Spaces for Shaping the Nation: National Museums and National Galleries in Nineteenth-Century Europe

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National Museums and National Galleries in Nineteenth-Century Europe

[transcript] → Museum

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Spaces for Shaping the Nation

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[transcript]

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Contents

Part 3: Education and Role Model

Part 4: Framing and Display Strategies

Foreword and Acknowledgements

Christina Strunck

The present volume results from the conference "Die Nation bilden. Nationalmuseen und Nationalgalerien als Vermittlungsorte der Nation im langen 19. Jahrhundert in Europa" (Shaping the Nation: National Museums and National Galleries as Sites for Mediating the Nation in the Long Nineteenth Century), hosted by Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg (FAU) in the spring of 2022. Due to the global pandemic, the conference was held online, though originally the Germanisches Nationalmuseum (GNM) had generously offered its hospitality.

The conference was part of the research project "Modellierung von Kulturgeschichte am Beispiel des Germanischen Nationalmuseums: Vermittlungskonzepte für das 21. Jahrhundert" (Shaping Cultural History: The Example of the *Germanisches Nationalmuseum* and Curatorial Lessons for the Twenty-First Century), a collaboration initiated by the Department of Art History at FAU with the GNM. From 2018 to 2023, the Volkswagen Foundation funded the research projects of six Ph.D. candidates in several different humanities disciplines, simultaneously enabling these early career researchers to gain hands-on professional experience (see https://www.kunstgeschichte.phil.fau.de/?p=12810). The research group explored the history of the GNM, its collections and its exhibitions from its inception to the present day. Our driving concern was to explore how this museum, from its establishment in 1852 onward, has modelled cultural history; how, in so doing, it has shaped our ideas of the past; and what conclusions we can draw from these observations to guide curatorial work in museums today. The fellows received training in technology and management skills as well as in museological work, and they were given an opportunity to test new approaches to visitor engagement using the GNM's holdings. As a joint project, they developed the online exhibition *Frauenwelten* (Women's Worlds). Each fellow explored a different topic, contributing a distinct point of view to this kaleidoscopic digital project (https://frauenwelten.gnm.de/).

In order to contextualize the research of the doctoral students, we organized several conferences and workshops that dealt with concepts key to the study of cultural history, museology, and the process of nation-building. The outcomes of the workshops "Geschmacksbildung im Zeitalter der Nationenbildung. Das Museum als Ort der (ästhetischen) Erziehung und Volksbildung" and "Regionale und nationale Identitätsbildung im Museum. Regionalmuseen in Nationalstaaten im 19. Jahrhundert" will be published in a

digital format by Marina Beck, the project's coordinator, who is currently finishing her *Habilitationsschrift* on nationalist themes in nineteenth-century military museums.

As director of the project I would like to thank Daniel Hess, Director General of the GNM, for his support throughout, as well as the Volkswagen Foundation for funding the project along with the publication of the conference proceedings. Special thanks are due to the authors of the individual contributions, to Julia Oswald for her meticulous editing, and to Mirjam Galley for her supervision of the book project. Above all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Marina Beck for her great care, patience, and hard work in making this inspiring conference happen.

Introduction and Framework

Introduction: Spaces for Shaping the Nation

National Museums and National Galleries in Nineteenth-Century Europe

Marina Beck

The aim of this volume is to take a closer look at the function of museums in the process of nation-building. As spaces of knowledge, national museums and galleries played an important role in conveying a national identity in nineteenth-century Europe, though the individual institutions differed in their precise function, in the orientation of their collections, and in their didactic approach. This volume examines the potential of such spaces to contribute to the formation and education (*Bildung*) of the nascent nation-states. In addition to the mediation of knowledge, this question concerns the originary purpose of the museums: why they were founded and by whom. While the chronological scope of the volume is the long nineteenth century, some authors extend their view to the present, accounting for the imperatives of national museums today. Across a breadth of case studies encompassing Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, and Switzerland, the contributors consider how national museums and galleries engaged with the specific nation-building process of the country in question.

Methodological Approach

Research on national museums and galleries is not new. Fundamental studies have addressed many such museums, whether from the perspective of the history of the institution and its collection or the architectural framework.[1] In addition, a number of conferences and projects have dealt with national museums and galleries from a comparative point of view. One of the first was the conference *Das kunst- und kulturhistorische Museum im 19. Jahrhundert*,[2] held at the *Germanisches Nationalmuseum* (Germanic National Museum) in 1977. This was followed in 1991 by an international symposium at the

1 The relevant literature is cited in the contributions to this volume.

2 Deneke and Kahsnitz, 1977.

Deutsches Historisches Museum (German Historical Museum) in Berlin. There, twenty-five representatives of national museums and galleries presented on the history, contents, status, and future of their museums. This gathering resulted in the volume *Die Nation und ihre Museen*.[3]

Anniversaries are often the occasion for such publications, as with the recent one organized on the 150th anniversary of the *Museo Nazionale del Bargello* (Bargello National Museum), in Florence.[4] While such volumes tend to present the latest research on the museum in question, they lack a comparative view.[5] And they rarely define the basic terms, i.e. what constitutes a national museum or gallery and what their respective functions have historically been.

This is where the research project "European National Museums: Identity Politics, the Uses of the Past and the European Citizen" (EuNaMus) came in, producing numerous publications on the subject between 2010 and 2013.[6] EuNaMus is based on the "Making National Museums: Comparing Institutional Arrangements, Narrative Scope and Cultural Integration" (NaMu) project, funded by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions of the European Commission in 2007–2008. The results of NaMu appeared in the 2011 volume *National Museums. New Studies from around the World*.[7] This publication was the starting point for EuNaMus, which investigated national museums in thirty-seven countries from a comparative perspective. In addition to the search for a common definition of the national museum, the project focused on the active and intentional processes of history-making in museums. Further to this point, EuNaMus looked at the potential roles of national museums in Europe today, in particular for forging understanding as well as a European sense of belonging. The reorientation of national museums in our time was also a topic of discussion at the conference on which the present volume is based.[8] And it is a question central to current museum work.[9]

The EuNaMus project's definition of the national museum, which we take up in this volume, aims to capture "the national museum in all its social, political and intellectual complexity, through a systematic comparative study of the formation of these institu-

3 Plessen 1992.

4 Ciseri and Wolf 2021.

5 Madsen and Jørgensen 2007.

6 Among the most important publications is Aronsson and Amundsen 2012, which provides a first definition of the national museum and discusses important issues related to its study. These initial findings led to the volume Aronsson and Elgenius 2015. Two publications present the national museums in the thirty-seven countries in detail: Aronsson and Elgenius 2011 describes and classifies the most important national museums for each country, whereas Poulot, Bodenstein, and Guiral 2012 deals with overarching thematic issues related to the individual museums.

7 Knell 2011.

8 The participants in the discussion were: Christopher Breward (Director of the Scottish National Museum), Daniel Hess (Director General of the Germanic National Museum), Thomas Lyngby (Head of Research and Curator of the Museum of National History Frederiksborg), Martin Olin (Research Director of the National Museum Stockholm), and Mette Skougaard (Director of the Museum of National History Frederiksborg). We thank Tobias Kämpf, from the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg and the Germanic National Museum, for chairing the discussion.

9 Hess 2022.

tions as read in the context of the overall evolution of Europe".[10] In this sense, EuNaMus defines national museums as

> institutions, collections and displays claiming, articulating and representing dominant national values, myths and realities. National museums are institutionalized negotiations of national values that form a basis for national identity and cultural underpinnings for the operation of the state.[11]

The function of a given museum as a 'national museum' therefore is not dependent on whether the word 'national' appears explicitly in its name; nor are there specific collection items that necessarily define a museum as national in character. The decisive factor lies instead in the role that the museum has played in the process of nation-building. Therefore, in order to understand the operations of the 'national museum' as such, one must first understand how the relevant museums fulfilled this role.

In this context, the present volume considers museums as educational spaces that conveyed knowledge about the nation and analyses the didactic methods entailed. Eilean Hooper-Greenhill deals with these aspects in her book *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*,[12] showing how the knowledge conveyed varies according to the arrangement of objects. Thus, any decision concerning the presentation of objects in a museum is a decision to communicate a particular kind of knowledge. This process demands reflection and analysis in order to understand how museums function as spaces of education.

This important methodological tool has thus far been employed only sporadically to investigate the didactic intentions of object displays, and its application to past displays is also rare. An exception is the work of Jana Scholze, who takes a semiotic approach to analysing four museums in terms of how and with what ostensible aim the objects were arranged.[13] Julia Noordegraaf, for her part, takes the example of the *Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen* (Boymans–Van Beuningen Museum) in Rotterdam to examine how the presentation of objects changed over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She analyses the museum from the perspective of the viewer and refers to the installation itself a 'script' "in order to analyse the complex relations between such diverse components as people's ideas and intentions, material objects, buildings and visitor behaviour".[14] Meanwhile, Sarah Czerney adopts an approach from media theory to describe how the medium of

10 "European National Museums" 2013.

11 Aronsson, Amundsen, and Bugge 2011, 10. Knell 2016, 9, notes that a national museum or gallery "might be understood as an institution meeting some or all of the following criteria: holding and exhibiting all or part of the national collection of fine art, established by an act of parliament or government decree; funded at least in part by the national government; possessing a professional staff employed by the state; situated in government bureaucracy and delivering in policy areas in the arts; and designated or referred to as a national museum or gallery".

12 Hooper-Greenhill 1995.

13 Scholze 2004. The four museums are the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, the *zeitgeschichtliches Forum* (Forum of Contemporary History) in Leipzig, the *Tropenmuseum* (Museum of the Tropics) in Amsterdam, and the *Werkbundarchiv* (Archive of the *Werkbund* Association) in Berlin. In her contribution to Baur 2010, she summarizes her methodological approach once again, see Scholze 2010.

14 Noordegraaf 2004, 14.

the museum conveyed the self-image of the nation in the nineteenth century, before going on to address what role European national museums can play in this respect today.[15] Joachim Baur's anthology[16] presents other methodological frameworks for analysing the display of objects, including those that examine the museum as a historical source[17] or an ethnographic field,[18] alongside others that draw from theories of narrative[19] or cultural memory.[20]

This volume analyses the exhibitions in order to shed light on the didactic intentions that were pursued via the arrangement and presentation of the objects: How was the collection arranged? What relationships were established between the objects and the space surrounding them, i.e. pictorial programmes, ornaments, inscriptions, etc.? What principles of order and what presentation strategies were used? And finally, what impression was the collection meant to leave on visitors?

The specific educational mission of the so-called *Landesmuseen* (state museums) is also examined in the volume. How was regional history, art history, and cultural history conveyed in these museums? What objects were used for this purpose, what persons were referred to, and what important events were narrated? What aesthetic and political canon was to be conveyed to the population? How did such museums contribute to the self-representation and self-creation of the state?

In this volume, we focus on mediation in museums. With this emphasis, we ask new questions about the function and use of museums. We ask specifically how national identity was didactically mediated in museums in the context of the rise of the nation-state in nineteenth-century Europe.

The Function of National Museums and Galleries in Nineteenth-Century Europe

Over the course of the long nineteenth century, the countries that are now geographically part of Europe underwent an extremely complex process of state- and nation-building. This process did not follow any uniform pattern but rather was highly individualized. In Germany and Italy, for example, several states joined together to form a nation-state. The nations of Greece and Belgium, however, emerged upon seceding from an existing state system. By contrast, the national borders of France have for centuries been more or less congruent with a specific cultural and linguistic area. And there were nations that did not have their own state, such as divided Poland.

The process of what historians call 'external nation-building' was preceded by the anchoring of the national idea in the population, known as 'internal nation-building', which manifested itself in the cultural sphere (language, monuments, national festivals, rituals,

15 Czerny 2019.
16 Baur 2010.
17 Thiemeyer 2010.
18 Gable 2010.
19 Buschmann 2010.
20 Pieper 2010.

symbols, anthems, flags, etc.). Not only museums but also archives, libraries, and monuments functioned as sites of knowledge transmission about one's nation and its place in history.[21]

The so-called national museums played an important role in this.[22] Per the definition of the national museum given by the EuNaMus project, the present contributions examine not just national museums designated as such but also national galleries, historical museums, museums of cultural history, art museums, army museums, and *Landesmuseen* that were established in the states that merged to form the German Empire in 1871. The *Landesmuseen* had the same function as the national museums in neighbouring European countries. Here, however, the exhibition of the nation was concentrated on the respective federal state. One example is the *Bayerisches Nationalmuseum* (Bavarian National Museum), where the Bavarian nation of the Kingdom of Bavaria was to be presented.

Thus, different types of national museums emerged in various countries, differing in their function, collection focus, and didactic approach, but sharing the same function: the formation and representation of the nation. Against this backdrop, it is important to examine how museums and galleries fulfilled this educational role. How exactly did they contribute to nation-building and education in the nineteenth century? In order to understand how nation was communicated in museums and galleries, it is necessary to identify and interpret the different narratives. This requires an examination of the design of exhibitions and the presentation of collections. The question to ask is always: How was the visitor engaged by the display of the objects? What image of the nation did the exhibition convey to the visitor in concrete terms? What information did the visitor receive, and what information did they not receive?

Ideally, museums can be divided into two groups, although overlaps are possible. The first group consists of institutions whose collections were created with the aim of disseminating knowledge as widely as possible. These were often art museums (for example paintings galleries, sculpture collections, antique collections), which presented to the public collections of paintings, sculpture, and antiquities with the aim of shaping taste. In addition to these 'educational museums', a second group emerged with an interest in shaping visitors' notions of what constituted their nation. These encompassed, for example, museums of history, cultural history, and military history, as well as collections that focused on historical, cultural, or other elements seen as characteristic of a specific nation.

21 Jansen and Borggräfe 2007, 28–32. On the process of nation-building and the nation as a cultural construct, see the fundamental studies by Renan 1882; Anderson 1983; Gellner 1991; Hobsbawm 1991.

22 On the role played by national museums in the establishment, consolidation, and legitimation of nations and nation-states, see the crucial work of Pomian 1992; Kaplan 1994; Bennett 1995; MacDonald 2000; Evans and Boswell 2002; Knell 2011.

Shaping the Nation in National Museums and Galleries

Although museums that were designated 'national' employed various staging devices to didactic ends, certain recurrent themes and strategies can be identified across both of the aforementioned subtypes. The history of the nation was an important theme and could be told in different ways. Therein, one sub-theme was progress, manifested in the display of the nation's products, including folk and decorative arts; another was the nation's military victories. These and other themes were used to demonstrate the achievements of the nation.

As sites for displaying history, the national museums and galleries were the right place for this. It is important to emphasize that this was never a neutral presentation of history. Rather, a construction of history took place that was intended to convey a certain image of one's own history. It was thus a matter of staging a certain image of history and a certain view of select historical events. Thus, a specific narrative was exhibited in the museums.

To achieve this, various strategies of display were implemented in the national museums and galleries. Thus, in chronologically arranged collections, the visitor's own nation and own present were exhibited as the culmination of a certain cultural development. In this, the idea of progress became quite pronounced.

Another way of demonstrating the idea of progress was to present the objects in period rooms. This approach helped convey the original use of the objects and, at the same time, created a sense of atmosphere. The rooms were often themselves arranged chronologically, such that visitors could walk through the centuries and view pictures representative of the different periods. In this way, national history 'came to life'.

In collections arranged systematically by material (glass, ceramics, wood, stone, textile, etc.) or function, the objects of one's own culture or nation could be juxtaposed with those of another. This was often the case with folk and decorative arts, which were largely preserved in national museums, wherein the nation's own production techniques were positively emphasized in contrast to those of other nations. A similar possibility manifested in the presentation of paintings, which were hung according to national styles or schools. The objects were thus arranged according to their perceived quality and contributed to the formation of taste (*Geschmacksbildung*).

Another important aspect of conveying a sense of national identity was commemorating historical events that were important for one's own nation. This memory could be kept alive in various ways, for example, by displaying objects that were directly related to a particular event, such as weapons or other trophies that had been captured in the context of war. In museum installations, these objects were ascribed the status of national relics.

Another possibility was the production of history paintings visualizing key historical events. The museum thus became an illustrated history book. Portrait galleries, in which personalities of importance to the nation were depicted, had a similar function. Here, historiography took a personality-centred form. Like the memorial objects, the people depicted became representative of the narrative presented in the museum.

The Structure of This Book

This book proceeds in four parts, each consisting of case studies on national museums of the long nineteenth century. An introductory essay by Christina Strunck provides a framework for the volume by placing the representation of national values in a broader context. Drawing on examples from sixteenth-century Italy and eighteenth-century Britain, she investigates different conceptions of the nation and the ways in which these were visualized in architectures of display before the emergence of nineteenth-century national museums. She then presents the example of Anselm Kiefer's installation at the Panthéon in Paris, showing how this French national monument from the long nineteenth century is deconstructed in the twenty-first century.

This introduction is followed by Part 1, which deals with the concept of memory and the different ways in which it is thematized in national museums. Museums function as institutions of memory: on the one hand, they preserve memory, and on the other, they aspire to trigger certain memories in visitors. Memory is also an important aspect of the question of what was understood by a nation. The 'nation' defines itself as a group through attributions; it is an "imagined political community".[23]

Stefan Berger's essay explores the different types of memory that could be retrieved in national museums, with particular emphasis on 'antagonistic' and 'cosmopolitan memory'. The former is based on a clear distinction between friend and foe, between self and other. Cosmopolitan memory, on the other hand, invokes universal values, such as human rights, which emphasize commonalities. Berger explains how these two forms of memory were at play in the national museums.

The other contribution in Part 1 deals with the memory raised by certain objects exhibited in museums. Presenting three case studies, Ellinoor Bergvelt accounts for the narratives associated with objects as they entered and were arranged within museums. In doing so, Bergvelt speaks to the museum landscape that developed in the Netherlands in the nineteenth century under constantly changing political circumstances.

Bergvelt's contribution offers a useful transition to Part 2, in which the founding histories of national museums are discussed. Examples are drawn from countries where nation-building was difficult or not yet possible in the nineteenth century. In Italy and Switzerland, for instance, different states and cantons merged to form a nation-state, and this often fraught process also raised the question of what kind of national museum should represent the new entity.

When the nation of Switzerland was founded, one of the first things to decide was where to locate the national museum. Cristina Gutbrod examines the submissions of the respective cities and why Zurich was ultimately chosen. Meanwhile, in the newly formed state of Italy, it was immediately clear that Rome would be the capital. What was unclear, however, was how to establish a museum there that could serve nationalist ends. Maria Vittoria Marini Clarelli discusses the pre-existing museums in Rome and what considerations informed the creation of the new national museums. Indeed, unlike in Switzerland, the nation was represented not by a single museum but by a multitude of museums, with various interrelations among them.

23 Anderson 1983, 14.

In this respect, the situation in Italy was similar to that in Poland, where again numerous museums were founded to mould and educate the nation's population. Unlike Switzerland and Italy, however, Poland was not a nation-state during the period in question. Therefore, the various 'national' museums, as Kamila Kłudkiewicz explains, served to keep alive the memory of a people. As a result, a large number of national museums emerged, both within and far beyond the borders of present-day Poland. Kłudkiewicz discusses their history and significance in the Polish nation-building process.

A national museum without a state was also an occurrence in Scotland. Christopher Breward traces the development of the National Museum of Scotland as well as the motivations behind its creation. In this context, he goes into detail concerning the function of the museum, how the objects were displayed, and what narrative of the Scottish nation they were mobilized to relay.

Breward essay's provides a transition to Part 3, which focuses on the educational and role-modelling function of the national museum. Thomas Lyngby's contribution examines the Danish national museum established in the burned and rebuilt Frederiksborg Castle. A defining feature of the museum is that it was founded by a private individual, Jacob Christian Jacobsen, who had also founded the Carlsberg breweries. As Lyngby explains, Jacobsen's aim was to create a place where people could learn about Danish history. To achieve this, the donor set up a gallery of portraits of important people and commissioned paintings of significant events in Danish history.

In Sweden, on the other hand, a number of national museums were established, with varying educational missions. These are presented in Martin Olin's contribution to the volume. The first such museum, in Stockholm, was a multipurpose institution housed in a new building; it consisted of the art gallery, the national library, the archaeological museum, the armoury, and the mint. The National Museum in Stockholm was a place of education. There, the public could see international art, for example: rather than exhibiting only Sweden's own history, the museum prioritized more general educational content. Meanwhile, the history of the Swedish nation itself was emphasized at the *Nordiska museet* (Nordic Museum) and *Skansen* open-air museum. The installation showed how the Swedish people had lived, with the aim of strengthening patriotism and the people's understanding of their own history. The Swedish examples are therefore ideal for demonstrating the different ways in which national museums can be used for educational ends.

At the *Bayerisches Nationalmuseum* (Bavarian National Museum) in Munich, various possibilities for educating the public were implemented in a single building. Two of the authors, Matthias Weniger and Raphael Beuing, address this institution. Weniger focuses on analysis of written sources describing the staging devices employed at the original location of the Bavarian National Museum. He explains in detail how the objects were presented and what narratives about the Bavarian nation they were intended to convey. Meanwhile, Beuing's text deals with the so-called specialized collections. These were galleries of decorative arts that were to serve as models for the craftsmen. In this way, the Bavarian National Museum was intended both to convey national history and to contribute to the training of makers through the display of illustrative material.

Finally, these detailed descriptions of the presentation of objects at the Bavarian National Museum lead into Part 4, which concerns framing and display strategies at the national museums and galleries. 'Framing' is understood to encompass all the strategies

implemented on and in the building to refer to the collections and their contents: the architectural style of the site, exterior sculptural programmes, murals in the entrance areas and the galleries, etc. I explore one such example in my own contribution to the volume, namely, the sculpture and painting programmes in the Halls of Fame of the military museums in Berlin, Munich, and Vienna. The images unfolded like a book on national history, conveying a particular narrative. Meanwhile, the sculptures depict important historical figures connected to this narrative.

Daniela Roberts compares the English and Scottish portrait galleries through the same lens. After recounting the origins of the two portrait galleries and the purpose each was intended to serve, she details the architectural and furnishing programmes that messaged a national narrative to visitors. In doing so, she closely analyses the programme of paintings and sculptures that, already in the entrance areas of the museums, provided a framework for understanding the collections.

In Paris, the contents of the *Musée du Sommerard* (Sommerard Museum) were framed not primarily in the area leading into the museum but rather in the exhibition rooms themselves, which took the form of period rooms. There, the objects were displayed in an 'authentic' setting. Estelle Gottlob-Linke describes this process in detail, explaining how each room was furnished and what story was to be told about the contents. The aim of Alexandre Du Sommerard's period rooms was to enable the visitor to experience French history first-hand. As the contributions to Part 4 demonstrate, framing strategies were crucial means of conveying national history.

Conclusions

This volume aims to take a fresh look at the emergence of national museums in the nineteenth century. It asks why, across Europe, different types of national museums were established and what educational missions these institutions pursued. The starting point for this investigation was the *Germanisches Nationalmuseum* (Germanic National Museum) in Nuremberg, whose development and collection history was the focus of a series of doctoral research projects funded by the Volkswagen Foundation. The project also asked about similarities and differences between the Germanic National Museum and other national museums in Europe.

The present volume expands on this important research by addressing, through a broader comparative lens encompassing several European countries, the question of the educational mission of national museums and galleries in the long nineteenth century. This study fills an important gap in existing research, while also opening up new perspectives on museum work today. Only such a close examination of individual cases could effectively shed light on how the national museums contributed to the education and self-fashioning of emerging nation-states in nineteenth-century Europe, as well as what this means for work in and with museums in the twenty-first century.

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Precursors to and Reinterpretations of the National Museum

From the Early Modern Era to Anselm Kiefer

Christina Strunck

Every exhibition needs a framework. Frames or glass cases surround and valorize the works on display, whether paintings or objects. In addition, many exhibition designers make use of architectural devices that create sightlines in order to establish meaningful relationships between certain objects. Similarly, my paper is intended as a framework for this volume. It looks at what comes before and after the heyday of the national museum in the nineteenth century. In part 1, I will address the question of how the nation was represented within architectures of display before the emergence of national museums. In part 2, I will then analyse a twenty-first-century approach to the national museums of the nineteenth century.

As is well known, princely galleries count among the precursors to the modern museum. Much of the decoration of these galleries magnify the deeds of a specific ruler, most famously perhaps the *Galerie des Glaces* (Hall of Mirrors) at Versailles. Although such pictorial programmes were certainly important for the formation of a national identity, they are not the subject of this paper. Nor will I focus on collections or displays of national 'schools'. Instead, I intend to discuss mural paintings that actually visualize the nation as a community of people. By presenting three case studies from Italy, Britain, and France I will point out how conceptions of the nation, and their representation in architectures of display, changed over time.[1]

1 For a working definition of 'national identity', see Smith 2013, 7: "the reproduction and continuous reinterpretation of the pattern of values, memories, myths, symbols, and traditions that compose the distinctive heritage of the nation, and the identification by individual members with that pattern and heritage". As this paper deals with representations of the nation in the visual arts, it is also indebted to Benedict Anderson's concept of the 'imagined community' (Anderson 2006, 6). For a discussion of recent theories on nationalism, see Hirschi 2005, 24–44.

The Gallery of Maps at the Vatican: Plurality and Unity of Nations

In the early modern era, the Italian peninsula was divided into numerous sovereign states, each with its own form of government. Although a unified nation-state – namely, the *Regno d'Italia* (Kingdom of Italy) – was founded only in 1861, in the Italian language the term *nazione* had been current since at least the fourteenth century.[2] The first Italian dictionary, the *Vocabolario degli accademici della Crusca* of 1612, listed several occurrences of the word in the writings of Dante and Boccaccio. According to the *Vocabolario*, it had two separate meanings. On the one hand, *nazione* could denote 'birth' or 'origin' as an equivalent to the Latin term *ortus* or *origo*. On the other hand, like the Latin word *natio*, it could refer to people born in the same province or city.[3]

According to this definition, a nation was, in early modern Italy, a rather small entity: a community of people from the same place. Rome was filled with around fifty so-called national churches (*chiese nazionali*).[4] A third of them belonged to *nationes* from all over Italy,[5] for instance San Giovanni dei Fiorentini, Il Santo Sudario dei Piemontesi, and Santa Croce e San Bonaventura dei Lucchesi (places of worship for people from Florence, Piedmont, and Lucca respectively).

Between 1523 and 1978 the papal state was governed only by Italian popes,[6] while the papal court was dominated by cardinals from many different Italian regions who cultivated different 'national' identities.[7] The pope also had strong ties to his own hometown or province – a relationship that tended to influence his patronage of the arts as well.

The frescoes in the *Galleria delle Carte Geografiche* (Gallery of Maps; fig. 1), a 'visual encyclopaedia' executed in 1580/1581, were commissioned by the Bolognese pope Gregory XIII.[8] The maps on its walls were designed by the cartographer Egnazio Danti, who held a professorship in the pope's native city.[9] Although one of the maps stages Rome as *caput orbis*,[10] or 'capital of the globe', the pictorial cycle does not aim to represent the world as it was known at that time. Instead, it focuses entirely on the Italian peninsula, a topographical entity governed by many different rulers.

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2 From the thirteenth century, students at the University of Bologna were grouped by 'nation' (Dierse and Rath 1984, 407). Hirschi 2005, 177–242, analyses the ways in which Italian humanists discussed the nation.

3 "Vocabolario" 1612, 552.

4 Many of these buildings were studied in the collective volume by Koller and Kubersky-Piredda 2015a.

5 Koller and Kubersky-Piredda 2015b, 9.

6 See the list of popes with their birthplaces: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_popes (accessed 3 July 2023).

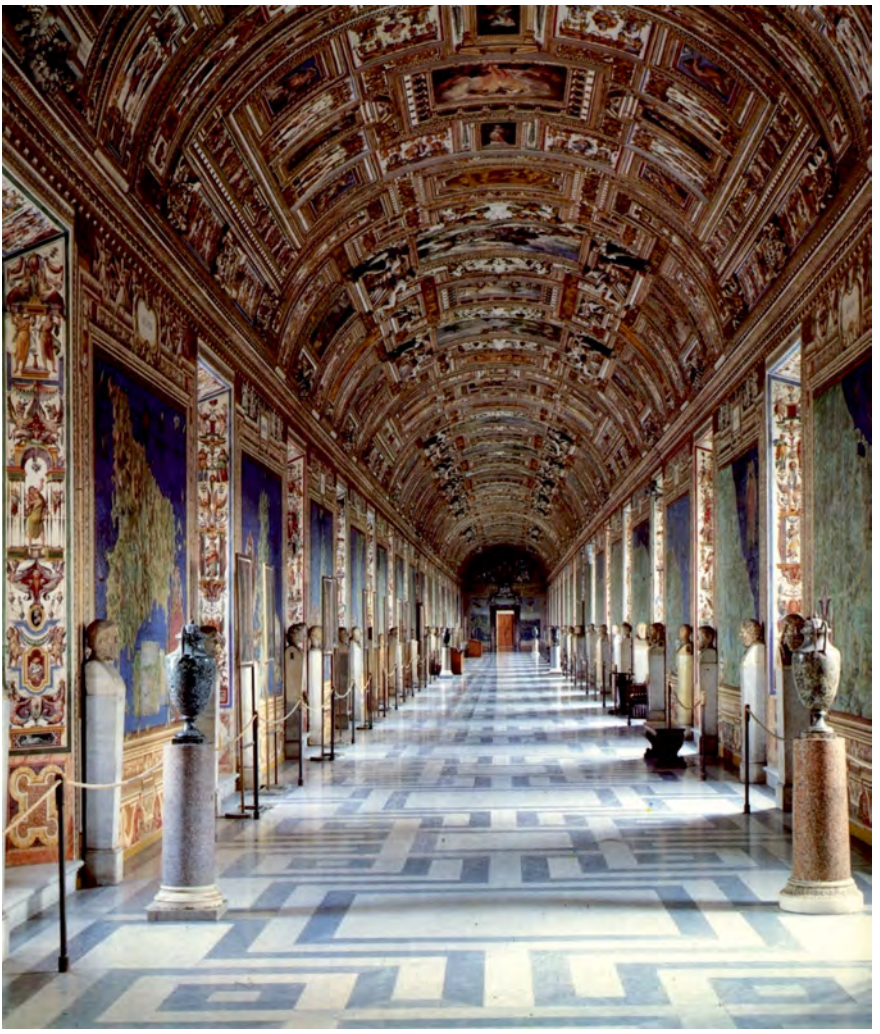
7 Koller and Kubersky-Piredda 2015b, 9, with reference to the relevant publications by Wolfgang Reinhard and Paolo Prodi.

8 Zollikofer 2008, 120, 128 (interpretation as *Bildenzyklopädie*, i.e. visual encyclopaedia). Zollikofer dates the gallery to 1578–1581, but the years 1578/1579 were entirely devoted to building work. The decorative campaign commenced only in 1580 when Egnazio Danti moved to Rome. See Fiore 1986, 660; Malafarina 2005, 5.

9 Fiore 1986, 660–661.

10 See the illustration in Malafarina 2005, 41.

Fig. 1: The Gallery of Maps in the Vatican Palace, with cartographic frescoes designed by Egnazio Danti, 1580–1581.



As the gallery was accessible to the pope's visitors,[11] each Italian guest, as well as successive popes, could discover their own 'nation' in this space. This created a sense of unity that was enhanced by the pictorial programme of the vault.[12] Its fresco cycle commences with two paintings that celebrate the superiority of spiritual over temporal power: Pope Sylvester baptizing Emperor Constantine and Constantine holding the reins

11 The gallery is located on the top floor of the Vatican Palace, leading up to a new private apartment for the pope: Pinelli 1994a, 47–51. A Latin poem written during Gregory's reign stresses that the rooms lying behind the gallery were strictly private, while the gallery itself was open to numerous visitors: Ferri 1994, 79.

12 On the iconography of the vault, see especially Schütte 1993 and Pineli 1994b.

of Sylvester's horse (fig. 2).[13] The latter scene refers to the so-called Donation of Constantine, a decree by which the emperor had allegedly empowered the pope to rule over the whole Italian peninsula.[14] By including maps of every region of Italy in his gallery, Gregory XIII implicitly endorsed the validity of the much-contested edict and thus his right to rule Italy in its entirety.[15]

Fig. 2: Anonymous painter, Emperor Constantine Holding the Reins of Pope Sylvester's Horse, ceiling painting in the Gallery of Maps.

The series of maps begins with a juxtaposition of *Italia antiqua* and *Italia nuova*, or ancient and modern Italy.[16] This was a feature of Danti's original pictorial programme, but as both maps were completely redesigned by Lukas Holste (Holstenius) in 1632, we have no means of forming a judgement on their original appearance.[17] In any case, it is

13 Gambi and Pinelli 1994, I, 408–409, 411–412 and II, 430–436.

14 According to Gambi and Pinelli, it is significant that the Donation of Constantine itself was not chosen for representation (Gambi and Pinelli 1994 I, 412). However, the text of the decree specifies that the emperor would act as *strator* (who holds the reins of the pope's horse), i.e. the depiction of the emperor in that role evokes the text of the so-called Donation (Fuhrmann 1968, 92). The relationship of this painting to the Donation is also underlined by Schütte 1993, 61–66.

15 On the controversies surrounding the so-called Donation of Constantine, see Fried 2005.

16 See the illustrations in Malafarina 2005, 24–27.

17 Gambi and Pinelli 1994, I, 178, 186 and II, 39–45; Malafarina 2005, 116–119.

clear that Gregory XIII wished to emphasize the continuity between the Roman Empire and the papal state.

During the pontificate of Urban VIII, an inscription was added to the map of *Italia nuova*, stating that Italy has always been considered rich in the arts and in scholarship.[18] A personification of the Church, crowned with the papal tiara, sits on top of the framed inscription.[19] Thus, the papacy symbolically presides over the cultural unity of Italy, which derives from a common ancient heritage. In this way, Urban VIII spelled out an idea already implicit in Gregory's pictorial programme, namely, that the many different nations of Italy actually form one large, all-encompassing Italian nation.[20]

The maps visualize the places of origin of the people of each nation, and in addition they show the members of these communities in action. Almost every map includes one or more historical scenes. For instance, the map of the duchy of Milan contains Hannibal's defeat of the Romans by the River Ticino and Charlemagne's triumph over the Lombards at Piacenza, plus the French siege of Pavia in 1528 (figs. 3, 4).[21] Depicting both ancient and modern battles in one and the same map stresses the continuity between ancient and modern Italy. Italy appears as a *theatrum* in which divine providence acts out various scenarios.[22] The maps, for their part, serve as *luoghi di memoria* (loci of memory) within a theatre of memory, inspiring interpretative discourses that could take shape according to the precise challenges facing each successive papal beholder.[23]

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18 Gambi and Pinelli 1994, I, 193 and II, 49: "*Italia / artium / studiorumque / plena semper / est habita*".

19 See the illustration in Malafarina 2005, 27. I do not agree with the identification of the crowning figure as Pope Gregory the Great, the namesake of Gregory XIII (Gambi and Pinelli 1994, I, 193). Firstly, the tablet was clearly painted during the pontificate of Urban VIII (as the prominent presence of the Barberini bees indicates), and secondly the dove does not whisper in the figure's ear (as in the iconography of St Gregory) but hovers above the temple, which is the standard attribute of Religion. Cf. Ripa 1970, 429 (under the heading 'Religione'): "*Donna vestita d'un Camiscio, Stola, & Piviale [...] terrà con la sinistra mano, con bella gratia, un bellissimo Tempio*". Contrary to the hypothesis upheld by Gambi and Pinelli, the inscription therefore does not date from Gregory's pontificate but rather from Holstenius's campaign of 1632 (for this, see no. 17 above).

20 On the development of national sentiment in Italy, see Hirschi 2005, 177–242.

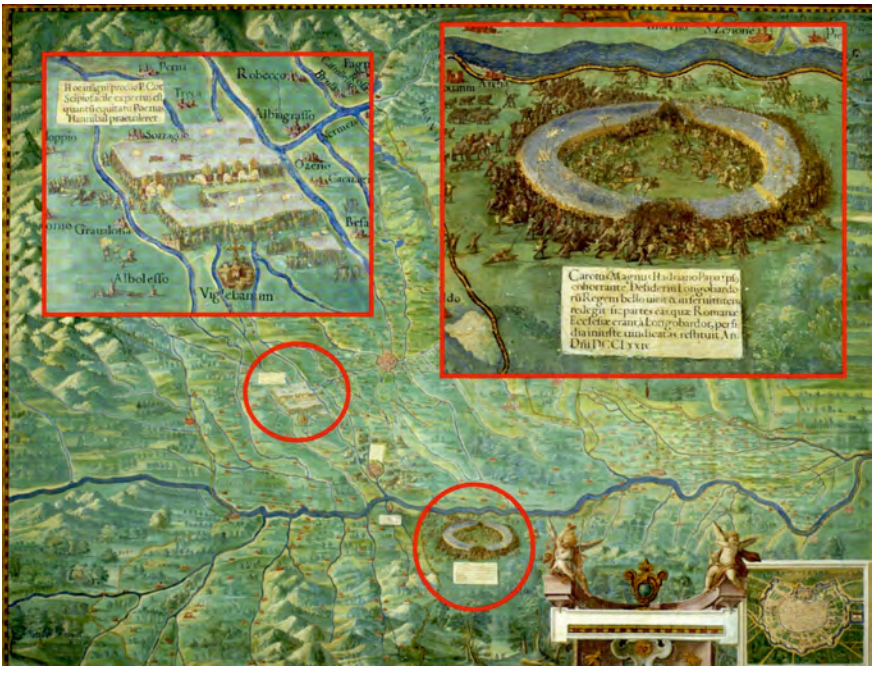
21 Gambi and Pinelli 1994, I, 282–289 and II, 215–222; Malafarina 2005, 135–136. The overlapping of events across different maps can point to historical parallels and to lessons that may be learnt from history. For example, this can be seen in the map of *Flaminia* (Gambi and Pinelli 1994, I, 325–334 and II, 293–299). The map commemorates the action Gregory XIII took against a form of banditism that was flavoured with political overtones (cf. Pastor 1923, 766–775). The same map includes Caesar's troops marching towards the river Rubicon, as well as a representation of an allegedly ancient inscription declaring that whoever crossed the Rubicon while bearing arms would be considered an enemy of the Roman senate; by doing so, Caesar began a civil war. Gregory's defeat of the armed rebels living in the same region is thus likened to quenching a civil war.

22 Schulz 1987, 108 and 226, no. 23.

23 On this concept, see Yates 1966; Bolzoni 1984; Kliemann 1993, 46–51; Meadow and Robertson 2013.

Fig. 3: Egnazio Danti and collaborators, Map of the Duchy of Milan Containing Hannibal's Defeat of the Romans by the River Ticino, Charlemagne's Triumph over the Lombards at Piacenza, and the French Siege of Pavia.

Fig. 4: Detail of fig. 3 with inserted close-ups of Hannibal's Defeat of the Romans by the River Ticino and Charlemagne's Triumph over the Lombards at Piacenza.



The scenes in the vault are meant to underline the role of divine providence. Above each map appears a miracle, whether the story of a saint or a scene from Church history that took place in the designated region,[24] thus pointing to God's impact on the course of Italian history. Particularly significant is the painting of Leo I driving away Attila the Hun, in that it casts the pope as defender of the Italian peninsula against a foreign, heathen nation.[25]

The goals of papal politics are triumphantly declared on the wall at the culmination of the gallery. These maps depict two recent naval victories over the so-called infidels in the Mediterranean: the liberation of Malta in 1565 and the 1571 victory of Lepanto.[26] In both cases, the papacy had been actively involved.[27] As these battles were fought outside the Italian peninsula, the pictorial programme of the gallery concludes with the idea that the divinely protected Italian nation is destined to defend Catholicism.[28]

All in all, the Gallery of Maps exemplifies the ways in which the concept of the nation was being negotiated during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. On the one hand, the programme refers to the definition of the *nazione* as a relatively small group of people from the same city or province, and on the other hand the paintings imply the existence of a much larger, pan-Italian nation. Despite regional particularities, this Italian nation is united through its common ancient heritage and a common culture based on a shared language and religion. By evoking the example of the Roman Empire, the paintings suggest that a united Italy would once again be able to control the world.

Precisely because the popes were elected and came from quite varied regional and cultural backgrounds, it was a clever move to focus the gallery's programme on the unity of Italian nations. After all, no matter who guided the papal state, consensus within the college of cardinals, as well as concord between the papal state and the other Italian territories, was essential for the success of a pontificate.

By showing the gallery to his guests, the pope could employ the paintings as a useful tool in his diplomatic negotiations. The overlapping of events across different maps allowed him to point out historical parallels and lessons to be learnt from history. The maps therefore acted as visual markers within a theatre of memory and as an admonishment to overcome the borders between single nations in the common interest of Italy as a whole.

24 Milanesi 1994, 103.

25 Gambi and Pinelli 1994, I, 306.

26 Ibid., I, 377–382 and II, 384, 392, 396.

27 Moretti 2020.

28 Strunck 2010, 135–137; Strunck 2011, 226–228.

The Painted Hall of the Royal Hospital at Greenwich: A Nation of Shared Values

The next case study takes us to Great Britain where the concept of a unified nation began to take shape during the sixteenth century.[29] In 1536, an Act of Union established a bond between England and Wales,[30] and in 1603 the kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland were united under James I,[31] but only the Act of Union of 1707 created "one united kingdom by the name of Great Britain".[32] Although it proved difficult to overcome the cultural and political divide among English, Welsh, Scottish, and Irish people,[33] throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth century literary sources nonetheless celebrated a British 'nation'.[34] Christopher Wren, the architect of the Royal Hospital at Greenwich (fig. 5), wrote that "architecture […] establishes a Nation",[35] and according to his collaborator Nicholas Hawksmoor the Royal Hospital was built for "the Benefit and Honour of the Nation".[36]

Fig. 5: The Old Royal Naval College at Greenwich seen from the River Thames.

The Royal Hospital at Greenwich (today the Old Royal Naval College) had been founded in 1694 as a home for aged or injured sailors.[37] However, the utilitarian function of the structure was clearly subordinate to its propagandistic message. For early modern travellers, who approached London usually via the Thames, Greenwich came into view even before they reached the capital. Thus, the impressive hospital building facing the river served almost as a billboard that advertised the splendours of Great Britain as well as the power of its Royal Navy.[38]

29 Meyer 2003, 89–92.

30 Ibid., 90.

31 Galloway and Levack 1985; Galloway 1986; Brown 1992, 77–84; Ó Buachalla 1993; Mason 1994; Colls 2002, 34. On the prehistory of national sentiment in England, Scotland, and Ireland, see Marshall 2000, 13–14, 16, 20–21; Smith 2008, 93–98, 102–106.

32 Meyer 2003, 92.

33 See, for instance, Brown 1995; Ellis 1995; Morrill 1995.

34 For examples from this period, see Maurer 1996 and Strunck 2021, 47, 62, 149, 177, 249, 291, 294, 308.

35 Soo 1998, 153.

36 Hawksmoor 1728, 14.

37 Lucas 2019, 20.

38 Strunck 2021, 288–289. On the architecture of the Royal Hospital, see especially Bold 2000.

From the start, the Royal Hospital at Greenwich sought to rival the splendid *Hôtel des Invalides* in Paris, which served a similar function as a home for war veterans. It had been founded by Louis XIV, Britain's main enemy in this period.[39] The hospital at Greenwich was likewise a royal foundation and aimed to demonstrate that Britain's sovereigns took equally good care of their soldiers.[40]

Wren consciously emulated the *Dôme des Invalides*, which stands at the centre of the French hospital complex. However, he also aspired to outdo it by gracing Greenwich's skyline with two domed structures rather than one (fig. 5). The right (western) dome tops the vestibule that leads to the so-called Painted Hall.[41] This space forms the core of the entire building complex (fig. 6). Its significance is highlighted by the stairs that lead from the vestibule into the main body of the hall. Ascending these steps, visitors are literally transported to a higher, ostensibly nobler realm.

Fig. 6 (left): The Painted Hall of the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich; view from the vestibule into the Lower Hall, with the Upper Hall beyond; Fig. 7 (right): James Thornhill and assistants, ceiling of the Lower Hall, ca. 1707–1714, detail: William III and Mary II triumphing over Popery and Tyranny while William offers the cap of liberty to Europe.

The Painted Hall imitates the architecture and decoration of the gallery of the Palazzo Colonna in Rome,[42] but the former was certainly not planned as a museum building. On festive occasions, it served as a dining hall both for the nobility and for veterans from

39 Cf. Gady 2015.

40 Strunck 2021, 289–291, 294, 314–315, 373.

41 See the illustrations in Lucas et al. 2019, 12–13, 27, 38, 40.

42 Strunck 2021, 298–303.

all ranks.[43] Meanwhile, in everyday life the Painted Hall was primarily a showpiece to be visited by sightseers. They could make use of a bilingual guidebook published in 1726, shortly after the completion of the hall, which was sold by the porters of the hospital and explained the pictorial cycle in both English and French.[44] Although Britain and France were no longer at war by that time, the inclusion of a French translation heightened the national rivalry that had been a driving factor of the programme from the start. The former French enemies were addressed in their own language in order to ensure that they properly understood the paintings of Britain's glory.

Based on the national subject matter and public accessibility of the murals, in addition to the existence of a didactic commentary intended for a wide audience, the Painted Hall can be seen as a precursor to a national museum. The central ceiling painting glorifies the joint rule of William III and Mary II, but it also references the war against France led by William in the 1690s (the so-called Nine Years' War, 1688–1697). A description of the ceiling published in 1715 points out that "the King tramples Tyranny under his Feet, which is exprest by a French Personage".[45] In fact, the crouching figure under William's feet holds a broken sword decorated with French fleurs-de-lis. Just below, a papal mitre can be seen toppling down (fig. 7). This arrangement alludes to the two catchphrases 'popery' and 'tyranny', which dominated British political discourse from the 1680s well into the eighteenth century. 'Popery' (Catholicism) and 'tyranny' (absolutism) were horrors Britons associated with continental European rulers, especially with Louis XIV.[46]

William's war against France ended in 1697 with the Peace of Ryswick, perceived as a British triumph. Accordingly, a white-clad personification of Peace hands William an olive branch, while he gives the cap of liberty to the kneeling personification of Europe (fig. 7).[47] This latter detail implies that William waged war for a cause even nobler than the national interest, namely, to bring liberty to the continent.

In interpreting Thornhill's painting, one must bear in mind that it was not created for William but rather during the reign of his successor, Queen Anne. As explained in a contemporary description, the huge galleys represented on either side of the vault allude to recent British victories in the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1713/1714), which occupied most of Anne's reign (fig. 8).[48] In this war, France was again Britain's main enemy. When Thornhill designed the ceiling, nobody could know who would eventually win. Therefore, the evocation of King William's past victory over France was meant to offer inspiration during the present conflict.[49] The central oval painting (fig. 7) visualized the values Britain was fighting for: liberty, peace, Protestantism.

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43 Ibid., 299.

44 "An Explanation" 1726.

45 Steele 1715, 192.

46 Strunck 2021, 272–274, 309–310.

47 Steele describes William III as "presenting Peace with the Lamb and Olive Branch, and Liberty expressed by the Athenian Cap, to Europe, who laying her Crowns at his Feet, receives them with an Air of Respect and Gratitude"; Steele 1715, 192.

48 According to Steele 1715, 193, the galley on the west end of the Lower Hall (fig. 8) depicts the "Blenheim Man of War", thereby pointing to the crucial triumph over France in the Battle of Blenheim in 1704.

49 Strunck 2021, 310–314, 316.

A closer look at the depicted warships reveals that they are surrounded by people, personifications, and goods evoking the British nation. For instance, the galley named after the famous Battle of Blenheim is accompanied by the personification of London held aloft on the shoulders of the rivers Thames and Isis (fig. 8).[50] The guidebook additionally mentions the River Tyne "pouring forth his Plenty of Coals",[51] thus illustrating the natural riches of the territory. Moreover, the guidebook identifies some of the figures on the balconies as famous Britons like Isaac Newton, John Flamsteed, and Thomas Weston.[52]

Fig. 8: James Thornhill and assistants, ceiling of the Lower Hall, ca. 1707–1714, detail: the galley "Blenheim" with personifications of London, Thames and Isis.

Thornhill's painting has strong national overtones because it shows a community of people associated with a specific territory and united in their opposition to a common enemy. However, for my purposes the Painted Hall is particularly relevant because it visualizes a concept of the nation that is no longer bound to a specific birthplace but rather to a set of shared values. This paradigm shift was necessitated by the fact that King William was not actually part of the British nation by birth.

Although he descended from King James I through his mother, William of Orange was born and raised in the Netherlands. He only became king of England as a result of the so-called Glorious Revolution, in which the legitimate but Catholic king James II was deposed (in 1688/1689). A large part of the British nobility preferred a Protestant king,

50 Johns 2019, 89; Lucas et al. 2019, 139.

51 Johns 2019, 92.

52 Ibid., 85–89; Lucas et al. 2019, 138.

and thus William was called to rescue them from the 'tyrant' James II. Whereas James had manifested marked tendencies towards absolutism, William guaranteed greater liberty through the Bill of Rights.[53]

Seen in this context, the central image of the Painted Hall is a manifesto of British values. The king triumphs over 'popery' and 'tyranny', or Catholicism and absolutism – institutions most contemporary Britons would have viewed with contempt. At the same time, he demonstrates his commitment to liberty and peace (fig. 7). Although he is not British by birth, William embodies the shared values of the nation: Protestantism and political liberty. This redefines the conception of a nation by separating it from a common birthplace and grounding it instead on the aims and ideals of the people who live together in a common territory. Accordingly, the country of origin of a monarch becomes less relevant than the values he represents.

This aspect was particularly important on account of the ongoing dynastic crisis. In 1701, the Act of Settlement stipulated that only Protestants could succeed to the throne. This finally led, in 1714, to the accession of a German, the Hanoverian George I, as king of the United Kingdom. Consequently, the pictorial programme of the Painted Hall concludes with a monumental portrait of King George and his family (fig. 9).[54] Within the large-scale composition, the king occupies a central, though rather small, space. Figuring much more prominently is the cupola of St Paul's Cathedral, which can be seen directly from the entrance to the hall. Once again this characterizes Protestantism as a defining trait of the British nation, no matter the monarch's actual place of origin.

While the Gallery of Maps at the Vatican extols Catholicism as a uniting force among the Italian nations, the Painted Hall posits Protestantism and opposition to 'popery' as defining characteristics of the British nation. In both cases, shared religious values are central to national identity. However, the conception of the nation itself differs markedly between the two. The Gallery of Maps celebrates individual regions and thus the attachment of each *nazione* to its birthplace. By contrast, the British nation is perceived as open to people from outside the British territory as long as they subscribe to certain shared values.

It goes without saying that reality did not always match these ideals. Just as there existed violent tensions among the numerous 'nations' on the Italian peninsula, Britain, too, experienced intense conflict among English, Welsh, Irish, and British people, not to mention deep rifts between rivalling Protestant factions as well as a high degree of suspicion towards people and ideas from continental Europe.[55] Both the Gallery of Maps and the Painted Hall present propagandistic images that were meant to create consensus and to evoke a sense of unity that was actually much contested.

53 Miller 1997, 68–75; Maurer 2002, 175; Pincus 2006, 69–74; Miller 2017, 337–338.

54 Johns 2019, 98–101; Strunck 2021, 316–325.

55 See, for instance, Brown 1995; Ellis 1995; Morrill 1995; Meyer 2003, 93–98, 102–108.

Fig. 9: James Thornhill and assistants, mural on the west wall of the Upper Hall, c. 1723–1726: George I and his family surrounded by allegorical figures.

The Panthéon in Paris: Reinterpretation and Deconstruction of the National Museum

My last case study concerns a twenty-first-century approach to the national museum: Anselm Kiefer's newly created works for the Panthéon in Paris. In 2020, the German artist installed two monumental canvases and six display cases in a setting that has continued to be highly charged with French national sentiment for more than two centuries (fig. 10).[56]

Like the Painted Hall, the Panthéon was not conceived as a national museum; instead, between 1764 and 1789 it had been built as a church dedicated to Sainte Geneviève.[57] Following the French Revolution, the former church served as a secular mausoleum for famous members of the nation and was accordingly named the *Panthéon*.[58] Its twofold function, as not only a memorial to national glory but also a burial site, clearly differs from that of a national museum. However, its nineteenth-century pictorial programme reinterprets the painting cycle of an earlier French national museum, the *Galerie des Batailles* (Gallery of Battles) at Versailles.

56 For a more detailed analysis of Kiefer's works at the Panthéon, see Strunck 2024 (forthcoming).

57 Ricolleau 2019, 19–30. On the architecture of the building, see Petzet 1961.

58 Ricolleau 2019, 33–55.

In 1833, King Louis-Philippe declared that he wanted to establish a new national museum at Versailles in order to display "all the national-historical keepsakes".[59] In addition, he intended to dedicate an enormously large gallery to the famous battles of French history.[60] This painted history book, realized through the cooperation of twenty artists and inaugurated in 1837,[61] presents the bellicose events in chronological order, starting with the Battle of Tolbiac in the centre of the north wall (fig. 11).[62] As that conflict had brought about the conversion of King Clovis, ultimately leading to the Christianization of France, it was deemed particularly significant.[63]

Fig. 10: Paris, Panthéon; view from the entrance towards the apse with Anselm Kiefer's paintings La voie sacrée *(at left) and* Ceux de 14 – l'armée noire – celles de 14 *(at right).*

Some decades after the completion of the Gallery of Battles, a decision was made to decorate the Panthéon with mural paintings. By that time, due to the turbulent course of French history, the building had undergone several changes in function. During the nineteenth century, it was used partly as a church and partly as a secular pantheon.[64] The murals were commissioned in 1874 while the building served a religious function.[65] This explains why religious subject matter plays an important role in the decoration.

59 *"tous les souvenirs historiques nationaux"*; Gaehtgens 1984, 62.
60 Ibid., 115.
61 For a schematic representation of the distribution of the individual paintings in the gallery, see Gaehtgens 1984, 398; on its inauguration: ibid., 89.
62 Ibid., 108–109, 122–125.
63 Ibid., 80.
64 Ricolleau 2019, 57–157.
65 Vaisse 1989; Macé de Lépinay 1997, 12–14.

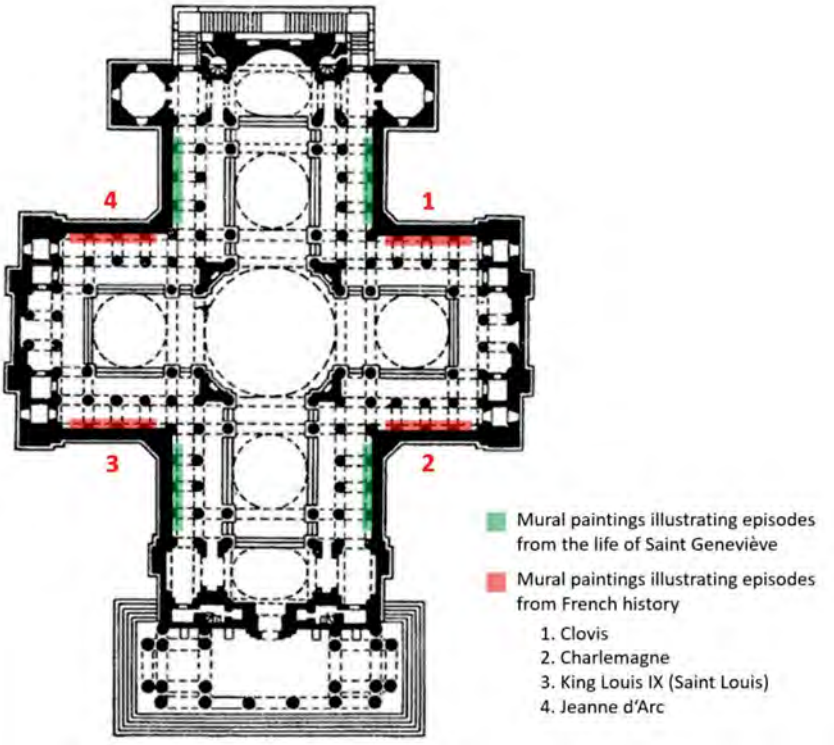
Four monumental paintings illustrating episodes from the life of the patron saint Geneviève are displayed along the main axis of the structure, which is built on a Greek-cross plan. In a somewhat subordinate position, on the walls of the transept, are four murals dedicated to glorious moments in the history of France (fig. 12).[66] Their protagonists are Clovis, Charlemagne, Saint Louis IX, and Joan of Arc, all of whom had already been immortalized in the Gallery of Battles.[67]

Fig. 11: View of the Gallery of Battles at Versailles, with Ary Scheffer's Battle at Tolbiac *at the far end.*

66 For a description of the programme by its author, Abbot Claude Bonnefoy, see Bonnefoy 1878. The printed edition of Bonnefoy's text is not dated, but according to Vaisse it was published in 1878 (Vaisse 1989, 255).

67 Gaehtgens 1984, 122–125 (Clovis), 130–134 (Charlemagne), 148–153 (Louis IX), 162–169 (Joan of Arc).

Fig. 12: Diagram visualizing the location of the nineteenth-century murals in the Panthéon.



The Panthéon's programme reinterprets the national museum at Versailles. The latter has a decidedly secular character; even in Ary Scheffer's *Conversion of Clovis*, there are no supernatural beings to be seen.[68] By contrast, the painting cycle at the Panthéon abounds with angels who symbolize God's protection of the French nation.[69] According to the author of the programme, Abbé Bonnefoy, the murals represent "the religious and national history of France".[70]

While the Gallery of Battles exemplifies an entirely secular conception of national history, Bonnefoy intended to visualize the connection between national and religious history. He wished to show how France had flourished under the benevolent protection of the Trinity and saints like Geneviève. Accordingly, above the paintings of religious history appears a continuous procession of saints from every region of France who protect the country as well as its people and its rulers (fig. 13). As each French visitor can recognize saints from his or her own region of origin, the depicted procession stands for the community of people who form the French nation. This focus on regional saints and the emphasis on divine providence are, in concept, quite close to the Gallery of Maps in the Vatican Palace.

68 See the illustration in Gaehtgens 1984, 122.

69 See the illustrations in Macé de Lépinay 1997.

70 "*l'Histoire religioso-nationale de la France*"; Bonnefoy 1878, 43.

Fig. 13: Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, Encounter of St Geneviève and St Germain; above: Procession of French saints.

Bonnefoy's pictorial programme was by no means the last intervention to expand and modify the patriotic messages of the Panthéon. Over the centuries, monuments continued to be added to and subtracted from the space[71] – most recently when Emmanuel Macron announced his decision to honour the French participants in the First World War by admitting the mortal remains of the writer Maurice Genevoix to the Panthéon.[72] Genevoix's fame rests on the tetralogy *Ceux de 14* (Those of 1914), in which he describes his experiences during the war. Macron declared that, together with Genevoix, all French veterans of World War I would enter the Panthéon symbolically. He stressed that this included the soldiers from the colonies, known as the *armée noire*.[73] Moreover, *ceux de 14* were to be complemented by *celles de 14*,[74] that is, the women who had supported the soldiers.

71 Lebeurre 2000.

72 "Macron annonce l'entrée" 2018.

73 Macron 2020.

74 *Ceux* and *celles* are the male and female forms of the demonstrative pronoun in French – a gendered distinction that cannot be translated into German or English. The idea to include women in the presentation may have originated with Anselm Kiefer, who celebrated female heroines in some of his earlier works: cf. Schmutz 2007; Baqué 2015, 112–143 ("In Praise of Rebellious Women"). In fact, in an interview Kiefer attributed this idea to himself (Duponchelle 2021).

Macron expressly wanted a monument for the whole nation and commissioned Anselm Kiefer to create it.[75]

In November 2020, Kiefer's installation was inaugurated. It consists of two monumental paintings and six vitrines filled with paintings and sculptural objects (fig. 14). Whereas the display cases were the result of the public commission, the German artist added the two large canvases on his own initiative and donated them to the French nation.[76] One of the paintings is inscribed with the title *Ceux de 14 – L'armée noire – celles de 14* (fig. 14, B; see also fig. 10). This reflects Emmanuel Macron's wish to change the character of the Panthéon, conceived no longer simply as a mausoleum for famous men and women but rather as a democratic monument for the whole French nation.

Approximately half of this particular painting is filled by a perspectival view stretching towards the horizon yet barred by wooden structures resembling burnt vines or the long rows of crosses in military cemeteries. At the top of the painting, just in front of its surface, Kiefer affixed a railing from which hang men's and women's garments. They evoke the bodies of the victims.

Although Kiefer's monumental canvas hides the existing painting on the wall behind it (fig. 13), the former arguably echoes the latter. Pierre Puvis de Chavannes's history painting has a similar centralized composition, with diagonals that rise from the corners to the centre of the landscape, but above all the crowning frieze of saints corresponds to Kiefer's empty garments.[77] In a way, the Catholic saints are replaced by the secular victims of war, the martyrs of our times.

Kiefer's six vitrines relate even more obviously to the nineteenth-century murals.[78] Some of the glass cases have transparent backdrops, allowing the paintings to be glimpsed through them (fig. 14, nos 2, 3, 5). They thus form a visual frame that enables us to see the nineteenth-century conception of the nation in a new light.

The vitrines reference the display principles of history museums, where historical objects are often placed in glass cases. However, these works by Kiefer do not glorify the national past – to the contrary. They are interventions that deconstruct the traditional conception of national history as exemplified by the monumental history paintings at Versailles and the Panthéon.

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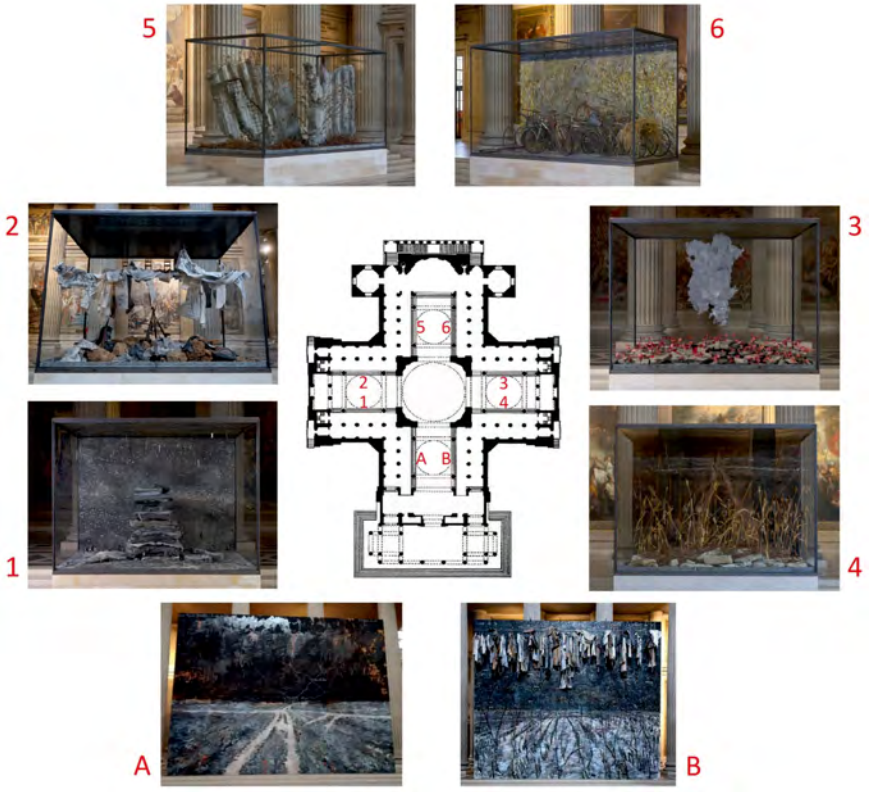
75 Macron's speech at the inauguration ceremony made repeated reference to the "nation" (Macron 2020). To complement Kiefer's work, Pascal Dusapin composed a score that integrates the names of 15,000 men and women who had died in the war. See Dusapin 2021, 37.

76 Cahen-Patron 2020; Lavrador 2020; Pietralunga 2020a; Pietralunga 2020b; Rykner 2020. Despite their enormous size, the support of the paintings is canvas: cf. Bruckner 2021, 8, 15.

77 On Puvis de Chavannes's painting, see Macé de Lépinay 1997, 40–41.

78 For a detailed analysis of the six display cases, their settings, and their relationship with the nineteenth-century murals, see Strunck 2024 (forthcoming).

Fig. 14: Diagram visualizing the location of Anselm Kiefer's works in the Panthéon.



If the Gallery of Battles aimed to celebrate national valour through the depiction of heroic battles, then the nineteenth-century murals at the Panthéon legitimated such battles by claiming that God had ordained them. For instance, in the scenes from the life of Joan of Arc, her heavenward glance, and above all the presence of an angel who hands her a sword, makes amply clear that she follows a course of action dictated by God himself (fig. 15).[79] The display case Kiefer has placed in front of this mural presents weapons, dirty garments, and three empty chairs (fig. 16). As the artist has explained, the chairs signify the Trinity[80] – which is conspicuously absent. In this way, Kiefer questions the strong sense of divine legitimation expressed by the murals.

79 On Lenepveu's murals, see Bonnefoy 1878, 28; Macé de Lépinay 1997, 34–35.

80 "Interview de Anselm Kiefer et de Pascal Dusapin" 2021, 9.

Fig. 15: Jules-Eugène Lenepveu, Scenes from the Life of Joan of Arc.

Fig. 16: Anselm Kiefer, Qu'est-ce que nous sommes, *display case placed in front of Jules-Eugène Lenepveu's Scenes from the Life of Joan of Arc.*

A similar relationship can be perceived between Paul-Joseph Blanc's *Battle of Tolbiac* and the vitrine positioned in front of it (figs. 17, 18). This glass case is filled with red poppies that evoke the wreaths made in remembrance of victims of war.[81] When standing in front of Kiefer's transparent case, one can still see portions of the *Battle of Tolbiac*. However, the main part of the conversion scene is hidden by a large slab of molten lead that

81 See, for instance, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Remembrance_Day#/media/File:Cenotaph_London.jpg, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Remembrance_Day, and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Cenotaph.

hangs down from the ceiling of the case. This element gives Kiefer's work its title, *Émanation*.

Fig. 17 (left): Anselm Kiefer, Émanation, *display case placed in front of Paul-Joseph Blanc's* Battle of Tolbiac, *detail; Fig. 18 (right): Paul-Joseph Blanc, Clovis at the Battle of Tolbiac.*

Emanation is a philosophical and theological term with multiple meanings. On a basic level, it denotes consequences flowing from a certain (often divine) cause.[82] Blanc's mural visualizes a heaven-sent, positive force that helps Clovis triumph: a group of six angels descends and encourages the emperor by presenting him with a sword. Kiefer interprets this 'emanation' in a negative light, however.[83] The relationship between Clovis and the angels is mirrored and yet obscured by the lead slab, which seemingly flows from the heavens. The material can be perceived as a reference to the 'iron age' of war; it comes down like an oppressive rain that threatens to destroy the blossoms.[84] The artist thereby deconstructs the visual argument that the glory of France is driven by God's favour. On the contrary, Kiefer suggests that this kind of nationalist thinking has produced incredible amounts of suffering.

Conclusions

In this essay, I have provided a framework for looking at nineteenth-century national museums. I have focused on three pictorial programmes – from Italy, Britain, and France respectively – in order to discuss different conceptions of the nation. In addition, I have

82 Dörrie 1958; Kremer 1972; Hutter 1995.

83 Kiefer speaks of "*la menace que diffuse peu à peu d'un ciel de plomb*" ("Interview de Anselm Kiefer et de Pascal Dusapin" 2021, 11).

84 'Emanations' and the oppressive force of lead are recurring themes in Kiefer's oeuvre; cf. Arasse 2001, 231–232, 235, 241; "Anselm Kiefer" 2007, 44; Jungk 2020. The ancient myth of the Four Ages of the World, in which the 'iron age' was associated with warfare, was most famously codified by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*, book 1, 89–150.

highlighted the ways in which religion was used to create a sense of national unity and purpose.

My first two case studies demonstrated how the nation was visualized in architectures of display before the emergence of national museums. The third and final case study took as its starting point a nineteenth-century national museum, the Gallery of Battles, and traced the reinterpretation and deconstruction of such nationalist imagery in the twenty-first century.

This process of transformation is highly relevant for the role of national museums in contemporary society. The conference from which this volume results was organized in cooperation with the *Germanisches Nationalmuseum* in Nuremberg (Germanic National Museum), i.e. a national museum faced with the very same challenge: to update and deconstruct traditional conceptions of the nation, or risk losing touch with a twenty-first-century audience. Accordingly, our joint research project "Modellierung von Kulturgeschichte am Beispiel des Germanischen Nationalmuseums: Vermittlungskonzepte für das 21. Jahrhundert" (Shaping Cultural History: The Example of the *Germanisches Nationalmuseum* and Curatorial Lessons for the Twenty-First Century) aimed to analyse curatorial concepts from the past 150 years of this museum's history in order to arrive at innovative ways of presenting our cultural heritage. The papers contained in this volume contribute new insights drawn from other national museums and can help fuel the 'reinvention' of these institutions in a spirit of democracy and cosmopolitanism.

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e/Mediatheque-Pantheon/Interview-d-Anselm-Kiefer-et-de-Pascal-Dusapin-par-Jean-de-Loisy. ("Interview de Anselm Kiefer et de Pascal Dusapin" 2021)

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Part 1: Memory

National Museums in Nineteenth-Century Europe
Between Antagonistic and Cosmopolitan Memory?

Stefan Berger

Museums were major sites for national identity-building in nineteenth-century Europe.[1] The space of the nation in that century was a highly complex one, however. It was really, as Jürgen Osterhammel has pointed out, more a century of empires than of nation-states and, one could say by extension, more a century of nations aspiring to become states.[2] The nation, therefore, was by no means the only reference point for the collections and strategies of museums in this period. In Western Europe, many states had been building empires since the sixteenth century. They were often more dynastic than national, and, with varying success, they attempted to accommodate and adapt the 'new' national ideas that had been spreading like wildfire through Europe since the late eighteenth century, frequently in association with the fervour of the French Revolution of 1789 – something to be very wary of, in the eyes of the dynastic rulers of Europe. As Eugen Weber famously put it for France, the nineteenth century was about "turning peasants into Frenchmen".[3] Such nationalizing strategies from above had to contend with strong regional and local identities across Europe. Similarly, preceding national museums were those that promoted feelings of belonging to one's locality or region. The nation had to be inserted into these existing institutions, or rather, the "small fatherlands"[4] had to be reconfigured as important building blocks of the larger national fatherland. Museums negotiated the complex demands of locality, region, nation, empire, and sometimes also ideas about belonging to larger transnational entities, i.e. in Scandinavia, that of the 'north'[5]; in Eastern Europe, that of the community of all Slavs[6]; or that of the Occident or of Europe.[7]

National museums, in attempting to negotiate these different conceptions of identity, acted as memorial institutions, constructing and promoting a particular notion of

1 Aronsson and Elgenius 2014.
2 Osterhammel 2014.
3 Weber 1976.
4 Green 2001.
5 Sorensen and Stråth 2008.
6 Snyder 1984.
7 Pasture 2015.

the past that upheld the museum's role as mediator of spatial identities. In this chapter, I would like to use the theory of agonistic memory in order to explore to what extent these constructions of nations were based on the three memory regimes identified by theories of agonistic memory, i.e. antagonistic, cosmopolitan, and agonistic memory.[8] Countering a long-held assumption that such constructions were based on a perceived antagonism between the nation and internal and external forces, I will argue that many museums followed a more complex strategy. Indeed, in their displays and their curatorial practices, they constantly oscillated between antagonistic memory strategies and cosmopolitan ones seeking to appeal to universal values that were often linked to ideas about the character and mission of the nation. Largely absent in the nineteenth century, however, were agonistic interventions capable of unsettling dominant constructs of nation and keeping open the horizon of identification with spatial constructions of identity. In the first section, I review the different types of national museums and the corresponding national identities promoted therein. In the second section, I discuss how the museums used both antagonistic and cosmopolitan memory regimes to underpin their respective nationalizing strategies. In the concluding part of the article, I ask how we might explain the absence of agonistic perspectives in nineteenth-century national museums.

National Museums and National Identities

There is a direct correlation between the rise of modern nationalism in the nineteenth century and the creation of national museums. This is particularly notable where nationalizing empire-states put their full weight behind the establishment of such museums. A good example is the *Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum* (Hungarian National History Museum) in Budapest, founded in 1802. After 1867, within the Habsburg Empire, the Hungarian half of the dual monarchy actively promoted policies of the Magyarization of its part of the empire. Attempts to fashion a 'greater' Hungary led to the creation of many institutions that could underpin this policy aim, and the national museum was part and parcel of this development.[9] As the Danish antiquarian Rasmus Nyerup put it, the national museum should be seen as "an asylum for slowly disappearing ancient national monuments […] [and] a temple for the remains of the spirit, language, art and power of our past, where every patriot can study the successive advances of the nation's culture and customs".[10] Following this logic, it is not surprising that, almost everywhere, the archaeological museum became the archetypal such institution of the nineteenth century.[11] In Europe this development was, however, particularly strong in Italy and Greece, where powerful national movements sought to connect their ambitions for an independent nation-state with the proud memory of ancient cultures.[12]

8 Cento Bull and Hansen 2016.
9 Rampley, Prokopovych, and Veszeprémi 2021.
10 Cited in Bligaard 2000, 288.
11 Díaz-Andreu 2007.
12 Erskine 2012.

In the German lands, where likewise national movements sought to create a nation-state out of a disparate aggregate of highly independent states and statelets, the *Germanisches Nationalmuseum* (Germanic National Museum) in Nuremberg, founded in 1852, became a political statement popularizing the notion of nationalization in the German lands.[13] Many national museums combined an antiquarian concern with collecting remnants from an allegedly national past with erudition and patriotic sentiment. In this way, they contributed to the forging of historicizing master narratives across Europe.[14]

Sometimes museums also became sites for politics. The Hungarian National History Museum, for example, witnessed the Revolutions of 1848 beginning on its steps, and the upper house of the Hungarian parliament held its sessions at the museum. If national museums came to underpin demands for statehood, the question often was on what historical grounds to rest such demands, especially in cases where, in lieu of the continuation of an existing state, an alleged national territory became integrated into another state (empire). In this situation, nationalizing master narratives tended to fall back on notions of the 'people', which retained the characteristics of nationhood despite any perceived 'foreign yoke' that might prevent the building of the nation-state.[15] For example, in Ireland, Norway, Finland, and Bulgaria the most important national museums were folk museums, documenting customs linked to the retention of an allegedly unchanging national character and presenting – including through the display of folk costumes – culture in endless local and regional varieties that were nevertheless seen as part of a larger whole.[16]

Continuity was key for all national museums. This includes national art museums. Indeed, the nationalization of art continues apace throughout the nineteenth century, neatly delineating art into Germanic, Spanish, Italian, French, etc. As has been pointed out, such nationalization ignored the many parallels and connections that were all too visible among different 'national' schools.[17] The *Alte Nationalgalerie* (Old National Gallery) in Berlin bore the inscription on its portico, "To German art, 1871", thereby directly referring to art's task of contributing to the national unification of the country in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871.[18] In the sphere of the national museum, empire-nations were likely to create a landscape that reflected their imperial ambitions. By an act of parliament, the British Museum in London, founded in 1753, collected and displayed artefacts not just from the multinational state of the United Kingdom but also from across its colonies.[19]

The strong connection between warfare and nation-building was reflected in the establishment of national war museums in many European nation-states. [▸ Beck] Nine-

13 Crane 2000; Wolbring 2009.

14 Berger with Conrad 2015.

15 On Ireland, see Ó Giolláin 2000, 60.

16 Dewhurst and MacDowell 1981.

17 The Prado Museum in Madrid held a temporary exhibition on Dutch and Spanish paintings aimed at revealing how superficial the division of art into national schools is and indeed how close a relationship existed among artists, often even transcending national borders. See the catalogue for the exhibition, entitled "Velazques, Rembrandt, Vermeer: Parallel Visions" 2019.

18 "*Der deutschen Kunst MDCCCLXXI*". Forster-Hahn 1994.

19 Caygill 1981.

teenth-century unification nationalisms, like the German or the Italian ones, could not be achieved without warfare; colonial warfare was vital to the creation of empire-states. Wars between empire-nations resulted in new power constellations, rendering the belligerents either 'great' or in decline. Wars to establish nation-states from territories previously incorporated into empires were also common. As we can see, there is no shortage of wars variously pertaining to forms of nation-building.[20]

A wide range of other museum types that boomed in the nineteenth century also had strong connections to nation-building exercises. Technical museums, for instance, often had the ambition to display and promote the scientific and technical achievements of the nation and thereby to strengthen feelings of national pride in their visitors. The *Deutsche Museum von Meisterwerken der Naturwissenschaft und Technik* (German Museum of Masterpieces of Science and Technology), founded in Munich in 1903, is a good example.[21] Technology and science epitomized the modern nation, whereas nature and landscape stood for the eternal nation.

Natural history museums became popular venues for celebrating national landscapes and flora and fauna, advocating the uniqueness of the physical features of the nation.[22] The manifestation of the nationalizing agendas of the nineteenth century in various types of museums was actualized from above and below – both by states and by national movements, usually in conjunction with each other. In manifold combinations, they linked notions of national history to memory and, through memory, forged powerful national identities.

Memory Regimes for National Museums

What kind of memory regimes were established through national museums? We can differentiate among three types of memory regimes: antagonistic, cosmopolitan, and agonistic.[23] Antagonistic memory is based on a clear differentiation between friend and enemy. Set within such a stark binary construction, it is entirely monologic and monoperspectival, directed towards the 'insider' (friend) and against the 'outsider' (enemy). Mobilizing the passions of belonging (in our case, to the nation), for the insider antagonistic memory equals nationalist memory.

Cosmopolitan memory, by contrast, is rooted in the presumption of shared universal values, such as human rights and freedom of speech. It also adheres to strong binaries, namely, between various totalitarianisms that would threaten these values, on the one hand, and a liberal democracy that defends them, on the other. Unlike antagonistic forms of memory, it is, however, multi-perspectival and dialogic. In Habermasian fashion, it advocates a power-free dialogue between different positions within a liberal-democratic

20 Berger 2021.

21 Mayr 1990.

22 Köstering 2005.

23 Cento Bull, Hansen, and Colom González 2021. Cento Bull and Hansen developed the theory of agonistic memory on the basis of Mouffe 2013 and her notion of 'agonistic politics', see Cento Bull and Hansen 2016.

framework – often referred to as 'deliberative democracy' – out of which emerges a consensus.[24] Cosmopolitan memory is largely directed towards the victims of various totalitarianisms. Indeed, mobilizing passions for the victims of totalitarianism is one way of strengthening the universal values championed by this memory regime.

In contrast to the antagonistic and cosmopolitan frameworks, agonistic memory seeks to overcome all binary constructions and amounts to a radical historicization. Equally interested in the memory of victims, perpetrators, and bystanders, it seeks to arrive at a historical understanding of these respective positionalities. Such a radical multi-perspectivity is not geared towards closing political debates through consensus. Rather, it politicizes memory by pointing to unbridgeable political differences that can only be decided within a liberal democratic context. Both agonistic and cosmopolitan memory share their commitment to the liberal-democratic process, wherein different political positions must accept one another as adversaries rather than as antagonistic enemies, thus allowing for the functions of multi-perspectivity. Rather than aiming for closure, the debates within agonistic memory frameworks are open-ended. Memory conflicts are understood as political conflicts. Largely committed to solidarity, social justice, and equality, agonistic forms of memory seek to activate passions that coincide with these values.

Unsurprisingly, antagonistic forms of memory were prevalent in nineteenth-century national museums, as evident in constructions of 'others' against which the nation defined itself. That 'other' could be internal to the nation (e.g. socialists, Jews, regionalists, etc.) or external (e.g. other nations, empires, transnational entities, etc.) and could shift over time. Thus, for example, the *Kansallismuseo* (Finnish National Museum) in Helsinki, founded in 1916, underwent a gradual move from an anti-Swedish bias in the first half of the nineteenth century to an anti-Russian bias by the end of the nineteenth century.[25] In another case, the Hungarian National History Museum reflected an emphatic orientation against the Habsburg Empire, while at the same time celebrating its own sub-empire, at the heart of which stood the Hungarian nation.[26] The Bulgarian *Naroden muzei* (People's Museum) in Sofia, opened in 1905, constructed as its main enemy the Ottoman Empire, which was seen as having oppressed the Bulgarian nation for centuries. As in this instance, such antagonistic memories were often strong forces within nationalist movements. Such movements from below came to support constructs of antagonistic memory from above, including in and through museums.[27]

The same is true for the powerful individuals who often stood behind the creation of museums. Mihalache Ghica, for example, amassed a huge collection of national antiquities in Romania and opened a private museum in 1834. Along with its promotion of antagonistic national memory, the institution was taken over by the state in 1864, forming the foundation of the *Muzeul Naţional de Antichităţi* (National Museum of Antiquities).[28]

24 Lafont 2020.
25 Pettersson 2011.
26 Apor 2011.
27 Vukov 2011.
28 Bădică 2011.

Intriguingly, we also find in the nineteenth century a number of unfulfilled aspirations to become a nation-state. Whereas some, like Scotland, still today – at least in part – struggle to achieve that ambition, others, such as Bavaria, have forgotten such desires, which only remain visible in the designation of certain institutions, including museums, as 'national'. [▸ Breward] The *Bayerisches Nationalmuseum* (Bavarian National Museum) in Munich, founded in 1855, was strongly anti-Prussian before 1866. However, first under Prussian occupation following the German civil war of 1866, and later within the newly founded German Empire, it toned down that antagonism and found a role for Bavaria – albeit sometimes still not quite a comfortable one – in the greater German nation-state that came into being in 1871.[29] [▸ Beuing, Weniger]

Overall, the 'regional' museum landscape in the German Empire was very effectively nationalized, and the museums that had once championed Bavarian, Badenese, Prussian, Hamburger, etc., identities now located these comfortably within a grander national historical narrative that legitimated the unification. In fact, the regional museums strengthened the conception of the regions as building blocks of the nation, and reciprocally, national museums portrayed the variety of the regions as enriching the national unity. The German Empire witnessed a veritable boom in museums, and many of these newly founded institutions promoted just this cosmopolitan and multi-perspectival notion of a unified nation based on a harmonious multitude of regional differences.[30]

In Italy, the nationalization process was not quite so effective. After the unification of Italy, an endless number of *musei nazionali* (national museums) sprang up across the country. However, looking at those in greater detail, we observe that most had been local or regional museums and were only reclassified as national museums. [▸ Marini Clarelli] Even more crucially, they often continued to put forth a strong regionalist narrative that was difficult to integrate with a national master narrative. The antagonism between region and nation was thus retained to a far greater degree in Italy than was the case in the German Empire before 1914.[31]

If many German museums, in their attempts to forge a powerful unity between regional and national memory, employed cosmopolitan memory strategies as a means of overcoming previous antagonisms, similar attempts to use cosmopolitan memory in the service of the nationalizing state can be observed elsewhere. Archaeological museums certainly played an important role in uniting discrete parts of the nation, bringing separate ethnic and cultural identities into a larger unitary framework. In addition, many regional history museums throughout Europe championed cosmopolitan multi-perspectivity in order to facilitate the integration of different spatial perspectives, both sub- and transnational, into their nationalizing agendas. Time and again this led to strong forms of cooperation between regional and national museums, as Nikolai Vukov has demonstrated for Bulgaria.[32]

Furthermore, all those national movements that sought to construct the nation against an existing empire could appeal to cosmopolitan forms of memory as they

29 Glaser 1992.

30 Hein 2009, 155.

31 De Caro 2003.

32 Vukov 2011.

narrated the nation's story as one of victimhood in the face of the imperial oppressor. Indeed, the victim orientation of cosmopolitanism could be employed in service of those national movements. This worked particularly well in cases where the memory of oppression and victimhood was not too antagonistic. Thus, for example, the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff was established on notions of civic pride that sought to write the cultural nation of Wales into a British liberal cosmopolitanism.[33] Likewise, the Cambrian Archaeological Association, founded in 1846, employed cosmopolitan memory to incorporate Wales into a multinational United Kingdom while celebrating within this framework the distinctiveness of Welsh culture.[34] Cosmopolitanism bolstered not only those national ambitions directed against empire but also those of empire-nations. National museums displaying the art of the world, such as the *Musée du Louvre* (Louvre Museum), simultaneously exhibited their cosmopolitan values and their imperial ambitions.[35] Similar forms of imperial cosmopolitanism could be found in natural history museums, such as the *Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales* (Royal Cabinet of Natural History) in Madrid, founded in 1771, which depicted the natural history of Spain as well as of its empire in various corners of the world.[36]

Last but not least, newly founded nation-states could also marshal cosmopolitan forms of memory to inscribe, via universal values and ideals, their specific nation into a cosmopolitan canon. Thus, for example, the *Nasjonalgalleriet* (National Gallery) in Norway decided around 1850 to focus its collecting strategy on national art in a desire to put Norway on the map of international art, attaching the nation to universal values within the fine arts.[37] Even colonial museums that appealed to universal civilizing ambitions could operate within cosmopolitan memory frameworks. The *Museum voor Midden-Afrika / Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale* (Royal Museum for Central Africa), also known as the *Museum van Belgisch Congo / Musée du Congo Belge* (Museum of the Belgian Congo), founded in Tervuren in 1910, was underpinned by this type of deeply racist cosmopolitanism invoking alleged universal civilizational values.[38] Cosmopolitan universalism was deeply implicated in the justification of colonialism, imperialism, and racism, a fact that already indicates the ahistoricity and one-sidedness of its identification with human rights and liberties. A final example of the mobilization of cosmopolitanism in nineteenth-century museums can be found in the Habsburg Empire. In its German-speaking parts, this empire was barred from nationalizing itself through the exclusion of Austria from the German nation in 1866. Many museums in the German-dominated part of the empire opted for a celebration of diversity and difference. The art and natural history museums located on the *Ringstrasse* in Vienna emphasized such diversity both within the Habsburg Empire and within a wider European history.[39] Even the *Heeresmuseum* (Army Museum), opened in 1891, depicted the military successes of the Habsburgs

33 Morgan 2007.
34 Edwards and Gould 2013.
35 McClellan 1994.
36 Kamen 2008.
37 Amundsen 2011.
38 Cornelis 2000.
39 Kriller 2000.

not as a national storyline but as a European one – thus superseding nationalist principles in favour of a continental outlook.[40] [▸ Beck] If cosmopolitanism was visible in the storylines of nineteenth-century national museums, it was also written into the very fabric of these institutions, including into the bricks and stones of the buildings that housed them. The nineteenth-century museum world was a deeply transnational one, championing universal models. Thus, for much of the nineteenth century, the French national museum was widely seen as an exemplar for all of Europe.[41] The architectural styles in which museums were built were deeply transnational, spanning from classicism to romanticism to historicism. Museum pioneers, like Artur Hazelius, who put his stamp on the *Nordiska museet* (Nordic Museum) in Stockholm, became influential transnational figures.[42] [▸ Olin]

Why is There No Space for Agonism in Nineteenth-Century National Museums?

I have argued in this chapter that nineteenth-century national museums were strongly influenced by antagonistic memory regimes, clearly delineating 'us' versus 'them' ideas of belonging; such notions aided the creation national identities that defined themselves contra an enemy.[43] What is a bit more surprising than this predictable result is the fact that many national museums adhered to cosmopolitan memory regimes. This had much to do with the complicated ways in which the nation had to be negotiated with a range of other spatial identities, such as local, regional, imperial, and transnational identities. Empire-nations, or "nationalizing empires",[44] were more likely to adopt a mixture of antagonistic and cosmopolitan memory regimes in order to underpin their specific governmentalisms. Similarly, where nations had to be built on older regional and local identities, the negotiations of those diversities often led to the adoption of cosmopolitan memory strategies that could integrate such diversity better than any other memory regime. However, the cosmopolitanism that we detected in many nineteenth-century national museums was sometimes connected to racism and constructions of national superiority and of hierarchies, and this reveals a problematic underbelly of cosmopolitanism that runs contrary to its adherence to values of human rights and liberal democracy.

If we ask the question why it is so rare to identify agonistic interventions in nineteenth-century national museums, one explanation lies in the absence of powerful civil actors that shared the normative vision of agonistic memory. Of course, we see the formation of a strong labour movement in various parts of Europe, jointly committed to solidarity, social justice, and greater equality – yet, this effort remained oppositional in virtually all European countries before 1914 and, therefore, exerted little influence on the world of museums. It did, however, create an agonistic counterculture capable

40 Rauchensteiner 1997.
41 Sherman 1989.
42 Bäckström 2011.
43 Knell, Aronsson, and Amundsen 2010.
44 Berger and Miller 2015.

of influencing national museums in the twentieth century, but that story falls beyond the scope of the present article. Nineteenth-century forms of civil mobilization that did help shape national museums were nationalist in character: at best, their antagonisms could be inflected by cosmopolitan memory, whereas agonism would have necessitated a willingness to historicize their own ambitions in ways that kept open the end result of their endeavours. For nationalist memory activists, that was one step too far.[45] Hence, we can tentatively suggest that the development of agonistic memory in national museums could only happen with the emergence of social actors who, in a democratizing framework, had the room and authority to influence the national master narratives staged in such museums. An acceptance of the possibility of constructing the nation differently was the minimum precondition for the emergence of agonistic perspectives. Such self-reflexivity entailed a move away from identity and towards 'identification'.[46] Only further studies into the relationship among different memory regimes in the context of twentieth-century national museums will reveal whether this hypothesis is correct.

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45 On the concept of memory activism, see Gutman and Wüstenberg 2022.

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History in the Dutch National Museums 1800–1900[1]

Ellinoor Bergvelt

The premise of the 2022 conference at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg was that every European country in the nineteenth century had a government that wished to form a (cultural) nation, for which purpose objects were displayed in national museums. With these objects a national narrative was told, intended to forge a national identity and thus a (cultural) nation. In the Netherlands, however, things were different.[2]

First, there was no museum of national history. There still is none.[3] During the Batavian Republic (1800–1806) a *Nationale Konst-Gallerij* (National Art Gallery) was established in The Hague, where in addition to the rooms for fine arts there were others (and adjacent cabinets) dedicated to the history of the country. In 1808 the collection of that gallery was moved to Amsterdam, and in 1817 it was renamed *'s Rijks Museum* (National Museum); a new building to house this collection was erected at the end of the century. That building housed several further museums, among them the *Nederlandsch Museum voor Geschiedenis en Kunst* (Netherlands Museum of History and Art). Its collection also came from The Hague, where it had opened in 1875. But, as the name implies, it was not really a historical museum: part of it was devoted to arts and crafts from the past.

Second, Dutch rulers of the nineteenth century, in the few cases where they formulated ideas about museums or even developed policies for them, were more interested in art than in history. Until 1830 considerably more money was paid for pictures deemed to

1 Many thanks to Barbara Laan, Erik Schmitz (Stadsarchief, Amsterdam), and Lieske Tibbe.

2 This article is based on my book (in Dutch) about the history of the two national Dutch art museums in the nineteenth century – the *Rijksmuseum* in Amsterdam and the *Mauritshuis* in The Hague – with an emphasis on the acquisition of pictures: see Bergvelt 1998, see also the later articles (in English): Bergvelt 2010, 2012, 2013, and 2018.

3 Despite an initiative by the Dutch House of Representatives in 2006 to create a museum of national history. In fact, an architect had already been at work on the museum, which was supposed to be in Arnhem, and a group of people had been hired to make further preparations. Despite work on the project from 2008 to 2011, the plan failed. See Elshout 2016, 771–817. Meijers 2009, 53, sees the survival of regionalism as an important factor in resistance to the plan. More recently, in December 2021, the plan for a museum of national history was again put forward, this time in the coalition agreement of the Fourth Rutte Cabinet. However, given the history, as well as the current crisis situation, it seems unlikely that it will ever be realized.

be of artistic value than for those with historical significance.[4] However, in the middle of the century almost no money was spent on Dutch art and culture, to the extent that the time between 1830 and 1870 was justly characterized – by the Amsterdam alderman Emanuel Boekman in his dissertation of 1939, which gives an overview of Dutch cultural policy – as the era of national indifference (*nationale onverschilligheid*).[5]

Finally, in the nineteenth century there was no Dutch national museum that told a chronological or thematic story of Dutch history: the historic objects were presented at best decoratively; often, objects related to a single person were displayed separately.[6] In a case that is exceptional for the early years of the Dutch national museums, at the National Art Gallery in The Hague the curator Jan Waldorp provided guided tours, during which he seems to have told a coherent story in accordance with the ideals of the Batavian Republic, forming an object-based narrative across different rooms.[7]

Fig. 1: Jan Asselijn, The Threatened Swan, ca 1650, oil on canvas, 144 × 171 cm.

4 See Bergvelt 1998. That seems to be contradicted, at least for the later period, by Laan 2014–2016, 71 and 93 (note 7), where the Netherlands Museum of History and Art is discussed.

5 Boekman 1939, 15–35.

6 The situation seems to have been different at the Netherlands Museum of History and Art in The Hague: see below.

7 Grijzenhout 1984, 10–11; Bergvelt 1998, 34–54; and Bergvelt 2012, 118–121.

To explain what was happening in Dutch museums in the nineteenth century in the matter of history (and nation-building), I will discuss three objects and the changes they underwent during their many relocations and rearrangements in that century. The first is a seventeenth-century painting by Jan Asselijn, *The Threatened Swan* (fig. 1). My second case study is an eighteenth-century cannon taken in 1765 from the island of Ceylon, now better known as Sri Lanka (fig. 2). The third is a seventeenth-century painting by Ferdinand Bol, *The Portrait of Michiel de Ruyter*, the most famous of Dutch seventeenth-century admirals (fig. 3). This portrait is included because the eighteenth-century cannon from Sri Lanka was later mistakenly thought to have belonged to or been associated with De Ruyter.

Fig. 2: Cannon, Sri Lanka, before 1745, bronze, silver, gold, rubies, and wood, ca 54 (h.) × ca 181 (w.) × ca 77 (d.) × ca 98 (l.) × ca 43 (diam.) cm.

Fig. 3: Ferdinand Bol, Michiel de Ruyter as Lieutenant-Admiral, 1667, oil on canvas, 157 × 138 cm.

The Batavian Republic (1795–1806)

The French armies and the Dutch so-called Patriots, who were opponents of the stadtholders, ended the *ancien régime* of the Dutch Republic of the Seven United Provinces in 1795. This brought to a close the federation of provinces, in which cultural life had been locally organized – as evidenced by city drawing academies, for example. Before 1795, no national cultural institution existed under the aegis of the stadtholder or the States General. Now a centrally organized administration arose with national institutions, such as a national library (1798) and a national art museum (1800). A royal academy was not established in Amsterdam until 1822. The House of Orange-Nassau, from which the stadtholders had been chosen in the previous centuries, fled to England, with their jewels, money, and some of their collections, but they left their best pictures in The Hague, along with very important natural history collections. These holdings were taken by the French to Paris; some of the pictures are still in the Louvre and other French museums, the natural history collections are still in the *Muséum national d'histoire naturelle* (French

National Museum of Natural History). In the Netherlands, all the possessions of the House of Orange were nationalized. What had been left behind in the other palaces began to be sold. After a while, however, minister of finance Alexander Gogel realized that, from an international perspective, it might come across as barbaric to sell the cultural heritage of the House of Orange. Moreover, the objects could be used to represent the aims of the Batavian Republic, which shared with its sister, the French Republic, the values of *liberté, égalité et fraternité*. It was Gogel who, in 1798, proposed to found a national museum. Gogel's first aim was to raise the moral standard of the Dutch public. That objective fits in general with the subject of nation-building: works of art with images of esteemed historical events or persons could indeed serve this purpose. Gogel, however, did not mention anything about offering a complete overview of Dutch history in the proposed museum. His other two objectives had to do with the art that would be on view.[8]

The French had taken with them to Paris the pictures and the natural history collections of the former stadtholder, who was their real enemy in the Dutch Low Countries. But there were other, historical, parts of his collection that they did not want or deemed unimportant. Whatever the reason, in 1795 the so-called *Vaderlandsche gedenkstukken* (reminders of the Fatherland), also referred to as *nationale of historische relieken* (national or historical relics), were handed over by the French to the States General in an official ceremony (fig. 4). Among these national relics were some weapons that had been taken from Sri Lanka in 1765 and presented to the stadtholder.[9]

8 Second, Gogel sought to spread good taste by means of works of art, both from home and abroad, and thereby raise the level of civilization of the general public. Third, contemporary artists could study the work of their predecessors in the museum in order to improve their own work. This, it was believed, would in turn benefit the country's economy, see Bergvelt 1998, 31; Grijzenhout 1984.

9 See the recent report on the cannon from Sri Lanka: Schrikker and Boogaart 2022a. Until now, at least in Van Thiel 1981, this object, along with the golden sabre (inv. no. NG-NM-560) and silver sabre (inv. no. NG-NM-7112) from that same island, were thought to have belonged to the *Vaderlandsche gedenkstukken*. However, in the recent reports (Schrikker and Boogaart 2022b-c) a different provenance is given, without taking into account Van Thiel 1981. Recently, on 6 July 2023, the State Secretary of Culture decided to return the objects to Sri Lanka, see https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documents/kamerstuks/2023/07/06/tegengave-van-cultuurgoederen- to-indonesia-and-sri-lanka. On December 5, 2023, the objects were transferred: they were on display at an exhibition at the National Museum in Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka.

Fig. 4: Reinier Vinkeles, Return by the French of Historical Items from the Stadtholder's Collection to the States General, 1795, published in 1803, etching and engraving.

Thus the end of the eighteenth century saw the beginnings of a national collection, consisting of these national relics and the many paintings left behind in palaces. These were mainly portraits of admirals, generals, and members of the House of Orange-Nassau. There were also quite a few paintings with still lifes or animal subjects, as was usual in palaces used for hunting. In any case, reminders of the Orange family were prevalent. This was further emphasized when the first Dutch national museum, the National Art Gallery, opened on 31 May 1800 in the west wing of *Huis ten Bosch* (House in the Wood) near The Hague. In the centre of this palace was the *Oranjezaal* (Orange Room), dedicated to the memory of the seventeenth-century Stadtholder Frederik Hendrik. Waldorp's tour ended in the *Oranjezaal*, a masterpiece of Dutch seventeenth-century art, to which various Dutch and Flemish painters had contributed.[10] It was somewhat ironic that the main part of the Batavian museum was devoted to one of the protagonists of the *ancien régime*.

Since the French troops had taken the stadtholders' most beautiful pictures to Paris, the House in the Wood could only display the leftovers of their collection. Nevertheless, initially the national museum was dominated by the history of the House of Orange.

Although the Batavian Republic was in precarious financial condition (it had to pay millions of guilders to France), it attempted to balance the contents of the museum by purchasing portraits of opponents of the House of Orange. This was apparent from the very first purchase for the National Art Gallery, in 1800: *The Threatened Swan* by Jan Asselijn (see fig. 1). This painting was at the time thought to be an allegorical depiction of the Grand Pensionary Johan de Witt: since *wit(t)* means 'white' in Dutch, the link between De Witt and the swan was quickly made. An outspoken enemy of the House of Orange, De Witt had in 1653 become the most powerful man in the Dutch Republic during the first stadtholder-less era (1650–1672), when the House of Orange-Nassau was not in power. The formidable swan in the painting defends its nest, and the egg therein, against a dog that may be barking. To make the message clear, inscriptions were incorporated reading "the Grand Pensionary" (beneath the swan), "Holland" (on the egg), and "the enemy of the state" (above the dog).[11] There was disagreement as to whether this 'enemy' was England or Orange, or perhaps both. Asselijn probably conceived the painting only as an animal picture. He could not have known that Johan de Witt would become Grand Pensionary, given that he died a year before De Witt took office. It later turned out that the inscriptions had been added in the eighteenth century.[12]

This first acquisition for the National Art Gallery was rather cheap, only 100 guilders. In general, more was paid for paintings acquired for artistic reasons, such as *The Hippopotamus Hunt* by Rubens (now a copy after Rubens) for 3,300 guilders and *The Beheading of John the Baptist* by Rembrandt (now attributed to Carel Fabritius) for 775 guilders.[13] In

10 See http://oranjezaal.rkdmonographs.nl/ (first published in 2015).

11 The inscriptions read: "*DE RAAD-PENSIONARIS*"; "*HOLLAND*"; and "*DE VIAND VAN DE STAAT*".

12 Van Thiel 1981, 173. According to him, the words were added during the so-called *Wittenoorlog* (Witt's War). This fierce battle of pamphlets in 1757 counted more than seventy titles. At stake was the significance of Johan de Witt for the Republic of the Seven United Provinces. Two parties were diametrically opposed – Orangists versus what was then called the Loevestein faction.

13 Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. SK-A-600 (copy after Rubens; burned in 1942), see Bergvelt 1998, 395 (*1804–16); Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. SK-A-91 ("Rembrandt"), see Bergvelt 1998, 394 (*1801–7).

the end, 129 paintings were acquired in the Batavian period, for which a total of 64,000 guilders was paid. This included roughly equal numbers of paintings deemed important for historic as for artistic reasons.[14]

We are fairly well informed about the objects in the collection and how they were displayed. Waldorp drew plans of the walls in the winter of 1800/1801, writing on them, in picture frames, the names of the artists and the titles of the paintings. In 1801, the director of the museum, Cornelis Sebille Roos, compiled a catalogue in manuscript in the collection that was not published until 1909.[15] In 1981 the art historian Pieter J. J. van Thiel used Waldorp's wall plans and Roos's catalogue as a basis to identify the 225 paintings and other objects that were present at the time, most of which have ended up in the *Rijksmuseum*; some are in the *Mauritshuis*, while others are missing.[16]

Waldorp's drawings show that while the National Art Gallery had three rooms as well as some cabinets devoted to art, two rooms were dedicated to Dutch history. In the first history room and cabinet hung Asselijn's *Threatened Swan*, next to portraits of admirals, members of the House of Orange-Nassau, and seascapes. Curiously, we do know that some years later, in 1804, Waldorp moved *The Threatened Swan* from the history display to one of the fine-arts rooms, placing it alongside the other pictures of animals.[17] It seems he thought Asselijn's painting had been out of place in the former room, which mainly contained portraits, including Bol's depiction of De Ruyter (fig. 3).[18]

The Monument Room was the second room dedicated to Dutch history. This is where the 'national relics', including pieces from Sri Lanka, were displayed. The Dutch had seized the splendid cannon (fig. 2) and other weapons as booty during a military campaign in 1765, when the palace of the king of Kandy in Sri Lanka was captured. They were presented to Stadtholder William V (r. 1751–1806) for his cabinet of curiosities in The Hague. In Roos's catalogue of 1801, however, the cannon was recorded as a seventeenth-century object – as "present from the emperor of Tunis to the state, conveyed by Michiel de Ruyter"[19] and assumed a relationship with De Ruyter, the Dutch hero of the seventeenth century.

Despite the purchases made during the Batavian Republic, it was by no means possible to present an overview of Dutch history in the two historic rooms of the National Art Gallery. It seems this was not the aim, as is apparent for instance from the placement of the portrait of De Ruyter in the first room and the display of the cannon that had supposedly belonged to him in the Monument Room. Nevertheless, during Waldorp's tour the visitor would have received a clear message concerning the commendable bravery of all

14 Grijzenhout 1984, 12 and 43 (note 56).

15 Moes and Van Biema 1909, 47–53.

16 Van Thiel 1981, 180–223.

17 This can be deduced from the list that Waldorp made in 1804. There he maintained the interpretation of the swan as Johan de Witt: Bergvelt 1998, 43 and 297 (note 91).

18 Of the six official portraits of De Ruyter that Bol made in 1667 for the Dutch Admiralties, four survive. Two were in the national collection during the Batavian period: in 1799 one came from Amsterdam, and another arrived from Rotterdam in 1800. They seem to have disappeared. The one that is still in the *Rijksmuseum* arrived in 1808 from Middelburg. On the several versions see Van Thiel 1981, 193, no. 95.

19 Moes and Van Biema 1909, 53, no. 229.

those seventeenth-century admirals who ruled the seas. The Oranges had contributed to the fight against Spain, and one of them had been not only stadtholder but also king of England. The Netherlands had been a very important European power.

From Kingdom of Holland (1806–1810) to Part of the French Empire (1810–1813)

A complete change followed during the reign of Louis Napoleon (r. 1806–1810), who was made king of Holland in 1806 by his brother Napoleon, the emperor of France. Because Napoleon was dissatisfied with Louis for identifying too much with his subjects, he recalled him in 1810 and annexed Holland to France (1810–1813). Louis Napoleon had chosen Amsterdam as his capital and had moved part of the national collection there from The Hague. He turned the former town hall into his royal palace, and in 1808 the national collection was installed there, forming his Royal Museum. Louis transformed it into a true art museum by purchasing two major collections of paintings from the Dutch Golden Age for more than 200,000 guilders, thus spending much more than the Batavian Republic had.[20] He wanted to show himself to be a real Dutchman, hence his emphasis on Dutch art in the Royal Museum. Although Louis Napoleon stated that Dutch history was important and that material related to it should be collected, this attitude is not apparent from the purchases for the museum.[21] In addition to Dutch works, emphasis was placed on the city of Amsterdam, since the Royal Museum was located in the former town hall. The king ordered that the seven most important pictures of the city be shown in his museum. Amsterdam had, like the other main Dutch cities, acquired works of art that had been expropriated from churches and monasteries at the end of the sixteenth century when the Netherlands converted to Protestantism. The cities also became repositories of the possessions of the militia and guilds when those were abolished in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. That is how Rembrandt's *Night Watch* and *Syndics of the Drapers´ Guild* came into the possession of Amsterdam.[22] These paintings have been in the national collection since the time of Louis Napoleon, although still in the form of a loan from the city.

The paintings *The Threatened Swan* and *Portrait of Michiel de Ruyter*, along with the national relics, were brought from The Hague to the Royal Museum, located on the third floor of the Royal Palace in one large room and four smaller ones. The organization of this space was described in 1810 by Cornelis Apostool, who had been made director of the Royal Museum in 1808:

> The great salon is entirely decorated with historic works, most of them concerning the history of the country and depicting several battles, memorable events, portraits of

20 On the acquisitions for the national art collection during the reign of Louis Napoleon see Bergvelt 1998, 68–77, 303–305 (notes 84–137), 396–400 (nos *1806/1–*1806/6; *1807/1–*1807/3; *1808/1–*1808/90; *1809/1–*1809/146; and *1810/1–*1810/2).

21 Bergvelt 1998, 70 and 390 (appendix XIIc): of the 247 paintings acquired under Louis Napoleon, there are 29 whose subjects could be seen as related to national history.

22 Seven paintings from Haarlem's municipal property had already been sold to the national government and placed in the National Art Gallery, see Meijers 2009, 46–48.

> famous men, views, antiquities and curiosities, comprising 199 paintings, of which the seven most remarkable belong to the city of Amsterdam.
>
> In the other apartments the rest of the history paintings are displayed of which there are 71, and 86 genre paintings, 95 landscape paintings, 16 marine paintings, 33 dead game, flower and fruit paintings, and 52 modern paintings, or by masters who are still alive: the total number of pictures comes to 552.[23]

It is questionable whether *The Threatened Swan* or the Portrait of Michiel de Ruyter would have made any impression among these hundreds of paintings. There was no guided tour to bring order to the chaos. Interestingly, in Apostool's alphabetically organized catalogue, published in 1809, *The Threatened Swan* is still characterized as an allegory about Johan de Witt, and it remained so until the beginning of the twentieth century. In this catalogue, the cannon from Sri Lanka is listed under "Antiquities and Curiosities", where it is said to have been gifted – though it does not say by whom – to Michiel de Ruyter rather than the state.[24] Apostool states in his 1810 description that the "Antiquities and Curiosities" were located in the large room. However, since his catalogue is organized not by room – as Roos's had been – but alphabetically, we have no idea whether the cannon was in the same room as Bol's portrait of De Ruyter.

With the departure of Louis Napoleon in 1810 the Netherlands became part of the French Empire. The museum went through dark times. The staff were no longer paid. One can't help suspecting that they didn't protest because they were afraid that this would attract attention, and that the French might decide to transport the Dutch national collection to Paris to join the imperial collection in the Louvre.

After the initial impression of chaos, the message conveyed by the national collection during its stay in the former town hall of Amsterdam must have been one of the great importance of Amsterdam (through the building and the seven important large paintings of the city), the patronage of Louis Napoleon (for the 52 contemporary paintings and the two Golden Age collections he had acquired), and a first overview of the painting of the Golden Age. The history of the Netherlands would gradually disappear from the museum, and return to it in 1885.

From United Kingdom of the Netherlands (1815–1839) to Kingdom of the Netherlands (1839–present)

The House of Orange-Nassau returned in 1813, not as stadtholders but as kings. The Netherlands were made into a kingdom by the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815), when, after their victory over Napoleon, the European allies gathered to discuss the situation in Europe and possibly draw new borders. The congress decided that the territories of the northern and southern Netherlands should be combined into a single kingdom, led by the son of the last stadtholder. The newly established kingdom was intended by the

23 Bergvelt 1998, 67–68, 303 (note 81 gives the original quote in French).

24 Apostool 1809, no. 2 (Asselijn's *Threatened Swan*), no. 37 (Bol's *Portrait of De Ruyter*), and no. 473 (*De Ruyter's cannon*).

European powers as a counterweight to France and Britain. When the Belgians revolted in 1830, however, none of the European powers seems to have objected to the founding of the Belgian nation.

The first king of the House of Orange-Nassau was William I (r. 1815–1840), son of William V, the last stadtholder. In principle he built upon the institutions that had been founded by Louis Napoleon. The old museums were maintained, and new ones created. Civil servants were allowed to stay on, including Apostool. William I renamed Louis Napoleon's Royal Museum *'s Rijks Museum*, and moved it from the Royal Palace to the *Trippenhuis* on the *Kloveniersburgwal*. The *Trippenhuis* was at the time the largest house on a canal in Amsterdam, but like the House in the Wood it was an existing building. William I also founded a second national art museum for the paintings that had originally belonged to his father, which were partly recovered from the Louvre. This was the *Koninklijk Kabinet van Schilderijen* (Royal Cabinet of Paintings) in The Hague, better known as the *Mauritshuis* with reference to the building where it was housed in the winter of 1821/1822. Since then there have been two Dutch national art museums, representing the two centres of power in the Dutch Republic before 1795: on the one hand Amsterdam with its merchants, and on the other hand The Hague with the stadtholders and their court.

Although the two art museums had different names – one was 'national' and the other 'royal' – they were funded in the same way. Neither had a budget of its own: they had to appeal for each purchase individually to the ministry, and in the end the matter had to be approved by the king himself, at least until 1848 when a new constitution was passed limiting the king's power. Before 1830 there was a small budget for the museums in the ministry, and the king had a considerable sum available for unforeseen expenses in general, on which he could decide. When both these sums were exhausted, the king sometimes offered to help from his own resources. The *Mauritshuis* was regarded by the king as 'the' national museum: it received almost three times as much funding as the *Rijksmuseum* (250,000 rather than 83,000 guilders).[25] Both museums first purchased examples of the work of well-known Dutch and Flemish artists.[26] Only rarely were paintings with historical subjects acquired. Both museum directors kept a list of painters whose work should be purchased, whereas a comparable list of historical persons or events was never made.

From 1817 the *Rijksmuseum* in the *Trippenhuis* was organized by genre, which was rather unusual in Europe: at the back of the building was a room with still lifes, one with Italianate landscapes, one with Dutch landscapes and sea pieces, and one with genre paintings (*tableaux de genre*) or interiors. Of the two larger rooms at the front of the *Trippenhuis,* one was filled with pictures devoted to the "History of our Homeland" and the other with pictures of historical, mythological, and Biblical subjects. That room also housed the national relics and some antiquities.

25 See Bergvelt 1998, 93. A total of 220 'Old Master' paintings were bought for the *Mauritshuis* and 75 for the *Rijksmuseum*.

26 For the *Rijksmuseum* some foreign pictures were acquired; for the *Mauritshuis* the majority of the 220 pictures came from abroad. See Bergvelt 1992, 272–282.

In 1825, at the instigation of the ministry, all three-dimensional objects were removed, as part of a more general reorganization of the national collections. All historical objects, including the cannon from Sri Lanka, were sent to the *Koninklijk Kabinet van Zeldzaamheden* (Royal Cabinet of Rarities) in The Hague. The director of the *Rijksmuseum* did not object; indeed, Apostool stated that the historical relics were only important if one believed that they were authentic, which he clearly did not.[27] After the removal of all objects, both from antiquity and from Dutch history, the *Rijksmuseum* became a museum solely for paintings, with the *Rijksprentenkabinet* (National Print Room) added in 1816. There was also a room for everything that did not belong to the Dutch Golden Age, such as paintings by Rubens (visible in the foreground of fig. 5).

Fig. 5: Gerrit Lamberts and H. A. Klinkhamer, Smaller Room, Looking towards the Front Room upstairs in the Rijksmuseum in the Trippenhuis, Amsterdam, 254 x 330 mm. Visible in this (non-–Dutch Golden Age) room are works by Rubens (the upper picture to the left of the arch), Geertgen tot Sint Jans (upper left to the right of the arch), and other early Netherlandish painters. Through the arch is one of the large "historic" rooms with a picture by Paulus Potter, the so-called "Rembrandt" (now Fabritius), a militia painting by Govert Flinck, and against the ceiling small portraits from the (Orange) Honselaarsdijck series.

27 For Apostool's original Dutch quote, see Bergvelt 2010, 187 (note 35); for Apostool's earlier (1821) and comparable remarks on the proposed reorganization and on the historical relics, see Bergvelt 1998, 93 and 310 (note 41).

After the departure of various objects – and also some paintings through an exchange with the *Mauritshuis* – the paintings in the *Trippenhuis* had to be reordered. Apostool transformed the two rooms with historical subjects into one with portraits and another with scenes from national history, together with scenes from mythology and the Bible. The smaller rooms could remain as they were. Now all the rooms were devoted to a particular type of painting. The result was that the *Rijksmuseum* became an art museum with rooms that were too small, increasingly regarded as a disgrace to the Netherlands, especially when compared to the accommodations of the many new national museums that had opened all over Europe.

That was not the point of emphasis, however, in an article the Dutch poet and author Everhardus Johannes Potgieter published in 1844. His fierce criticism was rather aimed at the room with portraits that Apostool had arranged in 1825. Potgieter wanted this to be transformed into a room devoted to the history of the Netherlands. He described exactly which historical scenes and which historical figures should be presented to form an overview of Dutch history. In addition, he asked private individuals and the king (then King William II, r. 1840–1849) to give or bequeath such historical pictures, given that the Belgian Revolt of 1830 had put an end to almost all spending for the national museums. No response has been recorded to Potgieter's article, or any relevant gift or bequest predating about 1870. Until that year, private donors mainly focused on local institutions. Potgieter was seeking something completely different from what the contemporary museum staff (and the government) had in mind for the *Rijksmuseum*: to provide an overview of the best works by Dutch and, to a lesser extent, Flemish painters.[28]

Alas, since Apostool's catalogue is not organized by room we do not know where Asselijn's *Threatened Swan* and De Ruyter's *Portrait* were hanging either before or after 1825. Only two images survive from after 1825: one of the historic room,[29] and the other of the room, at the front of the building, for works not belonging to the Dutch Golden Age (figs. 5, 6). We can assume that the rather large *Threatened Swan* did not hang in the small back room, with the still lifes, but rather in one of the large rooms, alongside the 'history' paintings: another large animal picture, the great *Bear Hunt* by Paulus Potter, is partly visible at the left end of the far wall of the front (historic) room. De Ruyter's image must have been in the room with portraits on the floor below.

28 Bergvelt 1998, 190–191; Bergvelt 2010.

29 Confusingly, at the time 'historic' meant both real history and also mythological and Biblical scenes, and clearly from the images also large animal pieces, as well as pictures too large to be hung in the smaller back rooms.

Fig. 6: Gerrit Lamberts and H. A. Klinkhamer, Front Room upstairs in the Rijksmuseum in the Trippenhuis, Amsterdam, Looking towards the Smaller Room, 235 x 410 mm. In this "historic" room the arch is flanked by pictures by Gaspar de Crayer. In the smaller room beyond is a glimpse of The Fall *by Cornelis Cornelisz. van Haarlem.*

The 'reminders of the Fatherland' found their place in the Royal Cabinet of Rarities on the first floor of the *Mauritshuis*. The works of the Royal Cabinet of Paintings were on the second floor. These two museum collections were housed in spaces that were far too small. The Royal Cabinet of Rarities was the only national museum that had a historical component, but it was mainly an ethnographical museum, with one large room featuring a model of Deshima, the Dutch (and only Western) trading post in Japan prior to the American navy's forcible opening of the country in 1853. There were also four smaller rooms: two devoted to objects from China and one to objects from the rest of the world. National history was confined to the fourth room, which was shared with the applied arts. This is where the cannon from Sri Lanka was housed; in one of the many undated catalogues, it is again described as a gift to Admiral De Ruyter, but with yet another invented provenance: now it had been a gift from the East India Company.[30]

The financial troubles ended in the 1870s as the Dutch economy began to flourish again – so much so that this period is called the Second Golden Age. First the Netherlands Museum of History and Art was founded in The Hague, and eventually the decision was made to build a new *Rijksmuseum* in Amsterdam and to include there the contents from the Netherlandish Museum.

30 On the Royal Cabinet of Rarities see Effert 2008; the undated catalogue is Van de Kasteele n.d., no. 660.

The Netherlands Museum of History and Art in The Hague

The era of national indifference was slowly coming to an end. After some earlier initiatives to preserve Netherlandish national antiquities, in 1874 the *College van Rijksadviseurs* (Board of Government Advisors) was established, with the task, among others, of tracing remnants of Dutch art and history from earlier times. The advisors interpreted this broadly, not only collecting objects from the past but also exhibiting them in the building where they met, in The Hague. In 1876 one of the advisors, David van der Kellen Jr, became the first director of the collection named the *Nederlandsch Museum voor Geschiedenis en Kunst* (Netherlands Museum of History and Art).[31] The Roman Catholic jurist Victor de Stuers was appointed as the highest civil servant in the Ministry of the Interior, and he put things in order, including the museums. For example, he decreed that the national museums should produce annual reports, which they did from 1877. He also oversaw the construction and fitting out of the new *Rijksmuseum* and can be regarded as the 'national collector'. Protestants in particular strongly criticized the architectural style, decoration, and display of the new building, which they considered to be far too Catholic; indeed, in the furnishing and decoration much attention was paid to the Middle Ages, the period before the Netherlands became Protestant. Acquisitions were also the subject of criticism. For example, the author Carel Vosmaer, also a member of the Board of Government Advisors, believed that there was not enough emphasis on the Dutch Golden Age and too much on the 'ultramontane' – meaning medieval and ecclesiastical (and hence Catholic) – art.[32]

A cursory glance at the first annual reports of the Dutch national museums shows that Vosmaer was wrong, however: large quantities of seventeenth-century Dutch silver and Delft pottery, for instance, were acquired in 1877–1879.[33] Every now and then, a medieval object can be discerned. Therefore Vosmaer's remark must be seen as prompted by his Protestant struggle against the Catholic Victor de Stuers. According to Vosmaer the museum received thousands of guilders more than any other collection,[34] but he provides no evidence to support this claim.[35]

De Stuers accomplished a lot and left no stone unturned. In his letters to the minister he often said one thing but did another. This was the case, for example, when he advocated the establishment of the *Nederlandsch Museum* (Netherlands Museum). In the first place, he said that it was to illustrate the history of the fatherland by means of images of

31 Laan 2014–2016.

32 Vosmaer 1877.

33 Verslagen 1877–1880.

34 Vosmaer 1877.

35 His claim is readily adopted by Duparc 1975, 11, although the figures Duparc gives elsewhere seem to point in a different direction (ibid., 110): in 1886, the *Rijksmuseum van Schilderijen* [of paintings] and the *Rijksprentenkabinet* together received 19,000 guilders; in 1891, they received 20,000 guilders; the Netherlands Museum received 11,500 guilders in 1886 and in 1891; in 1896, the three institutions together received 51,916 guilders. Laan adopts these figures, see Laan 2014–2016, 71 and 93 (note 7). It falls beyond the scope of this article to attempt to determine the precise figures for the various museums. Unfortunately, no figures are mentioned in the annual reports of the museums.

its princes and great men. In addition, beautiful and instructive objects from the various branches of art were to be exhibited for the development of the taste of the general public and for the education of craftsmen. If we look again at the annual reports, however, we can see that if objects related to important patriotic heroes or rulers were collected at all, they disappeared behind an immense mass of simpler objects – things dredged from rivers, national costumes, horse-drawn carriages, and musical instruments. De Stuers and Van der Kellen apparently wanted to display objects related to the ordinary Dutch person and not just to elite culture.[36]

Director Van der Kellen also emphasized history in his writings. For instance, in 1879 he published a six-part magazine article summarizing what he called *historische herinneringen* (historical memories) in the Netherlands Museum of History and Art.[37] He did not give an account of the department of applied arts at that time, let alone compile a catalogue of the holdings of the museum, given the quantity of objects acquired. In the same year, in an article on the new installation he arranged at the museum in The Hague, he complains that a

> placement according to some scientific principle has long since become a dream, which can only be realized [when the *Rijksmuseum* in Amsterdam is completed]. Until then, [the Netherlands Museum of History and Art] should only be regarded as a warehouse or collection point for materials from which a beautiful whole can later be formed [namely in the *Rijksmuseum* in Amsterdam].[38]

Ultimately, however, in the new *Rijksmuseum* the presentation both of the applied arts and of history left a lot to be desired.

Van der Kellen did not lack a critical view of his collection. Like Apostool, he had great doubts about the authenticity of the Dutch 'reminders of the Fatherland', which, during a subsequent reorganization of the national collections, the Netherlands Museum of History and Art had received from the Royal Cabinet of Rarities. In an article about the cannon from Sri Lanka, Van der Kellen cannot see how it could have anything to do with De Ruyter, who never travelled to Ceylon. He recognizes that the inscription on the cannon is from Ceylon but notes that he has not succeeded in deciphering it (that would not be accomplished until 1894).[39]

The New Rijksmuseum

The new *Rijksmuseum* building designed by the architect Pierre Joseph Hubert Cuypers housed several museums: the *Rijksmuseum van schilderijen* (of paintings), the National Print Room, the Netherlands Museum of History and Art, and several private collections. The second floor of the new building, with the paintings, opened first, in 1885 – with Rembrandt's *Night Watch* as its centrepiece. *The Threatened Swan* hung in the third

36 Bergvelt 1998, 200–201.

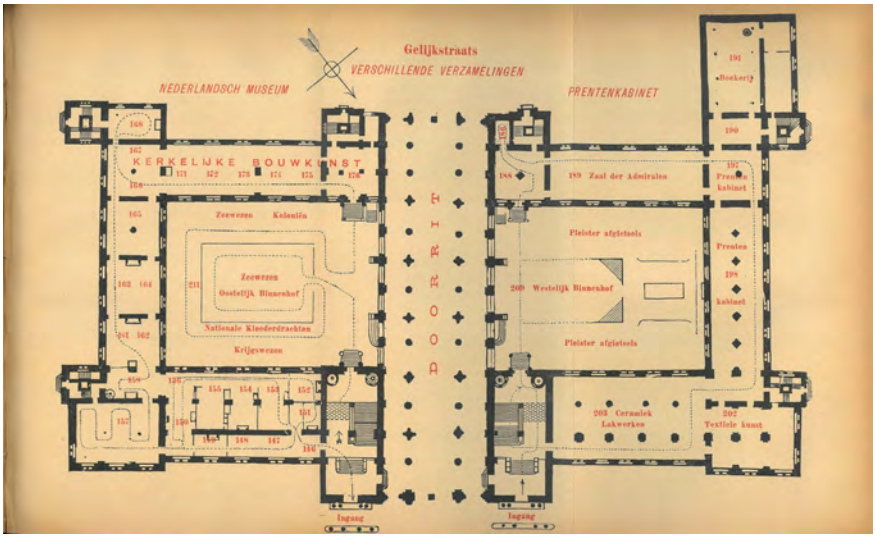
37 Van der Kellen 1879a.

38 Van der Kellen 1879b.

39 Van der Kellen 1880; Schrikker and Boogaart 2022a, 31.

compartment of the Gallery of Honour, which leads to the location of *The Night Watch* – still making reference to the vigilance of Grand Pensionary Johan de Witt, but in the context of art rather than history. Not until 1909 did Ernst W. Moes and Eduard van Biema, in their publication about the early years of the *Rijksmuseum*, point out that the inscriptions on Asselijn's painting must have been written later, because Asselijn had died before De Witt became Grand Pensionary.[40] The Netherlands Museum of History and Art was gradually installed in the later 1880s and 1890s on the first floor, next to the print room and the library. It included period rooms, some dedicated to ecclesiastical architecture (fig. 7).

Fig. 7: Plan of the ground floor of the Rijksmuseum.



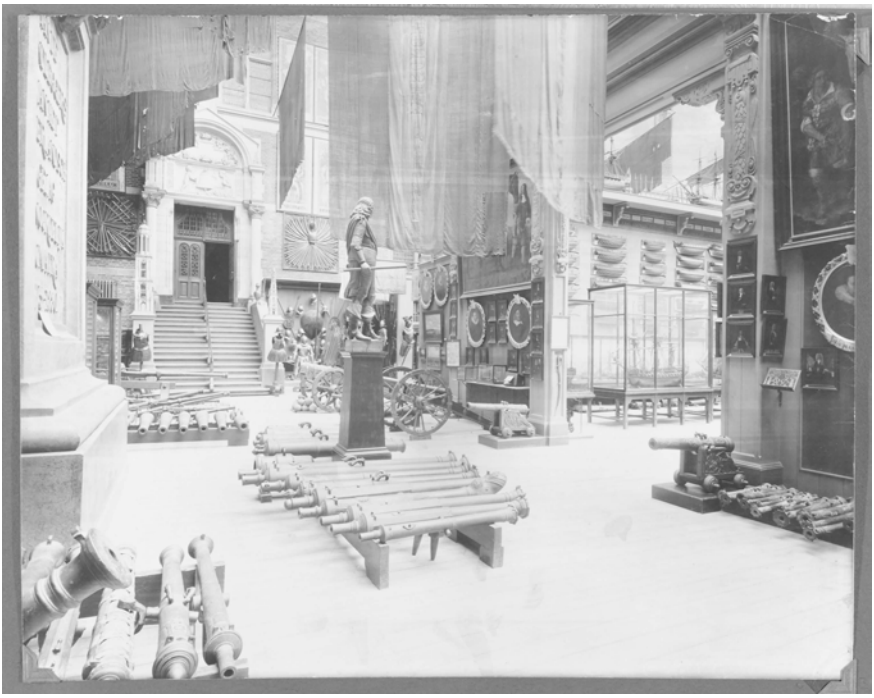
In the furnishing of these rooms, quite a few copies were included. Next came the seventeenth-century rooms, for which many further authentic objects were available. Finally, there were rooms displaying historical subjects. Only two rooms on the first floor presented purely historical content. One was the Room of the Admirals (no. 189; on the right in fig. 7), and the other was a very small room dedicated to historical objects (no. 152; bottom left in fig. 7). There, at last, almost everything related to De Ruyter was exhibited, including his portrait.[41] In the two courtyards, extremely varied historical collections were displayed, with musical instruments next to weapons, and life-size dolls with traditional costumes next to a sculpture commemorating the colonial war in the Indonesian province of Aceh. In the eastern courtyard portions of the historical collection

40 Moes and Van Biema 1909, 175 (appendix V).

41 The large stern decoration of the *Royal Charles* was exhibited in the eastern courtyard, as room 152 was too small. This British ship had been captured by the Dutch in June 1667, when Michiel de Ruyter and Cornelis de Witt undertook an expedition to the River Medway to destroy the fleet at anchor near Chatham.

were given a sort of trophy arrangement, as in the great halls of British stately homes (fig. 8). The cannon from Sri Lanka must have been in a display case in this courtyard. Van der Kellen still thought it a beautiful object; in the 1890 addition to his guide of 1888, he noted: "without proof it was said to have come from De Ruijter, but it seems that it was donated by a Javanese prince to the States General".[42] Had De Stuers forbidden Van der Kellen from mentioning Sri Lanka as the origin?

Fig. 8: Display of the Netherlands Museum of History and Art in the eastern courtyard of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1900–1915, photograph, 230 × 290 mm.



When the display of the Netherlands Museum was finally completed around 1900, its installation told no coherent story but rather made loose statements about Dutch history.[43] This approach to arranging the contents of the collection was not up-to-date: the contents of decorative art museums were generally arranged according to technique and material, not in rooms devoted to any particular period.[44] In 1927, the Netherlands Museum was divided into two departments, that of Dutch History and that of Sculpture and

42 Van der Kellen 1888[-1890], 139–140. He first displayed the cannon in 1883 in a major exhibition at the *Rijksmuseum*, in a sort of test presentation. In the accompanying catalogue, he remarked that it probably came from Ceylon and that it was previously thought to have been given to De Ruyter: Van der Kellen 1883, 16–17.

43 Bergvelt 2012.

44 This is one of the many criticisms of the arrangement of the *Rijksmuseum*. Contemporary museums of applied art, such as the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, displayed the development of

Applied Arts. The former department could then begin working on displays that were more current in their curatorial approach and, above all, historically accurate. The display of Dutch history at sea was realized in 1931 and Dutch history on land in 1937.[45]

At the *Rijksmuseum* at the end of the nineteenth century a chronological, cultural-historical story was told via period rooms, with attention also paid to the lower classes and the countryside. After Van der Kellen's death in 1895, his successors did not know how soon they could dismantle those rooms. The *horror vacui*, the copies, and the decorative ensembles that had characterized the display in the new *Rijksmuseum* were replaced by objects of elite culture that were authentic, of aesthetic value, and grouped by material. Rural culture was sent to the *Openluchtmuseum* (Open Air Museum) in Arnhem, established in 1918.[46] The decoration of Cuypers' building, considered too dominant (or too Catholic), was whitewashed in the course of the twentieth century, and partly restored in 2013.

History itself found a problematic position in the nineteenth-century *Rijksmuseum*. When the historical objects came to the new building they did not receive proper attention: both De Stuers and Van der Kellen were more interested in cultural or art history. Indeed, history was of minor importance in the early Dutch national museums, especially because the museum staff was made up of artists and art historians. At the *Rijksmuseum* that changed in the twentieth century, and even more so in the twenty-first. But in the nineteenth century there was a struggle between history and art. And history lost most of the time.

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the individual branches of applied art, not cultural-historical ensembles, see Laan 2014–2016, 85. On the Victoria and Albert Museum, see Burton 1999.

45 Bos 1997.

46 Laan 2014–2016.

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Fig. 5: Stadsarchief Amsterdam, access no. 10097, inv.no. 0/010097001636.

Fig. 6: Stadsarchief Amsterdam, access no. 10097, inv.no. 2341.

Fig. 7: Obreen 1893, between pp. 128 and 129.

Part 2: Establishing National Museums

Conceiving a National Museum in the Federal State

On the Founding of the *Schweizerisches Landesmuseum* in Zurich[1]

Cristina Gutbrod

In 1891, Zurich was chosen by the Federal Assembly as the seat of the *Schweizerisches Landesmuseum* (Swiss National Museum; today the *Landesmuseum Zürich* / National Museum Zurich).[2] The choice had been preceded by a fierce dispute among Bern, Zurich, Basel, and Lucerne over the location of the museum, each city competing with a different concept (see fig. 3).[3] On the political level, opposition played out between liberal forces supportive of centralizing efforts and conservative forces supportive of federal structures. The national self-image associated with the creation of the Swiss National Museum was crystallized in the submissions put forth by the different cantons, including the architecture they proposed for the museum building.[4]

National Self-Discovery

The Federal Council Hall and the Main Building of the Federal Polytechnic School

When the Swiss Confederation, as the modern state is officially called, was founded in 1848, the Federal Assembly elected Bern as 'federal city'.[5] In return, the rival city of Zurich was chosen as the location for the *Eidgenössische Polytechnikum* (Federal Polytechnic School).[6] Between 1859 and 1868, the canton of Zurich erected a building for the

1 English translation by Jennifer Bartmess.

2 The National Museum Zurich was inaugurated in 1898 as the *Schweizerisches Landesmuseum*. Today, the Swiss National Museum brings together the National Museum Zurich, the *Château de Prangins*, the Forum of Swiss History Schwyz, and the Collection Centre in Affoltern am Albis. See https://www.landesmuseum.ch/en/about-us/organisation.

3 On the founding of the Swiss National Museum, see Zimmermann 1987; Capitani 1998; Draeyer 1998; Draeyer 1999; Sturzenegger 1999; Capitani 2000; Lafontant Vallotton 2007.

4 On the subject of searching for a national Swiss identity, see, for example, Capitani and Germann 1987; Marchal and Mattioli 1992; Schweizerisches Landesmuseum 1998.

5 *Bundesstadt*, seat of federal government. See Kölz 1998.

6 See Weidmann 2010, 369–376.

polytechnical school designed by Gottfried Semper, which also housed the cantonal university in its south wing. Andreas Hauser describes the structure as Switzerland's "*geistiges Bundeshaus*", or federal building of arts and sciences.[7] The city of Bern fulfilled its obligations to the Swiss Confederation by constructing the *Bundesrathhaus* (Federal Council Hall),[8] the architecture of which corresponded more to that of an administrative building than a national monument.[9] The disposition of the Federal Council Hall reflected the bicameral system that had been established in 1848 on the model of the American Congress. The side wings contained the halls for the two legislative bodies, the National Council representing the population and the Council of States the cantons. The hall for the executive Federal Council was placed in the central building. This organizational scheme was based on plans designed in 1850 by Ferdinand Stadler, who had also proposed the Italianate *Rundbogenstil* (Round-Arch Style) with its republican connotations.[10]

Historical Identities for the Federal State

The creation of the Federal Constitution of 1848 was preceded by a military confrontation (Sonderbund War of 1847) in which liberal (mainly Protestant but also Catholic) cantons, seeking greater centralization, prevailed over an alliance of conservative Catholic cantons (Lucerne, Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, Zug, Fribourg, Valais) that defended cantonal sovereignty.[11] If a new identity as a federal state was to be formed, then national historiography would have to "do everything possible to cover up smouldering conflicts and heal the open wounds".[12] In the search for a common origin, in 1854 Ferdinand Keller – founder of the *Antiquarischen Gesellschaft in Zürich* (Antiquarian Society in Zurich) in 1832 – interpreted the wooden posts found in the shallow water close to the shore of Lake Zurich as the remains of a prehistoric village.[13] His concept of the so-called pile dwellings reverberated strongly, as it provided a national history free of linguistic and confessional conflicts.[14]

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7 Hauser 2001.

8 The Federal Council Hall is the oldest part of the Federal Palace and was built between 1852 and 1857 by Jakob Friedrich Studer; today it is known as *Bundeshaus West*. On the Federal Palace in Bern, see, for example, Hauser 2002; Minta and Nicolai 2014; Rüedi 2016; Bilfinger 2020.

9 Hauser 2003, 196. With regard to the National Museum, see Capitani 1998, 26–27. In 1845/1846, the Swiss architect Johann Georg Müller designed a Swiss national monument whose architectural sequence consisted of a temple, a monumental staircase, a courtyard, and a domed structure. The project was never realized, but it is of significance to the process of national self-discovery.

10 Hauser 1976, 202–211; Hauser 2003, 195–196. In his 1848 project for Zurich's bid to become the federal city, Stadler had also used this organizational scheme, combined with Gothic-style grammer.

11 See, for example, Maissen 2010, 196–204. On the occasion of the 175th anniversary of the Federal Constitution, see Schweizerisches Nationalmuseum 2023. In the same year the National Museum Zurich also celebrated 125 years since its opening.

12 "*alles daran setzen, die schwelenden Konflikte zu überspielen und die offenen Wunden zu heilen*"; Capitani 2000, 4. See also Capitani 1998, 27.

13 See, for example, Altorfer 2006; Corboud and Schaeren 2017, 4–8.

14 Capitani 1998, 27–29; Capitani 2000, 5.

As a result of scholarly analysis of pre-Reformation history in the late nineteenth century, national historiography also shifted its focus from Swiss founding myths to the warlike successes of the Confederation, achieved in the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries. In his *Geschichte der Schweiz*, published in three volumes between 1884 and 1887, the historian Karl Dändliker would describe this time period as the height of the Confederation, followed by a sixteenth-century emergence of a common culture, despite confessional antagonisms.[15]

This historiographical claim found a counterpart in the research of the art historian Johann Rudolf Rahn. His major work *Geschichte der bildenden Künste in der Schweiz: Von den ältesten Zeiten bis zum Schlusse des Mittelalters* (1876), though concluding with the late Middle Ages, stated in its introduction that a genuine Swiss art form developed only in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, in the domain of craftwork.[16] Rahn would later determine the Swiss National Museum's acquisition policy in its founding phase:[17] the relevant federal commission acquired a large number of arts and crafts objects from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, including the parlour from the Rosenburg in Stans (1566; acquired 1887), the parlour from Mellingen (1467; acquired 1888), and the medallions from the ceiling of the hall of Arbon Castle (1515; acquired 1888).

Towards a Swiss National Museum

Initial Influences

The Helvetic Republic (1798–1803), imposed by France, replaced the old confederation of states with its complex networks but then failed as a unitary state. Significantly, however, the project of a Swiss national museum had been promoted during the Helvetic period by Philipp Albert Stapfer, Minister of Arts and Sciences. At the end of the 1870s, the proposition built momentum with the support of the Bernese city parliament member, banker, and collector Friedrich Bürki.[18] Bürki considered it his life's mission to found a museum to house his substantive collection of Swiss historical art.[19]

In 1880, the theologian Friedrich Salomon Vögelin, who, alongside Rahn, taught the newly created subject of cultural and art history at the University of Zurich,[20] brought Bürki's idea to the Federal and National Councils – to no avail. In the same year, Bürki committed suicide without leaving a will, whereupon his heirs auctioned off his collection in Basel. As Bürki intended, the history museum opened in Bern in 1882, in the Baroque *Bibliotheksgalerie* (Library Gallery) built by Niklaus Sprüngli (fig. 1). The museum incorporated, among other things, the already extant *Bernische Antiquarium* (Bern Antiquarium), the Burgundian carpets owned by the city, the collection of historical weapons

15 Capitani 2000, 5.

16 See Hauser 2012.

17 See Lafontant Vallotton 2007, 185–189.

18 On Bürki's efforts, see Zimmermann 1987, 117–119; Zimmermann 1994, 371–372; Sturzenegger 1999, 35–36; Lafontant Vallotton 2007, 95.

19 Rahn 1883, 300.

20 See Abegg 2012.

from the cantonal armoury,[21] and a number of glass paintings from Bürki's dispersed collection, which had been purchased at auction.[22]

Fig. 1: Historical museum in the Library Gallery in Bern, view from the north, undated photograph. The museum opened in the new building on Helvetiaplatz in 1894.

The Preservation of Historical Art and Cultural Assets

Numerous historical objects from the property of families, communities, or monasteries were sold in Switzerland as a result of political upheaval following the failure of the Helvetic Republic in 1803.[23] This included the *Basler Münsterschatz* (Basel Cathedral Treasury), most of which was auctioned off following the division of Basel into two cantons in 1833. The loss of Bürki's collection gave further impetus to efforts to protect historical art and cultural assets in Switzerland. The *Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Erhaltung historischer Kunstdenkmäler* (Swiss Society for the Preservation of Historical Monuments), founded in 1880 as a result of Rahn's concerns for the former church of Königsfelden Monastery and specifically its stained-glass choir, sought to bring public attention to the preservation of historical monuments and works of art.[24] A milestone in its development was the exhibition *Alte Kunst* at the first Swiss national exposition, held in Zurich in 1883 and curated

21 Zimmermann 1994, 372.

22 Rahn 1883, 327–328, 340–341; Historisches Museum Bern 1899, IV.

23 Lapaire 2010.

24 Haupt 2012, 355–357.

by Vögelin along with, among others, Rahn and Heinrich Angst, a silk merchant, collector, and later director of the Swiss National Museum.[25] In the context of the exhibition, Vögelin renewed his plea for a national museum, and that same year he would build on this in an influential speech to the National Council.[26]

In his speech, Vögelin evoked "the national idea"[27] that could not be captured in state regulations but rather manifested itself in popular festivities. He described artwork as its lasting form, expressing that "there are forms in which the national idea has found its imperishable and monumental expression. These are the historical monuments of a people, which bear witness more vividly than any other to their will and ability, to their deeds and fortunes, to their hopes and ideals".[28] Vögelin anticipated that the question of the seat of the Swiss National Museum would prove particularly difficult within the federalist state.[29] He offered to discuss dividing the institute, with one historical museum to be established in Bern (with the Burgundian carpets at its core), or alternatively in Lucerne (as the first city of the old confederation), and a museum of art or arts and crafts in either Zurich (as the seat of the Federal Polytechnic School), Basel, or Geneva.

As for the architecture of a national museum, he had an existing building in mind: the former monastery church of Königsfelden, near Brugg. Here, Vögelin imagined a *Kunst-Museum* (art museum) unlike any other in the world.[30]

National and Cantonal Museums

In his speech, Vögelin tried to refute the objection that a centralized museum would reduce interest in local museums.[31] He emphasized the importance of a national museum for the preservation of Swiss artistic and cultural assets, arguing that such an institution would supplement, not replace, the several historical museums that had been founded – with the support of associations, societies, and private collectors – in various cantons during the last third of the nineteenth century.[32] The collections of these museums were mostly housed in prominent architectural monuments,[33] for example in *Haus Buol* in Chur (opened 1872), in the former grain and salt storage house in Stans (opened 1873), in the so-called *Hexenturm* (Witches' Tower) of the thirteenth-century Lower Sarnen Cas-

25 Lafontant Vallotton 2007, 64.

26 See, for example, Draeyer 1999, 8–10.

27 "*den nationalen Gedanken*"; Vögelin 1883, 3.

28 "*Aber es gibt Formen, in welchen der nationale Gedanke seinen unvergänglichen und monumentalen Ausdruck gefunden hat. Das sind die geschichtlichen Denkmäler eines Volkes, die lebendiger als alle Andere Zeugniß ablegen von seinem Wollen und Können, von seinen Thaten und Geschicken, von seinen Hoffnungen und Idealen*"; ibid.

29 See ibid., 10–13.

30 "*ein Kunst-Museum […], dessengleichen in der ganzen Welt nicht mehr existirt*"; ibid., 11. Letterspaced in the original text.

31 Ibid., 4–9.

32 See Deuchler 1981, 32–36; Lafontant Vallotton 2007, 15–25.

33 In Neuchâtel, the new building of the *Musée des Beaux-Arts* (Museum of Fine Arts) by the architect Léo Châtelain was inaugurated in 1884. As of 1885, it also housed the city's history museum.

tle (installed 1876–1880),[34] in the medieval Valeria Castle of Sitten (opened 1883) (fig. 2),[35] on the ground floor of the castle of Nyon (installed 1888)[36] and in the Knights' Hall of Thun Castle (opened 1888).[37]

Fig. 2: Photograph by Auguste Garcin showing the installation of historical museums in architectural monuments, 1880; on the right: Valeria Castle (museum opened 1883); on the left: Tourbillon Castle, Sion, in the canton of Valais.

Although the Swiss Confederation had laid the foundation for its own collection by purchasing the physician Victor Gross's collection of pile-dwelling remnants in 1884, it did not want to prejudice the creation of a national museum. Despite various requests from the cantons to show the pile-dwelling collection, it was exhibited in the Federal Council Hall.[38] The federalist opposition to a centralized museum, originating with the councillors of state Johann Baptist Rusch and Gustav Muheim, demanded an official statement on the matter.[39] By an 1886 law concerning the participation of the federal government in the preservation of historical art and cultural assets of national importance, the Swiss Confederation foregrounded its role as the ultimate authority in this arena. It granted a subsidy that supported federal acquisitions of objects, cantonal collections, as well as involvement in excavations and the preservation of historical monuments.[40] In doing so, the Federal Council distinguished between "antiquities of local (cantonal)

34 Studach 1988, 135.
35 Morand 2003, 8–10.
36 Lieber 2011, 71.
37 Keller 1930, 9–20.
38 See Zimmermann 1987, 127–137; Draeyer 1998, 159–162; Sturzenegger 1999, 40–46.
39 Zimmermann 1987, 187.
40 See ibid., 137–139; Sturzenegger 1999, 44–46.

interest and those of general importance for the fatherland and the confederation".[41] In consideration of local museums, it rejected Vögelin's motion to create a national museum. At the same time, the council did not want to limit the federal government's room to manoeuvre: it thus reserved the right to revisit the issue, should the Confederation receive an important historical collection or an artistically outstanding monument that granted a firm basis for the project.[42] Regarding the open question of the founding of a Swiss national museum, in 1888, in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Heinrich Angst advertised the construction of such a museum in Zurich, thus triggering a competition for the seat among the cities of Basel, Bern, Zurich, and Lucerne (see fig. 3).[43]

From 'Nationalmuseum' to 'Landesmuseum'

In view of the cities' submissions, the Federal Council ultimately felt compelled to draw up a programme for a national museum. It entrusted this task to the *Eidgenössische Kommission für Erhaltung schweizerischer Alterthümer* (Federal Commission for the Preservation of Swiss Antiquities), which had been formed in 1887 from the board of the Swiss Society for the Preservation of Historical Monuments to administer an *Altertümerkredit* (antiquities subsidy) based on the law of 1886.[44] During the deliberations, its actuary Carl Brun,[45] who had studied art history with Rahn and Vögelin at the University of Zurich, proposed "to change the pompous name 'National Museum' [*Nationalmuseum*] […] to 'State Museum' [*Landesmuseum*]. One can speak of a Swiss people, but not of a Swiss nation. Our confederate republic is actually a body fused together from the fractions of three nationalities".[46] The commission applied the change of name – only in the German language

41 *"Alterthümern von lokalem (kantonalem) Interesse und solchen von allgemein vaterländischer gemeineidgenössischer Bedeutung. Wir halten beispielsweise die Heldenschlachten des Schwabenkrieges und der Burgunderkriege […] nicht für kantonale, sondern für eidgenössische Ereignisse. Ja, wir sind sogar geneigt, die Schlacht bei Sempach, in der zwar keine Zürcher und keine Berner mitfochten, für einen eidgenössischen, nicht nur für einen Luzerner oder Unterwaldner Ehrentag zu halten"*; "Botschaft des Bundesrathes an die Bundesversammlung" 1886, 748. See Draeyer 1998, 163.

42 *"Sollte sich die Sachlage ändern, indem eine bedeutende historische Sammlung oder ein künstlerisch hervorragendes Baudenkmal der Eidgenossenschaft zur Verfügung gestellt würde, sodaß eine feste Grundlage für das Projekt gewonnen wäre, so würden wir uns vorbehalten auf die Angelegenheit zurückzukommen"*; "Botschaft des Bundesrathes an die Bundesversammlung" 1886, 750–751.

43 The city of Geneva was the first to submit an application but did not pursue the matter further. The cities' bids, which were gradually fleshed out between 1888 and 1890, were prepared by committees that brought together personalities from politics, science, business, architecture, and art.

44 For details on the elaboration of the programme by the commission, see Lafontant Vallotton 2007, 267–276; Zimmermann 1987, 139–142. See also Draeyer 1998, 165–166; Sturzenegger 1999, 51–55.

45 See Battaglia-Greber 2004. In 1891, the *Eidgenössische Landesmuseumskommission* (Federal National Museum Commission) was created, and Brun was responsible for taking the committee's minutes until the year the museum opened, in 1898.

46 *"den pompösen Namen 'Nationalmuseum' […] in 'Landesmuseum' um[zu]ändern. Man kann vom einem Schweizer Volke, nicht aber von einer schweizerischen Nation reden. Unsere Conföderativrepublik ist eigentlich ein aus den Bruchtheilen dreier Nationalitäten zusammengesetzter Körper"*; Swiss Federal Archives, E84#1000/1163#4*, Eidgenössische Kommission für Erhaltung schweizerischer Altertümer, Protokoll zur Vorstandssitzung vom 9. Juni 1888 in Basel (copy), 11. See Zimmermann 1987, 141; Lafontant Vallotton 2007, 271.

– within its programme for the national museum, confirmed by the subsequent federal resolution of 1890.[47]

Fig. 3: Heinrich Jenny, Struggle of the cantons competing for the Swiss National Museum (Das kantonale Käsdrücken um das schweizerische Nationalmuseum), caricature. Helvetia is shown as auctioneer, thronged by the candidates: the Lucerne Lion (depicted as Bertel Thorvaldsen's Löwendenkmal of 1821), the Zurich Lion, the Basel Basilisk, and the Bernese Bear, with the Basel Läll-lenkönig in the back; front right: the representatives of the cantons trying to push each other off the centre of the bench.

Submissions from the Cities

To vie for the seat of the national museum, cities emphasized in their submissions not only their individual merits and distinctive identities but also their capacity for representing the Swiss Confederation.[48]

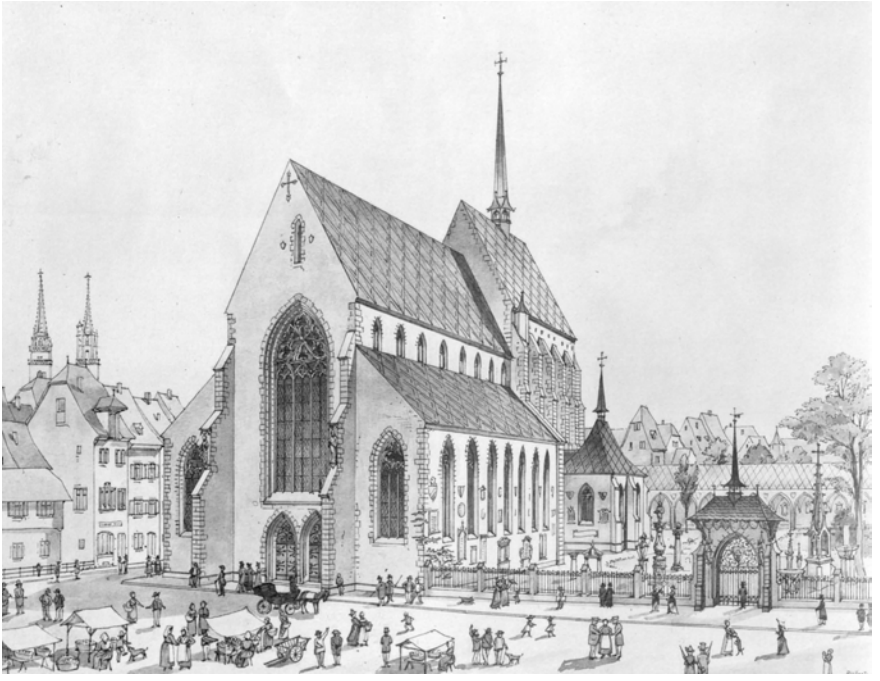
47 "*Nous préférons le titre de Landesmuseum à celui de National-Museum, bien que nous n'ayons pas su trouver de traductions française et italienne à ce titre. Il faudra, dans ces langues, conserver les expressions de Musée National et Museo Nazionale*"; Swiss Federal Archives, E84#1000/1163#4*, Théodore de Saussure to Federal Councillor Carl Schenk, Genthod, 16 June 1888, 2. See Lafontant Vallotton 2007, 271.

48 Tommy Sturzenegger elucidates the political connections in the dispute over the seat of the national museum and discusses the bids and strategies of the cities. See Sturzenegger 1999, 91–114, 157–175.

Basel: "Hie Basel, hie Schweizerboden!"[49]

The authors of the submission from Basel emphasized that the city, which had joined the Confederation in 1501, had not yet housed a federal institution. Moreover, they refuted the notion that a relatively peripheral site, at the northwestern Swiss border, would be a disadvantage. To underpin a Swiss national museum, Basel could offer the Medieval Collection with origins reaching back to the Amerbach Cabinet, acquired by the city in 1661. This collection contained outstanding objects such as the Iselin Room from 1607, from the *Bärenfelser Hof* in Basel. For the museum building, the authors proposed the fourteenth-century *Barfüsserkirche*, which had been deconsecrated in 1794 and for which no definitive purpose had yet been found (fig. 4).[50] The architecture of the church suited the objects: the collection could be better accommodated in a historical room that constituted an artwork in itself[51] – as at the exemplary *Musée du Sommerard* (today the *Musée de Cluny – musée national du Moyen Âge* / Cluny Museum – National Museum of the Middle Ages) in Paris and the *Germanisches Nationalmuseum* (Germanic National Museum). [▸ Gottlob-Linke]

Fig. 4: "Hie Basel, hie Schweizerboden!" Basel's bid for the seat of the Swiss National Museum, application from 1888: Barfüßerkirche after the Restoration.



49 "Basel und das Schweizerische Nationalmuseum" 1888, 10. Bold in the original text.

50 See Settelen-Trees 1994, 9–16. On Basels application, see, with further literature and sources, also Egli 2009.

51 "Basel und das Schweizerische Nationalmuseum" 1888, 9.

Lucerne: "die erste Stadt im Bunde"[52]

The city of Lucerne presented itself as the cradle of the old confederation, situated in the natural beauty of Switzerland's geographical centre. In 1332, Lucerne was the first city to join forces with the rural communes of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden in the Battle of Sempach (1386) against the Habsburgs. Lucerne could boast diverse holdings from the armoury, archives, and libraries, as well as those from churches and private properties, but it lacked a large historical collection.[53] The city compensated by offering an important historical building: the town hall, built around 1600 (as documented by Wilhelm Lübke and August Ortwein in their works on the German Renaissance), supplemented by the *Freienhof* (1400–1600; demolished 1948–1949) on the opposite side of the river. The town hall (fig. 5) had served as a museum since 1879, when the Lucerne Historical Museum opened on its ground floor; art exhibitions had been displayed in the space since 1873.[54]

Fig. 5: "Die erste Stadt im Bunde": The historic town hall (built 1602–1606 by Anton Isenmann) for a Swiss National Museum in Lucerne, application from 1890.

52 "Eingabe der luzernischen Behörden" 1890, 6.

53 Ibid., 7–8.

54 Brülisauer 1997, 29–32.

Bern: "an der Stätte, wo Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft des Vaterlandes ihren würdigsten, in seiner Gesammtheit einzig richtigen Ausdruck finden"[55]

In Bern, the authorities of the canton and the city relied on their historical significance and exceptional status as the *Bundesstadt* (federal city):

> Bern as a historical city, as the most outstanding bearer of its own consistent and purposeful policy in the bosom of the old, loose Confederation – and at the head of the new Confederation, strengthened as a federal state – should be the given place above all others for the collection of the monuments of our patriotic history.[56]

Fig. 6: "At the place where the past, present and future of the fatherland find their most dignified, total and singularly correct expression". View of the city of Bern from the Kirchenfeld. From right: Nydeggerkirche, Rathaus, St Peter and Paul (built 1859–1864), Bern Münster, Zeitglockenturm, Käfigturm, old Inselspital, Bundesrathhaus (today Bundeshaus West), Heiliggeistkirche; foreground left: Kirchenfeldbrücke to Helvetiaplatz.

As far as collections were concerned, Bern, unlike any other city in Switzerland, possessed objects that would provide an overview of cultural development from prehistoric times to the present: a "complete picture of cultural development from prehistoric times to the present day".[57] The trophies from Burgundy were the main pieces highlighted, and, the authors of the proposal argued, as "witnesses to the politically greatest time of

55 "Schweizerisches Nationalmuseum" 1888, 13.

56 "*Bern als historische Stadt sodann, als hervorragendste Trägerin einer eigenen, konsequenten und zielbewussten Politik im Schoße der alten, lockeren – und an der Spitze der neuen, als Bundesstaat gekräftigen Eidgenossenschaft, dürfte für die Sammlung der Denkmäler unserer vaterländischen Geschichte vor allen anderen der gegebene Ort sein*"; ibid., 4. "*[H]istorische*" letterspaced in the original text.

57 "*vollständiges Gesammtbild der Kulturentwicklung von der prähistorischen Zeit bis in die Gegenwart*"; ibid.

our fatherland"[58] these should not be absent from the national museum, nor could they belong to the museum were it located outside of Bern.[59] To house the new museum, the city offered a site on the *Kirchenfeld* near *Helvetiaplatz* (fig. 6), from where one could appreciate the panorama of the historic city with its architectural monuments. The urban fabric would represent the historical and political development of Bern: "the museum of the great architectural monuments […], which clearly show us the historical and political development of the city and the state, as well as their relations with the Confederation".[60] The city completed its bid in 1890 with Adolphe Tièche's building project, characterized by stylistic references to Swiss buildings from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries.[61]

Zurich: "Landesmuseum und Polytechnikum"[62]

The fundamental idea behind Zurich's submission for the museum seat was to combine the Swiss National Museum and the Federal Polytechnic School, as Zurich's Friedrich Salomon Vögelin had envisaged in his aforementioned speech of 1883. The authors sought a connection with Gottfried Semper's doctrine, according to which "architecture had to derive its forms from the industrial arts".[63] Also conducive to this idea was the merger with the *Kunstgewerbeschule* (School of Decorative Arts) and the *Gewerbemuseum* (Museum of Trade and Industry), both institutions initiated in the 1870s by Semper's former assistant Julius Stadler. A core object of Zurich's submission was the famous *Seidenhofzimmer* (Seidenhof Room) from the holdings of the Museum of Trade and Industry.[64] Supplemented by the collections of the Antiquarian Society in Zurich, the Swiss National Museum would become the scientific centre for archaeological and historical research in Switzerland.[65] In addition, Zurich promised the Swiss National Museum the collection of historical weapons from the cantonal armoury and two important rooms from the former *Fraumünster* convent, among other holdings. Finally, the city offered a magnificent site: the *Platzpromenade*, where the industrial hall had stood at the national exposition in 1883, thus being already anchored in the nation's collective memory. For the museum building, the authors of Zurich's submission were able to present a novel project, with a picturesque, medieval-inspired design by the young, local architect Gustav Gull (fig. 7).

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58 "*Zeugen der politisch größten Zeit unseres Vaterlandes*"; ibid. 5.

59 Ibid., 5.

60 "*das Museum der großen architektonischen Monumente […], die in deutlicher Weise die historische und politische Entwicklung der Stadt und des Staates, sowie deren Beziehungen zur Eidgenossenschaft uns vor Augen führen*"; ibid., 8–9. "*Museum der großen architektonischen Monumente*" letterspaced in the original text.

61 Biland 1994, 7. On the founding of the *Bernisches Historisches Museum* (Bern Historical Museum), see also Castellani Zahir 1993, II, 75–101.

62 "Zürich und das Schweizerische Landes-Museum" 1890, 17 (title).

63 "*die Baukunst ihre Formensprache von den technischen Künsten abzuleiten habe*"; ibid., 18.

64 On the suggested site, the design proposal for the building itself, and the contents of the collection, see "Zürich und das Schweizerische Landes-Museum" 1890. Like the Lucerne's town hall, the Seidenhof Room had also been described by Lübke and Ortwein. On the period rooms in the Landesmuseum Zurich see Sonderegger 2019.

65 "Zürich und das Schweizerische Landes-Museum" 1890, 13.

Fig. 7: Gustav Gull's bid for the Swiss National Museum seat in Zurich.

Gustav Gull's Museum Building

Gull succeeded in developing an "imaginary national architecture"[66] for the future museum building. He designed a building conglomerate that organically incorporated the original rooms and architectural elements, which together with the parlours offered in Zurich's bid were the key objects of the federally owned collection, thereby also emphasizing the arts-and-crafts orientation of Zurich's submission for the museum seat. That he could depart from Semper's neo-Renaissance style was due in no small part to the art historian Johann Rudolf Rahn. Gull referenced a sixteenth-century Swiss architecture that Rahn had characterized in 1881 as a continuation of Gothic building traditions, combined with Renaissance ornamentation.[67] Bern had already failed to find a suitable architecture for a national museum in the architectural competition of 1889, where the projects considered by the jury had largely taken the form of massive neo-Renaissance palace designs. Compared to the innovative Zurich project, in which the so-called *Agglomerations-Prinzip* (agglomeration principle)[68] was first implemented for a new museum building, Tièche's symmetrically designed museum project also failed, whereupon Bern withdrew it, replacing it in 1891 with one by André Lambert.[69] Unlike Lambert, who provided architectural models for his design,[70] Gull included a multitude of references in his composition without committing himself to specific architectural monuments for

66 "*imaginäre Nationalarchitektur*"; Thome 2015, 222. On the architecture of the National Museum Zurich, see, with further literature, Draeyer 1999; Sonderegger and Indermühle 2016; Curran 2016, 28–35; Sonderegger 2019; "Zeitschrift" 2021.

67 See Gutbrod 2012, 279–282.

68 See Verband Deutscher Architekten und Ingenieurvereine 1891.

69 On Lambert's draft, see, for example, Biland 1994, 7–12; Crettaz-Stürzel 2005, 176–178.

70 See Lambert 1891.

the design of the exterior. His architectural synthesis offered a surface for identification, in which various elements of Swiss building culture could be recognized.[71]

Determining the Museum's Location

The Federal Assembly's choice of the seat was finally determined by a controversial decision-making process.[72] The museum directors August W. Franks, Alfred Darcel, and August von Essenwein, who had been consulted in 1890 to assess the bids, favoured Bern because of the Burgundian collection, but also Zurich because of the proposed museum building; Basel and Lucerne were not seen as competitive, given the historical buildings they offered to house the museum.[73] Once Basel and Lucerne dropped out, the Council of States supported Zurich's bid, and the National Council that of Bern. Zurich's support by the Council of States was in keeping with the desires of the cantons of western Switzerland, which, according to the press at the time, did not want to increase Bern's power.[74] It is possible that the National Council members who rejected Zurich's proposal voted in favour of Bern to prevent a decision from being made.[75] The time that elapsed between the votes in the councils was riddled with conspiracies and accusations. Heinrich Angst, for example, supported the construction of the Catholic *Liebfrauenkirche* (built 1893–1894) in Protestant Zurich to win the Catholic councillors' votes for the Zurich location.[76] Not least against the backdrop of the first national jubilee in 1891 – an occasion for demonstrating unity rather than discord – the councils finally reached an agreement in favour of Zurich.[77]

Already during the bidding process, the Bernese had decided to realize their museum project regardless of the competition's outcome.[78] Basel also actualized its project in the *Barfüsserkirche*: by the end of 1890, it was already clear that Basel would not be considered by the Federal Assembly as a museum site, but work had already begun on the restoration of the church. Therefore, state archivist Rudolf Wackernagel in particular campaigned to promote cantonal museums in opposition to a national museum.[79] The museums in Basel and Bern opened while the Swiss National Museum in Zurich was still under construction, in 1894. The opening of the museum in Zurich in 1898 was celebrated with a parade by the cantons. Zurich presented itself as a city of education and science, as documented by photographs taken of several participating cantonal groups against the backdrop of large educational buildings, including the Federal Polytechnic School.

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71 Lafontant Vallotton 2007, 278.

72 For the chronology of events, see Sturzenegger 1999, 75–86.

73 Ibid., 63–75.

74 Ibid., 77–78.

75 Ibid., 78–80.

76 Ibid., 122–123.

77 The jubilee was referring to the constitutional document of the Federal Charter of 1291. See, for example, Kreis 2011.

78 The name '*Schweizerisches Nationalmuseum*' remained in use for the museum in Bern until 1893. See Germann 1994, 259.

79 On the *Antimuseums-Petition* (antimuseum petition), see Sturzenegger 1999, 134–144.

Epilogue

Gull's outstanding architectural career began with the design of the Swiss National Museum in Zurich in 1890.[80] In the municipal architecture office between 1895 and 1900 and as a freelance architect and professor at the Federal Polytechnic School as of 1900, he played a leading role in transforming Zurich's medieval monastic grounds into municipal complexes that referenced the former building fabric. He won the competition for the expansion of the Federal Polytechnic School in 1909, for which he extended Semper's main building with a rotunda, later distinguished by a dome (built 1914–1925). Gull thus established the architectural core of the *Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich* (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, known as ETH Zurich)[81] and drew a parallel with Hans Wilhelm Auer's parliament building in Bern (built 1894–1902 as the main part of the Federal Palace), in which the Semper-influenced Swiss neo-Renaissance tradition culminated around 1900.[82] In the context of Gull's work, the National Museum Zurich and the extension of the main building of ETH Zurich form stylistic counterpoints. Nevertheless, the structures belong together (fig. 8): conceived as national monuments and as complementary educational sites in Zurich's 1890 bid for the seat of the Swiss National Museum, the two represent architectural poles in the search for a national identity between the old confederation of states and the modern federal state.

80 On Gustav Gull's architectural career, see, for example, Gutbrod and Kurz 2017, 123–132.

81 In 1911, the Federal Polytechnic School was renamend the *Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule* (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology). See https://ethz.ch/en/the-eth-zurich/portrait/history/epochs/1904-1911.html. On the expansion of the ETH's main building by Gull, see Hassler and Kainz 2016.

82 See, for example, Hauser 2003, 215–216.

Fig. 8: Photograph by Adolf Moser showing the city of Zurich, 1902. Left: Schweizerisches Landesmuseum (built 1892–1898 by Gustav Gull); right: Hauptbahnhof (built 1865–1871 by Jakob Friedrich Wanner), and in the background behind the museum building the Eidgenössisches Polytechnikum (built 1859–1868 by Gottfried Semper), view from the northwest; foreground: Zollbrücke and the tram bridge over the Sihl River. The tower of the Predigerkirche, designed by Gustav Gull in 1896, and the towers of the Grossmünster are visible in the urban fabric.

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Fig. 1: Burgerbibliothek Bern, FR.E.706.
Fig. 2: ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, Bildarchiv, Ans_05121-FL.
Fig. 3: *Nebelspalter* 14, 30 June 1888, no. 27. e-periodica.
Fig. 4: "Basel und das Schweizerische Nationalmuseum" 1888. Zentralbibliothek Zürich, Alte Drucke, DW 1920.
Fig. 5: "Eingabe der luzernischen Behörden" 1890. Zentralbibliothek Zürich, Alte Drucke, Fol. 407.
Fig. 6: "Schweizerisches Nationalmuseum" 1888. University Library Bern, BeM KMU YB 2501.
Fig. 7: "Zürich und das Schweizerische Landes-Museum" 1890, pl. 2. gta Archiv / ETH Zurich.
Fig. 8: Baugeschichtliches Archiv der Stadt Zürich.

The Birth of National Museums in Rome after the Italian Unification

Cultural Policies and Education[1]

Maria Vittoria Marini Clarelli

Museums and Heritage

When Rome was proclaimed the capital of Italy on 3 February 1871, the main museums of the city were the Vatican, which remained closed at the disposal of the pope,[2] and the *Musei Capitolini* (Capitoline Museums),[3] which were owned by the municipality. Although all the capitals of the pre-unification states owned rich collections of antiquities and art, it was decided to leave them in their original contexts, and in some cases even in their current buildings. Therefore, a constellation of national museums and galleries is spread across the Italian peninsula. To understand the reasons for this choice – as a result of which the Italian state lacks a museum on the scale of the British Museum, London, the *Musée du Louvre* (Louvre Museum), Paris, or the *Эрмитаж* (Hermitage), Saint Petersburg – we must consider that, already in the eighteenth century in Italy, the museum had become a metaphor for the country.[4] In this 'widespread museum', destination of the Grand Tour, if the collections of the *Gallerie degli Uffizi* (Uffizi Galleries) had left Florence or those of the *Museo Borbonico* (Bourbon Museum) had left Naples, the cultural world would have revolted. The museum city *par excellence*, however, was Rome itself. As Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy wrote in 1796:

> The real museum of Rome, the one I am talking about, certainly consists of statues, colossi, temples, obelisks, [...] etc ., but nevertheless it is composed of places, sites, mountains, roads, ancient streets, the respective positions of the ruined city, geograph-

1 English translation by Antonio Plescia.

2 On the Vatican Museums in the nineteenth century, see Pietrangeli 1985, 169–196.

3 Magagnini 1994; Parisi Presicce 2010; Arata 2016.

4 Marini Clarelli 2008, 73–74.

> ical relationships, relationships between all objects, memories, local traditions, the still existing uses, the comparisons that cannot be made except in the country itself.[5]

Quatremère de Quincy's notion of Rome as a 'museum city' was still alive when it came to deciding how to set up the national museums of the capital. This was, in my opinion, the first of four main factors that influenced their creation.[6]

The second factor was the cultural and topographic relationship among ancient, papal, and modern Rome.[7] The paradigm of three cities became a source of conflict between the municipality, which was still linked to the second, and the state, which sought to unify the third with the first. The model of the open-air museum could be used to assign greater visibility to the archaeological remains of the Roman past.[8] The third factor was the tension between the local vision and the national one. This was a common theme of the cultural debates in the new-born Kingdom of Italy, but in Rome it had a deeper meaning. Indeed, only here was the local dimension also international. Many foreign intellectuals were disappointed with the transformation of the universal city into another national capital among many.[9] In addition, Roman identity was stronger than its Italian counterpart: it coincided with a model of citizenship (*civis romanus*) and of Catholicism (*romana ecclesia*). The Capitoline Museums themselves resulted from Pope Sixtus IV's 1471 donation of a group of Roman bronzes – including the symbolic she-wolf – to the *populus romanus*.[10]

Finally, the fourth factor was the entanglement with reformed approaches to the preservation of cultural heritage, which in Rome meant confronting two urgent issues: the management of archaeological materials found during urban-expansion projects, and the risk of dispersal of family art and antiquity collections. Papal legislation survived[11] until 1902, when a less protective national law on the conservation of

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5 "*Le véritable muséum de Rome, celui dont je parle, se compose, il est vrai, de statues, de colosses, de temples, d'obélisques –, de colonnes triomphales, de thermes, de cirques, d'amphithéâtres, d'arcs de triomphe, de tombeaux, de stucs, de fresques, de bas-reliefs, d'inscriptions, de fragments d'ornements, de matériaux de construction, de meubles, d'ustensiles, etc. etc. mais il ne se compose pas moins des lieux, des sites, des montagnes, des carrières, des routes antiques, des positions respectives des villes ruinées, des rapports géographiques, des relations de tous les objets entre eux, des souvenirs, des traditions locales, des usages encore existants, des parallèles et des rapprochements qui ne peuvent se faire que dans le pays même*"; Quatremère de Quincy 1796, 22.

6 On the birth of state museums in Rome, see Bernini 1997. On the archaeological museums, see Curzi 1998; Dyson 2019, 129–153.

7 On the three cities, see Marini Clarelli 2021.

8 Dyson 2019, 5.

9 Ibid.

10 Parisi Presicce 2000.

11 In the midst of the Napoleonic invasion of Italy, the edict of 2 October 1802 issued by Cardinal Doria Pamphilj extended existing prohibitions on the destruction of ancient buildings, whether publicly or privately owned, as well as the requirement of licenses for the export of objects and the imposition of a twenty percent tax on such exports. Thereafter, the edict of 7 April 1820 issued by Cardinal Pacca was the most comprehensive heritage legislation in Europe. See Volpe 2007, 49–51.

monuments, antiquities, and fine-art objects was passed,[12] but, as we shall see later, gradually the safeguard of cultural patrimony became more and more important in the nation-building process.[13] While the legislative procedure was quite long, the reform of the preservational model inherited from the papacy was almost immediate and the institution of ministerial offices dealing with excavations and monuments was parallel to that of new museums. Significantly, the Crown did not intervene in this process. The Vatican and the Capitoline, the two hills where the existing authorities were based, each housed a museum that was historically connected to the power they embodied. On the contrary, the palace on the third and most important hill, the Quirinal, was found completely empty by King Victor Emmanuel II (r. 1861–1878), when he settled there on 2 July 1871, leaving his dynastic collection in Turin. While the Quirinal was transformed into a royal palace, the state museums initially shared the same location as the parliament, the ministries, and other state offices, all of which were provisionally housed in ecclesiastical buildings confiscated from the religious orders.

The Citadel of Culture

The first minister of education to address the question of museums was an intellectual of the calibre of Ruggiero Bonghi (1826–1895), a university professor of philosophy and ancient literature and a member of parliament famous for his oratory skills.[14] The occasion was the passage to the state, in 1873, of the entire Jesuit *Collegio romano* (Roman College), where the university and the schools of the company were located, together with the *Musaeum Kircherianum* (Kircherian Museum), which had been founded in 1651 by father Athanasius Kircher, whose collections encompassed everything from natural sciences to physics, from archaeology to esoterism. In 1870, immediately after the capture of Rome, the first public high school in the capital – named after the archaeologist Ennio Quirino Visconti – was founded in one part of the building, alongside an astronomical observatory and the illustrious Jesuit who had made it famous, Father Angelo Secchi. Bonghi set up a sort of interdisciplinary citadel of culture, consisting of the *Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma* (National Central Library of Rome), the *Circolo Filologico* (Philological Circle), the *Società Geografica* (Geographical Society), the Kircherian Museum, which was refurbished to include only the archaeological collection, and six new museums of an educational and experimental type. (fig. 1) Instead of competing with the great collections of the Vatican and the municipality, as well as with the private museum Prince Torlonia was opening at the same time to present his collection of classical statuary,[15] an

12 On the legislative debate on heritage protection from law no. 286 of 28 June 1871 to law no. 185 of 12 June 1902, see Volpe 2007, 60–77; Thatcher 2018, 75–76.

13 On the relationship between cultural heritage and nation-building in Europe, see Poulot 2006, 134–136.

14 On Bonghi as minister of education, see Ciampi 2004.

15 The Torlonia Museum at the *Palazzo Corsini alla Lungara* was founded by Prince Alessandro Torlonia in 1875 following a long series of acquisitions of ancient Greek and Roman sculptures. It is still highly representative of the history of the collecting of antiquities in Rome from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries. See Settis and Gasparri 2020.

attempt was made to inaugurate collections corresponding to new orientations within academic research and pedagogy. The *Museo scolasatico* (Educational Museum) was tasked with proposing "the best didactic systems" and "examples and models of everything pertaining to the schools of the Kingdom".[16] The *Museo dei Gessi* (Plaster Museum), deemed "necessary for a well-founded and effective teaching of archaeology",[17] already had the casts of the Aegina pediment and the part of the Parthenon frieze left in Athens, and efforts were underway to acquire the casts of the sculptures kept in the British Museum. In addition, there was the *Museo del Medioevo e del Rinascimento* (Museum of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance) for the study of applied arts, founded by Prince Baldassarre Odescalchi and the jeweller and art dealer Augusto Castellani on the model of the South Kensington Museum (today the Victoria and Albert Museum), London.[18] Three new archaeological museums were set up on the first floor, which, as the minister declared in his inaugural speech on 14 March 1876, "have no ambition to appear splendid; they are and want to remain modest in all their appearances, and assume only that they can become a reliable and serious object of study".[19] The choice to start from archaeology was aligned with the creation, in 1875, of the *Direzione Centrale degli Scavi e Musei del Regno* (Central Directorate for Excavations and Museums within the Ministry), entrusted to the illustrious archaeologist Giuseppe Fiorelli.[20] It was also a way of joining ancient and modern Rome, leaving on the sidelines the second Rome, that of the popes. Bonghi noted that

> the *Museo Preistorico* [Prehistoric Museum] is meant to divulge knowledge of the conditions of the peoples of this Italy of ours before they had a history, they who were

16 "*Entrati nella Corte che ci si para dinanzi, si vede dirimpetto il Museo scolastico creato anch'esso in questi ultimi anni, ed inteso così a svegliare l'amore della discussione come a migliorare e chiarire le idee intorno a' migliori ordinamenti didattici, e a fornire esempi e modelli di ogni cosa attinente alle scuole del Regno elementari e secondarie, classiche e tecniche, ed a fornire di libri e di aiuti i Professori*"; Bonghi 1876, 11.

17 "*Dirimpetto alla prima tesa della scala un'altra porta mette nel Museo dei Gessi, istituzione appena iniziata, ma di grande e riconosciuta utilità, poiché è necessario ad un fondato ed efficace insegnamento dell'archeologia l'avere dinanzi agli occhi ordinata e continua la serie delle principali e più antiche opera che la ispirazione dell'arte ha create*"; ibid., 11. That first nucleus of the Plaster Museum became the property of the University of Rome, thanks to the efforts of the Austrian archaeologist Emanuel Löwy, who, after his nomination as professor of History of Ancient Art in 1889–1890, worked to create a collection that could compete with the university plaster-cast collections that had arisen in Europe. He directed the museum until 1915. On its history, see Barbanera 1995.

18 This museum had been founded in 1872 under the name *Museo Artistico Industriale* (Museum of Industrial Arts), for the purpose of collecting artifacts from ancient times to the seventeenth century and, at the same time, of training craftsmen. It was inaugurated on 23 February 1874 in the former convent of *San Lorenzo in Lucina*. Its second venue (1875–1880) was the Roman College; from there, it moved to the convent of *San Giuseppe a Capo le Case* (1880–1913). When the museum closed, the collections were dismembered and moved to the storerooms of various Roman museums. See Borghini 2005; Coen 2020, 69–78; Raimondi 2021.

19 "*Non hanno nessuna ambizione di apparire splendidi; sono e vogliono rimanere modesti in ogni loro apparenza, e presumono solo di poter diventare oggetto sicuro e serio di studio*"; Bonghi 1876, 20.

20 The first state office dealing with cultural heritage in Rome was the *Sopraintendenza per gli scavi di antichità e per la custodia e conservazione dei monumenti* (Superintendent for Excavations of Antiquities and for the Stewardship and Conservation of Monuments), directed by Pietro Rosa from 1870 until its dissolution in 1875. See Delpino and Dubbini 2011.

among the first to have one, and who then held such a great place in it; the other, the *Museo Italico* [Italic Museum], is meant to inform about those Italic civilizations that developed before the Roman, and lived for several centuries next to it; the third, the *Museo Lapidario* [Lapidary Museum], is meant to show in the scientifically arranged inscriptions the organization of that powerful social, political, religious life which had its centre here for so many centuries, and which from here conquered with weapons and then shaped with its ideas the civilized and barbarian world with which it gradually came in contact.[21]

Fig. 1: Antonio Bonamore, The Education Museum in the Collegio Romano.

21 *"Il pensiero onde son mossi è questo, di dare, l'uno, il Museo preistorico, cognizione delle condizioni dei popoli di questa Italia nostra prima che avessero una storia, essi che sono stati tra i primi ad averne una, e soli poi, non hanno cessato mai di tenervi così gran posto, l'altro, il Museo Italico, di dare notizia di quelle civiltà italiche che si svilupparono prima della romana, e vissero per più secoli accanto a questa, il terzo, il Museo Lapidario di mostrare nelle iscrizioni scientificamente disposte l'ordinamento di quella potente vita sociale, politica, religiosa che ebbe centro qui per tanti secoli, e di qui conquistò colle armi e plasmò di nuovo colle sue idee il mondo civile e barbaro con il quale venne via via in contatto"*; Bonghi 1876, 20–21. See also Bruni 2001, 778–779. On the Italic Museum, projected by Gianfrancesco Gamurrini, see Magagnini 1998; Delpino 2001, 632–633.

The Museum of Prehistory and Ethnography

Of these new museums, the only one that remained at the Roman College after the fall of the government on 18 March 1876 – that is, four days after the inauguration – was the *Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico* (National Museum of Prehistory and Ethnography, fig. 2), now named after its founder, Luigi Pigorini, who in 1881 summarized the museum's duties as follows:

> it is divided into two large classes, the prehistoric and the ethnographic. The first includes what the various peoples left in the Italian provinces and in the foreign districts, from the Palaeolithic Age to the end of the Early Iron Age. In the other, we admire what living families manufacture or use, which have remained some more, some less in conditions of civilization inferior to ours, starting from the savage state. And the reason for the parallel between the two classes lies in the fact that in the infinite variety of uses and customs of peoples less civilized than us, we still find today the image of our more distant past, the explanation of the way of life and industrial processes of prehistoric populations.[22]

The first group of materials was collected thanks to a circular (no. 458, dated 8 November 1875) from Fiorelli, Director General of Excavations and Museums, who invited the regional inspectors of excavations and monuments to collaborate on the foundation of the museum, namely, by contributing a selection of significant 'prehistoric relics' found in their territories.[23] "It was necessary to find out and collect those antiquities for the museum, that would fill gaps in national history, to find in the most distant ages the features of our country when it was called for the first time Italy",[24] Pigorini wrote some years later. In 1882, the museum acquired the prehistoric materials still preserved in the Kircherian Museum, and by the last decades of the nineteenth century the institution proved to be most conducive to nation-building, in that its main goal was to demonstrate how ancient the history of Italy was. As Maria Gabriella Lerario has pointed out,

> according to Pigorini, prehistoric populations moved from the north to the south of the Italian peninsula, creating new settlements; in doing so, they established the cultural basis, which connected the territory and shaped Italy. In this interpretation, the present and the past were tightly connected to the freshly established Italian unity.[25]

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22 "*Il Museo è diviso in due grandi classi, la preistorica e l'etnografica. Comprende la prima quanto nelle provincie italiane e nelle contrade estere lasciarono le varie genti, dall'età archeolitica al chiudersi della prima età del ferro. Nell'altra ammirasi ciò che fabbricano od usano famiglie viventi, rimaste quali più, quali meno in condizioni di civiltà inferiori alla nostra, a partire dallo stato selvaggio. E la ragione del ostume fra le due ostumeta in ciò, che nella infinita varietà di usi e ostume di popoli meno civili di noi, trovasi ancora l'immagine del nostro passato più lontano, la spiegazione della maniera di vita e dei processi industriali delle popolazioni preistoriche*"; Pigorini 1881, 3.

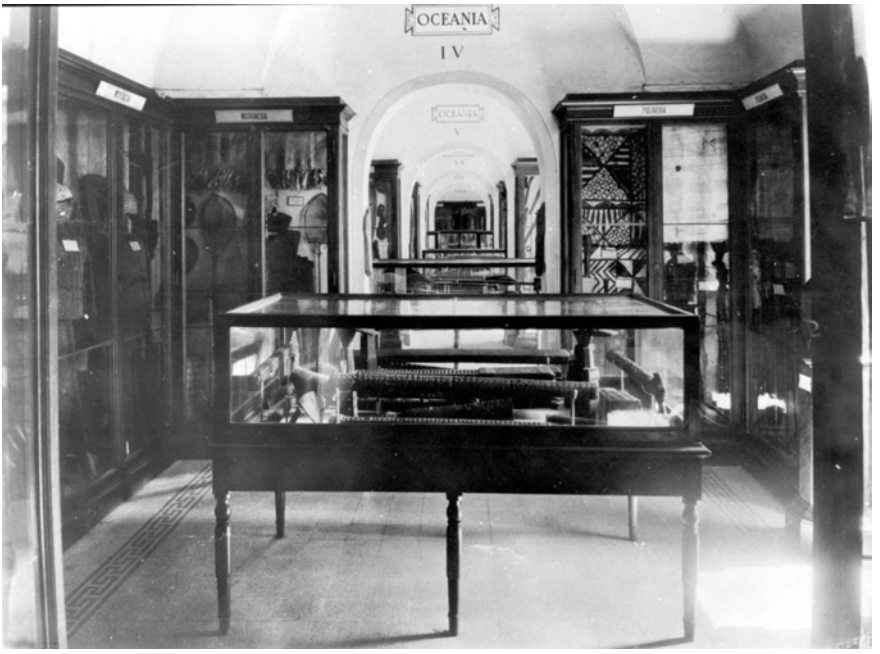
23 See Lerario 2012, 60.

24 "*Era necessario cercare e raccogliere in un museo simili antichità, per colmare delle lacune nella storia nazionale, per trovare nelle età più lontane la ragione di quello che era il nostro paese allorché ebbe per la prima volta il nome d'Italia*"; Pigorini, 1891, 599. See also Lerario 2012, 67.

25 Lerario 2012, 50.

Therefore, the debate on the *Antiquity of the Italian Nation*, as Antonino de Francesco titled his book on this subject,[26] referring to the autochthony of some or all of the pre-Roman inhabitants of the Italia peninsula, assumed a museological form. Pigorini also made the museum a driving force for palaeo-ethological studies through the courses the chair entrusted to him.[27]

Fig. 2: View of the Foreign Ethnography section of the Museum of Prehistory and Ethnography.



26 De Francesco 2013.

27 Enriched with many other collections, the museum, named Luigi Pigorini after its founder, remained at the Roman College until 1962, when it began its transfer to the *Palazzo delle Scienze* in the EUR district of Rome, completed in 1977. Since 2016, it has been part of the Museum of Civilizations; for its history, see Lerario 2005.

The Project of a Museum of Ancient and Modern Art

The policy of small study museums continued for a few years, with the opening of antiquarian galleries in the archaeological areas subject to excavations. However, the city's expansion efforts were bringing to light a growing number of important finds that needed to be preserved and exhibited. In 1880, Fiorelli commissioned Pietro Rosa to present a project for a large national archaeological museum in which the plaster casts, the collections of the Kircherian museum, the *Museo Palatino* (Palatine Museum),[28] and the *Museo Tiberino* (Tiberine Museum),[29] plus the *Accademia di Belle Arti* (Academy of Fine Arts), would converge. The chosen area was that of the Baths of Diocletian, a complex which included the former monastery of *Santa Maria degli Angeli e dei Martiri*, built on a design by Michelangelo and still occupied by the Carthusian monks though falling under the jurisdiction of the municipality, while the sixteenth-century cloister belonged to the Ministry of War, which used it as a warehouse for materials. The location was strategic, because the baths were located close to the railway station, faced the modern *piazza dell'Esedra*, and dominated the elegant *via Nazionale*, but both the Carthusians and the municipality opposed the project.[30] The following year, in 1881, the doctor Guido Baccelli was appointed minister of public education.[31] Taking up the question of museums, he immediately asked Rosa to modify the project to also accommodate a national gallery of modern art – which, at that time, existed only on paper – within the complex of the Baths of Diocletian. What had brought about this change of course?

Baccelli immediately transformed the Directorate General of Monuments and Excavations, with the archaeological sector in its purview, into the *Direzione Generale Antichità e Belle Arti* (Directorate General of Antiquities and Fine Arts), which remained under Fiorelli's responsibility yet on which the academies of fine arts would also depend. As an advisory body for the artistic part, the *Commissione Permanente di Belle Arti* (Permanent Commission of Fine Arts) was created, again in 1881, consisting of painters, sculptors, and architects. Within these bodies, there emerged a conviction that it was necessary to separate the roles of teaching archaeology and art from those of managing museums. Therefore, with the Royal Decree of 13 March 1882 (no. 678), it was decided that "the galleries, art galleries and archaeological museums, annexed to the universities, academies and institutes of fine arts, would cease to be part of the aforementioned scientific or artistic institutes, and will have their own administration".[32]

The separation of institutions of teaching from those focused on the conservation of monuments and works of art had little effect on universities but greatly impacted

28 The Palatine Museum had been created in 1863 by the archaeologist Pietro Rosa to house archaeological materials excavated on Palatine Hill during the reign of Napoleon III. The building was razed in 1882 to connect the Roman Forum with Palatine Hill. See Tomei 1997.

29 The Tiberine Museum opened in 1879 in the botanical garden at the Lungara. It consisted of a garden with the remains of the Valentinian Bridge and four rooms with archaeological objects discovered during the excavations on the left bank of the Tiber. See Bruni 2001, 780.

30 Frezzotti 2011, 50–51.

31 On his biography, see Borghi 2015.

32 Marini Clarelli 2008, 83–85.

the academies of fine arts, which in many cases were equipped with important museums. Let us call to mind the *Pinacoteca di Brera* (Brera Pinacotheca) in Milan or the *Gallerie dell´Accademia di Venezia* (Accademia Gallery of Venice), which became national galleries. The artists lost their traditional role as museum directors, and in return the minister promised to create a national gallery of modern art. In 1883, still nothing had been done, and the artists – led by the sculptor Ettore Ferrari, and also thanks to his high rank in the Masonic hierarchy – promoted a parliamentary interrogation. Thus, on 26 July 1883, "a national gallery of modern art, which will consist of excellent works in painting, sculpture and engraving, without distinction of genre or manner",[33] and relating to the period following the unification of Italy, was finally established.

For this reason Minister Baccelli asked Pietro Rosa and his architect son, Salvatore, to modify their project for a single museum of ancient and modern art located in the Baths of Diocletian, where only part of the archaeological structure was accessible.[34] Strange as it may seem now, this proposal had the same political implications as the connection between ancient and modern Rome that was pursued through the archaeological excavations. The new square in front of the baths was to host the *Accademia dei Lincei* (Lincean Academy), the *Istituto di Archeologia* (Institute of Archaeology), and the Academy of Fine Arts in order to maintain the link among museums, research, and education. The Permanent Commission of Fine Arts), however, rejected the museum project, as the necessary works would have altered Michelangelo's cloister.[35]

The National Gallery of Modern Art and the National Roman Museum

Under the new minister, Michele Coppino, the *Galleria Nazionale d´Arte Moderna* (National Gallery of Modern Art) was temporarily placed in the *Palazzo delle Esposizioni*; the new exhibition space was erected on *via Nazionale* by Pio Piacentini, the winning architect of the 1877 design competition, and opened in 1883 (fig. 3).[36] On 5 March 1885, the National Gallery of Modern Art was inaugurated with 115 works crammed into 350 square metres that had been made available, very reluctantly, by the municipality of Rome, the owner of the building.[37]

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33 Royal Decree, 26 July 1883, no. 1526, article 1: "*E' istituita in Roma una galleria nazionale d'arte moderna, la quale si comporrà di lavori eccellenti in pittura, scultura, disegno ed incisione, senza distinzione di genere o maniera*".

34 The baths were commissioned by Maximian in honour of Diocletian in 298 and built between May 305 and July 306, by which point both of them had already abdicated. Restored at the beginning of the fifth century, they remained in use until 537. In 1561, Pius IV ordered their transformation into a Carthusian monastery and a church dedicated to *Santa Maria degli Angeli e dei Martiri*, following a design by Michelangelo, but the construction continued throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In 1884, the Carthusians abandoned the charterhouse.

35 No more fortunate was another design made by Giuseppe Sacconi at the request of Fiorelli between 1885 and 1886, see Frezzotti 2011, 52.

36 Pirani 2021, with full bibliography.

37 Lafranconi 2006, 19–26.

Fig. 3: Dante Paolocci, Palazzo delle Esposizioni. Central Hall.

Meanwhile, for a national archaeological museum, an agreement was being sought between the state and the municipality.[38] Fiorelli, supported by Mayor Leopoldo Torlonia, was assisted by Rodolfo Lanciani, an engineer and archaeologist destined for a brilliant career.[39] At first, two buildings were conceived, one for the urban antiquities, run by the municipality, and the other for those found outside the city limits, run by the state. Ultimately, however, the decision was made to build an entirely new venue on the Caelian Hill, as attested by the minutes of the *Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma* (Municipal Archaeological Commission) from 1884 to 1887.[40] In 1887, Lanciani prepared the scientific project, and the architect Costantino Sneider the design.[41] On 15 February 1887, an agreement was reached stipulating that two thirds of the costs be borne by the state and one third by the municipality; the latter would also give the antiquities already in its possession, excluding those of the Capitoline Museums. But the new minister Paolo Boselli, worried about the very high costs, did not agree to these terms. Thus, in 1889, the *Museo Nazionale Romano* (National Roman Museum) was established by the state alone (Royal Decree, 7 February 1889, no. 5958), with its holdings displaced to two locations, each insufficient: the section of urban antiquities was placed within the complex of the Baths of Diocletian (fig. 4), and that of extra-urban antiquities provisionally at *Villa Giulia*, in the building designed by Vignola, where today the *Museo Nazionale Etrusco* (Etruscan Museum) is located.[42]

38 Bruni 2011, 782–785.

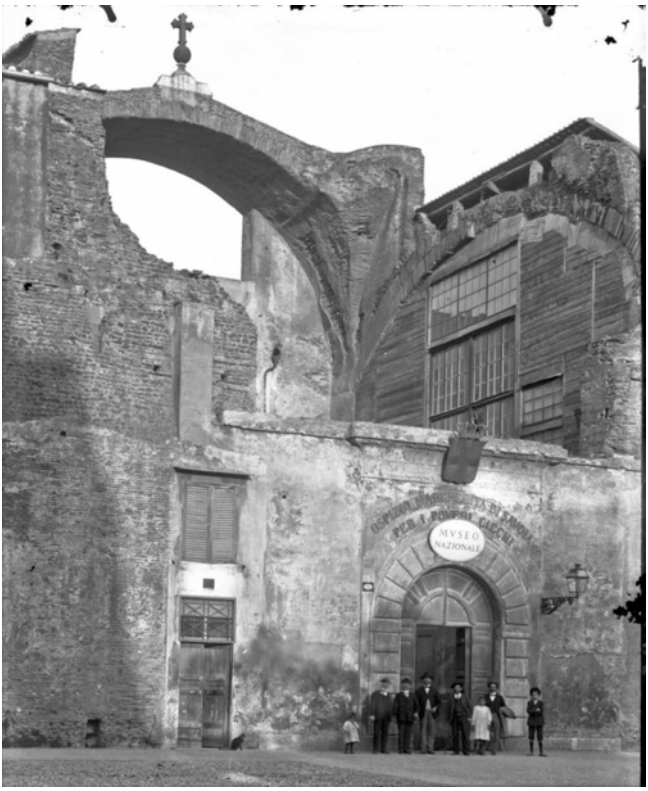
39 On Lanciani, see Palombi 2006.

40 Pallottino and Volpe 2021, 167–168. The commission was created in 1872 for managing the archaeological sites and museums of the city, overseeing excavations, and preserving the finds. Lanciani was its first secretary.

41 Bernini 1997, 26–30, 75–76; Arata and Balestrieri 2010, 269–271.

42 Santagati 2004.

Fig. 4: View of the National Roman Museum at the Baths of Diocletian, between 1890 and 1911.



The arrangement of the objects in both venues was the work of Felice Barnabei, who had also brought together the archaeological collections of the Kircherian Museum, and in 1890 the museum was inaugurated. In the same year, the Austrian Emmanuel Löwy was installed as Chair of Classical Antiquities at the University of Rome – where he would teach until 1915[43] – and in 1892 he created the Plaster Museum, also incorporating the items previously housed in the Roman College.[44] On the Caelian Hill, instead of a museum, the municipal archaeological warehouse, known as the *Antiquarium*, was erected on Sneider's design and opened on 7 May 1894.[45] In the inner garden of the *Palazzo dei Conservatori*, an octagonal wooden pavilion designed by Virginio Vespignani was erected as a temporary gallery.[46] It was demolished in 1903, when Lanciani reorganized the Capitoline Museums.[47]

43 Barbanera 2015, 88–94.
44 Barbanera 1995, 1–19.
45 Palombi 2006, 143–146.
46 Sommella 1992, 146.
47 Palombi 2006, 93.

Meanwhile, a plan had been approved by law in 1887 to create an enormous archaeological park encompassing most of the major Roman ruins.[48] It was a political success on the part of Minister Baccelli, but this over-ambitious goal was never entirely achieved. Nonetheless, it marked the beginning of a process that led, on the one hand, to the creation of the largest archaeological area in a town centre and, on the other hand, to Fascism's inheritance of a useful tool for manipulating urban planning in the name of a new imperial Rome.

The National Gallery of Ancient Art and the Borghese Gallery

Guido Baccelli returned to his role as minister between 1893 and 1895, and – in addition to facilitating the nomination of the director of the National Gallery of Modern Art in the person of the painter Francesco Jacovacci, who would hold the position until 1908[49] – he resumed another project of which we have not yet spoken: that of the *Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica* (National Gallery of Ancient Art), begun in 1883 with the purchase of *Palazzo Corsini alla Lungara* and the donation to the state of its rich picture gallery.[50] Like other great Roman galleries formed by the papal or cardinal families (the Borghese, the Barberini, the Colonna, the Spada, the Doria, the Torlonia, the Boncompagni Ludovisi, the Sciarra, the Rospigliosi, etc.), the Corsini collection remained intact on account of the inheritance clause of *fidecommisso*.[51] However, the only way to ensure that these historic Roman art galleries would be for public use was to acquire them, either by buying them or by having them donated by the owners when the state bought the building in which they were housed. The Corsini gallery was therefore the first nucleus of the National Gallery of Ancient Art (fig. 5), which, upon its establishment by the Royal Decree of 6 June 1895, also included the collections of the Torlonia and Odescalchi families and of a financial agency called the Monte di Pietà. The museum was commissioned by Adolfo Venturi, the famous art historian who would become its director in 1898, and was inaugurated on 9 June 1895 in the presence of the king of Italy. In subsequent years, the additions to the collection followed one after the other at an intense pace, with the purchase of the Sciarra (1896), Hertz (1915), and Chigi (1918) collections. The state, however, chose to leave the most important of the Roman collections, the Borghese, where it was.

48 Law no. 4730 of 14 July 1887, *Piano per la sistemazione della zona monumentale di Roma*.

49 Lafranconi 2006, 24–28.

50 On the collection and its history, see Borsellino 2017.

51 Law no. 286 of 29 June 1871 established that the principle of the *maggiorasco*, or primogeniture, would also be suppressed for the artistic collections, reiterating, however, the prohibition, on the part of the heirs as a whole, to divide or sell them, see Volpe 2007, 60–67.

Fig. 5: Ludovico Tuminello, The First Hall of the Galleria Corsini, 1883.

In 1887, the Borghese family, involved in a financial crash, began to put pressure on the state by asking that it decide either to buy the collection or to drop a restriction that disallowed the owners from selling the works abroad. Wilhelm von Bode, director of the *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin* (Berlin State Museums), was commissioned to estimate, on a piece-by-piece basis, the value of the works. Two factions emerged in parliament: the first favoured finding a solution that mitigated state spending through the acquisition of some of the Borghese works for free and the owners' sale of the remaining works on the free market; meanwhile, the opposing party favoured the purchase of the entire collection at a cost that was certainly much lower than market estimates, given the endurance of the sale restriction, but was in any case still substantial in an economy that was anything but thriving. While the negotiation was in progress, Baron Rothschild offered to purchase a single work – namely, Titian's *Sacred and Profane Love*, for 4,000,000 lire – while the rest of the collection would be passed on to the state without any charge. Although the offer was tempting and the Borghese agreed to it, it was rejected on the advice of an artistic commission of three experts appointed by Minister Baccelli, which included Venturi, who had rearranged the collection in 1891 and published the catalogue in 1893. The complex in which the collection was displayed was bought in 1901 for a sum of 3,600,000 lire, less than that proposed by Rothschild.[52] It was opened to the public in 1902, and the first director was Giovanni Piancastelli. Venturi had already left for the University of Rome, where a chair of art history was finally created for him, after twelve years

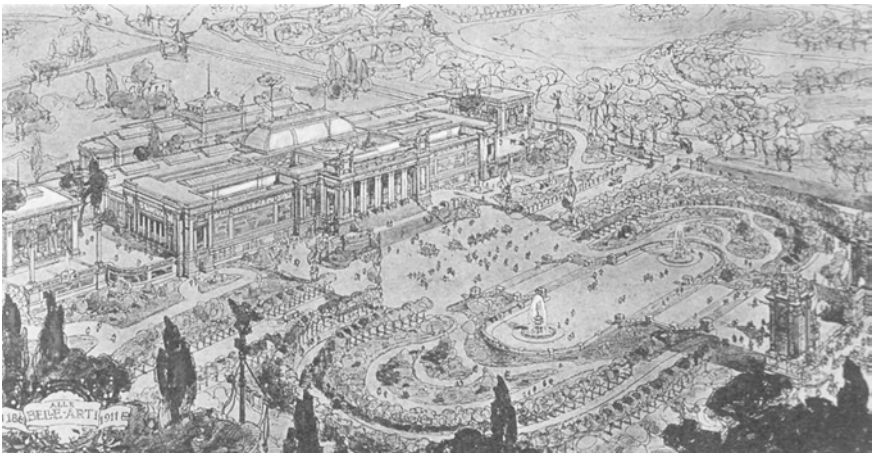
52 Staccioli 1995. On the same date, the expropriation of *Villa Borghese* was approved by vote, with an indemnity of 3,000,000.

of teaching.[53] His monumental *Storia dell'arte italiana*, published in forty volumes, would become the greatest testimony against the possibility of encompassing the breadth and variety of Italian works of art in a single national museum.

The Exhibitions of 1911

The epilogue of our story coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the unification of Italy and with the celebrations organized for that occasion. It was a favourable period. In 1909, a new law on the preservation of cultural heritage had increased ministerial control over the cataloguing, excavations, exportation, and modification of cultural assets.[54] It was the victory of a coalition of intellectuals and senior administrators from the Ministry of Education, who shared the belief that cultural heritage was essential for national identity.[55] Not by accident, the minister of education Luigi Rava and the director general Corrado Ricci were born in the same city, Ravenna.

Fig. 6: Unknown artist, The Park of Fine Arts and the Pavilion of the National Gallery of Modern Art, engraving, 1911.



53 Cavenago 2020. He was also the founder of the postgraduate school of art history at the same university.

54 Law no. 364 for antiquities and the fine arts of 20 June 1909, see Balzani 2004.

55 Thatcher 2018, 76–78.

The 1911 *Esposizione internazionale d'arte* (International Exhibition of Art) solved the problem of the seat of the National Gallery of Modern Art (fig. 6). In fact, the mayor of Rome at the time, Ernesto Nathan, had in 1908 proposed the purchase of a private property, the Cartoni vineyard in Valle Giulia, as the location of the exhibition pavilions, allocating the main one to the modern-art gallery.[56] Designed by Cesare Bazzani in a beaux-arts style,[57] it was the only new museum erected in Rome and the only one whose collection was composed from a national perspective. At the same time, the 1911 exposition's executive committee opted to host the great archaeological exhibition in the Baths of Diocletian (fig. 7), and this was an opportunity to expropriate any private structures and to free the complex from other offices, thereby recovering its archaeological character. A commission headed by Rodolfo Lanciani ordered the demolition of any postclassical additions,[58] including the Baroque façade of the church of *Santa Maria degli Angeli e dei Martiri*, designed by Luigi Vanvitelli.[59] The scientific project of the exhibition conceived by Lanciani aimed to offer "a picture of Roman civilization, asking of each of the thirty-three provinces some memories of the benefits which they had from Rome under the various aspects of civil and private life and the especially in the area of public works".[60] It is worth mentioning that this celebration of the Roman Empire fell in the same year of the capture of Libya by the Italian army.[61] The colonial implications were not the only legacy this exhibition left to Fascist rhetoric: the austere and essentialist language employed in the display's design was also an anticipation of the cold aesthetics of the *romanità*, as Domenico Palombi has remarked.[62] Moreover, for purposes of cultural nationalism, Fascism emphasized the connection between ancient and modern Rome by focusing especially on archaeology and contemporary art.

56 In exchange, the municipality would receive the garden of *Villa Borghese* from the state, which it would "open to strolls".

57 On the design competition, see Pasquarelli 1980. On Bazzani's project, see Racheli 1980.

58 On the removal of modern structures, see Guidi and Paribeni 1911. On the history of the monument in the nineteenth century, see Serlorenzi and Laurenti 2002, 147–155. On the 1911 archaeological exhibition, see Palombi 2009; Liberati 2014; Caruso 2019. On the role of Rodolfo Lanciani, see Palombi 2006, 179–198.

59 Ricci 1909, 365.

60 "*Un quadro della civiltà romana, domandando a ciascuna delle sue trentatrè provincie qualche ricordo dei benefici avuti da Roma sotto i vari aspetti della vita civile e privata, e specialmente nel ramo delle opere pubbliche*"; Lanciani 1911, 9, review ed. by Strong 1911.

61 Palombi 2009; Dyson 2019, 150–152.

62 Palombi 2009, 90.

Fig. 7: Cover of the catalogue for the archaeological exhibition at the Baths of Diocletian, 1911.

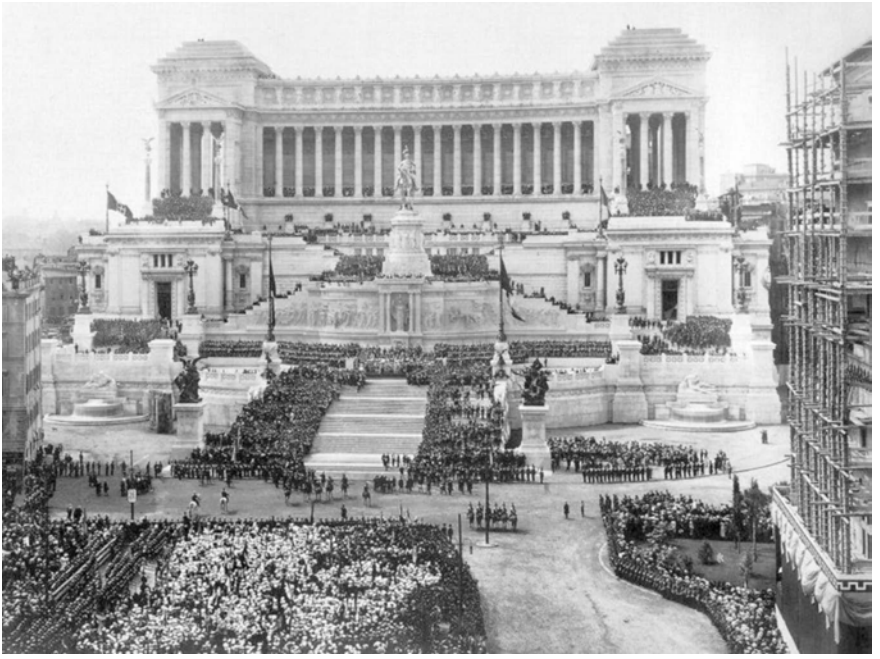
In 1911, the gigantic national monument to Victor Emmanuel II, the first king of Italy, was finally inaugurated (fig. 8), which, through this figure, presents the most emphatic celebration of the *Risorgimento* – that is, the 'resurgence', or the process of national independence and unity – whose heroes and battlefields had already been evoked in Rome by a new toponymy and the dissemination of political statues in squares and parks.[63] The architect of this so-called *Vittoriano*, Giuseppe Sacconi, who had won the second design competition in 1885, died in 1905 without seeing its realization. Indeed, the structure was not completed until thirty years after the inauguration, and the *Museo Centrale del Risorgimento* (Central Museum of the Resurgence), whose creation had been proposed in 1890 and whose location Sacconi had already foreseen in 1905, opened another thirty years after that.[64] Many other museums of the *Risorgimento* have been founded in Italy since

63 Tobia 1991, 100–129; Berggren and Sjöstedt 1996; Brice 1997; Tobia 2021.

64 On the *Vittoriano*, see Porzio 1987–1988; Tobia 1998; Brice 2005; Coen 2020, 95–127, 235–278.

1884, when the first exhibition dedicated to it was held in Turin,[65] but none evolved into an institution devoted to national history. The *Vittoriano*, where the *Altare della Patria* (Altar of the Fatherland) and the *Tomba del Milite Ignoto* (Tomb of the Unknown Soldier) would also eventually be located, became the thermometer of patriotic sentiment – to be loved, hated, forgotten, and, only in the third millennium, rediscovered as a national symbol.[66]

Fig. 8: Roberto Reale or Domenico Anderson, Inauguration of the Monument to Victor Emmanuel II, 4 June 1911, Museo di Roma AF 8634.



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65 Baioni 1994.

66 Brice 2005, 5.

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Museums of a Stateless Nation, between History and Art

Polish National Museums in the Nineteenth Century

Kamila Kłudkiewicz

In his 1996 publication, the American researcher Allan Wallach mentioned two preconditions for the establishment of national museums in the nineteenth century:

> The first precondition is that there must be a centralized state power that has the ability to create and sustain national institutions. It follows that when such power exists, particular institutions and groups may claim national status and in some situations may be capable of designating themselves 'national', but their claims will, in the long run, be of relatively little consequence without the state's imprimatur. Second, the state must experience a need for a national gallery and a national collection. Needs of this sort vary, but they fall into two broad categories: the need to address a national audience, that is, to represent the nation to itself in a particular form and thus play a role in shaping it as, what Benedict Anderson calls, an "imagined community", and, second the need to address an international audience and thus represent the nation in relation to other nations.[1]

Wallach admitted that it is not always possible to identify these two conditions, especially because the beginnings of national museums were often independent from state initiatives, in particular when the state did not exist. Such was the case for the key Polish museum institutions in the nineteenth century: their origins lay in grassroots projects undertaken by individuals, associations, and, if the political situation allowed it, municipal and regional authorities. These museums developed at different paces – sometimes struggling with significant financial problems, sometimes altering their originary principles and visions for the future. To use Wallach's words, before 1918 they lacked the "state's imprimatur". Therefore, Polish museums expressed "the need to address an international audience and thus represent the nation in relation to other nations" to a much lesser extent than comparable institutions in other countries. The primary goal of the former was to unite Polish society and provide it with information on Polish history, culture, and art.

1 Wallach 1996, 113.

At the end of the eighteenth century, the historical territory of Poland was divided among Russia, Austria, and Prussia. Each of these countries had its own laws and policies towards Poles: take, for example, the policies of Russification and Germanization implemented by the Russian and German authorities in their respective territories and, contrastingly, the autonomy granted to Polish Galicia in Austria-Hungary after 1860. Despite the differences between the regions, in the second half of the nineteenth century, Poles founded museums that were perceived to be 'national', whether on a *de facto* basis – as attested by publications and written sources from the period – or because they had the word 'national' in their very name.[2]

Although early initiatives to create museums with the designation 'national' were undertaken in Poland as early as the eighteenth century,[3] actual national museums (or institutions considered to be such) only emerged after 1870. The latter consisted of: the *Musée National Polonais* (Polish National Museum) in Rapperswil, Switzerland (opened 1870), the *Muzeum im. Mielżyńskich w Poznaniu* (Mielżyński Museum in Poznań, 1881), the *Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie* (National Museum in Krakow, 1883), the *Muzeum Narodowe im. Króla Jana III we Lwowie* (King Jan III National Museum in Lviv, 1908), and the *Muzeum Sztuk Pięknych w Warszawie* (Museum of Fine Arts in Warsaw), which was called after 1916 the *Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie* (National Museum in Warsaw). The institutions in Lviv[4]

2 In this article I discuss institutions that, in the nineteenth century, functioned in the capacity of a national museum either directly, i.e. by including the 'national' component in their name, or indirectly by invoking the term in literature, private communications, or the press. In nineteenth-century Poland (understood to encompass the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth before 1775, i.e. before the first partition of Poland, currently within the borders of Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine, Belarus, and Latvia) over 500 museum institutions existed. Some did not go beyond the design phase, and others were very short-lived. They were established by Poles, Lithuanians, Russians, Germans, and Ukrainians, and their character varied – from museums associated with educational, religious, scientific, artistic, and industrial groups and institutions, to local museums, which were important for shaping regional identities. Museum institutions with various profiles were also established by Polish emigrants (Rapperswil, Rome, Lucerne, Chicago, Paris, Brussels). The list of museums operating in Poland before 1918 is published on the website of the research project "*Muzeum w polskiej kulturze pamięci*" (Museum of Polish Memorial Culture): http://muzeumpamieci.umk.pl/?page_id=74. The summary of the project can be found in Rosset, Tołysz, Wawrzak 2020.

3 The first (uncompleted) project of establishing a national gallery (*Proyekt Galleryi Sztuk wyzwolonych Narodowey*) was conceived by Józef Salezy Ossoliński in 1785, before the final collapse of Poland (see Ossoliński 2020, 71–96). In the years 1848–1850, a rather ephemeral private museum in Dresden was created by a collector, Maciej Wodziński. His widow named the institution the Wodziński National Museum. However, the collection was quickly transported from Dresden to Paris and incorporated into the collection of the Polish Library. See Rosset 1993, 1–46; Adamska 2007, 477–498.

4 The King Jan III National Museum was created in Lviv in 1908 in a tenement house on the Market Square. The house had belonged to the Sobieski family in the eighteenth century, frequently hosting the Polish king Jan III Sobieski. As it required a thorough renovation at the beginning of the twentieth century, only a modest collection of historical memorabilia connected with King Sobieski was displayed before the outbreak of World War I. It developed into a full-fledged institution after 1918. See Czołowski, 1911, 5.

and Warsaw[5] fall beyond the scope of this article, as their activities did not fully develop until the interwar period. For a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon in question, I will supplement this list with references to smaller museum institutions throughout the text.

The most important Polish national museums were established in large urban centres, namely in regional capitals (i.e. Poznań, the capital of Greater Poland in the nineteenth century within the borders of Prussia, and Krakow, the main city of Galicia in the nineteenth century within Austria and later Austria-Hungary), but also in other nations (i.e. Rapperswil in Switzerland). They were founded by city authorities, learned societies, or private collectors. The fact that the museums were established and managed by various entities made their activities very diverse.

However, one can observe two main areas of interest for Polish national museums in the nineteenth century: national (Polish) history, on the one hand, and Polish art, primarily contemporary painting, on the other. In some cases, like that of Rapperswil, the dominating elements of the collection were connected with historical elements that, at least initially, were also sentimental, nostalgic, and emotional in character. This sentimentality bespeaks the institution's intended influence on viewers. Elsewhere, the wish to exhibit and promote Polish art prevailed over the interest in objects related to national history (i.e. the Mielżyński Museum in Poznań). And certain museums underwent an evolution in their declared status, from that of a national gallery of painting to that of an institution attempting to show various aspects of Polish culture (National Museum in Krakow). The present analysis of the activity of these museums will focus on the discourse accompanying their creation, the goals set by their founders, and the curation of their exhibitions.

The History of Poland: From Nostalgic Vision to Scientific Collection

Interest in Poland's past, strengthened by the will to preserve and protect historical relics from being dispersed and destroyed, had guided Polish collecting efforts since the loss of independence. Initially, in the first half of the nineteenth century, it was private collectors who assembled historical artefacts. One of the first such figures was Izabella Czartoryska née Flemming (1746–1835), who created the *Świątynia Sybilli* (Temple of the Sybil) and the *Dom Gotycki* (Gothic House) in Puławy to display national treasures. The two buildings accommodating the aristocrat's collections are considered by some researchers to constitute the first Polish museum.[6] The Temple of the Sibyl housed weapons and memorabilia of military heroes along with items from the crown treasury and the treasury of the

5 The National Museum in Warsaw was officially established during World War I (1916). It included, among others, the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, which had existed in Warsaw since 1862. It was established as one of the educational institutions accepted by the Russian authorities under the "Public Education Act in the Kingdom of Poland", having been approved by Tsar Alexander II. It was a government institution under the control of the Ministry of Public Education of the Russian Empire. In 1898, its management was taken over by the city of Warsaw. The museum had no permanent home for more than half a century. See Masłowska 2002.

6 Żygulski 2010, 169.

Wawel Cathedral chapter in Krakow, the former seat of the Polish kings. Meanwhile, the holdings in the Gothic House were universal, with relics of famous figures from European culture and works by Old Masters.[7]

However, it was only after 1870 that collecting such relics became more institutionalized and ceased to be solely the domain of private collectors. Upon the establishment of the museum in Rapperswil – on the private initiative of Count Władysław Broel-Plater (1806–1889), an insurgent and émigré activist – the need to preserve historical memorabilia was emphasized. Broel-Plater had settled in Switzerland because the country welcomed Polish emigrants fleeing persecution by the tsarist authorities for having participated in national uprisings. Initially a private endeavour, the museum was subsequently transformed, according to its founder's wishes, into a public institution, operated by an émigré foundation under the supervision of a committee comprising both emigrants and Poles living under the foreign occupation. In 1869, Broel-Plater signed a lease agreement with the authorities of Rapperswil to occupy a medieval castle overlooking the town, with a term of ninety-nine years. The Polish National Museum officially opened within its walls on 23 October 1870.[8]

The intellectual rationale for using the word 'national' in the name of the museum reflects how the term 'nation' was understood at the time. In his essay "What a Nation Is and What It Needs to Exist", published in the *Album of the National Museum in Rapperswil* in 1872, the philosopher and activist Karol Libelt distinguished "nation" from "the closely related words: state, country, homeland", listing six features that he believed constituted the former: "tribalism, faith, language, customs, and rites, native and scientific education, the whole historical past".[9]

Libelt's definition was partly reflected in the construction and exposition of the Rapperswil museum. Initially, the collection was dominated by the library, which contained rich archival materials, including the correspondence and autographs of Polish kings and other historical figures. The 'Antiquities' section consisted of items from archaeological excavations (donated by the Society for the Advancement of Arts and Sciences in Poznań), weapons, and a significant collection of historical memorabilia. In the 'Art Collections' section, one could find portraits of kings and famous Polish men of state, along with other paintings, watercolours, and "photographs of works by the most distinguished Polish artists".[10] Broel-Plater prided himself on the diversity of the museum collection. In the text he authored on the occasion of the opening, he referred to the *Germanisches Nationalmuseum* (Germanic National Museum) in Nuremberg as a model of a private foundation that had been transformed into a public institution.[11] Indeed, Rapperswil – with its archaeological, historical, artistic, and even ethnographic artefacts (both originals

7 On the collecting activity of Izabella Czartoryska née Fleming, see above all Żygulski 2009; Jurkowska 2014 (includes an extensive bibliography of the previous studies); Mencfel 2021.

8 On the museum in Rapperswil see Bąbiak 2010, 142–151; Rosset 2005, 188–191; Janik 2010; Pomian 2016, 53–57.

9 Libelt 1872, 46.

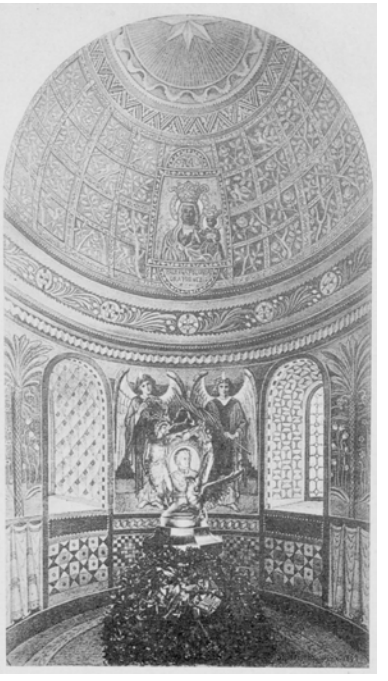
10 Broel-Plater 1872, XVI.

11 Ibid., XV.

and copies of various kinds) – echoed the founder's deep interest in the Nuremberg museum, which displayed all traces of German culture: texts, prehistoric artefacts, works of art, etc.

How did the museum present its collections, and, consequently, how did it construct its narrative and seek to affect its audience? The very entrance to Rapperswil Castle revealed the character of the collection.[12] The lintel of the gate leading to the castle courtyard was decorated with stone busts of the Polish king Kazimierz the Great (r. 1333–1370) and Queen Jadwiga (r. 1384–1399), as well as with the coats of arms of Poland and Lithuania (fig. 1). A mausoleum containing the heart of Tadeusz Kościuszko (1746–1817), the hero of the Polish fight for independence, was created in a small chapel on the ground floor of the structure (fig. 2).

Fig. 1 (left): View of the gate of the Polish National Museum in Rapperswil, before 1906;
Fig. 2 (right): Mausoleum with Tadeusz Kościuszko's heart, Polish National Museum in Rapperswil, postcard published by Kunstverlag Th. Zingg, before 1906.

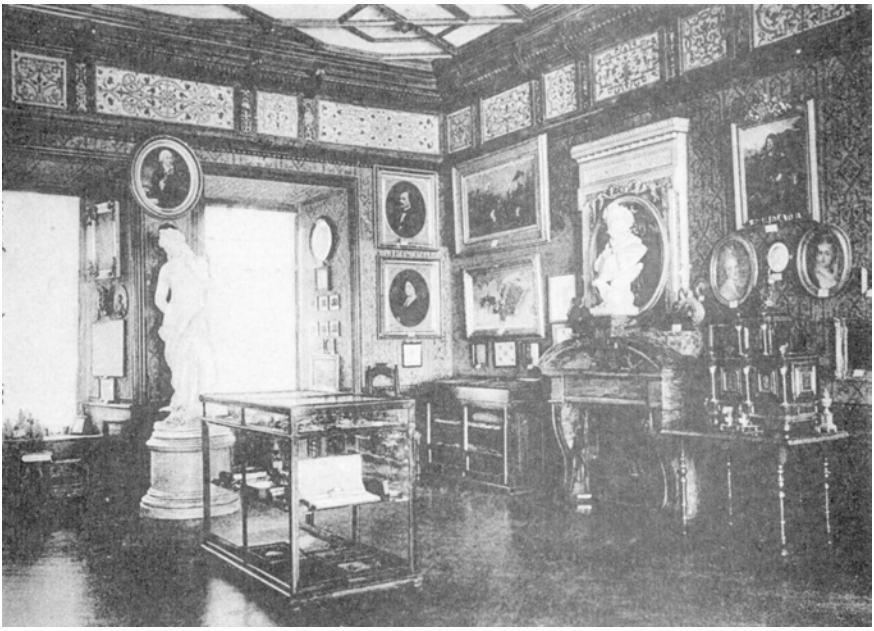


The exhibitions therein incorporated various items of ancient and recent memorabilia: visitors to the exhibition halls could see busts of Polish poets, military men, and heroes of the uprisings, alongside souvenir objects, such as a tablecloth given to King Jan Sobieski (r. 1674–1696) by the inhabitants of Gdańsk, or an 1832 letter of support from the English people to the Polish nation – with 100,000 signatures on a series of conjoined

12 Description of the Rapperswil Museum interiors based on museum catalogues ("Catalogue" 1872, "Le Musée national" 1909) and preserved photographs.

parchment sheets measuring over 36.5 metres in length. On the first floor of the museum, one could find the Portrait Room, containing primarily portraits of Polish kings, poets, politicians, and emigrants, as well as display cases housing mementoes of famous historical figures (fig. 3). On the same floor were the Uniform Room, presenting mainly the uniforms of the Polish army, and the Armoury, with old as well as modern weapons. The museum had further rooms, such as Tadeusz Kościuszko Hall, featuring mementoes of the hero arranged around the bed in which he died; Nicolaus Copernicus Hall, displaying portraits of the astronomer alongside editions of his works; and Friends of Poland Hall, which housed items related to foreigners supporting the Polish efforts to regain independence, among them Charles de Montalembert, George Washington, and Giuseppe Garibaldi.

Fig. 3: View of the portrait room of the Polish National Museum in Rapperswil.



The installation sought to affect the viewer mostly on an emotional level. Playing a major role in that respect were mementoes (mostly personal items) of heroes who had fought for independence. Rather than conveying knowledge about the history of Poland, the exhibition presented only selected historical events, often in a non-chronological order. Those responsible for the curation highlighted the subject matter and protagonist of each work rather than tracing historical development over time. Indeed, the exhibition was intended to shape the emotions of the recipients rather than to transfer knowledge. This atmosphere, evoking the sentimental and romantic collecting of historical items, was openly criticized in the Polish press already by the end of the nineteenth century. In 1911, Polish intellectuals, in particular the writer Stefan Żeromski, who had worked as a librarian in Rapperswil in the 1890s, accused the museum managers of malfeasance,

including the removal, mishandling, and damaging of collection items as well as the fabrication of new items.[13] In the 1911 brochure *For the Future of Rapperswil*, Żeromski called for a display that would meet the requirements of a "modern historical museum".[14] Many years would elapse before any institution in Polish territory would meet these demands. While almost every museum in Poland had a department dedicated to historical memorabilia,[15] none of them could be described as a coherent, well-thought-out and systematized collection that would shape knowledge about the past.

Visitor experience at the Rapperswil museum was informed by the emotionally charged, nostalgic atmosphere. A comparable mode of presenting the past could be found in the exhibitions that, in the mid-nineteenth century, acted as substitutes for museums and enjoyed great popularity and attendance. These were large undertakings involving Poles from all three partitions (i.e. Prussia, Austria, and Russia). The most important such events were the *Exhibition of Antiquities and Art Objects* in Warsaw in 1856, the *Exhibition of Antiquities and Art Monuments* in Krakow at the turn of 1858 and 1859, and the monumental *Jubilee Exhibition* of King Jan III in Krakow in 1883 celebrating the 300th anniversary of the victorious battle of Vienna against the Turks. These represented first opportunities for the general public to see treasures from private collections, usually aristocratic ones, that were normally accessible only to a limited, elite audience.

The earliest exhibition among them, organized in 1856 in Warsaw, pronounced the following aims: "to collect as many national historical monuments as possible, to open a temporary museum, to publish a critically organized list, indicating current location and owner of a given item, to revive interest in this rather neglected part of historical research".[16] In the first two months, the exhibition was visited by about 2,000 people. This was considered a success in Warsaw, which had never hosted a similar event.[17]

The exhibitions presented relics in picturesque and decorative arrangements.[18] Emphasis was placed on recalling particularly victorious and glorious moments in history. The crowning achievement of this approach was the jubilee exhibition of 1883, the arrangement of which resembled a theatrical performance. Atmosphere was created mainly through effects of spotlighting to bring out the glow of jewels and metal weapons. The accompanying guidebook oriented the viewer as follows:

> At the entrance from the Market Square to the Cloth Hall, we see bronze cannons of the Potocki family, covered with a green patina of time. Having defeated the Turks,

13 Żeromski et al. 1911. Details can be found in Szyndler 1977, 131–159.

14 Żeromski et al. 1911, 16.

15 Some examples are: the Museum of the Polish Scientific Society of Toruń, the collections of the Poznań Society for the Advancement of Arts and Sciences, the Lublin Museum in Lublin, and numerous sightseeing museums established after 1906 by the Polish Sightseeing Society, especially in the Kingdom of Poland while under Russian rule. Amassing historical memorabilia was also a marked trend among private collectors in Poland, including aristocratic families such as the Raczyński in Rogalin, the Działyński in Kórnik, the Tarnowski in Dzików, and the Krasiński in Warsaw.

16 Anonymous 1857, 4.

17 Podczaszyński 1857, 13.

18 See Kłudkiewicz 2011, 102–121.

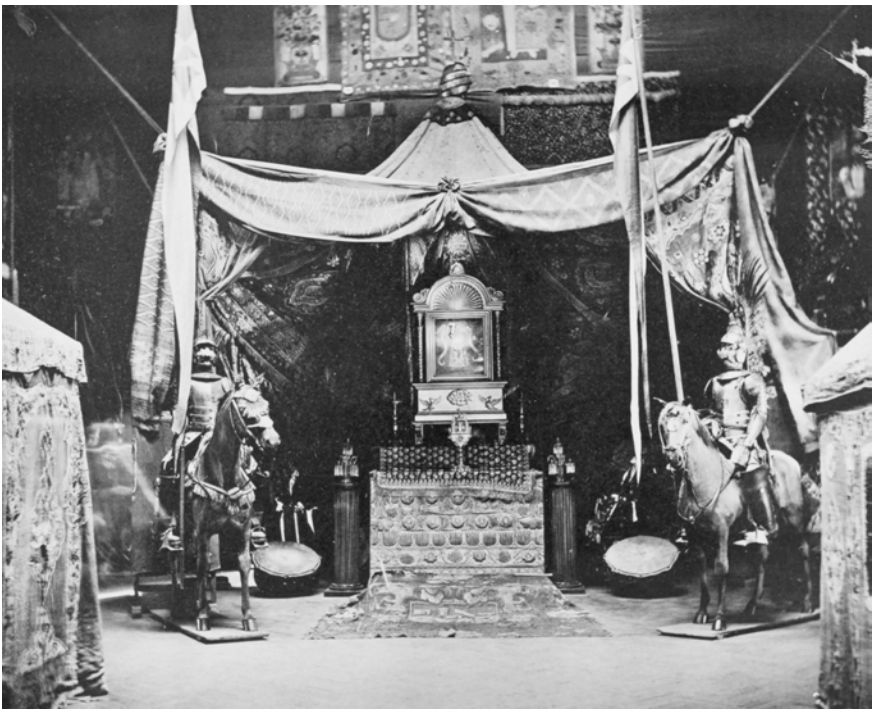
> they represent the gateway to the sanctuary dedicated to the memory and veneration of the hero [...]. The door opens. We are facing a large, high, elongated hall that occupies only half of the floor. This room without windows, or rather with its windows covered, is illuminated by full light from above. At our feet, there is a smooth shining floor. We can see the bright glass cases standing in a long row in the middle and four cabinets in the corners, concealing the most precious items [...] [fig. 4].
>
> Finally, far in the still solemn shadow, through the open door, you can catch the glimpse of a little lamp burning in front of an altar with the palladium of the Viennese expedition, the miraculous image of the Blessed Virgin Mother, closing the whole and ending the perspective [fig. 5].[19]

Fig. 4: View of the main hall of the Jubilee Exhibition of King Jan III in Krakow.

The articles about and reviews of the exhibition emphasized the almost theatrical effect of the exhibition space. The tendency to frame Polish history as a nostalgic spectacle – with emphasis on the feats of the heroes, the greatness of past victories, and the pain of successive defeats – continued for much of the nineteenth century. A change in approach to historical presentations in museums occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century, as is well illustrated by the case of the National Museum in Krakow, to which I return later in this text.

19 "Zabytki" 1884, 1.

Fig. 5: View of the altar of the Viennese expedition at the Jubilee Exhibition of King Jan III in Krakow.



Polish Art: From Patriotism to Lectures in Art History

The second key area of activity in Polish national museums was Polish art, especially contemporary art. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the use of the term 'national gallery' in Polish texts was associated with universal collections, which were intended to include works of Polish artists. Such was the plan for the *Galeria Sztuk Wyzwolonych Narodowa* (National Gallery of Liberal Arts) designed in 1785 by Józef Salezy Ossoliński. It was to contain examples of artworks from the Polish as well as European schools of painting.[20] A similar idea was expressed in 1859 by Count Seweryn Mielżyński, a collector of the work of Old Masters. He used the name 'national gallery' to describe his collection of European paintings, to which he added a modest number of Polish works from the holdings of another collector, Baron Edward Rastawiecki.[21] However, the first two public museums in Poland that either officially or unofficially designated themselves as 'national', the Mielżyński Museum in Poznań (1881) and the National Museum in Krakow (1883), clearly highlighted the evolution of Polish painting, and especially contemporary painting, in their display.

20 See note 3 above.

21 Kłudkiewicz 2017, 112–142.

This interest in Polish art of the past and present was associated with the 'discovery' of the so-called Polish school of painting in the mid-nineteenth century. Related discussions among writers and people of culture triggered a frantic search for the historical traces of Polish art.[22] Concern with the historical development of Polish painting coincided with an unprecedented flowering in Polish arts. The period saw the simultaneous collecting of works of the so-called Munich school – a colony of Poles who were graduates of the Munich Academy or other private schools and studied under German artists in the city – as well as of the nineteenth-century Polish artist Jan Matejko and his students from the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow. In addition, an artistic movement called Young Poland found favour among collectors: the term broadly refers to artists active at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in association with the symbolist (above all Jacek Malczewski and Stanisław Wyspiański), secession, and expressionist movements. The second half of the nineteenth century also marked the beginning of Polish art criticism, which thereafter developed rapidly.

Therefore, the nature of the interest in Polish art, definitely more pronounced for painting than for sculpture, was primarily historical. Searching for traces of the first artists of Polish origin (initially engravers, then painters), formulating research methods, and establishing foundational concepts together laid the groundwork for the historiography of Polish art. Moreover, this initial historical perspective on Polish painting affected judgements of Polish contemporary art, as was evident already at the inception of the Mielżyński Museum in Poznań, considered then to be the first Polish national gallery.

It is worth quoting the speech of Wawrzyniec Benzelstjerna Engeström, writer, social activist, and secretary of the Poznań Society for the Advancement of Arts and Sciences (the association that had commissioned the Mielżyński Museum), on the day of the institution's opening, in 1881:[23] "The door opening before us leads to the only national gallery in Poland, a gallery of Polish artists. Its sole task and purpose are to research and present the history of our aesthetics".[24] He continued with an enthusiastic assessment of

22 The first essays and texts on the question of the Polish school of painting appeared in the 1840s (an 1842 essay by the poet Seweryn Goszczyński entitled *On the need for national Polish painting* and an 1850–1857 outline of the history of Polish art presented by Edward Rastawiecki in the *Dictionary of Polish painters*). The most famous text of this period was the dissertation *Polish Art* by Julian Klaczko, an émigré historian and journalist who denied the existence of Polish art. See Rosset 2014, 24–43.

23 The Society for the Advancement of Arts and Sciences in Poznań assembled collections from its very establishment in 1857. At first, they were not large and, most importantly, not available to the public due to the lack of a suitable location. The decisive years for the society's collection were 1870–1876. It was then that Seweryn Mielżyński, an aristocrat collector, donated Edward Rastawiecki's collection, which he had purchased for this specific purpose, to the museum together with a plot of land and a fund for the construction of a building. After the donor's death, his collection of Old Masters was also given to the society. Due to legal regulations in Prussia, which prevented the society from having a legal personality, in 1876 the association made an agreement with the donor's heir, Józef Mielżyński. He leased Mielżyński's collections to the society until they could be legally acquired. Thus, the Mielżyński Museum came into being. It functioned legally as a private museum managed by a scientific society until 1916. On the Mielżyński Museum, see Kłudkiewicz 2018, 99–112.

24 Engeström 2020, 321–322.

the artworks once belonging to the aristocrat, antiquarian, and collector Edward Rastawiecki, on which the museum collection was based: "From Rastawiecki, we have acquired a rich national gallery, and the only one so well-formed in Poland, a gallery of paintings by artists, both native and foreign, who worked and settled in our land, together with an invaluable and unique collection of Polish prints – a complete national museum".[25]

Next, Engeström emphasized the educational function of displaying Polish artworks. In doing so, he drew analogies between the condition of the art of a nation and that nation's history and development:

> The sense of beauty, the idea of art and love of art, in short, the sense of aesthetics in the nation is the most eloquent testimony to the development of social civilization; it is, if I may say so, the most wonderful bloom of a carefully cultivated and developed spirit, the embodiment of social thoughts and concepts, and, I can venture to say, just like a healthy mind is in a healthy body, a beautiful soul is a place where beautiful thoughts, aspirations, sense of beauty and desire for beauty are born. The moral development of social concepts and feelings is reflected in the national aesthetics, which is the most telling assessment and philosophical feature in the history of peoples. Looking at the history of nations from a research perspective, we can see that in every age their spiritual development, decline, collapse, or growth are inseparable from the history of art, the rise and fall of national aesthetics.[26]

The Mielżyński Museum was unofficially referred to as the National Gallery. Characteristically, while the museum housed a collection of European paintings – namely, a collection of Old Masters that had been assembled by Mielżyński, along with historical memorabilia and prehistoric artefacts and natural specimens – the term 'national' was used primarily in relation to the Polish paintings. The gallery of Polish artists was also the first section of the museum to have a corresponding catalogue published, in 1888/1889.[27] But it was the collection of Polish paintings that was first made available to the public.

The *Galeria artystów i rzeczy polskich* (Gallery of Polish Artists and Works) was opened in May 1881 on the top floor of the society's premises. The design concept for the interior envisioned forty marble busts of distinguished Poles: scientists, artists, writers, patrons of art, and generals from the Napoleonic Wars and the November Uprising.[28] Ultimately, these plans did not come to fruition. However, the gallery stood adjacent to the society's meeting room, which contained images of nineteenth-century men of culture and science in a kind of "Valhalla of scholars from Greater Poland".[29]

The large gallery was specifically designed for exhibition purposes, being lit from above and terminating on its west end in an apse-like, polygonal space. The person who conceived the arrangement – presumably Engeström – focused not so much on the artistic value of a given artwork but rather on the subject matter it depicted. The exhibition was thematic, but it also bore traces of a symbolic, patriotic, and historical narrative.

25 Ibid., 320.
26 Ibid., 321.
27 Erzepki 1888/1889.
28 Ostrowska-Kębłowska 1982, 51.
29 Wojtkowski 1928, 253.

Around a centrally placed portrait of Mielżyński, the generous patron of the museum, the western wall was covered with portraits of Polish kings, such as Stanisław August (r. 1764–1795) and August II (r. 1697–1706, 1709–1733), as well as of other historical figures (fig. 6).

Fig. 6: Pawel Boczkowski, The Main (or 'Apsidal') Wall of the Gallery of Polish Artists and Works, Mielżyński Museum in Poznań, woodcut printed in watercolour, 1883.

This composition was augmented with mythological and allegorical scenes, genre scenes, and landscapes; the installation concluded with monumental caricatures titled *The History of Civilization* by Maksymilian Antoni Piotrowski. Supplementing the two-dimensional works on view, the room contained busts of famous Poles, along with models of important local monuments including the Statue of the First Piasts in the so-called Golden Chapel in Poznań Cathedral (partly funded with contributions from Poles in the mid-nineteenth century) and Poznań Town Hall, a Renaissance building from before the time of Prussian reign. Additionally, in 1889 a plaster model of the Gniezno Door was embedded in the walls of the room. The bronze door is an outstanding work of medieval artistic craftsmanship made for the cathedral in Gniezno, the first capital of Poland. Thus, despite the declaration that the Gallery was to serve as a historical review of Polish art, its first exhibition concentrated not on the artistic but the historical value of artworks, that is, on their subject matter. The arrangement was designed according to theme rather than chronology.

Changes in the installation took place at the beginning of the twentieth century when the collections were enlarged by individual works by Jan Matejko, Jacek Malczewski, and Juliusz Kossak, famous and recognizable artists who explored historical, contemporary, and symbolic topics connected with Polish culture. The person behind the new arrangement of the painting collection was its restorer Bolesław Erzepki, a historian and linguist. He introduced a chronological order following national schools, a trend extant in public galleries since the eighteenth century and, by the nineteenth, widespread and almost obligatory. Another revival in the gallery's history came in 1914 with the employment of a new curator, the young Vienna-educated art historian Szczęsny Dettloff. Under his care, the collection was not only expanded but also conserved, examined through a scholarly lens, as well as documented in photographs.

Recalling the final years of the Mielżyński Museum's existence before Poland regained independence, Dettloff remarked: "The gallery was no longer outside the interest of the public, who recognized ever more clearly how important the place was for the artistic culture of our region".[30] Most importantly, the gallery began to serve its intended purpose of showing the history of Polish art, with reference to both the current state of scholarly knowledge and the tenets of modern museology.

Re-examining the two quotes that bracket the history of the Mielżyński collection before 1918, from Engeström's inaugural speech to Dettloff's reminiscences in the interwar period, one may notice a significant change in the attitude of the curators. Engeström's statements were mostly declarative. In his view, the aim of the gallery was to educate the public in aesthetics, and the paintings were intended to reflect the spirit of the nation. An exhibition showing the historical development of Polish art came into being only in the early twentieth century, during the First World War. Consequently, Dettloff, who continued to rearrange the collection, emphasized that the audience could – finally – appreciate the importance of the gallery for the cultural development of society. What he had in mind was not only the aesthetic education of the viewer but also advancing academic knowledge on the history of Polish art.

The National Museum in Krakow: From Gallery of Painting to Museum of Polish Culture

The history of the National Museum in Krakow, created and managed by the city authorities, illustrates how the understanding of the role and content of the national museum changed at the turn between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In 1871, Józef Dietl, the city mayor, wrote that the future national museum should contain historical paintings, ethnographic collections, and an armoury. Similar bold plans for the institution

30 Dettloff 1928, 473.

were outlined by the archaeologist Teodor Nieczuja-Ziemięcki in his 1878 publication *The National Museum in Krakow*.[31]

The idea of establishing a museum in Krakow belongs to a period that saw major revival in the city, beginning with far-reaching prerogatives and funds given to the Galician autonomy within Austria-Hungary after creating its legal structures in the years 1869–1873. This was followed by a movement to renovate and reconstruct the historical capital of Poland (such as efforts to preserve the old city, especially the Wawel building complex), coinciding with ambitious plans to modernize and expand the city. The prospect of a museum had already been discussed in Krakow for some time and was in harmony with the enthusiastic atmosphere of the city under the mayorship of Józef Dietl. Yet, the direct cause of the institution's creation was a gift by the painter Henryk Siemiradzki.

The year 1879 saw the fiftieth anniversary of the creative work of Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, a very popular writer, journalist, collector, and enthusiast of Polish history. The occasion was celebrated in Krakow with a gala dinner, which took place on 5 October in the renovated and rebuilt *Sukiennice* (Cloth Hall), a historic market at the centre of the Main Square. During the celebrations, Siemiradzki presented the city with his most famous painting, *Nero's Torches*, executed in Rome in 1876 and awarded a gold medal at the 1878 Paris Exposition. Inspired by Siemiradzki's spontaneous decision, a group of forty artists present at the event (including Stanisław Chlebowski, Juliusz Kossak, and Franciszek Żmurko) donated their works to the city.

Within two days, the city council adopted a resolution to establish the National Museum in Krakow. Nieczuja-Ziemięcki, one of the most active promoters of the idea, was appointed its first curator. Article 2 of the first statute of the National Museum in Krakow explicitly stated that: "The aim of the museum will be to present the whole historical and current development of art in Poland on the example of the collected items", while Article 4 specified that "Excavations of prehistoric objects and non-artistic relics are excluded from the collection".[32] The choice to limit the museum's interest to Polish art was certainly influenced by the sudden yet enthusiastic donations of artworks by Polish artists. To some extent, one can also see the statute of the museum as evidence of a well-thought-out plan to complement other museums in the city. At the time of the opening, Krakow had two such institutions, with quite different profiles. The first was the *Muzeum Przemysłowo-Techniczne* (Museum of Science and Industry), which contained a collection of older works of craftsmanship as well as contemporary applied arts. Created from the personal of Adrian Baraniecki, it was modelled on the South Kensington Museum (today the Victoria and Albert Museum), in London. The second was the private *Muzeum Książąt Czartoryskich* (Princes Czartoryski Museum), housing an excellent collection of European

31 The author presented a vision of an institution that would have the following units: painting and sculpture gallery; collection of drawings, watercolours, and graphics; a museum of medieval art; the Stoss Museum (a collection of copies of Veit Stoss's works); an archaeological museum; an ethnographic museum; a history museum; a numismatics collection; and the so-called Memorial Museum (in the words of Ziemięcki, a kind of Polish Valhalla, a collection of all memorabilia 'of our great people'). Nieczuja-Ziemięcki 2020, 273–281. On the origins of the National Museum in Krakow, see Kluczewska-Wójcik 2020, 187–208.

32 "MNK statute" 1881, 1.

Old Master paintings, ancient and medieval art, together with Polish objects and historical memorabilia from the aforementioned museum established by Izabella Czartoryska in Puławy.[33]

To expand, the museum relied mainly on donations, although over time a permanent subsidy from the city authorities enabled the formation of an acquisitions policy focused on the work of contemporary Polish artists. The installation in the Cloth Hall in Krakow, the first premises of the museum, showed all the works of the collection *en masse*. Despite the initial declarations that the display would only feature contemporary art, the overall vision came to be altered every few years. After 1883, some changes were initiated by the first director of the museum, Władysław Łuszczkiewicz. In 1889, the board of the museum outlined a new division of the collection into the following departments: 1. Contemporary Polish Art; 2. Post-Partition Art; 3. Medieval and Modern Polish Art (until the reign of the last king, Stanisław August); 4. Architecture (meaning fragments and plans); 5. Drawings and Watercolours; 6. Prints and Reproductions; 7. Medals, Coins, and Banknotes; 8. Engraved Gems; 9. Antiquities and Relics; 10. Adam Mickiewicz Memorabilia; 11. Foreign Art; 12. Library. The board also acknowledged that the new structuring of the museum was based on a large number of private gifts, "which the committee is forced to accept in whole in the hope that the extended collection will show what kind of donations will be sought in the future".[34] Several years later, the museum authorities justified ever more frequent violations of the museum's statute by accepting objects other than works of art:

> The statute excluded collecting memorabilia devoid of artistic features to avoid those of questionable authenticity. A relic may not always have a proof of origin, but as long as it is beautiful and meets the criteria of an object of art, it has the right to be placed in the museum. The management of the museum could not be guided by these regulations and accepted non-artistic objects. Regarding this provision, we have already made an exception for [the mementos of] Mickiewicz [...]. As a consequence, the public came to believe that the museum collects family keepsakes of people connected with recent periods of history. We were forced to accept them regardless of their artistic features, and the past year was particularly rich in this kind of generosity. Most of the souvenirs were related to Polish uprisings.[35]

The rooms of the museum were quickly filled with paintings, works on paper, sculptures, weapons, fabrics and other examples of applied art, together with numerous historical objects. From the 1890s, the museum tried to bring order to the installation by taking over other rooms in Cloth Hall and expanding its exhibition space. The main and largest hall was occupied by contemporary paintings, with Siemiradzki's grand work at the centre. However, the adjacent room, the so-called *Langerówka*, contained displays from the other departments: Old Masters, paintings of historical and memorial value, the most esteemed works of European art, and prints shown in cabinets. In 1891, two small rooms

33 On museums in Krakow in the nineteenth century, see Żygulski jun. 1998; Krzaczyńska 2013; Prokopovych 2018; Guichard-Marneur 2012.

34 "National Museum in Krakow (MNK) report" for 1889, 1890, 5.

35 "National Museum in Krakow (MNK) report" for 1893, 1894, 9.

added to the museum displayed monuments and historical memorabilia donated by the Academy of Arts and Sciences in Krakow. Further private gifts were regularly incorporated, and ultimately the museum board conceded that the rooms "looked more like a warehouse than a systematic collection".[36]

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the museum faced the challenge of redefining its vision for the collection and its future expansion. The director appointed after Łuszczkiewicz's death was Feliks Kopera, an art historian educated in Basel, Berlin, Florence, and St Petersburg. At the same time, Nieczuja-Ziemięcki resigned from the post of curator. The new management reorganized the museum in a legal sense by adopting a new statute in 1901 and in a spatial sense thanks to city's placement of the entire second floor of the Cloth Hall at the museum's disposal.

The new goals of the National Museum in Krakow were stated in Article 2 of the new statute of 1901: "The objective of the National Museum, in accordance with the new aspirational statute, is to use the collected specimens to present the state of art and culture in Poland in its historical and current development".[37] The document radically changed the wording of Article 4 concerning the collection:

> The museum will also strive to acquire products of the artistic industry, from all fields and techniques (any relics, whatever their form and purpose, relating to the life and cultural development of the past and conveying direct or indirect image thereof) [...]. These collections also include prehistoric excavations, folk art, and items that testify to the cultural development of the people. A separate department should contain personal memorabilia of distinguished national figures or people relayed to historical events.[38]

The new arrangement in the larger space focused on all kinds of items related to the history of Polish culture: works of craftsmanship and applied arts, handicrafts, historical objects, and national memorabilia. These were placed in the smaller rooms and corridors, since "smaller rooms are convenient to group the objects chronologically and create stylishly furnished chambers or culturally interesting spaces, such as alchemist laboratories, pharmacies, kitchens, prison cells, following the popular practice in the museums abroad".[39] In the largest hall, the items on view were divided into three separate modules: artefacts from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, those from the eighteenth century, and those from the nineteenth century (fig. 7). In each section, works of painting, applied art, and material culture were presented according to the principle that "artefacts from the same period, regardless of type and technique, were grouped together".[40]

36 "National Museum in Krakow (MNK) report" for 1893, 1894, 12.

37 "MNK statute" 1901, 3.

38 Ibid., 3–4.

39 "National Museum in Krakow (MNK) report" for 1901–1902, 1903, 12.

40 Ibid., 12.

Fig. 7: Partial view of the exhibition from the room of monuments of the first half of the nineteenth century, National Museum in Krakow, 1902.

The changes reflected the expertise of Kopera, who sought inspiration in the latest arrangements at European museums of culture and history: in Basel, Göttingen, and Jena, at the *Historisches Museum zu Frankfurt am Main* (Historical Museum in Frankfurt on the Main) under the direction of Otto Lauffer, and subsequently at the famous *Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte* (Museum for the History of Hamburg).[41] He was also influenced by the concept of 'period rooms', popular in museums of industrial design[42] at the time and, last but not least, by discussions on museum exhibitions that ensued in Berlin at the turn of the century, sparked by the ideas of the art historian and curator Wilhelm von Bode.[43]

The art collection occupied three spacious rooms. The first one contained contemporary works of the so-called Young Poland movement; the second, called Siemiradzki Hall – largely representing academism – housed its namesake's paintings of religious and ancient subjects, including the famous *Nero's Torches*; the third, known as Matejko Hall, was dominated by the monumental works of Jan Matejko, alongside paintings by other artists from his generation (fig. 8).

41 See Deneke and Kahsnitz, 1977, 118–132; Miller 2013, 370–373.

42 Curran 2016.

43 Joachimides 2001.

Fig. 8: Matejko Hall in the National Museum in Krakow.

Kopera described the intended visitor experience generally as follows: "By beginning the museum tour in the Hall of Prehistoric Monuments and going through all the rooms one by one, up to Matejko Hall, one may get acquainted with the development of art and culture on Polish territory from the earliest times to the present day".[44] Indeed, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the National Museum in Krakow became the first Polish institution to attempt to create a comprehensive picture of the development of Polish culture, history, and art.

Final Remarks

In the nineteenth century, installations at Polish national museums remained largely under the influence of a patriotic and sentimental order. They appealed to the emotions of viewers, showed commemorative items, and staged paintings and works of art in a way that emphasized the works' connections with important events in the history of the nation. It was not until the end of the century that the tools of academic systematization came into use in art and history museums in an attempt to demonstrate the current state of relevant knowledge. Concurrently, this period saw the development of a new idea for the Polish national museum as a multi-departmental institution with many different collections, together presenting the historical development of Polish art and culture. The concept came to fruition in the stated mission of the National Museum in Krakow.

44 "National Museum in Krakow (MNK) report" for 1901–1902, 1903, 14–15.

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Fig. 1, 2: National Library in Warsaw.
Fig. 3: Karczewski Witold, *The National Polish Museum in Rapperswil*, Krakow 1906, 33. National Library in Warsaw.
Fig. 4, 5: *Monuments of the 17th Century. The Jubilee Exhibition of King Jan III in Krakow 1883. Explanations to the Album of the Jubilee Exhibition of Jan III*, Krakow 1884, ill. 2, 3.
Fig. 6: Poznań Society for the Advancement of Arts and Sciences.
Fig. 7: National Museum in Krakow.
Fig. 8: *Report of the Management of the National Museum in Krakow for the Years 1901–1902*, Krakow 1903, 19.

"To no one Nation has been given the monopoly of genius"[1]

Multiple Nationalisms at the National Museum of Scotland, a Director's View

Christopher Breward

In 1857, George Wilson, Regius Professor of Science and Technology at the University of Edinburgh, laid out a vision for a new museum under his directorship, the Industrial Museum (today the National Museum) of Scotland. Though formed in the context of Britain's imperial ambitions, the institution Wilson envisaged also seemed to speak against them, in a double bind that perhaps expresses Scotland's unique place in the complex history of colonialism and culture:

> The Museum which I have been commending to you, is not a Museum of Scottish history, but a Museum of the world in relation to Scotland. It cannot be less than this [...]. There is not a single invention or discovery [...] which we as a people can claim more than the lion's share; and seeing that in our veins runs the mingled blood of I know not how many unlike races, it would be very strange if it were otherwise. To no one nation has been given the monopoly of genius, constructive skill or practical sagacity.[2]

Wilson's words continue to echo with some contemporary relevance in the spectacular building he helped to install on Edinburgh's Chambers Street. The foundation stone of its first wing was laid by the prince consort Albert in 1861, and the construction project was completed in 1866. Though Wilson held his post from 1855 to 1859 and sadly never saw it open, he established a lasting philosophical rationale for the institution. Even today, we continue to reference his ideas as we come to terms with the history and future of the National Museum of Scotland: we must both acknowledge the role of the museum in the international project of the British Empire and situate its collection and approach to interpretation within Scotland's own contested national history. Overlaying these national

1 Acknowledgements: I am very grateful for the advice and scholarship of Stuart Allan, Hugh Cheape, and Geoff Swinney, whose knowledge and work have directly informed the content of this chapter. Errors in judgement and interpretation are all mine.

2 Lidchi 2016, ix.

debates are the more generic questions encountered by any museum in which the various emphases on the research, educational, commercial, and leisure functions of the organization, as well as its disciplinary biases, influence its purpose at different times and in different ways. It is a complicated negotiation, and in this short essay I will attempt to outline the museological threads and directorial positions that have brought us to our multifaceted present, using as an anchor the voices of those who have influenced the museum's development.

Most histories of our organization commence with the foundation of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1780. As essential components of the public national museum that was emerging as a collective desideratum, at its inaugural meeting Lord Buchan argued for the importance of a secure physical site, patronage, and a degree of professional and scholarly competence:

> I suspect that [earlier Societies] [...] instituted for the study and collection of Antiquities and the objects of Natural History failed on account of their having no house in property, nor any private interests to care for their books, museum and other necessary appurtenances and that having met in taverns, their meetings degenerated into convivial and anomalous conversations. All these hazards I mean with your approbation to guard against and ever to exclude.[3]

Buchan's promise is characteristic of that shift from an amateur, often aristocratic dilettantism – still in itself scholarly and serious – towards a scientific and methodological rigour, newly established in the public realm of universities, scholarly societies, and public institutions, that informed the culture of the so-called Scottish Enlightenment. It is also a practical plea for strong management of Scotland's material and intellectual heritage during a moment when the idea of a United Kingdom – in which a post-Jacobite Scotland played a crucial part – was giving rise to a concept of 'Britishness' that would prove essential to the formation of a global empire. The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland did indeed find a home (or successive homes) and a system for presenting and interpreting Scotland's national artefacts, but the path was marked by several starts and stops and an underlying sense of uncertainty. Its first location, established in 1781, was in Edinburgh's Cowgate. In 1826, the society moved its holdings to the Royal Institution (today the Royal Scottish Academy) at the foot of the Mound, and in 1851 it transferred ownership to the British state, in effect confirming the legal status of these holdings as 'national'. But it was not until 1891 that the collection found a purpose-built home in the Findlay building, on Queen Street (now the site of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, with which it once shared the premises). [▸ Roberts] Though it had already, in 1858, taken on the formal title 'National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland', it was only at the turn of the twentieth century, in 1902, that the society's president Sir Arthur Mitchell felt confident enough to state a vision for the collection and its uses that was truly nationalist in spirit:

3 Bell 1981, 31.

> I have pressed the importance of regarding the Museum as National. It is so in the sense of being the property of the Nation. This makes its preservation secure. But it is National in another sense. It is very largely a collection of objects illustrating our Nation's pre-history. Indeed, if taken with local collections, it supplies nearly all the material for this study which we possess [...]. There are persons perhaps to whom Scotland is nothing but 'that garret of the world – that knuckle of England', but to us Scotland is the special field of our studies, as well as the land we love; and it seems to me that the very reason of our existence as a Society is to make additions to the knowledge of its unwritten history.[4]

Half a century earlier, in April 1854, Lyon Playfair, Secretary of State for Science in the Department of Science and Art, Westminster, London, had effectively launched a very different and practical approach to nation-building through museums in supporting the Treasury minute endorsing the establishment of the Industrial Museum of Scotland. The minute stated emphatically, and with undisguised ambition, that "Competition in Industry is competition in intellect, and the Nation which most quickly promotes the intellectual development of its artisans must by inevitable law of nature advance".[5] And though it is George Wilson's idea of an equitable museum of the world that we remember most fondly today, other statements he made are rather more representative of imperial attitudes, including notions of evolutionary competitiveness. They fit squarely with the transactional and patriotic approach enshrined at the South Kensington Museum (today the Victoria and Albert Museum) in London, an approach that was pedagogic in seeking to address poor British skills, that harnessed the cultures and materials of Britain's colonial dominions to the advantage of Britain's manufacturers, and that promoted the superiority of British 'civilization' over not only 'subordinate' nations but also those, like the German Reich and the United States of America, whose scientific prowess, and industrial and military heft, represented a threat. Wilson predicted that the new museum would "largely help us to hold recovered India, and to diminish the recurrence of American panics, if we can imbue the whole community with such instruction as industrial museums are pre-eminently fitted to afford".[6]

In 1858, he was explicit in promoting an imperial mission when he stated that the Industrial Museum of Scotland should be "a museum of the industry of the world in relation to Scotland [...] and as this it will increase our civilization and add to our power to civilize the rest of the world". Wilson's aim would be achieved via three interrelated functions, namely, "a systematic collection of industrial raw materials, manufactured products, tools and machinery; a laboratory and workshop; [and] a library".[7] Here was the modern museum: a site for the storage, dissemination, and creation of knowledge in the service of 'progress'.

Wilson's successor, Thomas Archer, appointed by Henry Cole at the South Kensington Museum in 1860, refined that sense of purpose with a focus on the need to inspire

4 Cheape 2009, 13.
5 Swinney 2006, 130.
6 Ibid., 131.
7 Ibid., 131.

through observation and craft. In 1861, he recommended the use of "specimens of superior design and workmanship in various branches of manufacturing art which may serve to stimulate others engaged in similar workmanship".[8] This marked a shift towards the application of art and design for the improvement of industry, as reflected both in the museum's redesignation in 1864 as the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art and in a tightening of its direct governance by the Department of Science and Art. By replacing 'Scotland' with 'Edinburgh', the museum momentarily positioned itself as a northern British institution. Similarly, its new building, designed by the British government architects Frances Fowke and Robert Matheson, adopted the specifications and characteristics of the South Kensington Museum: modern materials, a cast-iron structure, and plate glass, as well as gas lighting for the late-night openings to accommodate the working man and woman from local shops, trades, and factories after their clocking-off time.

The transition may have seemed at first glance as smooth and polished as the building's surfaces, but tensions simmered concerning differing interpretations of the collection's uses. Archer's belief in the transformative possibilities of art and design, and the role of the patterns and materials in nature to inspire these, was challenged by Charles Wyville Thomson, Keeper of Natural History and Professor of Natural Sciences, who cleaved to traditional Enlightenment principles in his belief that the museum's holdings were there to further pure scientific research and to unlock new academic knowledge of a higher order. In the end the applied educational purposes advocated by Archer won out, and by 1900 this formal didactic function was enshrined in the new strategy of the institution – what four years later would be renamed the Royal Scottish Museum, serving once again both imperial and national aims. Administered by the Scottish Education Department in London under the leadership first of Frances Grant Ogilvie and then James J. Dobbie, the museum was conceived less as a laboratory in the service of great thinkers than as a grand and inclusive classroom in which to cultivate a better-informed citizenry. The *Scotsman* reported on

> the appropriation of one gallery to the exhibition of appliances illustrative of science teaching in schools, but too costly to be found in school collections; the extension of the collection by type and diagrammatic models, with full descriptive labels; an additional education section in the reference library in the museum; [and] Encouragement to science and art classes to take advantage of the facilities for instruction.[9]

The reorganized installations ushered in the rationalizing, unifying principles of twentieth-century social and educational reform and produced an experience that would become familiar to generations of museum visitors through to today. This included working models; brightly illustrated didactic panels; and naturalistically painted dioramas featuring taxidermy and mounted skeletons of prehistoric 'monsters'. So far as its 'national' role was concerned, the Royal Scottish Museum's perspective was perhaps now a more insular one, wherein Scotland's industrial modernization and status as a burgeoning welfare state dictated a focus on the nation's needs rather than those either of the

8 Ibid., 132.

9 Ibid., 133–4.

world or of an empire that was simultaneously shrinking and transforming into a commonwealth. Certainly, in the latter half of the century the museum's development prioritized the successive incorporation of collections relating to the country's armed forces, home-produced goods (particularly textiles and crafts), and rural traditions. In 1970, it took over the administration of the Scottish United Services Museum (today the National War Museum, situated in Edinburgh Castle), along with the National Museum of Flight, founded in 1975 on a decommissioned World War Two airfield in East Lothian. These additions were complemented by the 1982 establishment of the Museum of Costume and the Scottish Agricultural Museum, first on a site near Edinburgh Airport and then, from 2001, at a rural site near East Kilbride, where it is currently called the National Museum of Rural Life.

The ever-expanding remit of the Royal Scottish Museum and the concurrent realization that the Queen Street premises of the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland had outlived their purpose necessitated the establishment of the 'National Museums Scotland' by an act of parliament in 1985, which set in motion a more material reconsideration of the future of the institution with which this essay commenced, as well as a review of Scotland's ancient history and heritage. Now joined with its scientific, technological, and artistic counterparts under the same board of trustees and director (Robert Anderson from the Science Museum in London), the collection of the former National Museum of Antiquities demanded a setting adjacent to the Royal Scottish Museum site and better suited to the museological, architectural, and political fashions of the late twentieth century.

Following complex planning, patronage, logistical, curatorial, and philosophical deliberations – which from 1992 were led by the new director Mark Jones, formerly Keeper of the Department of Coins and Medals at the British Museum – Benson + Forsyth's iconic building to house Scotland's historic heritage came into physical being on 30 April 1993, when Ian Lang, Secretary of State for Scotland, put spade into soil at the western end of the Chambers Street site. It was opened by Queen Elizabeth II (r. 1952–2022) on St Andrew's Day 1998: a millennial moment that coincided with Scotland's new self-image as political devolution from the Westminster government and the founding of a Scottish parliament also gathered pace. The building itself, and the way its collections were corralled to tell Scotland's story, produced a timely sense of the museum as 'narrative architecture', embodying the nation's character and soul. Its dramatic meaning and associations were well described by the architectural critic John Allan:

> 'Scotland in miniature' was, as I recall, the tourist tag used to describe the representative scenic completeness of Arran [...]. 'Scotland in essence' might serve as the equivalent sobriquet to be applied to Benson + Forsyth's new Museum of Scotland to suggest the range and authenticity of this educational and architectural experience. For even a day spent exploring this enthralling building and its contents will vouchsafe more insights and understanding of Scotland's story than might be gained in weeks of well-intentioned sightseeing [...]. The museum is one of the defining buildings of our age. This ancient institution, once needed to protect totemic objects and valuable relics from pillage or dispersal and later overlaid by ideals of education, entertainment and cultural ambition, has come to epitomise modern society's ambivalence about its

> past, a focus for debate over the role and meaning of 'heritage' [...]. [Its] role in augmenting Scotland's self-knowledge and emergent sense of national identity is clearly paramount – if also unquantifiable.[10]

Mark Jones moved on to become director of the Victoria and Albert Museum in 2001, and his successor, Gordon Rintoul (formerly Chief Executive of Sheffield Galleries and Museums Trust and a graduate of the University of Edinburgh, in Physics), turned once more to the original Chambers Street museum of Fowke and Matheson. In an £80 million transformation of its much altered and outdated interiors, his 'Royal Museum Project', driven by a Wilsonian strategic vision of "Inspiring People, connecting Scotland to the world and the world to Scotland",[11] revealed the soaring Victorian framework of the building, bathed in light, providing new interactive, interconnected, and visitor-centred spaces for the display of international collections relating to the natural world, world cultures, decorative art, design and fashion, and science and technology. Complementing all of this, and essential in a logistical sense to subsequent developments, the museum's storage facilities at Granton in north Edinburgh were renamed the National Museums Collection Centre Scotland in 2006, and a continuing programme of investment in environmental standards and research infrastructure have ensured widened access to and care for the museum's extensive and diverse study collections.

The Royal Museum Project succeeded in broadening the National Museum of Scotland's status as a 'world museum', doubling the number of visitors from 1,420,000 in 2007 to 2,410,000 in 2016, many of them international. In some ways, it represents in microcosm a historical moment – not dissimilar from that which characterized the 2012 London Olympics – of global connection, post-disciplinary freedom, and technological and social optimism, since called into question by continuing debates around Scottish political independence, Brexit, the financial and climate crisis, the so-called culture wars, and the pandemic.

At the time of writing, in 2022, we remain optimistic for our museums. Gordon stepped down, and I took on the directorship as COVID-19 closed our doors to the public in spring 2020. The pause has allowed us to regroup and refocus. We have a new strategy whose vision retains the core duty of a museum to inspire but also resurrects that earlier mid-nineteenth-century liberal view that a national museum should aim to 'address the challenges of our age' through its collections and programmes. What makes us national now is a shared sense that our collections, programmes, sites, and people have the power to reveal new things about ourselves through our shared heritage – local and international – providing an important civic space where everyone, wherever they were born, can consider the world as it has been, as it is, and crucially, as we would wish it to be; and all from our base in Scotland. Museums, however, are also like that other local monument to optimism, the Forth Bridge: they require constant attention. Our Scotland galleries are now a quarter of a century old, and the national stories Benson + Forsyth and the curators of the last generation told require rethinking for new audiences and a new century. In the legacy we inherit from Lord Buchan onwards, we have much

10 Allan 1999, 120.

11 Lidchi 2016, ix.

raw material and history to draw on and a sense that our national role and context will continue to evolve in interesting ways.

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Part 3: Education and Role Model

Educating the People

The Museum of National History at Frederiksborg

Thomas Lyngby

Det Nationalhistoriske Museum (The Museum of National History) in Denmark was founded in 1878. It is located at Frederiksborg Castle, a former royal residence in the town of Hillerød, about 40 kilometres north of Copenhagen (fig. 1).

Fig. 1: P. C. Skovgaard, Frederiksborg Castle, 1841, oil on canvas, 44 x 60 cm.

In December 1859, a fire had destroyed much of the interior of the castle. A huge treasure of tapestries, furniture, paintings, and other irreplaceable cultural relics was lost, an event that was considered a national catastrophe. Spontaneous nationwide collections

and contributions from the king and the parliament facilitated the rebuilding of the castle (fig. 2). The restoration of Frederiksborg was a national issue, and local committees were formed around the country to support the work.[1]

Fig. 2: Ferdinand Richardt, The Fire of Frederiksborg in 1859, 1859, oil on canvas, 76,5 x 112,5 cm.

These widespread reactions to the fire reflect the strong national sentiments that were linked to Frederiksborg. The castle had been built by Christian IV (r. 1588–1648), king of Denmark and Norway; during this heyday of Danish history, the country's territory was relatively large and included parts of what are today Sweden and Germany. The castle would go on to play an important role in the history of the Danish nation due to its magnificence, which also allowed it to host important events and ceremonies. For instance, the palatial chapel was the venue for the coronation (or so-called anointment) of the absolute monarch from 1671 through 1840, with only one exception (fig. 3).[2]

The monument and its character as a site of memory, or *lieu de mémoire*, made it an important symbol during the national awakening of the early nineteenth century. Accordingly, Frederiksborg became a favourite subject for Danish painters and writers. The castle's status as a locus of memory was further underlined by the fact that it housed the royal collection of portraits depicting important men and women from Danish history. This rendered it a kind of national pantheon. Two-thirds of this collection were destroyed during the fire.[3]

1 Eller 1964.

2 Eller 1976. The 1767 ceremony whereby Christian VII was anointed took place at Christiansborg.

3 Heiberg 1997.

Frederiksborg's importance for the Danish nation manifested in the united efforts to reconstruct the castle during the 1860s and 1870s. The chapel, which had only suffered minor destruction, was reinitiated in 1864. Given its function as a parish church, there was no question that the chapel would be restored, whereas for other parts of the complex the situation was not so clear. When outside Copenhagen, the new king, Christian IX (r. 1863–1906), preferred to use Fredensborg, another palace in north Zealand, as his residence. In the end, Frederiksborg was turned into the Museum of National History, but no one had put forward this idea publicly until 1877.[4]

The person who came to play the decisive role in this was the founder of the Carlsberg breweries, Jacob Christian Jacobsen (1811–1887). He made important donations from the beginning of the reconstruction and throughout the entire transformation of the site. When the chapel was reinitiated, Jacobsen organized a competition soliciting ideas about how to best reconstruct the king's oratory: this small but extremely extravagant and intricate room had, before the fire, been one of the most well-preserved spaces from the time of Christian IV, and its appearance was documented through paintings and descriptions.

The next projects proceeded at a very large scale. In 1874, the restoration of the Great Hall began, and two years later Jacobsen set in motion the recreation of 'the Rose', another of Christian IV's splendid halls. Through such undertakings and the corresponding financial support, Jacobsen became a driving force in the restoration of Frederiksborg Castle. In 1877, he suggested that a museum of national history be established at the site.

Fig. 3 (left): Johan Jacob Bruun, The Procession in the Inner Courtyard for the Coronation of Christian VI in 1731, ca. 1737, gouache, 24,3 x 20,1 cm; Fig. 4 (right): August Jerndorff, Brewer Jacob Christian Jacobsen, 1886, oil on canvas, 165 x 110 cm.

4 Bligaard 2008.

To understand the background for this initiative, it is necessary to dwell a little on Jacobsen and his time. Jacobsen was an entrepreneur with great confidence in the ability of science to improve all aspects of society. In his youth, at the Polytechnic, he had attended the lectures of the famous Danish physicist H. C. Ørsted. He trained at his father's craft brewery in Copenhagen, which he later inherited, and constantly strove to make improvements in beer production, including by implementing new scientific findings. In 1847, he founded the Carlsberg brewery, producing beer with innovative, modern techniques. Carlsberg soon became a leading brewery in Denmark and made Jacobsen extremely wealthy.

Jacobsen's travels in Europe proved important to his work in improving brewing technologies. Here, he also enhanced his skills in foreign languages and his knowledge about culture and history. Among the historical sites and museums Jacobsen visited, the *Musée national de Versailles* (Versailles Museum; today the *Musée de l´Histoire de France* / Museum of French History), established by King Louis-Philippe (r. 1830–1848) in 1837, and the *Statens porträttsamling* (Swedish Portrait Gallery), at Gripsholm Castle near Stockholm, served as great sources of inspiration for his later vision of a museum at Frederiksborg. In both cases, former royal residences had been transformed into museums where the public could be educated in the history of their nation.[5]

Broadly speaking, Jacobsen was very engaged in society. He was politically active in the liberal movement, which in 1848 succeeded in pressuring the king to accept a new constitution, transferring the Danish government from absolutism to democracy. Jacobsen was elected to the Copenhagen City Council and to the Danish parliament. He was also very concerned with the national question, not least the problems in the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, home to a mixed Danish- and German-speaking population. In 1864, Denmark lost the duchies to Prussia and Austria, thus becoming a very small and vulnerable state.

Jacobsen's spirit of public service manifested in his wish to give some of his wealth back to the society, and he remains one of the most important Danish philanthropists to date. In 1876, he created the Carlsberg Foundation with the purpose of supporting science; as an independent branch of this organization, in 1878 he founded the Museum of National History at Frederiksborg, and later he bequeathed his brewery to the foundation. Though Jacobsen's work as a patron took many forms, the Carlsberg Foundation and the museum at Frederiksborg were probably the most impactful, and they are still in operation today (fig. 4).[6]

When, in 1877, the brewer expressed his intentions for the museum to the restoration committee, he used the following words:

> Association with the relics of the past wakens and sharpens the historical sense of the people and strengthens its consciousness of having contributed to the development of culture in general, and thus its awareness of the tasks laid upon present and future

5 Skougaard and Lyngby 2011.

6 Glamann 1991.

> generations by this inheritance from their forefathers. Such an awareness cannot fail to strengthen the pride and moral courage so essential to a small nation such as ours.[7]

The museum was meant to educate visitors in their cultural and national history. In doing so, it sought to strengthen the public's sense of a shared past and destiny as well as of belonging to a common nation in the present. The larger purpose of this was to commit the individual to engage in society.

Jacobsen offered to subsidize the refurbishment of the castle entailed in converting it into a museum. This philanthropic gift was accepted by the king and the state, with the caveat that the refurbished site would suitably accommodate its continued use for certain royal festivities; in addition, the Danish state should have no financial commitment to the museum, whereby it was agreed that it would be designated an autonomous branch of the Carlsberg Foundation.

The museum was intended to constitute a stimulating and comprehensive presentation of Danish history from the introduction of Christianity to the present day. This evocative and coherent account was to be achieved through the display of history paintings of crucial events as well as portraits of famous men and women. As conceptualized by Jacobsen, these works should be exhibited in period rooms alongside furniture and crafts. In this way, the museum was to be a continuation and expansion of the royal portrait collection that had been largely destroyed in the aforementioned fire. Works of portraiture were gathered for the new museum, and when it was not possible to acquire some of the famous originals, copies were made. Historical memorials as funeral monuments and runestones were also cast and exhibited.

Jacobsen compiled a list of the more than 200 episodes in Danish history that he found most important. Artists were then commissioned to execute paintings, with great emphasis on making the scenes as historically correct as possible; at the same time, the history paintings were meant to be engaging, such that they would appeal both to visitors familiar with national history as well as those with lesser knowledge.[8]

Of course, among contemporary historians it became sport to criticize and find errors in the paintings – a tendency that increased around the year 1900 – and as a result of this reception, new commissions of history paintings were abandoned. Jacobsen's larger plan for the paintings was never realized, but important works with great impact, including afterlives as illustrations in books, were executed. Exemplifying this is a frieze of paintings illustrating the Danish conquest and rule of England in the early eleventh century, executed by the artist Lorenz Frølich between 1883 and 1886. In a similar spirit, Jacobsen also commissioned a 1:1 photographic copy of the entire Bayeux Tapestry, on account of the fact that the Normans who conquered England in 1066 were descendants of Danish and Norwegian Vikings.

One of the most famous of the museum's history paintings is Otto Bache's account of the last Danish regicide in 1286 (executed 1882). Bache depicts the conspirators riding away from the burning Finderup barn, where King Erik V (r. 1259–1286) lay murdered.

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7 Jacobsen 1894, 27.

8 Eller 1989.

In their bloodstained clothes, they halt their horses at the top of a hill to look back towards the scene of the murder. At far right, a frightened peasant crouches trembling in the heather beside a toppled cross. The picture's sinister atmosphere indicates that strife among the leading classes, in this case resulting in the assassination of a king, often has disastrous implications for the common man, who can also be seen as representing the nation (fig. 5).[9]

Bache also painted a scene of the 1596 coronation of Christian IV (executed 1887). He did his utmost to make the depiction as historically correct as possible by using as sources contemporary prints of the event as well as portraits of the most important participants. However, the artist has also reflected on contemporaries here. Jacobsen's own face can be seen in one of the windows of the house, and that of his wife appears in the other window. The history painting opens up connections between past and present by positioning not only Jacobsen but also the viewer as witnesses to the historical event (fig. 6).

Some of the galleries in the museum featured decorated ceilings and other elements that corresponded to the topic and period of the artworks they were intended to house, such that the space became a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. For example, room 31 has a ceiling showing signs of the zodiac. The room was appointed in this way to reflect the period around the year 1600 – when the Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe had carried out his research – from which the other artworks in the room dated.

Fig. 5: Otto Bache, The Conspirators Riding Away from Finderup Barn after the Murder of King Erik V in 1286, 1882, oil on canvas, 254 x 377 cm.

9 Lopdrup 2011.

Fig. 6: Otto Bache, The Procession after King Christian IV's Coronation in 1596, 1887, oil on canvas, 293 x 543 cm.

The overall concept of the museum was that the visitor should experience a journey through the important events of Danish history, walking through interiors where shifts in style reflected shifts in the country's cultural history. In this way, the organization of the Museum of National History at Frederiksborg ran contrary to the classic museum's systematic, typological presentations of collection objects and emphasis on material authenticity. The latter modes of display were organized after scientific principles and oriented towards visitors with special preconditions and required an effort on the part of visitors to gain full benefit and understanding. Jacobsen, however, opted for the principles he had witnessed at Versailles, principles that were advanced for their time and still quite controversial: in order to address many people with museum exhibitions, it was necessary to appeal both to educated visitors and to the more ordinary men and women. Furthermore, to achieve this, what was needed was a national-cultural formula that could be immediately understood by anyone, regardless of education level, age, and other variables. The design of the museum's rooms aimed to elicit visitors' empathy with the past and thereby with the nation.

The museum experience was like a theatrical performance: every room one entered represented a new scene, illustrated a new set, a new period of the nation's history, with the most important persons and events, in a way that was comprehensible yet engaging. The museum's emphasis on accessibility and appeal positioned the visitor as a coplayer in the experience. In this context, visual 'authenticity' was a top priority, featuring rooms that were composed of portraits of key characters, history paintings dramatizing important events, furniture and other objects from the era, as well as ceiling paintings and other decoration that underscored the atmosphere of, or something else essential about, the historical period. Everything was organized to give visitors the sense that they were at the centre of the history of the nation.[10]

10 Skougaard 2003.

This type of presentation has been maintained through the present. It remains compelling as a medium for storytelling about past events – and may even be more impactful for today's visitors, who come to the museum with more limited education and knowledge regarding history.

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The Two (or Three?) National Museums of Sweden, 1840–1910

Martin Olin

As in other countries, the nineteenth century in Sweden brought with it discussion of public museums: Were they something that was desirable? What was their purpose? Who should pay for them? Partly as a result of the terrible state of the royal family's finances, the royal art collection had become the property of the state during the second half of the eighteenth century. A few years after the assassination of Gustav III in 1792, part of the royal palace in Stockholm was opened to the public as the *Kongligt Museum* (Royal Museum).[1] Its chief attraction was the sculpture collection bought by the late king in Rome through the intermediary Francesco Piranesi, who also sold to the Swedish monarch the remaining contents of his father Giovanni Battista's sculpture workshop.[2] Adjoining the two galleries that housed the marble sculptures were smaller rooms in which other parts of the collection were displayed, such as a cabinet of Egyptian objects, but it soon became obvious that the space available in the royal palace was inadequate. (fig. 1)

A museum for the nation now became a political question. Proposals made to the *riksdag* (parliament) were initially voted down almost without debate. During the 1830s and 1840s, schemes to establish a national museum were brought before every parliamentary session. Since the late Middle Ages, the Swedish parliament had consisted of four estates: the nobility, the clergy, the burghers, and the peasants. The presence of the latter group was almost unique among early modern European parliaments, but at this point in the nineteenth century, landowning peasants as well as middle-class groups were pressing for broader representation. The establishment of a museum was initiated by a network of members of the higher estates consisting of courtiers, officers, and intellectuals, some of whom were also amateur artists. All proposals were firmly rejected by the peasants, who held that the idea was wildly extravagant, both in terms of cost and its lack of utility, above all for the group represented by this estate. All this begged the question: What was the purpose of the national museum, and who was it for?

1 Most often styled with the first word abbreviated, '*Kongl. Museum*'.

2 Leander Touati 1998.

Fig. 1: Pehr Hilleström, The Gallery of the Muses in Kongl. Museum, Royal Palace, Stockholm, 1796, oil on canvas.

Studying the parliamentary debates leading up to the eventual decision to found a museum, Per Widén distinguishes three types of supporting arguments, although these were, in practice, often amalgamated: education (in the sense of the German word *Bildung* or the Swedish equivalent *bildning*); national prestige and identity; and benefits to society.[3] The first proposition was idealist in its nature and connected to currents in contemporary philosophy. The goal of education (*Bildung*), according to these philosophical discourses, is to develop in us what is truly human. Art can connect the individual with the ideal; it can bring men and women closer to God and to the Eternal. Art makes us better people and should therefore be supported by the state.

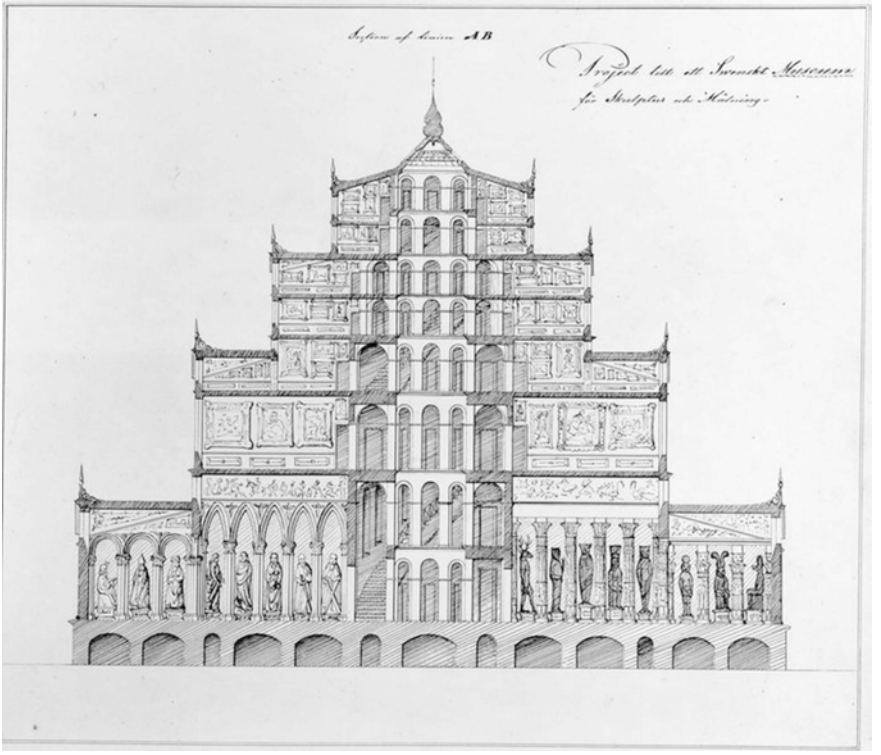
The second argument, however, advocating a museum on account of its importance for national identity, carried more weight. "It is truly with a sense of humiliation that we learn how foreigners view with pity the lack of care and space devoted to our collections of fine arts",[4] Count Claes Fleming, the marshal of the realm, lamented in an 1828 debate in the House of Nobility. Competition with Denmark, Widén notes, was a particularly sore point, as most foreigners ventured to Stockholm after having visited Copenhagen. If Sweden should be counted as a civilized nation, it needed a museum. By this logic, an emphasis was placed on displaying works of art from the foreign schools – Italian, Dutch, and Flemish paintings, for instance. The nationalist argument united conservatives and liberals and helped carry the eventual proposition through parliament.

3 Widén 2009; Olausson and Widén 2018.

4 Olausson and Widén 2018, 65.

What, then, were the benefits of a museum to the nation, beyond this ostensible increase of national prestige? Here, the reasoning focused on the advantages of museums for the industrial arts, whose competitiveness on the international market was believed to rely on access to suitable models and inspiration. In many countries, this argument provided a backdrop to the foundation of museums specifically dedicated to the applied arts, and indeed a few decades later it came up again in Sweden in the context of discussions of the educational role of the applied arts and whether the collection should be displayed in the national museum or in a separate institution. Finally, it was asserted that a national museum must be made available to everyone, for the betterment and recreation of all social classes.[5]

Fig. 2: Nils Månsson Mandelgren, Project for a National Museum on Kungsholmen, ca 1844, drawing.



A few projects for a museum building survive from the decades in which such debates occurred. Their exact context has been difficult to pin down. Nils Månsson Mandelgren's pyramid-shaped castle for the arts appears to us perhaps more like a cartoon or a quickly scribbled ideogram than a serious suggestion for a building. It does, however, address some of the central questions posed in the debates, such as the relationship

5 Ibid., 63–69.

among classical, Norse, and Christian culture and how to manifest this complex heritage in a Swedish national museum.[6] (fig. 2)

Fig. 3: Lars Jacob von Röök, Project for a National Museum in Stockholm, 1840s, pen, black ink, and watercolour.

Lars Jacob von Röök, the curator of the Royal Museum, drew two versions of an elegant, colonnaded, two-storey building with a low dome, vaguely recalling Karl Friedrich Schinkel's *Altes Museum* (Old Museum) in Berlin; the two drawings stage the building at different locations in the capital. The background to this project is uncertain, although the early 1840s seems to be a plausible date.[7] (fig. 3)

In the middle of that same decade, a political decision to construct Sweden's *Nationalmuseum* (National Museum) was finally reached. This came at the price of angering and estranging the peasant estate, whose violent opposition to spending tax money extracted from the poor in order to support "dead things" was passed over.[8] There also existed by this point a plausible project for the museum, put forward by the *Överintendentsämbetet* (National Board of Architecture). Curiously, the architect chosen by the board, Fredrik

6 Von Malmborg 1941, 78–81; Bjurström 1992, 107.

7 Bjurström 1992, 103.

8 Von Malmborg 1941, 28–29.

Wilhelm Scholander, was a mere 27-year-old, still training abroad.[9] He had in fact presented the design as if it were the solution to an academic assignment, focusing to a large degree on the magnificence of the architecture and the attractiveness of the drawings themselves. Having developed the proposal while still a student in Paris, Scholander sent it home to the National Board of Architecture, where, moreover, his uncle was one of the leading architects; indeed, it has been suggested that the talented student had to some extent been groomed for the assignment by his relative and the latter's associates. The rather simple exterior recalls a Renaissance palace. In the watercolour view, flocks of fashionably dressed people, looking perhaps more like Parisians than Swedes, walk leisurely in the museum's garden under a blue sky.[10] The interior is grandly classical, with a central monumental staircase and a domed hall for solemn meetings, inhabited by marble statues of Norse gods and Swedish kings.

Scholander returned to Stockholm and provided revised and more detailed plans for the museum, which were officially approved by the authorities but met with a storm of opposition in the press, both from jealous colleagues and a few museum officials and antiquarians who resented not having been consulted. In order to ease the tension, the king, Oscar I (r. 1844–1859), determined that a foreign architect of note should be asked to assess the various proposals and to make a statement as to their suitability and beauty. The Berlin architect Friedrich August Stüler, a pupil of Schinkel, was engaged to do so.[11] An established and respected architect and professor at the *Bauakademie* (Building Academy), Stüler was at this time occupied with the construction of the *Neues Museum* (New Museum) in Berlin. He visited Stockholm in 1847 to evaluate the designs in relation to the intended building site and other factors.[12]

The German architect judged Scholander's proposal to be the best, but for reasons that have never been fully understood, Stüler himself was asked to take over the project. In 1849, his drawings for a three-storey museum building in a Florentine-Venetian, or at any rate Italianate, neo-Renaissance style were approved by the king, and construction could begin. (figs 4, 5) The process was complicated and took around 15 years, but the finished building, on the whole, followed the original design. What should be noted is that the museum was conceived as a multipurpose structure in which several institutions were to be housed: the art gallery, the national library, the archaeological museum, the armoury, and the numismatic collections. From a philosophical point of view, the project could be labelled universal in that it would serve as a shrine not only to the arts but to history in general, as expressed in the inscription on the façade: "*Antiquitatis litterarum artium monumentis*" ("[This building is] for collections of antiquities, literature, and the arts"). On the ground floor would be housed the archaeological and historical collections. In a lavish watercolour section of the proposal for the complex, they are shown adjacent to the Royal

9 Ibid., 49–55; Grandien 1976. The protracted and painful story of Scholander's projects for and involvement in the building of the museum cannot be addressed in this essay but is discussed in detail by Grandien and later writers.

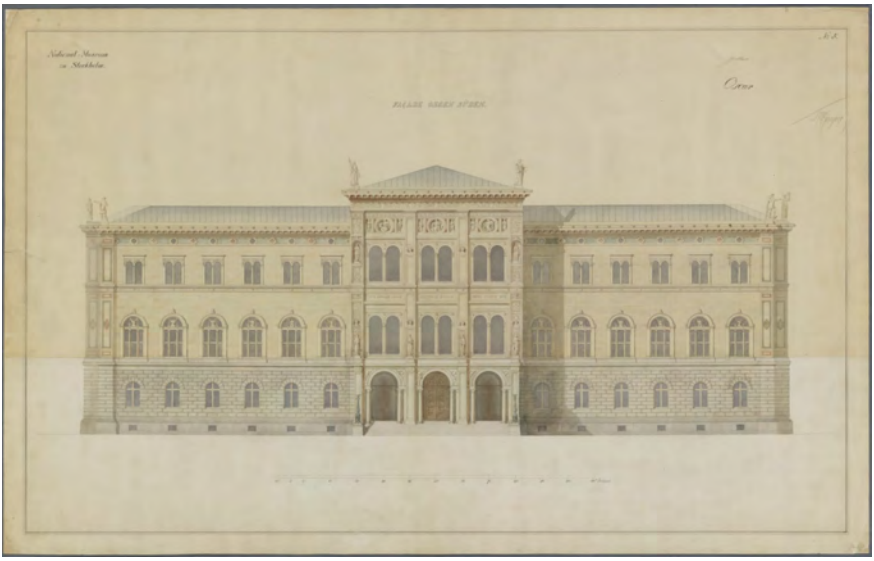
10 Fredrik Wilhelm Scholander, *Förslag till museibyggnad i Kungsträdgården* (Proposal for a Museum in the Royal Garden), Stockholm, Riksarkivet.

11 Von Malmborg 1941, 50–58.

12 Laine 1976, 84–86.

Armoury. Meanwhile, the first floor was intended to house the *Kungliga biblioteket* (Royal Library).[13] In some of the project drawings, bookcases can be made out. During the later stages of construction, however, it was realized that the library needed its own building, necessitating a reconceptualization of the first floor.[14] On the ground and first floors, natural light from the large windows illuminated showcases with typologically arranged collections.

Fig. 4: Friedrich August Stüler, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, Main Façade, 1849, pen, black ink, and watercolour.



After ascending the monumental staircase to the second floor, the visitor encountered a collection of plaster casts of ancient Greek and Roman sculptures, in fact copies of copies, yet powerful signifiers of the perceived summit of human cultural achievement.[15] The National Museum building in Stockholm, with its stylistic references to the Italian Renaissance and ancient Greece, voiced an understanding of culture as universal and ideal. The foreign nationality of the architect was considered a strength, not a weakness, and the parallels to contemporary German museums are evident.[16] For example, a rather close parallel in Stüler's production is the *Magyar Tudományos Akadémia* (Hungarian Academy of Sciences), which he executed between 1862 and 1865.[17]

13 In English, the institution has recently adopted the designation 'National Library'.

14 Kåberg 2018, 76–78.

15 Söderlind 1999; Dahlström 2022.

16 Laine 1976, 97–100.

17 Sisa 2015; Sisa 2016, 307–314.

Fig. 5: Friedrich August Stüler, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, Section, 1849, pencil, pen, brown ink, and watercolour.

The Nordic Museum and 'Skansen'

However, the winds of the cultural climate were about to veer violently. The universalism and international outlook expressed by the National Museum building and its programme were beginning to look problematic within years of the institution's opening to the public in 1866. It now dawned on the Swedish intelligentsia that the traditional way of life of the now suddenly idealized peasant class was all but irretrievably lost. Indeed, the abandonment of customs and beliefs among the *allmogen* (common people) came to be deplored as evidence that the nation as a whole was losing its soul, purity, and purpose – as in the recent passing of a golden age, of an innocent era when peasant society had remained untouched, or at least unharmed, by the calamitous forces of modernization. The collective sense of imminent loss led to a number of scientific initiatives involving the gathering of ethnographic objects and information. Two national manifestations of

this broad movement will be considered here: the establishment of the *Nordiska museet* (Nordic Museum) and that of the open-air museum *Skansen* (literally, the 'sconce'), close to each other in Stockholm. The pioneering ethnologist Arthur Hazelius founded both, and they remained part of the same organization until 1963.[18]

As for the Nordic Museum, an early version opened already in 1873, but it was not until 1907 that the museum's monumental building could be inaugurated. (fig. 6) The building committee and the architect Isak Gustaf Clason had originally conceived it on an even grander scale, but only the central section was realized, with its great hall surrounded by galleries on three levels.[19] The architectural style and decoration of the structure are redolent of national history, explicitly that of the independent nation founded by Gustav I (or Gustav Vasa) in 1523 and thus also the Protestant aspect of Sweden's history. The Catholic and prehistoric periods, with their much more complex and even contradictory national identities, remained at the National Museum, to be transferred later to a museum of their own (*Historiska museet* / The Historical Museum).[20]

Fig. 6: View of the exterior of the Nordiska museet, Stockholm, winter 2004, photograph.

The Nordic Museum was always meant to cover the breadth of Nordic countries in the interest of Scandinavian unity, but Sweden was its focus, and particularly the country's central regions. The museum not only collected and displayed objects related to the way

18 On the history of the institutions, see Medelius, Nyström, and Stavenow-Hidemark 1998; Biörnstad 1991.

19 For the architecture of the Nordic Museum, see Mårtelius 1987; Mårtelius 2020.

20 The treatment of the Viking era is of great interest in this regard yet falls beyond the scope of this paper, see Knell et al. 2011.

of life of the Swedes, its great hall was also intended as a place for national celebrations. The latter purpose was severely impeded, however, when the Royal Armoury was transferred to the museum upon its inauguration, being installed in the hall; this included the armoury's trophy collection, which was displayed hanging from the first-floor gallery. Despite this, the discourse of the Nordic Museum remained primarily ethnographic and ethnological, i.e. focusing on traditions and customs, whether long-standing or more recent.

Skansen opened its gates in 1891, with a clear emphasis on the buildings and traditions of rural Sweden. It pioneered the expansion of the very idea of a museum, moving farm buildings, a manor house, a church, and even a stretch of a street into its landscaped premises to represent the nation in miniature – all within a park in the capital's most affluent neighbourhood. Moreover, the presence of animals, both wild and domesticated, on the grounds made the museum popular with families and children, while also suggesting the adjacency of national identity to the country's nature and wildlife. This hybrid character – namely, of museum cum amusement park cum zoological garden – has proven successful on the whole, although some aspects of the inaugural programme have, perhaps with good reason, since been abandoned. Mattias Bäckström has discussed the case of Stockholm upper-class ladies dressing up as peasants for the *Skansen* spring festival to rally the patriotism of working men and women on a Sunday outing.[21] It should be stressed – and was often emphasized in debates of the time – that the founding of the Nordic Museum and *Skansen* was less an expression of widespread popular patriotism than a supposed remedy for a lack of patriotism in the population as perceived by elites, especially in comparison with the other Nordic countries.

The yearly performance, or re-enactment, of nineteenth-century rural traditions at *Skansen* has arguably fulfilled the institution's original purpose of contributing to a Swedish national identity founded on the love of nature, life in the countryside, and traditional crafts rather than on warlike historical achievements. (fig. 7) Meanwhile, the Nordic Museum, with its majestically patriotic building, has in recent decades displayed some uneasiness in relation to the tenets of its founding. As a result, it has sought to be more inclusive and innovative in its collecting strategies and its definition of national culture.

What about the National Museum? As a consequence of various administrative shifts involving the state art collections, it has become an institution dedicated almost exclusively to European or Western fine and applied arts. Objects from other parts of the world, such as the important collection of East Asian antiquities, have been transferred to other museums, making it difficult for the National Museum to engage in discussions of global issues or situate itself in an international context. The 'national' in the museum's name has largely lost its connection to the idea of national identity, as exhibitions of international art are more conspicuous than in other Stockholm galleries.

21 Bäckström 2011.

Fig. 7: A woman at the Midsummer celebrations at Skansen, ca 1970, photograph.

130 years ago, however, the romantic and nationalist ethos prompted the decision to dress the hostesses of the National Museum in the traditional costume of Dalecarlia, a province in central-west Sweden. A photograph taken during the 1890s on the upper floor, at the top of the central stairwell, shows three women dressed in the attire of Rättvik in Dalecarlia, with its striped apron. (fig. 8) The figures are juxtaposed, a little absurdly perhaps, with the plaster casts of antique statuary, the foremost expressions of the universal, idealist aspirations of the previous generation. The contrast illustrates the broad conclusion of this paper, namely, that this universal, idealist discourse was replaced in Sweden in the 1880s by a romantic, nationalist – and to a certain extent also performative – paradigm that in some ways remains a dominant cultural framework for Swedish national identity. It is within this framework that the country's heritage institutions are compelled to operate.

Fig. 8: Women from Rättvik in traditional costume in the upper hall of the Nationalmuseum, 1890, photograph.

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Fig.1, 3, 4, 8: Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, fig. 1: NM 965; fig. 3: NMH 54/1885; fig. 4: NMH A 70/1975; fig. 8: Photo: A. Holmberg.

Fig. 2, 6: Nordiska museet, Stockholm. Photo: Mats Landin.

Fig. 5: Riksarkivet, Stockholm, ÖIÄ, PS132:19.

Fig. 7: Digitalt Museum, https://digitaltmuseum.se/021017052288/kvinna-avbildad-vid-midsommarfirandet-pa-tingsvallen.

"Ein Nationalmuseum im vollsten und schönsten Sinne des Wortes"

The 1861 Description of the Bavarian National Museum by Wilhelm Weingärtner

Matthias Weniger

In 2006, the *Bayerisches Nationalmuseum* (Bavarian National Museum) edited a *Festschrift* to celebrate the first 150 years of its existence.[1] It was partly modelled on an even more robust publication by the *Germanisches Nationalmuseum* (Germanic National Museum), from 1978.[2] The 875 pages of the 2006 volume attempted to compile all information about the museum that was available at that moment. There are essays on key moments of the museum's history, on the personalities that left a particular impact on it, on its various collections, and on related institutions, not least its branch museums all over Bavaria. There is also a complete list of publications edited by the museum and a short list of the literature devoted to it. Special emphasis is placed on the years immediately following the museum's foundation, which had been planned since 1853 but was only realized in 1855. An appendix consists of key documents linked to that foundation.

Curiously, the earliest among the scholarly publications on the museum escaped the attention of the primary editor, Ingolf Bauer, and of the contributors to the volume, myself included. It was published by Wilhelm Weingärtner in May 1861,[3] seven years before the appearance of the first text published by the museum itself, its guidebook of 1868.[4] Nor is Weingärtner's article quoted in two other important publications on the early history of the museum, Michael Kamp's 2002 dissertation *Das Museum als Ort der Politik. Münchner Museen im 19. Jahrhundert*[5] and Barbara Six's *Denkmal und Dynastie*, from

1 Eikelmann et al. 2006.

2 Deneke and Kahsnitz 1978.

3 Weingärtner 1861.

4 "Das bayerische Nationalmuseum" 1868. The *Vorwort* is signed by Aretin, while the information was compiled by Josef Alois Kuhn and Joseph Anton Meßmer.

5 Kamp 2002.

2012.[6] In the meantime, the present author has mentioned Weingärtner's article on some occasions, namely, his references to certain objects from the museum's collection.[7]

Earlier descriptions of the new museum appeared in the *Neue Münchener Zeitung* in September/October 1855 and May 1858.[8] The former, divided into five parts, is signed 'G', and the latter 'AZ'. Together with Weingärtner's 1861 contribution, these deepen fundamentally our understanding of the appearance and the founding principles of the young institution. However, the newspaper articles are equally omitted from the 2006 *Festschrift*.[9]

While nothing is known about the monograms that accompany these articles from the 1850s, Wilhelm Weingärtner, for his part, belonged to the early generation of art historians. He published an 1858 monograph on the origins and development of church buildings (*Ursprung und Entwicklung des christlichen Kirchengebäudes*), followed two years later by a book on church towers (*System des christlichen Thurmbaues. Die Doppelkapellen, Thurmkapellen, Todtenleuchten, Karner, altchristlichen Monasterien, Glocken- und Kirchenthürme in ihrem organischen Zusammenhange und ihrer Entwicklung*). In 1861, an essay on Silesian, and in particular Breslau (today Wrocław), architecture (*Charakteristik der Schlesischen, besonders Breslauer Architekturen*) appeared in the *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens*. In 1863, an article on the late Gothic sculptures of Breslau was presented in two parts (*Die Breslauer Sculpturen am Ende des XV. und zu Anfang des XVI. Jahrhunderts*). In addition, Weingärtner published on antique sculpture, including the Monte Cavallo Dioscuri in Berlin, as well as on art of the nineteenth century.[10]

Given the preferences of its author, it comes as no surprise that the article on the Bavarian National Museum, *Die Kunstdenkmale der altchristlichen und romanischen Periode im k. bayerischen Nationalmuseum zu München*, concentrates on its medieval holdings. However, one should remember that the institution was generally perceived at the time of its foundation (and possibly by some still today) as a museum dedicated to the Middle Ages.[11]

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6 Six 2012.

7 Among them, in the article on the so-called Rosenheim retable quoted in Weingärtner 1861, 110.

8 'G' 13/20 September 1855; 'G' 21 September 1855; 'G' 2/3 October 1855; 'AZ' 18 May 1858 (the article itself is dated 11 May 1858).

9 The 1855 article is quoted by Kamp and Six, however. In Kamp's thesis, the reference to the section published on 20 September 1855 is missing: Kamp 2002, 93, no. 296; but see 98, no. 311. On the basis of the 1855 article, Six even attempts a reconstruction of the first rooms of the museum; Six 2012, 539–541. The 1858 article is only quoted by Six 2012, 338, no. 1162.

10 See Schultz 1861, 304. In addition, Schultz mentions several shorter articles for the *Göttinger Gelehrte Anzeigen*. For details on the other publications, see below.

11 On 13 September 1855, 'G' praises any undertaking offering a complete vision of medieval culture ("*jedes Unternehmen, dessen schöne Aufgabe es ist, uns durch Sammlung, Nachbildung und Restaurirung ein reiches und vollständiges Bild der mittelalterlichen Cultur des deutschen resp. des bayerischen Volkes aus zahlreichen Kunstdenkmälern und ihren Überresten zu entfalten*"), going on to describe the foundation of Aretin's new museum; 'G' 13/20 September 1855.

The Author

Weingärtner's publication on the Bavarian National Museum is remarkable for several reasons. First of all, it seems to be a comment coming from outside both the museum and the intellectual circles around it – in contrast to the appraisals in the *Neue Münchener Zeitung*, an organ close to the Bavarian government.[12] Weingärtner's article was published in Vienna in the *Mittheilungen der K. K. Central-Commission zur Erforschung und Erhaltung der Baudenkmale*, a forum Weingärtner opted for on several occasions – among them the presentation of the private collection of medieval art assembled by Karl Rolas du Rosey in Dresden.[13] In 1863, the journal posthumously released his articles from the same year on the Breslau sculptures. Weingärtner's two previous books were published in Leipzig and Göttingen, respectively. As we will see, he depended on Karl Maria Freiherr von Aretin, the founder of the museum, for access to its holdings, but their contact seems not to have been particularly close. The details are difficult to judge, since almost no pre-1945 correspondence has been preserved at the museum.[14] It seems no coincidence, though, that only one of Weingärtner's titles found its way into the library of the Bavarian National Museum – namely, the 1860 book on church towers – and even this one, not directly but as a gift from one of the first curators of the museum, Joseph Anton Meßmer.[15] The latter figure is known today above all because he completed, in 1869, the first handwritten inventory of the museum's holdings, again concentrated on the Middle Ages. In 1868, he co-authored the first guidebook to the museum.[16] Meßmer shared with Weingärtner an interest in early Christian architecture, and so his copy of the book bears quite a few annotations.

Weingärtner, for his part, seems almost forgotten today – even the documentation at the *Deutsche Nationalbibliothek* (German National Library) in Leipzig is short, not to mention partly erroneous.[17] However, an obituary by Alwin Schultz, published in the same 1861 volume of the Vienna *Mittheilungen* on the occasion of Weingärtner's premature death, offers quite a number of details.[18] Born in Breslau on 30 April 1831, he studied German literature in Breslau, Berlin, and Munich. In 1858, he presented in Göttingen his doctoral thesis dedicated to the pronunciation of the 'Gothic' language during the period of Ulfilas, the fourth-century theologian more commonly known as 'Wulfila' (*Die Aussprache des Gothischen zur Zeit des Ulfilas*). Gravitating more and more from literature to art and archaeology, he published that same year a book on the origins of church buildings as well as his second thesis (*Habilitation*), likewise at Göttingen. After teaching art

12 See Kamp 2002, 101.

13 Weingärtner 1860.

14 The acquisition files are an exception to that rule. It comes as no surprise that Weingärtner is not mentioned therein.

15 Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Bibliothek, code Archit LH 67570 W423, "Geschenk d. H. Prof. Meßmer".

16 "Das Bayerische Nationalmuseum" 1868.

17 Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, https://d-nb.info/gnd/117268747.

18 Schultz 1861, 304.

and archaeology there,[19] he moved in January 1860 to Breslau and in April 1860 to Munich, where he sought to obtain approval to teach. The essay on the museum is the fruit of that stay, which cannot have been long: in that same year, he also spent quite some time in Dresden, and in autumn he moved on to Italy to collect material for a major work on Romanism and Byzantinism. He died in Milan on 21 July 1861.

The Accessibility of the Newly Founded Museum

The second factor that makes Weingärtner's 1861 contribution and the preceding newspaper articles so remarkable is that they attest to the arrangement and – at least to select visitors by appointment – the accessibility of the objects at that early date. Prior to the 12 October 1867 inauguration of the first proper building for the museum, on *Maximilianstraße*, the objects were assembled at *Herzog-Max-Burg*, an existing palace of the Bavarian kings. A provisional installation of the first six rooms had already been realized in March 1855, and visits to it by the royal founder of the museum, King Maximilian II (r. 1848–1864), are documented at that time and again in 1858.[20] In parallel, 'G' described the 1855 display in these rooms, and 'AZ' reported on its enlarged state in 1858. There are no known illustrations of these inaugural arrangements of the collection. And, above all, there is no certainty about a more general accessibility of the museum; strangely enough, the topic is discussed neither in the 2006 *Festschrift* nor by Kamp and Six.

What we know, however, is that new objects constantly entered the collection. Consequently, in 1857 plans for a larger space were drawn up. According to the historian Karl Otmar Freiherr von Aretin, great-grandnephew of Karl Maria von Aretin, the rooms were by that time overcrowded and unsuitable to be visited by the public.[21] This implies that the public would not be permitted to see the collection from this point until the completion of the new building, in 1867/1868, a possibility supported by the fact that the *Brockhaus' Reise-Atlas München* of 1860 excludes the name of the institution, though featuring several other museums.[22] In Georg Kaspar Nagler's much more ambitious guidebook *Acht Tage in München. Wegweiser für Fremde und Einheimische*, published in Munich in 1863,[23] the description of the *Herzog-Max-Burg* makes no reference at all to the works of the museum preserved there.[24] The Bavarian National Museum is mentioned separately, but with regard to the architecture of the new building, not yet completed.[25] However, another guidebook, Friedrich Morin's *Neuester Wegweiser durch München und seine Umgebungen für Fremde und Einheimische*, from 1862, is more explicit. It makes an important distinction, confirming that, though the collections were still closed to the public, anyone interested in viewing them would only need to seek permission from Aretin himself. On the

19 File on his (brief) activity in the archives of the university, code 4.V.c.92. Warm thanks to Christine Hübner and Anne-Katrin Sors for their assistance on this.

20 Karnapp 2006, 61–62, with nos 9 and 34; Aretin 2006, 74, with no. 16.

21 "*für einen Publikumsverkehr gänzlich ungeeignet*"; Aretin 2006, 78.

22 Lange [1860].

23 The volume has 228 pages.

24 Nagler 1863, 103.

25 Ibid., 115–116.

given day, between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., Aretin himself would then lead the visitor around. Morin adds that at this date the installation was still provisional and that some works were even displayed on the floors. He also reports that the transfer of objects to the new building was already underway and that, there as well, Aretin would be much disposed to sacrifice his time to lead knowledgeable people around.[26]

Weingärtner had visited the premises shortly before. In his article, he sheds further light on the circumstances of these early encounters and on the character of the display. On one hand, he similarly stresses the provisional nature of the arrangement,[27] including the fact that the chronology of the objects had not yet been established in any way and that he had to rely on information delivered orally by Aretin for provenance and acquisition details, which would imply an absence of labels. He also emphasizes that, for the purposes of preparing his text, he would have needed more time than the eight hours conceded to him; apparently Aretin had to accompany visitors at all times.[28] Weingärtner further mentions an inscription on the back of a work,[29] suggesting that he was allowed to handle at least certain items. The character of Weingärtner's visit would also explain why even the closest circle of experts was barely familiar with this collection.[30] It might be added that Meßmer became curator only in 1865 – at the time of Weingärtner's visit, he was teaching at the local university – and thus Aretin worked basically alone; a second curator, Josef Alois Kuhn, was likewise installed in 1865. Aside from Aretin, only one person was active at the museum from its beginnings, namely, Kaspar Feldhütter. Born on 1 June 1794, he was almost sixty years old when he was hired by the museum on 1 January 1854 – more than a year before its official foundation. With his previous profession given as *Bader* (a sort of nonmedical practitioner) , he was employed as the *Museumsdiener* (museum attendant). In this capacity, he also acted as the institution's first conservator. Behind this employment was the relationship between director Aretin and Feldhütter's daughter Maria; the couple had children in 1851, 1853, and 1857, before finally marrying on 4 November 1862. Kaspar Feldhütter only retired in November 1875, at the age of more than eighty, though mention of poor health had been made as early as 1871.[31] Beyond the anecdotal, these circumstances underline the extent to which the establishment of the museum was a personal matter for and of Aretin.

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26 Morin 1862, 111: *"da Baron v. Aretin mit der aufopferndsten Bereitwilligkeit selbst den Führer macht"*. I'm very grateful to Barbara Six for having drawn my attention to this important source.

27 "*nur annähernd vereinigt*".

28 Weingärtner 1861, 109.

29 Ibid., 111.

30 "*die bis jetzt noch kaum im allerengsten Kreise der Fachgenossen bekannt war*"; ibid.

31 In his sixteen and a half years of service prior, he took fewer than eight days off; due to his poor health, he was not able to lend full services in his final years. These and more details in his personal files: Munich, Hauptstaatsarchiv, MK 30758. Feldhütter had also worked alongside Aretin on the restoration of Blutenburg Castle in 1855–1857; ibid., MA 75185 and Abt. V, Nachlässe und Sammlungen, NL Aretin, 33, 10. In a ministerial report of 18 October 1862 that relies on police information, Kaspar Feldhütter is presented as a once dealer of paintings and now a servant of the National Museum; ibid., MA 75185. The same file reports on the marriage and relationship between Aretin and Maria Feldhütter. I owe my warmest thanks to Barbara Six for having suggested that I consult these files.

In addition, Weingärtner describes arrangements made for visitors rather than for storage purposes. He tells us that fragments of manuscripts were preserved "under glass" and that, for the sake of comparison and completeness, related drawings, prints, and photographs were displayed alongside the originals.[32] He similarly notes the many gesso replicas that represented (*sind repräsentirt*) objects that could not themselves be put on view. As for architectural fragments, Weingärtner reports how these were arranged side by side and one on top of the other.[33] More broadly, he stresses the purpose of the museum: to be – or, maybe better, become – a public collection.[34] It might be added that Weingärtner mentions that a new and proper building for the museum was well underway.[35] Work had started in 1859.[36]

The Scope of the Museum and References to Specific Works

As pertains to the collection itself, it is reflective of the general preferences of the period that Weingärtner centres his attention on paintings as well as on the applied arts, such as objects of ivory and bronze, textiles, and stained glass. With the exception of two monumental crucifixes,[37] large-scale sculptures barely play a role in his essay – a remarkable fact given that, thanks to the groundwork laid by Aretin, the Bavarian National Museum was among the largest collections of wooden sculpture of the late Gothic period in Germany. 'G' did them greater justice in his 1855 article, acknowledging, among other comments, the importance of the dedication relief from the Lawrence Chapel at the Old Court in Munich and the "great beauty" of the Virgin from Seeon – two of the centrepieces of the museum until this day.[38]

Weingärtner lamented in an earlier publication that no German government had undertaken to form a collection of medieval art, and thus he reports his surprise and satisfaction to see Bavaria filling this gap.[39] He moreover notes his appreciation that the scope of the new museum went beyond the Middle Ages by including works from the Renaissance and the Baroque (*Zopfzeit*)[40] – a choice that was surprising at that date. This remark is complemented by the information given by 'AZ', who tells us that, by 1858, the installation continued into the time of King Maximilian I (r. 1806–1825), i.e. the beginning of the nineteenth century.[41] Somewhat surprisingly, Weingärtner does not mention at all

32 Weingärtner 1861, 114.
33 Ibid., 115.
34 Ibid., 109.
35 Ibid.
36 See Karnapp 2006, 67.
37 Weingärtner 1861, 113. Modern inv. nos MA 153 and MA 152.
38 'G' 21 September 1855.
39 Weingärtner 1861, 109. He refers himself to his article on the collection of Karl Rolas du Rosey, Weingärtner 1860.
40 Weingärtner 1861, 109.
41 "*dass Frhr. v. Aretin […] die Aufstellung dergestalt erweitert hat, daß im ersten Stockwerke zwölf Säle mit Gegenständen von der Zeit Kaiser Maximilians I. an bis zu König Max Joseph I. von Bayern besetzt […] sind*"; 'AZ' 18 May 1858.

the parallel establishment of the Germanic National Museum in Nuremberg, in contrast to 'G', who asked, rhetorically, on 20 September 1855 whether Munich should trail behind Nuremberg, despite the equal importance of the two institutions' treasures.[42]

While works like Byzantine paintings left the permanent display many decades ago,[43] Weingärtner offers lengthy discussions and descriptions of several works that are still today considered highlights of the collection, such as the ivory with the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ (today better known as the *Reider panel*),[44] the so-called casket of Empress Kunigunde (Weingärtner ascribes this name to a different object, possibly in error[45]),[46] and the small bronze figures of the Four Elements[47] – all works from the collection of Martin Joseph von Reider, acquired the very year of Weingärtner's visit, in 1860.[48] Among the other objects Weingärtner describes in detail is an "altarpiece with the Coronation of the Virgin and the apostles", one of the earliest works of its kind.[49] Today, it is largely known as the *Rosenheim retable*, though this provenance may be incorrect; in light of this possibility, it is even more interesting that Weingärtner himself speaks of "Rosenhain".[50] The altarpiece is painted in a very peculiar style, a detail that did not escape his attention. On the basis of information that has since become available, we no longer agree with all of Weingärtner's assessments of works in the Bavarian National Museum. However, as further proof of the sharpness of his eye, he was able to correct the dating of the Reider panel, from the eighth century to the fifth or sixth century.[51] Indeed, the ivory is today believed to have originated around the year 400. The dearth of comparable objects makes the lucidity of Weingärtner's judgement even more remarkable.

Since the documentation concerning the early accessions of the museum is highly incomplete, Weingärtner's article, as well as those in the *Neue Münchener Zeitung*, offer a very helpful *terminus ante quem* for the museum's acquisition of a number of objects. Moreover, these publications contain valuable information about the condition of these works in 1860. These data have yet to be systematically integrated into the object files and the collections-management database of the Bavarian National Museum.

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42 "*und endlich, sollen wir noch auf Nürnbergs vielbesprochenes Germanisches Museum hinweisen, um zu fragen, ob München bei gleichem Reichthum des Materials hinter Nürnberg zurückstehen dürfe, müsse und wolle?*"; 'G' 20 September 1855. On 20 September 1855, 'G' already cited the role of Rudolf Maria Bernhard von Stillfried-Rattonitz (1804–1882), who, as head of the *Königliches Hausarchiv*, directed a huge project to document the history of the house of Hohenzollern – and can be considered an example for Aretin in several respects.

43 Weingärtner 1861, 111, describes several works of this kind, among them MA 371.

44 Ibid., 110. Modern inv. no. MA 157.

45 To the fragments of an ivory casket from the same Reider collection. Modern inv. no. MA 174-MA 176; ibid., 114.

46 Ibid., 110–111. Modern inv. no. MA 286.

47 Ibid., 111. Modern inv. no. MA 194-MA 197.

48 For a history of the Reider collection and the circumstances of its acquisition, see Weniger 2012a. See also Weniger 2011.

49 Modern inv. no. MA 2363.

50 Weingärtner 1861, 114–115. See also Weniger 2012b.

51 "*eine Annahme, die durch nichts sich rechtfertigen lässt*"; Weingärtner 1861, 110.

Bavarian versus National

What is most important in the context of the subject of this volume, however, is the emphasis Weingärtner places on the untenability of, and resulting efforts to overcome, the museum's originally narrow focus on Bavaria.[52] In his 1861 article, Weingärtner considered the character of the museum to be not just Bavarian but national in the fullest and truest sense of the word.[53] Such an assessment of the southern German museum carries special weight when expressed by this writer from Prussia. It is echoed in an article signed 'Herwegen' in the *Unterhaltungs-Blatt der Neuesten Nachrichten* of 1867 that describes the new institution as a German historical museum, without any reference to Bavaria at all. In fact, Herwegen stresses his desire that every visitor would leave the museum more 'German' than he or she had entered it.[54]

It must be remembered, however, that also King Maximilian II himself had looked beyond the confines of his state, and even those of the *Deutscher Bund* (German Confederation), when he proposed the name '*Nationalmuseum*' on 30 June 1855. In the same letter, he advised Aretin to take three French institutions as examples: the *Musée des Souverains* (Museum of Sovereigns) at the *Musée du Louvre* (Louvre Museum), the *Musée de Cluny* (today the *Musée de Cluny – musée national du Moyen Âge* / Cluny Museum – National Museum of the Middle Ages), and the *Musée national de Versailles* (today the *Musée de l´Histoire de France* / Museum of French History).[55] Weingärtner's remarks certainly do justice to Aretin. Alongside publishing his book *Alterthümer und Kunst-Denkmale des bayerischen Herrscher-Hauses* in 1854,[56] Aretin had started the institution as a *Wittelsbachisches Museum* (Wittelsbach Museum), a collection of objects linked to the ruling house of Bavaria. However, he gave up this focus at a very early stage – years before Weingärtner's visit – and pivoted to amassing works for their quality, for this purpose going also beyond Bavaria and the German Confederation, as some interesting acquisitions of Italian and Netherlandish art prove.[57] His role model became the South Kensington Museum (today the Victoria and Albert Museum) in London,[58] in lieu of the French institutions named by

52 "*Der ursprünglich bei der Gründung desselben festgesetzte einseitige streng bayerische Gesichtspunkt […] hat sich im Laufe der Zeit als unhaltbar erwiesen […] und ist auch thatsächlich bereits überschritten*"; ibid., 109.

53 "*ein Nationalmuseum im vollsten und schönsten Sinne des Wortes*"; ibid.

54 Herwegen 1867; see Kamp 2002, 132.

55 Karnapp 2006, 60; appendix 3 to Eikelmann et al. 2006, 759. For the concept of 'nation' in this context, see in particular Six 2012, 329–388, passim.

56 'G' describes the publication as a royal initiative to make more widely accessible the results of the art-historical research precipitated by the establishment of the new museum: "*Um aber die kunsthistorischen Resultate des Unternehmens zugleich weiteren Kreisen fruchtbar zu machen, wird auf Befehl des Königs mit dem Museum ein literarisches Werk in Verbindung stehen, welches […] speciell die bedeutendsten Monumente des Wittelsbachischen Hauses ediren wird. Zwei Hefte davon sind unter der Redaction des Frhrn. v. Aretin in prachtvoller Ausstattung bereits erschienen*"; 'G' 13 September 1855. In addition, Nagler 1862, 116, mentions a certain connection ("*In einem gewissen Zusammenhange*") between the museum and the publication. On the publication project, see Six 2012, 227–327, passim.

57 See Weniger 2006a; Weniger 2006b.

58 See Kamp 2006, 92.

King Maximilian II. That Aretin had been trained as a historian, rather than an art historian like Weingärtner, makes this shift of direction even more remarkable. Discussion of whether the focus of the Bavarian National Museum should be local or international would continue to mark the museum – even until this very day.

As for the name, curiously enough the first two parts of the 1855 article by 'G' still refer to the "*Wittelsbachisches Museum*". In the second one, dated 20 September, a footnote is attached to the title, reporting the king's apparent wish to rename the institution "*Bayerisches Nationalmuseum*". Part 3 of the article, published the following day, already takes up the museum's new and still current name.

The Bavarian National Museum among the Institutions of Its Time

Aretin's first and only publication on the museum was the 1868 guidebook. When he mentioned the South Kensington Museum in its preface, he stressed that the industry of the time would benefit from a collection of exemplary works drawn from all periods of culture.[59] The importance assigned to the *Vorbildersammlung* (collection of prototypes) would later lead to a bifocal approach to object display at the museum, with a traditional art-historical sequence on the main floor and an arrangement by classes and types of works on the other. Only on the main floor would objects of many different types – from sculptures and paintings to textiles, furniture, and applied art – continue to offer a cohesive image of the period they sought to represent, as had been envisaged by Aretin. This bifocal approach still marks today's museum, and discussions of whether to maintain this structure persist among scholars at the institution. These debates had not yet taken shape by the time of Weingärtner's visit in 1860, and one must also note that the 1867 installation in the new building was chronological in character. Discussions around the arrangement of the collections began with the arrival of Aretin's successor, Jakob Heinrich von Hefner-Alteneck – as will be the subject of the contribution that follows.

The singularity and the innovative character of Aretin's approach was explicitly identified and praised in the early comments on the nascent museum by 'G' in 1855 and by 'AZ' in 1858. The former stresses that, to his knowledge, a strict chronological order had never before been realized in any museum,[60] while the latter highlights the museum's conception to offer a complete panorama of a given period, contrasting this curation strategy to examples from other museums.[61] It would be up to the learned scholar Weingärtner

59 "*welchen Nutzen eine Sammlung von Vorbildern aus allen Culturperioden für die Industrie unserer Tage haben musste*"; Weingärtner 1861, IV.

60 "*Die Einrichtung des Museums […] ist so getroffen, daß die einzelnen Kunstwerke und Alterthümer nicht nach ihren Gattungen, sondern in universaler Gruppirung nach der Chronologie der Jahrhunderte aufgestellt sind, einmal um den Gesammtüberblick der Culturentwicklung einer bestimmten Epoche in ihrem inneren Zusammenhang und allen Eigenthümlichkeiten zu erleichtern […]. Diese erste streng chronologische Aufstellungsart ist unseres Wissens noch in keinem der bestehenden Museen zur Anwendung gekommen*"; 'G' 13 September 1855.

61 "*So stellt schon beim Eintritt in jedwedem Raum ein culturhistorisches Gesammtbild der jeweiligen Zeit sich dar, da die Objecte nicht etwa wie in naturhistorischen und anderen Sammlungen nach ihren Kategorien*

to doubt the exactness of this apparent order by undertaking a more nuanced analysis of the collections and their display.[62]

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aneinander gereiht wurden, sondern jeder Raum alles auf e i n e Zeitperiode Bezügliche in sich begreift"; 'AZ' 1858.

62 *"die Chronologie ist noch in keiner Weise festgestellt"*; Weingärtner 1861, 109.

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Balancing the National and the Decorative Arts in the Bavarian National Museum in Munich

Raphael Beuing

The purpose of the *Bayerisches Nationalmuseum* (Bavarian National Museum) in Munich can hardly be defined in a single sentence. This task might have proven easier, and indeed less eventful, had the designation *Wittelsbachisches Museum* (Wittelsbach Museum) been adopted instead, as proposed by King Maximilian II of Bavaria (r. 1848–1864). He wished to establish under this heading a museum dedicated exclusively to his dynasty, although the present name became quickly favoured. Much has already been written on the foundation and early years of the Bavarian National Museum, foremost in the *Festschriften* published in 2000 on the centennial of the opening of the institution's current building and in 2006 on the 150th anniversary of the museum's inauguration.[1] The present contribution focuses on, and juxtaposes, two features concerning the first decades of the museum that have remained unsettled in the literature: the increased accentuation of the 'national', on the one hand, and the sharpening of the institution's character as a decorative arts museum, on the other.

The creation of the Bavarian National Museum in 1855 was one of the projects of King Maximilian II "to heighten Bavarian national feeling", in line with the preservation of long-standing customs and the revitalization of traditional costumes.[2] In the museum's first location, opened on *Maximilianstraße* in 1867, the king's intention was expressed pictorially in a gallery of murals depicting historical events: a total of 143 scenes ranging from Bavaria's time as a province of the Roman Empire to the defence of Gaeta in 1860–1861 by Marie Sophie of Bavaria, Queen Consort of the Two Sicilies (r. 1859–1861). The gallery encompassed the entire first floor, which remained almost completely devoid of other works of art. And although the modern viewer would interpret the people in the murals as marginal onlookers, the king in fact saw the people, his nation, visualized there.[3] According to the foreword of the first museum guide – which was conceived and published

1 Bauer 2000; Eikelmann et al., 2006.

2 "*zur Hebung des bayerischen Nationalgefühls*". Murr 2000, 16.

3 See ibid., 16–29, on the contradictions between the noble intentions of Maximilian II and their realization.

in 1868 by the inaugural director, Karl Maria von Aretin – that gallery had been particularly important to King Maximilian II as a sign of "his Bavarian state's fame and prosperity";[4] the last chapter of the catalogue neatly lists the 143 wall paintings, explaining some in more detail. Yet, in this first official address of the museum to its public, a year after its opening in 1867 and four years after the death of Maximilian II, the national aspect remains remarkably underexposed.[5] The king's argument that the wall paintings constituted a representation of the people was, oddly enough, never taken up in the discussions of the programme over the following decades.

According to the 1868 guide, however, the South Kensington Museum (today the Victoria and Albert Museum) in London served as an explicit reference point for the Bavarian National Museum, as reflected in the latter's mission to amass "a collection of models, drawn from all cultural periods, for the benefit of today's industry".[6] The authors of the catalogue acknowledge that, in Munich, the gathering of such models would have to be realized largely through the transfer of works of art from the Bavarian royal palaces, whereas in London the collections had allegedly all been newly acquired. The accentuation of the decorative arts in the catalogue, along with its rather wry account of the 'national' aspirations of the painting programme, was most likely a diplomatic way for Aretin to communicate his hesitations about the museum's layout, as he was never involved in its construction plans, which were a private project of the king himself.[7] But it seems that, with his wording, Aretin also wished to keep pace with the recently founded decorative arts museums. The London museum had its origins, as is widely known, in the Great Exhibition of 1851 and opened its doors in 1857. This example was followed on the continent in 1863 by the *k. k. Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und Industrie* (Imperial Royal Austrian Museum of Art and Industry) in Vienna and in 1867 by the *Deutsches Gewerbe-Museum zu Berlin* (German Museum of Trade and Industry, Berlin), and during the 1870s similar museums were established in Leipzig, Hamburg, Dresden, and Frankfurt.

Just as the guidebook came out in 1868, Aretin died and was succeeded by Jakob Heinrich von Hefner-Alteneck, who from 1853 to 1861 had served as curator of the *Vereinigte Sammlungen* (literally, the 'united collections', encompassing works from the royal holdings) and, after that, had overseen the *Königliches Kupferstich- und Handzeichnungskabinett* (Royal Cabinet of Prints and Drawings).

From this past experience, Hefner-Alteneck had existed in the orbit of the Bavarian National Museum since its founding and had even contributed to the constitution of its collections, which equipped him with extensive knowledge of the museum's structure

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4 "*seines Bayerlandes Ruhm und Wohlfahrt*"; "Das bayerische Nationalmuseum" 1868, VII.

5 The history paintings encompassed battle scenes dating back centuries, which could be included in historical exhibitions today without any political or social reservation. However, achievements of the history of Bavaria were also shown, which would today be conceived as highly dubious, if not objectionable. This could be said, for example, of the conquest of Venezuela in 1528 in favour of the Welser family of Augsburg merchants, members of which established a slave trade that already in the sixteenth century was described as cruel. "Das bayerische Nationalmuseum" 1868, 369–370, no. 135.

6 "*welchen Nutzen eine Sammlung von Vorbildern aus allen Culturperioden für die Industrie unserer Tage haben musste*"; ibid., IV.

7 Aretin 2006, 78–80.

and contents. Upon the opening of the museum, the collections – across all genres of art – were arrayed in chronological order on the lower two floors, presenting a cultural-historical tour through history. To improve this purportedly overcrowded display, Hefner-Alteneck began by withdrawing many objects in order to introduce galleries devoted entirely to the decorative arts, the so-called *Fachsammlungen* (specialized collections). These were set up on the first floor within the galleries furnished with murals of historical scenes, the whole rearrangement being finished in 1872 (fig. 1).[8] Rooms were dedicated respectively to arms and armour, to costumes and textiles, to ceramics, to ironworks, and to glass. This situation is documented in the earliest surviving photographs of the building's interior: examples of the decorative arts are presented on freestanding rows of shelves and on racks, partially concealing the history paintings. These rooms were to be followed by two others for contemporary design, a room for copies of works of art, a photo studio, and a room with plaster casts – a combination that illustrates the new department's function of providing role models for artisans.

Hefner-Alteneck certainly had no antipathy towards national undertones. Indeed, as much as he deemphasized the particularly Bavarian imprint of the museum's contents and mission, he stressed their 'German' character; this development was in line with the decreased importance of Bavaria after its defeat by Prussia in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866.[9] With some distance, he described the mural programme as Maximilian II's – and not his own – "*Lieblingsidee*"[10] (favourite idea) and noted visitors' preference for these far from subtle scenes over the decorative arts: "because a large portion of the audience, whether more or less educated, has little interest in the essentials of the national museum and is only attracted by these eye-catching paintings".[11] Indeed, the scholarly presentation of arts and crafts was of far greater concern to him, especially in light of the recent foundations of museums of the decorative arts in Vienna and Berlin.[12] Surprisingly, he made no mention of the *Bayerisches Gewerbemuseum* (Bavarian Museum of Trade and Industry) in Nuremberg, founded as early as 1869 and clearly determined to serve the education of craftsmen and thereby to support local production. Although this institution came close, in its title, to what Aretin and Hefner-Alteneck sought for Munich, it seems as though the latter ignored it – either because he deemed it a rival or he considered it too insignificant – while acknowledging the more prominent *Germanisches Nationalmuseum* (Germanic National Museum).[13]

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8 Schickel 2000a, 39–40; Kamp 2006, 87–88. See Hefner-Alteneck 1899, 328–338.

9 Hefner-Alteneck evokes childhood memories of his contemporaries when speaking of the impressive collections of the municipal armoury of Munich: "*Möge dabei an das gedacht werden, was damals unser Vaterland war, und was wir den Männern zu danken haben, welche ein einiges deutsches Vaterland geschaffen!*"; Hefner-Alteneck 1899, 324. Kamp 2006, 89–90.

10 Ibid., 289, in addition to 199–200.

11 "*denn ein grosser Theil des höheren wie des niederen Publikums hat wenig Interesse für das Wesentliche des Nationalmuseums und wurde nur durch diese ins Auge fallenden Gemälde angezogen*"; ibid., 290.

12 Ibid., 277–281.

13 Ibid., 289, 379. In return, the Bavarian Museum of Trade and Industry seems not to have made any reference to the museum in Munich. Ultimately, the former could not prevail as an independent institution and became incorporated into the Germanic National Museum in the late twentieth century, see Bott 1989.

Fig. 1: View of Gallery 4 on the first floor of the Bavarian National Museum (Arms and Armour, 1520–1620), with the murals in the background showing the Battle of Brienne *(1814) and* Max Joseph issuing the Bavarian constitution *(1818).*

The transformation of the Bavarian National Museum was apparently widely discussed in the years that followed. The Munich art critic Carl Albert Regnet, certainly a supporter of Hefner-Alteneck, summed up the issue when he wrote in 1873 that "the historical gallery was intended to be a link in the chain, but instead became a crack in it".[14] Artistically, he considered the wall paintings to be unremarkable. It had to be admitted,

14 "*Die historische Galerie sollte ein Verbindungsglied in der Kette sein und wurde zum Riß in derselben*"; Regnet 1873, 61. See Kamp 2006, 92.

Regnet continued, that the new specialized collections, while presenting ample models for blacksmiths, locksmiths, armourers, etc., offered hardly any for carpenters, turners, stonemasons, or silver- and goldsmiths. This imbalance was due to aspects of the centuries-long development of the trades, in addition to the sheer impossibility of encompassing everything.[15] Despite the criticism, Regnet saw fulfilled in these galleries Maximilian's dedicating words, as presented on the museum's façade: "To the honour of my people and to their example".[16]

Not everyone took such a pragmatic view of the reinstallation of the museum. The art dealer Joseph Maillinger published a pamphlet in 1877 in which he lamented the reduction of the aspect of honour specified in Maximilian's inscription, while he found the second purpose, the education of the people through the promotion of industry,[17] to be overemphasized. Clearly adhering to an idea of progressivism, Maillinger advocated a greater explanation of historical development via a chronological display; in his estimation, only this could awake national awareness and enact the training of all technical forces.[18] Moreover, he interpreted the partial concealment of the history paintings as a violation of the will of the founder.[19] Only here was the 'national' mission juxtaposed to the decorative arts in such a highly polemical tone, opening up a dichotomy that did not particularly interest Hefner-Alteneck. As much as Maillinger's invective seems to have been ignited by a private feud with the museum's director, it may indirectly have led to the foundation of the *Bayerisches Armeemuseum* (Bavarian Army Museum) in 1879. Indeed, this development was backed by the Bavarian Ministry of War, which was headed by Maillinger's uncle and namesake. The new collection would familiarize visitors with the glory of weapons and military success and would evoke "patriotic consciousness"[20] in a way that the diverse collections of the Bavarian National Museum were incapable of. [▸ Beck]

15 Kamp 2006, 91.

16 "*Meinem Volk zu Ehr und Vorbild*". Compare the line of reasoning of Dr Johann Nepomuk Sepp, member of the Bavarian *Kammer der Abgeordneten* (Chamber of Deputies), when he argued on 17 February 1872 for a new museum building in light of the worlwide importance of the Bavarian National Museum: "*weil dieses Gebäude nicht etwa ein Schaukasten ist, sondern eine Lehrschule für jedermann und insbesondere für den Gewerbsmann*"; "Verhandlungen" 1872, 544; Schickel 2000a, 41.

17 "*zweite Zweck der Volksbildung durch Hebung der Industrie*"; Maillinger 1877, 6. See Kamp 2006, 90–91.

18 "*die ineinandergreifende Verwirklichung beider Zwecke, das ist durch die möglichst exakte und möglichst vollständige Darlegung der geschichtlichen Entwickelung, wodurch nationales Bewusstsein geweckt und die Ausbildung aller technischen Kräfte nach der conceptiven wie nach der productiven Richtung angebahnt wird*"; Maillinger 1877, 8.

19 Ibid., 10.

20 "*vaterländisches Bewusstsein*"; Kamp 2006, 91.

Fig. 2: View of the gallery dedicated to Ferdinand Maria, Elector of Bavaria, in the first building of the Bavarian National Museum, ca 1875.

Hefner-Alteneck seems to have remained fairly unimpressed by this movement. By the time the second edition of the museum's guidebook appeared in 1881, he had formulated a broader understanding, namely, distinguishing the chronological presentation of the museum's general collection (fig. 2), which "contains works of art of every kind, from Roman times to the present, from all civilizations [*Culturländern*], with special consideration to Bavaria",[21] from "the separate collections, which visualize the most important branches of handicraft".[22] He therefore conceded, almost apologetically – referring back to the situation more than ten years prior – that the various crafts were not able to

21 "*Das b. Nationalmuseum enthält Kunstwerke jeder Art von der Römerzeit bis zur Gegenwart, und zwar aus allen Culturländern, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung Bayerns*"; "Führer" 1881, 7.

22 Ibid., 8: "*die Separatsammlungen, welche die wichtigsten Zweige des Kunsthandwerks vergegenwärtigen*".

demonstrate their individual development within the former display. Casually, reference is also made to the murals depicting the history of Bavaria, their description being much reduced compared to the first edition of the guide.[23] A disclaimer prior to his introduction made clear that the works of art should serve as examples and models for artists, despite the fact that the museum was not a proper "*Gewerbe- und Industrie-Museum*" (Museum of Trade and Industry).[24]

Fig. 3: View of the gallery of ironworks in the second building of the Bavarian National Museum, 1902.

Beyond these discussions about how best to display the museum's collection, structural damage, flawed fire protection, and lack of space at the *Maximilianstraße* location

23 Ibid., 8, 129–142.

24 Ibid., 4.

eventually led to the planning and construction of an entirely new building, begun under Wilhelm Heinrich von Riehl, director from 1885 until 1897.[25] Hefner-Alteneck's twofold division was maintained in the new building on *Prinzregentenstraße*, with the cultural-historical survey on one floor and the series of specialized collections on another (fig. 3), a clear separation that marked an improvement from the previous location's improvised display.[26] Although there were no longer the history paintings that had characterized the museum at *Maximilianstraße*, notions of the 'national' were a now more subliminal guide for the visitor.

Fig. 4: View of the Bavarian National Museum's second building, on Prinzregentenstraße, 1902.

The building's architect was Gabriel Seidl, while Rudolf Seitz decorated and organized the interior. The approach taken by the two collaborators was firmly rooted in the anniversary exhibition of the *Bayerischer Kunstgewerbeverein* (Bavarian Arts and Crafts Association) in 1876, and more precisely in Seidl's *Deutsches Zimmer* (German Room) within the section *Unserer Vaeter Werke* (Works of Our Fathers). The German Room had been decorated in the style of the German Renaissance – in those days quite innovative as it turned away from the predominant revival of antiquity and of the Italian Renaissance – and, for decades to come, proved to be a formula of success for building activity in Munich. For the Bavarian National Museum, Seidl combined various elements associated with the

25 Volkert 2000, 14, 16, 19; Schickel 2000a, 40, 52; Brendecke 2006, 103–104.

26 Schickel 2000a, 43. The dualism in the new building was criticized by Gustav von Bezold, then director of the Germanic National Museum in Nuremberg, who advocated for museums to decide whether to uniformly opt for a historic-academic approach or one geared towards providing guidelines to artisans. Bezold 1899, 84–85; Koch 2000, 216.

Renaissance in southern Germany, arranging them in a picturesque configuration (fig. 4) that was markedly distinct from the Tudor Gothic architecture of the location at *Maximilianstraße*. At the new museum, which opened in 1900, the notion of the 'German' did not intrude on an impartial visitor, but it was very much perceived and appreciated by critics.[27]

In place of an emphasis on Bavarian pride in the face of the German Empire, we find a more low-key, folkloristic version of the 'national'. Terms such as *Heimat* (home) and *volkstümlich* (folklore), which were virulent in those years, were also explicitly used in connection with the newly unveiled museum. Indeed, they were epitomized in a third section, in the basement, comprising the so-called *Bauernstuben* (peasant rooms) and the ethnographic department.[28] As the *Magdeburgische Zeitung* put it, the museum was ultimately dominated by "carved, forged, woven, chiselled dialect",[29] and this included not only the architecture and interior decoration but also the presentation of the specialized collections. Using terms like 'home' and 'folklore' may have been a specifically Bavarian way of reassuring itself of its nationality in those decades, and it certainly was – much as it is still today – a rather inward-looking view. An emphasis on Bavarian independence would have been perceived as secessionist and anachronistic, but at the same time the imperial German tone was restrained: no attempt was made to extend the national concept beyond Bavaria, despite the wider geographical range of its objects. More broadly, throughout the state of Bavaria the notion of the Reich seems not to have been in full blossom at this date, as reflected in the lack of Wilhelmine monuments.

While the establishment of specialized collections had been in vogue 40 or 50 years earlier and had sometimes even juxtaposed a 'nationalizing' agenda, by the early twentieth century this framework had fallen out of relevance. Hefner-Alteneck had, in 1868, planned two rooms devoted to the modern "industrial arts," and the guides of the 1880s at least mention similar presentations of contemporary glass, for example, from Salviati in Venice, from Lobmeyr in Vienna, and from Steigerwald in Regenhütte, Bavaria.[30] However, such displays no longer found a place in the museum's new building. The opposition of the conservative Bavarian Arts and Crafts Association to the reform movements of the *Vereinigung für angewandte Kunst* (Association for Applied Arts), founded in 1903, and the *Deutsche Werkbund* (German Association of Craftsmen), founded in 1907 – both of which were artist-led – did not directly catalyse, as one might expect, the establishment of an alternative to the Bavarian National Museum that would focus on decorative arts. It was rather Philipp Maria Halm, the museum's interim director from 1914 to 1916 and director

27 Schickel 2000b, 74–75; Sangl 2000, 105–107; Koch 2000, 211, 213. The 'picturesque' and the 'atmospheric' were catchphrases for the arrangement of the exhibits. It was rather this that attracted wider criticism, the display being considered unscholarly and the objects lacking informative labels.

28 Bauer 2000.

29 "*geschnitzter, geschmiedeter, gewebter, gemeißelter Dialect*"; Bauer 2000, 234, quoting the *Magdeburgische Zeitung* from 2 October 1900.

30 "Führer" 1881, 84. This could not have been more than a small attempt to incorporate contemporary arts and crafts. According to "Führer" 1900, 10–13, Hefner-Alteneck intended to stage a temporary exhibition with both older and modern pieces, though this was never actualized.

until 1931, who appealed in 1915 to the Ministry of Education for the foundation of a museum of applied arts.[31] Halm acknowledged that the collections of the Bavarian National Museum could not neglect their dynastic backbone, and as a result they would continue to embody much more an aristocratic than an everyday way of life. Furthermore, the specialized collections covered only the period until around 1830 and lacked "objects in the simplest functional forms, [those] utility devices characterized by their structural simplicity and objectivity, the 'primitives', which carry within them the greatest value for modern artistic thought and creativity".[32] Halm did not want to consider an expansion of the scope of the Bavarian National Museum itself, noting that "a redesign of the museum is completely out of question due to its fundamentally distinctive structure, which is rooted in the will of its supreme founder and with which the new building also forms an inseparable whole".[33]

Eventually, in 1925, the desired museum was created as *Die Neue Sammlung* (The New Collection). Today, the museum calls itself in English the 'Design Museum', a self-designation that is probably more comprehensible to modern ears than its German name, the latter being tightly bound to the reform movement of the early twentieth century. For more than seven decades, this 'new collection' was housed in an annex to the Bavarian National Museum, the so-called *Studiengebäude* (study building). With the foundation of the design museum, the specialized collections were prevented from further chronological expansion and from incorporating contemporary pieces. In Halm's words from 1915 and the associated preservation of the concept of the Bavarian National Museum following decades of the institution's development, the authority of the founder shines through for the last time.

31 Hufnagl 2006, 148–149.

32 "*So mangeln den einzelnen Sammlungen vielfach Gegenstände in den einfachsten Zweckformen. […] namentlich die durch konstruktive Einfachheit und Sachlichkeit sich auszeichnenden Gebrauchsgeräte, die ‚Primitiven', die gerade für das moderne künstlerische Denken und Schaffen die stärksten Werte in sich tragen*"; quoted after Wichmann 1985, 24.

33 "*Eine Umgestaltung des Nationalmuseums in diesem Sinne ist aber durch eine grundsätzlich verschiedene Anlage, die in dem Willen seines allerhöchsten Gründers wurzelt und mit der auch der Neubau ein unzertrennliches Ganzes bildet […] gänzlich ausgeschlossen*"; ibid.

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Fig. 3, 4: *Der Neubau des Bayerischen Nationalmuseums in München*, Munich 1902. © München, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum. Foto: Andreas Weyer.

Part 4: Framing and Display Strategies

Objects in the Hall of F(r)ame

How Commissioned Works Set the Stage in Museums

Marina Beck

In the nineteenth century, the educational mission of the army museum overlapped with that of the national museum: to convey patriotic history. Indeed, in displaying important wars and military victories, the army museum seemed particularly suited to this purpose; the history of the nation was to be conveyed through the history of war. From a collection standpoint, army museums therefore had three main areas of focus: weapons and equipment (uniforms, flags, etc.), war trophies, and souvenirs of rulers and commanders. The historical narrative presented at the museum unfolded through these three areas of emphasis.[1]

In order to familiarize visitors with the role and function of the museum, an area was set up in advance of the exhibition spaces to introduce the main themes. These vestibules contained a programme of images and sculptures that were central to understanding the museums' contents. Such entrance areas are not unique to military museums. They also figured in various museums of art and cultural history in the nineteenth century. Examples include the *Alte Museum* (Old Museum) and *Neue Museum* (New Museum) in Berlin, the *Alte Pinakothek* (Old Pinacotheca) in Munich, the *Gemäldegalerie* (Paintings Gallery) in Dresden, the *Kunsthistorisches Museum* (Museum of Art History) in Vienna,[2] as well as the National Portrait Gallery in London and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh. [▸ Roberts] While these vestibules all aimed to convey a particular educational message to visitors, that message varied from museum to museum. It might take the form of an overview of art or cultural history, of the contents and purpose of the museum itself, or of the origins of the collection, for example. Whatever the case, here knowledge was to be imparted to visitors before they entered the exhibition rooms. To this end, the vestibules were furnished with custom works of art.

In this respect, the entrance areas of museums of art and cultural history are similar to the so-called Halls of Fame also found in several military museums in the German states. In the following, I would like to show how these halls functioned as 'halls of frame' that contextualized the collection items within patriotic history. Three examples will be

1 Alten 1909, 491.

2 Plagemann 1967, 78–79, 87–88, 122–125, 140–142; Sheehan 2002, 113–128, 185–206.

examined: the *Heeresgeschichtliches Museum* (Museum of Military History) in Vienna, the *Zeughaus* (Armoury) in Berlin, and the *Bayerisches Armeemuseum* (Bavarian Military Museum) in Munich. Each had a hall with a dome, which functioned at once as an entrance area and a hall of fame, as well as a 'hall of frame' that primed visitors for their encounter with the collections.

Vienna

In Vienna, the Armoury was built between 1850 and 1856 by Theophil Hansen as part of a military complex in the third district.[3] After only thirteen years of use as such, in 1869 the building was converted into a military museum, the so-called *Hofwaffenmuseum* (Museum of Court Weapons). The museum was then reorganized following the transfer of many objects to the Museum of Art History in Vienna in 1888. It reopened in 1891 as the *Heeresmuseum* (Army Museum).[4]

Visitors to the Army Museum first entered the vestibule on the ground floor. Here, fifty-six sculptures had been placed around fourteen pillars. Of these, four represented figures from the Babenberg dynasty[5] and eight from the Habsburg dynasty.[6] The majority of the sculptures were of military commanders who had fought in battles against the Habsburgs' main enemies, for example in the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), the so-called Great Turkish War of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Silesian Wars of the eighteenth century, and the wars against Napoleon in the nineteenth century (fig. 1).[7] The cycle continued in the staircase, where there appeared four sculptures[8] of military commanders and two busts of admirals[9] from the battles won by Austria against the Italians and Hungarians in the mid-nineteenth century. Whereas in both the vestibule and staircase the focus was clearly on the military commanders and their honours, their most de-

3 The construction of the building began in 1850, initially in collaboration between Ludwig Förster and Theophil Hansen. After Förster left the project in 1852, Hansen continued on his own, see Strobl 1961, 19–21.

4 See Dirrheimer 1971, 16–18, 85, 112; Dirrheimer 1977, 3–4, 7–9; Kaindl 1992, 274–275; Wischemann 2017, I, 38–41.

5 Leopold I, Margrave of Austria (died 994); Heinrich II, Duke of Austria, called Jasomirgott (died 1177); Leopold V, Duke of Austria, known as the Virtuous (1157–1194); Friedrich II, Duke of Austria, known as the Quarrelsome (ca 1210–1246), see Strobl 1961, 125.

6 Rudolf I, first King of the Romans from the House of Habsburg (r. 1273–1291); Albrecht I, King of the Romans (1255–1308); Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor (1459–1519); Karl V, Holy Roman Emperor (1500–1558); Ferdinand III, Holy Roman Emperor (1608–1657); Leopold I, Duke of Austria (ca 1290–1326); Archduke Leopold Wilhelm of Austria (1614–1662); Archduke Karl, Duke of Teschen (1771–1847), see ibid. 125–126.

7 For a list of the sculptures installed in the vestibule, see Erben 1903, 9–15. The 1903 museum guide is more detailed than the 1899 one and is therefore quoted here. The 1899 guide was the first to describe the new concept of the museum following its reopening in 1891.

8 Count Josef Radetzky of Radetz (1766–1858); Baron Julius von Haynau (1786–1853); Prince Alfred I von Windisch-Grätz (1787–1862); Count Josip Jelačić von Bužim (1801–1859). Ibid., 17, 19.

9 Wilhelm von Tegetthoff (1827–1871); Baron Maximilian Daublebsky von Sterneck zu Ehrenstein (1829–1897). Ibid., 19.

cisive actions were depicted in the Hall of Fame, which the visitor reached after climbing the stairs.

Fig. 1: View of the staircase in the Generals' Hall of the Museum of Military History in Vienna, 1890.

The Hall of Fame consists of three square rooms: one main room, surmounted by a dome, and two side rooms. Each of the side rooms is connected to the central room by a narrow portico. The three rooms are decorated with frescoes, painted by Karl Blaas between 1859 and 1871.[10] The iconographic programme begins chronologically in the dome, with the Babenbergs. There, the allegories of Bravery, Temperance, Power, and Art appear in four medallions. Corresponding stories from the lives of four Babenbergs serve to illustrate these.[11] Two of the figures, namely, Margrave Leopold I (r. 976–994) and Duke

10 On the programme, see Klingenstein 1996; Telesko 2006, 408–410.

11 Bravery: foundation of the *Ostmark* by the legendary expulsion of the Hungarians from Melk under Leopold I *(Gründung der Ostmarkt durch die (sagenhafte) Vertreibung der Ungarn aus Melk unter Leopold I.)*; Temperance: Margrafe Leopold III rejects the royal crown offered to him in favour of Lothair III (Duke of Saxony, Holy Roman Emperor) *(Markgraf Leopold III. der Heilige weist die ihm angebotene Königskrone zu Gunsten Lothars des Sachsen zurück)*; Power: enfeoffment of Margrave Heinrich Jasomirgott as the first duke of Austria by Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa *(Belehnung des Markgrafen Heinrich Jasomirgott als erster Herzog von Österreich durch Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossa)*; Art: promotion of art and science by Duke Leopold *(Beförderung der Kunst und Wissenschaft durch Herzog Leopold den Glorreichen)*. Erben 1903, 25.

Heinrich II (r. 1141–1177), also figure as sculptures in the vestibule. Below the dome, the pendentives contain images of important Habsburgs from the Middle Ages: Rudolf I (r. ca 1240–1291, Emperor 1273–1291), Albrecht I (r. 1282–1308), Maximilian I (r. 1493–1519, Holy Roman Emperor 1508–1519), and Karl V (Holy Roman Emperor r. 1520–1556), sculptures of whom also appear in the vestibule (fig. 2).[12]

Fig. 2: The Hall of Fame of the Museum of Military History in Vienna.

In the tympana is depicted a chronological series of battles from the Thirty Years' War, the Great Turkish War, and the War of the Spanish Succession. Several military commanders appear both in the battle scenes within the Hall of Fame and in sculptures within the vestibule, among them Count Ernst Rüdiger of Starhemberg,[13] Charles V, Duke of Lor-

12 Ibid.

13 Episode from the defence of Vienna against the Turks in 1683 (*Episode aus der Vertheidigung Wiens gegen die Türken 1683*) with a portrait of the wounded Field Marshal Rüdiger Count Starhemberg, who encouraged the defenders of the breach in the *Löwelbastei* against the oncoming Turks to fight persistently (pictured on the transverse arch), northwest wall. Ibid., 27.

raine,[14] and Prince Eugene of Savoy.[15] The Habsburgs Ferdinand III (r. 1637–1657)[16] and Karl VI (r. 1711–1740)[17] are also depicted in the paintings.

The cycle then continues in the tympana of the left room with battles from the Silesian Wars and ends with the surrender of Belgrade in 1789. Other battles from these wars are depicted on the ceiling. In the centre is the introduction of the Order of Maria Theresa,[18] the first military order introduced by the Habsburgs. Meanwhile, in the room on the right, the painting cycle proceeded with scenes of battles against the French at the beginning of the nineteenth century. There, the programme concludes with the battle against the Italians in 1849. The ceiling paintings centre on the return of Francis I (as Francis II Holy Roman Emperor r. 1792–1806, as Francis I Emperor of Austria r. 1804–1835) from Paris and his entry into Vienna in 1814.[19]

In these two rooms, too, the paintings depict the heroic deeds of people whom the visitor has already met in the form of sculptures in the vestibule. These are various commanders who fought in the wars: in the left room, Leopold Count Daun[20] and Ernst Gideon von Laudon;[21] and on the right, Archduke Karl[22] and Count Radetzky.[23] After first meeting these significant military commanders in the vestibule and learning more about their heroic acts in the Hall of Fame, the visitor then entered the exhibition. On view there were various objects directly related to the depicted military commanders and their deeds.

The exhibition rooms were divided into two halls, the so-called first and second armoury halls (*Waffensäle*), located on either side of the Hall of Fame. After the 1891 renovation of the museum, objects dating to the period from 1618 to 1789 were displayed in the

14 The Council of War during the Battle of St Gotthard 1664 (*Der Kriegsrath während der Schlacht bei St. Gotthard, 1664*), northwest wall; Episode after the storming of Ofen, 2 September 1686 (*Episode nach der Erstürmung von Ofen, 1686*) (pictured on the transverse arch), northeast wall. Ibid., 27, 29.

15 Flight of the defeated Turkish army at Zenta, 1697 (*Flucht des geschlagenen türkischen Heeres bei Zenta, 1697*); Prince Eugene's march to Bosnia in October 1697 (*Prinz Eugens Zug nach Bosnien, 1697*) (pictured on the transverse arch), both northeast wall; Battle of Turin (*Schlacht von Turin*) in 1706, southeast wall. Ibid., 29.

16 Victory at Nördlingen in 1634 with portraits of Ferdinand III and the Swedish Field Marshal Horn, who was taken prisoner (*Sieg der Kaiserlichen über die Schweden bei Nördlingen, 1634*), southwest wall. Ibid., 27.

17 Entry of Karl III of Spain (later Holy Roman Emperor Karl VI) into Madrid in 1710 with a portrait of the king and Count Guido von Starhemberg (*Einzug König Karls III. von Spanien, später Kaiser Karl VI., in Madrid 1710*), southeast wall. Ibid., 31.

18 Ibid., 31, 33, 35.

19 Ibid., 37, 39.

20 Battle of Kolin, 1757 (*Schlacht bei Kolin, 1757*); Raid of the Prussian army at Hochkirch, 1758 (*Überfall der preußischen Armee bei Hochkirch, 1758*). Ibid., 33.

21 Raid and storming of Schweidnitz, 1761 (*Überfall und Erstürmung von Schweidnitz, 1761*); Episode after the surrender of Belgrade: Osman Pasha gives Field Marshal Loudon a white horse, 1789 (*Episode nach dem Überfall von Belgrad, 1789*). Ibid., 35.

22 Episode after the Battle of Würzburg, 1796: Archduke Karl inspects the captured French war balloon and other trophies of victory, 1796 (*Episode nach der Schlacht bei Würzburg, 1796*); Battle of Caldiero, 1805 (*Schlacht bei Caldiero, 1809*); Battle of Aspern, 1809 (*Schlacht bei Aspern, 1809*). Ibid., 37.

23 Episode after the Battle of Novara, 1849 (*Episode nach der Schlacht bei Novarra, 1849*): armistice negotiations between Count Radetzky and Victor Emmanuel II King of Sardinia, 1849. Ibid., 39.

first armoury hall, while the second such hall presented objects dating from 1789 to recent times. The exhibition rooms were long, unstructured halls that terminated in a dead end. The exhibition tour therefore began on one long side of the armoury hall, continued on the transverse side, and then moved to the opposite long side.

In each armoury hall, objects depicted in the paintings were among those displayed in the installation. These included the French war balloon captured in the Battle of Würzburg in 1796: the balloon itself appeared in the second armoury hall, while a scene of Archduke Charles inspecting the war balloon was depicted in one of the frescoes on the ceiling in the room to the right of the Hall of Fame (fig. 3).[24]

Fig. 3: Karl von Blaas, Archduke Charles Inspects the Captured Trophies, Including a French War Balloon, photogravure after a painting by von Blaas in the Hall of Fame of the Museum of Military History in Vienna, 1870–1910.

There is also a depiction of the 1809 Battle of Aspern when, according to legend, Archduke Charles seized the regimental flag to lead his troops into battle and victory. The seizure of the flag became a symbol of the bravery and military prowess of the archduke. And likewise, the flag is also displayed in the second armoury hall.[25]

24 Ibid., 37, 283.

25 Ibid., 37–38, 275–276.

At the dead end of the exhibition hall, objects from the most decisive victories of the Habsburgs in each era were exhibited as highlights. In the first armoury hall, this was the victory over the Turks. A Turkish tent surrounded by trophies was displayed on the transverse wall of the exhibition room. Next to the Turkish tent on the long wall was a display case containing various objects belonging to Prince Eugene, who had distinguished himself in this fight. These included a lock of the prince's hair, a cuirass with several bullet holes in the chest, a yellowish cloth bodice with armoured sleeves, a goatskin waistcoat, a musket-barrel command staff dating to 1662, and a command staff made of narwhal horn and pierced on the inside to be used as an optical instrument.[26]

In the second armoury hall, the weapons and trophies captured in the battles against Italy in 1848 and 1849 were displayed on the transverse side of the exhibition room. In the centre of this installation, the highlight was a display case with Radetzky's memorabilia. Among them was the gala uniform, which was displayed in the centre of the trophy and weapon arrangement on the wall. In addition to the uniform, the display case contained an honorary Maltese sword, two seal stamps, three letters from Radetzky to his wife, his farewell letter to Franz Joseph (r. 1848–1916) dated 7 December 1856, and Radetzky's handkerchief.[27]

This series of examples shows how crucial the entrance areas were for understanding the subsequent object display. In the vestibule, visitors met the main protagonists. Then, in the Hall of Fame, they learned, through the many paintings, about the major battles in which these commanders took part. Here, visitors could already see representations of some of the objects shown in the installation that had belonged to the commanders personally, had been used in their battles, or had been otherwise associated with them. In the exhibition rooms, these objects were presented to the visitor in individual display cases, thus acquiring the status of relics. These objects were worthy of display because they had belonged to a significant person, whom the visitor learned about in the entrance area. The vestibules thus set the stage for understanding the collection items on view.

Berlin

The armoury in Berlin was built between 1695 and 1706, and the interiors completed in 1729. Four architects were involved in the project: Johann Arnold Nering, Martin Grünberg, Andreas Schlüter, and Jean de Bodt. In 1831, the *kleine Waffen- und Modellsammlung* (small collection of weapons and models) opened. From 1877 to 1880, the museum was rebuilt by Friedrich Hitzig, and a domed hall was incorporated into the north wing.[28] When the museum reopened in 1883, it retained the same name: in the sources, it is referred to as the *königliches Zeughaus* (Royal Armoury), whereas in scholarship it is known as the *Berliner Zeughaus* (Berlin Armoury).

26 Ibid., 162–163.

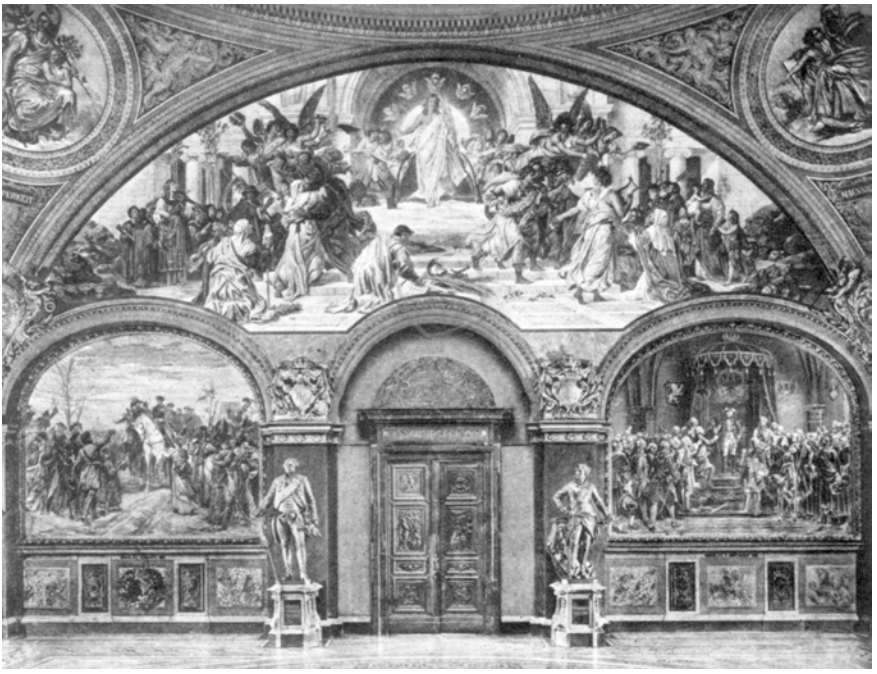
27 Ibid., 316–318.

28 Arndt 1985, 13, 35–36; Müller 1994a, 9, 23–32, 58–60, 127–142; Müller 1994b, 25–26, 38, 43, 53, 82–87, 174–184; Wischemann 2014, I, 511–519, 542–548, 574–580; Andrews 2014, 33, 42–48, 50–52, 58–64, 84–85, 90–91, 93.

Visitors to the museum first entered the vestibule, which led to the courtyard, surmounted by a roof of modern glass and wrought iron. At the centre of the courtyard stood a colossal statue of *Borussia*, a personification of Prussia. Behind it was Hitzig's monumental staircase, leading directly to the *Ruhmeshalle* (Hall of Fame) on the upper floor.[29]

Visitors entered the Hall of Fame, which consisted of the *Herrscherhalle* (Rulers' Hall), crowned by a pendentive dome and flanked by *Feldherrenhallen* (Generals' Halls). Paintings depicted the rise of Prussia and the Hohenzollern dynasty. As Mary-Elizabeth Andrews has noted: "The historical programme was complemented by a strong allegorical component, which [...] drew together symbolic, mythological, and historical elements, merging realism and myth into a singular vision of Germany as Prussian destiny".[30]

Fig. 4: View of the south wall of the Hall of Fame in the Berlin Armoury, with the allegorical painting Peace *and, beneath it,* Friedrich Wilhelms III's Appeal "To My People" of March 1813 *(left) and* Friedrich II Accepting the Homage of the Silesian Estates at Breslau in 1741 *(right), postcard, ca. 1906.*



In the Rulers' Hall, the dome and the tympana were decorated with various allegorical scenes, namely, "four large lunette frescoes by Geselschap, which were crowned by his four metre high, seventy metre long triumphal procession and four tondi depicting

29 Andrews 2014, 93. A detailed description of the statue and the staircase can be found on page 94. See also Arndt 1985, 42; Müller 1994b, 181–184.

30 Andrews 2014, 99–100.

the cardinal virtues of the Hohenzollern rulers: Justice, Strength, Moderation and Wisdom".[31] The triumphal frieze shows "a procession of victorious warriors returning home from battles on sea and land".[32] The themes of the four large allegorical frescoes were *War* (east wall), *Peace* (south wall), *The Reception of the Fallen Heroes* (west wall), and *The Re-Establishment of the Reich* (north wall).[33] Unlike in Vienna, these did not represent a chronological sequence of the most important rulers. Nor in Berlin were the allegories directly related to the history paintings on the walls. Rather, they served as a general framework for classifying and understanding the wall paintings (fig. 4).

The cycle of history paintings began in the Rulers' Hall on the north side, to the left of the sculpture of the goddess of victory with the painting *The Self-Coronation of Friedrich III as the First King in Prussia*, by Anton von Werner. On the opposite wall were paintings of *Friedrich II Accepting the Homage of the Silesian Estates at Breslau in 1741*, by Wilhelm Camphausen, and of *Friedrich Wilhelms III's March 1813 Appeal "To my people"*, by Georg Bleibtreu. The cycle ended to the right of the goddess of victory on the north side with von Werner's *Proclamation of the German Empire at Versailles in 1871*.[34] Each painting corresponded to a sculpture portraying a member of the Hohenzollern dynasty.[35] The Generals' Halls showed the most significant battles related to the historical events referenced in the Hall of Fame.[36] This meant that the images in the Rulers' Hall could be viewed either on their own or together with those of the Generals' Halls. The latter contained thirty-

31 Ibid., 100.

32 Ibid., 100.

33 Ibid., 100–103. The German titles are: *Krieg*; *Frieden*; *Walhalla* or *Empfang der toten Helden*; *Wiederherstellung des Kaiserreiches* or *Aufrichtung des Kaisertums*. The information in the literature and in the museum guides from the nineteenth century varies slightly here. See, for example, "Das Zeughaus" 1900, 7–8; "Das Zeughaus" 1910, 20; "Das Zeughaus" 1914, 7–8; Arndt 1985, 57–76; Müller 1994b, 196–203.

34 Andrews 2014, 97. The German titles are: *Krönung Friedrichs I. in Königsberg*; *Die Schlesischen Stände huldigen Friedrich II. in Breslau*; *Aufruf Friedrich Wilhelms III. "An mein Volk"*; *Kaiserproklamation in Versailles / Aufrichtung des Kaiserthums der Hohenzollern*. "Das Zeughaus" 1900, 9–11; "Das Zeughaus" 1910, 21, 25, 29; "Das Zeughaus" 1914, 8, 12–13, 16; Arndt 1985, 54–56; Müller 1994b, 190–196. Here, too, the titles vary slightly.

35 There were eight sculptures: Friedrich Wilhelm (1620–1688); Friedrich I (1657–1713), Friedrich Wilhelm I (1688–1740); Friedrich II (1712–1786); Friedrich Wilhelm II (1744–1797); Friedrich Wilhelm III (1770–1840); Friedrich Wilhelm IV (1795–1861); Wilhelm I (1797–1888). In addition, there were four portrait busts in the Hall of Fame, two of generals and two of statesmen associated with the Wars of Liberation and the Franco-Prussian War: Heinrich Reichsfreiherr von Stein (1757–1831); Gerhard David von Scharnhorst (1755–1813); Albrecht Graf von Roon (1803–1879); Otto Fürst von Bismarck (1815–1898). See Arndt 1985, 48–53; Müller 1994b, 188–189, 204–205; Andrews 2014, 98–99, 476–478.

36 The cycle began in the General's Hall on the left side of the north wall: Battle of Fehrbellin, 18 June 1675 (*Schlacht bei Fehrbellin*); Passage of the Curonian Lagoon, 1679 (*Übergang über das Kurische Haff*); Battle of Turin, 1706 (*Schlacht bei Turin*). On the west side: Battle of Hohenfriedberg, 1745 (*Schlacht von Hohenfriedberg*); Battle of Leuthen, 1757 (*Schlacht bei Leuthen*). On the south side: Battle of Torgau, 1760 (*Schlacht von Torgau*). It continued in the General's Hall on the right side of the south wall: Battle of Nations at Leipzig, 16, 18, and 19 October 1813 (*Völkerschlacht bei Leipzig*). On the east wall: Battle of Belle-Alliance / Waterloo, 18 June 1815 (*Schlacht von Belle-Alliance*); Storming of the Düppeler Schanzen, 1864 (*Erstürmung der Düppeler Schanzen*). On the north wall: Battle of Königgratz, 1866 (*Schlacht bei Königgrätz*); Storming of St Privat / Battle of Gravelottte 1870 (*Sturm*

two bronze busts of the most important Prussian military commanders who had fought in the depicted battles (fig. 5).[37]

Fig. 5: View of the left General's Hall with the busts of the generals at right, postcard, after 1935.

In contrast to Vienna, in Berlin the historical events and battles were not presented in the tympana but on the walls, at eye level. This brought the message of the room directly before visitors' eyes. Indeed, the Prussians staged a certain understanding of history in this space: Prussia's domination of the German states, along with the so-called 'Lesser German' solution, appeared as logical outcomes. Through political and military successes, Prussia had grown larger and larger, and this qualified the Hohenzollerns to become emperors of the German Empire. It was therefore Prussia's destiny to rule the German Empire. It was this narrative that was presented in the pictures.[38]

To tell this story, the content of the paintings focused on the major events that had contributed to Prussia's greatness and glory. Unlike in Vienna, the focus was not on the generals. Rather, the Prussian commanders were depicted only as busts and rarely in the

auf St. Privat); After the Battle of Sedan, 1870 (*Nach der Schlacht bei Sedan*). See Arndt 1985, 76–84; Müller 1994b, 203–204; Andrews 2014, 473–475.

37 A list of the bronze busts of the generals can be found in Arndt 1985, 134–135; Müller 1994b, 205–206; Andrews 2014, 477–478. Another forty busts of statesmen and officers were added to the niches on the ground floor and the upper floor (twenty busts per floor). The list of busts in the exhibition halls was first published in "Das Zeughaus" 1900, 30–32.

38 Andrews 2014, 110–111.

paintings. And only a few objects of theirs were featured in the exhibition. In the Berlin Armoury, the focus was clearly on the Hohenzollerns.

For this reason, this dynasty was also honoured in their own memorial rooms within the installation, with memorabilia from the most important Hohenzollerns. The first such rooms were dedicated to Friedrich II (r. 1740–1786) (southwest corner) and Friedrich Wilhelm III (r. 1797–1840) (northwest corner). Following the death of Wilhelm I (King of Prussia r. 1861–1888, German Emperor 1871–1888) in 1888, another memorial room was set up for him and Friedrich III (r. 1888). This was located in the centre of the south wing. In 1897, it was enlarged to consist of three bays, taking up the entire depth of the wing.[39] In 1910, another room was added in the east wing to commemorate the electoral era.[40] With the exception of the room for Wilhelm I, the memorial rooms were arranged in chronological order in keeping with the arrangement of the weapons, namely, chronologically by means of dynastic periodization.[41]

In the memory room of Friedrich Wilhelm III were presented

> his uniform and weapons, a number of decorative weapons carried by defeated French officers as well as allied commanders (the sabre of the Duke of Cambridge, for instance), Blücher's decorations and medals, Gneisenau's hat, a display of allied uniforms from the Wars of Liberation (Prussia, Austria, England, and Russia) and memorial objects commemorating the victories of 1813 and 1815.[42]

Of particular importance here were the items captured by Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo. These included the hat, weapons, and various medals. These memorabilia were displayed in a dedicated vitrine and were so prominent that they appeared both on a postcard and as an image in the first illustrated museum guide, in 1914 (figs. 6, 7).[43]

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39 The memorabilia had initially been displayed adjacent to the General's Hall in the west wing. On the occasion of the celebration of the 100th birthday of Wilhelm I on 22 March 1897, the objects were placed in the centre of the south wing, where Wilhelm II inspected them on 23 March and opened the display to the public. Müller 1994a, 169; Andrews 2014, 150–152. The memorial room is described for the first time in the museum guide from 1900, see "Das Zeughaus" 1900, 72–84.

40 "Das Zeughaus" 1910, 38–45.

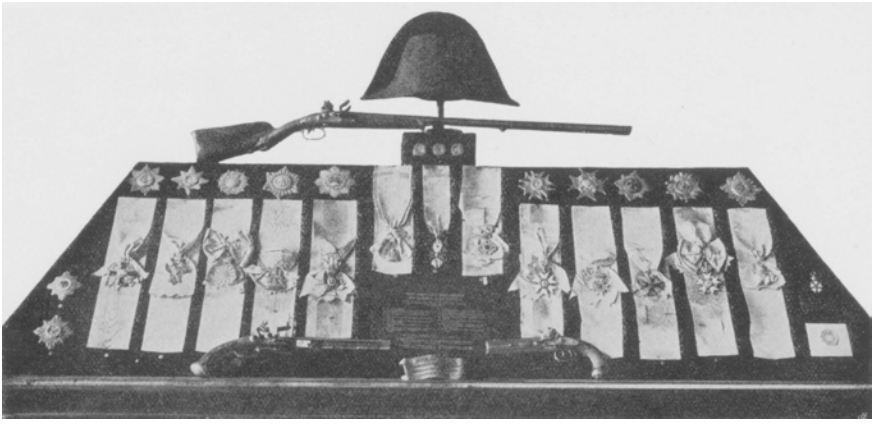
41 Andrews 2014, 129. The dynastic periodization of the objects became even clearer in 1914. A reorganization of the exhibition took place prior to that and is documented in the 1914 museum guide. Several bays came to be associated with important personalities. These included, for example, Emperor Maximilian I (bay 4); Friedrich Wilhelm (the Great Elector) (bay 14); Friedrich Wilhelm I (the Soldier King) (bay 15); Bismarck (bay 33); Prince Karl Friedrich (bay 35), and Blumenthal (bay 36). See "Das Zeughaus" 1914, 62–68, 119–129, 162–163, 170–175. The other memorial rooms remained intact, though some of them changed their position, e.g. that for Wilhelm I and Friedrich III, which was no longer located within three bays in the middle of the south wing, but rather occupied a single central bay on the inner courtyard side of the south wing (bay 34). The room for the electoral period and for Friedrich II remained in bays 5 and 18. The rooms for the Wars of Liberation were in bays 23–25. The memorabilia of Friedrich Wilhelm III were also displayed there. See "Das Zeughaus" 1914, 68–76, 133–138, 144–156, 163–170.

42 Andrews 2014, 130–131.

43 Beck 2023, 40.

Fig. 6: The memory room of Friedrich Wilhelm III, postcard, 1905.

Fig. 7: Napoleon's medals, hat, and weapons, captured after the Battle of Belle-Alliance (Waterloo) in 1815.



> Meanwhile, in the memory room for Wilhelm I and Friedrich III were exhibited
>
> an extensive collection of medals and decorations worn by the emperors, the flags and standards of their regiments, and a number of memorial pieces such as silver and gold commemorative columns (*Ehrensäule* and *Denksäule*), laurel wreaths, and daggers inscribed with the battles in which they had taken part.[44]

Displayed – indeed, enshrined – in glass cases, the objects became 'secular relics'. These everyday objects used by rulers were thus charged with emotional significance and were staged accordingly in the exhibition.

In Berlin, as in Vienna, the Rulers' Hall and the Generals' Halls set the stage for the visitor's encounter with the contents of the military museum. Visitors would first learn about the glorious history of Prussia and the significant role the Hohenzollerns played in the German Empire.[45] Equipped with this knowledge, they would then enter the exhibition rooms and see the weapons, the numerous trophies won in various battles, and the memorabilia of the Hohenzollerns and their military commanders.[46]

Munich

The Bavarian Military Museum was originally housed in an armoury that formed part of a military complex in the northwest of Munich. It was opened partially in 1880 and fully in 1881 (first museum building).[47] A new museum was built between 1900 and 1905 by Ludwig von Mellinger near the *Residenz* in Munich. From 1905, the collections were displayed at the new site (second museum building).[48]

In the first building of the museum there was no hall of fame. The exhibition rooms, five in sum, were situated on the first floor.[49] A hall of fame was introduced to the museum in its new building. Whereas the exhibition rooms were on the ground floor, the Hall of Fame was on the upper floor. Visitors began their tour in the ground-floor vestibule, where eight sculptures of Bavarian rulers were displayed.[50] From there, the

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44 Andrews 2014, 151.

45 Ibid., 121.

46 Beck 2023, 32–33, 36–40, 45.

47 Karnapp 1997, 385–386; Nerdinger and Blohm 2002, 120; Wischemann 2017, I, 625–632; Gauder 2019, 22; Beck 2021, 2, 4.

48 Habel 1982, 9–14; Habel 1988, 151–156. The texts by Habel 1988 and 1982 are almost identical word-for-word. The more recent edition is therefore quoted here. See also Wischemann 2017, I, 632–634; Beck 2021, 2, 10.

49 Beck 2021, 4. Building 1 is therefore not discussed in further detail in this text.

50 These were: Margrave Luitpold (d. 907); Heinrich the Lion (ca 1129/30–1195); Otto von Wittelsbach (ca 1120–1183); Ludwig IV (Ludwig the Bavarian, ca 1281–1347); Ruprecht (1352–1410); Friedrich I (Friedrich the Victorious, 1425/29–1476); Ludwig IX (Ludwig the Rich, 1417–1479); Albrecht IV (1447–1508). The sculptures had been exhibited in the staircase of building 1. The statue of Heinrich II (Heinrich the Saint, 973–1024) originally presented in that staircase is missing. The sculpture of King Maximilian I (1756–1825) was also removed from view there; instead, a bust of him now appeared in the Hall of Fame. Beck 2021, 11.

printed museum guide took visitors directly upstairs to the Hall of Fame, before leading them into the exhibition rooms.[51] This trajectory again underlines the importance of the vestibule and the Hall of Fame in setting the stage for the exhibition.

The iconographic programme was never completed in the Hall of Fame. While we know that there were plans to paint the dome and the tympana, we do not know the intended themes. Only the sculptural decoration was ultimately realized.[52] The Hall of Fame consisted of a square room with a mezzanine gallery. The dome that crowned the Hall of Fame rested on four massive pillars. These were set against the four pillars of the gallery, assigning them a strong emphasis. On these appeared four coats of arms representing the territories of *Bayern, Franken, Schwaben*, and *Pfalz* (Bavaria, Franconia, Swabia, and the Palatinate), which were united in 1806 to form the Kingdom of Bavaria.[53]

Above the coats of arms, figures symbolizing the four main orders of the Wittelsbach dynasty appeared in the pendentives. These were St Hubertus (Order of Hubertus and the Order for Art and Science), St Michael (Order of Michael and Louis), St Georg (Order of George and of the Crown), and a cuirassier (Order of Max Joseph and of Military Merit).[54]

In the tambour of the dome were four panels itemizing the most important battles of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. The northeastern panel listed decisive battles of the Thirty Years' War: Prague, Barenberg, Nördlingen, Allerheim. The designations of Vienna, Ofen, Gran, Mohacs, and Belgrade on the southeastern panel corresponded to Maximilian II Emanuel's victories over the Turks. The southwestern panel dealt with the Napoleonic Wars: the first three names – Eggmühl, Wagram, Polozk – referred to the alliance with Napoleon, and the Battle of Arcis-sur-Aube to Bavaria's participation in the Wars of Liberation. On the northwestern panel, Weissenburg, Wörth, Sedan, Orléans, and Paris commemorated events from the Franco-Prussian War of 1870/1871. The panels were framed by young warriors of an ancient type with various weapons and by female figures with attributes of glory such as wreaths and trumpets.[55] It is possible that the paintings planned for the Hall of Fame would have referred to the battles listed.

In the hall, below the gallery, a sculpture of Prince Regent Luitpold[56] was framed by four busts representing the Bavarian kings Maximilian I (r. 1806–1825), Ludwig I

51 Four museum guides are available for the second building of the Bavarian Army Museum. Written by Hans Fahrmbacher, they were printed in 1905, 1907, 1909, and 1913. All four editions sent the visitor first to the Hall of Fame. Fahrmbacher 1905, 21–24; Fahrmbacher 1907, 23–26; Fahrmbacher 1909, 25–27; Fahrmbacher 1913, *Wegfolge*, n.p.

52 Fahrmbacher 1909, 27; Habel 1988, 166; Fuchs 2005, 18–19.

53 Habel 1988, 166.

54 Fahrmbacher 1905, 23; Fahrmbacher 1907, 25; Fahrmbacher, 1909, 27; Fahrmbacher 1913, 4; Habel 1988, 165–166; Fuchs 2005 18–19.

55 Habel 1988, 166; Fuchs 2005, 18–19. Although the museum guides refer to the panels and their significance, the individual locations are not mentioned.

56 Prince Regent Luitpold first assumed rule for his nephew Ludwig II for a few days in 1886 and, after Ludwig's death, for his brother Otto I. He thus ruled Bavaria by proxy from 1886 to 1912. Albrecht 1987, 505–506.

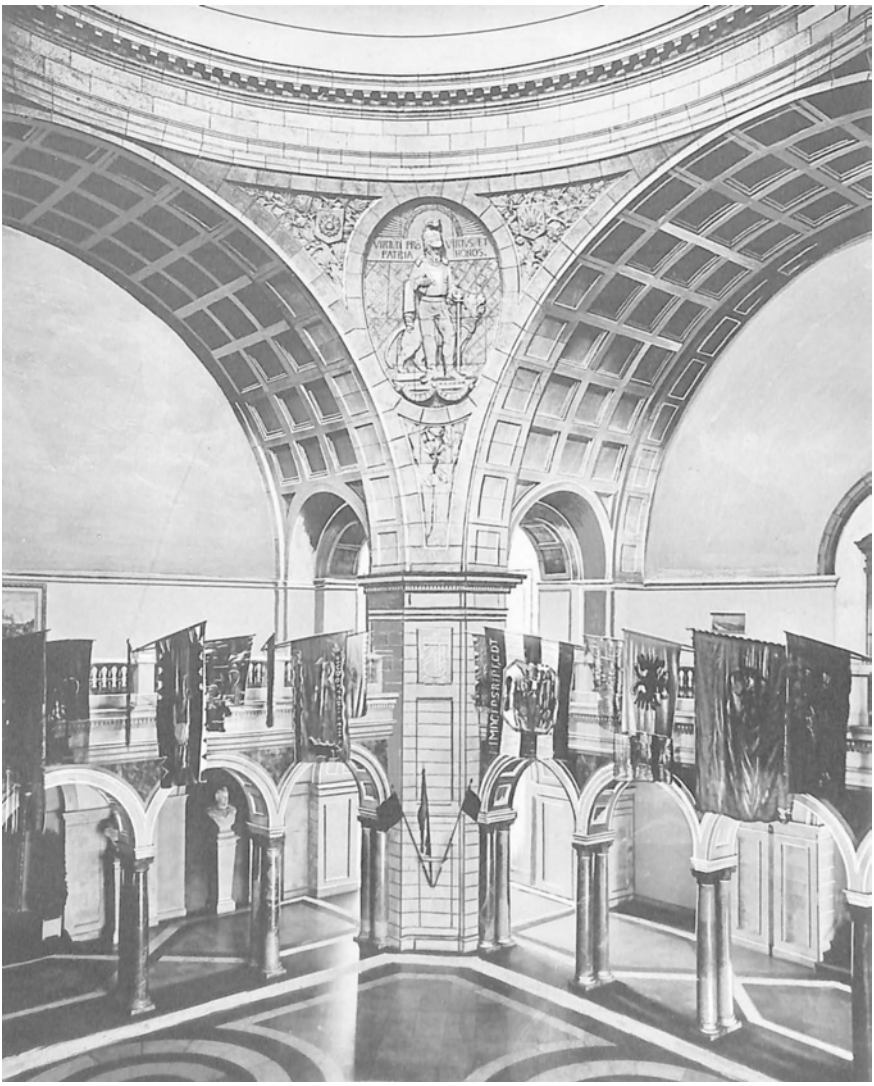
(r. 1825–1848), Maximilian II (r. 1848–1864), and Ludwig II (r. 1864–1886); the sculpture was replaced by a painting of the prince regent between 1905 and 1909 (fig. 8).[57]

Fig. 8: View of the statue of the prince regent and the busts of two Bavarian kings in the Hall of Fame of the Bavarian Army Museum's second building.

Before the Kingdom of Bavaria came into being in 1806, Bavaria, Swabia, Franconia, and the Palatinate had been independent and had consisted of various independent states with their own rulers, such as the free imperial city of Nuremberg or the Prince-Bishoprics of Würzburg and Passau. Upon becoming part of the Kingdom of Bavaria, they had to give up their independence, and all their inhabitants had to be made aware that they now belonged to this new state. This was expressed, for example, in the *Bayerisches Nationalmuseum* (Bavarian National Museum) in Munich [▸ Beuing]. There, in the first building on the first floor, the history of Bavaria was presented in a cycle of pictures. This national history also included various scenes from the history of the formerly independent states, such as Nuremberg or Würzburg, which now belonged to Bavaria. The aim was to show the new unity of the country.

57 Habel 1988, 167. The museum guides only mention the complete programme in 1905. In 1907, only the four busts are mentioned, and no longer the sculpture of the prince regent. This was replaced by a life-size painting, which is mentioned in 1913. Fahrmbacher 1905, 23; Fahrmbacher 1907, 25; Fahrmbacher 1909, 27; Fahrmbacher 1913, 4.

Fig. 9: View of the pillar with the coat of arms and figure of the cuirassier in the pendentive of the Hall of Fame of the Bavarian Army Museum's second building, 1912–1913.



At the Bavarian Army Museum, this new territorial unity was emphasized by the inclusion of only those Wittelsbachs who ruled or had ruled the new kingdom. This was a significant political statement intended to promote a sense of community and to strengthen the unification process in Bavaria. For this purpose, flags from the regiments of the former states were hung on the gallery surrounding the Hall of Fame (figs. 8, 9). The coats of arms on the pillars characterized the territories as the pillars of the new state:[58] just as the pillars support the dome, the territories support the Kingdom of

58 Fahrmbacher 1905, 23; Fahrmbacher 1907, 25; Fahrmbacher 1909, 26; Fahrmbacher 1913, 4; Fuchs 2005, 18–19.

Bavaria. The link between the dynasty and the Bavarian nation was emphasized here, as well as the linking of the territories to form a kingdom. The whole programme was designed to demonstrate the unity of the kingdom.[59]

After experiencing the Hall of Fame, the visitor descended the stairs and entered the exhibition space on the ground floor. In the north wing were objects corresponding to the period 1500–1806, and in the south wing those from 1806–1906. The exhibition was thus presented in chronological order.[60] The division of the collection into two wings, separated by a hall, is reminiscent of the Museum of Military History in Vienna.

Unlike in Vienna, however, the exhibition was not presented in one large undivided wing in each case. Rather, in Munich the wings were divided into several small rooms, each dedicated to a specific period. In each room, the objects belonging to that period were displayed alongside one or more portraits of the Wittelsbach family, for historical and chronological orientation. Moreover, the constant reference to the Wittelsbachs sought to demonstrate that the necessity of the dynasty to the unity and good government of the nation (fig. 10).

Fig. 10: View of Room 6 of the Bavarian Army Museum, with the portrait of Karl Theodor visible in the niche on the right-hand wall and the portrait of Prince Ludwig (later King Ludwig I) on the left-hand wall.

59 Beck 2021, 12.

60 Fahrmbacher 1905, 24–25; Fahrmbacher 1907, 26–27; Fahrmbacher 1909, 27; Fahrmbacher 1913, 5–6, 107–108.

There was no explicit staging of the military commanders in Munich. There was no Military Commanders' Hall. The memorabilia of the Wittelsbach dynasty and the military commanders were presented in the exhibition yet without any special room or area. In this respect, Munich differs from Berlin and Vienna, where a more explicit interweaving was orchestrated between the stories told in the Hall of Fame and the objects on display in the exhibition spaces. Perhaps a similar connection would have manifested in Munich had the iconographic programme of the Hall of Fame been completed.

Nevertheless, even in its incomplete form, the Munich Hall of Fame functioned as a framework that conveyed a certain narrative to visitors before they entered the exhibition rooms, namely, the narrative that the unification of the various territories into the Kingdom of Bavaria by the Wittelsbach dynasty had been important and necessary. With this knowledge, visitors would proceed through the installation and understand, as a logical development, the history that had led to the creation of the Kingdom of Bavaria. This would create a parallel to Berlin. There, the staging of history in the Hall of Fame and the Military Commanders' Halls was used to establish the institution of the German Empire. As the first place visitors were expected to visit before proceeding to exhibition rooms that were not on the same floor, the Hall of Fame in Munich had an identical function to those in Berlin and Vienna.

Conclusions

Military museums played a crucial role in the nation-building process in the nineteenth century. In particular, the entrance halls of such museums set the stage for visitors' understanding of the installation. In every case, these vestibules constructed and visualized a specific idea of national history.

At the Museum of Military History in Vienna, the focus was on the military commanders. Not only were they portrayed in the Military Commanders' Hall and in the paintings of battles, but their memorabilia were physically on view in the exhibition spaces. Members of the Babenberg and Habsburg houses, as rulers of Austria, were only incorporated into the display if they had fought successfully in the battles. At the Armoury in Berlin, on the other hand, the focus was clearly on the Hohenzollerns. Their importance to Prussia and the German Empire was highlighted in the Hall of Fame, and the object display included rooms dedicated to the memory of the dynasty. Finally, at the Bavarian Military Museum in Munich, the unity of the new Kingdom of Bavaria was demonstrated. The focus here was less on presenting the proud dynasty by showing important battles successfully fought. Rather, the aim was to demonstrate a new bond among the territories that had been brought together to form a common state.

Across these three examples, the message of the Hall of Fame therefore differed starkly. But though the halls always reflected the specific situation of the state to which they belonged, they nevertheless shared many common features that are relevant to the question of how military museums supported the nation-building process.

Firstly, the Hall of Fame and the Military Commanders' Halls were always located in the entrance area of the museum. Even when the halls did not lead directly into the exhibition rooms – as was the case in Munich – visitors were expected to visit them first and

engage them closely. This is evidenced by the detailed descriptions of the picture cycles in the museum guides, which also determined the visitor's route through the museum.

Secondly, the iconographic programme presented a specific way of looking at the history of one's own nation. Indeed, that history was portrayed in a positive light, with the battles fought presented as necessary to the nation. An image of national history was thereby constructed, with the aim of creating positive feelings of identification between visitors and the nation to which they belonged. By encouraging viewers to be proud of their nation and its achievements, the entrance areas contributed directly to the nation-building process. Moreover, they set the stage for understanding the object display to follow.

Thirdly, the paintings and sculptures in the Halls of Fame and the Military Commanders' Halls were custom made for these locations. They were always commissioned. This point is particularly important. They were works newly created to support the image of history constructed in the museum, a project that would certainly not have been achieved with the same clarity by repurposing paintings and sculptures from another context. These original works of art set the stage for understanding the account of national history presented in the museum.

In this context, the entrance areas of nineteenth-century museums warrant further investigation. Many types of museums had vestibules like this, for which commissioned works were created to explain to visitors the function and narrative of the museum. During the nineteenth century, the programmes of these spaces were at times linked to the process of nation-building. This will need to be researched in the future, with a view to the different types of museums. In the military museums, for their part, this process is more than evident.

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Fig. 6: Deutsches Historisches Museum Berlin, Pk 2015/4.

Fig. 8, 9. 10: Bayerisches Armeemuseum Ingolstadt, fig. 8: G 230.001, fig. 9: N 3218.007, fig. 10: G 230.016.

Visualizing Historical Greatness

The Architectural Frameworks and Display Strategies of the National Portrait Galleries in London and Edinburgh

Daniela Roberts

In this paper I will look at the two national portrait galleries in Great Britain and compare their strategies for presenting the collections of certain eminent men and women. Such strategies served to convey the significance of these figures both for the nation and for each museum's history. Choices of architecture, style, and decorative scheme, as well as the setting for the collection and its display, will be analysed in order to understand these institutional modes of reconstructing and visualizing national history.

The foundation campaigns of both museums had a stimulating effect on the development of the collections, including their accommodation in prominent, purpose-built edifices. The National Portrait Gallery in London (hereafter 'the NPG') was founded by an act of parliament in 1856.[1] The museum was housed at a number of locations before reaching its present home,[2] a building in the style of the Italian Renaissance (fig. 1) that opened in 1896, having been designed by Ewan Christian with funding from the philanthropist William Henry Alexander.[3] The Scottish National Portrait Gallery (today the National Galleries Scotland: Portrait), founded in 1882, opened the doors of its ornate neo-Gothic palace in 1889 (fig. 2).

One of the first custom-built exhibition spaces of its kind,[4] the structure was designed by Robert Rowand Anderson[5] on a commission from John Ritchie Findlay, a member of the Society of Antiquities.[6]

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1 "Debate" 4 March 1856, cols. 1771–1780, https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/1856-03-04/debates/c8c31eda-278d-4605-a74e-910800a631ca/GalleryOfNationalPortraits.

2 1856–1869 at 29 Great Georges Street, 1870–1885 at the Royal Horticultural Society's buildings on Exhibition Road in South Kensington, followed by the Bethnal Green Museum, see Hulme, Buchanan, and Powell 2000, 23–51.

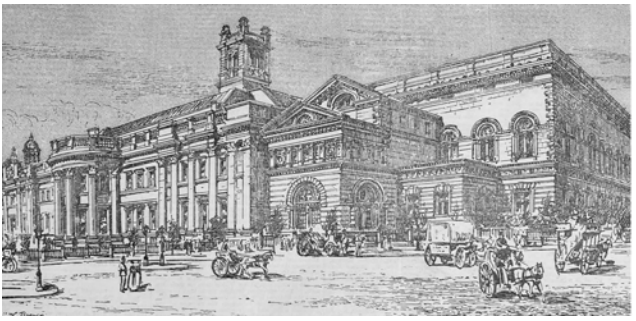
3 On the identity of the "anonymous donor": *Daily Telegraph*, 6 May 1889; "The Chairman's Draft", Harding, 22 May 1889, both in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

4 See https://www.nationalgalleries.org/visit/scottish-national-portrait-gallery#.

5 "Board of Manufactures" July 1884.

6 Thomson 2011, 19–20.

Fig. 1 (left): H. W. Brewer, National Portrait Gallery, London, Perspective View of the New Buildings as They Will Appear When Complete; Fig. 2 (right): View of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery from York Place, before the sculptures had been added, ca 1890.



The formation of the NPG amid the concurrent display of portraits in Aberdeen (1856), as well as the vast loan exhibitions at the South Kensington Museum (today the Victoria and Albert Museum; 1865–1867) and in Glasgow (1868), was a driving force behind the founding of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery (hereafter 'the SNPG'). The establishment of a designated building for the SNPG in Edinburgh – and the construction process as illustrated in 1887 by George Scharf, the first appointed secretary of the NPG – very likely encouraged another donor, William Henry Alexander, to offer to pay for a new building to house the London collection.[7] In the speech at the opening of the SNPG, John Inglis, Lord Justice-General of Scotland, underlined the fact of its being founded much later than its London forerunner and pointed to "a pretty strong contrast to the adventures of the London Portrait Gallery, which has been described by some of its warmest friends as 'leading a vagabond life for 30 years'". He went on to note that the "patriotic sentiment which underlies and prompts the desire of men in this country to possess authentic pictorial presentations of great and notable men and women of Scotland […] is, indeed, part of the national character" and can be traced back to much earlier days.[8] In fact, the striving for a gallery of national portraits first emerged decades earlier in the environment of the Society of Antiquarians of Scotland. [▸ Breward] Among the members were David Stuart Erskine, the 11th Earl of Buchan, a keen compiler of lists and drawings of "illustrious and learned Scots" towards the end of the eighteenth century, and David Laing, the society's treasurer from 1836 to 1852, both of whom were important promoters of the idea of a national collection of portraits.[9] Laing's contact with the great Victorian historian Thomas Carlyle (fig. 3) seems to have been crucial in this matter.

7 Ibid., 32. George Scharf, *Sketch of the Temporary Gallery*, 1887, Edinburgh City Archives.

8 Watt 1893, 472, 477.

9 Ibid., 11–12.

Fig. 3: Bust of Thomas Carlyle in a roundel above the entrance to the National Portrait Gallery.

Carlyle's famous letter[10] on the value of a British historical portraits gallery is recognized as one of the two founding 'charters' of the SNPG.[11] His endeavours likewise influenced the formation of the London collection, of which he served as a trustee.[12] In publications like *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, & the Heroic in History* – in which he explored his view that great men, in the sense of highly influential and unique individuals, shaped universal history through their personal contributions – he assigned a high value to pictorial representations of such persons.[13] Finding portraits to be superior to written biographies, Carlyle claimed:

> that Historical Portrait Galleries far transcend in worth all other kinds of National Collections of Pictures whatever; and that in fact they ought to exist [...] in every country as the most popular and cherished National Possession: – and it is not a joyful reflection, but an extremely mournful one, that in no country is there at present such a thing to be found.[14]

10 "Thomas Carlyle to David Laing", letter dated 3 May 1854. See also Fielding 2001, 84–90.

11 Watt 1893, 14.

12 North 2015, 497.

13 Lee 2004, 136–140; Thomson 2011, 14; North 2015, 468–469.

14 "Thomas Carlyle to David Laing", letter dated 3 May 1854.

Such a gallery appealed to him as "a Pantheon, a house of all the National Divinities where […] the better part of the soul of all men might worship".[15] In Carlyle's view, a portrait gallery operated as a means of cultivating "national identification and self-congratulations",[16] and this meant a growing feeling of national superiority and unifying patriotism in Britain and Scotland alike.[17] The need for such an institution recalls the letter of the donor John Ritchie Findlay, stating: "It has often been remarked of Scotland, that no modern country of like limited area & population has produced so many men of far more than local eminence in literature, science, arts & arms; yet Scotland has no National Portrait Gallery".[18]

Indeed, it was widely "believed that the viewing of portraits of the great and the good would stimulate self-exertion".[19] When, in 1856, Arthur Philip Stanhope proposed to the House of Lords that a national collection of portraits be established in London, he stressed its educational potential. He and the earl of Ellenborough promoted such a collection portraying "the most eminent men in British History" as a tool both for historical and moral instruction, especially with the 'industrious classes' in mind: a way of promoting the arts in general and portraiture in particular, as well as a model for portrait painters and a source of aesthetic pleasure for the public.[20] In support of this idea, Prime Minister Henry John Temple summarized the functions of the future gallery in the following way:

> There cannot, I feel convinced, be a greater incentive to mental exertion, to noble actions, to good conduct on the part of the living, than for them to see before them the features of those who have done things which are worthy of our admiration, and whose example we are more induced to imitate when they are brought before us in the visible and tangible shape of portraits.[21]

Apart from the assumed social benefit of the institution, Stanhope sought "to continue the aristocratic tradition of the ancestral gallery when the upper classes failed to do so" and to "form a gallery of the new, nationally defined 'family' of Britain".[22]

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15 Wilson 1929, 41.

16 Prescott Nuding 1989, 30–36. The genre of portraiture relates equally to a museum focused on national identity "because it offers a mix of interests, historical, artistic or aesthetic, which are often difficult to balance. Such institutions have inherited a long tradition of collections of portraits of the illustrious of the members of royal families, or great men, defined at the enlightenment"; Poulet 2015, 98.

17 Hulme, Buchanan, and Powell 2000, 14.

18 "Copy of the letter John Ritchie Findlay to Sir Willliam Fettes Douglas", 23 November 1882; in this letter Findlay offered anonymously 10,000 pounds towards the founding of the National Portrait Gallery.

19 Hulme, Buchanan, and Powell 2000, 15.

20 "Debate" 4 March 1856, cols. 1772–1783, https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/1856-03-04/debates/c8c31eda-278d-4605-a74e-910800a631ca/GalleryOfNationalPortraits. Lord Stanhope also read an extract from "Thomas Carlyle to David Laing", letter dated 3 May 1854.

21 "Debate" 6 June 1856, col. 1120, https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/1856-06-06/debates/1c1235ac-cb2c-464c-87d9-13e01ef545e0/Supply%E2%80%94MiscellaneousEstimates.

22 Kornmeier 1998, 108.

Undoubtedly, in their first decades of collecting, both portrait galleries had a strong focus on depictions of the ruling elite, though quite different statements were made regarding collection policy. Stanhope pleaded for a gallery "containing portraits of men honourably distinguished in war, in statesmanship, in art and science"[23] throughout British history. Regarding the SNPG, Carlyle had advocated for the inclusion of renowned historical figures or characters, that is, "whoever 'lives' in the memory of Scotchmen, whoever is yet practically recognizable as a conspicuous worker, speaker, singer, or sufferer in the past time of Scotland".[24] However, the early display at the SNPG consisted of "images of people of such fame that there could be not argument that they were worthy of representation in the collection",[25] like Mary Queen of Scots (r. 1542–1567), the later Stuart kings, David Hume (1711–1776), and Robert Burns (1759–1796); in the beginning, such figures were represented with plaster casts of coins and medals. The institution's strong attachment to the Society of Antiquities is evident in the bequest of David Laing's twenty-six historical portraits.[26] Portraits displayed in the first room of the National Gallery in Edinburgh were gradually transferred to the SNPG, like Ramsey's portrait of David Hume.[27] Acquisition policies concerning the national identity of the historical figures were never formerly defined, but the SNPG clearly moved to illustrate Scottish history, including persons who had played an important role in the history of Scottish art.[28] In contrast, the NPG, having begun with the so-called Chandos portrait of Shakespeare, incorporated portraits of Scottish heroes, such as Sir Walter Scott and Robert Burns, into their account of British literature.[29]

Contemporary discussions about the aesthetic qualities and historical values of portraiture had a strong influence on collection policies.[30] Although it had been emphasized by Carlyle, among other promoters of collections of historical portraits, that the identity of the depicted subject, as well as the authenticity of the portrayal, would outweigh the artistic qualities of any portrait, it became apparent that the aesthetic dimension needed to be considered insofar as it elicited a response in the viewer and therewith activated the image's didactic function.[31] One "cannot have good portraits […] without having good pictures", as James Caw, the inaugural director of the National Galleries of Scotland, expressed in 1903.[32] The wish for artistically valuable portraits undoubtedly caused problems in the collection policies, and the aspirations more generally, of the national portrait galleries. Indeed, concerned about the loss of portraits as historical documents, in 1856 Charles Eastlake, director of the National Gallery, London, had remarked "that a gallery

23 "Debate" 4 March 1856, col. 1774, https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/1856-03-04/debates/c8c31eda-278d-4605-a74e-910800a631ca/GalleryOfNationalPortraits.

24 "Thomas Carlyle to David Laing", letter dated 3 May 1854.

25 Thomson 2011, 115.

26 Goudie 1913, 134–136; Murray 1914, 357–358. Regarding the complex relationship between the SNPG and the Museum of Antiquities, see Smailes 1985.

27 Thomson 2011, 116–119.

28 Ibid., 94.

29 Hulme, Buchanan, and Powell 2000, 24.

30 Thomson 2011, 93.

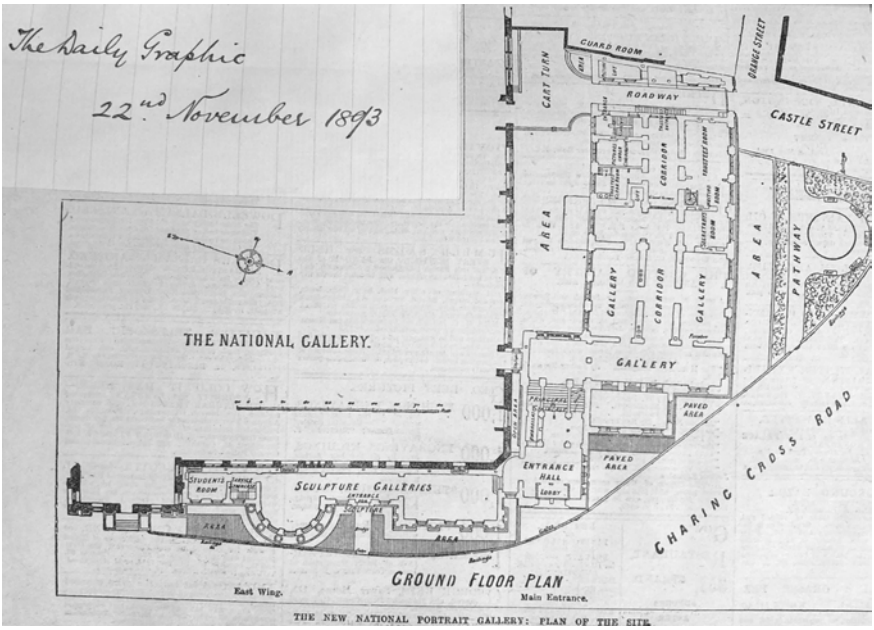
31 Barlow 1997, 219–238.

32 "Report by Departmental Committee" 1903, 39.

could be formed exclusively for authentic likenesses of celebrated individuals, not necessarily with reference to the merit of the works of art".[33]

Nevertheless, the quickly growing collections both in London and Edinburgh, each struggling with a lack of adequate space for display, prompted the search for dedicated and permanent housing. For both portrait galleries, a location at the very heart of the city was allocated – a site corresponding to each gallery's perceived significance for the nation. There can be no doubt that the NPG benefits from the large visitor flow heading towards the famous collection of the National Gallery, London, to this day. However, this government-proposed location for the NPG (fig. 4), in the area of St Martin's, caused great concern.[34]

Fig. 4: Plan of the new National Portrait Gallery site.



THE NEW NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY: PLAN OF THE SITE.

Objections were made on the issue of noise and pollution,[35] but principally on the close relation to the National Gallery building,[36] whether in terms of depriving the old

33 Quotation from "Charles Eastlake's letter to Sidney Herbert, January 1856, by Lord Stanhope", in "Debate" 4 March 1856, col. 1774, https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/1856-03-04/debates/c8c31eda-278d-4605-a74e-910800a631ca/GalleryOfNationalPortraits.

34 "Trustees' acceptance of a site next to the National Gallery offered by the Government", Lord Hardinge, 25 May 1889, in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

35 Robinson 1889.

36 In the "General thought as to requirements for a permanent National Portrait Gallery in London, 25th MAY, 1889", the following is specified: "No communication whatever to exist between the National Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery. Very solid walls will be required to separate

gallery of space allotted to it for an expansion project, the clash in architectural style between the two buildings, and the risk that the NPG building would diminish natural light in the National Gallery exhibition spaces.[37] Ewan Christian's ingenious architectural solution, which I will discuss later in this paper, reconciled the two buildings' architectural styles. Despite the requirement that "the institutions […] be kept perfectly distinct with separate entrances and […] floors […] without any communication between them",[38] the building plans had the disadvantage of undermining the independent status of the NPG.

Fig. 5: View of the north-east corner of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery's main façade, present day.

In contrast, the SNPG (fig. 5) is a distinctive landmark on Edinburgh's Queen Street, a grand, neo-Gothic building in red sandstone, which stands out against the surrounding plain, rectangular, Georgian-style structures of Edinburgh's new town. But in spite of its free-standing and imposing building, the SNPG could not convey its prominent collection profile to the public. This resulted in part from the circumstance, lasting until 1995, that the collection of the Society of Antiquities had to be housed in the other half of the

them. All police and watching arrangements to be totally distinct in both Institutions"; in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

37 For clash of styles, see Layard 1889. For space and light, see "Report trustees of the Treasury", 6 September 1890, in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896"; Hulme, Buchanan, and Powell 2000, 56–57.

38 "George Scharf to Lady Verney, letter dated 4 July 1889", in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

building.[39] This meant that the two institutions tended to merge into what was known simply as 'the museum', in spite of all conscious attempts on the part of Findlay and the donor to keep the SNPG and the Museum of Antiquity distinct by preventing any porosity between their different spaces on the building's first and top floors, respectively.[40]

Fig. 6: Robert Rowand Anderson (designer), Mount Stuart House, Isle of Bute, 1880–1885.

The selection of a neo-Gothic style for communicating the particular role of SNPG – as a national institution reclaiming Scottish history and culture[41] – is significant. Firstly, the building style must be seen in the context of the romantic movement and medievalism of the nineteenth century. One of the major players in the building's development was John Crichton Stuart, 3rd Marquess of Bute[42] and a member of the Society of Antiquities, which, guided by its antiquarian pursuits, must generally have steered the architectural conception. Stuart had become acquainted with the Gallery's architect, Robert Rowand Anderson, through their membership in the society and had given him the commission for his neo-Gothic palace Mount Stuart in 1880–1885 (fig. 6).[43]

39 See "Treasury" 1884.

40 Thomson 2011, 71. The donor expressed "that in the new building the Antiquaries should have accommodation equal to that devoted to the Portrait Gallery" and "insist[ed] also that the Portrait Gallery should be kept by itself, so to speak, as to entrances, elevations, and other arrangements, so distinctly as to avoid all possibility of its being confounded in the mind or eye of the public with any other Institution accommodated in the same building"; "Board of Manufactures" November 1884.

41 On his donation, in 1895, Findlay also articulated his desire "to make the National Portrait Gallery Building, as far as I possibly can, worthy of the purpose to which it is dedicated – the illustration of Scottish History and of the men, who made that history", see "Mr J. R. Findlay" 3 December 1895.

42 Thomson 2011, 21.

43 McKinstry 1991, 78–80. Anderson was a Gothic specialist who had collaborated also with William Burges.

In addition, the literary treatment of the nation's medieval heritage in the work of Sir Walter Scott, and its role in shaping Scottish identity during the nineteenth century[44] – commemorated by one of the most prominent Gothic Revival monuments[45] near Edinburgh's main station – may have strongly influenced the stylistic decision. Throughout the nineteenth century, the Gothic Revival had generally been recognized as a British national style, linked to the origins of the nation and to its values, particularly the constitution and the underlying idea of freedom.[46] What could therefore be more appropriate than to work in an architectural style, associated with such iconic and historically evocative buildings as Westminster Palace, that would speak to the importance of the institutionalized display of Scottish history undertaken at the SNPG. When Anderson designed a regular building block, repeating his design of Mount Stuart on a larger scale,[47] with turrets at the four corners in the style of, in his own words, the "Secular Gothic of the latter half of the thirteenth century",[48] he may have taken as a model Gothic residences in France like the *Maison du Grand Veneur*,[49] which he had seen on his continental tour. However, perhaps equally inspiring to him were the Gothic Revivalist buildings of his former employer in London, George Gilbert Scott, well known for the design of the imposing, polychrome elevation of the Midland Grand Hotel at St Pancras.[50]

An extensive decorative scheme characterizes the SNPG building,[51] elevating the expectations of the visitor and preparing him or her to experience the collection therein. In this sense, the façade acts like the outside of a medieval shrine. Between the clusters of twinned windows, as well as around the corner towers, twenty-eight statues (erected 1899–1906) appeared in canopied niches, interspersing royals, including Queen Mary, presented with two courtiers and James IV, as well as philosophers of the Enlightenment, the reformer John Knox, four Renaissance poets, an admiral, a general, and the painter Henry Reaburn.[52] Findlay suggested identifying the sculpted figures with inscriptions, but this never gained acceptance; therefore, the illustration of Scottish history

44 Brooks 1999, 92–93; Gottlieb 2004, 187–207; and Glendinning and MacKechnie 2019, 133–162.

45 Colston 1881.

46 Brooks 1999, 42–45; Bradley 2002, 332–340.

47 McKinstry 1991, 111.

48 Watt 1893, 476. Anderson also explained that the Gothic style had been adopted for "Considerations of utility as well as beauty", allowing also for flexible fenestral arrangements; McKinstry 1991, 111.

49 Anderson recorded secular and domestic Gothic architecture, "most of which was little known outside France and Italy". His publication *The Domestic and Street Architecture of France and Italy* (1868) featured prominently buildings in the styles of the early and geometric Gothic, such as the *Maison du Grand Veneur* in Cordes-sur-Ciel. See McKinstry 1991, 24–25.

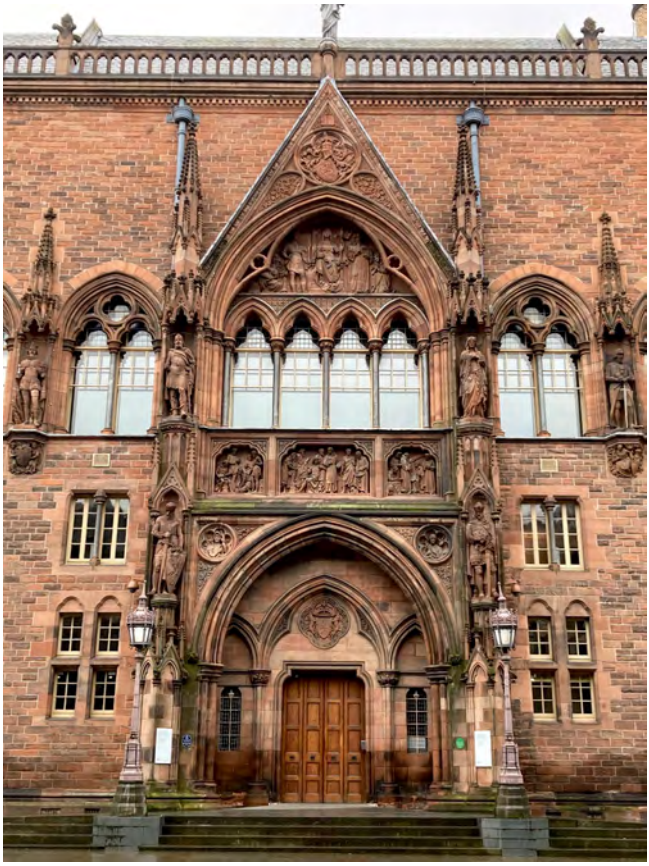
50 McKinstry 1991, 21–22; Brooks 1999, 324–325.

51 The sculptures were meant as part of the general plan of decoration by which the presence of the building was to be "beautified and ennobles all the rest", as Anderson stated, see Smailes 1985, 37. Lord Justice-General also expressed "that the union of sculpture and architecture is most desirable"; Watt 1893, 476.

52 Thomson 2011, 47–53. In the opening speech on the genesis of the National Portrait Gallery, Lord Justice-General pointed out that "it surely would be most appropriate that these niches should be filled with statues of eminent Scotsmen of times past". See "Opening of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery" 1888–1889, 248; Watt 1893, 476.

on the façade remained somewhat vague.[53] Moreover, the figural sculptures reproduced the personalities portrayed inside the building, and this had the effect of turning the collection inside out. The figures' positioning high on the edifice, and their sheltering under elaborated baldachins, made apparent their elevated ranks, a device well suited to indicating the value of the portrait collection. In the manner of the figural programme of a church façade representing the communion of saints – the *ecclesia* – the statues evoke the heart and body of the nation.

Fig. 7: View of the central portal of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.



The central portal (fig. 7), with its textural richness, outlines what constitutes the nation, its character, and its values. Under the figure of History sits Scotia, accompanied by the allegories of Industry and Religion, while relief panels alluding to Fine Art and

53 Thomson 2011, 52. Even in the 1930s, the lack of any indication as to whom the statues represented was an issue, and the placement of an inscription was considered, see "Letter" 14 July 1932.

Science.[54] With the life-size statues of the knight William Wallace and King Robert the Bruce flanking the entrance, welcoming the visitor, strong emphasis is placed on national sentiment in connection with the Wars of Scottish Independence (1296–1357). Armorial bearings play a major role in the decorative scheme of the building: continued within the entrance hall, these underline a medieval aristocratic heritage and thus a rather romantic view of Scotland's heroic history.[55]

The architecture of the NPG (fig. 8) tells a different story. In taking care that the character of the proposed building be consonant with that of the National Gallery, the architect Ewan Christian, rather a committed 'Goth', resorted to a variable classical vocabulary.[56] In order to master the problems of the site, with its north-south slope, Christian created three linked but visually distinct components – the east block, the entrance block, and the north block.[57] The entrance block, in the style of a Florentine Renaissance palazzo with rusticated banding,[58] and based on the layout of the fifteenth-century façade of Santo Spirito in Bologna (fig. 9), is designed to join together the neoclassical pilaster front facing Charing Cross Road and the three-storey block in the south. In terms of the stylistic orientation, he followed a continental trend in the architectural conception of fine-arts museums[59] – as reflected in the galleries in Munich (*Neue Pinakothek* / New Pinacotheca, 1846–1853) and Kassel (*Neue Galerie* / New Gallery, 1871–1877) – while at the

54 Thomson 2011, 47.

55 Gilbert Stuart's influential work *View of Society in Europe* (1778), emphasizing the importance of feudal notions of knighthood and chivalric duty in medieval and constitutional history, appealed to the Romantics, with Scott as a leading protagonist, see Allen 2021, 31–34. It may also have been foundational for the historical scheme of the SNPG. The concept "carried strong late-romantic overtones of nationalism and heroism", as noted in McKinstry 1991, 111.

56 "Charles Hardinge to David Punket, letter dated 21 February 1889", in the *Daily Graphic*, 22 November 1893, in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896". Hardinge's concern is that "the elevation of the New National Portrait Gallery should be in harmony with the existing elevation of the National Gallery". For Ewan Christian, see Hulme, Buchanan, and Powell 2000, 76–77; Stamp 2014, 92–93.

57 "The eastern wing, facing Chandos-street. It is a continuation of the façade of the National Gallery along the depth of the building, […] To do this satisfactorily was extremely difficult, owing partly to the rising of the ground from Trafalgar-square, but chiefly to the awkward shape of the piece of land at disposal"; *Daily News*, 5 September 1892, 3.

58 Referring to the eastern façade as "Florentine in some of its characteristics"; ibid., 3. See also "Volume of Architectural Plans".

59 "Mr. Christian visited several Continental picture galleries and found many of the best-shown pictures were lighted by windows"; *Pall Mall Gazette*, 2 July 1891, in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896". See also Ewan Christian to George Scharf, letter dated 24 November 1890: the former proposed the tower design, which had raised questions in Parliament about the overshadowing of the National Gallery. Christian also suggested a cabinet system resembling ones he had seen at the *Neue Galerie* (New Gallery, 1871–1877) in Kassel; the *Sempergalerie* (Semper Gallery, 1847–1854) in Dresden; the *Alte Nationalgalerie* (Old National Gallery, 1862–1876) in Berlin; and the *Städelsches Kunstinstitut* (Städel Art Institute, 1878) in Frankfurt, in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

same time alluding to famous Renaissance patrons and collectors like the Medici, which in turn assigned importance to the portrait collection housed in such an edifice.[60]

Fig. 8 (left): View of the National Portrait Gallery's main entrance, joining the east and north block, present day; Fig. 9 (right): Façade of Santo Spirito, Bologna, fifteenth century.

The donor William Henry Alexander, who had insisted on Christian as the architect for the project, suggested that the building be as well designed as possible while remaining plain and devoid of lavish ornamentation (fig. 10).[61] According to these specifications, and to save money, the possibility of a sculptural frieze of figures in scenes from British history had to be abandoned.[62] As principal elements of the ornamentation and as a unifying design, eighteen busts were applied in roundels around the top of the façade, proceeding from the entrance towards the north block. This display of worthy individuals differs distinctly from the decorative scheme, and the associated ideas, of the SNPG in portraying not historical subjects but rather the major players responsible for the existence of the London portrait collection.[63] Above the entrance can be seen Earl Stanhope, Thomas Babington Macaulay, and Thomas Carlyle, the key promoters of the NPG, followed by biographical writers and historians, among them James Granger and Horace

60 Leo von Klenze, architect of the *Alte Pinakothek* (Old Pinacotheca) in Munich, recognized the Renaissance gallery as a predecessor to Munich's New Pinacotheca, and the Medici's *Palazzi Pitti* as a prototype for picture collections generally. See Plagemann 1967, 84.

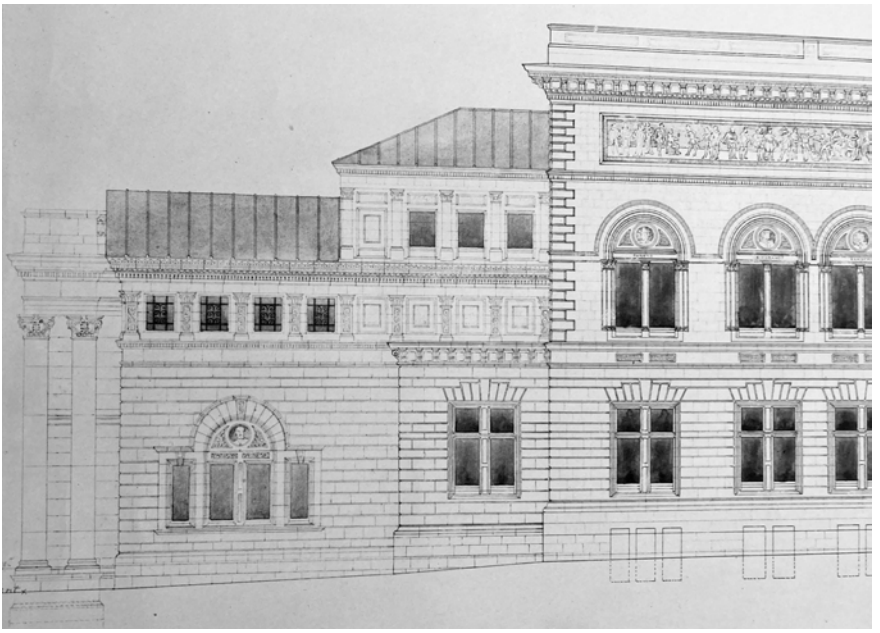
61 *Daily Graphic*, 22 November 1893, in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

62 Image of the design in the *Westminster Gazette*, 31 July 1893, and *Daily Graphic*, 22 November 1893, in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

63 "External Decoration: Portrait busts within circular frames are let into the north and east wall and represent artists and authors who have contributed so much to the formation of the Gallery and to perpetuate our National Worthies. 'Artists', on the one hand, through whose pencil or chisel we are enabled to realize the physiognomy and appearance of those represented within, and, on the other hand, 'Author and Historians' through whose pen (narrating the events of their lives and uttering their thoughts) we are convinced of the worthiness of the portraits selected for public distinction in the Gallery"; "Thirty-Sixth Annual Report – 1893", in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

Walpole, and concluding with a succession of famous portrait painters such as Lawrence, Reynolds, Hogarth, Lely, Van Dyck, and Holbein.[64] The clearly labelled scheme refers to portraits as a vehicle for enacting British history and pays tribute to a cultural awareness of the historical value of such a collection, while the SNPG focuses on the leading figures of history itself. In addition, the more abstract, self-reflective scheme of the NPG is apparent in the presentation of busts in the form of memorial plates, in contrast to the life-size figures on the SNPG façade, which, similar to an effigy, evoke the past in a more tangible way.

Fig. 10: Robert Rowand Anderson, National Portrait Gallery, Detail of the North Elevation.



Altogether, in Edinburgh a rather romantic concept seems to have taken hold, particularly in the way the building harkens back to the nation's preindustrial past. Like columns supporting the building's structure, the statues act as guarantors of a prosperous Scottish history. An equivalent perspective, looking into the glorious past, is taken up inside the SNPG. Entering the gallery, the visitor is welcomed by the spacious Great Hall (fig. 11), in the tradition of medieval residences.[65] Designed in a high Gothic style, the space is decorated with a procession of 155 full-length figures of famous Scots, who march in reverse chronology, clockwise, from Thomas Carlyle to a Stone Age axeman along the

64 North side: Chantrey, Lawrence, Reynolds, Hogarth, Roubiliac, Kneller, Lely, Van Dyck, Holbein; north side of the principal entrance: Lodge, Faithorne, Granger; east side of the principal entrance: Macaulay, Stanhope, Carlyle. See the *Daily Graphic*, 22 November 1893, in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

65 Anderson again took recourse to his design of Mount Stuart, which shows a great hall similar to the entrance hall of the SNPG.

first-floor balustrade.[66] Central focus is placed on a seated female Caledonia (fig. 12), towards whom the Stone Age figures turn "with a suggestion of veneration".[67]

Fig. 11 (left): View of the entrance hall of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery; Fig. 12 (right): View of the north side of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery's entrance hall, with mosaic frieze (central figure of Caledonia) and night sky ceiling.

In order not to tarnish the story of a successful and prosperous nation, the proposed figure of Oliver Cromwell was not included, and the defeat of Charles I was edited out.[68] Assigned greatness by being elevated in such a grand space, as well as by being set against a golden mosaic ground, a particularly dignified materiality, the assembly is bound to generate veneration and, with it, the emulation by the beholder. Presented below the night sky of the Northern Hemisphere painted on the ceiling,[69] the vast decorative scheme carried out by William Hole (fig. 13) – which also includes a series of large-scale murals on the first floor – shows scenes from Scottish history, with a tendency towards the warlike.[70] The main hall provides a breathtaking introduction to Scottish history, but one that is clearly embedded in the aristocratic tradition, as manifested in the prolific heraldic scheme, which bestows on the space the venerable air of a 'hall of the ancestors'. Tangible right from the beginning is Carlyle's notion that individual great men (and occasionally great women) shape the history of a nation. As a unified whole, the almost holy procession, framed by the zodiac signs in the sky, suggests greatness and significance on a universal and eternal level. The golden backdrop, a device by which the saints are dignified in medieval painting, signals a pseudo-religious idealization of the worthies of the nation.

66 Thomson 2011, 53.

67 Ibid.

68 Louis 2022.

69 Thomson 2011, 61.

70 "Subjects for the decoration": "3. The Battle of Largs", "4. The Battle of Stirling Bridge", "5. King Robert Bruce single-handed fight with the three Macdougalls", "6. The Battle of Bannockburn".

Fig. 13: View of the ambulatory of the entrance hall, with William Hole's murals; to the west: The Defeat of Haakon, King of Norway, by Alexander III at Largs, A.D. 1263.

There can be no doubt that Hole's murals, with their muted tones and gold grounds, are guided by the concept behind Pierre Puvis de Chavannes's work in the *Panthéon* in Paris, which set an important precedent with its statement of national renewal based on the life of Sainte Geneviève.[71] [▸ Strunck] Both programmes share the deliberate purpose of glorifying the nation's history and of elaborating its own myth.

Thus prepared, the visitor enters the SNPG (not the Museum of Antiquities, however, which is separated from the hall). Early on, the collection was confined to the first-floor gallery,[72] which consisted virtually of one large room divided by an arcaded wall (fig. 14), continuing the noble architectural layout of the hall with strong reference to the traditional 'long gallery' found in grand houses. Stained glass, with the small armorial bearings often used in Gothic Revival schemes to evoke a venerable heritage, was also employed in the gallery's early decoration.[73]

71 Hole was probably looking to the vision of an ideal past evident in Puvis de Chavannes's *Le Repos* or his Sainte Geneviève cycle at the *Panthéon* in Paris, see Willsdon 2000, 278. Reynolds has also pointed the close artistic connection between Edinburgh and Paris, see Reynolds 2016, 37–44.

72 "The Scottish National Portrait Gallery" 1889, 44.

73 Findlay suggested that "the Windows in the Hall, ambulatory and staircase, or a certain number of them, might filled with painted glass, illustrative of scenes and personages in Scottish History"; "Mr J. R. Findlay" 3 December 1895. He had been opposed to such decorations for the gallery windows in the interest of maximizing light, see Thomson 2011, 59.

Fig. 14: View of the ground-floor gallery of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, ca 1900.

A shortage of space for hanging pictures soon became a problem, particularly owing to the main walls being broken up by arcades and large windows, and therefore mobile wooden screens were inserted.[74] Further, the undivided space was not conducive to the display of the portraits in subgroups. Because, according to the catalogue, neither a stringent chronology nor another systematic arrangement was applied in the installation, and because the labels accompanying the portraits only indicated the identity of subject and artist, it seems that the gallery implemented a mode of display that was prevalent in private collections.[75] Even though a published catalogue provided extensive biographies of both the sitter and artist, along with the provenance of the painting, the installation's approach to Scottish history was geared towards an emotional and intuitive reception. This would seem to follow the prescriptions laid out by Findlay, namely, "that the Gallery should be started in a popular & effective style".[76]

The NPG's hanging policy seems to have been more didactic and educational in character. The main gallery (fig. 15) on the three floors of the north block were generally arranged in chronological order, or else the portraits were grouped according to profession, which included eminent women, albeit in a separate room.[77] Scharf classified the

74 Thomson 2011, 63.

75 Gray 1890.

76 "Copy of the letter John Ritchie Findlay to Sir William Fettes Douglas" 22 December 1883.

77 "On the TOP FLOOR the Portraits are arranged CHRONOLOGICALLY as far as possible beginning in Rooms I. and II: at the N.W. angle of the building and ending in Room XI. The large portraits in Room XII. Are not arranged chronologically on account of their size. […] On the FIRST FLOOR the Portraits are grouped in classes, as far as they allow, Artists […] Statesmen, Divines, Eminent

pictures on artistic merit as 'A', 'B', or 'C', advising that "the best pictures require the best light" and should be hung on the top floor, "lighted with skylights".[78] This systematic display was supported by the layout of the room, consisting of a series of cabinets running along a central floor.[79] Altogether, it seems that the concept followed the contemporary standards of fine-arts galleries concerning systematic display with the purpose of underlining the value of a portrait collection, in this case for the British nation. This included providing a catalogue with information on the sitters and on the provenance of the artwork and fixing large tablets to the frames to give extra biographical details, all of which facilitated the study of the portraits and of the nation's history.[80] The use of different colours for the walls of the display spaces served to break up the monotony that resulted from the uniform artistic genre. At the same time, the choice of wall colours was also guided by the necessity to create a neutral background that would allow for a flexible hanging, whether in chronological order or otherwise.[81] To create a display similar in scale and decoration to a domestic interior[82] – where the works on view often came from, in fact – the scale of the rooms was kept of modest size; no grand rooms were planned. Moreover, the interior was rather soberly treated, with originally proposed furnishings such as oak panelling ultimately excluded, in order to retain as much hanging space as possible.[83] The space was geared towards a didactic purpose, allowing the visitor to view the portraits without being distracted by architectural splendour.

Women, having separate rooms. […] On the GROUND FLOOR a room is allotted to Portraits of Judges. On the Upper Basements will be found the large pictures of the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Visitors desiring to follow the historical sequence of the Portraits should ascend at once to the Top Floor"; in "Thirty-Ninth Annual Report of the Trustees of The National Portrait Gallery, 1896", in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

78 "Scheme for moving and hanging pictures" by George Scharf, 10 January 1895, in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

79 Hulme, Buchanan, and Powell 2000, 132.

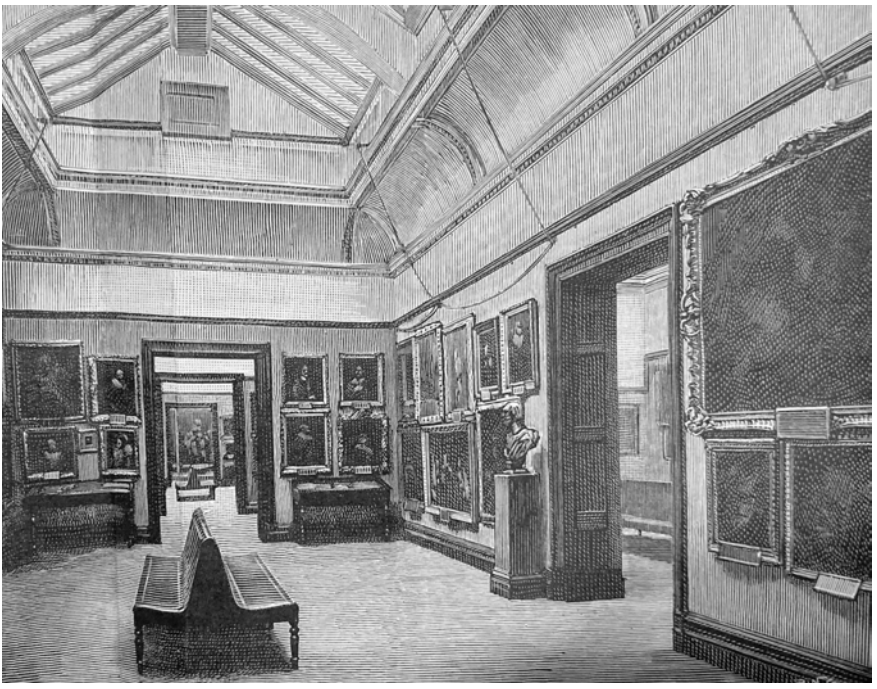
80 "The new catalogue of the collection […] will be an epitome of national biography. We would advise visitors to get this catalogue if they wish to enjoy their inspection of the pictures, but it is not necessary to obtain it to distinguish who the pictures represent, as tablets affixed to the frames explain fully the subject of the portraits"; *London Gazette*, 2 April 1896, in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

81 "Extract from a letter addressed by Sir George Scharf to Ewan Christian, 13 February 1895", in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896": "I would rather see the pictures up first on a dull neutral colour quite plain, some reddish (not brickly but crimsony) some greenish some brownish + some grey. No blue. Our arrangements of the pictures may require shifting and hanging, as the pictures must be hung chronologically, the colour of the wall cannot guide us".

82 "There are large rooms and small ones; […] nearly all have a certain air of cosiness and domesticity. As far as appearances go, in the possession of a person of wealth and taste"; *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 4 April 1896, in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

83 "Trustees minutes, 21 March 1892", in: Hulme, Buchanan, and Powell 2000, 127.

Fig. 15: Russell and Sons, Top-Floor Gallery, Room Containing Portraits of the Stuart Period, National Portrait Gallery, engraving.



Nevertheless, for the entrance and staircase (fig. 16) a more decorative scheme was desired.[84] The entrance featured a mosaic floor and an elaborate timber frame roof, while the staircase, imperial in form, was marked by round arches at the entrances.[85] The designs were modelled on Renaissance architecture, a style that conformed with the exterior of the building and stimulated the required mindset of appreciation for the historical value of this portrait collection. The topmost leg of the central flight was flanked by round arcades and foliated capitals.[86] Together with the tunnel vaulting of the stairs, the decoration seems to refer back to the medieval heritage of the British nation and to the earliest paintings in the collection.[87]

84 "Staircase architecturally ornamental, to occupy the full height of the building, and to be lighted from the top"; "General thought as to requirements for a permanent National Portrait Gallery in London, 25th MAY, 1889", in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

85 Hulme, Buchanan, and Powell 2000, 129.

86 Ibid., 130.

87 "Something of gloom, something of frigidity struck us one first visit. There is none of the lightness and splendour which dazzles in the vestibule of the adjacent and older building. Perhaps there is a certain rawness that chills in every edifice which has not yet been used; but the deep red line of the wood of the parquet flooring, the sombre tones of the pavements in the corridors, and the heavy round arches combine to give a vault-like effect to the interior, for which the exterior of the edifice hardly prepares us"; *The Echo*, 2 April 1896, in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

Fig. 16: View of H. W. Brewer's The Imperial Staircase from the NPG's Royal Gallery, drawing.

Conclusions

The buildings of both national galleries demonstrate the wish of the founders to provide for their portrait collection, creating an architectural framework that reflects the significance of the collection for its nation. And although the collections are also similar to each other in the range and type of portraits they contain, very different approaches were taken to conveying the importance of these holdings by means of architectural and decorative schemes as well as display policies. The Edinburgh building – with its Gothic façade, solemn entrance hall, and picture display in a grand, undivided space – points to Scotland's glorious past, dating back to medieval times. Particularly crucial for the understanding of this collection is the gallery's entrance hall, which further expanded the romantic conception of the 'great man' theory, alongside feudal notions of knighthood and chivalry. Here, the SNPG enacts a truly sensual and emotional appeal to the visitor, setting the tone for the reception of the collection. [▸ Beck]

The NPG shows a more rational approach, grounded on Enlightenment ideals and visualized by a classical architectural formula. The façade does not celebrate the worthies of the nation, who are presented in the collection itself, but rather represents the formation of an institution as a progressive stride to educate the nation. Similarly, inside the gallery the visitor is not distracted by grand spaces nor by elaborate decoration. The entrance is designed to direct him or her immediately to the central staircase, which leads to the different levels of the exhibition space. There, the visitor is guided through a systematic, institutionalized hang of portraits. In fact, the NPG controlled the viewing and

interpretation of the collection through aspects of the hanging. The contemporary press's censure that the NPG had failed in its purpose to celebrate the imperial idea reveals a paradigm shift concerning the decorum of collection display for the nation, namely, towards refraining from epic pictorial cycles with their recourse to a glorious past and their patriotic trappings.[88] That, at last, becomes clear in the way both galleries commemorate their donors, who through their generous support provided each collection with a permanent and prestigious housing. The NPG commemorates William Henry Alexander with a modest, mainly informative, plaque on the landing of the first-floor mezzanine. Findlay, for his part, receives his own memorial (fig. 17) in the entrance hall, with a portrait at the centre, thereby singling him out as the only contemporary in the assembly of the worthy on the frieze.

With this monumental memorial, the SNPG again uses magnificence and a tangible visual representation to engage the visitor. Shifting from Gothic to Renaissance styles with this sumptuous tabernacle-framed memorial, the programme aligns Findlay with famous Florentine donors – and the SNPG itself with the famous collections at the *Uffizi* and the *Palazzo Pitti*.

88 "[…] it cannot been said too strongly that, while the building is plain and unaggressive, it is certainly not beautiful, not well adapted to the purpose for which it was built, and quite unworthy of the imperial idea it should have embodied. The galleries are small and narrow and not half high enough for the method of lighting that is rendered necessary by the elevation, they scattered, too, over several storeys; and the connecting staircases are more suggestive of Clapham Junction than of a Walhalla of the Great, and although the pictures are as well arranged as space permits, there is so little space that many can only just discerned in the gloom."; *Westminster Gazette*, 2 April 1896, in: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".

Fig. 17: View of the entrance hall of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, with Georg Reid's John Ritchie Findlay-Memorial (1899).

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Fig.1: "National Portrait Gallery, New Building 1889–1896".
Fig. 2: Thomson 2011, 44.
Fig. 3: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Carlyle_National_Portrait_Gallery.jpg#/media/File:Carlyle_National_Portrait_Gallery.jpg.
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Fig. 6: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mount_Stuart_House_2018-08-25.jpg#/media/Datei:Mount_Stuart_House_2018-08-25.jpg.
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The Sommerard Museum

Capturing the Essence of French National Identity

Estelle Gottlob-Linke

During the nineteenth century, Europe saw a tremendous fascination in the Renaissance and, to a greater extent, the Middle Ages. In post-revolutionary France, historical artefacts from these periods became increasingly important to the formation of national identity and historical consciousness. While in the early 1790s the destruction of monuments was demanded by decree, the first decades of the nineteenth century were characterized by a veritable mania among private collectors for remnants of this forgotten period, which had significantly shaped France's cultural identity. Hence, growing interest in this period evolved as a reaction to the revolutionary era.[1]

Among numerous bourgeois private collectors, the antiquarian Alexandre Du Sommerard (1779–1842) stands out.[2] In 1833, he rented a vacant part of the *Hôtel de Cluny* to house his medieval and Renaissance art collection.[3] Built around 1500 in the heart of Paris's *Quartier Latin* next to the ruins of the Gallo-Roman thermal baths, the former residence of the abbots of Cluny provided an ideal architectural framework for his growing collection. Promoted by the national and international press, including Parisian travel guides, the *Musée Du Sommerard* (Sommerard Museum)[4] immediately became a magnet for the public.[5] After the collector died in 1842, the French state acquired the famous col-

1 For the emerging interest in the French Middle Ages, see Voss 1972; Grodecki 1979; Recht 2016, 295–318; Pomian 2021. With a specific view to collections of medieval and Renaissance art in nineteenth-century Paris, see Letellier 2015; Stammers 2020.

2 The paper uses the most common spelling: Alexandre Du Sommerard. Less common are Dusommerard and Sommerard.

3 Robert 2008. Older research refers to the year 1832.

4 The private collection of Alexandre Du Sommerard was known as *Musée Du Sommerard* by the press and contemporaries. It was located in the *Hôtel de Cluny* from 1833 until 1842. In 1844, following the collector's death, the medieval building and the adjacent ancient baths officially reopened as the *Musée de Cluny* (Cluny Museum). However, the collection was completely rearranged and no longer reflected its original character, losing the intimate charm of its exhibition galleries. This paper will use the name 'Sommerard Museum' to distinguish it from the Cluny Museum.

5 Du Sommerard 1838–1846, I, 402–403 and 417, complains about the growing number (30,000–40,000) of national and international tourists per year. Plato 2001 calls this number into question. For the national press, see, for example, Deschamps 1833; Jubinal 1834;

lection to create, together with the adjoining thermal baths, a new museum of national antiquities.[6] The success of this private collection resulted in the foundation of the only national museum for medieval art in France, today the *Musée de Cluny – musée national du Moyen Âge* (Cluny Museum – National Museum of the Middle Ages).[7]

During Alexandre Du Sommerard's lifetime, his museum became a focal point for national history. Here, French culture, language, art, religion, historical events, forgotten traditions, and customs could be visualized, encountered, and relived. Du Sommerard had an immense impact on subsequent collectors and museums, both in the selection of objects and their display. Indeed, his characteristic atmospheric mode of presentation finds a firm place in the development of the period room and of cultural history museums more broadly.[8]

Although research has illuminated some aspects of Du Sommerard's display strategies, no study to date has examined the entire collection. Instead, research has repeatedly focused on a small sample of rooms (the chapel and the chamber of Francis I).[9] It is undeniable that these rooms are, from a museological perspective, the most elaborated exhibition spaces in the museum. Nevertheless, without clarifying the extent and display of the collection objects, any analysis remains fragmentary. This paper aims to shed light on the entire display of the Sommerard Museum. Its leading question is, to what extent were French history, culture, and identity expressed in the presentation? What staging strategies and what particular objects shaped visitors' experience of the French nation – linguistically and culturally, as well as historically and art historically? And more generally, what impression did the collection leave on them? To answer these questions, it is first necessary to shed light on the collector himself and the cultural-political circumstances under which his collection arose.

Alexandre Du Sommerard and the Emerging Interest in the Middle Ages

Simon-Nicolas-Alexandre Du Sommerard, born in Bar-sur-Aube in 1779, first pursued a military career in the army of Napoleon and later, in 1807, joined the *Cours des comptes* (Chamber of Accounts) as master-advisor. His political involvement reflects the upheavals and tensions of the post-revolutionary era. During the fall of Napoleon (r. 1799

Anonymous 1836 (*Journal des débats* 4 June 1836); Janin 1842. The international press, especially that of Britain, followed with attention the establishment of a private museum of medieval art, e.g. Anonymous 1835a (*Albion and the Star* 11 July 1835); Anonymous 1835b (*Court Journal* 3 October 1835); Anonymous 1835c (*Drogheda Journal* 6 October 1835); Anonymous 1835d (*Court Journal* 10 October 1835). Waagen 1839 discussed the collection in a Parisian travel guide.

6 The report on the acquisition of the Du Sommerard Collection before the Chamber of Peers (*Sur l'aquisition du Musée Du Sommerard. Rapport à la Chambre des pairs, le 15 juillet 1843*) is reprinted in de Barante 1858. For a more detailed discussion, see Brière 1922; Marot 1968; Taburet-Delahaye 2021.

7 Erlande-Brandenburg 1977; Erlande-Brandenburg 1979b; Sandron 1993; Huchard 2001; Le Pogam 2006.

8 Bann 2001; Joachimides 2012; Costa, Poulot, and Volait 2016, 7–17.

9 Bann 1978; Bann 1984; Poulot 1997a; Plato 2001; Huchard 2001; Le Pogam 2006; Bann 2012.

First Consul–1815 Emperor of the French), he emerged as a moderate royalist and supporter of the Restorative Monarchy under Louis XVIII (r. 1814–1824). Hence, in 1816, he received the *croix de la Fidélité* for his loyal service to the state and was appointed *chevalier* of the Legion of Honour in the same year; barely twenty-five years later, he was even elevated to the rank of *officier* in the order.[10]

In addition to his career in the civil service, Du Sommerard was also a passionate art collector, antiquarian, scholar, historian, and museum founder. He counts among the founding members of the re-established *Société des Amis des Arts* (1816, Society of Friends of the Art) and the *Société de l'Histoire de France* (1834, Society for the History of France), joined the *Société Royale des Bonnes-Lettres* (1821, Royal Society of Literature), and was elected as vice president of the *Comité historique des arts et monuments* (1841, Historical Committee for Arts and Monuments) set up by the statesman François Guizot.[11] Du Sommerard was a respected member of society and maintained private and public relations with intellectuals, historians, and politicians. Even before he reached his prime as a collector, Du Sommerard had run a salon on the *rue Ménars* frequented by artists and Parisian society. Although the beginnings of his collection remain unclear, it must have already grown in size and stature by the 1820s, as the *Manuel de l'amateur des arts* reported in 1824: "since the suppression of the *Musée des monuments français*, a similar reunion of this type can be found nowhere".[12]

The comparison with the *Musée des monuments français* (Museum of French Monuments)[13] attests to the early quality of the collection. Moreover, it expresses the desire to re-establish an institution equal to this famous predecessor, which had functioned as a safeguard for vandalized monuments in the aftermath of the French Revolution. At that time, the possessions of the nobility and the Church became national assets (*biens nationaux*), and the destruction of historical sites and monuments from the previous regime was even encouraged by law.[14] One point of contention in the years following the French Revolution was the symbolic value of the material remains and whether they should be destroyed as testimonies of the *ancien régime* or preserved as the basis of France's national identity. Thanks to the efforts of the archaeologist Alexandre Lenoir, numerous testimonies of French patrimony were safely guarded in the *Couvent des Petits-Augustins*, which opened in 1795 as the Museum of French Monuments. Despite its immense popularity, the museum closed again as early as 1816 by order of Louis XVIII, leaving a significant void. Contemporaries considered the private collection of the archaeologist

10 Anonymous 1845; Marot 1968, 283; Huchard 2009. For detailed information on his political career, see Mérimée 1843; "Dictionnaire historique, généalogique et biographique" (1807–1947).

11 Du Sommerard served, among Victor Hugo, Léon de Laborde, Prosper Mérimée, and others, on the committee as vice president until his unexpected death in 1842. "Le comité historique des arts et monumens" 1843.

12 "*depuis la suppression du 'Musée des monumens français', il ne se trouve nulle part une pareille réunion de ce genre*"; Harmand 1824, 168.

13 The museum has been the subject of intense discussion. For a concise summary, see Stara 2013; Bresc-Bautier and Chancel-Bardelot 2016; Pomian 2021, 109–134.

14 On the vandalism of the Revolutionary Era and the debate on the preservation of material remains, see Pommier 1991; Poulot 1995; Bergeron 1996; Baczko 1996.

and antiquarian Alexandre Du Sommerard to be the direct and natural successor. Moreover, the Sommerard Museum sparked an urge to compensate for the loss of the Museum of French Monuments and to keep the memory of the national history of France alive.[15] However, this development also raised the question of which aspects of history to focus on and how to present them.

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, the idea of a new, genuine French history was at the centre of political and historical discourses. In the early 1820s, modern historians such as Augustin Thierry and François Guizot aimed to write a "true national history" by shedding light on sources and testimonies ranging from annals and chronicles to monuments and customs.[16] One must bear in mind that such textual sources did not serve the same purpose as historical monuments: as Roland Recht points out, the monuments served as visible memorial signs that were meant to be accessible to the entire nation and "to plunge the eye into the buried strata of national history".[17] The focus of national historiography shifted gradually from Greco-Roman antiquity to the French Middle Ages, as the period in which foundational ideas, feelings, and customs were believed to have their roots. The long-overlooked Middle Ages rose in public perception, coming to be regarded as, to quote Guizot, "the cradle of modern civilization".[18] In other words, the 'invention' of the Middle Ages became central to understandings of the nation's origin.[19] Hence, within this historical-political discussion, the collection of French antiquities by Du Sommerard gained prompt attention.

The Sommerard Museum

Built around 1500, the *Hôtel de Cluny* is one of the last remaining buildings of medieval Paris. In 1833, Du Sommerard rented part of the building both to live there with his family and to display his collection. The resulting Sommerard Museum was open several days per month to interested visitors who registered in advance.[20] The floor plan (fig. 1) indicates the exhibition rooms on the first floor, including two bedrooms dedicated to the French kings Francis I (11) and Henry IV (12), a living room or salon (17), a dining room (16), a gallery (13/15), and the late Gothic chapel (10). The upcoming section of this essay

15 De Barante 1858 summed it up in the much-quoted notation: "*L'hôtel de Cluny remplacera pour elle ce musée des Petits-Augustins qu'on a eu le tort de détruire*". For a more detailed discussion, see Erlande-Brandenburg 1977; Bann 1984; Poulot 1997a; Bann 2012.

16 "*La vraie histoire nationale, celle qui mériterait de devenir populaire, est encore ensevelie dans la poussière des chroniques contemporaines*"; Thierry 1827, 3–4. See also Poulot 1988.

17 "*Des signes bien visibles qui plongent le regard jusqu'aux strates enfouies de l'histoire nationale*"; Recht 2016, 7.

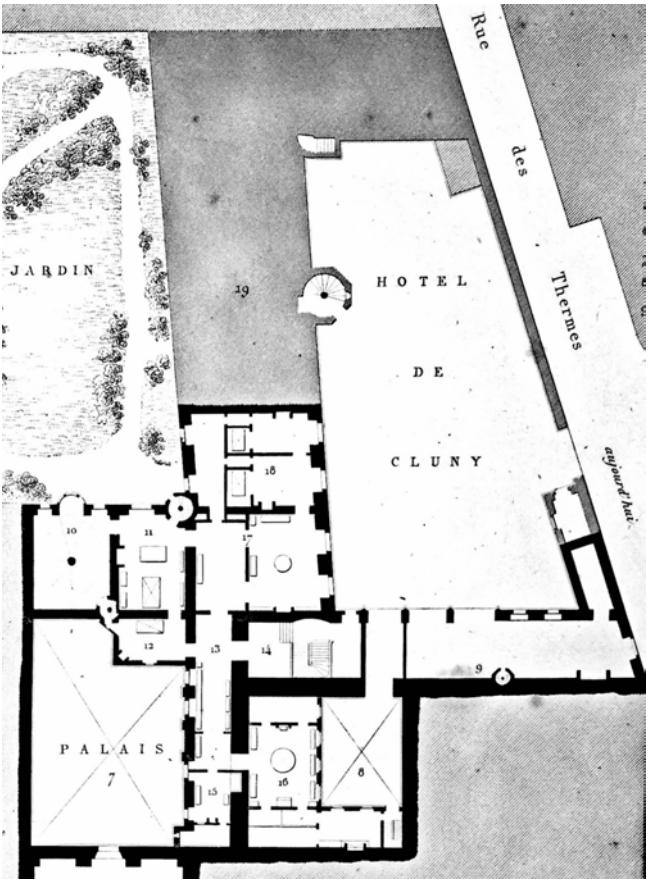
18 "*Ceci prouve clairement que le moyen âge est encore pour nous tout autre chose que matière de science; qu'il correspond à des intérêts plus actuels, plus directs que ceux de l'érudition et de la critique historique, à des sentiments plus généraux, plus vifs que celui de la pure curiosité. […] D'une part, il est impossible de méconnaître que c'est là le berceau des sociétés et des mœurs modernes*"; Guizot 1840, III, première leçon, 227.

19 Koselleck 1987, 178; Recht 2016, 7, 314.

20 In the course of time, the opening hours extended from twice a month to every week. Du Sommerard 1834, 113; Janin 1842, col. 10.

will shed light on the individual rooms. Based on contemporary sources, I examine the display and mediation strategies that produced an atmosphere reminiscent of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance – and, from a broader perspective, of the national history of France.

Fig. 1: Albert Lenoir, Ground Floor of the Hôtel de Cluny, lithograph.



Sources

Among the sources allowing us to reconstruct the original character of the Sommerard Museum are two publications written by Du Sommerard himself – a museum guide called *Notice sur l'Hôtel de Cluny* (1834) and the history of medieval art *Les Arts au Moyen-Âge* (1838–1846) – as well as numerous contemporary exhibition reviews and an inventory of the collection written in 1843 in the wake of Du Sommerard's death.[21] The inventory

21 Du Sommerard 1834; Du Sommerard 1838–1846; Roussel and Sauvageot 1843. I thank Jean-Christophe Ton-That from the Documentation Centre of the Cluny Museum, who drew my attention to the inventory and provided me access.

lists all 1,432 objects according to genre/material and room, and it provides detailed information on the display strategies within the museum.[22] The collection included late antique, medieval, and early modern art spanning the fourth to the seventeenth century. The inventory reveals Du Sommerard's preferences as a collector. Besides paintings and sculptures, one should note the significantly high number (175 pieces) of furniture items, which were explicitly understood as art objects in their own right and predominantly came from French castles. Of great importance to the collector were examples of decorative art and everyday objects such as Renaissance furniture (175 pieces), historical weapons (131), sophisticated faience (118), and antique enamels (53 *émaux de Limoges*; 70 *émaux de Bysantinons*).

In addition to collecting, Du Sommerard devoted himself to art-historical research. Inspired by his collection, he wrote a five-volume history of French art from the fifth to the seventeenth century, *Les Arts au Moyen-Âge*, published between 1838 and 1846. The first volume leads the reader on a fictional visit through the museum, portraying in detail the exhibition rooms.[23] The text was accompanied by eleven albums in large folio format with over 500 illustrations, including objects and rooms of the museum. Contemporary artists – such as Achille Devéria, Nicolas Chapuy, Godefroy Engelmann, and Charles-Caius Renoux – executed the predominantly colour lithographs.

The museum attracted some famous visitors – among them Émile Deschamps (*Journal des anecdotes* 1833), Achille Jubinal (*L'artiste* 1834), Michelet in 1835, Rosa de Saint-Surin (*L'Hôtel de Cluny au Moyen-Age* 1835), Jules Janin (*Journal des débats* 1842), and Prosper Mérimée (*Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne* 1843) – whose testimonies give a personal account of their visit as well as information about the founder. Deschamps, Jubinal, and de Saint-Surin promised their readers that the contents of the galleries would allow them to 'time travel' to the Middle Ages. Overall, these primary sources bear witness to the original presentation, didactic mediation, and effect on visitors.

The Introduction Room

A visit to the Sommerard Museum began in the first-floor salon.[24] Here, the presentation enabled the visitor to become familiar with the museum's historical scope and elaborated narrative. As Lenoir had done at the Museum of French Monuments four decades earlier, Du Sommerard used the first room to reflect on the museum's content in a condensed manner.[25] The critic Jules Janin later recalled, in an obituary for the collector, "in the large

22 The objects were distributed among the rooms as follows: salon 91, gallery 261, dining room 241, Henry IV 84, Francis I 376, chapel 284, courtyard and staircase 95. A detailed analysis of the inventory is provided in Gottlob-Linke 2018.

23 Du Sommerard 1838–1846, I, 402–436. Due to the author's death in 1842, his son, Edmond Du Sommerard, finished the last volume.

24 There have been many controversial discussions about the sequence of the rooms, as summarized by Gottlob-Linke 2018. For the most likely one, see Du Sommerard 1838–1846, I, 402–436.

25 For the entrance hall at the Museum of French Monuments, see Erlande-Brandenburg 1979a, 80; Chancel-Bardelot 2016, 122–125.

living room, you met the entire collection".[26] Hence, this was a programmatic exhibition room: an eye-opener!

The inventory of this first room indicates artefacts spanning the fourth to the seventeenth century – from late antiquity to the beginning of the reign of the Bourbon house. Du Sommerard guided his visitors through the collection and aimed for a highly regulated visitor experience by drawing attention to select objects.[27] Among the oldest artefacts in the collection were two fourth-century lion heads carved from rock crystal as well as a sophisticated and particularly eye-catching ivory statuette, *La Panthée*. Furthermore, a Florentine cabinet from around 1600 – decorated with inlays of precious materials like mother-of-pearl, tortoiseshell, semi-precious stones, and gold – took pride of place within the installation. According to Du Sommerard, this precious piece of furniture was a "jewel to which we have found nothing comparable in France".[28] It had belonged to Maria de Medici (1575–1642), the second wife of King Henry IV (r. 1598–1610). Attesting to the beginning of Bourbon rule under Henry IV, the cabinet signals the endpoint of the historical account presented at the museum.

From today's perspective, it seems surprising that the museum would characterize the medieval era as encompassing the fourth to the early seventeenth century. Yet, already in 1817, the statesman and historian Pierre Daunou had criticized the term *moyen âge* (Middle Ages), noting that it corresponded to a long, imprecise period whose beginning and end have never been precisely determined.[29] Numerous historians prior to Du Sommerard had extended their studies about the Middle Ages equally to the rise of the Bourbon.[30] Indeed, it would take until the 1860s to establish a distinction between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance as epochs.

The historical time-space of the display also took on importance at a cultural-political level, as the Middle Ages became key to notions of national history. After the upheavals of the revolutions – most recently the July Revolution and the proclamation of Louis-Philippe (r. 1830–1848) as 'King of the French' – the consolidation of a divided France through a shared identity became the most pivotal cause. In this context, increasing importance was assigned both to the Middle Ages and to the historical 'good kings' of France. From the nation's Gallo-Roman beginnings to the rise of Bourbon rule, the Sommerard Museum spanned a period that seemed particularly conducive to re-establishing common roots in order to consolidate the divided nation in the first half of the nineteenth century.

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26 "*dans le grand salon vous rencontriez la collection complété*"; Janin 1842, col. 11.

27 Du Sommerard 1834, 84; Du Sommerard 1838–1846, I, 404–405.

28 "*Ici, par example, le meuble florentin, bijou auquel nous n'avons jusque'ici rien trouvé de comparable, en France*"; Du Sommerard 1838–1846, I, 404.

29 Daunou 1817, 133.

30 E.g. Bernard de Montfaucon's "*Les monumens de la monarchie françoise (1729–1733)*" or Seroux d'Agincourt's "*Histoire de l'art par les monuments: depuis sa décadence au IV siècle jusqu'à son renouvellement au XVI*" (1823). See Voss 1972; Chaudonneret 1994; Letellier 2015.

Court Life and the 'Good Kings'

The opulent bedroom of King Francis I (r. 1515–1547) was a highlight of the museum, being "filled with his memories and with objects for his personal use".[31] The display sought to recreate an atmosphere of the past, suggesting that the spectator had entered the king's chamber. Two lithographs from *Les Arts au Moyen Âge* illustrate the character of the room from different angles. The first (fig. 2) shows a baldachin bed on which armour is arranged, as if the king himself has just laid down to rest. Standing on either side of the bed, two knights watch over the 'resting king'.

Fig. 2: Isidore Deroy, The So-Called Chamber of Francis I, lithograph.

The second lithograph (fig. 3) shows the room from an alternative angle, with the knights seated on either side of a game of chess. Du Sommerard notes that this marvellous rock-crystal chess set had belonged to King Louis IX (r. 1226–1270).[32] As Stephen Bann has convincingly argued – and as these two scenes underline – Du Sommerard staged the objects in such a way as to stimulate a vivid image of the past.[33]

31 "*Elle est remplie d'ailleurs de ses souvenirs et d'objets à son usage personnel*"; Du Sommerard 1834, 59.

32 The chess game formed part of the crown jewels until 1791, when Louis XVIII handed it over to a servant, from whom Du Sommerard later acquired it. Du Sommerard 1834, 62; Du Sommerard 1838–1846, I, 409–410.

33 Bann 1978; Bann 2012.

Fig. 3: Charles Bachelier, Second View of the So-Called Chamber of Francis I, lithograph.

Research has nevertheless disregarded the strategic installation of two paintings: a work by the court artist Francesco Primaticcio (1503–1570) and a portrait of Emperor Charles V (r. 1520–1556). The former, then attributed to the Italian painter Primaticcio (fig. 4), shows two young ladies of the court at their toilette.[34] The collector guarantees through it the authenticity of the display: "The first overdoor near the bed, a picture by Primaticcio, offers us the complete and necessarily exact appearance of a grand lady's bedroom at the court of Francis I".[35] The depicted décor, furniture, and period bore stylistic analogies with the room as arranged by Du Sommerard. This painting was of further significance to the installation in that the subject of a woman's chamber introduced the spectator to life at the French court in the sixteenth century, specifically that of Francis I, for whom Primaticcio worked as a court artist. Du Sommerard thus enhances the atmosphere and authenticity of the scene by presenting a work of art by this painter near the 'resting king'.

34 The inventory lists the painting as "*dans le Style du Primatice*" Roussel and Sauvageot 1843, fol. 133, Cl. 853. In 1896, the painting was transferred to the Louvre Museum (inv. no. R.F.994); since 1985 it has been attributed to Toussaint Dubreuils and titled "*Hyante et Climène à leur toilette*".

35 "*Le premier dessus de porte près du lit, Tableau du Primatice, nous offre l'aspect entier et nécessairement exact d'une chambre à coucher de grande dame de la cour de François I* "; Du Sommerard 1834, 66. Du Sommerard 1838–1846, V, 120–121 and Atlas, Cap. VI. Pl. 7.

Fig. 4: After Primaticcio, Ladies of the Court of Francis I at their Toilette, lithograph.

The second painting, a half-length portrait of Emperor Charles V in magnificent armour, hung over the doorway on the opposite side of the room (see fig. 3). Du Sommerard sees in the strategically placed painting of the opponent of the French king a renewed confrontation between these two rivals.[36] The engagement between the Kingdom of France and the Habsburg Empire of Charles V culminated dramatically in the Battle of Pavia, in which the French king was defeated and captured. Du Sommerard draws

36 "*un portrait de Charles -Quint armé de toutes pièces, comme si, dans une seconde visite à son rival*"; Du Sommerard 1834, 67. Du Sommerard 1838–1846, V, 120–121. Roussel and Sauvageot 1843, fol. 133, Cl. 854 list the painting as a portrait of Emperor Charles V. Bann 1984, 80, mistakes it as a portrait of the French king.

attention to the armour of the defeated Francis I, displayed to the left of the emperor's portrait, noting:

> As for these memories, they are here almost alive, or at least *palpable*. Because a few inches from this portrait of the victor of Pavia are the spoils of the vanquished, the harnesses and swords he wore in this battle and kept, no doubt, as a token of his feat of arms, by the count of Lannoy, vice-king of Naples, to whom our great king returned everything but *his honour*.[37]

Here, Du Sommerard emphasizes the vivid effect evoked by this juxtaposed arrangement. The objects served the collector in several ways in terms of elaborating famous provenances, introducing the visitor to court life and customs, and – as in the case of the 131 swords, daggers, pistols, and pieces of armour – commemorating battles and their famous protagonists.

When Rosa de Saint-Surin published a description of her visit to the museum, she titled it, ambiguously, *L'Hôtel de Cluny au Moyen-Age* (The Hôtel de Cluny in the Middle Ages). Therein, she notes her inclination to perceive what she sees as reality:

> one passes into the room of Francis I. His bed is there!!! […] it looks like the hero is resting! Two knights standing at the bedside, spears in hand and visors lowered, seem to be still guarding their master. […] At the glance of these episodic pictures, the imagination is tempted to take the illusion for reality.[38]

Overwhelmed by the vivid display, de Saint-Surin herself recognizes the armour as staffage. Her gaze glimpses the beauty of precious objects: she is particularly fond of a small manuscript of poems written by André de la Vigne in the sixteenth century for Louise of Savoy, the mother of Francis I, which Du Sommerard placed on a table next to the 'resting king'. De Saint-Surin would ultimately republish these forgotten examples of French literature, enabling the visitor to experience them not only within Du Sommerard's arranged environment but also outside the museum walls.[39]

Du Sommerard established similar presentation strategies in the room dedicated to Henry IV, called the Good King, by staging furniture items alongside genre paintings. As already pointed out, under the restorative monarchy of Louis XVIII, a 'cult' emerged that

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37 "*A propos de ces souvenirs, ils sont ici presque vivants, ou du moins* palpables, *car, à quelques pouces de ce portrait du vainqueur de Pavie, se trouve la dépouille du vaincu, les Étriers et Éperons qu'il portait à cette bataille et que conserva, sans doute, comme gage de son fait d'armes, le comte de Lannoy, vice-roi de Naples, à qui notre grand roi rendit tout,* fors l'honneur. *Ces trophées, demeurés à Madrid dans la famille de l'ancien général de Charles-Quint, où la nullité de leur valeur matérielle en assura sans doute seule la conservation, ont été recueillies avec empressement par le propriétaire de la collection*"; Du Sommerard 1834, 67, emphasis in original.

38 "*on passe dans la chambre de François I . Son lit est là!!! […] on dirait le héros qui repose! Deux chevaliers debout au chevet du lit, la lance en main et la visière baissée, semblent garder encore leur maître. […] A la vue de ces tableaux épisodiques, l'imagination frappée est tentée de prendre le prestige pour la réalité*"; de Saint-Surin 1835, 24.

39 De Saint-Surin 1835 published the *rondeaux* along with other historical texts concerning etiquette, including table manners.

recognized in Henry IV an ideal figure of monarchy. However, with the July Revolution of 1830 and the election of Louis-Philippe as citizen-king, Henry IV's cultural-political currency ended abruptly.[40] Still, for Du Sommerard, the memories of Henry IV remained inviolable: "Great and good, Henry! A model of bravery and clemency, your physiognomy and your appearance, at once energetic, witty and gallant, […] heralded the high destinies France would have attained under your reign".[41] According to the inventory, while the chamber of Francis I contained 375 items, the room dedicated to Henry IV seems to have been sparsely equipped, with 84 objects. This unequal distribution across the rooms underlines a thematic focus. Furthermore, it is remarkable that no contemporary visitor refers to an installation space dedicated to the Bourbon king. It remains an open question whether this silence is due to an uninspiring installation or whether the contents were considered too politicized.

Medieval Treasuries

The heart of the *Hôtel de Cluny* is the magnificent late Gothic chapel, with its filigreed stellar vault (figs. 5, 6). Du Sommerard reserved this room for medieval sacred objects and church treasures, including those previously in the holdings of the French clergy and nobility. The spectator could see objects from the ninth to the fifteenth century such as illuminated manuscripts, enamels, ecclesiastical furniture, and altarpieces, as well as monstrances, crosiers, mitres, and precious-metal reliquaries. To preserve the atmosphere of a medieval chapel, the collector featured a large, neo-Gothic sacristy cabinet, incorporating it into a sophisticated narrative.[42] Central to this display were the preservation of an almost mythical atmosphere and the creation of harmony between the architectural framework and the objects on view.

With the acquisition of the collections of Edme Durand (1824) and Pierre Révoli (1828), medieval objects had recently entered the *Musée du Louvre* (Louvre Museum), thereby becoming part of a state museum policy that was oriented towards fashioning a broader perspective on history.[43] However, the museological presentation of Christian artefacts detached from their historical-functional context has met much criticism.[44]

40 Stierle 1987, 466–470.

41 *"Grand et bon Henri! Modèle de bravoure et de clémence, ta physionomie et ton allure, à la fois énergiques, spirituelles et galantes, […] annonçaient seules les hautes destinées que la France eût atteintes sous ton règne"*; Du Sommerard 1834, 110.

42 The sacristy cabinet served as a presentation area for smaller objects and enhanced the authentic impression of the location. According to the collector, it originated from the abbey of *Saint-Pol-de-Léon* and dates to the thirteenth century. The later director Alfred Darcel doubted the authenticity of the piece and had it removed. Joubert 1979; Huchard 2009; Fouché 2013.

43 Chaudonneret 1999, 45–49; Bresc-Bautier and Fonkenell 2016, II, 9–103, 243–244; Pomian 2021, 268–307.

44 Poulot 1997b; Brückle, Mariaux, and Mondini 2015.

Fig. 5 (left): Nicolas Chapuy, Chapel of the Hôtel de Cluny (First View), lithograph; Fig. 6 (right): Nicolas Chapuy, Chapel of the Hôtel de Cluny (Second View), lithograph.

The case at the Sommerard Museum was a different one: the installation in the chapel of the former residence of the abbots of Cluny represented a unique opportunity to recreate the atmosphere of a medieval church within a sacred space.[45] And the museum did so with success. Indeed, contemporary voices underline the convincingness of the presentation: "You found yourself in the Middle Ages".[46] The author Émile Deschamps found himself overwhelmed by the abundance of precious objects and expressed admiration for Du Sommerard's achievement in bringing back to life the opulence of the royal abbey:

> The present owner, or rather the creator of this unique museum in France and perhaps in Europe, has reserved this chapel for all the research of taste, all the splendours of luxury. […]; and I do not know where one could find all these [objects] which, under their used magnificence, still attest the opulence of the royal abbeys.[47]

This passage amplifies Du Sommerard's vision to create an aesthetically convincing space characteristic of medieval taste and luxury. Yet, it also indicates a change in purpose for the objects on view, as compared to their past ritual functionality: they become collectable objects. The reliquaries in particular emphasize this transformation in a crucial way. Du Sommerard summarizes them as a group of objects of varying sizes and dating from the

45 Fouché 2013.

46 "*vous vous trouviez en plein Moyen-Age*"; Janin 1842.

47 "*Le possesseur actuel, ou plutôt le créateur de ce musée unique en France et peut-être en Europe, a réservé pour cette chapelle toutes les recherche du goût, toutes les splendeurs du luxe. […]; et je ne sais où l'on a pu retrouver tous ces [objets] qui, sous leur magnificence usée, attestent encore l'opulence des royales abbayes*"; Deschamps 1833, 166–167.

ninth to the twelfth century.[48] He gives no further explanation about their former use or dedication; rather, their beauty, materiality, strangeness, and historical value are emphasized. Although the ecclesiastical objects have returned to a sacred setting, they have lost their original function. They take on a new meaning, one no longer related to cult practice but to historiography. The artefacts handed down from the churches, monasteries, and abbeys exchange their religious function for the memory of the past.[49] At the Sommerard Museum, medieval church treasuries could be seen, explored, understood, and admired in a historicizing architectural framework, thus allowing the spectator to discover this aspect of the (Christian) history of France.

The Glory of (French) Art

After a glimpse into court life and the former opulence of church treasuries, the visitor entered the gallery – a corridor off which the individual rooms radiated – which was dedicated to Renaissance art. The display assembled paintings, sculptures, and furniture, along with spolia from historic French monuments. Du Sommerard juxtaposed artworks from the Italian school of Sebastiano del Piombo, Luca della Robbia, and Benvenuto Cellini with the German and Flemish schools represented by the van Eyck brothers, Albrecht Dürer, Lucas van Leyden, and Hans Memling. Over the years, Du Sommerard's peculiar attributions have lost much of their validity. Nevertheless, his observations on the materiality and light effects of these Northern masters, in contrast to the compositions of the Italian school, offered guidance to the attentive spectator.[50]

The main focus of the gallery lies in the representation of French art, monuments, and artists. The inventory of the gallery counts at least fifty pieces of furniture, foremost furnishings and spolia from historic French monuments. The collector points to pieces selected from medieval and Renaissance castles and elaborates on the history of these magnificent monuments of French history. A wooden door from the *Château d'Anet*, which belonged to Diane de Poitiers, a courtier and the mistress of King Henry II (r. 1547–1559), is repeatedly referenced as a masterpiece of the sixteenth century.[51] Artefacts like this one served the collector as signifiers of the architectural buildings from which they originated as well as of their prominent inhabitants. Certain precious pieces were based on designs by the sixteenth-century French sculptor Jean Goujon, whom Lenoir had crowned the 'French Phidias' only a few years earlier.[52]

The gallery left a strong impression on contemporary visitors. Rosa de Saint-Surin noted her delight in being surrounded by these magnificent objects, which had adorned the palaces of the kings and nobility:

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48 "*pour ne pas faire un catalogue in-folio, nous citerons d'abord, par droit de primogéniture, quelques figures et coffres en cuivre et en ivoire, travail des 9, 10 et 11 siècles. Une belle Croix portative à deux faces, du 12 siècle, et bon nombre de reliquaires, grands, moyens et petits*"; Du Sommerard 1834, 48.

49 Brückle 2015. See Pomian 1988, who established the term 'semiophore' for similar cycles of transformation.

50 Du Sommerard 1834, 89–101; Du Sommerard 1838–1846, I, 422–425.

51 Du Sommerard 1834, 59; Du Sommerard 1838–1846, I, 416.

52 For Lenoir's appreciation of Jean Goujon, see Poulot 1997a, 1524; Montalbetti 2016.

> [Du Sommerard] lived there, surrounded by the furniture, bas-reliefs, paintings and stained glass, which in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries adorned the palaces of our kings and the more modest mansions of the great ones of the kingdom. France, Italy, Brabant, the German Reich, and the whole of ancient Europe were all put to contribution by him. One would think being next to Maximilian of Austria, Francis I, and Leo X; one is witnessing the Renaissance!!![53]

For her, the display conjured medieval and Renaissance Europe. Later, in an obituary for the collector published in the *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France*, the author recalled the gallery as a neutral terrain:[54] indeed, in contrast to the other rooms, which invoked French history, the gallery opened up a broader perspective, shedding light on the glory of French art as well as that of its neighbouring countries.

French Cuisine and Domestic Customs

A visit to the Sommerard Museum ended in the dining room, which engaged French cuisine and domestic culture. In this space, Du Sommerard discussed historical recipes, table manners, and related customs. A laid table and Gothic-style sideboards displayed objects ranging from goblets (*cupa magistra*), ceramic tableware, cutlery, and Venetian glasses, as well as ancient cups recently discovered during excavations in the *Quartier Latin*. To enhance the atmosphere of a medieval bourgeois setting, Du Sommerard refers to forgotten customs, to medieval and Renaissance toasts, and to the history of viticulture and of certain French dishes.[55]

The collector is particularly fond of his 118 pieces of faience, all arrayed in the dining room. He draws attention to numerous rustic wares by the French potter Bernard Palissy, who became famous for his large, oval platters decorated with animals, insects, and vegetation. The works by Palissy are described as "productions so original and varied by the genius creator for France".[56] By discussing national customs and traditions, including everyday matters such as nourishment, conviviality, and table manners, Du Sommerard sought to present visitors with a historical setting in which they could learn about the roots of their own culture.

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53 "*[Du Sommerard] y vit, entouré des meubles, des bas-reliefs, des peintures et des vitraux, qui aux quinzième et seizième siècles ornaient les palais de nos rois et les hôtels plus modestes des grands du royaume. La France, l'Italie, le Brabant, l'Allemagne, toute l'ancienne Europe, ont été par lui mis à contribution. On se croirait auprès de Maximilien d'Autriche, de François I et de Léon X; on assiste à la Renaissance!!!*"; de Saint-Surin 1835, 22–23.

54 Anonymous 1842, 296.

55 Du Sommerard 1834, 102–110; Du Sommerard 1838–1846, I, 425–433.

56 "*productions si originales et si variées dues au génie, créateur pour la France*"; Du Sommerard 1834, 105–106.

Conclusions

National museums are "manifestations of cultural and political desires".[57] The Sommerard Museum was neither a national gallery nor a national museum, however. Rather, it was a private collection that contemporaries regarded as a museum and praised as the most precious collection of national antiquities.[58] Furthermore, Du Sommerard's holdings became an expression of and an answer to the cultural and political desires of the time, and they fulfilled the expectations of a national museum. The didactic presentation of the collection captured a broad picture of French history and introduced the spectator to royal, ecclesiastic, and domestic costumes, mores, and traditions. Du Sommerard's goal was to create, in a medieval building, a harmonious ensemble of architectural framing and historical objects in order to visualize national history. The combination of architecture, art, and domestic objects sought to offer an authentic image of the past.

The key to the success of the concept was the collector himself. His much-frequented guided tours resembled history lectures, oscillating between facts and fiction. He staged the spaces like a dramaturge to elaborate both key narratives (e.g. Francis I) and ancillary ones (e.g. Henry IV). Whether general explanations or fascinating anecdotes about individual objects, his comments aspired to educate and enchant the visitor at the same time. Each room introduced the spectator to different aspects of French history, ranging from court life, historic battles, and poems and literature, to the medieval treasuries of Christian art, to customs of domestic life. The atmosphere and narrative were thereby assigned greater importance than historical truth or consistency. Nevertheless, contemporary visitors emphasized the convincingness of the arrangement, describing an impressive experience of immersing themselves in a vanished civilization, for example, in the 'good old days' of chivalry.[59] A visit to the Sommerard Museum seems to have been a journey into a vivid image of France's past.

In 1843, Prosper de Barante argued before the Chamber of Peers in favour of the benefits of this remarkable collection as a place for young students to plunge into history and witness the old centuries, which at the *Hôtel de Cluny* seemed to still be alive.[60] He articulated his conviction that the museum would be a place of research and study – a place to educate oneself and to be educated, all by encountering memories of French national history.

In May 2022, the Cluny Museum reopened after extensive renovation. The event received media attention via Instagram, Twitter, and advertising and promised a modern, hip, and lively 'Middle Ages of the New Generation' (fig. 6). Whether in short videos, posters, or memes, various stars from the Christian Middle Ages gathered to celebrate: a preacher serves as a DJ, setting the beat; nuns and putti wave, wearing sunglasses; Adam sips a Coke; and a knight plays a guitar. As in the days of Du Sommerard, the new museum aims to present the Middle Ages in a colourful, cheerful, and vivid way. Likewise,

57 Aronsson and Elgenius 2015, 2.

58 Anonymous 1836.

59 "*vous marchez au milieu d'une civilisation disparue; vous êtes comme enveloppés des bons vieux temps chevaleresques*"; Deschamps 1833, 165.

60 Reprinted in de Barante 1858, 420–422.

today's voices seem equally enchanted by the reopened museum, describing a sensitively reimagined display that breathes new life into medieval masterpieces.[61] As a result, "the Middle Ages are probably nowhere as lively and modern as at the Cluny Museum".[62] Obviously, the conservative, dusty Middle Ages needed a spring cleaning. And Du Sommerard's basic idea lives on: educating through a vivid image of the past.

Fig. 7: Musée de Cluny. Le Moyen Âge – Nouvelle Génération; campaign poster for the reopening of the Cluny Museum.

61 Wellesley 2022.

62 "*Die Besucher dort sind begeistert über die neue Präsentation, denn so lebendig und modern, wie im Musée de Cluny ist das Mittelalter wohl nirgends*"; Markert 2022, min. 6:34.

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Fig. 1: Alexandre Du Sommerard, *Les Arts au Moyen Âge*, chap. 1, pl. 2.
Fig. 2: Alexandre Du Sommerard, *Les Arts au Moyen Âge*, chap. 2, pl. 3.
Fig. 3: Alexandre Du Sommerard, *Les Arts au Moyen Âge*, album 1st series, pl. 10.
Fig. 4: Alexandre Du Sommerard, *Les Arts au Moyen Âge*, chap. 6, pl. 7.
Fig. 5: Alexandre Du Sommerard, *Les Arts au Moyen Âge*, chap. 2, pl. 5.
Fig. 6: Alexandre Du Sommerard, *Les Arts au Moyen Âge*, chap. 2, pl. 6.
Fig. 7: © Musée de Cluny 2022 / Scorpion Dagger / Oficina.

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