



Building National Museums in Europe 1750–2010

Conference proceedings from EuNaMus, European National Museums: Identity Politics, the Uses of the Past and the European Citizen, Bologna 28–30 April 2011.

Peter Aronsson & Gabriella Elgenius (eds)
EuNaMus Report No 1



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Editors

Peter Aronsson and Gabriella Elgenius

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Foreword: A European Project

Peter Aronsson

This Open Access publication gives a comparative overview of the historical roles of national museums in state-making processes. Its national reports have been presented and discussed at a workshop in Stockholm in April 2010 and at a conference at the University of Bologna March 2011. The conference proceedings provide a basis for comparative analyses and include 37 reports by 33 researchers.

The conference proceedings are the first in a series of Open Access publications from the three-year research project EuNaMus which is introduced below.

The editors wish to thank all partners, contributors and staff involved in research and publication of this impressive comparative collection of observations and analyses of a central cultural institution.

Eunamus – the project

The level of investments in national museums is high in contemporary society. The motives and hopes are often a mixture of a will to secure a scientific and relevant understanding of the national heritage, community integration, stimulating creativity and cultural dialogue and creating attractions for a burgeoning experience economy. In France, Germany and The Netherlands there are plans for new national museums for communicating a stronger historic canon, a path also chosen in Denmark. A great many other museums in Canada and New Zealand and also England and Sweden hail a more multi-cultural approach, downplaying the traditional national aspect of narrative and inviting new citizens to a more diverse idea of society. The pan-European project for a historical museum is on its way. Ethnographic museums in many places open with post-colonial invitation to dialogue all over the world in tension with strong demands for restituting objects ranging from the human remains of Samis, to the Elgin Marbles of Acropolis. It is a contested billion-dollar cultural industry creating, negotiating and reinforcing ideas of values, belonging and ownership.

The *European National Museums: Identity politics, the uses of the past and the European citizen* (EuNaMus, www.eunamus.eu) research project explores the creation and power of the heritage created and presented by European national museums to the world, Europe and its states, as an unsurpassable institution in contemporary society. National museums are defined and explored as processes of institutionalized negotiations where material collections and displays make claims and are recognized as articulating and representing national values and realities. Questions asked in the project are why, by whom, when, with what material, with what result and future possibilities are these museums shaped.

In order to shape a cultural policy for an expanding European Union the Commission asks for more research on the working of its cultural institutions and national museums constitutes one of its most enduring institutions for creating and contesting political identities is necessary. The

focus in our project is on understanding the conditions for using the past in negotiations that recreate citizenship as well as the layers of territorial belonging beyond the actual nation-state.

This project is one of the few humanistic projects supported by the Seventh Framework Programme, run by the European Commission. It has grown out of collaboration between university partners connecting starting with a network of young and senior cultural researchers supported by the Marie Curie programme, and will for three years (2010–2013) proceed by a series of investigations beyond the stereotypical ideas of museums as either a result of outstanding heroic individuals, exponents of a materialization of pure Enlightenment ideas or outright ideological nationalistic constructs disciplining citizens into obedience.¹

The research is pursued through multi-disciplinary collaboration between eight leading institutions and a series of sub-projects (in EU-speak: work packages or WPs) studying institutional path dependencies, the handling of conflicts, modes of representation, cultural policy and visitors' experiences in national museums. Understanding the cultural force of national museums will provide citizens, professionals and policy makers with reflexive tools to better communicate and create an understanding of diversity and community in developing cultural underpinning for democratic governance.

The first work within the project to start is called "Mapping and framing institutions 1750–2010: national museums interacting with nation-making". This overview of the most important museums established to fulfill the function of a national museum in all European countries will achieve several objectives, most of them possible to attain only through the comparative method used. Surprisingly this has never been done before.

The first project, which is documented by these conference proceedings, gives us the general patterns of what museums were initiated and realized, by whom, with what agenda and with what consequences.² In the first step it is the interaction with political state-making that is analyzed covering all EU states. One hypothesis is that the actual history of state-making is of importance for the role played by museums, since empires, old well-established and unthreatened states did not have and still do not have exactly the same needs as nations more recently struggling to form a nation-state. Finland and Norway show different patterns than Sweden and Denmark; Greece, Italy and Germany have partly other priorities than France or the UK. The role of empires in initiating colonial museums at home or abroad is also considered.

In the second project led by Dominique Poulot our research penetrates deeper into explicit narratives of the unity and destiny of the nation as well as the opposite, the treatment of conflict and "heritage wars" that exist in all nations. There is tension between striving towards a hegemonic representation of the cultural and political history of a country and oppositional voices of many kinds coming from other nations and minorities as well as regional aspects, class and gendered tensions that demand representation in these prestigious arenas or a new narrative assigning them a more prominent role. The conflicts over heritage range from a targeted destruction of heritage in war via international battles for the ownership of artifacts to issues of how to represent or integrate minorities.

All narratives are, however, not explicit. In the third project led by Simon Knell the implicit message of architecture, city plans and the whole assemblage of national museums will be interpreted in a number of states. Art museums are especially interesting since they do claim to stand for universal aesthetical values but at the same time assess narratives in several dimensions

on the grandeur of the host carried by the arrangement of collections and exhibitions. Another aspect of the spatial arrangement of national museums is the relationship between representations centralized to the capital and the existence of various “distributed” performances of the national in many local, regional historic and art museums of Italy. How is the national constructed in collecting and interacting with regional identities and marginalized communities? The third dimension, which is also a new form of distribution, is to interpret the impact of new assemblages of digital museums, like the representation of communities that goes beyond the individual museum.

National museums have from the start been utopian visionary projects carried by politicians, intellectuals, scholars and citizens in the state and in civil society. The hopes of cultural politicians to use museums as tools for education, tourism and integration interplay with the formulation of the national museum professionals and directors themselves. In the fourth project led by Arne Bugge Amundsen, this dynamic is explored for the last two decades on both national and on European policy-making levels.

Now that we have a good view of the set-up, trajectories and importance of the institutional framework, the explicit and implicit narratives that negotiate meaning, conflicts and directions, and the major actors’ hopes for the future, the question remains: How does this matter to the audience? The fifth study led by Alexandra Bounia concerns audiences in a set of European countries with a view to mapping the experience of visiting by both quantitative and qualitative methods.

The sixth project led by Simon Knell involves extracting the most relevant results and inserting them in a global context by exploring the working of national museums beyond Europe.

In projects financed by the Seventh Framework Programme a great deal of weight is put on communication. A communication plan is required to develop the identification of stakeholders and the means to communicate with them. Websites, newsletters, policy briefs, reference groups and material for exhibitions are some of the means used. This work is led by Bodil Axelsson.

Conferences are part of the running project with the final one in Budapest in December 2012 going to focus on broad participation and on identifying the multi-dimensional relevance of the results. The major results will be available via Open Access, but a series of books will also come out of the efforts. The best way to keep up is to follow www.eunamus.eu.

Notes

¹ Among the publications are several conference proceedings, also available on-line at LiU E-press, and a book linking to the new project. Arne Bugge Amundsen & Andreas Nyblom, (eds.), *National museums in a global world [Elektronisk resurs] : NaMu III : Department of culture studies and oriental languages, University of Oslo, Norway, 19-21 November 2007*, ed., *Linköping electronic conference proceedings (Online)*, 31 (Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press, 2008); Peter Aronsson & Magdalena Hillström, (eds.), *NaMu, Making National Museums Program. Setting the frames, 26-28 February, Norrköping, Sweden [Elektronisk resurs]*, ed., *Linköping electronic conference proceedings (Online)*, 22 (Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press, 2007); Peter Aronsson & Andreas Nyblom, (eds.), *Comparing: national museums, territories, nation-building and change. NaMu IV, Linköping University, Norrköping, Sweden 18-20 February 2008 : conference proceedings*, ed., *Linköping electronic conference proceedings (Online)*, 30 (Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press, 2008); S.J. Knell, P. Aronsson, and A. et al (eds.) Amundsen, *National Museums. New Studies from around the World*, ed. (London: Routledge, 2011). The earlier project was presented in Peter Aronsson, "Making National Museums (NaMu) - ett internationellt program för jämförande studier rörande nationalmuseernas framväxt och funktion,"

Nordisk Museologi, no. 1 (2007); P Aronsson et al., "NaMu: EU Museum Project connects and educates scholars from around the world," *MUSE* 26, no. 6 (2008) and is still available at www.namu.se.

² We anticipate that partners and others will benefit from this material for further analyzes and publications beyond Eunamus. Among those already announced are Aronsson, P. and Elgenius, G., (eds.) (2013) *A History of the National Museum in Europe 1750-2010*: In prep.



Making National Museums in Europe – A Comparative Approach

Peter Aronsson & Gabriella Elgenius

National museums are the result of the negotiated logics between science and politics, universalism and particularism, difference and unity, change and continuity, materiality and imagination. In this publication, national museums are defined as those institutions, collections and displays claiming, articulating and representing dominant national values, myths and realities. National museums are hereby explored as historic and contemporary processes of institutionalized negotiations of those values that will constitute the basis for national communities and for dynamic state-formations. National museums have thus become significant within arenas of negotiation and consolidation of new answers to questions ultimately related to nationhood, citizenship and the role of nations within a system of other nations, making some periods and context in particular, conducive to museum-building. The intensive demand for national museums thus followed in the wake of the Napoleonic wars and with the creation of national states, within which the nations justified the autonomy of the state on the basis of being distinctive and unique. As a result, regional differences within nations became rearranged in order to fit in with such affiliations and brew new loyalties that, in turn, also created new spaces in which knowledge and politics was to be negotiated.

The notion of a western civilisation and western values also became nationalized in the process of museum making in Europe resulting in different interpretations of universal, national and transnational values and identifications. The implications of such different interpretations took different forms and had very different consequences. In the Scandinavian context, for example, the cultural reconstruction of *Norden* (referring to Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Iceland) as a complex and collected *lieux de memoire* had a significant role in the production of a peaceful and emancipated environment in the midst of a political climate of rival nationalisms that could have been (ab)used to encourage revenge and/or territorial reacquisitions. Similarly, transnational ideas – in different times include Pan-Slavism, Scandinavianism, the notion of a Central Europe and Britishness on the British Isles and have, in various ways, attempted to negotiate tensions with varying success. It is within such contexts, among many, that a study of *national* museums - as a means of representing high values and culture as well as national pride - provide illuminating and comparative data on the many related processes of nationalisation as has been mentioned above. Moreover, the aim of the *EuNaMus* research programme has been to illuminate gaps in existing expertise and research by adding a crucial comparative perspective to the study of national museums.

In a comparative light and as a rule, the trajectories of the European national museums provide an interesting account of the parallel interactions between museum, nation and state and give witness to the long standing relevance of national museums as constituent components of what will be analysed as negotiated cultural constitutions through which nations express their yearning for a golden and legitimate past, balancing perceived needs for continuity with

increasing diversity and difference of present circumstances in which a unified agenda of the future may seem challenged.

Comparing cultural expressions and processes

The aim of this publication is to ascertain the modes and degrees to which the making of national museums have interacted with nation- and state making over the last 250 years in Europe. National museums have been chosen as the object of comparative focus and explored as part of processes of institutionalized negotiations in which material collections claim, articulate and represent national values and realities. As one would expect, such negotiations of meaning are far from smooth and behind the scenes, we find therefore, that the world of museums have long standing trajectories of complexity and conflicts, a process which makes them significant as cultural forces.

We argue here that national representation and representations of nations, as negotiated by national museums, provide a contribution to shaping and representing the socio-political community. Moreover, the fundamental properties of nations and states, perceived of as legitimate and factual representations of the world, are presenting the nation within a political system of other nations. As a measure of the museum's capacity to provide a foundation for legitimacy and representation as both factual and relevant, we think of the level of engagement that is part of the initiation of museums and exhibitions. Once established, they become a cultural asset and force unto themselves that are to be regarded and rearranged but seldom destroyed by new socio-political groups and visions. The longevity of their existence across periods of political change provides one of the powerful features of the institution.

Systematic comparisons have been made for a number of different reasons, with different contributions creating knowledge on the role of national museums in state- and nation making processes (Aronsson 2008, Skocpol and Somers 1980, Tilly 1984, Bloch 1953, Landman 2007, Ragin 1987, Aronsson 2011, Elgenius 2011b, Elgenius 2011a). While mapping and exemplifying possible comparative strategies, we also indicate the different readings and conclusions that can be drawn from the material in this volume by readers with knowledge or interest other than ours: The museum director in search for inspiration, cultural policy makers in search for viable strategies and civic organizations in search for stronger representation in the national museums have different uses for this material, as have academics of various disciplines. The material is rich enough to contribute to both students of specific countries, regions of Europe and those doing global research from perspectives of history, sociology, political science etc. Four more general comparative strategies are available:

a) In order to *generalize*:

By comparing national museums as part of a process, producing meanings and providing a function, we will be able to decipher a pattern of similarities and differences hidden within a more monographic context. The context of nationalism (including historical traumas, divisions, conflicts and tensions) is one important factor, but other related factors must also be explored comparatively such as gender, class, regionalism and rapid socio-economic and socio-political change. In future research, the aim would, within this line of reasoning, be to predict under what circumstances national museums appear and change, and what

the consequences of their activities are. Under what conditions are, for example, the establishment of national museums and traditional narratives triggered or challenged?

b) In order to *explore variation*:

Generalizations of national museums can not only be produced, but also nuanced by comparative investigation. On this level the ambition is to contribute to a map of national museums in Europe with a set of categories for various types of museums and relevant societal situations. Attempts to describe strategies and paths for the development of national museums, and linking these to the trajectory of state making, allowing for the politics and skills of active patrons, would fall into this category. The variation can then be conceptualized within an *encompassing unitary context*, half way in-between exploring variations and uncovering the rules of museum making. For example, to what degree does the ensemble of museums play an orchestrated role within a national system and to what extent do they produce a scientific or ideological part on the whole?

c) In order to *individualize and contrast*:

A carefully performed contextualisation of cases will also individualize the cases and utilize an implicit comparative approach. The comparative analysis can hence be used to assess the individual cases and clarify the different dimensions brought forward to shed light on that which often is normalised within a *national* paradigm and even confronted within other cases.

d) *For the purpose of heuristic exploration*:

The main object of comparative exploration is also, with Marc Bloch as a prominent forerunner, to develop new questions that do not appear when the object under scrutiny is analysed in one context only. The preceding Marie Curie Project on National Museums (*NaMu*) created a European field of research by linking several disciplines working heuristically, stimulating new questions to arise from a multitude of perspectives (Aronsson and Nyblom 2008). A platform for comparative research developed, in other words, step by step.

Hence a comparative approach is without doubt motivated for a number of reasons and with a multitude of approaches in mind as an open heuristic enterprise, a systematic endeavour of social science, tools for functional reformism and the critical deconstruction of contemporary practices (Mathur 2005).

Comparative variables

When studying modernization, democratization, national movements and nationalism, a number of comparative approaches must be developed (Brubaker 2009, Hroch 2000, Rokkan and Campbell 1970, Gellner 1999, Tilly 1975, Tilly 1990, Tilly 2004, Tilly 1984). So far, the study of national museums as significant cultural institutions has been neglected. The ambitions and functions of national museums may vary according to the character of nation- and state making and must be scrutinised in order to tell us something about the nature of the relation between the two. Empires, pre-modern states, modern or post-imperial nations, threatened or vulnerable nations or states or those in the making through processes of unification or devolution do not have the same trajectory. Classic examples are the nineteenth century unification of Germany and Italy that differ from the devolution of the Austrian and Ottoman Empires. Again, processes of

liberation and devolution, not only in the former Eastern Europe (and the former Soviet Socialist States) but also in Western Europe (Scotland, Wales, Belgium and new EU nations), provide new realities and motivations for the construction of national museums from the 1990s onwards and testifies to the on-going process of nation making. There are also other related cases such as the emerging Sápmi nation, Catalonia and the Basque country; some of which will be mentioned here. This project will provide a series of quantitative comparisons in which museum- and state making variables will be analysed together with its qualitative dimensions. State making variables include: year of established sovereignty, type of state (empire, conglomerate, pre-modern, modern or post-imperial state and nation) and time for the establishment of the democratic constitution.

Possible expansions from literature are manifold as the types of nationalism may have influenced a number of related issues such as pride in nationality and preferred nationality (World Value studies, European Value Survey), trust, religious culture, traditional versus individual values and percentage of minorities (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). When considering relevant museum variables we will explore years of initiative and inauguration, types of museums (art, history, etc.), the number of institutions involved, periods of time referred to by collections and implicit claims made considering also the style of museums in terms of Architecture and their location, whether in a central or marginal location.

The initiation of national museums

Historic factors promoting early and decisive initiatives for national museums are perceived threats to the existence of the state and inherited ideas of a national community. The existence of collections assembled for Aristocratic glory or Enlightenment goals that can be reinterpreted and provides, furthermore, for a rapid and prestigious transformation, assimilating possible competing projects.

Moreover, the composition of the actors active in the process of initiating, formulating and mobilizing and negotiating the realm of a new national museum will be dependent on relative strength, perceived need and responsibility of the national project. The initiation of national museums are typically led by various elites that, as a rule, lack access to a strong state in which civic groups would act as representatives for the nation. Typical elites that have initiated many national museums in Europe include liberal aristocrats, academies, public officials more common in the early phases then later on, professional groups and capitalists.

The list of countries - in which former royal collections constituted the main source of artefacts - commenced with France where revolutionary actions removed the symbolic representation from the dynastic period of the *Ancien regime* and/or turned this into a unified national expression. In countries such as Denmark, Sweden, Spain, Prussia and Bavaria, Royal collections were transferred to national representation during different periods and the actual timing gives witness to a formative moment of the national state. In Spain, the establishment of the republic also initiated the transfer of the royal collection into the public sphere, whereas in Denmark a similar transfer of symbolic value took place a century earlier by an absolute Monarch. As seen, in later decades the state became a central actor for the initiation of national museums and went through periods of transitions between the years 1989-1991 in the former Eastern Europe. Private initiatives should not be disregarded as counter indicative in the context,

of the national purpose of the national museum. On the contrary, museum projects supported by people and ideologies were in many ways a stronger statement of the national nature of the museum project. In most states, the prefix 'national' is not protected in terms of constituting a brand so the word can signal an ambition from the founders and/or of the funding body by means of the state.

In order to visualise and 'communicate' the nation, it is necessary for any nation-state to keep the associations and meanings of nationhood alive. However, this does not per se identify national museums as equally important to other dimensions of nation building. Identifying a few, among many competing strands of possible representations of national communities, is necessary in order to assess their potential importance. Firstly, nations are also expressed through their civic services and welfare provisions, part of the nation's legitimacy but with little *explicit* cultural content: a judicial system, infra-structure, military defence, welfare, schooling and health-care. Secondly, within the cultural sphere itself the promotion of science, learning and language skills that are explicitly linked to cultural policy are only indirectly dependent on museums. Moreover, when the materiality, glory and didactics of museums are called upon they might even emphasise universal values or local and regional territories, which diminish the outright national message, even if they implicitly negotiate difference into national unity. However, for many nations-to-be or nations defending vulnerable statehood or sovereignty, national museums can fulfil a highly central role and even constitute a central institution by which nationhood can be defined and promoted. In such contexts, there is usually one central museum organization, or an ensemble of museums modelling different aspects of the nation, that plays a central role. Such museum organisations are usually placed in the centre of capitals in prestigious quarters and hereby (re)presenting political power, religion and high culture. The architecture of such museums also reflects the value carried and communicated by the museums: enlightenment is linked to classical antiquity, ethnic community with romantic nationalism or, more recently, with post-modern cosmopolitanism. Naturally, the significance of national museums might vary over time, according to threats and other possible representations and promoters of national values and integration. This is not only true for the early nineteenth century in Hungary but also for many contemporary western nations such as Germany, France and the Netherlands as they are developing new plans to vitalize national representations. We note that this is also true for the European Union as such.

Museums have a heavy inertia due to their materiality and due to the claims that represent the perceived unchanging reality of the nation. Thus, part of their attraction is not only in stabilizing consensus but also in stopping reform, acting for change, and re-installing a just state of affairs or periods of adjustments when new centres of power wish to be culturally represented. In terms of the dynamics within which national museums and nation-making go hand in hand, four central circumstances and contexts can be identified:

1. *Pro-active national museums*: utopian visions as materialised in Hungary and Poland in the nineteenth century and in recent years in the Balkans and with the emerging Sápmi nation.
2. *Stabilizing national museums*: most museums are usually part of inclusive strategies, but strategies might differ from universal values, ethnic assimilation to multi-cultural approaches such as in Canada, Britain and Sweden.

3. *Reactive national museums*: constitute part of the process of demanding the restitution of land as happened openly in Turkey and on Cyprus (or in non-European countries such as Korea and China).
4. *Fading national museums and loss of relevance*. National museums are not equally relevant everywhere and during all periods of time. Some national museums have quite a low attraction to the general public compared to the resources invested in them. For example, the new republics in the Baltic States after the First World War did not prioritise their museums and, in Sweden, many national museums saw very little investment in the heyday of Social democratic modernity, 1945-1980s.

These categories of national museums are clearly linked to the nation-making process as they provide a space for political action, success and failure. Because of the scope and endeavour of national museums, a collective undertaking will always be in need of negotiations concerning conflicting goals and voices.

Summarising comparative variables

Along the lines of Anderson (1991) and in terms of imagination, national museums are uniquely placed to illuminate that which is actually imagined with reference to an emerging, re-emerging or fully formed ‘nation’. National museums and their making hereby provide us with significant cues relating to the emerging expressions of nations and they constitute strategic markers of nation- or state building. The reports of this publication commence with a summary of findings and a summary table; the latter intended to provide comparative information of the European national states. Below is a sample of what such a comparative approach may look like, summarising a few main variables about museum building in Europe: the name of the first museum, its year of inauguration, specifying the involvement of the main actors and the temporal reach of the museum in question. The countries are listed in chronological order after the opening (inauguration) of their first museum (opening in its original form). We note, at this early stage in the research process, that compiling such data demands a thorough process and that identical measures must be used in order to facilitate comparison. The latter is a challenge for a large programme involving over fifty researchers focusing on an unexplored phenomenon, remembering also that much information relating to nation- and state building is subject to interpretation and depends on the existence, depth and quality of research into such complex processes. Moreover, a correct implementation and interpretation of the definition of ‘national museum’ as defined by *EuNaMus* is naturally also a prerequisite. Therefore, we step with caution towards a first brief summary of comparative variables that may be presented as in the table below:

Country	Museum	Inauguration	Actor	Temporal reach
Britain	The British Museum	1759	Sir Hans Sloane, Parliament, Aristocrats	Creation of the earth to the present day.
France	Musée du Louvre	1793	Revolutionary government	10 000 BC to 1848.

Czech Republic	National Gallery	1796	Aristocracy	14 th to 20 th c.
Belgium	Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique	1801	Monarch	11 th to 19 th c.
Hungary	National Museum	1803	Aristocracy	History of civilization.
Netherlands	The State Museum in Amsterdam	1800-1808	Monarchy, City of Amsterdam	1100 - 1900.
Austria	Universal-museum Joanneum	1811	Arch-duke Johann, Steirischen Stände	All encompassing.
Norway	Commission of Antiquities	1811	Private organisation	Antiquity to Medieval times.
Spain	Prado Museum Museo Nacional del Prado	1819	Spanish Crown, Spanish state	Classical to Neoclassical period. Middle Ages to 19 th c.
Croatia	Archaeological Museum of Split	1821	Monarch, Emperor Franz I, Regional Parliament	Prehistory to Early Christianity.
Slovenia	National Museum of Slovenia	1821	Monarch, Aristocracy, Church and civil society	Antiquity to the present.
Sweden	National Portrait Gallery	1823	Court, Monarch	Renaissance to present.
Denmark	National Museum	1827	Monarch	Stone Age to contemporary society.
Serbia	The National Museum	1844	Princely collections and State	Prehistory to the present day.
Finland	The Finnish Art Society	1846	Civil Society, Aristocracy	19 th h c.
Germany	Germanic National Museum	1852	Aristocracy (1852), Parliament	Pre-history to 1650 at opening.
Luxemburg	National Museum of Natural History	1854	Scholarly societies	Geological time to present day.
Scotland	National Museum of Antiquities	1858	Society of Antiquaries, Aristocracy and middle class patrons	Prehistory to early Modern period.
Malta	Palace Armoury	1860	British Governors	16 th c. to 19 th c.
Italy	Uffizi Gallery	1860/61	State	1581-2000.
Poland	Museum of Fine Arts (1862-1916) then National Museum	1862	Tsar of Russia, local government	Antiquity to Contemporary period.

Iceland	The Antiquarian Commission	1863	Private initiative, Parliament	Settlement (870s) to the present day.
Estonia	Estonian History Museum	1864	Civil society	8000 BC to the present.
Romania	National History Museum of Romania	1864	Aristocracy	Pre-History to present.
Turkey	Ottoman Imperial Museum	1869	Ministry of Education	Prehistory - 18 th c.
Portugal	National Museum of Ancient Art	1884	Monarchy	1200-1850.
BiH	National Museum of BiH	1888	Civil society, regional government, state	Antiquity to the present.
Greece	National Archaeological Museum	1893	Archaeological Service	Greek Neolithic to Late Antiquity (7 th millennium BC to 5 th AD).
Latvia	National History Museum of Latvia	1894	Civil society	9000 BC to 1940.
Wales	National Museum Cardiff	Late 19 th c.	Local and national politicians	Prehistory to the present.
Switzerland	Swiss National Museum	1898	Swiss federal parliamentary act	5000 BC to 20 th c.
Bulgaria	National Archaeological Museum	1905/06	Bulgarian Learned Society, Ministry of Culture and Education, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences	Bulgarian and Balkan History, Pre-History, Antiquity to the Middle Ages.
Ireland	National Museum of Ireland, Archaeology	1908	Politicians in Dublin	Prehistory to ca. 1550.
Cyprus	Cyprus Museum	1909	British Archaeologists, Greek Cypriot intellectual elite	Neolithic period to Roman period.
Lithuania	National M.K. Čiurlionis Art Museum	1925	Artists, intellectuals, nation-builders of the 1920s-30s	1400s-1900s.
Slovakia	Slovak National Museum	1928	Civil society	Slovak territory from prehistory till today.
Northern Ireland	Ulster Museum Belfast, National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI).	1962	Parliament of Northern Ireland, Belfast Corporation	Cosmic time (geology), pre-historic to modern (history).
Sápmi	The Sámi Collection	1972	Private initiative	Sami culture in general, time not specified.

Naturally, nations cannot be dated in a precise manner but, by linking the emergence of national museums to research on other national symbols such as flags, anthems and national days, future analysis will also attempt to say something about national museums as part of a larger nexus of national symbolism. The nation-building process may thus be explored by the dating of national symbols and shed light on that which is actually imagined as national (Elgenius, 2011, b). The dates above will serve as the basis for a future analysis and will be compared to crucial nation and state variables such as the break-up of empires, declarations of independence or sovereignty or the processes of secessions and irredentism etc. We note that some of the first museums opened again in different forms, under new names or with new or joined exhibitions in new buildings.

Future analysis will also consider the inauguration of later museums that often contribute to national representation in such ways that the system of museums as a whole come to constitute an ensemble of museums – representing various dimensions of the nation – and contributing to making nationhood visible. The establishment of new museums provide a more complete picture of the representation of the ‘national’ and of its imaginations at different times (and at a different pace) in different parts of Europe. This is an on-going process, as demonstrated in contemporary debates on the new history museums in Europe.

Whereas the year of inauguration identifies the first national museum in its first (original) form, the next column in the table above denotes the major actors involved. This column demonstrate that the elites of the time clearly took museum making seriously and also that processes of democratisation, from the nineteenth century onwards, have engaged the realm of national museums and policy-making. Future research will evaluate the role of such actors working with or against other rival actors and rival nationalisms (Elgenius 2011a). The final column above - on temporal reach - is also interesting as it identifies the historical reach and the time period covered by the first national museum. In future analyses, such comparative data will be explored as a significant variable with reference to the negotiation of general history often claimed by nationalists, nation-builders and/or policy-makers as specific and distinctly national, along the lines that the nation has existed since time immemorial. Such claims seem particularly valid for Museums of Archaeology, whereas Museums of Art organized around national and high culture, focus on specific national schools and on the medieval to pre-modern period and their reach ends before modernism enter the stage.

Moreover, approaching the concept of a national museum as one among many images of nationhood or as a symbol of the same, constructed ultimately to justify the existence of nations and states, contributes to explanations explaining why national museums continue to engage nation-builders and citizens alike. As with other national symbols that represent the nation in various forms and guises, national museums negotiate meanings of the past, present and future, some narrated imaginations will be successful, others not. Such processes are fascinating when linked to nation- and state building and shed light on museum-policy as an expression of national policy and as part of the politics of nation-as-home. With reference to the latter, national symbolism is highly significant as an analytical variable in its capacity as an extension of the nation. National symbols, such as national museums, have therefore become highly regulated by law, a matter that further suggests that there is a *relationship* between the symbol of nationhood and the nation itself. Thus a comparative analysis is in process and will extend to include all the comparative variables presented in the reports that follow. Such comparisons will also help

explore the emergence of national museums in relation to theories of nationalism and the politics of home and will aim to draw attention to the complexity of the layered and ongoing process of nation building (Elgenius, 2011a) (Elgenius, 2011 b).

Comparative results

It would not be possible to summarize the results comprehensively here at this stage in the conference proceedings. As mentioned, an exploration of the findings is to be pursued. There are, however, some conclusive dimensions that have appeared in the material and thus are interesting to put forward already at this early stage linking museum representation to nation- and state building. Such dimensions and links reflect on the shaping of nations through national museums, the narrative strategies and the diversities of museums as well as the trajectories and ambiguities of national museums. We can foresee that a few ideal-types matching set-ups of national museums with nation-making trajectories will be helpful to understanding both diversity and patterns for the role played by museums in state and nation making. This will be developed further in a book project (Aronsson and Elgenius 2013).

1. Shaping nations through national museums. National museums are initiated at significant moments in history. In terms of a general pattern, we find the presence of a mix of initiatives, and later, a responsibility for funding, but that they all connect the state and the nation. Hence the mix of initiatives is not identical in all European states but reflects the anatomy of a ‘cultural constitution’ that helps shape the relationship between state and nation. The theoretical framework of the project suggests that initiatives would follow the relation between nation and state in the historical establishment of the nation-state. If the state was a crucial actor in establishing the legitimacy of the nation, it might continue to carefully invest in the representation of its power. The latter is verified by the development of national museums in, for example, France, Turkey, Finland and Greece. It is not only the revolutionary cases that present this possibility for rapid transformation. A perceived and vital threat coupled with a strongly centralized political structure, which was the case in Denmark in the early nineteenth century, produced similar results. This process triggered a quick setup and transformation of royal assets into national ones and later also became the model to inspire advanced economic powers having other political challenges, such as England and Scotland.

States which build on complex ideas of civic society in which national museums constitute a carrier of national values, whether states of pre-modern existence, such as Britain, Sweden or post-imperial ones such as Norway and Austria, might demonstrate more a complex palette of initiators, whereas a more contemporary pluralism has developed in Eastern Europe and Turkey.

In the examples above, the political diversity builds up to a more diverse and/or universalized representation, characterised by being less centralized and less easy to define in ethnic terms. This is even more the case if diversity is not politically concerted within a federal structure. Regional diversity is resisting strong centralized representation in countries such as Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland and, to some extent, Spain. In former empires, such as Britain, Spain and the Netherlands, there is a need to move beyond one ethos in order to represent the nation as something that has made art and universal values from the Enlightenment useful.

The cases above form a continuum – forming the possible basis for one ideal type of museum system – that develops along a continuum of strongly centralized states with explicit and

orchestrated representations, to decentralized and diverse states in which the middle ground was characterised by frequent half-orchestrated endeavours.

Museum representations in capitals such as in London, Paris and Lisbon have been able to draw upon their urban centres, which is not the case with all capitals. Madrid used to be able to constitute a crucial place of national representation but does not to the same degree today with the recognised changes of the autonomous regions. Amsterdam never managed to constitute a centre for museum representation in the Netherlands, where the republican tradition was similar to the Italian case. Belgium, held together by a monarch with a military and colonial agenda, was represented in the nineteenth century museum structure in Brussels but the role of the capital has changed. The promotion and legitimacy of the Belgian nation-state has become problematic and the rationale for the representation of national unity difficult to reinvent with the growing differentiation between Wallonia and Flanders in mind. Similarly, the museums in Northern and Eastern Europe have been characterised by an influential rural and regional flavour, affiliations not easily reconciled with the centralisation of museums to the capitals. The complexity is further illustrated by the imperial past of the UK, the unfinished unification process in Italy, or the formal federal structures in Switzerland and Germany. In the case of the latter, its traumatic history adds to the complexity of the political structure and representation. In Italy, the transition to a centralized state represented by national museums was never fulfilled and remained, in many occasions, on a regional level such as with the city states of Naples, Firenze, Venice and so on. In many places, strong city communities or aristocratic collections keep representing major cultural capital perceived as significant to nation making, sometimes hoarded in the national capital and sometimes in competing cities. There are many examples of this from the old city museum in Riga to the new industrial and bank patrons of Istanbul.

As a result, the fostering of a long and unified political history or of an ethnic dimension of unity is renounced within these states, as the main source of unification and other means of cultural unity are formulated by diversities, as the guardian of universal values and comparative knowledge and art are more useful and less challenging in order not to arouse discontent. The efficiency and variety of museums in relation to national unification and integration is to be pursued within the next level of enquiry. Moreover, an interesting dimension is identified by the Turkish case where an Islamic culture of representation prohibits images representing central values, and hence counteracting a centralized, visualized representational narrative central to the western idea of visual representation. In brief, museum representations do not necessarily, or at least not explicitly, follow the national political culture of strong national representation visible in other fields of national symbolism. In consequence, the power of the national museum, as a western innovation or a universal tool for nation formation outside its cultural context, begs more analysis.

2. Narrative strategies and the diversities of museums. It is in strong centralized states where the national coherence and power is not to be disturbed by regional or imperial diversity, that one unitary ideal-type of national museum is best represented. This ideal-type displays a long coherent and all-encompassing narrative from the beginning of time until today, encroaching nature, archaeology, history, art and industry. We find such museums in, for example, Finland, Denmark, Wales and Hungary. Where one of the above mentioned prerequisites of centralization and perceived threats are missing the narrative will deviate from this unitary ideal type.

Regional and colonial tensions were the source of the major conflicts to be negotiated in the nineteenth century state-making process. Today, this remains a source of dynamic but with a somewhat different content. The metropolises of the world use the collection more for branding and marketing of themselves in a growing but competitive travelling industry where regional actors are also making stakes to have their bit of the cake. New states in Eastern Europe (and also in Asia) are acting in accordance to both these logics, integrating the nation and bidding for the cosmopolitan public. This has consequences for the Coda – and the aesthetization of cultural heritage seems to be the fix to communicate the nation to these audiences at the same time.

The Soviet influence on cultural policy in Eastern Europe supported centralization, only lacking the label ‘national’ by substituting this to ‘republican’ by feeding the institutional framework a national narrative even stronger than the earlier republican period had managed to do. In countries such as Lithuania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, the former Czechoslovakia and the former Yugoslavia, Marxism enhanced the structural growth in national museums as both an organizational and a narratological unity. Ethnic narratives were allowed as part of that story as a concession to regional variation but were not allowed to be politicized. In fact, the latter reminds us of the technique of dealing with regional and ethnic minorities in the west most visible in the paradigmatic format of the open-air museum of *Skansen* in Stockholm, a museum layout that was to spread over the world. Here the intention is to represent diversity as a form of cultural richness within a given political frame that gives space for local pride, while domesticating and historicising communal feelings and keep them out of an explicit political agenda. The communist ideology had a ready-made philosophy of history with an evolutionary and teleological story to tell. The evolutionary starting point was shared by broad intellectual strata and was parallel to the social historical turn in Western Europe. It was only with the writing of modern history that the story of progress and the position of hero and villain was swapped. It is possible to keep intact such an ethos of progressivity by changing only the casting of the historical drama of national unification.

The international outlook on museum representation varies according to colonial experiences. In the United Kingdom, the Enlightenment and the Empire are narrated side by side, today in terms of post-colonial standings. Smaller states with long gone empires such as Portugal and Sweden have been less critical when dealing with the past. Similarly, smaller conglomerate states like Denmark and, again, Sweden would use collections to contrast ‘us’ to an often very implicit ‘them’. Today, the existence of notions of otherness, otherhood and ethnic divisions are clearly more universally present in the West in Holocaust and Genocide museums.

3. Trajectories and ambiguities of national museums. It is not possible to categorise states by their museums since the function of these might have changed over time. Even if it is possible to assess the overall function of the national museum at a specific moment, it often has ambiguous or multi-layered narratives that move in different directions. Furthermore, the utopias of national museums have traditionally highlighted a Golden Age as their foremost rhetorical trope; hence they are reactionary in style but pro-active on a political level. Art and Design museums might work more as an intermediary between the Golden Age Museum and the modern format of technological museums that place more hope on a better future. Again the contemporary drive towards community involvement including ethnic minorities and recognising the force of migration has had little use of the past when legitimizing the present order of things.

Rather, universal human rights and civic participation lies at the core of reform where the multiplicity of histories is used in promoting pluralism and tolerance.

Loss of relevance with reference to trajectories can be read in the inability in some countries to attract financing and/or visitors in certain periods of time. The rather meek development in many Eastern European countries after the First World War might be a case in which old structures did not meet the demands of the modern industrial and technological age and with the urgency needed to support their development. This changed, in many cases, during Soviet rule and influence where both ideas on cultural republicanism, 'democratic centralism' and mass-education supported national investment in museums. Thus, the evolving structure was at hand around 1990 when states were again autonomous and in need of developing rapid symbolic representation of their nation-hood. Old style art museums that lived on the traditional ideal of *Bildung* had difficulties in transforming to the desires of the new citizenship, as in the example of Latvia. The inability of national museums to create or to recapture their relevance can, however, be caused by active resistance in ways that make national museums relevant but the forces of support are too weak to lead to successful establishment as with the case of Italy.

The complexity of considering intended and unintended actions and various logics outside the horizon of actors remain at the core of museums in forming a flexible yet well-defined form of *cultural constitution* as a complement to the explicit, formal and political sibling formulated with the fundamental law of each state. Contributing to bringing this dynamic as part of the space of experience of Europe into the horizon of expectations of actors (Koselleck 1985) is the overarching aim of this project. The most interesting comparative analyses of this material seems to appear on the theoretical meso-level of providing new *encompassing unitary contexts* for understanding the role of national museums in nation- and state making. The material is also able to answer questions about other comparative dimensions depending on the interest of the reader and researcher. It is not only big structures, large processes and huge comparisons (Tilly 1984) that have been accomplished: new questions, general patterns and the outline of astonishing variations are also part of the material presented in this volume.

Design and outline of reports

The definitions of a national museum made by states and/or other collective actors have been considered in the reports and the analytical definition used by *EuNaMus* has enabled comparisons. The partners of *EuNaMus* have produced reports to cover most of the European states; some of these will include national museums established as part of colonial ambitions outside Europe. The individual authors are credited at the outset of each report and the responsibility is divided between the partners of *EuNaMus* as follows:

1. Linköping University: Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH), Slovenia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Lithuania and Sweden.
2. University of Leicester: Britain, Scotland, Wales, Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland
3. University of the Aegean: Cyprus, Greece, Malta and Turkey
4. University of Paris: Belgium, France, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Switzerland

5. University of Tartu: Estonia and Latvia
6. University of Oslo: Iceland, Norway and Sapmi
7. University of Bologna: Italy and Spain
8. Kozep-Europai Egyetem (CEU): Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia.

In the reports to follow, the evolving nature of the ‘national museum structure’ is to be related to the political state by making short epochal and formational chronologies. Affirmation, silences and discord should be noted between, on the one hand, the representation of the museums and the state-making history, on the other. Within this process, the creative initiatives from individuals, patrons, civic society, university disciplines, regional powers and state policies is to be contextualised so that the role of different stakeholders’ power and contributions to the establishment and development of the museum institution can be assessed. Thus the structural components of the evolving national museum system is in focus for the individual reports in which a few national museums are discussed more in depth. Depending of the nature of the nation and the state, up to five museums have been selected as brief case studies. So this part of *EuNaMus* focuses on the institutional framework instead of the indirect narrative behind their collections and displays. Narratives relating to the civic sphere, political regimes, class, power, ethnicity, multiculturalism, universal values or aesthetic ideals and tastes are all associated with national representations but have been outlined only insofar as to understand the driving force behind museum initiation and promotion. Moreover, research within this part of *EuNaMus* has been conducted only in relation to state- and nation making processes. More detailed work on challenging narratives is pursued by other projects (work-packages) within the *EuNaMus* programme.

In order to facilitate understanding for the reader, the reports follow a similar structure and commence with a brief summary of main findings. The overview will describe major foundational and restructuring moments of the museum system, assess the relative power of individual, civic, academic, professional and state initiatives, and analyse all this in relation to the nation and state making process. The reports will also provide an overview of the organisation of the structural interface between cultural policy and national museums. This will also be related to democratization by discussing the inclusion and recognition (or exclusion) of new or previously marginalised groups. The most important institution(s) in this process will be identified, as will central moments and controversies in the nation making process. The case studies follow in chronological order considering their function in the formative moments in history and their role in contemporary society. Their initiation, inauguration and development will be outlined. The most decisive initiatives and powers that initiated, established and gave form to the national museums are thus presented in greater complexity and with the organisation of ownership in mind.

The reports will also outline the field of collections and representations in the national museum and identify whether collections are focused on art, archaeology, cultural history and ethnography. This is done in order to ascertain the type of values and territories that are represented in the displays and the degree to which these are understood as manifestations of universal, civic, territorial, multi-cultural, national or ethnic values and identities. The division of

labour between various national museum institutions in relation to the same dimensions is also assessed. Results that are summarized in the tables at the outset of the case studies and reports may contain additional museums that are discussed in an Annex.

The reports expand from a maximum of 10,000 words to 15,000 in total. The questions posed vary significantly between the different countries, but we are proud to present the first comprehensive overview over national museums in Europe - thanks to the effort of all the eight partners and the many researchers involved in *EuNaMus*.

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National Museums in Austria

Emma Bentz & Marlies Raffler

Summary

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw much of the nation-making and museum creation discussed in this paper, Austria underwent a whole spectrum of constitutions: monarchy, republic, autocracy and part of a totalitarian state and then again, since the ten years spanning 1945-1955, a republic. This dramatic history is also reflected in the changing borders of Austria – from a geographically extensive mosaic of the Habsburg Monarchy (as a *Vielvölkerstaat*, a multinational realm) to today's Austria that is made up by nine federal states with approximately 8,4 million inhabitants in total. Thus, an important question concerns what the term 'national' may refer to in the specific case of Austria.

Turning to developments in the museum sphere, the period of the *Austrian Empire* (1804-1867) and the *Austro-Hungarian Empire* (1867-1918) – especially in the *Vormärz* - was marked by royal initiatives regarding existing collections. A process of centralizing and ordering collections, that hitherto had been dispersed, began and thus it was only now that these began to be regarded as entities. In the imperial city of Vienna, splendid buildings were constructed to host these collections during the second half of the century, e.g. the "twin museums" *Kunsthistorisches Museum* (KM, Museum of Art History) and *Naturhistorisches Museum* (NM, Museum of Natural History), emerging from the imperial collections. However, the two museums were never described as 'national', since the *Vielvölkerstaat* had to represent all peoples. The same can be said about the *Austrian Museum für Volkskunde* (The Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Art), inaugurated in 1894.

Outside Vienna, a number of regional/provincial museums were founded; the Joanneum in Graz/Styria (1811) being perhaps the most prominent example. The Joanneum serves as a case study, highlighting topics such as the development of a national and regional identity and private initiatives in the museum sphere. The question of the relation between region and nation, what is centre and what is periphery is important in this context. According to Raffler, these museums were Janus-faced, being both cosmopolitan and regional as the museums presented both history of humanity and nationally specific knowledge (Raffler 2007: 344f).

With the disintegration of the Habsburgian monarchy, museums became state-owned. Often characterized as a time of crisis, a new self-image and identity had to be invented. The term 'Austria' was however, regarded with scepticism since it hitherto primarily had been associated with the dynasty of the Habsburgs. Rituals and festivities rooted in the empire had to be replaced and attempts were made to promote music as the factor that made the geographically highly-shrunken Austria into a world nation (Matzl 1995). The period also included art restoration claims, posed by former members of the multinational realm..

During NS-rule, megalomaniac projects included new museums, here exemplified with plans for (but never completed) Fuehrer-museums in Linz and Vienna. Austria's role during this period of fascism has been much disputed, affecting later plans and discussions for museum projects dealing with this period: Austria as a victim vs. Austria as willing partner? Further post-war

discussions on identity include the status assigned with the signing of the state treaty in 1955 that has been endlessly celebrated; and the constructing of a tale of new beginnings forming a unifying national symbol and stepping stone for new national myths.

In this paper, the question of the existence of an Austrian national museum, focusing on twentieth century history, is addressed by highlighting recent discussions surrounding the plans for a *Haus der Geschichte* (House of History). Until today, it is – interestingly enough – the *Heeresgeschichtliches Museum* (The Museum of Military History) that presents the most complete history of Austria, although ending with the end of WWII. Since the late 1990s, various proposals for a new museum have been made and the project has been intensely debated among politicians and historians. Still today, no consensus exists regarding exactly what to exhibit and why; neither is the question of where (in Vienna) such a museum should be located settled. The debates are interesting since they reveal the still-existing tensions regarding how to tackle and present central topics such as the *Ständestaat* (authoritarian rule 1934-38), the Austrian civil war, the *Anschluß* and Austria's role during the NS-reign. Many historians fear a political instrumentalization and a too-smooth version of the violent past that constitutes one aspect of Austrian twentieth century history. Finally, Marlies Raffer has put forward an interesting thought: could it be that an Austrian national museum is equal to the sum of existing *Landesmuseen* (i.e. museums located in the federal states of Austria), together making up a kind of 'disloziertes Nationalmuseum' (dislocated Nationalmuseum) today?

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Universal-museum Joanneum	1811	1808	Arch-duke Johann, <i>Steirischen Stände</i>	Ltd. Landes-museum Joanneum GmbH (2003)	Natural Sciences and Humanities	Universal values, education, encyclopaedic, Styria	All encompassing.	Different buildings, new under construction, centre of Graz.
Museum of Military History <i>Heeres-geschicht-liches Museum</i>	1856/ 1891	1848	Imperial Kaiser Franz Joseph I	State: Ministry of Defence	Military History	Imperial Austria, Austria in the world	17 th c. to 1945.	Purposely designed, historicist style. South of town centre, Vienna.
Museum of Natural History <i>Natur-historisches Museum</i>	1889	(1750), 1857	Imperial (Franz I and Franz Joseph I)	<i>Bundes-museum mit vollrechts-fähigkeit*</i>	Natural History, Pre-history	Universal, encyclopaedic	All encompassing.	Purposely designed, neo-renaissance style. Prominent location die Ringstraß (Kaiser-forum), Vienna.
Museum of Art History <i>Kunst-historisches Museum</i>	1891	1864	Imperial (Kaiser Franz Joseph I)	<i>Bundes-museum mit Vollrechts-fähigkeit*</i>	Art, Cultural History	Europe, Greek-Roman, Middle East Egypt	Prehistory-late 18 th c.	Purposely designed neo-renaissance style. Prominent location die Ringstraße, (Kaiser-forum), Vienna.

* = Outsourced, but still state-owned, museums with responsibility for management and finances.

Introduction

In regard to museum- and nation making discussed in this paper during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Austria has undergone almost the whole spectra of constitutions available: monarchy and empire (1804-1867, 1867-1918), republic (1918-1933), autocracy and austro-fascism (1934-1938), totalitarian state under NS-rule (1938-1945) and then, since the end of World War II, the second republic (1945-1955 - today). This dramatic history is also reflected in the changing borders of Austria – from the geographically extensive mosaic of the *Vielvölkerstaat* to today's Austria made up by nine federal states with approximately 8,4 million inhabitants in total. Thus, what has been considered Austrian territory, and thereby part of Austrian politics and culture, has shifted over the centuries, but the general trend has been the gradual loss of territories. In this paper, primary focus is on museums that lie within the borders of today's Austrian republic. The founding of museums in countries that previously were related to the Habsburgian monarchy in different ways, such as Hungary, the Czech Republic and Balkan states, to mention a few, are discussed and treated in detail in separate papers.

Overview

Needless to say, the different constitutions have also affected the museum sphere in both direct and subtler ways. In an attempt to discuss nation-making and the museum system, the following subdivision has been made here highlighting some characteristics for the different periods:

- *Habsburgian Monarchy: Austrian Empire (1804-1867) and Austro-Hungarian Empire (1867-1918)*. Imperial collections on display framed by elaborate and opulent architecture, e.g. *Kunsthistorisches Museum* and *Naturhistorisches Museum*, situated in Vienna as imperial capital. Projects to reflect the grandeur of the empire: the (not completed) *Kaiserforum*, *Ringstraße-project*. Founding of a number of provincial museums. *Vielvölkerstaat*.
- *First Republic (1918-1933) and Ständestaat (1934-1938)*: Disintegration of the Habsburgian monarchy after defeat in WWI and loss of territories. Crisis (financial, political, identity, legitimacy). Political turbulence, fallout in 1934 resulting in the *Ständestaat*. With the end of Habsburgian rule, museums become state-owned.
- *Nazi cultural policy (1938-1945): 'Anschluß' and 'Gleichschaltung'*. A number of megalomaniac NS-projects including the construction of 'cultural institutes', for instance a *Fuehrermuseum* devoted to 19th century art in Linz. Museums under NS-control. Austria's role during this period of fascism much disputed, affecting later plans and discussions for museum projects dealing with this period: Austria as a victim vs. Austria as willing partner?
- *Second republic (1945/1955-today)*, complete sovereignty in 1955; the signing of the state treaty as central founding myth for the republic. Creation of a national narrative based on Austria and Austrians as victims rather than active perpetrators and participants during the NS-reign. Long-lived myth gradually contested since the 1960-70s. Changing view on NS-reign: from initial '*Opfermythos*' ('Myth of Austria as a victim') to collective responsibility. Still an issue today, exemplified by the discussions and controversies surrounding the plans for a '*Haus der Geschichte/Republik*', ('House of History') a museum intended to display Austria's post-1918 history. European/international ambitions,

‘benchmarking’: *MuseumsQuartier*. Museum reforms: process of outsourcing prestigious institutes. First hesitant discussions on inclusions of new groups (history of migrants) in a museum context.

Four museums have been selected for closer studies and further important institutes are discussed in the text. The case studies concern the Universalmuseum Joanneum in Graz, the “twin” museums *Kunsthistorisches Museum* and *Naturhistorisches Museum* in Vienna as well as the *Heeresgeschichtliches Museum*, also situated in the capital. All have been, and are still, prominent and influential institutions, often associated with the term ‘national museum’ – but in very different ways. The Joanneum in Graz/Styria is also an important example of a private initiative and questions concerning regional identity. The two art- and science museums can be regarded as the two most prominent museums during the Empire. Finally, the *Heeresgeschichtliches Museum* in Vienna is, still today, the only museum in the country with a permanent exhibition that covers Austrian history from the Thirty Years War until the end of World War II.

Early national and provincial museums in the Habsburgian Monarchy

Initial note: This chapter is partly identical to chapters in Marlies Raffer's book Museum. Spiegel der Nation? Zugänge zur Historischen Museologie am Beispiel der Genese von Landes- und Nationalmuseen in der Habsburgermonarchie (Raffer 2007).

According to Marlies Raffer, the origin of the national and regional/provincial museums established during the Habsburgian monarchy lies primarily in the so called *Länderbeschreibungen*, i.e. documents describing the characteristics of each region and its inhabitants. These documents were basically intended as information sources to future regents, so that they could gain detailed knowledge and understanding over the land they were designated to rule. But the descriptions also came to influence museum founders such as Archduke Johann (see separate case study: Joanneum/Graz) in an exemplary way. The questions ‘What do we know about our own country’ and ‘What constitutes our country’ were materialized and documented not only in writing and depicting but also in the collection of objects (*Realia*). The ordering of objects (historical and natural sciences) proved important also to regional studies as a form of ‘tangible’ *Landeskunde*.

During the nineteenth century, a number of provincial museums – *Landesmuseen* – were founded. The Joanneum in Graz/Styria has been mentioned above, but also in e.g. Innsbruck/Tyrol (1823) and in Linz/Oberösterreich (1833) and in Klagenfurt/Kärnten (1844) museums were established. Encyclopaedic principles of collecting still prevailed in these museums but also new aims were formulated in accordance with this tradition. The museums were national/patriotic/*Vaterländisch* and practical/public education-scientific. Educational ambitions were signalled by the presence of libraries and teaching.

An increased awareness of a ‘national heritage’ had been strengthened by the wars of freedom and Napoleon’s art robberies. But what connotations does the attribute ‘national’ have in an Austrian context? Does national mean ‘a large, multilingual province’, or does ‘national’ mean ‘vaterländisch’, ‘patriotic’, ‘chauvinistic’ or perhaps national in the sense of language/ethnic? There existed no ‘Austrian nation’ but a *Vielvölkerreich*, which – different from western European national states – was held together by a dynasty and held down by an absolutist concept of government. Vienna was also not situated in the heart of this empire. The imperial collections in Vienna were never described as national since the Empire had to represent all peoples of the

complicated *Vielvölkerstaat*. Yet the imperial collections in Vienna surely would have been suitable as ‘national’. They are expressions of a constant process of centralisation, of bringing together dispersed collections under one roof. The result is that they, by the end of the nineteenth century, are, for the first time, regarded as constituting unities. This is further emphasised by the fact that the collections are now displayed in magnificent museum buildings, created specifically with the purpose of hosting and exhibiting the valuable objects, to be marvelled at by amazed visitors – both back then and also today (see below).

Raffler summarized these ‘national’ and regional museums as having a “certain Janus character, at the same time cosmopolitan and parochial. On the one hand they presented the history of humanity as a whole [...] while on the other hand depicting nationally specific knowledge.” (Raffler 2007: 348).

Second half of nineteenth century: Imperial collections in new buildings and examples of private foundations

Apart from being the political centre of the monarchy until 1918, the Hofburg in Vienna also hosted some of the most important imperial collections. A wish to exhibit these and thereby make them public accessible was repeatedly expressed. For this purpose, new buildings were needed and, during the second half of the nineteenth century, some of the most well-known Austrian collections were brought together under one roof. Several of these museums are situated along the *Ringstraße*, the c. 5 kilometre long street embracing most of the old town centre of Vienna. In 1857, Emperor Franz Joseph I expressed his will that the town wall of the expanding city should be removed and replaced by a boulevard. This prestigious project started with an architecture contest in 1858 and shortly thereafter construction work began. The new boulevard was inaugurated in 1865 (although it took until 1913 before the last building could be completed). Among the many prominent buildings erected in various forms of historicist architecture, often subsumed under the term ‘*Ringstraßenstil*’, is the parliament, the university and the town hall. Both noble families and members of the bourgeoisie erected private palaces. The first museum to be constructed in the *Ringstraße* was the MAK (*Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst/Gegenwartskunst*, Museum of Applied Arts), at the time of its founding named ‘*K. K. Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und Industrie*’. The first collections were on display in a part of the Hofburg from 1864 until 1877, when a pompous neo-renaissance building, built for the museum in the Stubenring 3, could be inaugurated.

One important reason for the founding of the museum in 1864 was the perceived inferiority of Austrian design when compared with other European countries. After having visited the World Fairs in Paris (1855) and London (1862), art historian Rudolf von Eitelberger was painfully aware of the poor state of design in the Empire. He made the lack of any formal institutions devoted to the subject responsible for the current situation and sought to fight this by creating both an exemplary collection and a site for the further education of designers and craftsmen (in 1868, a School of Design connected to the museum could be founded) (Rampley 2010). Eitelberger wished to promote global and universal values, contrasting to the older *Landesmuseen*, where focus was on the local and the provincial (Rampley 2010:255). In this context, it is interesting that younger museums of applied art within the Habsburgian state pursued and emphasised national aspects of the design rather than the universal promoted by

Eitelberger (Rampley 2010:256). Today, the museum has sought to define and profile itself anew by also making it a site for contemporary art. With the rebuilding in 1986, the trademark 'MAK' was established and a 'mission' formulated by the director, who describes today's museum as '*a central interface for global communication*' (http://www.mak.at/mission/f_statement.htm [March 10, 2011]).

In a different part of the Ring, the *Kunsthistorisches Museum* stands vis-à-vis *the Naturhistorisches Museum*, two neo-renaissance buildings (drawn by Carl Hasenauer and Gottfried Semper) separated by the Maria-Theresien-Platz. These important museums are discussed together in a separate case study (see p. 20).

Among the many museums founded (or considerably enlarged/merged) during the second half of the nineteenth century, only a few institutes in Vienna came into being as the result of private initiatives and did not constitute imperial foundations. Since both the *Österreichisches Museum für Volkskunde* (The Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art) and the *Technisches Museum* (Museum of Science and Technology) constitute such foundations, they deserve brief mentioning here.

The *Österreichisches Museum für Volkskunde*, situated in the *Gartenpalais Schönborn* and one block away from the *Ringstraße*, was founded in 1894. The initiative came from two men working in the department of prehistory and ethnography in the Museum of Natural History. Contrasting to the national sentiments expressed in similar foundations all over Europe at the time, the two founders Michael Haberlandt and Wilhelm Hein had the ambition that the museum should be a 'monument of the *Vielvölkerstaat*' and represent all peoples 'from the Carpathians to the Adriatic'. Members of the museum society came from the bourgeoisie, but also the aristocracy was well represented and during the Empire, a member of the House of Habsburg acted as custodian/protector of the museum. Ironically, it was only in 1917 that the museum could present itself as '*k.k. Kaiser-Karl-Museum für österreichische Volkskunde*' (Johler 2008: 230). One year later, with the end of the Empire in 1918, the ideals of the *Vielvölkerstaat* promoted by the museum had to be replaced and new identities negotiated. Depending on the prevailing political situation, different approaches dominated during the century from a '*Haus des deutschen Volkstums im Donauosten*' during the NS-period to an emphasis on Austrian *Volkskultur* in the post-war era (and since the 1970s emphasis on the European perspective and context). The changing roles of the museum and its ideological links during the first half of the twentieth century have only recently started to become subject to more detailed studies (see Johler 2008).

In the case of *Technisches Museum*, the oldest collections originate from different imperial initiatives but the idea to found an Austrian museum for science and technology came from Wilhelm Franz Exner, professor of mechanics in Vienna (Fellner 2008). Inspired by a visit to the World's Fair in Paris in 1867, he repeatedly sought to realise his visions of a museum where all existing collections could be united under one roof. With the 60-year anniversary of Franz Joseph's rule, it was decided that a permanent museum, originating from Exner's idea, should be established in order to celebrate and commemorate this event (Ibid: 2f). In 1907, a 'preparatory committee' was founded and chaired by industrial Arthur Krupp and two years later the '*Verein Technisches Museum für Geschichte and Gewerbe*' replaced it. Construction work was completed in 1913 but due to the outbreak of World War I the inauguration was postponed. The museum finally opened in 1918. The museum remained in the hands of the society until 1922, when in wake of

the founding of the first republic; the state took over the ownership. The *Deutsches Museum* in Munich, founded in 1903, served as a model for the Austrian pendant. The national character of the museum was underlined by the explicit ambition only to include foreign exhibits when important for the history of production (Ibid: 3).

First Austrian Republic/Republic of Austria (1918-1933) and *Ständestaat* (1934-1938)

The rupture caused by the disintegration of the Habsburgian monarchy after World War I also had implications for the cultural sphere. Museums that hitherto had been in imperial hands now became state-owned. Collections expanded due to allocation of objects that previously had constituted royal property. At the same time, the '*Nachfolgestaaten*' such as e.g. Italy, made claims and demanded the return of certain (art) objects, from e.g. the *Kunsthistorisches Museum*. The change from monarchy to state-owned collections also meant that museums now became unrestrictedly accessible to the public and Raffler posed questions regarding the two twin museums – *Kunsthistorisches* and *Naturhistorisches* – and whether, by now, they constituted national museums for the new republic? (Raffler manuscript: 15).

Austria's new constitution as a republic was marked not only by financial and political crises but also by crises concerning identity and legitimacy. Also, in the cultural sphere a new identity had to be formed. On the one hand, it was no longer self-evident to decorate oneself with imperial glory and display universal collections but on the other hand, there was also no previous republican tradition to tie on to (Mattl 1995). The many rituals associated with monarchy and empire were no longer suitable and a new legitimacy was needed, something that could unite the shrunken country. One such political attempt was to focus on Austria's musical heritage and to establish and present the new republic '*Klein-Österreich*', as – although a small country - a great power within the field of culture, for instance by founding festivals (Salzburg) and promoting Vienna as a world city for classical music (Ibid: 620; 625ff). But it was also the time of mass-culture (cinema, radio, sport events) and a tension between 'high culture' and culture for the 'masses' remained, and the republic did not manage to create a new legitimacy that could unite all groups of society (Ibid).

During the first decades of the twentieth century, the capital was often referred to as 'Red Vienna', being a stronghold for social democrats. The first republic not only implied loss, crisis and disorientation, it was also a time when Vienna was a creative and intellectual centre – perhaps partly due to this situation. An almost endless list of famous icon-like individuals can be put together: starting e.g. with Sigmund Freud and Ludwig Wittgenstein etc. etc. Vienna was also the centre for political skirmishes, reaching a violent peak with the Austrian civil war in 1934 with chancellor and austrofascist Engelbert Dollfuß as a major actor violently fighting socialism.

***Anschluß* and Second World War (1938-1945): Museums as part of megalomaniac NS-plans**

With Austria's '*Anschluß*' to NS-Germany in 1938, the museum sphere was affected in several different ways. Like in Germany, persons approved by the regime replaced several museum directors and employees, or subordinated German counterparts in Berlin replaced the directors. As part of the *Arisierung*, museums like the *Kunsthistorisches Museum* received works of art that had been confiscated from Jewish collections and homes.

In Vienna, when the *Ständestaat* established the “*Kulturamt*” (‘culture department’) (1934), it became the central institution for cultural politics during the NS-administration (Matzl 1995:621). During the NS-reign, new museums or the rebuilding of already-existing museums were manifested in megalomaniac plans for cities like Vienna and Linz. Shortly after the *Anschluss*, Linz was selected as one out of five ‘*Führerstädte*’ (the other selected cities were Berlin, Hamburg, Munich and Nuremberg) and for a short while the city became a ‘[...] playground for the national socialists fantasies of power’ (Weihsmann 1998:942). Apart from plans for major industrial expansion and the Danube harbour, Hitler designated Linz to be a new European art metropolis (Ibid: 946). In a new axis street south of the town centre, an opera, a library and a ‘*Führermuseum*’ were planned. The museum was thought of as an equivalent to the Uffizien in Florence and should exhibit art representing the “*Germanische Klassik*” (Ibid: 950). The so-called ‘*Sonderauftrag Linz*’ was established to acquire the therefore needed paintings. Hitler appointed art-historian Hans Posse, director of the Picture Gallery in Dresden, to be in charge of the planned museum for German and Austrian art from the nineteenth century. The museum was never realized but photo albums covering the paintings intended for display have been partly preserved; out of originally 32 albums, 19 are archived in the German Historical Museum in Berlin while the remaining 13 are missing (<http://www.dhm.de/datenbank/linzdb/> [February 2, 2011]). Shortly after Austria’s ‘*Anschluss*’ to NS-Germany, Adolf Hitler had issued the so called ‘Fuehrer’s prerogative’ in Mid-June of 1938 with the intention of securing first access to artwork seized from Austrian families by the Gestapo and other organisations. Many of the paintings listed in the preserved albums come from these confiscations, from the finest collections in Austria but also from Germany and other countries. Approximately 4000-6000 paintings were reserved for the *Fuehrermuseum* in Linz (<http://www.kunstrestitution.at/F.prerogative.html> [March 9, 2011]).

Apart from a spectacular art museum, Hitler’s plans for Linz also included museums of natural sciences and folklore respectively. The intention was that all construction work should be completed by 1950, after the imagined victory. Today, a bridge is the only architectural reminder of the large-scale plans of the Fuehrer.

In Vienna, it was Hitler’s wish to connect the town more clearly to the Danube and several detailed plans were made (Weihsmann 1998:1021ff). Directly affecting the Habsburgian ‘twin museums’ was architect Hanns Dustmann’s proposal for a ‘Haus des Fuehrers’, intended for the exhibition of contemporary art (Gottfried 2001: 136). A square-shaped building with defence towers was to be constructed vis-à-vis the already existing museums. In the vicinity, the *Heldenplatz* should be converted into a ‘*Wiener Walhalla*’ or ‘*Kultbezirk*’ and as a place for ceremonies and marches (Weihsmann 1998:1028).

During the final phase of the war, several museums were severely damaged; for instance, parts of the *Heeresgeschichtliche Museum* were bombed in November 1944.

New beginnings and old ghosts: Second Republic (1945-today)

As in Germany, the allied forces made a division into four occupation zones. The capital of Vienna was also four-divided/powered and surrounded by the Soviet-occupied zone. Ten years after the end of World War II, in May 1955, Austria gained full independence with the signing of the Austrian State Treaty. Needless to say, this was a much longed-for moment and soon incorporated as a central founding myth for the Second Republic, by many viewed as the

country's resurrection and new start. This was based on the narrative of Austria as a victim, first occupied by NS-Germany and later by a second '*Fremdberrschaft*' in the form of the Allied forces (Uhl 2005:487f). The famous photograph showing foreign minister (and former Chancellor) Leopold Figl standing on the balcony of the *Oberes Belvedere*, holding up the treaty in front of a cheering crowd forms a strong collective, visual memory of the event. This symbol of Austria's newfound freedom gains an additional symbolic dimension as one learns that the photograph in reality was a photomontage, since the fragile balcony would not have been able to carry the weight of all representatives (Felber 2006)! Another act constituting an important part of post-war Austria and its self-image is the declaration of neutrality for all time to come, signed later that same year, on the 26th of October 1955. Notably, it was this date and not the 15th of May that ten years later became the country's official national holiday/commemoration day.

Over the years, anniversaries commemorating the 15th of May, 1955 have been celebrated. On some of these occasions, the procedures during the famous day have been reproduced and dramatized in the presence of the Austrian government and foreign ministers from the countries involved in the preparation of the treaty in 1955 (Liebhart & Pribersky 2004). This happened for instance in 1990, when 35 years of republic was commemorated and celebrated. By repeating the procedures of this event, the strength of this national myth is reinforced and the memory of it kept alive in a collective awareness (cf. Liebhart & Pribersky 2004:396f). The most recent celebration took place in 2005 and was accompanied by '*Das neue Österreich. Die Ausstellung zum Staatsvertragsjubiläum 1955/2005*', a temporary exhibition presenting Austrian twentieth century history (Dürriegl & Frodl 2005). To give additional weight to the anniversary, once more the original setting was used as the exhibition was arranged in the *Oberen Belvedere*, where the negotiations had once taken place. In the catalogue accompanying the exhibit, the importance of not just highlighting the positive memories but also discussing more negative aspects of the young republic was stated in several prefaces. However, to many this was not enough and, for instance, historian Heidemarie Uhl criticized the exhibition for not taking any stand and for treating each view on the history of the second republic as equally valid (Uhl 2006). The three-fold anniversary year of 2005 – celebrating 50 years of state treaty but also 60 years of republic and 10 years of EU-membership – provoked much discussion and also counter-manifestations, clearly showing the still-present tensions in Austrian society in relation to its post-war history and the interpretation of this more recent history. An internet site (www.oesterreich-2005.at) was founded as a base for publication of critical contributions and views of the celebrations, presenting itself as a "Eine Aktionsplattform tritt gegen die konservative Jubelmaschine an". [March 14, 2011].

The exhibition in the Oberen Belvedere was not the only one commemorating the state treaty: the Technisches Museum Wien arranged "Österreich baut auf. Wieder-Aufbau & Marshall-Plan" und the exhibition "Österreich ist frei" opened in the Schallaburg/Niederösterreich (for discussion and comparison between these three exhibitions, see Felber 2006).

In post-war Austria, parallel to the vision of a new start materialised in the signing of the state treaty, there was an eagerness to put brackets around the NS-years. Generally speaking, Austrians saw no need to try to come to terms with a postulated Nazi legacy since there was a general consensus that the country had been Hitler's first victim with the *Anschluß* of 1938 (Uhl 2004). This focus on Austria as a victim of war was long prevailing in the national narrative and only

gradually questioned and deconstructed. Historians use words such as “Taboo”, ‘Guilt defence’ and ‘Suppression’ when speaking of post-war Austria’s relation to the eight years of Nazi rule. Until the 1970s, subjects related to the NS-reign focused primarily on which differences existed between Austrian society and the totalitarian NS-state, and as a consequence, National Socialism and the atrocities committed in its name solely belonged to German history and not to Austrian history – the Nazis had conducted a ‘*Fremdherrschaft*’/’*Gewaltherrschaft*’ over Austria. The process of questioning this comfortable self-image began slowly in the 1960-70s, and gained additional pace in the 80s with the Kurt Waldheim-controversy. The former UN-general secretary successfully ran for president in 1986 and remained holder of the post until 1992. His mandate period was lined with controversies relating to his past as an officer in the *Wehrmacht* and possible involvement in war crimes on Balkan states. Waldheim became a symbol for the Austrian population’s complicated and ambiguous relation to the NS-years, much quoted is his statement that he “...did nothing else during war-time than what hundred of thousands of Austrians also did, namely fulfilling my duties as a soldier” (Original quote: “Ich habe im Krieg nichts anderes getan als Hunderttausende andere Österreicher, nämlich meine Pflicht als Soldat erfüllt.“ (quoted from Uhl 2004:493)).

The 1980s was also the decade when initiatives towards a ‘*neue Erinnerungskultur*’ (‘new commemoration culture’) took place. Until then, monuments commemorating Austrian soldiers dominated rural parts of Austria whereas many other groups remained invisible in this landscape (Perz & Uhl 2005:546, 557ff). Exhibitions on Austria during the Second World War and the republics relation to the NS-regime were few during the first decades after the war, which was in accordance with the general *Verdrängung* (Suppression). The post-war history of the Mauthausen concentration camp well illustrates this. In 1970, when a museum could finally open on the site where more than 135.000 persons lost their lives (incl. satellite camps) between 1938-1945; it was, for a long time, close to the only permanent exhibition in Austria presenting the history of national socialism in Austria (Perz & Uhl 2005:570f). As expected, Austria was presented as a victim rather than as perpetrator and still today, the author Bertrand Perz states that: “Die Frage nach Mauthausen als realem und symbolischen Ort für eine österreichische „Tätergeschichte“ ist ebenfalls nach wie vor offen.” (Perz & Uhl 2005:573).

To a foreign observer, modern Austria appears highly (pre)occupied with self-reflection regarding its identity as a nation. To a certain extent this goes hand in hand with more general trends within European cultural and social studies, where the much-quoted works of Pierre Nora and Maurice Halbwachs often serve as a starting point for analysis of the construction (or destruction) of memory. Symbol-bearing places, myths and festivities are examined and related to questions of national identity.. In the case of Austria, this has resulted in the production of three voluminous books in the project ‘*Memoria Austriae I-III*’, covering different aspects of the Austrian mental landscape. The volumes contain articles on individuals, myths, epochs (vol. I), architectural objects, sites and regions (vol. II) and, in the final volume, the role of Austrian companies, businesses and products in the making of identity is discussed (Brix, Bruckmüller & Stekl 2004a; 2005a; 2005b, see also Plaschka, Stourzh & Niederkorn 1995; a volume focusing on the name “Österreich” and its connotations). The topics dealt with have been selected based on the results of questionnaires distributed to 1000 Austrians, aiming at answering questions regarding what is especially memorable with this specific country (Brix, Bruckmüller & Stekl

2004b). Another, slightly different example, are the two conference volumes originating from a research project conducted by the Austrian Academy of Sciences, focusing on loss, construction and storing of memory (Csáky& Stachel 2000; 2001). In this context, museums are discussed and the question of a national history museum in Austria is also highlighted - a subject we shall now turn to (Rauchensteiner 2000a).

The missing national museum?: Seemingly endless retakes and hurdles

As seen in the paper, Austria does not have a museum dealing solely with its own post-war history, like, for instance, neighbouring Germany. The most coherent, permanent exhibition on Austrian history can be found in the military museum (see separate case study). However, ever since the end of World War II there have been, and still are, calls for and discussions on the possibilities (or impossibilities) of such an undertaking. While more recent discussions tend to avoid the epithet 'National museum' and instead speak of plans for a '*Haus der Zeitgeschichte – Toleranz - österreichische Geschichte/Republik*' (to compare with similar institutions in Germany), Austria's first president (*Bundespräsident*) after the war, social democrat Karl Renner, made up plans for a national museum dedicated to the history of the Republic (*Museum der Ersten und Zweiten Republik Österreichs*) (Auer 1983). Renner initially proposed that also the federal states and communes should be encouraged to set up similar museums. Later, in 1947, it was decided that one would await the results and experiences made in Vienna before museum plans should be translated to other regions (Auer 1983:53). Renner was himself a figurehead within twentieth century politics in Austria and thus intrinsically connected with the periods he wished to devote to a museum. The social democrat served as state chancellor in 1918-1919 and partook as negotiator in the peace treaties in Saint-Germain and acted as a member of the *Nationalrat* from 1920-35 (serving as its president 1931-34). Immediately after the war, Renner was in charge of the first provisional government and was also elected federal president of Austria in 1945, beginning his services the year after.

In a first letter addressed to the chancellor regarding his plans for a museum in the Leopoldine wing in the Hofburg (which was to be renovated back to the state it had pre-1938), Renner suggests an exhibition in three halls, each devoted to a certain chapter of Austrian history. The first should contain the history of the First Republic; the second would be the '*Saal der Katastrophe*' (Anschluß, World War II) including a '*Helden- und Opferbuch*' and then the resurgence, the '*Wiedererhebung*' (Renner 1946 in Auer 1983: 79). The most important moments in history should be depicted in large paintings and paintings of presidents and chancellors (in size 1:1) should be displayed in portrait galleries. Finally, facial portraits of other prominent Austrians should be produced. A bust of Karl Renner himself constitutes inventory number 1! Renner's museum was intended for politicians on state visits and diplomats, but Austrian civilians and school children were also regarded as important visitors (Auer 1983: 60).

With Renner's death in 1950, the initiative lost its foremost advocate and the project slowly "ran dry", as Manfred Rauchensteiner has put it (Rauchensteiner 2000a: 72). Whereas the federal president Theodor Körner expressed his wish to let the project continue, Adolf Schärf (federal president 1957-1965) was more sceptical (Auer 1983:71; 75). The only slowly proceeding exhibitions became a source of conflict when Schärf wished to transfer responsibility from the president's desk to the Ministry of Education. For a long time, a deadlock prevailed and only in

1971 was it decided that the Ludwig Boltzmann should be in charge of the, by then dead, museum cause. Today, parts of the collection are exposed in the *Heeresgeschichtlichen Museum* in Vienna. Renner's vision of a museum of the republic has been realized on a much smaller scale, in his former home in Gloggnitz/Niederösterreich, where a society in 1978 founded a "Dr. Karl Renner Museum für Zeitgeschichte", devoted to the person Renner and contemporary history. (www.rennermuseum.at).[March 7, 2011].

Discussions on a new museum have however, continued. Since the 1990s, there have repeatedly been calls for a museum on twentieth century Austrian history. In 1998, the future of the neo-renaissance Palais Epstein in the Ringstraße was subject to debate. Leon Zelman, leader at the time of the Jewish Welcome Centre, advocated the establishment of a 'Haus der Toleranz' ('House of Tolerance') and that discussions could begin. Together with Anton Pelinka, professor of political science and much-engaged in questions concerning nationalism, Zelman focused on questions of racism and genocide with Jewish-Austrian experiences as a starting point. Finally, it was decided that, after the renovation, the former home of a prominent banker and his family, the Palais Epstein, should serve as an annex to the Austrian parliament. Today it is stated on the homepage of the Austrian parliament that the building would have been 'too small' for the proposed museum (<http://www.parlament.gv.at/GEBF/EPSTEIN/VERWENDUNGPLALAIS/Aktuell/> [March 10, 2011]).

The decision against a museum in the Epstein-palace has however, had a long postlude. In 1999, the Austrian *Nationalrat* decided to arrange a competition for a '*Haus der Toleranz/Geschichte*' and asked for proposals. The house was to be constructed on a different (by then – and still in 2011- not decided) location in Vienna. With many political complications, and instead of an '*Ideenwettbewerb auf breiter Basis*', two different proposals and feasibility studies were produced by two different ministries (Mattl 2002). Grazer historian Stefan Karner and director of the *Heeresgeschichtliche Museum* Manfred Rauchensteiner formulated the idea of a '*Haus der Geschichte*' with a focus on the second republic that was supported by the Ministry of Education, but the Ministry of Science preferred a '*Haus der Toleranz*' (proposal A. Pelinka among others). Since the procedure did not correspond to the initial ideas of an open contest, protests came from historians and further political turbulence followed. Finally, after the dissolution of the coalition SPÖ-ÖVP in 2001, further plans included a common proposal where both 'Houses' should merge into one. It is impossible to discuss all twists and turns of the debate in detail and only the broad views can be covered here. Many debates were carried out in the daily press such as *Der Standard* and *Falter* (*Wiener Stadtzeitung*) but also in *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften* (esp. *ÖZG* vol. 13, 2002/1).

After the exhibition in connection with the 50th anniversary of the signing of the state treaty in 2005 (see above), the seemingly never-ending debate took a new turn. On an initiative of the Minister of Education the project group joined the main figures behind this exhibition in favour of a '*Haus der Geschichte*'. Their task was to produce a road map for the realisation of a museum focusing on the history of republican Austria. After protests by prominent historians, a group of experts was added. In 2006, a road map was finally presented and, as expected, the waves of discussions went high once more (a summary of the road-map is available online: https://www.doew.at/thema/haus_der_geschichte/roadmap.pdf [February 12, 2011]). The

time-plan included in the road map foresaw a decision on where to locate the museum (incl. an architecture contest) and a construction start for the period 2008-2010 (Roadmap 2006:4). So, what is the current state of affairs? The political intention is, as stated in the *Regierungsprogramm* for 2008-2013, prepared by the coalition parties SPÖ and ÖVP, that the “planning and further work for the realization of the Haus der Geschichte should, as foreseen, rapidly be carried on” (Regierungsprogramm, s. 235). According the newspaper *Der Standard*, the chancellery holds a 2018 completion/finalization date of the work as probable, and it is surely no coincidence that this year is also the 100-anniversary of the Austrian republic (Der Standard, 12 November 2008).

Along the way, plans for a history museum have evoked strong opinions and feelings. The core problem seem to be that no one knows exactly why such a house is needed and what it should display, i.e. which history should be presented. Historians fear a political instrumentalization and the production of yet another carefully arranged success story of the Austrian republic.

Developments since the 1990s: processes of outsourcing

In the course of the 1990s, next to all institutions belonging to the cultural sphere (i.e. museums, theatres, operas) were subject to extensive reforms that resulted in new structures for their organisation and juridical status (Tschmuck 2008:11). A controversial process of outsourcing affected a number of Austria’s most well-known and well-visited institutes, such as *Kunsthistorisches Museum*, *Albertina* and *Obere Belvedere*. The first museum that underwent the change from being a primarily state-run institute to an independent institute with a management of its own was the *Kunsthistorisches Museum* (1999) and seven to ten others have followed. There are three kinds of Bundesmuseen that often, mistakenly, are subsumed under one heading: museums that hitherto had been state-owned and state-financed cultural institutions remained in state ownership and thus still belong to the republic of Austria but have received *Vollrechtsfähigkeit*. Those are: Albertina, Kunsthistorisches Museum (since 2011 also including Museum für Völkerkunde and Österreichischem Theatermuseum), Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig (MUMOK), Naturhistorisches Museum, Technisches Museum Wien (including Österreichischer Mediathek) and Österreichisches Nationalbibliothek. Museums still run by the state make up a second group: Volkskundemuseum, Ethnographisches Museum in Kitzsee, Pathologisch-anatomische Museum och Heeresgeschichtliches Museum. Museums tied to the universities constitute one last group of Bundesmuseen (Konrad 2008:20f). The first institute to be outsourced was the Tiergarten Schönbrunn in 1991 (Tschmuck 2008:21).

The *Vollrechtsfähigkeit* for the first group of museums briefly means that each museum operates as an independent and self-financing actor – in accordance with a market oriented, neo-liberal way of thinking. The reforms were part of a general ‘Privatisierungswelle’ in Austria during the 1990s that, according to Peter Tschmuck, most probably was further supported by the Austrian EU-membership in 1995 (Tschmuck 2008:20ff). Museum visitors have noticed this change in a very concrete way as entrance fees have been considerably raised since the reform was implemented; something that may constitute a discouraging barrier to some groups of potential visitors.

In some cases, an increased tendency to invest in ‘safe’ exhibitions with non-controversial and internationally well-known artists can be noticed since the outsourcing. This is valid for the art museums and especially for the *Graphiksammlung Albertina*, where exhibitions on Munch, Klee, Picasso, Rembrandt, Rubens, Goya and Chagall (just to mention a few) have replaced each other since 2003 (Tschmuck 2008:232f). In the case of the *Albertina*, the author Tschmuck relates this to its new ambition as a “*Universalmuseum der bildenden Kunst*”, a self-appointed position not without complications. It already has resulted in exhibition overlaps with other art museums (Ibid: 232f). Another phenomenon is that museums, since their outsourcing, tend to arrange exhibitions outside of their traditional and stated area/field of collections. The increased amount of exhibitions has also had priority over other core areas of the museums (collecting, archives, research).

In another study on management in the museum sphere and cultural politics, the process of reforming and re-organizing the institutes included in the *Bundesmuseum*-reform serve as a case study (Konrad 2009). After a detailed analysis, Heimo Konrad concludes that not much has changed within a number of spheres (Konrad 2009). The organization of the individual museums has, to a large extent, preserved earlier structures. Larger renovations or new buildings are, like before, being financed directly by the state and there are no traces of more cooperation between the *Bundesmuseen*; just to mention a few points made by Konrad. The state has been discontent with this and other developments and, in 2007, a revised ‘*BMuseen-G Novelle*’ was formulated. Seemingly paradox to the initial aims of the reform, the state is once again strengthening its control over the museums.

The Austrian museum landscape in the twenty-first century

Since 2001, yet another museum complex can be added to the list of prestigious museum projects – realised or only planned - with spectacular architecture, which, as we have seen, has a long-standing tradition in Vienna. In the mid-1980s, the ever present lack of room for collections and exhibitions led to a proposal that the area of the former *Hofstallungen*, the baroque stables from 1725, that later long served as a fairground (*Messepalast*) should be converted into a museum. Initiatives came from the national government. Brainstorming followed by an architectural competition and resulted in a winning proposal for a museum/cultural centre in 1990. Construction work would begin eight years later, in 1998, after a number of compromises had been made, and an official inauguration followed in 2001.

The *MuseumsQuartier* presents itself with different museums, shops, event locations and cafés on an area measuring 60,000 square meters. That size matters is reflected in the marketing: The MQ “is one of the ten largest cultural complexes in the world“, it can display “Vienna's longest Baroque façade”, the MUMOK “is the largest museum for modern and contemporary art in Central Europe” while the Leopold Museum holds “the world's largest collection of works by Egon Schiele” (quotes from the homepage www.mqw.at). With its conglomerate of architectural styles, spanning from the baroque eighteenth century buildings to the modern and sober shell limestone façade of the Leopold museum, it constitutes a stage where an international audience can meet and consume essential parts of the proud Austrian national heritage, the MQ thus adding yet another dimension to the ‘classic’ imperial city of Vienna. There is a tension embedded here: a desire for internationalization/globalization on the one hand and for tradition

and national sentiments on the other. This tension was evident in the debates that followed on the winning architectural proposal in 1990, where the first plans for the MQ, among other things, was described as a “*Fremdkörper*” (‘alien’) and as “non-Austrian” (quoted in de Frantz 2002:14). Public opinion demanded changes and there was, in general, a call for “*eine stärkere Historisierung des Projektes?*” (Gottfried 2001:140). Revisions followed where, for instance, the idea to construct a library tower ‘*Bibliotheksturm*’ was abandoned.

Democratization and inclusion of new groups

The question of the representation of (im)migrants in Austrian museums has only slowly found its way into discussions and in November 2010, the first conference on the subject took place („Museum und Migration“ was held at the Volkskundemuseum in Vienna, 18-20 November, 2010 and arranged by Forschungszentrum für historische Minderheiten (FZHM), Institut für Wissenschaft und Kunst (IWK), Österreichisches Museum für Volkskunde (ÖMV) in cooperation with the Museumsbund Österreich. Abstracts are available under:

http://www.univie.ac.at/iwk/mus_mig.html [6 February, 2011]).

According to Christine Hintermann, a migration researcher at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for European History and Public, the permanent exhibitions in the larger history museums in Austria to a large extent still remain “*migrationsfreie Zonen*” whereas temporary exhibitions devoted to subjects related to migration have increased in number

(http://www.univie.ac.at/iwk/mus_mig_abstracts.html [February 7, 2011]). Currently, there are no strong calls for the establishment of a migration museum in Austria. One explanation to the relative non-visibility of migrants in the country’s national narrative as reflected in, for instance, museums and textbooks, has, according to Hintermann, to do with the fact that post-war Austria preferred to centre on “reconciliation, consensus and homogeneity of the young nation state.” (Hintermann 2009:13). In such a tale there is little room for heterogeneity and Hintermann describes today’s Austria as “a reluctant immigration country” (Hintermann 2009).

Finally, the question of the existence of an Austrian national museum today shall be addressed once more. Marlies Raffler has put forward an interesting argument: could it be that an Austrian national museum is equal to the sum of existing *Landesmuseen* (the main museum of each federal state in Austria), together making up a kind of ‘*disloziertes Nationalmuseum*’ (‘dislocated National museum’)?

Case studies in chronological order

Universalmuseum Joanneum, Graz

Situated in Graz in the federal state Styria (*Steiermark*), the Joanneum – often mentioned in terms of a national museum - is an important example as it highlights several of the topics that are of interest to WP2. There is the individual Archduke Johann, brother of Franz II./I., as a driving force behind the foundation and further work, there is the Joanneum’s function as a source of inspiration and role-model to other museums of the time (e.g Franzensmuseum Brünn/Brno, Böhmisches Landesmuseum Prag/Praha) and further, there is the aspect of *Landesmuseen* and regional identity.

Starting with the *‘Nationalmuseum’*, it can be stated that there existed nothing like an ‘Austrian nation’ when the museum was initiated in 1808. Yet the deed of gifts and the statutes for the museum formulated three years later, in 1811, mention the institute as an *“Innerösterreichisches Nationalmuseum”*. But what exactly did the term refer to? As little as an Austrian nation existed, neither was there a “Styrian Nation” nor an “Inner-Austrian Nation” (Raffler 2007:151f). Instead of being a prosperous nation, Styria was part of a troubled *Vielvölkerstaat* with Napoleon as a constant threat. The empire’s defeat at Wagram led to the peace treaty of Schönbrunn in 1809, which meant great losses of land for emperor Franz I./II. Due to the many military attacks by Napoleonic armies and subsequent repression by the same, Styria was in a bad state at the time of the peace treaty and at the time when the museum was initiated. This has led to an interesting and seemingly paradox situation formulated by Marlies Raffler: Even though – or perhaps just because? – Styria belonged to one of the most underdeveloped regions of the Habsburg monarchy, the most progressive institute with the broadest impact is founded here; the Joanneum (Raffler, manus, s. 5).

The protagonist in the tale of the museum that later became the Joanneum that was inaugurated in 1811, is Habsburgian Archduke Johann (1782-1859), brother of Emperor Franz. He came to play an important role in the strengthening of Styrian identity and patriotism and is sometimes given the epithet ‘Prince of Styria’. Today, a statue of him in the centre of Graz reminds the visitor of his past achievements. Interestingly enough, Johann did not come from Styria/Steiermark and the decision to found a museum in Graz was, in fact, a second hand choice. His first intention had been to donate his private collection (main focus on history and science) to the University of Innsbruck in Tyrol (Sommer 2000: 136). Personal political involvement in conspiracies organising an uprising against Napoleon – with whom Franz II./I. currently was reconciled - led to a prohibition to visit Tyrol in 1813 and thus Johann turned to Styria. The collections were, at the time, rather ‘neutral’, or universal, in terms of what they represented and they could be displayed everywhere. With time, the collections expanded and also became more focused on Styria, but in a first phase they had to be, as Monika Sommer put it, “charged with Steiermark” (Ibid: 137). As mentioned earlier in this paper, Marlies Raffler sees the systematic *Landesaufnahme* a possible origin to the later provincial and national museums. The existence of such documents also influenced and inspired Johann, who formulated inquiries and calls for collection and also ordered texts regarding the “spiritual climate” in Styria.

The decision to display the collections in Graz was made in 1808. At first, the name *“Museum für Naturgeschichte, Chemie, Ökonomie und Technologie am Lyceum in Gratz”* was intended, since the idea was to put the collections in the already-existing Lyceum and not in a separate building, as a separate unit (Ibid: 137). Later, in 1847, when the museum had been established, an educational institution focusing on applied sciences and science became part of the institute, revealing Johann’s educational ambitions rooted in a late-enlightenment tradition of bringing together teaching and collecting (Raffler 2007:187).

Regarding the organisation of the museum, it was Johann’s wish that responsibility for the institute should go to the *“Steirischen Stände”* as being representatives for the collective; the *Land*. Johann himself remained head of the institute and three curators were appointed to monitor work and make sure that this was done according to Johann’s will during his absences (Sommer 2000: 139). Also today, even if the Joanneum, since 2003, has been detached from the local

government administration, representatives from the *Landesstellen* are part of the organisation. The re-organization was made in order for the Joanneum to “remain competitive in the international museum business” but is still owned by the Land. Steiermark.

From the very beginning, the museum was open to the public. Visitors could marvel the impressive and manifold collections, but they were also encouraged to display self-made art or products coming from the region, strengthening the bond between museum and region. Step by step additional collections were acquired or donated to the museum and with time the regional anchoring increased. Monika Sommer writes: “*Die im Joanneum präsentierten Exposita zeichnen ein Bild der Leistungen der Steiermark und ermöglichen durch bewusstes Aussparen und –wählen die Konstruktion eines identifikatorischen Selbstbildes.*” (free translation: „The objects exhibited in the Joanneum paint a picture of Styrian achievements and through a deliberate/conscious omission/exclusion and selection [of objects] it makes the construction of a identificatory self-image possible.”) (Sommer 2000: 140). This included ideas of progress and patriotism where central topics included the shift away from agriculture to industry and the French occupation (Ibid: 140). The museum’s active role in strengthening the regional identity continued also after Johann’s death, for instance, a cultural history museum and an art gallery were founded in 1887, some years later – in 1913 - the ethnological museum was added. Today the museum consists of a number of departments or ‘sub-museums’ where not all are located to Graz but are dispersed in the region. When the museum was re-named in 2009, it was argued that the name “Universalmuseum Joanneum” would reflect the many facets of life covered by the collections. A second argument was that the name was understood also outside the German-speaking parts of the world. It, of course, also gives different associations than the old name “*Landesmuseum Joanneum*” does, important in a time when museums are competing for visitors.

The Joanneum museum was assigned a representative role from early on and proudly shown to important visitors in Graz. But also persons with more specific interests in the institute *itself* visited Graz, such as Graf Kaspar Sternberg, founder of the Bohemian national museum in Prague or Franz Xaver Berger, later founder and director in Prague. Written information on the organisation of the Joanneum was collected in work proceeding the founding of museums in Brünn, Innsbruck, Lemberg and Laibach; also the statutes were adapted (Raffler 2007: 181). Johann himself was also actively involved in questions regarding the organisation of new museums in other parts of the *Vielvölkerstaat*. In this way, the Joanneum had an important function as a role model for both national museums and regional *Landesmuseen*. But even if, around 1820, there existed a ‘good example’, Emperor Franz instructed the *Akademie der Bildenden Künste* in Vienna to work on a design for the ‘ideal provincial museum’ (Ibid:182). These plans never came to be realised though and other *Landesmuseen* were founded independent of the existence of the Emperor’s plans, for instance in Innsbruck (Tyrol) 1823, Linz (Oberösterreich) 1833 and Salzburg in 1834 (Ibid: 127f).

During the last years, big investments have been made in order to cover the demand for representative premises for the ever-expanding Joanneum, looking more and more like a “*Gesamtkunstwerk*”. 2010 saw the construction start of the *Joanneumsviertel* that is associated with other spatial expansions like *MuseumsQuartier* in Vienna or *Museumsmeile* in Bonn. This year, Joanneum celebrates its 200-anniversary and thereby also “revitalize(s) its founding myths” (cf. Sommer 2000: 143). The homepage already proudly announces the festivities planned for the

celebration of “Austria’s oldest (public) museum” (see: <http://www.museum-joanneum.at/de/joanneum/ueber-das-joanneum/200-jahre-joanneum-1> [March 9, 2011]).

Kunsthistorisches Museum und Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna

The *Kunsthistorisches Museum* stands vis-à-vis the *Naturhistorisches Museum*, two neo-renaissance buildings (drawn by Carl Hasenauer and Gottfried Semper) separated by the *Maria-Theresien-Platz*. The architecture forms an intrinsic part of the *Denkmal* (‘monument’) formed by the imperial collections (cf. Kriller 2000). The exterior and interior and the collections match each other in terms of splendour and grandeur. The choice of architectural style was deliberate, creating references to universalism, the spirit of humanism and patron of the arts with the purpose of, as Beatrix Kriller has put it, to immortalize the House of Habsburg via the “*Transportmittel*” (‘mode of transport’) art (Kriller 2000: 217). In the *Kunsthistorisches Museum*, one of many examples of unrestrained self-depiction is a monumental roof painting reproducing prominent collectors, belonging to the House of Habsburg, placed in the mezzanine. Here especially, Emperor Rudolf II (1552-1612) should be mentioned, who formulated the first ideas for a common Austrian *Schatz- und Kunstkammer* (Treasure- and art cabinet) as well as Emperor Leopold I (1640-1705), who made the first attempts to centralise the dispersed collections (Seipel 1992: 57ff). In 1776, during the reign of Empress Maria Theresa, a decision to move art collections to the *Obere Belvedere* was made and from 1781, collections here were publicly accessible (Ibid: 60f). On Franz Joseph I’s initiative, the collections were rearranged and an inventory conducted. Thereby an attempt to clarify which objects could be considered as imperial property or state property was also made. A suitable building was needed and after many proposals and modifications construction work began in 1871 and the museum could finally be inaugurated in 1891 (Gottfried 2001). According to Wilfried Seipel, the collections do not so much represent the national and he prefers to describe it as a “*Gesamtkunstwerk des europäischen Kulturerbes*” (Seipl 1992: 68). On the museum’s homepage, the institute – today consisting of the art museum, the museum for ethnography, the Austrian theatre museum, the *Schatzkammer*, *Neue Burg* (incl. armory), *Wagenburg*, *Schloß Ambras* and the Theseus Temple (in the Volksgarten) - is presented as “one of the world’s biggest and most important museums” (<http://www.khm.at/de/kunsthistorisches-museum> [March 7, 2011]).

The *Naturhistorisches Museum*, the art museum’s ‘twin’, displays the enormous, universal collections that started with Emperor Franz I Stephan von Lothringen’s acquisition of, at the time, the most famous collection of natural history objects in 1750. After his early death in 1765, his widow, Maria Theresa, donated the collections to the state and wished them to be publicly accessible. On the homepage of the museum it is proudly written “the first museum in the spirit of Enlightenment was founded!

(http://www.nhm-wien.ac.at/museum/geschichte__architektur/museum_der_aufklaerung [March 10, 2011]). The collections were first displayed in the Hofburg, and construction for a new museum began in 1871 and was completed in 1881 (Gottfried 2000: 87ff). In 1889, Emperor Franz Joseph I opened the exhibition. If imperial patrons of the art are immortalised and ever-present in the *Kunsthistorisches Museum*, sculptures of famous scientists and canvas paintings of exotic countries and exotic epochs grace this building. Apart from nature history objects, the

museum also has an archaeological exhibition. Venus from Willendorf is perhaps most prominent exhibit.

Heeresgeschichtliches Museum, Vienna

A museum often mentioned in association with the term ‘*Nationalmuseum*’ is the military museum in Vienna, the *Heeresgeschichtliches Museum*. Today it belongs to the group of *Bundesmuseen* (see above), but is different to other museums in this category; the Ministry of Defence has direct responsibility over the museum.

The founding of the museum has a very direct political background. In the wake of the 1848 revolution, first plans for an army museum were launched as part of a new citadel (a “*Konzentrierten Artillerie-Establissement?*”) that was to be constructed southeast of the town centre. Hitherto, modern weapons as well as a historical weapon collection had been stored in the centre of Vienna, in the *Zeughaus*. This location proved too vulnerable when it was attacked and stormed by revolutionaries in October 1848. In the following year, the new emperor, Franz Joseph I, signed a decision to transfer forces as well as military equipment to a new building complex southeast of the town centre. The winners of the architectural competition quickly produced plans for a citadel hosting ‘all military needs’. Apart from premises such as caserns and store of arms, the construction of a more representative building was also part of the plan (Zatschek 1960: 9). Originally, this building was intended to host the weapons of the infantry as well as the imperial collection of arms. During the long construction phase, many changes were made and gradually the scope of the museum was modified, increasingly focusing on the history and glory of imperial Austria. The museum was to be a place where “... *die gesamte bewaffnete Macht und alle Volksstämme der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie wiederfinden sollten.*” (Rauchensteiner 2000a: 78). Statues depicting the most prominent rulers and commanders; series of wall paintings with motifs taken from Austrian history and the allegory statue ‘Austria’ all emphasise the splendour and greatness of the Habsburgian Empire – as well as the nation. In order to portray Austrian history accurately, historians were involved in the composition of the different motifs (Rauchensteiner 200b: 4). When the museum was finally inaugurated in 1891 - note: when the museum had been inaugurated in 1856, in the presence of Emperor Franz Joseph, it had been far from complete) - it did not host the collections that had originally been intended for display. The vast collection of arms soon moved to the *Kunsthistorisches Museum* and the army museum, more and more, took the form of a history museum.

During the war years, the museum was instrumentalized by the NS-reign and displayed temporary propaganda exhibitions on campaigns, the direction of the museum then in Berlin. The building was heavily bombed in 1944-45 and was later also subject to looting (Rauchensteiner *et al* 2005). Shortly after the war when rebuilding began, objects from other museums were acquired and a new collection took shape. Also, a new name for the museum was considered as the name “*Heeresmuseum*” seemed unsuitable. There were proposals for the term “*Nationalmuseum*”, and Manfred Rauchensteiner states that there was hardly any other museum better suited to demarcate Austria from Germany and its history than the army museum (Rauchensteiner 2000a: 79). It was museum director Alfred Mell that, in 1946, had expressed the wish to integrate the museum in a - at the time not existing - “*Österreichisches Nationalmuseum*” in the *Neue Hofburg* (Rauchensteiner *et al* 2005:39f; 129). Discussions in the Ministry of Education

were not in favour of this idea, but noted that it this very “ambitious title” might a suitable term somewhat later (Original quote: „Diese Bezeichnung dürfte später, nachdem das Museum wieder in Erscheinung getreten ist, vielleicht am Platze sein. Dermalen erscheint diese sehr anspruchsvolle Bezeichnung noch verfrüht.“ (quoted in Rauchensteiner *et al* 2005:41).. However, the proposal “*Vaterländisches Museum*” did not evoke the same feelings! But finally the name “*Heeresgeschichtliches Museum*” was chosen.

The recent (2005) publication on the destruction and rebuilding of the museum is entitled “Phoenix aus der Asche” and tells the story of loss, dissolution and the gradual “resurrection” (Rauchensteiner 2005 et al). To the reader, it much resembles the conventional narrative: the tale of Austria’s post-war history as an success story with emphasis on new beginnings and restoration. Franz Kaindl, former director of the museum (1983-1992), describes it as a military museum, but, apart from that, also as “a history national museum of international dimension” (Kaindl 1992: 280. Today, the museum is presented as a “*Gesamtkunstwerk*” with its many different collections held under one roof (<http://www.hgm.or.at/107.html#c259> [14 March, 2011]).

The *Heeresgeschichtliches Museum* was never renamed as part of an “Österreichisches Nationalmuseum” but as we have seen, discussions on such a museum in the shape of a museum for contemporary history (mainly post-1945) are still ongoing. Among the active participants in this debate, director of the *Heeresgeschichtliches*; Manfred Rauchensteiner, advocated a “*Haus der Republik*”, to take over where the exhibition in the *Heeresgeschichtliches Museum* ends (post-1945).

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Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Österreichisches Galerie Belvedere, Vienna	1781	1770	Imperial	<i>Bundes-museum mit vollrechts-fähigkeit*</i>)	Art (Medieval-Contemporary)	Universal, educational	Middle Ages-Today	Baroque, prominent.
Universal-museum Joanneum, Graz	1811	1808	Archduke Johann, <i>Steirischen Stände</i>	Ltd. Landes-museum Joanneum GmbH (2003)	Natural Sciences and Humanities	Universal values, education, encyclopedic, Styria	All encompassing	Different buildings, new under construction. Centre of Graz.
Albertina, Vienna	1822 (first public access)	1776, Grund-ungs-urkunde	Royal: Duke Albert von Sachsen-Teschen	<i>Bundes-museum mit vollrechts-fähigkeit (since 2000) *</i>)	Art (Graphic collection)	Austria and international	Middle Ages-contemporary	Palais Albertina, prominent.
Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna	1864/1877	1863	Imperial (Franz Joseph I), also: Rudolf von Eitel-berger	<i>Bundes-museum mit vollrechts-fähigkeit*</i>)	Design and Architecture (also Contemporary)	National with global ambitions	Middle Ages-contemporary	Purposely designed building in historicist style (neo-renaissance).
Heeres-geschicht-liches Museum, Vienna	1856/1891	1848	Imperial Kaiser Franz Joseph I	State: Ministerium für Landwehr-verteidigung	Military History	Imperial Austria, Austria in the world	17 th c. - 1945	Purposely designed, historicist style. South of town centre.

Natur-historisches Museum, Vienna	1889	(1750), 1857	Imperial (Franz I and Franz Joseph I)	<i>Bundes-museum mit vollrechts-fähigkeit*</i>	Natural History, Pre-history	Universal, encyclopedic	All encompassing	Purposely designed, neo-renaissance style. Prominent location die Ringstraße (part of the Kaiser-forum).
Kunst-historisches Museum, Vienna	1891	1864	Imperial (Kaiser Franz Joseph I)	<i>Bundes-museum mit vollrechts-fähigkeit*</i>	Art, Cultural History	Europe, Greek-Roman, Middle East Egypt	Prehistory-Late 18 th c.	Purposely designed neo-renaissance style. Prominent location die Ringstraße, (part of the Kaiser-forum).
Öster-reichisches Museum für Volkskunde	1894	1894	Private society	State	Ethnology	Originally intended as a “Museum des Viel-völker-staates”	17 th c. - today	Museum hosted in a the baroque Garten-palais Schönborn, nearby the Ringstraße.
Technisches Museum, Vienna	1918	1879/1907	Private (W. A. Exner)	<i>Bundes-museum mit vollrechts-fähigkeit</i>	Applied sciences and technique	National/Austria, education	18 th c. - today	Historicising, close to Schönbrunn.

Museums-Quartier, Vienna	2001	1986/87	State	Republik Österreich: 75% Bund, 25% Gemeinde Wien	Mostly Art	National with global ambitions	19 th c. - contemporary	Conglomerate of buildings spanning from the 18 th /19 th c. - contemporary architecture. Prominent, building a block alongside the Ringstraße.
„Haus der Geschichte der Republik Österreich	Not yet realised	(1946)/1998	State	Intended to be a Bundes-museum	Austrian history, 1918-today	Austrian in an European + international context	---	---

NOTE: Several of the above listed museums have additional collections displayed in other parts of Vienna/Austria.

Just main collections/buildings are mentioned in the table.

*) = Outsourced, but still state-owned, museums with responsibility for management and finances.



National Museums in Belgium

Felicity Bodenstein

Summary

The problematic and laboriously constructed nature of the Belgian nation is, to a large extent, reflected in the structure and distribution of Belgium's federal/national museums. The complexity and contradictory nature of the administrative organisation of the Belgian state led one of its leading contemporary artists to comment that 'maybe the country itself is a work of art' (Fabre, 1998: 403). Its national museums - those which receive direct federal funding - are the result of a series of projects that founded the large cultural institutions of Brussels in the nineteenth century, decreed by the Belgian monarchy that was itself only founded in 1830. Brussels, the largely French speaking capital of the nation situated geographically in the centre of a Flemish speaking region, is since 1830 the seat of a constitutional monarchy and democratically elected parliament that governs over the two very distinct linguistic and cultural areas: the northern Dutch-speaking Flanders and southern French-speaking Wallonia. In his article on 'What, if Anything, Is a Belgian?', Van der Craen writes: 'Belgium has been at the centre of a heated debate since its creation. The relatively young country has had little time to develop any nationalistic feelings in comparison to, for instance, the Netherlands or France' (2002: 32). In constructing a nationalist discourse through the creation of national institutions such as museums, the Belgian monarchy looked very much to the French model for inspiration, and the strong influence of France, both politically and culturally, can be clearly retraced in the history the *Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique*. In the parliamentary debates concerning the organization and support of the arts, France appears as the preponderant model (Montens, 2001: 14).

Today, the relative inertia of Belgium's federal institutions is indicative of the problems that the Belgian federal state has been experiencing in the face of rising regionalism and the transfer of the management of cultural affairs to the communities. As has been pointed out by numerous critics, its national museums, the *Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale* and the *Musée royal de l'Armée et d'Histoire militaire* especially, can be characterized by the 'dusty' character of their museography. Of the *Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale* (1910) an American scholar wrote: 'The fundamental message remains the same: when going through the revolving doors of the museum's main entrance, one has the feeling of entering into a liminal space, frozen in time' (Muteba, J., 2003: 61).

Three periods are of capital importance to understand the evolution of Belgium's national museums: the French occupation at the end of the eighteenth century (1793-1815) – although no museums were really established this was a crucial period for the crystallisation of a public consciousness of artistic heritage; the years following Belgian independence in 1830 with the decision of the city of Brussels to sell its collections to the state (1843) and finally the period of the jubilees and the great national, universal and colonial exhibitions (1880-1930). Recent decades have, in stark contrast to what can be observed in other countries (for example Luxembourg), seen no major projects initiated by Belgium's federal cultural authorities, and this despite the fact

the museum as an institution is of growing popular appeal. One may however mention the creation in 2005 of the BELvue Museum that tells the history of Belgium as structured by the reigns of its successive monarchs.

This is not to imply however that there have not been major developments under the control of the government of the different communities – but simply to underline that the dynamics of museum creation have moved away from the central federal powers.

The identification of Belgium's most important national/federal museums poses no problem of definition of any kind – though none of them carry the epithet 'national' but are denominated as royal. There are exactly five major 'royal' museums, all situated in Brussels and all directly funded by the federal government, they form an exemplary group to illustrate the classic national museum typology with a national art museum, an archaeology and history museum, an ethnology/colonial museum, a natural sciences museum and a military museum.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique	1801	1797	Monarchy	Municipal, State (1842). Federal Science Policy Dept. today	Fine Arts	Old Master paintings, all schools. Strong representation of Belgian/Flemish artists.	11 th to 19 th c.	Classical architecture, Brussels.
Muséum de l'Institut Royal des Sciences naturelles de Belgique	1848	1846	Monarchy	State Federal Science Policy Dept. today	Anthropology, Zoology, Ecology, Mineralogy Paleontology	Materials from Belgium but include international specimens.	Geological time to present day.	Brussels.
Musées royaux d'art et d'histoire - Musée du Cinquantenaire	1880 in its current buildings	1835	Monarchy	Princely collection, Federal Science Policy Dept. today	History, Archaeology	Universal collection world history and art. Antiquity, European and non-European decorative arts.	Prehistory to 1000 AD to present day.	Beaux-Arts style classical construction, Brussels.
Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale (formerly known as the <i>Musée du Congo Belge</i> - 1960)	1910	1897	Monarchy	State Federal Science Policy Dept. today	Ethnography	Museum of Belgian Congo after independence 1960 including Africa and Oceania.	17 th to 20 th c.	Beaux-Arts style classical construction, Tervuren.
Musée royal de l'Armée et d'Histoire militaire	1911	1910		State, Federal department of Defence	National Heritage and Military History	Collection of arms, uniforms, and military equipment.	17 th to 20 th c.	Beaux-Arts style classical construction, Brussels.
Musée BELvue	2005	1992 (former museum of the Belgian dynasty)	Monarchy	King Baudouin Foundation	National History	History of Belgium 1830, the federal state, reign of King Baudouin.	1830 to 1990.	Place des Palais in Brussels, next to the Royal Palace, Bellevue Hotel.

Introduction: A brief history and geography of Belgium's national museums

The last decade has seen the development of a historiography dedicated to questions of cultural policy and also to the history of artistic institutions such as museums (Kurgan-van Hentenryk, Montens, 2001). Christoph Loir (2004) has studied the origins of Belgian museums and cultural policy in detail. One might observe however that the history of other types of institutions has received far less attention.

As opposed to the other major European museums, such as the Prado or the Louvre, the royal museums of Belgium are not rooted in any major early modern princely collections (Roberts-Jones, 1987: 9) - the collections of curiosities and arms of the dukes of Brabant and later of the archduke of Austria that were displayed in the royal arsenal of the Coudenberg palace (today the location of the Royal palace of Brussels) in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries went back to Vienna in the eighteenth century.

The secularisation of artworks from the Jesuits and the convents under Habsburg rule did not lead to the creation of any museums (Loir, 2001: 44), however the French invasion greatly hastened the process of secularisation of works of religious art. The French revolutionaries began by confiscating major masterpieces of Flemish painting in 1794; this provoked a growing awareness of the territory's artistic heritage – an exodus that served as a traumatic catalyst for the development of a sense of national heritage. Subsequent campaigns also led to the creation of depots and of municipal collections in Antwerp, Brussels and Gand between 1802 and 1804. The French decree that founded France's major municipal museums also founded the museum of Brussels, which opened its doors to the public in 1803.

Thus, quite paradoxically, the museums of Belgium have been very much influenced by the evolution of France's national museums due to its occupation of Belgian territory during a period when it was developing its own republican museum system. Belgium's first museums in sense developed with, and in reaction to, the occupying force. Although no official 'national' museum could be created during the period of French rule under the Republic or the Empire, many projects were put into place and the core of the collections that were nationalised in the 1830s was established during that period (cf. the *Musée royal des beaux-arts de Belgique*), notably the paintings collection.

In 1835, the new king of Belgium declared the creation of an official royal museum in Brussels that was to be based on the collections that had been brought together in the buildings of the former court and which along with paintings also housed a cabinet of natural history and sciences. The collections of the city of Brussels were officially acquired by the state in 1843 to form what was to become the *Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique*, but also the basis for the *Muséum de l'institut royal des sciences naturelles de Belgique* founded in 1846 and the basis of what came to be known later as the *Musées Royaux d'art et d'histoire*. The idea behind the creation of the museum of fine arts especially – indeed the acquisition of the city's collection of paintings was considered to be the most important element of the whole affair - was to create a national institution exclusively dedicated to the productions of the most noteworthy Belgian painters, sculptors and architects. It was hoped that this would fuel a much-needed sense of national pride (Stengers, 2002: 15). This fundamental decision in terms of national cultural policy was accompanied by the organisation of an artistic salon, the creation of a commission for the

preservation of historical monuments and a royal commission for a series of statues representing Belgium's greatest men. The debate that arose at the beginning of the 1840s surrounding the opening of these museums shows the difficulty of creating a national centralized institution in a nation where local powers and sentiment are particularly strong (Kalck, Michèle Van, 2003).

The last decades of the century saw the development of the two major museum poles of the city of Brussels with the *Parc du Cinquantenaire*, created for the 1880 anniversary celebrations of the Belgian nation and the expansion of the *Mont des arts*. The *Cinquantenaire* marked a period of distinct reinforcement of a nationalist discourse. Indeed, the end of the nineteenth century saw the elaboration of a theory of the Belgian 'soul' (Dumont, 2001: 38) in a famous text by Edmond Picard published in 1897 (Gubin, 2002: 121) as the product of two races, the child 'Belgium' was the combined result of the north and south as mother and father. It was hoped that the celebrations for the jubilee would appease the internal conflicts that the country was experiencing at this time; the so-called *guerre scolaire* was indeed dividing the country between clerical and liberal camps. In this context, the celebration of national art was the strongest argument in the discourse of unification that characterized the celebrations (Deneckere, 2005 : 7), a thin veneer that could only barely hide the dividing forces at work within the country (Dumont, 2001: 28).

It was in the buildings constructed for the *Centenaire* that the universal collections of the *Musées royaux d'art et d'histoire* (as opposed to the more clearly national character of the collections of the *Musée des Beaux-arts*) were relocated in 1885. The Universal Exhibition of 1897 also hosted in the park was the original starting point for the *Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale*, which later moved to a building by Charles Girault in *Tervuren* and opened to the public there in 1910. The park also became the home of *Musée royal de l'Armée et d'Histoire militaire* whose origins go back to 1910, the year of the following Universal Exhibition in Brussels, when a young army officer Louis Leconte assembled a collection of 800 objects destined to illustrate Belgium's military history. It may be considered with the *Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale* as a reflection of colonial policy and nationalist sentiment that needs to be considered with particular intention.

As we can see from this short overview, most of the federally funded national Belgian museums are situated in Brussels, home to the monarchy and the parliament. The *Musée royal des Beaux-Arts d'Anvers* (Antwerp) may also be considered as a national (royal) museum. In many ways there was no absolute cultural centralisation in 19th century Belgium: the (national) art salons are organised each year alternatively in Brussels, Gent and Antwerp, the national Art Competition (*Prix de Rome*) was organised in Antwerp, the two national Art Schools (Académies Royales) were in Antwerp and in Brussels.

Recent studies of the history of cultural policy in Belgium underline the fact that state subsidies for the arts were however unequally distributed before the 1970s and there was little sense of proportion in relation to the value of the artworks and the size of the museums. The museums of Gent, Liège or Bruges, although extremely rich, received very little state financing in comparison to Brussels, a fact that was perceived as an injustice by the Flemish members of parliament (Montens, 2001: 16).

This may have influenced the negative perception of a relatively strong concentration of institutions in Brussels which came under criticism from the beginning of the twentieth century onwards and has remained a subject of unresolved tension though it has lessened since the 1970s when in the context of the federal state, the communities were given jurisdiction over cultural

matters, including most museums. In the context of the current federal structure of Belgian government, recent historiography tends to present the development of “national” cultural institutions in Belgium as a failed attempt to create a central national state by establishing most major institutions in the capital.

Of course, Brussels was, and is, a space of conflict in relation to the nation as Van der Craen (2002 : 27) points out. In a city whose role is to reconcile two different linguistic communities, Francophone cultures appears nevertheless as dominant quite simply because of the population figures: only 15 to 20 percent of the city’s population speak Flemish, and only 2.5 percent of Belgium’s Flemish speaking population live in Brussels. This is in stark contrast to the 33 percent of Belgium’s French speaking population that has its residence in the city meaning that the national museums of Belgium are, above all, easily accessible to Belgium’s French speaking community.

National museums and cultural policy in Belgium

The history and geography of Belgium’s national museums on the one hand reflects a centralized system, with a strong concentration of federal institutions in the capital of Brussels. However in parallel to the creation of such state institutions as the *Musée royal des Beaux-arts*, the structure of Belgium’s artistic institutions as a whole and the distribution of cultural heritage has also been strongly influenced by the historically divided character of power in the territory of the Belgian state since the creation of the United Provinces in 1648. Ruled by the Spanish and Habsburg monarchies from afar, the different provinces maintained a high degree of autonomy with individual towns establishing themselves as independent cultural actors and centres. According to Carl Strikwenda (2006, 81) it was ‘only these historic liberties’ which ‘formed a basis of identity among the ‘Belgian’ provinces at the beginning of the 19th century’.

Belgium’s national museums however are the nearly exclusive heritage of the system of support for the arts defined after the independence of the Belgian Kingdom in 1831 under the rule of Leopold I, in a sense a system that has, since the 1970s, appeared as a failure (Dumont, 2001: 26). According to Montens (2001: 10) one cannot identify the expression of a national cultural policy in today’s sense - that is to say a systematic and deliberate plan of cultural action that is cross disciplinary by nature – in Belgium before the end of the Second World War. For Dumont (2001: 26) indeed it can only really be identified from the 1960s onwards, meaning that the elaboration of a cultural policy coincided with the development of the federal state. This rather strong interpretation should however be considered with some care as it does not seem to take into account the very different nature of what one might (perhaps somewhat anachronistically) call cultural policy for the nineteenth century. This modern perspective, such as presented by Dumont, indeed considers the true nature of the Belgian nation to be not central but federal and so tends to describe the policies of the past with a somewhat negative bias.

Indeed, cultural affairs were a strong element of national construction during the first decades after the establishment of the Belgian state. The fine arts in particular were identified as a strong vector for the development of national sentiment and for the consolidation of its still fragile political legitimacy. A notion clearly expressed by the senator, the count Renesse, before the parliament in 1844: ‘Patriotic sentiment is composed of the memory of great men, of the admiration inspired by the great masterpieces of national genius and lastly by the love that one

may have for its institutions, its religion and the glory of the country' (Montens, 2001: 13). It was clearly felt that the role of the arts was to edify the citizen, to teach him of Belgium's rich past and to illustrate that great men had inhabited its territories.

This discourse was developed by the celebrations of the 50th, 75th and 100th anniversaries of Belgian independence in 1880, 1905 and 1930 respectively, as events that sought to overcome the fragmented structure of the nation to establish social cohesion, a process in which a very important role was given to the arts and their promotion (Beyen, 2001: 75). Subsequently this called for important government investments. These events were important moments in the crystallization of projects and indeed in the building of Belgium's museums: most notably Balat's *Palais des Beaux-arts* and the *Parc du cinquantenaire* which houses the *Musées royaux d'art et d'histoire* and the *Musée royal de l'armée à Bruxelles*. Beyen (2001: 78) identifies what he defines as the culture of the nation as the *Gesamtkunstwerk* reflected in the celebrations for the Jubilees (and for the different National and Universal exhibitions); according to him the idea of national genius could unify different strands of political, artistic, industrial, popular, literary and historical thought present in the country. A romantic and essentialist approach to the idea of the nation defined the jubilee and its resulting institutions as contexts for the unification of the most heterogeneous cultural elements.

The beginning of the twentieth century appears as a period of particular importance with a considerable increase in state financing for the arts, which tend to have been privileged over support for literature and the sciences. In 1907, a ministry for the Sciences and the Arts is created for the first time, leading to the creation of an independent direction of the arts, letters and public libraries (Montens, 2001: 10-12). Between 1900 and 1930 the national institutions all experienced a period of growth and important new museums were founded. Despite these efforts and the creation of large national institutions in Brussels, Montens and Dumont (2001) point to the absence of a real cultural policy capable of instilling a feeling of national adhesion/identity. Dumont in particular accuses the absence of a policy for the democratisation of access to culture, although one may add that Belgium does not appear to be any less advanced in this field than most other European countries (2001: 26). He accuses the 'false intuition' that led the state to believe that the cultural identity of Belgium could coincide with what was essentially one common meeting space: Brussels. How would both Flemish and Francophone culture unite in an area where Flemish was spoken by a minority of the population? This situation did indeed lead to a centrifugal movement away from the culture proposed by the monarchy and the government in Brussels (Dumont, 2001: 27).

The regionalist movement underway since the 1960s finds its origins in the historical situation of the Belgian territories before the independence of 1830 and its strength in the weakness of the state's efforts to overcome linguistic and cultural divisions reinforced by economic inequalities. It resulted in a series of reforms that culminated in 1993 with the creation of a tiered system of government.

Since the 1970s, Belgium has progressively evolved towards a federal state made up of territorial regions and linguistic communities. The federal government is based in Brussels, and delegates all local affairs to three language communities (Flemish, French and German), but also to three regions (Flemish, Walloon and Brussels-Capital) each with their own parliament and

government. The communities and regions do not consistently coincide with each other, notably the Brussels-Capital Region is both part of the Flemish and of the French community.

The history of cultural policies since the 1970s must therefore be considered by looking at the combined activities of the three independent linguistic communities and those of the Federal state. Belgian cultural policy is structured by two underlying principles since the 1970s: firstly the autonomy of the communities in terms of their elaboration of a cultural policy and secondly by the ideological and philosophical pluralism that is supposed to guide their cultural activities. For Dumont, the first of these principles is the result of the failure of the Belgium state to unite its citizens through the recognition of a common cultural heritage that is readily accessible to all. The second principle of pluralism as defined in the federal constitution is a specific product of Belgian cultural policy (although one may compare it to the case of Switzerland), it is designed to ensure that the first principle of autonomy does not lead to the further isolation of the different communities in relation to each other (Dumont, 2001: 26). Each of the communities has indeed established their own independent institutions, traditions and structures of political influences (Janssens, 2010). Dumont (2001: 35) retraces the slow genesis of the ideological and philological pluralism back to 1919 and the nomination of the Walloon socialist, an ardent advocate of artistic eclecticism, Jules Destrée to the position of Minister for the sciences and the arts. Destrée had famously written to King Léopold II in 1912: 'Let me tell you the truth, the grand and horrifying truth ... there are no Belgians.... No, Majesty, there is not such a thing as a Belgian soul' (quoted by Van der Craen, 2002: 25).

One of the first and most important reforms (1980) made to allow for a new reattribution of power to the newly defined authorities was related to cultural affairs (including museums, libraries and archives). Since 1980 these sectors are handled separately by a specific Ministry created in each of the communities: French Community: Unit Patrimony and Visual Arts of the Directorate General Culture; Flemish Community: Unit Visual Arts and Museums of the Administration of Culture; German-speaking Community: Department of Cultural Affairs (Van Dinter, 2008). We might add that whilst the communities thus became responsible for cultural affairs, notably museums, the regions were given responsibility over historical monuments and the conservation of archaeological sites.

This division of control has meant that the different communities work separately without consulting each other or following any kind of plan of cooperation. The most notable absence is that of an official body or agency to coordinate their efforts, this of course also implies the absence of any form of consensus or clear expression of national cultural policy that would integrate the federal museums into a larger perspective – or seek to give them greater territorial coverage by creating antennae institutions, as is the case in Switzerland.

This is all the more remarkable as we can find many efforts of coordination at other levels. The Brussels Museum Council for example, or *Conseil bruxellois des Musées* is a non-profit association established in 1995 as a result of the initiative of about 15 curators whose main aim was to find an efficient way of promoting tourism in Brussels. It regroups 80 museums and is particularly sensitive to making sure that all of its activities and events are equally available to both Francophone and Flemish speakers.

Another clear indication of the fragmented system of administration is the absence of a website regrouping along the same lines of criteria all the institutions officially recognised as

museums in Belgium (as may be found again in other countries). Instead, associations and councils representing the different communities provided this information separately (Van Dinter, 2008).

Major Federal museums can be found on the website of the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office and on that of the Brussels Museum Council ('Brusselse Museumraad/Conseil Bruxellois des Musées' - BMR- CBM). The museums of the French Community however can be found on the official portal for museums in Wallonia, <http://www.lesmuseesenwallonie.be> and the association 'Musées et Société en Wallonie' (MSW) (Museums and Society in Wallonia). The Flemish Community has a website of about 300 museums in Flanders and in Brussels. A separate list of the museums officially recognized by the Flemish Community is provided on their website (ca. 50 museums).

Beyond this, the museums of the different communities are classified according to different categories. The French community applies the following categories: art; sacred art; archaeology; regional; ethnography; technology; history; science; literature; special collections. The Flemish have established five categories: cultural-historical museums; modern art museums; ancient art museums; museums for applied arts and technology museum, whilst the German-speaking community does not divide museums into categories related to the type of collections (Van Dinter, 2008 : 25).

An obvious result of this process of regionalisation is to have quite neatly stopped most national projects, and we find no new national museums in Belgium funded by the federal government (there is a marked difference here to the surrounding countries that have all seen the creation of new national museums in the last thirty years, be it France, Germany, the Netherlands or Switzerland).

In this context, an interesting case is the *musée BELvue* established in 2005, to mark the 175th anniversary of the establishment of the Belgian nation. It is not run by the federal government but is managed and financed by the King Baudouin Foundation (an independent public benefit foundation, created by 1976, when Baudouin I (1930-1993) celebrated his 25th anniversary as King of Belgium) and as part of this foundation it has a particular status of public museum. The *musée BELvue* is the only museum of Belgian national history: it presents a chronological narrative of the history of the Belgian nation from the perspective of its monarchy. Bellvue, is of course a reference to the name of the former hotel in which it is housed – however, with the adopted typography 'BELvue', it seeks to underline the notion of Bel, for Belgium and vue – as in an all-over view of Belgian history. Interestingly, the museum has maintained quite a low profile and no critical studies or analysis of its creation have been published to this day.

The transfer of cultural affairs to the governments of the communities explains the absence of involvement from the federal government in museum building. This observation is all the more significant if we consider that in the regions of Wallonia and Brussels, 50% of all the museums that can be accounted for today have been created since 1977 (Mairesse, 2004: 158). A good example of the impact of this regionalism on museum geography is the case of the open-air museums of country architecture. In other countries such as Switzerland (museum of Ballenberg) or the Netherlands (The Dutch Open Air museum of Arnhem) we find national institutions that are representative of rural architecture from all over the country. However, although the Flemish philologist, Henri Longeman had called for a Belgian open air museum in 1909, no national

institution was ever founded (Jong and Skougaard, 1992: 155): the open air museum of Bokrijk, was opened in 1953, it is dedicated to rural architecture and daily life for the Flemish region. Its counterpart, the museum of rural life in the Walloon region was founded in 1971 and opened in 1981 – no serious attempt appears to have been made to found a nationally representative institution (even if it is to underline national diversity, as it is the case in Switzerland).

Meanwhile federal authorities have maintained the administration and continued to financially support certain scientific establishments, including a handful of large museums situated in the capital: *Musées royaux des beaux-arts de Belgique*; *Musée royal de l'Afrique centrale*, *Musées royaux d'art et d'histoire - Musée du Cinquantenaire*; *Muséum de l'Institut Royal des Sciences naturelles* de Belgique. To this group we must add a handful of other museums, financed by the federal Ministry for Finance or Defense, such as the Museum of the Royal Mint, in Brussels, the *Musée royal de l'Armée et d'Histoire militaire* and the National Maritime Museum of Antwerp.

We have already established that the administration of culture and heritage is fragmented and somewhat haphazardly distributed. Indeed in the case of the French community, the competence for heritage is shared between the Regions (Wallonia and Brussels-Capital) and the community. The French Community's heritage policy is thus mainly focused on museums, the most important of which being the *Royal Mariemont* of the French Community.

In our table of Belgian national museums, we have listed some other museums titled as 'royal' or 'national' that are today funded and administered by one of the three communities, such the *Musée royal de Mariemont* (cf. table) initially a state run institution it is now under the administration/ownership of the French community. It includes a magnificent park and a collection of Greco-Roman antiquities as well as an important collection of regional antiquities assembled by Raoul Waroqué in the nineteenth century. One might also consider the case of the *Musée Royal des Beaux-Arts d'Anvers* founded in 1810, which is the most important museum run by the Flemish community; it housed the collection of one of the five academies that were directly financed by the Belgian state in the 1830s for the development of their museums (Loir, 2004: 9). It has come to house some of the greatest masterpieces of old Flemish masters. It also continually collected works by contemporary Belgian and foreign artists and today it has the largest collections of paintings by James Ensor in the world.

According to Mairesse (2004: 153) who studied the 405 museums of the regions of Brussels and Wallonia, the larger federal or municipal museums are hardly representative of this group taken as a whole in the subjects that they handle. Indeed what transpires as the great importance, even predominance of the Fine arts, disappears when we stop focusing on those large museums. He has shown that, whilst the major institutions occupy several clearly marked out territories, the other museums constitute a nebula of themes that is difficult to define and classify.

In this complex political context and in view of the fact that it seems difficult to envisage the creation of any new national museums in Belgium today, we might also ask ourselves whether certain museums, though perhaps not administered by federal government, may be considered to be of specific national resonance (cf. table below). This may be of interest to help gain a deeper understanding of specific aspects of national identity as, for example, projected through the life of specific historical figures related to the fine arts. The museum house of Rubens in Antwerp or James Ensor in Ostend are both related to the importance of a figure of great national artistic genius. Rubens as a Belgian artist became of particular importance after 1830; indeed one of the

first exhibitions organized by the *Musée des beaux-arts de Belgique* was a retrospective of Rubens' paintings (1840).

We have also included in our list the *Centre Belge de la Bande Dessinée* which is an associative museum founded by a group of professionals of cartoon drawing (both Francophone and Flemish speakers as underlined on the website) who together decided to promote a popular art form considered to be a national export. It is quite an exceptional institution as it is nearly entirely self-financing. Inaugurated by the king and queen of Belgium in 1989, it is housed in Brussels in a 1906 *art nouveau* building by Victor Horta (former Waucquez shops) and has become one of Brussels' most successful museums, welcoming 200 000 visitors per year.

On the other hand, we might also observe that certain of the museums financed by community or federal governments and carrying 'national' in their title (and there are not many) are not necessarily of any particular importance (National Museum of Linen, National Museum of the Playing Card).

Case studies in chronological order

Musées royaux des beaux-arts de Belgique

The *Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts* are considered to be the most popular and most visited of museum complexes in Belgium: at the heart of the capital, it is under this denomination that we find united, the so called *Mont des arts*: the *Musée d'Art ancien*, the *Musée d'Art moderne* and the *Musée Magritte*. It also managed the *Musée Meunier* and the *Musée Wiertz*. They depend on the Royal Museum of Fine Arts (as the Musée Magritte), which is at the Mont des Arts. In celebration of the 200th anniversary, the *Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique* produced an important history of the institution allowing for a detailed account of its history (Van Kalck, 2003).

We can observe the importance of national art in the construction of Belgian identity by reading Deneckere's introduction to the history of Belgium during the *Belle Époque*. On the first page we find a quote from a speech given by the senator Henri't Kint de Roodenbeke at one of the many ceremonies organized to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Belgium independence, in this case the inauguration ceremony on the 2nd of August, 1880 of the first Palace/Museum especially built for the fine arts, designed by king Leopold II's architect Alphonse Balat, the new *Palais des Beaux-Arts* in Brussels. She claimed on this occasion that 'Art in Belgium has its roots in the customs, in the taste and in the character of the nation itself' (Deneckere, 2005 : 7).

Though officially founded thanks to the decree of Napoleon's French Minister for the Interior, Chaptal, in 1801, the idea and the desire to found a museum in the city of Brussels may be dated back to the last decade of the eighteenth century. In the decree that named most of France's important burgeoning municipal museums, Brussels is designated as one of the four most important cities to receive depots from the Louvre (out of a chosen fifteen cities altogether). This is relatively ironic, as the initiative to create a museum for the city had been provoked by the confiscations of the French revolutionary armies from 1793 onwards. At this time, Charles-Antoine de Santander (1752-1813), the librarian of the central school of the Dyle, a man fascinated by the arts and the sciences and an avid bibliophile, had the idea of establishing a picture gallery with paintings that the French representatives had deemed of insufficient importance to be sent to Paris. The paintings, the former property of the suppressed convents

and abbeys, of aristocrats who had fled the country and of the seats of corporations, were stockpiled in depots (as was also the case in France). The idea was developed by the director of the Academy of Painting and Sculpture, Bosschaert, who resorted to the same arguments propounded in the pamphlets that supported the opening of the Louvre in 1793 to create a museum as a centre for the education and betterment of young artists (Roberts-Jones, 1987:13). The museum, founded in Brussels in 1803 on the basis of the Chaptal decree, was significantly expanded thanks to the restitution of a large number of revolutionary confiscations in 1815. The museum was situated in the Royal palace during the Dutch regime that succeeded French rule.

The court was an important arena for the promotion of intellectual life in Brussels and already housed several cultural institutions such as a library, a scientific cabinet of natural history, forming the basis for the future *Mont des arts* (Roberts-Jones, 1987:20). With the creation of the Belgian State in 1830, the provisional government named a new director for the museum but its administration and property remained that of the city of Brussels. After the enthronisation of Léopold I in 1831, the Ministry for the Interior transferred all of the contemporary works that it owned and that it had bought at recent exhibitions to the municipal gallery.

It was the royal decree of the 7th of January 1835 that founded the modern national institution for what was to be a 'national museum, exclusively dedicated to Belgium's most remarkable painters sculptors, engravers and architects' and by 1845 a special section of the museum was dedicated to living artists (Roberts-Jones, 1987:26). The difficult financial situation of the city of Brussels encouraged the sale of its collections to the state in 1843 after long negotiations whose main object had been the paintings collections. The deal, however, also made the state the legal owner of the former royal palace and its chapel and a series of other buildings such as the *Porte de Hal*, one of the towers of the former city walls, the town library and the other scientific collections that had already been regrouped at the royal court (Loir, 2001: 43). The *Musée royal* declared its status officially on the 31st of March 1846. This fundamental decision in terms of national cultural policy was accompanied by the organisation of an artistic salon, the creation of a commission for the preservation of historical monuments and a royal commission for a series of statues representing Belgium's greatest men. The debate that arose at the beginning of the 1840s during the negotiations for the sale of the collection shows the difficulty of creating a national centralized institution in a nation where local powers and sentiment are particularly strong (Kalck, Michèle Van, 2003, 121). It is interesting to follow the evolution of the notion of a Belgian school of painting in the midst of this debate. Loir writes that, in the arguments of the *bourgmestre* of Brussels in 1840, one could read the beginning of a national appropriation of the Flemish school of painting. The old Flemish school and the so-called Belgian school were to become one and the same thing. Van Eyck, Rubens and all the other great masters were naturalized as Belgians (Loir, 2001: 49). The problem of the exodus of Flemish paintings is brought up again and again as the most stirring of heritage issues that the country faced.

Once the collections of the town of Brussels had been acquired by the state, the question of their localisation remained to be answered and the decision was rapidly made to maintain their place in Brussels. Loir underlines that, here for the first time, a collection was to be considered and was to represent Belgian national culture (Loir, 2001, 55). The collection of contemporary art remained beside that of the old masters until 1887 when the Palais Balat that had been built for the 1880 centenary was used to house the Museum for Ancient Art. Between 1850 and 1907 a

series of the paintings was isolated as having principally historic value and forming a so-called historical gallery that was to be reintegrated into the rest of the collections again in 1907 (Van Kalck, 2000:194).

As already stated, the museum's policy was, from the beginning, to collect only national art and its directors today, to a certain extent, regret the absence of many French or Dutch artists that could easily have been bought such as Monet, Renoir, Gauguin, Cézanne, Van Gogh and others who had all exhibited paintings in Brussels around 1900 at the time of the XX and the *Libre Esthétique* (Van Kalck, 2003: 16). For Van Kalck, the museum's principle was based on the universal value of art as a celebration of the state and its power, but it was also a collection founded in the context of romantic national particularisms – a perspective that forges its policy to this day.

Musées royaux d'art et d'histoire

The initiative for the creation of this museum of universal ambition and scope (art and archaeology of antiquity: Egypt, Near and Middle East, Iran, Greece, Rome and Etruscan, Byzantine; European decorative arts, Belgian national archaeology) also goes back to a royal decree established on the 8th of August 1835, just a few months after the decree that founded the principle of a museum for the fine arts. It was decided that a museum of ancient arms, armours, art objects and coins should be founded in the 'interest of the historical studies and of the arts' (*Musées royaux d'art et d'histoire. Antiquité*, 1988: 7). It was installed in the ground floor of the *Palais de l'Industrie* beneath the also newly founded *Bibliothèque royale*. With the rapid expansion of the collections, these were transferred to the *Porte de Hal* in 1847 where they became known as the *Musée royal d'Antiquités et d'Armures*. However, with the construction of the buildings on the *Parc du Centenaire* for the national celebrations of 1880, the antiquities found a new home in 1889, in the wing that would later become the *Musée royal de l'armée* whilst the arms remained in the *Porte de Hal*. The collections had expanded greatly to include many other fields and, inspired by the model of the South Kensington museum in London, it became the *Musées royaux des Arts décoratifs et industriels*.

It was organized according to different techniques but also chronologically to show the evolution of form and style. However, this denomination did not do justice to the wide historical scope of the collections which were finally renamed *Musées Royaux du Cinquantenaire* in 1912. Indeed, the collections cover the art and history of the world from prehistoric times to the present day (with the exception of painting in terms of media) and Africa in terms of geography (represented in the *Musée Royal de l'Afrique centrale*). Antiquity, European decorative arts and non-European civilisations are represented but there is also an important section dedicated to national Gallo-Roman archaeology. Today it also includes a museum of musical instruments. The *Porte des Hals* is today a site for a museum of the history of Brussels and for exhibitions dedicated to folk culture and life.

Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale (1910)

The Royal Museum of Central Africa was created as a 'display case of colonial action' (Cornelis, 2000: 71). Its collection goes back to the creation of a colony that was ruled directly by Leopold II as his personal kingdom between 1885 and 1908. From 1882, a series of initiatives brought together objects – so called curiosities and fetishes - in a small natural history museum

established in Brussels. The director of the museum called for the creation of a specific museum dedicated to the Congo as early as 1894. In 1896, the first director of the future museum of the Congo, Théodore Masui expressed his concern for the changes that European influence was causing on the traditional arts, underlining the need for a specifically dedicated museum. But it was the direct initiative and desire of Leopold II that led to the presentation of the collections in the 'Palais des Colonies' after the vast colonial exhibition organized at Tervuren in 1897. This evolved into a monumental project for a permanent museum that Leopold II hoped would be a forum for 'colonial education', to incite initiatives and vocations related to the colonies. In 1908, after much contestation concerning the administration of Leopold's private colony, with a population terrorised by the iron force of the militia, the Belgium government annexed the colony, and the Independent state of Congo became the Belgian Congo. It was under this title that the museum finally opened in 1910 - the *Musée du Congo Belge* was placed in a sumptuous *Beaux-arts* style palace designed by the French architect Charles Girault who had built the Petit-Palais in Paris for the 1900 Universal Exhibition. Under the direct administration of the Ministry of the Colonies, it was divided into five sections: political economics, moral and political sciences, natural sciences, ethnography and photography and vulgarisation. A large part of the exhibition space was thus dedicated to products such as rubber and ivory imported from the colony. The moral and physical progress of the indigenous populations was presented, notably the elimination of practices such as cannibalism – this section was later to become the historical department of the museum – telling the story of the colonialization – including commemorative plaques for those Belgians who died in the Congo. The ethnography department presented its objects also in the perspective that sought to show the impact of European rational thought on African culture. A small section was even dedicated to the use of African materials such as ivory by Belgian artists. (Cornelis, 2000: 74). The museum's project/mission, as defined by Leopold II's initiative, remained practically unchanged up until the Second World War. (Cornelis, 2000: 72). However, the museum did develop its scientific orientation to include the study of geology, mineralogy, zoology, entomology and botany as well as in the human sciences with a prehistory and anthropology section.

In 1960, with the independence of the Belgian Congo, the museum was renamed to become the *Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale* and, at this point also, its mission and organisation were largely reformed – yet its museology remained largely unchanged (Roger, 2008: 85). However, in terms of themes and subject matter, the economic perspective that had held such a preponderant place in the first decades of the museum's existence all but disappeared and the human sciences section was purged of a great deal of its propagandist discourse.

In order to renew its image from being an out-dated and politically tendentious institution, the museum has developed a strong programme of temporary exhibits, entering a strong period of reflexivity concerning its own history from about 2000 onwards (Roger, 2008: 85) with the temporary exhibition *ExitMuseumCongo* that questioned the museographical usage of the ethnographic objects in the museum. The museum came under increasing violent attacks where 'its Dusty Colonialist Exhibition' was qualified as the 'Ghost of Leopold II' (Muteba, 2003). Roger lists several factors that might contribute to explaining how actors from outside of the museum promoted this reflexive turn. For her, it is in large part the identity crisis of the Belgian state that has encouraged this questioning as it has been accompanied by a re-evaluation of the

classical ideological elements of Belgian national unity, such as the national undertaking of colonialism. Indeed Leopold II's initiatives in the Congo did not at first meet with real enthusiasm and the museum's purpose was also to show the 'Belgian public who they really were in contradistinction to the uncivilized Congolese 'tribes' (Muteba, J., 2003). However, rather than a rigorous post-colonial critique, the social aim appears to be not so much to open painful subjects of the past but rather to attain a more peaceful and harmonious relation to present-day Congo and to harmonize Belgium's own past – an ideological reversal of the national museum's policy that is not politically neutral either (Roger, 2008, 89).

The museum is still awaiting a more general overhaul of its permanent display. A project for its complete renovation appears to be in preparation. However, in absence of a full renovation today, the museum recognizes and describes the maintenance of certain elements of the colonial message in such spaces as the memorial room, where it underlines for the visitor that here the history of the Congo is still presented from a uniquely Belgian point of view. The visitor is made aware of how colonial propaganda has shaped the museum's museography (Roger, 2008, 89).

Musée Royal de l'Armée et d'histoire militaire, Brussels (1911)

Unfortunately the history of this very interesting museum is extremely badly documented, but we have pieced together some essential facts. The idea for a military museum in Belgium developed during the Universal Exhibition of 1910, for which a young officer, Louis Leconte organized the presentation of a collection of around 900 objects that was supposed to illustrate Belgium's military past. The young officer may have felt that his country should, no less than any other, develop such an institution. A military museum already existed in France for example. In the context of growing nationalist tensions, the exhibit was indeed a great success and it was decided to maintain it as a permanent exhibit by installing it in the former military buildings in the Abbey of Cambre. Leconte was able to considerably expand the collections after the First World War that inspired many donations and certainly drew a lot of attention to the museum. It was soon obvious that they would need to be housed elsewhere and in a more prominent position. It was thus decided in 1923 to establish the collections in the north wing of the *Palais du Cinquantenaire* that had been finally completed for the exhibition of 1910 and whose park quite fittingly had formerly been a vast ground for the manoeuvres of the national guard. Leconte, who had fought during the war, asked to be disengaged from the army in 1919 to be named permanent curator of the museum. Leconte conceived of the museum as an arena for display but also as a place for historical research, developing an important library and one of the most important collections of military iconography in Europe (Lorette, 1965 : 486). As an historian himself, Leconte published widely on the history of the Brabant Revolution, the Revolution of 1830, and on the history of arms and Belgian uniforms he was careful to establish a well-documented collection. Although the focal point of the collection was mainly objects related to the history of the Belgian military, an effort was also made in documenting not only a broader European but also colonial context. The collection is perhaps most universal in terms of military uniforms and either due to the presence of the costumes themselves or thanks to iconographic material nearly all the countries in the world are documented (Lorette, 1965 : 499).

In the 1960s, one began questioning what the mission of such museums, created in the very specific context of turn of the century nationalism and defined to glorify a militaristic society

might be in the future (Lorette, 1965: 483), and it became very clear that radical changes would be required. For Lorette, the difficulty for these institutions is to overcome their initial ideology and to allow the past to help them understand the future in light of better analyses of international affairs and history that excludes the prejudices and chauvinism predominant in the older displays. In the case of the *Musée Royal de l'Armée* in Brussels this was achieved by organizing more temporary exhibits allowing for a more in-depth explanation of crucial topics and thus developing a more clearly pedagogic mission.

However the collections had grown more quickly than the museum's capacity to catalogue them and organize them accordingly: it became legendary for its plethoric displays (Lierneux, 1994: 43) that today still give the museum a very distinctive appearance in terms of its permanent presentation. It is one of the largest military museums and 'it is doubtful if there is a more concentrated display of military objects elsewhere in Europe' (Westrate, 1961: 62). It was only in 1989 that a project for a new system of classification and cataloguing began to establish a more coherent organization and typology of objects. Larger and more spacious reserves were organized, allowing the museum to finally really appreciate the variety and richness of the collection (Lierneux, 1994: 43). This has not, however, really led the museum to change its permanent exhibit which today appears as an authentic display, illustrated by the description given by Westrate: 'Cases line the walls, filled with objects. Artillery pieces and large guns are placed between the cases. A number of halls have flags jutting out from the walls close to the ceiling. Other halls have airplanes suspended from the ceiling, and there is hardly a bit of wall space that is not covered by either a portrait, a picture of a battle scene, or a bust of some Belgian military hero. Some of the busts and pictures are completely surrounded by swords or guns which jut out from behind and give the appearance of an extra frame. This provides an attractive rosette type design but is hardly conducive to a thorough examination of the pieces' (1961:62). It remains true today, what is more troublesome still is that it is not properly explained so that the visitor might appreciate the specificity of the historical character of this display.

Notes

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<http://www.africamuseum.be/visiting/permanentexpo/memorial>

Musée royal de l'armée et de l'histoire militaire belge
<http://www.klm-mra.be/klm-new/frans/main01.php?id=amuseum/geschiedenis>

Musées royaux des beaux-arts de Belgique
<http://www.fine-arts-museum.be/site/fr/default.asp>

Musées et Société en Wallonie' (MSW) (Museums and Society in Wallonia):
<http://www.msw.be/>

Vlaamse Museumvereniging (VMV) in Flanders
<http://www.museumvereniging.be>

Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values
<i>Royal museums under the direct administration of the federal state</i>						
Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique	1801	1797		First municipal, then state (bought in 1842 from town).is one of the four Belgian museums under the authority of Federal Science Policy Dept today.	Fine Arts	Old Master paintings, all schools. Strong representation of Belgian artists/Flemish artists.
Muséum de l'Institut Royal des Sciences naturelles de Belgique	1848	1846		State: is one of the four Belgian museums under the authority of Federal Science Policy Dept today.	Anthropology, Zoology, Ecology, Mineralogy and Paleontology	Research is mainly based on materials from Belgium but spécimens from other parts of the world also have their place.
Musées royaux d'art et d'histoire - Musée du Cinquantenaire	1880 (dans le palais du cinq.)	1835		Princely coll, then state, is one of the four Belgian museums under the authority of Federal Science Policy Dept today.	History, Archaeology	Universal collection that covers the art and history of world from prehistoric times to the present day (with the exception of painting). Antiquity, European decorative arts and non-European civilisations. There is a section dedicated to national gallo-roman archaeology.

Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale (formerly known as the <i>Musée du Congo Belge</i> - 1960)	1910	1897		State: is one of the four Belgian museums under the authority of Federal Science Policy Dept today.	Ethnography	Started as the the museum of the Congo, but with the independance in 1960 it enlarged its horizons to all of Africa and Oceania.
Musée royal de l'Armée et d'Histoire militaire	1910	1910		State, federal departement of defense.	National Heritage and Military History	Collection of arms, uniforms, and military equipment.
National Maritime Museum	1927	1925		Municipal and then state.		
Musée de la monnaie royale de Belgique	1969 (?)			Ministry of finance, state.	Numismatic, Technical	Chronological presentation of the coins struck by the Belgian king since 1830.
<i>Museums titled as 'royal' but administered by one the communities</i>						
Musée Royal des Beaux-Arts d'Anvers	1802-1804	1773		First municipal, then state in 1927, and in 1992 it became an institution of the Flemish Community.	Fine Arts	Most represented: Old masters paintings of the North. But also French, Italian and German schools.
Musée royal de Mariemont	1960 (in today's building)	1917	Donation of the private collector Raoul Warocqué to the state.	State owned by since 1991, scientific establishment administered by the French Community.	Art, Archaeology, History	Ancient European and Asian arts, regional archaeological collections, history of the domain of Mariemont, porcelains of Tournai.

<i>Museums titled as 'national'</i>						
National Museum of the Playing Card	1969	1969			Material Culture	Collection of playing cards printed in Turnhout and a collection of printing presses and tools.
National Museum of the Resistance	1972		Initiated by a group of former resitants and political prisoners.		History	History of the Resistance, concentration camps.
National Museum of Linen	1982	1963		Private initiative supported by the municipality.	Social and Economic History	Exhibits including mannequins illustrate all the stages of the production process.
<i>Museums with collections of specific national resonance</i>						
House of Rubens	1946	1931			Art, Furniture, Living Culture	Houses a very varied collection organised in museum style and period rooms.
House of James Ensor		1960			Art, History	The artists atelier and reproductions of his work.

Bastogne Historical Center	1976	1950	Financial support from the ministry for tourism.	Private initiative, municipal since 2000.	Military History	A collection (mostly donated by private collectors) of material related to life on the battle field, two reconstitutions of the the battle situation on the American and German side.
Musée juif de Belgique		1984		Association: Pro Museo Judaïco.	Art, History	Objects representing Jewish culture as a whole but also life for Jews in Belgian, the Shoah, collection of contemporary art by Jewish artists.
Centre Belge de la Bande Dessinée	1989			Non-profit organisation, financed by museum entries (10% state financing).	Cultural History	History of comic strip drawing and printing.
Musée BELvue, formerly Musée de la Dynastie, Museum of the Belgian dynasty	2005	1992	Monarchy	King Baudouin Foundation.	National History	History of Belgium from 1830 to development of the federal state. Bellevue Hotel, Place des Palais in Brussels, next to the Royal Palace.
Musée Juif de la Déportation et de la Résistance	1995	Circa. 1985	Consistoire central Israélite de Belgique, with the Province of Anvers and the town of Malines.	Municipal, regional.	History	Situated in the town of Malines, in the province of Anvers in a former military barracks turned into a deportation center by the SS in 1942. It was then again a 'Centre de formation en Administration de la Défense' state owned before becoming a museum of the deportation and memorial site.



National Museums in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Slovenia: A Story of Making 'Us'

Vanja Lozic

Summary

This study explores the history of the five most significant national and regional museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia. The aim is to show how these museums contribute to the construction of national and other identities through collections, selections and classifications of objects of interest and through historical narratives.

The three museums from Bosnia and Herzegovina that are included in this study are The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo; which was founded in 1888 and is the oldest institution of this kind in the country; the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina founded in 1945 (Sarajevo) and the Museum of the Republic of Srpska in Banja Luka (the second largest city in BiH), which was founded in 1930 under the name the Museum of *Vrbas Banovina*. As far as Slovenia is concerned, two analysed museums, namely the National Museum of Slovenia (est. 1821) and the Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia (est. 1944/1948), are situated in Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia. The most significant periods for the creation of museums as a part of the consolidation of political power and construction of regional and/or national identities can be labelled:

- The period under the Austrian empire (-1918) and the establishment of first regional museums.
- The creation of First Yugoslavia (1918-1941) and museum's contribution in stabilization and universalization of the union of South Slavs.
- The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1945-1992) and museological emphasis on socialist culture, politics of "brotherhood and unity" and regional differences.
- The proclamation of independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia and the museological focus on the narratives about the struggle for independence and national history of the newborn states.

Both the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the National Museum of Slovenia were established as provincial museums within the Austrian empire in the nineteenth century. At the time of their establishment, the aim was, through preservation of historical artefacts of interest, to contribute to the cultivation of provincial (regional) identity on one hand and the Austrian Imperial identity on the other hand. For the museum in Ljubljana, the geopolitical and museological space of interest was much smaller during the period of the Austrian Empire (Austrian-Hungarian Empire) than it is today. In fact, it only included the province of Carniola with Ljubljana as the administrative and cultural centre. After the disintegration of the Austrian Empire in connection to the end of the First World War, the first Yugoslavia (The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/The Kingdom of Yugoslavia) was formed. This political and

administrational change led to a shift in ideological and identification-making focus of both museums insofar as the museums had to re-orientate towards more proclaimed trans-Yugoslav and monarchical identities, with Belgrade as a political and administrative centre, while at the same time maintaining the regional character. The formation of the first Yugoslavia also meant that almost all of the Slovene-speaking population was now, for the first time, united within one political and administrative entity in which the Slovene language had predominant position. Hence, the National Museum of Slovenia had to broaden its horizon in order to include the political, social and cultural history of the majority of regions where Slovenian was used.

After the Second World War, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (also known as second Yugoslavia) was formed and it consisted of six republics, namely Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. The political change also implied a boom in the establishment of new museums whose focus was to interpret the contemporary past in accordance to strict guidelines of the communist regime. The institutions that today are called the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Museum of the Republic of Srpska and the Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia played together with the national museum's important part in the construction of a trans-Yugoslav communist identity, legitimization of the communist system and Titoism (Titoism was socialist/communist ideology named after Josip Broz Tito, the leader of Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) as well as the assertion of the slogan "brotherhood and unity". Parallel to this, all five museums continued to have distinct regional characters (i.e. Bosnian-Herzegovinian and Slovenian respectively). Unlike the other four museums, which had a regional (Slovenian or Bosnian-Herzegovinian) geopolitical perspective on one hand and a Yugoslav perspective on the other hand, the Museum of the Republic of Srpska had, since its establishment in the early 1930s, Bosnian and Herzegovinian, Yugoslav and explicit local vantage points, namely north-western Bosnian (since 1990's the Republic of Srpska, which covers 49 percent of Bosnia and Herzegovina and includes northern and eastern parts of the country).

In connection to the breakup of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, all museums changed their ideological, political and identification-making point of view. While the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina treated Bosnia and Herzegovina as an independent and unified entity, with a specific cultural and historical development, the Museum of the Republic of Srpska embraced the ideological standpoint that gave a special attention to the Serbian population within this Bosnian-Herzegovinian region. In this way, the museum differs from the other four museums which have had pronounced national and sovereign perspectives (i.e. Bosnian-Herzegovinian or Slovenian).

Summary table 1: Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Museum of BiH	1888	1884	Civil society, regional government, state	State	Archaeology, Cultural History, Ethnography, Natural History	Territorial representation: BiH, Yugoslavia	Antiquity to the present.	Neo-classical, central Sarajevo
Museum of Republic of Srpska	1930	1930	Regional government, Civil society	Regional government	Culture, Social History, Archaeology, Ethnography, Art, Natural History, Military History	Territorial representation: Bosnian Krajina/Republic of Srpska	Antiquity to the present.	Post-modern, central Banja Luka
History Museum of BiH	1945	1945	Regional Government, state	Regional government, state	Military History, Culture, Social History, Labour	Territorial representation: BiH, Yugoslavia	Middle ages to the present.	Post-modern, Central Sarajevo

Summary table 2: Slovenia

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Museum of Slovenia	1821 (1831)	1821 (1809)	Aristocracy, Regional government, civil society, monarch, state	Regional Government /state	Archaeology, Cultural History, Ethnography (1923), Art (1933), Natural History (1944)	Territorial representation: Carniola, Slovenia, Yugoslavia	Antiquity to the present.	Neo-classical, central cluster Ljubljana
The Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia	1948	1944/1948	Regional government, state	Regional Government /state	Cultural History, Military History, Social History, Art	Territorial representation: Slovenia, Yugoslavia	20 th century to present.	Existing building, Solitary Ljubljana

Introduction

Like in many other countries, the five analysed museums (The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo, the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Museum of the Republic of Srpska, the National Museum of Slovenia and the Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia) in these relatively new nation-states function as institutions that safeguard a group's cultural heritage and significant narratives about the group's past. The museums are, first and foremost, chosen for their size and cultural, political, ideological and historical relevance in the analysed regions/states. The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its counterpart in Slovenia are the main agents in the museological presentation and mediation of history of these two states. They are also the oldest museums in the countries and were both established by Austrian (Austrian-Hungarian) Empire. The History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its Slovenian equivalent The Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia both have a communist heritage and were established as museums that were to celebrate the communist regime and the Partisan liberation of Yugoslavia during the Second World War. Finally, the Museum of the Republic of Srpska was established in the 1930s as a regional museum for the area around the city of Banja Luka (north-western Bosnia and Herzegovina), but its political and identificational dimension has changed since the 1990s because it is now a museum whose main aim is to present the history of a newly-formed entity; the Republic of Srpska. This federal entity, which is, according to The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (also known as the Dayton Agreement), a part of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina has had problems to come to terms with the central government of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the all-embracing Bosnian-Herzegovinian national identity. Furthermore, "the achievement of Serb independence from Bosnia-Herzegovina is desired – if suppressed – objective of the political parties which still command the majority of votes in the Serb Republic" (Pavković, 2000: 184). Thus, it is interesting to compare and contrast the ways that the museums balance between different forms of identities; how they relate to the past political and state constellations; and whose identities are regarded as prevailing.

The legacy of the past is through museums made available to a larger audience and they are an important force in the formation of collective identities. The notion of museum as a cartographic space of national history; a space for the preservation of cultural and natural (different forms of material) artefacts and as a part of political struggle to define a group or different groups are a starting point for this analysis (Kaplan, 1994: 1-2). Historian Flora Kaplan (1994: 9) points out that "[m]useums have long served to house a national heritage, thereby creating a national identity and often fulfilled national ambitions".

However, it is not only national history that is the focus of this enquiry. As a matter of fact, regional and ethnicity dichotomising and unifying representations of history as well as depictions of different regions and political models of rule are also important parts of museological constructions of historical narratives within the analysed museums. Museums form and reproduce the idea of common identities and differences, history and geographic boundaries plus, and this is important to bear in mind, educate and mobilize the population. In this context, the diachronic analysis of museums makes it possible to call attention to the impetus of museums

and the processes of nation-building and eliminations of past collective identities at work. Questions given attention in this study are:

1. How is 'ourness' (i.e. national identity) constructed and shaped in national/regional museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia?

2. Which identities have been articulated during the history of the museums?

Consequently, attention is given to historical continuity and change.

National museums and cultural policies in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia

By way of introduction, the country that is today called Bosnia and Herzegovina was incorporated into the Ottoman Empire in 1463 (Herzegovina was conquered in 1483). The country was culturally, politically and economically dominated by the Ottoman Empire until the Congress of Berlin in 1878, when the Austrian-Hungarian Empire obtained administration over it. The Ottoman Empire allowed Bosnia and Herzegovina to preserve its territorial integrity while initiating several changes in the ethno-cultural and religious character of the region. For instance, the region became a melting pot for different religious groups (Catholic Croats, Muslim Turks and Bosniaks, Orthodox Serbs, Sephardic Jews etc.) and many Sephardic Jews, escaping from inquisition at the Iberian Peninsula, found a safe place in the Empire. Furthermore, many inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina converted to Islam and the Slavic-speaking Muslim community, today called Bosniaks, are today the largest ethno-religious and cultural group in country (Lampe, 2000: 23-24).

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the history of the Empire's westernmost province was, among other things, characterized by political conflicts and uprisings. The political instability culminated with the agrarian unrests in 1875 in Herzegovina (southern part of Bosnia and Herzegovina with Mostar as a cultural, economic and political centre). This constant political disorder together with the political interests of the neighbouring countries and the weakening of the Ottoman Empire "persuaded the European powers to add Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the terms of the Treaty of Berlin" (Lampe, 2000: 66). The consequences of the transformation of power in Bosnia and Herzegovina were changes in (i.e. 'westernization' of) urban infrastructure/architecture, other contributions in the field of culture, the creation of a new rural transport network as well as a number of state industrial enterprises. As a part of this development, the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina was established.

The country that we today refer to as Slovenia has, since the fourteenth century, been divided into several provinces/territories controlled by the House of Habsburg and the Austrian Empire. In fact, the population of Slovene-speaking inhabitants of the empire was "scattered among six Austrian provinces and territories, most with German and Italian ethnic majorities" (Lampe, 2000: 69). Hence, this longstanding political, cultural and economic dominance had an appreciable effect on the character of the region. During the first half of the nineteenth century some Slovene-speaking intellectuals were influenced by Cultural Illyrianism, a movement whose main goal was "to unite South Slav 'sub-groups'", as well as the idea of the formation of "a single Slovene entity within the Habsburg monarchy" (Lampe, 2000: 43). Different forms of this cultural and political ideology continued to permeate the works of several influential intellectuals until the outbreak of the First World War (Hansen, 1996: 476). In this cultural and political era,

The National Museum of Slovenia was established as a provincial museum in the region of Carniola (area around Ljubljana).

On June 28, 1914, the pro-Yugoslav movement Black-Hand assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria in Sarajevo. This sparked off the First World War, the war that, for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia (and several other countries from the region), ended in the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (after 1929 renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia). Within this union of South-Slavs, Serbia had a dominating position in so far as the capital of this newborn state became Belgrade and the King was chosen from the House of Karadjordjević, from Serbia. The kingdom had, during the period between two wars, several parliamentary and political crises. In connection to the creation of the kingdom, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia became the administrative provinces within the kingdom. However, in 1929 the kingdom was divided in nine banovinas (provinces) and, as a consequence of this, Bosnia and Herzegovina ceased to exist as an administrative and unified entity and was instead divided amongst four banovinas.

The attack on Yugoslavia on the 6th of April 1941 by Nazi German forces led to the partition of Slovenia between Nazi Germany and Italy. Bosnia and Herzegovina was, during the Second World War, the place of the most severe fighting in the territory of Yugoslavia. Bosnia and Herzegovina also became a part of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), a 'puppet state' of Nazi Germany whose "overriding purpose was to create an ethnically pure Croatian state from which Serbs, Jews, and gypsies would be permanently cleansed" (Lampe, 2000: 209).

After the Second World War, Second Yugoslavia was formed and unlike the first one that was a monarchy, the new Yugoslavia was a socialist/communist republic led by President Tito (until his death in 1980) and the communist party of Yugoslavia. This political and ideological transformation led to the establishment of the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia. The aim of the museums was to safeguard the history of the communist regime and its importance for the liberation of Yugoslavia from German occupation during the Second World War. The new federal state was divided into six republics and, similar to the first Yugoslavia, even the socialist republic had numerous problems that could be related to economic and ideological differences between regions/republics as well as issues of ethnicity. The problems escalated after Tito's death and culminated in 1990 with parliamentary and constitutional crises and multi-party elections. In June 1991, Slovenia and Croatia declared independence from Yugoslavia, soon followed by other republics including Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a consequence of the break-up of Yugoslavia, the world witnessed 'the Ten-Day War' in Slovenia, the war in Croatia and the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina that occurred between 1992 and 1995. The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina is often defined as a civil war between the three largest ethnic groups. According to the Census of 1991, the largest ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina are Bosniaks (also called Bosnian Muslims, 43.5 percent), Orthodox Serbs (31.2 percent) and Catholic Croats (17.4 percent) (Agencija za statistiku Bosne i Hercegovina, 2010: 21). Slovenia is today a member of European Union while Bosnia and Herzegovina is a federal state ethnically divided in two entities, namely The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (primarily inhabited by Bosniaks and Bosnian Croats) and the Republic of Srpska (sometimes called Serb Republic).

Case studies in chronological order

The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina

In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the oldest museum, namely The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo (*Landesmuseum* or *Zemaljski muzej*), was established by the Austrian-Hungarian Empire (1867-1918) and it operated as a provincial/regional museum until the 1990s when it became the national museum of the newly-established state that followed the breakup of The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina was inaugurated in 1888 as a regional museum within The Austrian-Hungarian Empire and is the oldest modern cultural and scientific institution in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Kosta Hörmann, an adviser of the imperial government, was appointed as the director of the museum

(www.zemaljskimuzej.ba/o_nama/osnivanje_muzeja.php). According to historian Robert Donia (2006b: 89), the initiative for the establishment of the museum was taken by Dr. Julije Makanec, “who founded a committee to establish a Landesmuseum or Zemaljski muzej” in 1884. However, the formation of the museum was preceded by a long period of deliberations, where many individuals pointed to the need for such an institution. The first attempt to establish an institution of this kind was in fact done in 1850 by catholic priest and writer Franjo Jukic, the founder of the first literary magazine in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Hajdarasic, 2000: 130).

In Jukic’s preface to the collection of *Folk Songs of Bosnians and Herzegovinians*, published in Osijek (a city in today’s Croatia) in 1858, he points out that the motivation for the publication of the book lied in the need to make the South Slavic peoples in general and Bosnians and Herzegovinians in particular aware of their ‘glorious’ and ‘heroic’ past and make them ‘proud’ of their cultural heritage (Jukic, 1858: III-IV). Influenced by the ideas of cultural independence and the proliferation of cultural ‘uniqueness’ and ‘authenticity’, Jukic advocated the consolidation of both South Slavic and Bosnian and Herzegovinian ethnic (‘national’) identities. Under the pseudonym Slavoljub (Slavophile), Jukic had also published *Geography and History of Bosnia* as well as the journal ‘The Friends of Bosnian language’ (Jukic, 1858: XV). At the time of his proposal for the establishment of the museum, the country was a part of The Ottoman Empire and his cultural ideology could be construed as a part of an emerging nationalistic discourse, Pan-Slavism and a discourse of struggle for political and social independence and sovereignty.

At the Congress of Berlin in 1878, the Austro-Hungarian Empire obtained the administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina and ten years later, the museum was established. The spread of museums in Europe was prompted by the era of the construction of national identities in the nineteenth century. Political, strategic and economic goals that were set by the Austro-Hungarian government demanded the expansion of literacy and mass education as well as the establishment of power-control in the region and the preservation of the presumed cultural heritage of the region and its peoples. The Museum Society was formed in February 1888 and since then, the museum consists of three departments, namely the Department of Archaeology, the Department of Ethnology, the Department of Natural Sciences and a library. The director of the *Landesmuseum* (German for provincial, regional museum), as it was also called, was appointed by the Austrian-Hungarian government and the decision to move the premises of the museum, due to the lack of space, was made in 1908. The structure and organisation of the museum was

inspired by museums at Ringstrasse in Vienna and was built in the neo-classical style (Donia 2006b: 89). The construction of the new building was finished in 1913 and for many years, this was the only purpose-built museum complex in the region which was later named Yugoslavia. The museum complex consists of four buildings and a botanic garden. The annual scientific journal in Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian was first published in 1889 and a scientific journal in German, entitled '*Wissenschaftliche Mitteilungen aus Bosnien und der Herzegovina*' (later renamed '*Wissenschaftliche Mitteilungen aus Bosnisch-Herzegovinischen Landesmuseums*') was established in 1893. The fact that the international publication of the museum's journal is still being published in German illustrates the importance and the influence of German culture, science and language in these areas of Europe. This also illustrates the cultural bond between Bosnia and Herzegovina on one hand and Western Europe on the other hand and indicates that Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a territorial and cultural entity, regards itself primarily as a (Western) European country. This identity construction is present in spite of its Ottoman heritage and the effects of the Empire's influence on Bosniak identity that is, according to the Oriental institute in Sarajevo, in some ways related to Arabic, Turkish and Persian languages and cultures (www.ois.unsa.ba).

The establishment of the *Landesmuseum* (The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina) had quite distinct political dimensions. According to Robert Donia, behind this expenditure of cultural institutions and musealisation of presumed Bosnian and Herzegovinian cultures, natural history and geology lays a political motive in accordance to which the Austrian-Hungarian government "wanted to highlight Bosnia's indigenous cultural heritage in its campaign to negate Serbian and Croatian nationalist influence from neighbouring lands" (Donia, 2006a: 394). As a matter of fact, Serbia and Croatia tried to win political influence over Bosnia and Herzegovina and thus make the region culturally, politically and territorially dependent on these two neighbouring states/regions. The representatives of the Austrian-Hungarian polity were, in contrast "trying to articulate a common Bosnian consciousness for all three ethnic groups" (Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs) and "spell out Bosnia's multi-ethnic identity" (Lampe, 2000: 68). By promoting the idea of 'bosnjastvo' (Bosnian identity), the imperial government tried to reduce Serbian and Croatian cultural, political and territorial claims and interests. The museum encouraged research that could show that "a dualist religious heresy known as Bogumilism" preceded Islam and that "Bogomils were proto-Muslims unique to Bosnia-Herzegovina and forefathers of its contemporary population" (Donia, 2006b: 90). In this way, the scientific work was used to undermine pan-Slavism. This was, in some degree, both contrary to, and in line with, Jukic's original intentions because his cultural orientation had emphasized both Pan-Slavic and pro-Bosnian-Herzegovinian alleged objectives.

During World War I, the museum was closed but was, soon after the war, reopened and it functioned as a regional museum in the newly-formed state The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, later renamed The Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918-1941). This period is, according to the museum's official history-writings and historian Robert J. Donia, characterized by a centralized administration of the government of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia that neglected the cultural institutions of all ethnic groups, except three main nationalities, i.e. Slovenes, Croats and Serbs. Hence, historians point out that there was an ostensible lack of financial support to major public institutions of cultural heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other 'marginalized' regions on one hand and an emphasis on recognition of Belgrade, Ljubljana and Zagreb as the

main centres and transmitters of cultural heritage of The Kingdom of Yugoslavia (www.zemaljskimuzej.ba/o_nama/razvoj_muzeja-en.php) (Donia, 2006a: 236-237). Museum officials state that “the Court and the Greater Serbian bourgeoisie” were responsible for the deterioration of the status of the National Museum

(www.zemaljskimuzej.ba/o_nama/razvoj_muzeja-en.php). In a way, Serbian official interests and the central government in Belgrade are described as bearers of an ideology that firstly undermined the preservation of the cultural heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina and secondly deprived the ‘national’ interest of the region and the people living there. Following this line of interpretation, the authors of the history of the museum highlight that “Bosnia and Herzegovina abruptly found itself on the margins of the socio-economic, political and cultural mainstream” (www.zemaljskimuzej.ba/o_nama/razvoj_muzeja-en.php). Interestingly enough, Bosnia and Herzegovina ceased to exist as an entity in 1929 constitution and Bosnia and Herzegovina was divided in four regional units (banovine) so that none had a Muslim majority (Lamp, 2000: 167).

However, after World War II and during the communist regime (1945-1992), the museum received subsequent economic funding and was recognized as an institution of utmost importance. Within the communist regime, culture in general and cultural products of the ‘working-class’ and the communist party in particular were declared as special fields of importance for society. In accordance with the slogan ‘*bratstvo i jedinstvo*’ (‘brotherhood and unity’) all republics and the citizens living in the new Yugoslavia ‘deserved equal standing’. The communist government advocated that each of six republics in the post-war Yugoslav federation should have its own media as well as cultural and educational institutions while at the same time, it celebrated the ‘common Yugoslav spirit’ (Donia, 2006a: 394; Lampe, 2000: 236-237). Consequently, both regional (i.e. republic) and Yugoslav national identities were acclaimed simultaneously. Paradoxically, Yugoslav-identity “was first time included in the third post-war census in 1961”, the category was, at the beginning, reserved “for those who offered no particular national identity” and Yugoslavs were, de facto, a minority in Yugoslavia (Sekulic, Massey and Hodson, 1994: 84; Lampe, 2000: 337).

During the period of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1945-1992), many exhibitions were made in cooperation with other museums in the former Yugoslavia and the usage of the term ‘Yugoslavia’ is intermittent in the list of exhibitions from this period. Exhibitions such as ‘Traditional costumes of peoples of Yugoslavia’, ‘Trees and shrubbery of Yugoslavia’, ‘Yugoslav flora’ and ‘The Folk art of Yugoslavia’ are a few of the many examples of Yugoslav-identity production by the museum and a ‘naturalization of culture’ that is to say, the ways culture and nature present and create as well as accommodate to nation (Stoklund, 1999: 7).

Parallel to this, the museum organized exhibitions that had, in its focus, the presumed authenticity of culture and nature of Bosnia and Herzegovina (i.e. ‘The Fauna of northern Bosnia’, ‘Bosnian and Herzegovinian embroidery and jewellery’, ‘The Life and culture of peasantry in Bosnia and Herzegovina’). These, and similar exhibitions, illustrate the ways in which the *Landesmuseum* during the communist regime contributed to the construction of a specific Bosnian and Herzegovinian identity. It should be noted that the references to Yugoslavia are marginalized in the present exhibitions at the museum and that Bosnia and Herzegovina as a nation state is in focus. It is also evident that during the communist history of the *Landesmuseum*

there was an almost total absence of exhibitions with religious connotations. However, this changed after the proclamation of independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The 1992-1995 war caused “not only a break in the development of the Museum, but direct devastation and damage to the four buildings of the Museum complex and to the Botanical Garden” (www.zemaljskimuzej.ba/o_nama/razvoj_muzeja-en.php). Since 1995, The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina has been the primary beneficiary of aid and development work because the museum is regarded as “Bosnia-Herzegovina’s only museum with a national profile for all the different ethnic groups in the country” (besides the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo) (Cultural Heritage without Borders, 2005). The explanation for this economic support can be found in the Dayton Peace Agreement that states that it is of great value to preserve national monuments. The law on the protection of properties designed as national monuments underlines the significance of “the restoration of damaged or destroyed property to the condition it was in prior to its destruction” (Law on the protection of properties designed as national monuments).

In the period after the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, emphasis on the ‘religious coexistence’ and so-called multi-religious/multi-ethnic nature of the country is evident in many exhibitions and the ways the museum contributes to the construction of the national identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Hajdarasic, 2008: 114). In cooperation with the Catholic Church in Sarajevo, the museum exhibited painted Easter eggs in 1997 and in 1999, the museum presented exhibitions about “Bosnia and Islamic culture in Europe” that was also shown in many cities in Sweden. In 2008, the museum opened an exhibition of religious artifacts, in association with The Catholic Parish of the Holy Trinity in Sarajevo (www.zemaljskimuzej.ba/etnologija/aktivnosti-en.php). It could be argued that the museum nowadays attempts to establish Bosnia and Herzegovina as a country that encompasses ‘Occidental’ and ‘Oriental’ cultures. Thus, Bosnia and Herzegovina follows a similar development as many Western European countries insofar as multicultural discourse and the recognition of multi-ethnic and pluralistic social order seems to gain ground on many political levels and obtains acceptance (Hewitt, 2005: 15). Bosnia and Herzegovina is thus presented as a multicultural/multi-confessional country located in the middle of Europe.

However, it appears as if cooperation with Serbian cultural and religious organisations is not given the same attention and that the cultural heritage of the Serbian population of Bosnia and Herzegovina is, in some ways, marginalised. In this context, it should be highlighted that Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided into the Republic of Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina covers 51 percent of the country’s total area, while the Republic of Srpska covers 49 percent. Sarajevo is the capital of The Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the administrative centre of The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina that is primarily inhabited by Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims) and Bosnian Croats (Catholics).

Related to the increased interest for religion, religious affiliation and religious artefacts since the latest war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is ‘the Sarajevo Haggadah’ which has been the main exhibit item of the museum since 2002. The manuscript was created in the middle of the fourteenth century in northern Spain and it “found its way to Sarajevo with Jews who were expelled during the Inquisitions” (Hajdarasic, 2008: 114). Surprisingly, the manuscript was not publically exhibited and did not have the role of the main cultural item of the museum until after

the war in the 1990s. Through the joint efforts of the UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and international donors (such as Soros Open Social foundation, EU and Sida among others) the Haggadah was presented to the public in December 2002 and many international guests attended the opening ceremony.

Today the manuscript is on permanent public display and is, according to American historian Edin Hajdarpasic, used with the view of forming Bosnian and Herzegovinian multicultural identity. Firstly, religious as well as domestic and international political figures have emphasized the narrative of 'religious coexistence' and the multicultural nature of the country. Multiculturalism is, as stated by Hajdarpasic, synonymous with multiconfessionalism. In the opening ceremony, Jacques Paul Klein, the UN special representative and head of the UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, described Sarajevo during the Ottoman Empire when Sephardic Jewish refugees arrived as a result of inquisition in Spain as a multicultural city "that was a beacon to tolerance in Europe" (Hajdarpasic, 2008: 115). The Haggadah exhibition illustrates the way in which the international community attempts to influence public culture in post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina but also the fact that there is an "essentialist interpretation of the culture as a derivative expression of the religious" (Hajdarpasic, 2008: 116).

Historian Muhidin Mulalic asserts that Sarajevo and consequently Bosnia and Herzegovina is "a truly multicultural city situated on the crossroads between Europe and the Muslim World". He states that Bosnia and Herzegovina enriches and strengthens "Europe's multicultural diversity" as well as provides policymakers across Europe "with some ideas in terms of addressing contemporary challenges of multiculturalism" (Marcinkowski, 2009: 11). Accordingly, Bosnia and Herzegovina in general and Sarajevo in particular have been, in these and other examples, profiled as a meeting point between different cultures and religions (Western Christianity, Orthodox Eastern Christianity, Judaism and Islam) and the EU has, in several projects, emphasised the significance of multiculturalism within the country (i.e. European Committee of the Regions – the Western Balkans, TACSO; TAIEX, Delegation of the European Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Nevertheless, cultural diversities in the country and among its inhabitants are viewed from a religious perspective and the announcement and proliferation of multiculturalism from the international community holds a reductionist understanding of culture, where culture=religion=ethnicity=identity (C.f. Baumann, 1999: 19-27). In this regard, the multiculturalist discourse is based on the politics of recognition where ethnicity and presumed embracement of religion are regarded as essential cultural and identification expressions of human beings (Cf. Taylor, 1994: 25-73). These developments entrench "the view that culture is something so ancient and so deeply spiritual that present and future generations of particular community have no choice but to carry on or in some way honour the venerable traditions" (Hajdarpasic, 2008: 119).

Secondly, The Sarajevo Haggadat is seen as a symbol of the Nazi Holocaust during the Second World War. In this respect, an analogy is made to the lack of international intervention to stop the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Hajdarpasic, 2008: 111). To the same extent, the term 'ethnic cleansing' has been used to describe the events during the war and, according to Laura Silber and Allan Little, the term "became the defining characteristic of the conflict" (Lampe, 2000: 244). In fact, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina "was the first international crisis during which the

American foreign policy debate routinely invoked Holocaust imagery and analogies” (Steinweis, 2005: 277).

In conclusion, the National Museum would, without international financial support, have difficulties operating. In fact, the museum has, during several occasions, been closed since the end of the war in 1995. Other museums, which have since then had various economic difficulties and have received international financial support, are the Museum of the Republic of Srpska and the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Museum of the Republic of Srpska

The museum was established in Banja Luka in 1930 as the ethnographic Museum of Vrbas Banovina and was the first institution of this kind in northwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina. The initiative was taken by Svetislav Milosavljevic, the first head of Vrbas Banovina, who proposed creation of an institution that would help economic development of the region, promote cultural integration and contribute to the amalgamation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (Kulundzija, 2010: 20). Before the establishment of the museum, ethnically homogenous associations organized the cultural preservation of heritage. As previously mentioned, the division of The Kingdom of Yugoslavia into nine regions (banovine) implied that Bosnia and Herzegovina as a unified region, ceased to exist.

The museum structure stressed the importance of preservation of the ethnographic culture of the region (traditional costumes and ancient items, folk-art and handicraft); highlighted the tourist and economic interests of the city of Banja Luka where the museum and regional government were located and encouraged the strengthening of the regional identity (i.e. that of Vrbas Banovina) (Kulundzija, 2010: 25-27). In contrast to the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina that describes this period in negative terms, the period of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia is, by the authors of the official history of the museum, considered to be a culturally flourishing epoch.

During World War II, Bosnia and Herzegovina was a part of the Independent State of Croatia and the museum in Banja Luka was first renamed the ‘National Museum of Croatian Krajina’ (*Krajina* stands for region or frontier) and later the ‘Croatian National Museum’. It has been pointed out that all items that were related to Serbian culture and Serbia were removed from the museum exhibits and that they were replaced by items which favoured the Croatian population and their culture (Kulundzija, 2010: 58-60). As a matter of fact, during the existence of the Independent State of Croatia, a very large number of Serbian men, women and children were killed, expelled or driven to death camps (Lampe, 2000: 211).

After the end of WWII, the first thing done was to change the museum’s name to “The State Ethnographic Museum of Bosnian Krajina” in 1945. After Second World War, the museum-workers concentrated on collecting, preserving and making public items from the so-called People's Liberation War and the history of the communist party and its officials (Kulundzija, 2010: 64-65). In 1953, the museum was yet again renamed the “National Museum in Banja Luka” and in 1962, it received a new official name ‘The museum of Bosnian Krajina’. The museum was restructured into the following scientific departments in 1961: archaeology; culture and cultural history; ethnography and folklore; labour-movement, national liberation war and the construction of socialism as well as the nature of Bosnian Krajina.

The representation of a new communist Yugoslavia and its people through modern mass institutions of education and communication was, in many cases, permeated by tales of military sacrifice and victory, images of shared destiny and unified people who fought The War of National Liberation in Yugoslavia (Sekulic, Massey and Hodson, 1994: 85). This is very noticeable in the case of the museum in Banja Luka where emphasis was given to remembering the apparent unity of all ethnic groups in the region, their struggle against Nazi occupation as well as ostensible common political interests (communist ideology) and views on the future of the country. The following slogan, which can be related to this political discourse and which was used all over Yugoslavia, also found its place in one of the exhibitions at the museum: “Comrade Tito, we swear to you that we will not leave your path” (Kulundzija 2010: 77). Such an emphasis on common goals and so-called Titoism was a part of the mobilization of people and the construction of a shared communist identity and ideology of ‘brotherhood and unity’. Symbolic for this kind of political agenda was the museum’s move into the premises of the Worker’s Solidarity House in 1982.

Parallel to the construction of Yugoslav and/or communist identity and emphasis on the remembrance of the War of National Liberation in Yugoslavia, the museum organized several exhibitions which had in focus the regional cultural heritage and significant people from the region (Bosnian Krajina 1945-1985 in 1986, Postal communication in Bosnian Krajina at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century in 1989, Women of Bosnian Krajina in the war and during the rebuilding from 1962). Subsequently, the museum was an important space for the construction of regional identity and the region was defined as a part of the Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In November 1992, during the first year of war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the newly established government of ‘The Republic of Srpska’ pronounced that the museum was “the central museum in The Republic of Srpska”; the name was changed into The Museum of the Republic of Srpska and Banja Luka is today the administrative centre of the Republic of Srpska (muzejrs.com/about-museum,2.html; Kulundzija 2010: 89). According to Laura Silber and Allan Little, there were hundreds of thousands of Bosniaks and Bosnian Croats in northern Bosnia and Herzegovina before the war and the newly formed Republic of Srpska used “ethnic cleansing” in order to “render territory ethnically pure” (Silber and Little, 1997: 245-246).

The war was also a period of change in the focus of the museum and its presentation of cultural heritage. Today, the central points of interest for the museum workers are Serbian cultural and religious objects. The point of departure for The Museum of the Republic of Srpska was the exhibition ‘Serbian traditional clothing in Bosnian Krajina’ in 1993. The exhibition was followed by the one-hundred-year anniversary of the publication of the first Serbian ethnographic anthology and a few other anniversaries that celebrated works of influential Serbian intellectuals. In these, and similar exhibitions that followed, the emphasis has been given to the ‘ethnic’ and ‘religious’ perspective, something which had not been so appreciable during the communist era. In the following decade, the museum, for example, held the exhibition ‘Icons – Reflection on the 800th anniversary of Hilandar Monastery’ in 1999 and in 2006, the museum accommodated ‘Survival in Kosovo – the restoration of sacred’ (Kulundzija, 2010: 92-97).

Furthermore, it should be noted that, in the contemporary history of the museum and its exhibitions, there is an almost total absence of history of the Bosniak population in the area and

the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an independent state. As a consequence of the latest war, “all of the city mosques and eleven Roman Catholic churches in the Banja Luka area were destroyed” as “a signal for the exclusion” of all non-Serbs (Riedlmayer, 2002: 118; Sells, 2003: 314). One of the buildings destroyed during the war was the pre-war cultural symbol of the city, namely the sixteenth century Ferhadija mosque. Nonetheless, its significance as a part of the cultural heritage of the Republic of Srpska is not recognized by the museum. However, the significance of the Catholic order Trappists (The Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance) was highlighted in an exhibition from 2009 and the members of the order were praised for their importance to “economic development of the city during the past one hundred years” (Kulundzija, 2010: 124). As a result, the significance of the pre-war and present Bosniak population is marginalised while the Islamic cultures of Bosnia and Herzegovina in general and the Republic of Srpska in particular are not recognised by the museum as parts of the religious and cultural identities of the region.

Religious architecture and sacred space are at the centre of identity construction, both for those working for religious exclusion (i.e. silencing of the importance of Islam as religion and cultural heritage of the region) and those working for religious pluralism (i.e. inclusion of Catholicism). The struggle over religious/ethnic symbols articulates both ethnic inclusion and exclusion and the museum has formative and reflective role in the society and is a contributing factor in so far as some artefacts, monuments and historical perspectives fall to oblivion while others get an increased representation in the voices presented at the museum. Following this line of argumentation, “in order to remember some things properly we have to forget others” (Peralta, 2009: 105). In the case of The Museum of the Republic of Srpska, the presence of Bosniaks and Islamic cultures before the war in the city and the region are silenced and it could be argued that the articulation/remembrance of the expulsion of non-Serbs “could bring a threat to national cohesion and self-image” (Misztal, 2009: 118). Remembering and forgetting are not opposites; instead they are an integral part of identity construction. In this museum, Christianity and not Islam is put forward as a signifying religious carrier of cultural heritage.

As an institution for the preservation of the heritage of the Republic of Srpska and as the memorial centre for Serbian collective identity, the museum has also a vital position in maintaining the remembrance of Jasenovac, the site of the largest death camp in the Independent State of Croatia during World War II (Denich, 1994: 370). Just before the latest war, Jasenovac also became a site of a ‘symbolic war’ and of ‘historical disputes’. The participants were (and still are) historians as well as politicians, and John R. Lampe describes the situation in the following way:

Postwar Communist historians claimed that over one-half million people [...] died at Jasenovac alone, a figure doubled by recent Serbian pseudo-history and then [...] reduced to slightly less than 100,000 by Croatian scholars. It has since been further reduced and its consciously racist purpose denied by Croatian pseudo-history. (Lampe, 2000: 211)

The most significant participant in the Croatian public debate about genocide during World War II was former Croatian president Franjo Tuđman who “supported calculations that greatly reduced the number of Serbian victims and referred to Jasenovac as a ‘myth’” (Denich, 1994: 376). The consequence of ‘historical disputes’ about Jasenovac (and ‘symbolic war’) and the

actual war in the Balkans was that the nationalists on both sides exploited traumatic memories and different events in history. History became an instrument of the power struggle and an important element in the construction of ethnic identities and self-image. In the case of the Republic of Srpska, Jasenovac is both the symbol of experiences during World War II and the expulsion of Serbs from Kosovo, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina during the latest conflicts in the Balkans.

Finally, I would like to remind that genocide as a part of museum exhibitions is also an integral part of The National Museum in Sarajevo where genocide is, through The Sarajevo Haggadah, implicitly associated with Serbian atrocities during the latest war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Unlike the museum in Sarajevo, the genocide during Second World War symbolises, in the case of the Museum of the Republic of Srpska, the Serbian population in Croatia, Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina as victims of oppression, both during World War II and the latest war. Thus, Jasenovac is tacitly used to highlight the necessity of the independence of the Serbian population and the preservation of Serbian culture and their presumed cultural heritage. As a part of the promotion of preservation of Serbian culture and on the request of Serbian Orthodox Church in south-eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina, religious icons were “protected, conserved and presented to the public on a successful exhibition” in 2009 (Kulundzija, 2010: 126). The religious icons came from Serbian communities where maltreatment of Bosnian Serbs and destruction of their property have been reported by Human Rights Watch (Human Rights Watch, 1993: 316-327, 376).

In conclusion, in spite of the consequences of the latest war, the museum managed to establish extensive collaboration with cultural institutions in Serbia during 1990s and after the war, the museum received financial support from international organizations and institutions for preservation of its cultural heritage. The museum can be regarded as a contributory factor in the creation of identity of the Republic of Srpska; an identification which is closely linked to Serbian ethnic identity.

The History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The museum was founded in 1945 with the purpose to “collect, preserve and display all documents related to course and development of the national liberation fight and its achievements, to collect, study and reveal to public all source materials which relate to history of national liberation war, and to preserve and cherish remembrance to national heroes and victims of fascism, to heroism and devotion of our peoples in the liberation war” (Kanjanac, 2010: 7). This predominant focus on the events and consequences of World War II, as interpreted by the Communist regime, is reflected in the original name of the museum, The Museum of National Liberation in Sarajevo.

The museum was, during the existence of the second Yugoslavia (1945-1992), funded by the assembly of the Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and it was this institution that, in November 1945, made the decision to impose “the Law on foundation of the Museum of the national liberation as a state institution under the direct control of the Ministry of education” (Kanjanac, 2010: 7). During the first two decades of its existence, the museum had moved several times into different buildings and exhibitions were often held in improvised premises. Until 1950, it was located in *Landesmuseum* (Sarajevo), when it was moved into the Sarajevo Town Hall. Since

1963, the museum has been located in a purpose-built building, which at the time of its construction was praised for its architectural innovation. In 1967, the name of the museum was changed to the Museum of Revolution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the current name, the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina was officially given in the midst of war in June 1993 by the government of independent Bosnia and Herzegovina. The change of name also implied a shift in perspective and the museum widened its temporal scope of work to include the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the arrival of Slavs to the Balkans to the formation of “modern and independent Bosnia and Herzegovina” (Kanjanać, 2010: 17). At the same time, the geographic horizon was narrowed.

While the primal focus of the Museum of Revolution was during the period of communist regime, the national liberation war; the communist party and labour unions in Yugoslavia in general as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular, the museum became, in the 1990s, a scientific and educational arena for the systematic research, collection and cataloguing of artefacts of special interest for the history of an independent Bosnia and Herzegovina. Consequently, the pre-1990s period could be outlined by numerous exhibitions about battles held in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina during Second World War; the history of the worker’s movement and socialist revolutions; history of the communist party of Yugoslavia and its Bosnian and Herzegovinian branch as well as post-war socialist development until the 1960s. The geographic horizon of the museum was both Bosnian and Herzegovinian and Yugoslav while the ideological perspective was communist. The implicit aim of the museum was to legitimize communist rule through an emphasis on: the importance of the partisan movement (i.e. People’s Liberation Army and Partisan Detachments of Yugoslavia) for the liberation of peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Yugoslavia, the remembrance of the suffering of its peoples during the war, the danger of divisive ideologies such as fascism and nationalism and the representation of Titoism as well as socialism as progressive and modernist ideologies. Similar to the Museum of Bosnian Krajina in Banja Luka, even the Museum of Revolution was influenced by the ‘brotherhood and unity’ slogan in accordance to which there exists a danger of disintegration if communism is to lose its dominant ideological position. In this sense the National Liberation War is used as a symbol of unity of different ethnic groups in the territory of Yugoslavia in general and Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular. Correspondingly, the slogan “Death to fascism, freedom to people” is in the museum’s exhibitions and within its program declaration used to define the communist party and partisans as the only liberating forces during World War II. Both regional (i.e. Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Yugoslav national identities under the umbrella of communism were acclaimed at the same time. Correspondingly, the disintegration of unity was seen as something threatening.

While the period of the communist regime is, within the official history of the museum, described as the “period of flourishing of the Museum”, the museum has, in the period after the latest war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, had many economic problems and was, during the war, heavily damaged. So, in spite of the fact that the parliament of the independent Bosnia and Herzegovina has, de facto, proclaimed the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a museum of public interest for the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the museum has had difficulties to operate and find a new focal point after the fall of communism (Kanjanać, 2010: 18). Because the museum’s archive predominantly consists of artefacts that symbolize the

communist past, it has had difficulties to re-orientate and find new goals that would give it continuous financial support.

The way to go was to focus on the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina in general and military history of the region/country/nation in particular. In this way, there is a continuity of the perspectives of the museum but a shift in the geopolitical focus of the museum. Today it is a museum with a particular focus on the articulation of historical continuity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The first exhibition organised during the wartime was opened in July 1993 under the name "Sarajevo's war pictures". During the first decade of the twenty-first century, the museum organised the following exhibitions: Paper Money in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1918 until Present Day, Fleur-de-lis in Medieval Bosnia (Golden Lilies were, in the 1990s, used as a symbol of an independent Bosnia and Herzegovina), Hundred years of Trade union movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ban of Bosnia and 'Surrounded Sarajevo'. The main objective of the preservation, collection, documentation and presentation of three-dimensional objects and photos from the War in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995) is to depict life in war conditions and show "the strength, resourcefulness, persistence of the citizens of this country to survive" as well as to document the "suffering of citizens, uricide and life in period 1992-1995" (Kanjanač, 2010: 53-54). In this way, the museum also functions as a memorial space of the most recent war and a place for the construction of Bosnian and Herzegovinian national identity and the representation of the struggle for the independence.

The Slovene National Museum

The National Museum of Slovenia, as it is called today, was founded as Carniolan provincial museum within The Austrian Empire on the 15th of October 1821 and the official proposal for the establishment of the museum was presented by the Bishop of Ljubljana, Avgustin Gruber (later the Archbishop of Salzburg), who advocated formation of "a centre in which all new discoveries would find ways and possibilities of being exploited to the general benefit and gain" (Stamcar, 2007: 9). The proposal was approved by the Imperial administration in Vienna and during the first years of the work of the museum, it was called *Krainisch Ständisches Museum*, but was soon renamed *Krainisches Landesmuseum* (the Provincial Museum of Carniola).

The reason for its provincial character lies in the fact that during several hundred years, the territories in which the Slovenian language was used were divided between different political units such as the provinces of Carniola, with Ljubljana as the administrative and cultural centre, Styria, Carinthia, Gorizia-Gradisca and Istria (Dezman, 2006: 9). Therefore, during the first half of the existence of the museum, it primarily operated as a provincial museum with the aim of improving the economic and cultural life of Carniola. In the early years of its existence, special attention was given to "the collection of the objects of contemporary craft and industrial production" (www.nms.si/slovensko/12_oddelki/uporab_umetnost/zgodovina/zgodovina.html). This laid the foundation for the establishment of applied arts and design collections.

Even though there was, among the founders and guardians of the interest of the museum, an observable notion of modernity and faith in the future, the museum staff also had a particular interest in objects from the past. In fact, the newly established provincial museum in Ljubljana received private donations; including the collections of minerals, preserved plants and zoological specimens, "archaeological artefacts from the bed of the Ljubljanica river", and numismatic and

ethnographic collections; during the first decades of its existence (Stamcar, 2007: 10). Besides these fields of interest, attention was given to collections of “national” literature and traditional clothing of Carniola and remembrance of some great “men’s” achievements (Petru, 1971: 15-16). It is possible to link the process of the formation of the museum to the celebration and inclusion of the important figures of the time in historical writings. Consequently, the exhibits had a particular political, ethno-cultural and gender outlook and they mirrored social stratification of the time.

As a consequence, two explanations for the formation of the museum have emerged. Firstly, there was an appreciable emphasis on the modernity and the future development and industrialisation of the region (Carniola). The descriptions that emphasise the significance of the Austrian Empire for the development of the region are closely related to the discourses of progress and teleological views on history. They also justify the power of the Empire. Secondly, there are, in the proclamations presented by Bishop Gruber, no references to presumed pan-Slovene political and ideological interests. Instead, the museum had predominantly provincial (i.e. Carniola) and imperial identity-forming influence. These two points of view complement each other in so far as the presumed idea of the common past and heritage of all Slovene speaking inhabitants of the Austrian Empire are underplayed. But the question is whether it is possible to make a clear demarcation line between notions of Carniola, “Slovene” and imperial identifications.

According to Peter Petru, the director of the museum between 1970 and 1983, the establishment of the museum was preceded by a vivid discussion about the need for an educational institution whose aim would either be the preservation of cultural heritage of Carniola or, and this is important to have in mind, the struggle for Slovenian domestic/national/provincial interests as well as the interests that were related to pan-Slavism and the Illyrian-movement (Petru, 1971: 1-2). It should be added that Illyria was a region in the western part of the Balkans. The Roman province of Illyricum stretched from present Albania in the east to Istria in the west and from the River Sava in the north to Adriatic Sea in the south. However during the Napoleon era Illyrian Province occupied the area which we today call Slovenia as well as parts of today’s Croatia. The capital of the province was Ljubljana. It is possible to look upon the above discussed ideological standpoints and views on cultural life of the province as illustrations of the preservation of the regional character of the museum as well as the safeguarding and further development of ties between Carniola and the Imperial government in Vienna on the one hand and the enhancement of different forms of Slovenian nationalism on the other hand.

In general, the emphasis on the culture and central role of the Austrian Imperial Power was combined with the provincial character of the museum, whose main focus was the preservation of the presumed cultural authenticity of the province. In this context, the museum contributed to the solidification of identity which was directly connected to Austria and Vienna on one hand and on the other, the local (i.e. regional, provincial) identity which had a character of the presumed authenticity of Carniolan culture and was possibly, to some extent, influenced by pan-Slavism and the pan-Slovenian movement, United Slovenia.

The core of the United Slovenia programme was the unification of all the Slovene lands, irrespective of existing historical provincial borders. The idea was for it to evolve into an

autonomous administrative unity under the protection of the Habsburg Empire, thus moving from traditional provincial borders and the legacy of being tied to the historical provinces of Carniola, Styria, Carinthia, Gorizia-Gradisca and Istria. (Dezman, 2006: 9)

However, Petru concludes that, during the imperial era, Slovenian “national” history was regarded by the museum administration as “an inappropriate and unworthy” point of interest (Petru, 1971: 27). This seemingly complex relation between provincial, imperial, pan-Slovene and pan-Slavic identities continued to permeate the work of educational and cultural institutions until the end of World War I.

On the whole, the museum was opened to the public in 1831 and the museum-curator had to be “a man from the province of Carniola, who has a public reputation and the knowledge of natural sciences and arts” (Petru, 1971: 22). While the museum had only a handful of donors during the first years of its existence, the number of contributors rose steadily during the whole nineteenth century. At the end of the nineteenth century, “[c]ollectors across the country, from parish priests, landowners and farmers to the urban middle class were encouraged to send local folk material and other items of interest to the museum, where the collections were systematically catalogued” (Stamcar, 2007: 12). The museum functioned as a guardian of both Carniolan and Austrian culture and history and it had an impact on the preservation of cultural heritage of many, but not all, social classes. It appears as if the cultural artefacts of the working class were not represented here; this due to ideological reasons and the fact that Carniola was considered to be, relatively, industrially undeveloped and a peripheral region of Western Europe (Fersila, 2010: 3-4; Dezman 2006: 9).

The significance of the Austrian Imperial Power, the ideological work of the museum and the effects of the museum on identification-construction are mirrored in the fact that the museum was renamed the Provincial Museum of Carniola – *Rudolfinum* (*Krainisches Landesmuseum – Rudolfinum*) in 1882 in honour of the Crown Prince of The Austrian-Hungarian empire (Rudolf Franz Karl Joseph). In 1883, construction of the new museum building began as a part of the 600-year anniversary of the accession of the province of Carniola to the Duchy of Austria. The new museum building, which was built in a neo-classical style, saw public light in 1888 (www.nms.si/slovensko/13_zgodovina_muzeja/zgodovina.html). It should be added that the cornerstone was laid by Emperor Franz Joseph I and that the so-called dominantly Slovene-speaking provinces of Styria, Carinthia, Istria, Trieste, Gorizia-Gradisca and Carniola “were incorporated into the Habsburg domain” during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Fersila, 2010: 1).

Not only was the new museum building constructed in honour of the Crown Prince and implicitly, the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, but the regional history of iron production was, for example, in an exhibition defined as a part of “Geschichte den Eisens in Inner-Österreich von der Urzeit bis zum Anfange des 19. Jahrhunderts” (Petru, 1971: 18). Correspondingly, the museum was entitled “*des Landesmuseum Rudolfinum in Laibach*” and the absence of Carniola in the designation indicates that the museum and the artefacts collected and exhibited there were regarded as an integral part of Austrian-cultural heritage and not only Carniolan (or Slovenian). Furthermore, German had a dominant position among museum-workers and intellectuals during the whole nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century. For that reason, many journals were published in German (*Jahreshefte des Vereines des Krainischen Landesmuseums*,

Mitteilungen des Musealvereines für Krain, Mitteilungen des Historischen Vereines für Krain) (Petru, 1971: 24).

As a consequence of World War I, the Austro-Hungarian Empire disintegrated and new countries emerged in its territory. The newly established State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs (the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, later renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia) brought a certain degree of independence to Slovenia as well as unification of the majority of territories where the Slovenian language was used (Dezman, 2006: 15-19). The museum changed its focus from primarily being a provincial (i.e. Carniolan) museum to becoming a pan-Slovene museum and governance over the museum was given to the Provincial Government of Slovenia in 1920 (Petru, 1971: 25). In line with this ethno-geographic and political change, the name of the museum was changed to the National Museum in Ljubljana in 1921

(www.nms.si/slovensko/13_zgodovina_muzeja/zgodovina.html). This change of name was not only a symbol of a new era but also a proclamation of an alteration of the vantage point of the museum.

Which nation was primarily the focus of the museum exhibitions?

According to Petru, the explanation for the shift in the viewpoint can be found in the wish to “enlighten Slovenian nation” about its history. “Slovenes were then given a museum which displayed their centuries-old history” (Petru, 1971: 27). During the interwar years (1918-1941), the museology of Slovenia entered an extensively vigorous period and an independent Ethnographic Museum was established through separation from the National Museum while in 1933, “a large part of the painting and sculptural fund was transferred to the National Gallery” (Stamcar, 2007: 13). In relation to the consolidation of the Slovene national identity, the Slovene University was founded in 1919 and it “incorporated many distinguished Slovene academics, who had until then taught at Vienna and other universities” (Dezman, 2006: 18). All this political and cultural development after World War I led to the situation where the museum became, to a large extent, orientated towards the preservation and mediation of political, social and cultural history of Slovenia (Petru, 1971: 26).

The formation of the first Yugoslavia and the incorporation of Slovenia in the union of South-Slavs, meant that Slovenia’s point of economic, cultural and political interests changed to some extent. The orientational shift from Western Europe towards so-called Eastern Europa also influenced the scientific work of museums in Slovenia insofar as Serbian historians and anthropologists published their contributions in Slovenian museology journals in Serbian (Ferfila, 2010: 4; Dezman, 2006; c.f. Zupanic, 1926/1927; Trojanovic, 1926/1927). Thus, both Slovenian and Serbian/Croatian became officially recognised as languages used in different political, cultural and scientific contexts in Slovenia. At the same time the importance of German was reduced.

However, during the whole interwar period, there existed an internal division in Slovenian cultural and political life. While some groups supported a centralised/federal system for Yugoslavia, others were asserting an autonomy declaration (Dezman, 2006: 18; c.f. Lampe, 2000: 147-149). This dualism between Slovenian and Yugoslav identities influenced the work of cultural institutions and museums, and it had continued to characterize the work of the National Museum in Ljubljana until the disintegration of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In 1971, the director of the museum wrote that the presentation of Slovenian history and statehood within the framework of the National Museum is, in many ways, unique and he asserted that the museum

had helped Slovenes to “form the present - in a joint effort with South Slavic Nations – and their future skills and knowledge” (Petru 1971: 26). Furthermore, he explained that important historical decisions require that every individual personally confront the past. By emphasizing the educational and identificational nature of the museum, he highlighted that “an important task of the museum is to present the society with historical evidence and illustrate the prehistory and history of Slovenes” (Petru 1971: 28).

Consequently, even though Slovenia was a part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and later the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the main task of the museum was representation of history and culture of the Slovene people. Examples of this historical and political point of view are visible in the following exhibitions: Turkish raids on Slovenian soil (1958), The art of Alpine Illyrians and Venets (1962), The Illyrian Provinces during Napoleon Era (1964); the Illyrian Province was a province of the Napoleonic French Empire established in 1809 with Laibach (Ljubljana) as the administrative centre; as well as Secession in Slovenia (1984).

Since the beginning of the 1990s, the museum has mainly had a national focus, something that in many ways permeates the exhibition on “Slovene Language: Identity and Symbol. A short History of Slovenes” (2006). The exhibition was part of the fifteenth anniversary of the independence of Slovenia (1991). Slovenian language is represented here as the primary symbol of Slovenian identity and it is explained that Slovenes “had to wait until the end of the twentieth century to form a state in which a large majority of the population for the first time could fully assume responsibility for its own existence and the survival of their language” (www.nms.si/slovensko/10_razstave/stalne/IdentitetainSimbol.html).

Today, the museum consists of six departments that are, according to the authors of the museum's official history, responsible for the collection, protection and preservation of historical artefacts, the study of portable cultural heritage of the Slovenian ethnic space and exhibiting them to the public (www.nms.si/slovensko/18_ijz/katalog-informacij-javnega-znacaja.html). Subsequently, during some 190 years of the existence of the museum, it has transformed from being a provincial museum within the Austrian Empire (later The Austrian-Hungarian Empire) to today being one of the leading museums that contribute to perpetuate the identity of the citizens of The Republic of Slovenia, which was established on the 26th of June 1991 via separation from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia

The forerunner of the museum was established in the midst of World War II (on the 12th of January 1944) under the name the Scientific Institute of the Executive Committee of the Liberation Front. The first exhibitions of the institute called attention to the Partisan press and Bozidar Jakac's works of art (www.muzej-nz.si/slo/zgodovina.html). Jakac was one of the key organizers in the establishment of the Ljubljana Academy of Fine Arts and was a member of the Partisan movement and communist party (*Razstave muzeja novejse zgodovine Slovenije*). Out of this institute, two different institutions were formed in 1948, namely the Institute of National Questions and the Museum of National Liberation. The Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia is the direct successor of the Museum of National Liberation and is situated in Ljubljana.

The history of the museum during the communist regime is analogous to the Museum of Revolution of Bosnia and Herzegovina (later called the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina). This is evident in the fact that the Bosnian-Herzegovinian museum exhibited some of its paintings produced by partisan artists at the museum in Ljubljana in 1977 (*Gostujuce Razstave v Muzeju Novejse Zgodovine Slovenije*). In a similar manner, the primary focus of the Slovenian museum was military history as well as the history of the communist regime/party and the sociocultural development of communist Slovenia/Yugoslavia. In line with the ideological viewpoints of the museum, it was, for few years, a part of the Institute of the Workers' Movement but it gained independence again in 1962 when the name was changed to The Museum of the People's Revolution. Its primary collections consisted of "records of the revolutionary Communist movement before the Second World War, Partisan resistance" and affirmative representations of socialism/communism after the war and Tito's leadership (www.muzej-nz.si/eng/eng_zbirke.html).

As a consequence of Slovenian separation from Yugoslavia in 1991, the name of the museum was changed in 1994 to The Museum of Contemporary History. Since 2003, this national museum, with a purpose to collect, preserve, document, study, present and communicate the intangible "heritage from the history of Slovenian ethnical territory from the beginning of the 20th century onwards", has been called The Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia (http://www.muzej-nz.si/eng/eng_zgodovina.html).

The central point of departure during the period of Second Yugoslavia was the representation of the Partisan struggle against Nazism during World War II and the Partisans' merits during the war. The discourses of liberation of Yugoslavia, the significance of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and Slovenia in this matter and the construction of post-War Yugoslavia and Slovenia as well as the images of sacrifice were an important part in the legitimization of the communist regime and the construction of both Yugoslav national identity and Slovenian ethno-regional identity. The history of so called People's Liberation Army was, in this and other museums of this kind, given an epic dimension and Partisans were celebrated as the only liberating force and the military formation which signified the union of all peoples living in the territory of Yugoslavia. The communist party was, at the same time, depicted as the solitary guardian of the Yugoslav federation and its principals.

On the one hand, the museum was part of the political construction of new communist and trans-Yugoslav identity which, in a wider sense, was associated with an idea of progress, so-called working class ideals, Titoism as well as militarist discourse. In this context, the communist regime in general and the People's Liberation Army in particular were not criticized until the break-up of Yugoslavia. The museum played a part in the construction of the 'socialist person', which would embody communist ideology and the dogma of 'brotherhood and unity'.

On the other hand, the museum embodied a Slovene regional identity and history. In this context, usage of the Slovene language and other ethno-cultural symbols were quite important. The pre-Yugoslav history of Slovenia is, in fact, embodied in the mansion which has, since 1951, been used to house the museum. The mansion was built by Austrian count Leopold Karl Lamberg and it had, during its early history, housed several figures that are seen as important for the construction of Slovenian culture. One of them is poet France Preseren, who worked here as a teacher between 1818 and 1819. One of his poems "The Toast" is used as the Slovenian

national anthem and the date of his death is, in fact, a national holiday that celebrates Slovene culture. As a matter of fact, the “political program advocating a united Slovenia (but still inside Austria) was formulated in 1848 by a small group of intellectuals associated with this romantic movement” and among them France Prešeren holds a special position (Hansen, 1996: 476). Another person who is seen as an important figure in Slovenian historical writing and cultural representation of the country and who lived in the mansion is Peter Kozler, the author of *Short Slovenian Geography*, which was published in 1853 (www.muzej-nz.si/slo/cekinov_grad.html).

The entanglement of the communist ideology, “Yugoslavism”, militarism, Titoism and ‘brotherhood and unity’ dogma on one hand and Slovenian national/ethnic identity on the other hand is visible in the titles of many exhibitions of which I will mention just a few: “Ten-year Anniversary of the Establishment of the Communist Party of Slovenia” (1947), “Four decades of the establishment of Communist party of Yugoslavia” (1959), “Youth in War” (1963), “Yugoslav Partisan Graphics – Slovenian part” (1965), “Children in the Liberation War and the Construction of the Socialist Homeland” (1972), “Tito – the Strategist of the Revolution, the Creator and the Supreme Commander of Armed Forces” (1975), “Socialist Art, Graphics and Drawings” (1976), “Brotherly Ties Between Serbian and Slovenian Nationalities” (1978), “Socialist Realism in Slovenian Paintings” (1986) etcetera (*Razstave muzeja novejše zgodovine Slovenije*).

The above mentioned ‘whitewashing’, that is to say glossing over political and military vices during the communist regime as well as a biased presentation of communist system, was gradually abolished in connection to the formation of an independent and democratic Slovenia during the 1990s. On the whole, there has been a shift towards a deconstruction and a critical representation of the communist past as well as an increased emphasis on the processes of democratization and the struggle for independence of Slovenia. According to museum workers, the democratisation of Slovene public life, which started in the 1980s, has permeated a wide range of public and (sub)cultural institutions and organisations (www.muzej-nz.si/slo/stalna_razstava_06_01.html). The transition of the viewpoint of the museum is anthropomorphized in the exhibition entitled “Posters – Elections of 1990” (the year when the first multiparty parliamentary elections were held in Slovenia) from 1992 as well as several temporary exhibitions which were dedicated to the formation of the multiparty system in Slovenia (“Twenty Years since the Foundation of the Democratic Opposition of Slovenia, DEMOS”, “Twenty years since the Foundation of the Slovenian Christian Democrats” and “Twenty Years since the Foundation of Greens of Slovenia”) (www.muzej-nz.si/eng/eng_obcasne_razstave_2009.html).

In 1996, the permanent exhibition “Slovenes in the 20th Century” was opened and a part of this exhibition is “United in Victory - Democratization and Independence of Slovenia”. Here, the so-called Yugoslav People’s Army was, and still is, seen as an aggressor and somebody who tried to hinder *our* political objectives and *our* struggle for freedom from communist oppression. All things considered, the museum gives important attention to the Slovenian national identity and its premises are today used to display the narrative about democratic Slovenian citizens as well as their struggle for independence and against oppression from the communist totalitarian regime. For instance, in 1997 a photo-exhibition displayed photos from the war for independence. Furthermore, the museum points out in the exhibition about Cultural and Technical Heritage of Blind and Visually Impaired (2010) that people with these disabilities helped in the War for

Slovenia from 1991 (www.muzej-nz.si/slo/obcasne_razstave_2010_01_slepi.html). In conclusion, the museum educates its citizens about the significance of democracy and political participation and elections.

Unlike the two analysed museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina, namely the Museum of the Republic of Srpska and the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where there is no substantial critique of the communist era, the museum in Slovenia has noticeable critical perspective on usage of history during the communist regime. It seems as if one of the aims of the museum is to discover, reveal and make public as well as reconstruct problematic issues from the communist past and past wrongdoings. According to Istok Durjava (1998:10), the former director of the museum, “[a]fter the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia and beginning of independent Slovenia, a period of attempts at ‘museum lustration’ arrived, the aim of which was to get rid of the so-called ‘red’ museums, and ideologically and physically to ‘cleans’ the Slovenian museum network”.

In the exhibition “Slovenes in the 20th Century”, attention is given to the economic and political system in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in general and Slovenia in particular. The Yugoslav system is, in “Slovenian economy since 1945”, denoted as problematic while the story about the socialist revolution, the liberation war and the socialist system is differentiated (www.muzej-nz.si/slo/stalna_razstava_05.html). In other words, there are no footprints of so-called “Yugonostalgia”. Yugonostalgia, which exists among a considerable number of people living in the areas of former Yugoslavia or among those who have identity ties to the country; is, according to political scientist Nicole Lindstrom (2005: 235-236), longing “for the past that appears better than the present”. Lindstrom states that it is nostalgia “for the fantasy of the Yugoslav state itself” and is “most often expressed towards the charismatic leader who personified it: Josip Broz Tito”.

The critical perspective towards the socialist/communist regime is most vividly expressed in the temporary exhibition called “*Huda Jama* (Cave of evil)” which opened in December 2009. *Huda Jama* is labelled “the burial and killing site” and the purpose of the exhibition was to reconstruct and revile the truth about “the worse crime of all times on the territory of the Republic of Slovenia” as well as open up critique of “Titoistic taboos” (www.muzej-nz.si/eng/eng_obcasne_razstave_2009_13_huda%20jama.html). The discourses of the search for truth and critique of the so-called Stalinistic Dachau trials permeate the analysis. Pavel Jamnik, the Senior Criminal Police Superintendent who led the project Sprava (Eng. Reconciliation), describes the site in the following words.

After changes in the political system in Slovenia in 1990, experts started investigating criminal offences perpetrated by the Yugoslav authority that do not fall under the statute of limitations. On 1 January 1995, the police started investigating post-war mass killings, and that date can be considered as the day when the new Slovenian state recognised the post-World War Two events as crimes that do not fall under the statute of limitations. According to data collected so far, the territory of Slovenia witnessed the killing of about 100,000 people in the first months after the war ended. Most of the victims were of other Yugoslav nationalities and were captured in Slovenia fleeing from the Partisan army. According to that data, at least 15,000 of the murdered were of Slovenian nationality. (Jamnik, 2008: 207)

By doing this, the museum workers hope to resolve conflicts and historical controversies left over from the communist past. Political scientist David Mendeloff points out that, since the 1990s, there has been a growing interest among many organisations and states to “address past crimes and misdeeds” and according to him “truth-telling” or “truth-seeking” are seen as important parts in democratization of societies and a necessary mechanism for achieving reconciliation (Mendeloff, 2004: 335-336).

Another example of truth-seeking processes and the obvious shutting up of the new Slovenian nation from the communist past is the exhibition “Unite, unite poor peasants: Prosecution of farmers in Slovenia 1945-1955” from 2009 (www.muzej-nz.si/eng/eng_obcasne_razstave_2009_14_le%20vkup.html). At this juncture, discourses used to define communist regime are filled with war-like depictions. Proclamations such as “killing”, “murder”, “the war against religion and church”, “aggressive de-agrarization” and “the class war strategies” point to the fact that there is a strong antipathy towards the former communist regime and that the museum possibly attempts to renegotiate the interpretation of Yugoslav and Slovenian history as well as come to grips with that which, in former Eastern Germany, is called *Ostalgie* and in the countries of former Yugoslavia, Yugonostalgia. The problematizing interpretation of the communist past is feasibly used to reduce a nostalgic interpretation of the former system and the country that once existed. However, the extent to which Slovene nationals are associated with these violent acts is still arguable. In fact, it could be argued that those who were involved in the above-mentioned misdeeds are depersonalized and associated with abstract groups called Partisans or communists. Nevertheless, this is still an example of the rewriting of Slovene history. Another illustration of the renegotiation of the history of the Slovenes is a conference that is organised by the museum and that will be held in October 2011 (www.muzej-nz.si/eng/eng_index2.html). The conference pays attention to the mobilization of the Slovenes into Wehrmacht (armed forces of Nazi-Germany). This also demonstrates the museum’s growing interest in oral-history traditions, history-from-below and an attempt to give voices to the victims and their families.

In this and many other ways, a complex history of the *Slovenes* is presented to the public today. In spite of the fact that the museum has a pronounced aim to present the heritage of “national minorities, emigrants and immigrants”, it primarily serves as an important contributory factor in the construction of the Slovenian identity which emphasizes the importance of “the rights to self-determination and statehood”, “the needs for democratic changes”, the “ideas and lifestyles of western societies” and thus, increasingly, the place of Slovenia in the EU (www.muzej-nz.si/slo/stalna_razstava_06_01.html). In 2008, the museum organised an exhibition entitled “Slovenian European Union Council Presidency 2008”. According to the organisers of the exhibition, “Slovenia played an international role which it had never played before” (www.muzej-nz.si/slo/obcasne_razstave_2008_07.html). Consequently there has been a shift in interpretation of Slovenian identity, a shift that mirrors the dissociation of Slovenia from former Yugoslav republics and a shift towards an increased importance of the European Union for the self-image of citizens of the Republic of Slovenia. However, this does not mean that cooperation with other countries of the former Yugoslavia has ceased to exist. In fact, the museum has toured with its exhibitions in former countries of Yugoslavia and visiting-exhibitions from former Yugoslavia have been displayed at the Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia (*Gostjujce Razstave v Muzeju Novejse Zgodovine Slovenije*).

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Annex table 1: Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina	1888	1884	Civil society, regional government, state	State	Archaeology, Cultural History, Ethnography, Natural History	Territorial representation (national, regional): BiH, Yugoslavia	Antiquity to the present.	Neo-classical, central cluster; Sarajevo
Museum of Republic of Srpska	1930	1930	Regional government, Civil society	Regional government	Culture, Social History, Archaeology, Ethnography, Art, Natural History, Military History	Territorial representation (regional): Bosnian Krajina/Republic of Srpska, Yugoslavia	Antiquity to the present.	Post-modern, central cluster; Banja Luka
History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina	1945	1945	Regional Government, State	Regional government, State	Military History, Culture, Social History, Labour	Territorial representation (national/regional): BiH, Yugoslavia	Middle ages to the present.	Post-modern, Central cluster; Sarajevo
The Museum of Herzegovina	1950	1950	Regional government	Regional government, Municipality (Mostar)	Archaeology, Cultural History, Ethnography	Territorial (regional): Herzegovina	Middle ages - 20 th c.	Existing building, Central cluster; Mostar

Annex table 2: Slovenia

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Museum of Slovenia	1821 (1831)	1921 (1809)	Aristocrats, Regional government, civil society, monarch, state	Regional Government/ State	Archaeology, Cultural History, Ethnography (until 1923), Art (until 1933), Natural History (until 1944)	Territorial representation (national, regional): Carniola, Slovenia, Yugoslavia	Antiquity to the present.	Neo-classical, central cluster; Ljubljana
The Slovene Ethnographic Museum	1923	1821/1923	Regional government	Regional/ State.	Ethnography	Territorial Slovenia and Non-European countries; Universal	19 th and 20 th c.	Existing building, Solitary; Ljubljana
The Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia	1948	1944/1948	Regional government, state	Regional Government/ State	Cultural History, Military History, Social History, Art	Territorial representation (national, regional): Slovenia, Yugoslavia	20 th c. - present.	Existing building, Solitary; Ljubljana



National Museums in Britain

Sheila Watson & Andrew Sawyer

Summary

National museums in London, England, (with sub branches elsewhere), are specifically designed as museums for Britain as a whole and are funded by the British national government in Westminster, having been established by Act of Parliament. Trustees at arm's length run them from direct ministerial control. Occasionally, a Select Parliamentary Committee is set up to investigate a particular national museum and make recommendations, but this is rare. Most British museums have survived for long periods in the past on benign governmental neglect, as well as support from particular individuals and sponsors who shape them to their interests. Thus throughout their history, national museums have had a great deal of independence. Traditionally, governments show an interest in them when they can see a practical instrumental use for them, such as in the mid - late nineteenth century, when museums were seen as tools for educating the general public in a liberal education of the arts and as a means of tempting the working man and woman from the public house.

National museums in Britain have complex histories and there is no single foundation pattern. It is unusual in Britain for national museums to be established by a government as part of the state making process. There are a few exceptions such as the Imperial War Museum set up during the First World War as a memorial to the suffering of the ordinary civilian and combatant, not as a celebration of victory. However, many national museums owe their origins and developments to wealthy aristocrats and members of the middle classes who donated their collections to the state, thus coercing the government of the time into funding an institution in which to display them. The Tate, the Wallace Collection and the British Museum all fall into this category and are the result of the persistence of a few well-connected benefactors. The state accepted these donations for a variety of reasons, which will be discussed in the case studies. The role of the nation in promoting the arts was slow to be established.

This paper will focus on the following key institutions: The British Museum, the V&A (Victoria & Albert), the Imperial War Museum, the National Gallery and the Tate. The earliest national museum is the British Museum. Irish physician Sir Hans Sloane left his collection to the nation provided his heirs were reimbursed with £20,000. An Act of Parliament in 1753 led to the opening of the Museum in 1759. For most commentators, the British Museum is an Enlightenment project, designed to preserve and promote knowledge of the world. The V&A was the product of the enthusiasm of one or two individuals, supported by Prince Albert, and of the Great Exhibition that funded its establishment. Here, the motivation was an educational one and a desire to improve the quality of the design of Britain's manufacturing industries.

Britain's vast empire enabled her to acquire an unparalleled collection of material from around the globe and much of this was deposited over time in national museums. However, we should be wary of reading all such material as entirely or mainly the result of a desire to own and regulate

the world. Individual explorers and connoisseurs interested in the pursuit of knowledge and the appreciation of fine and decorative arts acquired much of it. National museums such as the National Maritime Museum now tend to avoid any attempt to boast about the Empire, preferring to focus on trade and exploration and the horrors of the slave trade.

Britain's identity was firmly attached to the idea of itself as a democratic nation (even when most people did not have the vote) and thus national museums were part of the notion of an open civic society. Over time, the idea that everyone could and should have access to culture developed as the franchise was extended.

After a relatively long period of stagnation and neglect in the twentieth century caused by economic depression and two world wars, as well as government indifference, in the last fifteen years national museums have undergone something of a revival in the UK. Many have secured large capital projects partly funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, which includes new buildings and sites such as the Imperial War Museum North and new displays such as the British Galleries at the V&A. They have established outreach programmes and promoted educational activities. Many of them regard themselves as international rather than British and look to the rest of the world for comparators rather than to Europe. Some, like Tate Modern, represent a confident Britain, punching above its weight in international cultural affairs, enjoying cultural capital and expanding it. Others such as the British Museum promote world cultures rather than national ones partly as an attempt to avoid disputes over ownership of material that could be understood to have national significance for other countries.

National museums and galleries in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are governed by their respective devolved parliamentary institutions and are dealt with in separate reports. There are no specifically English national museums, nor has there been any attempt to establish one. Research by Watson (2006) suggests that some members of the English community resent what they see as their icons (here Nelson) being interpreted as British rather than English. Surveys of attitudes to national identities in Britain 'suggest that if anything the decline in adherence to Britishness over the last decade has been more marked in England than it has been in either Scotland or Wales' (Heath et al 2007: 11). Gordon Brown, anxious about a perceived lack of national unity and the rise of Islamic extremism, briefly promoted the idea of setting up a museum of Britishness but this received little support from national museums and academic consultants, and was abandoned before Labour lost the election in 2010. Thus, existing British national museums currently do not promote an overt comprehensive narrative of British history, culture and values, though individual institutions deal with some aspects of this.

Post colonial immigration and global migration has affected the ethnic makeup of Britain and has led to lively debates about the nature of Britishness and whether it can encompass loyalties to other peoples and places. The Labour government of 1997 – 2010 promoted Britishness as an all-encompassing umbrella under which a multicultural nation could enjoy separate cultural identities. National Museums in London have promoted this idea in a range of ways, foregrounding ethnic minority contributions to the state and encouraging the idea that minority groups have lived in Britain for centuries. Such exhibitions are as much a result of liberal professional enthusiasm for multiculturalism as of direct national government influence.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
The British Museum	1759	1753	Sir Hans Sloane, Parliament Aristocrats	Parliament and Trustees	World Cultures: Archaeology, Natural History, Art, History, Ethnography, Sculpture, books and manuscripts	Universal	Creation of the earth to the present day	Originally Montague House, 17 th c. French style house., since 1852 in classical building. Both in same location Bloomsbury, London.
The National Gallery	1824	1823	John Julius Angerstein, merchant, Sir George Beaumont, Parliament	Parliament through Board of Trustees	Art	Western Europe	From 13 th to 19 th c.	First established in Angerstein's town house in Pall Mall, London). Moved to purpose built gallery (1838) in the classical style, dominating one side of Trafalgar Square, central London.
Victoria and Albert Museum	1852	1851	Prince Albert, Sir Henry Cole and the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851, Parliament	As above	Design, Art, Sculpture	Universal	The last two thousand years	Originally 'Museum of Manufactures' in Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London. Moved to temporary built iron building 'the Brompton Boilers' (1856–1861). A variety of buildings in the Italian style were constructed to house the V&A that consists of galleries and courtyards. Located in the Museums area of South Kensington, London.

Imperial War Museum	1920	1917	The War Cabinet	As above	Social and military history relating to conflicts in the 20 th c.	British Empire and Commonwealth	1914 to the present day	Originally housed in the Crystal Palace, in affluent suburb of London. Housed (1924-1935) in two galleries adjoining the former Imperial Institute, South Kensington. Moved (1936) into the central portion of Bethlem Royal Hospital a former psychiatric hospital with an imposing central dome and classical facade. Located in Lambeth, marginal area of London.
Tate Britain	2000	1992	The Tate Trustees	As above	Art	National	1500 to present day	Classical building, purpose built on the Thames at Millbank with several later extensions.
Tate Modern	2000	1992	The Tate Trustees	As above	Art	Universal	Contemporary	Former converted power station and part of the South Bank regeneration project. Overlooks Thames River, Bankside, London.

Introduction: The making of the British state

Any study of the United Kingdom and its museums requires some background knowledge of the relationship between the notion of Great Britain (founded in 1707 with the Act of Union between Scotland on the one hand and England and Wales on the other), and the conflation of Britain with England. It also needs to take account of the complex relationship between the Union states and Ireland. English colonisation of Ireland over the centuries before this date meant that Ireland, by 1707, was to all intents and purposes part of this union, though this was only formalised by Act of Parliament in 1800 when the Irish lost their Parliament and sent their representatives to Westminster.

According to Colley whose seminal work in 1992 *Britons; Forging the Nation 1707 - 1837*, has remained largely unchallenged, Britishness was constructed and contested after 1707 largely in response to overseas events. Between 1775 and 1783, Britain lost its North American empire, and the mainly Catholic countries of Europe, particularly Spain and France, became the threat against which Protestant Britain re-imagined itself as the champion of European freedoms both religious and political. At the same time, the growth of a second empire in the nineteenth century re-enforced the sense of exotic otherness against which Britishness could be compared. Other factors encouraging this sense of British identity include pride in trade, a sense of British survival against the odds (repeated right up to the Second World War and drawn upon during the Falklands War, 1982), and the importance of Parliament, of which the British were inordinately proud. A key tenet of Colley's thesis is that Protestantism was a major factor in British identity. At its simplest, Protestants were good, Roman Catholics bad. Ireland does not, however, fit into this thesis.

To what extent did these developments lead to a loss of regional and national identities within Great Britain? Hechter (1999) suggests that, although subsequent industrialization did result in some decline in regional linguistic differences, Celtic identities remained strong. Colley also argues that British identity did not mean the involuntary loss of separate national identities within the British Isles. While proud to be British we can assume that most people in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were also conscious of their own local, regional and national identities within this construct. Individuals moved easily between different senses of self and history. Key players, such as the monarch, Parliament and London (capital city of England) took on a strong British identity. Museums, like all institutions of the time, could be several things to people at once. They moved, particularly in the nineteenth century, between different functions, and people had no difficulty in holding apparently contradictory views on museum representation of national identities that were both separate (Wales, Scotland, Ireland and England) and conjoined simultaneously (British). For those who lived during this period the identification with these different complementary and competing senses of nation were implicit in much of what they did and how they imagined themselves.

The Empire in the nineteenth century helped to support the notion of Britishness (Peers 2004: 53). Its existence and the wealth it generated enabled British citizens to acquire vast collections of material culture from all around the world, much of which found its way into national museums in London. Many of these collections were private ones, donated by individual explorers and

wealthy aristocrats who wished to endow the nation with the fruits of a lifetime's study and hobbies.

Southern Ireland broke away from Britain after the radical Sinn Féin party's electoral victory in 1918, followed by war with the British and civil war. As the Irish Free State (1922-37), later Éire/Republic of Ireland, it is a completely independent country and its national museums tell a story of Irish distinctiveness. The remainder of Britain remained relatively united and the Second World War provided the British state with a sense of a war well fought and won, one from which it emerged poorer and less powerful but with a strong sense of moral superiority and pride. As the memories of the war have faded, and the Empire mostly disbanded, the idea of Britain has seen less attractive to some parts of the United Kingdom. Scotland obtained its own parliament established by the Scotland Act of 1998, following a referendum on devolution. Wales gained a National Assembly for Wales established by the Government of Wales Act in 1998. The relationships between the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Welsh Assembly, the Scottish Parliament and the UK's Westminster Parliament (where all four parts of the UK are represented) vary in detail. However, national museums and galleries in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are governed by their respective institutions. There are no English national museums, but national museums in England are British ones and are governed by Westminster albeit at arms length.

National museums and cultural policy in Britain

Definitions of national museums in the UK

The Department of Culture Media and Sport, the government department responsible for museums in the UK, defines the national museums for which the Westminster Parliament is responsible as consisting of the following (as of 26 October 2010), and listed in the order in which they appear in the website:

- British Museum founded in 1759
Houses a collection representative of world cultures
- Imperial War Museum 1920
Covers conflicts, especially those involving Britain and the Commonwealth, from the First World War to the present day. The Museum comprises:
 - IWM London 1920
 - IWM Duxford 1976
 - Churchill Museum and Cabinet War Rooms 1984/2005
 - HMS Belfast 1978
 - IWM North Manchester 2002
- National Gallery 1824
Houses the national collection of Western European painting from the 13th to the 19th centuries.
- National Maritime Museum 1937
Illustrates the importance of the sea, ships, time and the stars. The Museum comprises three sites:
 - the Maritime Galleries 1937

- the Royal Observatory founded in 1675. Transferred to the National Maritime Museum in 1960
 - the Queen's House Acquired in 1934
- National Museums Liverpool

England's only national collection based entirely outside London. Eight venues cover art, history, archaeology, natural history, geology, maritime collections

 - World Museum Liverpool 1860/1 – became national in 1986
 - Walker Art Gallery 1843/1852
 - Merseyside Maritime Museum 1992
 - International Slavery Museum 2007
 - National Conservation Centre 1996
 - Lady Lever Art Gallery 1922
 - Sudley House 1944
 - Museum of Liverpool
- National Museum of Science & Industry 1857 founded as part of the South Kensington Museum

Cares for the national collections of science, technology, industry, transport and medicine. It incorporates:

 - the Science Museum, London Gained independence in 1909
 - the National Railway Museum at York and Shildon 1975
 - the National Media Museum at Bradford 1983
 - the Science Museum Swindon, storage facility 1979
- National Portrait Gallery 1856 Founded in 1856 to collect and display portraits of eminent British men and women
- Natural History Museum 1851 (formerly part of the British Museum)

The UK's national museum of nature, and a centre of scientific excellence in taxonomy and biodiversity. It incorporates:

 - Natural History Museum, South Kensington opened in South Kensington in 1881. The collections were not finally declared a museum in their own right until 1963. Natural History Museum, Tring 1937
- Royal Armouries claims to be the UK's oldest museum – Tower of London admitting visitors in the sixteenth century

Cares for the national collection of arms and armour. Its outstations are:

 - Royal Armouries in Leeds 1996
 - Royal Armouries, Fort Nelson 2004
 - Royal Armouries at the Tower of London. Sixteenth century or earlier
- Sir John Soane's Museum 1837

Displays the antiquities, furniture and paintings collected by the architect Sir John Soane in the house he designed for his private residence in Lincoln's Inn Fields.
- The Tate 1897

Houses the national collection of British art from the 16th century and the national collection of international modern art. Tate is a family of galleries, comprising:

 - Tate Britain 2000

- Tate Modern 2000
- Tate Liverpool 1988
- Tate St Ives 1993 (including the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden)
- Victoria and Albert Museum 1852

Housing one of the greatest collections of decorative arts in the world, the V&A displays everything from fashion, textiles, theatrical collections, through to toys, furniture and paintings. The V&A includes:

 - V&A in South Kensington 1852
 - V&A Museum of Childhood in Bethnal Green 1872
- Wallace Collection 1897

Among its treasures are one of the best collections of French 18th century pictures, porcelain and furniture in the world, a remarkable array of 17th century paintings and a superb armoury. (DCMS 2010)

These museums are sponsored museums. They receive funding from the government. However, this alone is not enough to secure the title ‘national’. Only museums founded by Act of Parliament are defined as national museums. Other museums funded by the state without such a foundation, such as the People’s History Museum, are not deemed to be national museums, despite their sponsorship by the state. For the purpose of this paper we have chosen to study only those museums defined by the government in this way as national museums. This is not to deny that others fulfil the similar functions and represent important aspects of the nation to itself. Our research has revealed how serendipitous has been the foundation of British national museums (mainly in London) and we recognise that there is further study to be done on British national museums that do not have this Parliamentary foundational moment.

The major foundational restructuring moments of the museum system

National museums in Britain were established for a variety of reasons over a long period of time, beginning with the founding of the British Museum in 1753 by Act of Parliament. Unlike their counterparts in Europe the monarch was not the main patron of those museums, which are now deemed to be national. Royal collecting came to an abrupt end with the execution of Charles I in 1649 when royal collections were sold. In the eighteenth century the formal role of the state in Britain in supporting the arts was very limited. Society fostered individualism and it was only through the influence and patronage of leading figures in society that notions of what we would now regard as culture and heritage gained a foothold. Without strong civic government, individuals from the wealthy middle classes drove the founding of successive waves of learned societies, which often formed their own collections.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century it was assumed that ‘the quality ...of a nation’s art collections and the taste of her *connoisseurs* helped define her state of civilization and her international prestige’ (Hoock 2003: 255 own italics). For most of this period it was accepted that private patronage should support the arts and not the state (Brewer 1997). The British Museum (whose collections included art and whose antiquities were displayed in an aesthetic manner), was free and open, in theory, to all, and is thus exceptional and an unusual foundation in Britain at

this time. Its popularity undermined these exclusivist assumptions of the polite world. During the next hundred years British opinion shifted from viewing the idea of taste as something that could only be cultivated by a few to the concept that it could be something more widely understood (Hooock 2003: 256). This shift engendered a debate about the role of the state in fostering and making available the arts to the public, and marked the beginning of a change in attitude towards the democratisation of art, science and knowledge generally, helping to pave the way towards an expansion of the national museum system. It also marks the beginning of Parliamentary interest in the arts generally.

Traditional views of the British government (and here we are referring to Parliamentary democracy and not the personal patronage of the King), and its relationship to the arts and culture during the second half of the eighteenth century, have depicted Parliament as uninterested in the promotion of the arts and unable to support them financially to the extent certain absolute monarchs elsewhere in Europe were able to do (Hooock 2005: 227 – 230). This interpretation is in part influenced by Parliament's lack of enthusiasm for a National Gallery. Thus, according to these interpretations, the British government in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries limited its interests to war, trade and a narrow domestic field.

Hooock challenges this and argues that not only could the British state afford the arts, it saw them during this period as an extension of its war efforts. For many people of the political class the war was not only waged between armies and economies but was also extended to cultural rivalry. In other words the Napoleonic Wars encouraged the promotion of patriotic art (the English/British School) and the acquisition of antiquities from abroad (for the British Museum) in direct attempts to rival French cultural developments.

However, despite this enthusiasm to acquire trophies of war and to outdo the French in the acquisition of classical and Near Eastern antiquities, the state (here we mean Parliament as opposed to the King) remained resolutely uninterested for a long time in formal sponsorship of museums in Britain, once the British Museum had been established. Indeed the foundation of this institution provided a convenient repository for all sorts of material offered to the monarch (as representative of the nation) or to Parliament itself, thus conveniently negated the need for any other museum in Britain. However, there was one particular field of collecting where individuals regarded the British state as deficient in support – art – particularly old masters and contemporary fine art, despite the fact that the British Museum had art collections. Looking abroad to the rest of Europe there was a growing concern in the eighteenth century that the British lagged behind other powers in its sponsorship of fine art. Old masters, in particular, were considered important to facilitate and encourage the development of an English school through the imitation of past styles. At the same time there were concerns that artists needed encouragement to create an English school of art, to rival those in Europe. It was the monarch rather than the state as expressed through Parliament that sponsored such a school.

Private collecting was popular amongst the wealthy middle classes and the aristocracy and it was their influence upon Parliament and their private generosity and personal enthusiasms that led to the foundation of several key national museums in Britain, such as the British Museum, the National Gallery and the Tate in the nineteenth century.

The nineteenth century

In the nineteenth century learned societies provided the foundations for a pervasive museum culture in Britain, but they should not be understood simply as vehicles for the development of Enlightenment knowledge; they were frequently regarded as independent ‘parliaments’ which brought together new blood with blue blood in a period of weak national and corrupt local government (Knell 2000; 2007). The contrast between Britain and France – the latter having undergone a publicly funded cultural revolution in the sciences and arts after the Revolution in 1789 (Taquet 2009) – was profound. Throughout the early nineteenth century, some British intellectuals bemoaned their government’s reluctance to commit public monies to the sciences and to museums. The development of museums by provincial learned societies was a means to make up for this failing and to defend the intellectual identity of Britain against the French.

In January 1823 John Julius Angerstein died and this brought the issue of a national gallery to a head. Before his death he had been eager for Parliament to buy his collection for a National Gallery and there were fears that this collection would be sold and taken abroad. The Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, was persuaded that the time had come for a National Gallery in order to improve public taste and the standard of painting in England. Speeches made in parliament at the time suggest that MPs were very aware that the Louvre set a standard that no art gallery in Britain had yet matched and that the Gallery would enhance the nation’s standing. Thus the tide had turned. With this creation Parliament acknowledged its role as a provider of educational opportunities for artists and all those interested in high culture, as well as recognising the cultural significance to the nation’s standing in Europe of the possession of a great art gallery.

The National Gallery opened to the public in 1824 in a town house in Pall Mall in London. This marks a gradual shift in national policy towards the arts with the state acknowledging a responsibility for the purchase and exhibiting of key Old Master paintings for the benefit of the public as a whole; entry was free without tickets. The Gallery was the result of the efforts of a few individuals, rather than a distinctive policy established by Parliament, and was motivated by the lack of a British school of art. A study of old masters such as to be found in a national gallery was considered one of the best ways of promoting such a school.

Government control of the National Gallery, like all national museums then and now, functioned at ‘arms length’ from the government of the time and was governed by a Board of Trustees independent of direct parliamentary control, though several of them were originally members of the government. The director (or keeper as he was called at the time of the founding of the Gallery) reported to the Trustees. Such Trustees of national museums in the UK had, and still have, considerable powers. They appointed the directors and oversaw all expenditure in the museum, approved all major developments and usually showed an interest in the displays and museum programmes. Relationships between Trustees and directors have been, on occasion, fraught.

From the mid 1830s, British governments were forced to respond to the social and political consequences of the industrial revolution that created large cities with urban proletariats working in poor conditions, and had seen a middle class drive for a wider franchise. Periodically, the government set up select Parliamentary Committees to investigate the state of culture and the government’s role in supporting it. The Select Committee on Arts and their Connexion with Manufactures of 1835-6 was headed by radicals and it wanted not only to support manufacturing

but it also saw museums and galleries as tools of social improvement, good for the nation as a whole (Prior 2002: 84). During this period, Mechanics' Institutes in the provinces were established to provide educational opportunities for the skilled working classes and arranged exhibitions. The great success of these organisations and their exhibitions helped counter some views that working class people did not appreciate educational opportunities. At the same time Britain, as the greatest manufacturing nation in the world, wished to retain her advantageous position. Thus there was great interest in ways in which all those engaged in manufacturing, from designers to artisans, could improve their knowledge particularly of design. It was this that drove much of the subsequent move towards regional and national museums in third, fourth and fifth decades of the nineteenth century. In some areas middle class interest in antiquities and archaeology led to the growth of specialist societies and the founding of local museums.

It has been suggested that British concerns about social control and the needs of an educated workforce, together with concerns about poverty and unemployment in Ireland, prompted efforts to educate the wider population in the nineteenth century and museums were understood to be places where the working classes could go to be 'civilised.' Bennett (2002: 19) argues that by the mid-nineteenth century, the 'governmentalisation of culture' was aimed precisely at the modification of the thoughts, feelings and behaviour of the wider populace. From the eighteenth century to the mid nineteenth century, these ideas, in some form or another, are influential in Britain although, as Knell (2007) points out, it is only after the mid nineteenth century (several decades after the development of museum culture) that the State shifted its attitude towards education and museums became sites of learning for all.

The Great Exhibition of 1851 was a seminal moment in British cultural development in the nineteenth century. The profit of £186,000 was used to found the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Science Museum and the Natural History Museum, which were all built in the area to the south of the exhibition, nicknamed Albertopolis. As far as Henry Cole (1808-82) was concerned, (one of the key players, whose influence in these developments cannot be overestimated), the purpose of the Victoria and Albert Museum was to improve the taste and knowledge of those who were concerned with manufacturing in the United Kingdom. Prince Albert's support for the original Exhibition and for subsequent museums was also extremely important. The mid-Victorian period saw a great upsurge in the founding or development of provincial museums. Civic pride and rivalry between cities, along with a desire to follow where London led and to promote manufacturing everywhere, resulted in a wave of museum building and development throughout the UK. Municipal museums imitated national ones in their collecting policies, acquiring material from across the world, often as a result of bequests, but sometimes as a result of organising expeditions abroad. In Wales, Ireland and Scotland museums that were to become national imitated these London initiatives.

The nearest national museum to a national history museum is the National Portrait Gallery established in 1856 with the criteria that the Gallery was to be about history, not art, and about the status of the sitter, rather than the quality or character of a particular image considered as a work of art. These criteria are still used by the Gallery, which was the idea of biographers and historians and some politicians, not the government of the day. Philip Henry Stanhope, 5th Earl Stanhope (1805-75) Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59) and Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) were the originators of the idea. Stanhope first introduced the idea to the House of Commons in

1846; he tried again in 1852 and, after he took his seat in the House of Lords, he tried for a third time in 1856. Queen Victoria supported the Gallery.

However, following Albert's death in 1861, Mandler argues that 'the court's contribution to the patronage of the fine arts was nearly nil' (Mandler 2006: 119), due in part, no doubt, by Victoria's long period of mourning. Nevertheless the state, as represented by Parliament, continued to support the national museums it had already created and focussed on issues of access rather than expansion. Only when wealthy collectors such as Sir Henry Tate (who offered to build a national art gallery subsequently and whose Gallery, the Tate was founded in 1897) or Lady Wallace, who bequeathed the house and art collection of the Herford family to the nation, offered their collections to the nation along with buildings in which to house them, only then were new national museums founded. Private, rather than state patronage was the characteristic of the last forty years of Victoria's reign and in the period leading up to 1914.

1914 and after

During the First World War many museum members of staff were called up and the work of the national museums appeared irrelevant to the war effort. The Government's Committee on Retrenchment (1916) issued a White Paper on 1 February recommending that, with the possible exception of the reading room of the British Museum, all museums, national and local, should close. National Museums at this time cost about £300,000 a year and generated income of only £3000. Their closure would be a valuable object lesson in economy and the buildings could be redeployed. Despite strong lobbying the Government implemented this plan, but a few national museums remained partially open. The impetus for closure was thus economic. That said, with the threat of Zeppelin raids from 1915 onwards, institutions took steps to store their most treasured possessions outside London or below ground.

Without any government department to take a lead on the development of national museums the government commissioned periodic reports on aspects of museum work in the UK. The Curzon Report (1914-16) proposed a rationalisation of collecting policies pursued by the Tate, the National Gallery, the Victoria & Albert Museum and the British Museum with regard to British art (Spalding 1998: 42). Such a committee indicates that even in wartime certain cultural issues were important. However, the greatest long-term impact on national museums by the war was the decision taken by the Cabinet in 1917 to establish a national museum to collect and display material relating to the Great War (the Imperial War Museum). The Imperial War Museum, formally established by Act of Parliament in 1920, opened in 1920 in the Crystal Palace. It forms a case study below. It was the most important of a number of military museums set up after the war.

The interwar years were a time of recovery from the First World War, followed by a period of severe economic recession during the 1930s and preparations for the next war. According to Lewis (1989) we can see these years as a time when the foundations were laid for developments after World War Two. The Royal Commission on National Museums and Galleries was appointed in 1927 to investigate the state of national collections in London and Edinburgh. Reporting in 1929 it had a significant impact on museums and galleries in the UK. It found that compared with the development of other services and the expenditure on them, the growth of national museums had been checked. Proposals were made for extensions or upgrading of six

national museums: The British Museum, the British Museum (National History), the Museum of Practical Geology,¹ the National Portrait Gallery, the Science Museum and the Royal Scottish Museum. Key problems identified by the Commissioners were 'the passive attitude of the State to museums and the individualistic growth of the national museums themselves' (Lewis 1989: 41). It also recommended the establishment of a National Folk Museum (which was not acted on). It called for far closer collaboration between local and national museums, for national museums to show a far greater awareness of the needs of their visitors, to improve their displays in extend their contact with schools. Its impact can be seen in the development of the following:

1. The Museums and Galleries Commission (MGC) was originally established as the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries in 1931, in accordance with the recommendations of the Final Report of the Royal Commission on National Museums and Galleries (Cmd. 3401) of 1929.
2. The National Museum Director's Conference was founded in 1929, in anticipation of a Royal Commission recommendation that the national collections should 'coordinate their work and discuss matters of mutual concern'. It currently has twenty-eight members with institutions based in around one hundred locations.
3. The Museum Association launched a Diploma in 1930, including a balance between curatorial and museum administration skills, in response to the Commission.

The founding of the National Maritime Museum in 1934, when Act of Parliament in Greenwich established it, illustrates the ad hoc nature of government interest in national museums. Once again a national museum was established not so much as a result of government policy but as a response to individual initiatives and the work of independent interest societies. The origins of the museum go back to before the First World War and the foundation in 1910 of the Society for Nautical Research (SNR), which independently developed the aim of founding a 'national naval and nautical museum'. In 1927–28, following a public appeal organised by the Society, one of its wealthy members, Sir James Caird (1864–1954), purchased several maritime collections and this impetus encouraged the government to incorporate the Museum by Act of Parliament.

National museums in wartime 1939 – 1945

National museums in the Second World War continued to sustain the cultural life of the nation during wartime. Initially they closed and their collections were put into store often a long way from the capital. Many members of staff were drafted into the armed forces. However, public pressure led to the reopening of museums soon after war broke out. The V&A, for example, reopened on 13 November 1939 and continued its programme of exhibitions throughout the war on artists such as Van Dyke and Holbein. At the same time it housed about 350 children and staff evacuated from Gibraltar and became the RAF's canteen. The National Gallery's picture of the month scheme begun in 1942, by which one Old Master at a time was brought out of safe storage and exhibited, along with its programme of lunchtime concerts and recitals, was used in various propaganda films and documentaries to illustrate not only the importance of maintaining a cultural offering in a civilized society, but also the 'spirit of Britain' at war (Bosman 2008, Crookham 2009). Damage to national museums by bombing was considerable. Both the British

Museum and the National Gallery suffered substantial structural damage and, in the post war austerity of the 1950s, repairs were difficult to justify when so many people lived in temporary housing. In the case of some museums, such as the British Museum, full repairs were not completed until the 1980s.

1945 and the post-war consensus

With the coming of a Labour government in 1964 Ministers began to take a greater interest in public access to the arts generally. The 1964 Robbins Report recommended that national galleries, museums, universities and learned societies should be placed under a new Minister for the Arts and Education (giving them a voice in Cabinet). This was a major shift in policy. Wilson, the Labour Prime Minister, chose Jennie Lee, who held the post from 1964 to 1970. If the arts had been the leisure pursuit of the metropolitan upper classes in the past, her February 1965 white paper, *A Policy for the Arts, the First Steps*, set a different tone, and encouraged wider participation. Funding for the arts in general was significantly increased.

Following the 1979 election, Thatcher's government marked the end of the post-war consensus. Funding for National Museums was reduced, and Schubert uses the V&A as an example of what happened to the national museums in these circumstances. She describes it locked in a downward spiral, lurching from crisis to crisis, losing its position as one of the great European museums (Schubert 2000: 68). On the other hand, the Museums and Galleries Act 1992 gave the National Gallery, the Tate, the National Portrait Gallery and the Wallace Collection much more independence and control of their own buildings, and the National Gallery and the Tate at least succeeded in attracting large quantities of private sponsorship.

These pressures also brought about a culture change in national museums. They became more focussed on income generation. For example it was at this time that the Natural History Museum took on consultancy work, museum shops, trading and marketing divisions became core functions, and catering improved and became more expensive. For many staff this was a difficult time as they thought these pressures took them away from their research and collections focussed priorities. Redundancies were made and posts were not filled. It was also during this time (1986) that the National Museums Liverpool was established as part of an attempt to regenerate a former industrial area through cultural developments. These were essentially local civic museums with excellent collections.

In September 1981 the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries, established in 1931, was renamed the Museums and Galleries Commission and given new functions. It was a registered charity and was incorporated under a Royal Charter, which came into effect on 1 January 1987. Its aims included promoting the interests of museums and galleries (national or otherwise), advising institutions, developing agreed standards of good practice and encouraging the adoption of these standards, and raising standards through the administration of grant schemes. Currently known as MLA, the Council of Museums, Libraries and Archives, it is due to be wound up in 2012. Throughout this period the UK Government adopted an 'arm's length' approach to museums, and National Museums were left to the devices of individual directors and trustees.

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) – a state lottery established by the National Lottery Act of December 1992 (an initiative of John Major's Conservative government) brought about a

renaissance in local and national museums and provided match funding for a range of projects both capital and revenue that revolutionised the way national museums could plan their developments.

While the impact of the Labour Party government ('New Labour', 1997-2010) has yet to be fully assessed, there can be no doubt that this ushered in a decade or more of growth and development for the national museums in the UK. Labour harnessed provincial museums to its social inclusion agenda by directing national funding to the Renaissance programme that set these museums targets for audiences with specific emphasis on increasing working class and Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) visits. The period also saw disputes over entrance fees to national museums and free entry was introduced in 2001.

The decline of national government funding of core services and the linkage by New Labour of agendas to funding resulted in national museums becoming more interested in their audiences. Large visitor numbers gave them a stronger argument for more funding, both government and sponsor-led. HLF also demanded evidence of improved intellectual and social as well as physical access for all the museums it supported. As the case studies show, philanthropy, whilst always significant, has enabled, or provided, the majority of the funding, for some of the most important new investments. In the past high culture needed no defence, but now museums were encouraged to think about their social purpose.

Encouraged by the government to think beyond the confines of London, and to consider audiences in the regions, some museums expanded physically with branches elsewhere, for example the Imperial War Museum North (IWMN) in Manchester in 2002. Such expansions were usually linked to regeneration projects in deprived areas. In this case the IWMN was part of the Salford Quays regeneration. Art in particular underwent an extraordinary boom time with British artists such as Damien Hurst and Tracey Emin being exhibited in Tate Modern and collected around the world. It can be said that national museums during this period focussed on a brand and image that reflected their role not just as national museums but as international ones. This fitted in well with the Blair administration's encouragement of the arts as a symbol of 'Cool Britannia' and the desire to position Britain on the world stage. It was during the period 1997 – 2010 that British national museums exhibited more confidence and innovation than at any time since the 1850s, reflecting a nation undergoing an economic boom.

Funding

Direct governmental funding arrangements for national museums in the UK have changed over time. The Treasury funded most national museums until 1963, when the Standing Commission for Museums and Galleries was given responsibility for 'grant in aid'. In 1965, responsibility for funding was placed with the Department for Education & Science. Then, in 1992, the Conservative Government created the Department of National Heritage (DNH) to cover arts, culture and sport. In 1997 an incoming Labour government renamed this the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Note that DCMS had a very wide remit including (for example) organisations such as the BBC, the national lottery, and the 2012 Olympic Games.

DCMS is only responsible for national museums in England. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland museums are the responsibility of the Scottish Museums Council, the National Assembly for Wales' Department of Heritage, and Northern Ireland's Department of Culture, Arts and

Leisure. The exceptions are those armed services museums, which might be regarded as national in some respects, that are funded by the Ministry of Defence in whichever part of the UK they are sited.

The structural interface between cultural policy and national museums

As we have seen, the UK's national museums are run 'at arm's length' from politicians, in other words, in theory, governments cannot tell museums what they should exhibit. However, some have argued (Babbidge 2000: 8; Anderson 2005) that the 1997 Labour Government marked a shift to closer control of the cultural sector, including national museums. Under this administration (1997-2010), DCMS funding for national museums has been based on funding agreements that are negotiated with the museums. They typically last for several years. They normally cover the aims, and the strategic priorities of the museum, in fairly general terms. They also indicate the 'Key Performance Indicators' by which the museum's success will be judged. They may specify that some proportion of the funding is 'ring fenced' for specific projects. The current agreements last until 2011.

For example, the 2003-2006 funding agreement between DCMS and NMSI (the National Museum of Science and Industry) set one target related to the demographic classification of the British public. This used a classification system known as NRS ('National Readership Survey') after the organisation that developed it, and results in a loose division of British society along these lines:

- A upper middle class
- B middle class
- C1 lower middle class
- C2 skilled working class
- D Semi and unskilled manual workers
- E Those at the lowest levels of subsistence

The 2003-2006 funding agreement with the NMSI required an 8% increase in the number of C2DE visitors over the 2002-03 baseline (DCMS 2003: 5). National Museums under Labour were also expected to promote diversity and multiculturalism, as well as attracting larger numbers of visitors from lower socio economic backgrounds.

In the UK the government, (Her Majesty's Treasury), undertakes a 'Comprehensive Spending Review' (CSR) from time to time, which sets firm expenditure limits for Departments (such as DCMS). 'CSR07' (carried out in 2007) ran until 2011; given the 2007 financial crisis, and the change of government in May 2010, CSR10 brought major changes, including a 15 per cent cut over 4 years to national museum funding, and the closing of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). Some of MLA's responsibilities will be shifted to the Arts Council.

Analysis

The case studies demonstrate that the role of philanthropy has been critical in the creation and development of national museums in Britain, and government action in relation to museums has generally been 'ad-hoc' and reactive, with the interest shown by the Labour government in the function of national museums being the exception rather than the rule.

Today national museums in England have different narratives. The British Museum presents itself as a 'museum of the world, for the world' (British Museum 2010). This, along with its Enlightenment and universal museum claims, has been criticised as a ploy to legitimise ownership of collections of international provenance. The Imperial War Museum claims to tell a national story, but with strong Commonwealth representation. It aims 'to be the world's premier museum of modern conflict' (DCMS 2008: 1). The National Gallery's collection 'belongs to the nation' and it 'serves a wide and diverse range of visitors from the UK and overseas' (National Gallery 2010: 10). The V&A stresses its role as a museum of art and design, with an international status, and as a supporter of the UK's creative economy by inspiring the appreciation and implementation of good design. Although two other major nationals, the Science Museum and the Natural History Museum are not considered here, both possess an international outlook. To some extent their subjects, popularly perceived as 'factual' mean that in terms of narrative they can present an 'objective' story with a generically 'Western' interpretation (the Enlightenment project and progress, and Darwinism and evolution). In contrast Tate Britain and the National Portrait Gallery present national narratives through art exhibitions.

The formal role of museums in state making is not easily mapped, since the government has traditionally kept at 'arm's length', its strategies have been ad hoc or at best limited by the length of any given administration's time in office and, in practice, philanthropic initiatives have often driven the agenda. Their role has also changed over the centuries. As far as maintaining or encouraging national identity is concerned currently, it is questionable whether London-based national museums promote Englishness at all. Rather, they position themselves in an international space and assume a kind of distant Britishness that includes all groups currently residing in the UK and a British interest in cultures all over the world. This can be contrasted with museums in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, dealt with in separate reports. British national museums in London adopt an international approach to their collections and galleries, and are mindful of perceptions of British imperial power in the past. For example, the National Maritime Museum's Atlantic Galleries are positioned not as a story of British dominance of the Atlantic but thus:

This gallery is about the movement of people, goods and ideas across and around the Atlantic Ocean from the 17th century to the 19th century. The connections created by these movements changed the lives of people on three continents, profoundly affecting their cultures and societies and shaping the world we live in today. (National Maritime Museum, 2008)

Even the Imperial War Museum, which tells a national story about war in the twentieth and early twenty first century, positions this story within an Empire and Commonwealth experience. Thus national museums in London do not display a coherent narrative of the nation in the same way as, for example does the Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin.

Case studies in chronological order

Basis of selection

DCMS directly sponsors twenty-one museums, although only thirteen of these are regarded as national. The museums selected for case studies are, in chronological order of their founding:

- The British Museum
- The National Gallery (later, the National Gallery and the Tate, later Tate Modern and Tate Britain)
- The Victoria & Albert Museum
- The Imperial War Museum

Some of these institutions cover a very broad range of topics and, moreover, their subject specialisms have changed over time. This is dealt with in the individual studies. The British Museum contains ethnographic collections, archaeology and antiquities but much else besides, and in its first 130 years it also held the national natural history collection and until recently a great library. The National Gallery's focus is on paintings, whilst the Tate focuses on British art and modern art and more recently contemporary art. The Victoria and Albert Museum is a design museum and has a large and varied collection reflecting this. The Imperial War museum holds artefacts of war (including a warship) and represents Britain and its dominions and now its commonwealth at war in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. They have been selected because they have all been influential not only in Britain but also in Europe and throughout the world. The British Museum and the V&A are widely imitated and, although Britain copied other national art galleries, its reputation in the field of contemporary art is high. Britain has long defined itself by the wars it has (mainly) won and the Imperial War Museum helps define the way the nation has imagined itself in the past and continues to see itself today.

The British Museum

The British Museum is not only the oldest national museum in Britain but it retains its position as the premier museum in London. The breadth and quality of collections and its international significance ranks it as one of the most important museums in the world. Although some of its collections are now sought after by other nations who seek restitution of material culture originating in their territories the museum at present shows little interest in returning these. It positions itself as an international museum of knowledge and as the world comes to London so it reflects back to the world the story of its cultures.

The British Museum was founded in 1753, around the collections of Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753), an Ulster-Scots physician and collector. Sloane left his collection to the nation in a bequest (Caygill 1981). It first opened its doors to the public in 1759 in Montagu House Bloomsbury, formerly the London home of the Duke of Montagu, purchased by the Trustees for the purpose of housing the museum. The Museum is often understood as an Enlightenment enterprise, almost outside politics (Conlin 2006: 47, Wilson 1989: 115. Note Wilson was a former director of the Museum and promoted the idea of museum as a universal museum of all cultures).

The history of the Museum in its first fifty years or more suggests that Parliament, having founded it, was unsure what to do with it and certainly had little idea of how to promote its development. It was undoubtedly invested with a great deal of national pride (Jenkins 1992: 13) and was a convenient repository of collections secured for the nation in competition with the French. However, Jenkins argues that 'the material culture of the great civilizations of antiquity was not gathered out of any sustained motive for national self-aggrandisement, but rather through a series of remarkable accidents' (Jenkins 1992: 13). There was no collecting policy as

such and early acquisitions of antiquities were nearly always the result of the endeavours of particular individuals such as Lord Elgin, the Paduan engineer and explorer Giovanni Belzoni for the Egyptian sculptures, and Austen Laynard for the Assyrian sculptures. Yet, behind these efforts to secure such treasures of antiquity lay the strength of the Royal Navy and the diplomacy of the Foreign Office. Without this support few of the great collections of antiquity would have been secured.

The British Museum and the public in the eighteenth-century

The British Museum is sometimes seen as a democratic institution, as entry was free. It was the first public museum in Europe intended 'not only for the inspection and entertainment of the learned and the curious, but for the general use and benefit of the public' (Altick 1978: 25; cited Porter 2001:39). However, the 'public' in 1759, the year it first opened its doors to visitors, having been founded in 1753, was understood to be the educated middle class. Gaining entry was difficult with the need to obtain a ticket for timed entry, which severely limited the numbers who could visit at any one time, ten per hour at first (Shelley 1911: 59). However, within two years of the museum opening the idea of timed entry was abandoned in order to allow access to 'all persons of decent appearance without limitation of numbers' (Caygill and Date 1999: 14), although a ticket was still required and some of these exchanged hands on the black market. The Museum appears to have been visited mainly by the wealthy and educated. Larger numbers of visitors required extra space and a series of building projects were initiated. One of the first, indicating the importance given to the library, was to do with the re-housing of the library of George III, and the King's Library opened in 1827. The main museum building, designed by Sir Robert Smirke opened in 1852.

The British Museum and collections

The British Museum currently positions itself as a repository of world cultures. Its collections range in diversity from archaeology to art, from coins and medals to books and manuscripts. The Sloane material certainly set the precedent for such diverse collecting but a brief study of the history of the main collections of the Museum suggests that over time certain disciplines were regarded more favourably than others. During the early years of the Museum the most important collections were natural history specimens, manuscripts and books. For the first fifty or so years the antiquities such as the Egyptian ones were valued as curiosities rather than for their aesthetic or historical importance (Moser 2006: 43), although Egyptian antiquities were frequently donated and became one of the Museum's most important attractions to the general public. At the top of the hierarchy in the eighteenth and nineteenth century were the classical collections. Simultaneous to the acquisition of this material from Greece and Rome were the donations of material culture relating to ancient civilizations in the Near East because of biblical associations. Aristocrats and the middle classes, many of whom donated collections to the museum, collected near Eastern antiquities and classical materials widely.

Governance of the museum in the eighteenth century

The nature of the relationship between the state and the Museum was unsurprisingly close in the early years following the Museum's foundation. The Trustees were independent of government but the very nature of their composition, (including amongst their number the Lord Chancellor

and the Speaker of the House of Commons), inevitably meant that they could draw on funds and support from Parliament at very short notice. Over time, however, the relationship between the Museum and the government of the time weakened. The work of the Trustees became less 'hands on' and the principal librarians and curators managed things as they thought best.

The Museum gained some independence from parliament when the Trustees secured for it a regular grant in aid at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Up until this point the Museum relied on income invested from the Lottery funds it received upon its foundation and from funds voted by Parliament on a case-by-case basis.

British Museum architecture

As we have seen the first building to house the British Museum was the rather ramshackle Montagu House, formerly the home of the Duke of Montagu. It was possibly styled by Puget in the French fashion and constituted three sides of a quadrangle (Caygill 1981: 9). The fourth side consisted of a large colonnade with Ionic columns. Erected in 1677 in Bloomsbury, a fashionable residential area of London, it had gardens, a grand entrance, sweeping staircase and great reception rooms. Thus the first Museum in Britain was an aristocrat's residence, a place where objects could be displayed as a man of letters and connoisseurship might have done. The House faced onto Great Russell Street, which, despite its name, was not a fine thoroughfare but quite a mean one. There were no other civic buildings nearby, and only with the foundation of the University College London in the nineteenth century did the area become one of learning and culture. Thus, by accident of a suitable property being available in this area did the Museum begin its long association with Bloomsbury, which continues to this day.

Montagu House was not large enough to house the increasing number of objects being bequeathed to the Museum and in 1808 a new gallery, the Townley Gallery, built near the north-west corner of Montagu House, was opened. There followed a series of extensions to the museum until in 1847 the House was demolished to make way for a grand new building designed by Robert Smirke and completed by his brother Sydney Smirke. The new British Museum opened to the public in 1852 and it is this building in which the Museum is housed today (with later extensions). It has a neo-classical facade with a grand principal entrance. It illustrates the fascination with Greek architecture in Britain at the time. The round reading room was opened in 1857.

The British Museum in the nineteenth century

It was during the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century that the British Museum came under the influence of other museums in Europe (Wilson 2002). Until this time the British Museum's curators and librarians had focussed on non-national collections. However, throughout Europe new national museums recast the notion of what a national museum should be, encouraging staff at the British Museum to value British collections more highly than before. The Louvre continued to expand and the British, ever mindful of their greatest rivals, the French, were loathe to fall behind in museum development.

Edward Hawkins, Keeper of Antiquities, 1825 – 60, and Augustus Wollaston Franks, Keeper of the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities from 1866 to 1896, (Caygill 1997) were two of the key players in establishing national collections (as in belonging to the nation). Throughout the nineteenth century the British Museum continued to expand its collections,

depending on the enthusiasm of curators and keepers who often led collecting excavations abroad, particularly in the Near and Middle East, and on the benevolence of donors. Principal Librarians (as the directors were called) allowed a great deal of autonomy to senior members of staff who pursued their own interests. The influence of the Trustees was occasional and they relied very much on the advice of those who worked in the Museum.

In 1883, the British Museum opened a branch in South Kensington to which it sent its mineralogical, geological and botanical collections. This Natural History Museum remained under the control of the Trustees until 1963. The aim appears to have been to free up space for antiquities and to remove from the British Museum the large numbers of children who came to see the animals, many of whom were considered to be too boisterous (Caygill 1981: 40). This move indicates how natural history no longer remained some of the most important specimens as they had been in the eighteenth century but classical and other antiquities now were perceived to be the most important collections in the Museum.

The values espoused by the Museum and its collections were complex. On the one hand there is no doubt that the Museum represented the way the British understood themselves in the world – as explorers, disseminators of ideas, traders and adventurers as well as imperialists and governors. These values were, however, implicit. Britain's wealth and influence facilitated the growth of the collections and many were acquired through donation or through the personal interest of the Principal Librarians or individual keepers. The government had very little influence on the museum and its development although it provided most of its running costs.

The British Museum in the twentieth century

Lack of government interest continued throughout the twentieth century. Indeed the Royal Commission on National Museums and Galleries, reporting in 1929, identified that one of the key problems with national museums was the passive attitude of the State to museums and the individualistic growth of the national museums themselves. Two World Wars and a recession in the 1930s led to damage to buildings and a lack of investment in the future.

After the Second World War the British Museum struggled to accommodate all the collections on its site in Bloomsbury and, despite several additions, it was cramped. By the end of the 1960s one solution to the department's lack of space was found, when space in London's Burlington Gardens became available and was turned into the Museum of Mankind, the department's exhibition area and administrative centre. Here the Department of Ethnography hosted seventy-five exhibitions between 1970 and 1997. In 2004 the Department of Ethnography moved back into the main building in Bloomsbury. The removal of the collections and their return can be interpreted as a sign of changing attitudes towards ethnography. Previously the 'exotic other', less valued than 'antiquities', these collections are now part of world cultures, allocating them the same 'values' as antiquities from Greece and Rome.

In 1963 a new British Museum Act replaced the 1753 Act. The Board of Trustees was slimmed down from fifty-one to twenty five. The Sovereign continues to appoint one trustee, fifteen are nominated by the Prime Minister and one each are nominated by the British Academy, the Royal Academy, the Royal Society and the Society of Antiquaries. Members are no longer appointed for life. The British Museum (Natural History) was formally separated. The Museum was now given powers to lend material abroad without an Act of Parliament. It was also decided

to move the library from the museum into a different building to provide additional space and a new library opened in 1997 along the Euston Road, separating the Museum from its manuscript and printed material for the first time since 1753.

The British Museum: Conclusion

The Museum has become one of the cultural institutions against which all others are measured but it has developed into a world-class museum as much by accident as by design. While we can argue that it contributed to state making because it became the exemplar of an Enlightenment museum and reflected power and prestige of the state to the British public and to rivals and allies abroad, no government actively sought to dictate to or manage the museum until the last decade of the twentieth century. To describe the Museum as an imperial venture is to simplify it and to misunderstand many of the myriad motives that drove the individuals who worked in it and donated their collections. Certainly patriotic pride played its part but so did the quest for knowledge. Governmental interference has been intermittent and relatively ineffectual. Directors and Trustees have wielded enormous power and individual librarians, keepers and curators have all forged their own idea of the Museum, collecting and developing its exhibitions following their own particular interests. Donors have created whole sections of the Museum by their legacies and individuals have pursued excavations and expeditions that have added enormously to the Museum's collections. Politically, as we have seen, it positions itself as an international museum of the world for the world rather than a national institution.

The Victoria & Albert Museum

The founding and early history of the V&A is particularly complex. It grew out of concerns about education and social control. The successful Great Exhibition of 1851 played an important role in demonstrating the popularity of exhibitions of this nature and providing a surplus to pay for the new exhibition. It also sought to improve British art and design. This, Burton (1999) argues, was an 'Albertian vision', that is, it owed much to the views of the Prince Consort and those of his circle; they believed, for example, that the museum could help overcome shortcomings in British design. To achieve this practical end, Saumarez Smith (1997) suggests that 'part of the spirit of South Kensington lay in an oppositional view of what are normally regarded as the constituent elements of mid-Victorian culture' that is, the museum was intended to be: not academic, but popular; not dominated by the scholarly ideals of Oxford and Cambridge, but by a belief that the state should be actively engaged in public education; and not focussed on classical antiquity as represented by the British Museum, nor in masterpieces of Western European art as at the National Gallery, but in the products of contemporary British industry, in genre painting, and in new technologies, such as photography.

The South Kensington Museum opened in 1857 and by 1869, had over one million visitors per year. Entry was free on some days of the week, whilst on others, visitors had to pay (this was to keep numbers down so that students could work).

Influence of South Kensington

It is important to note the reach of the Department and the South Kensington Museum during the tenure of the first director Sir Henry Cole. Besides supervising the regional Schools, Cole drove through a takeover of collections in Dublin, which eventually formed part of the National

Museum of Ireland. In Edinburgh, in response to ‘representations from Scottish notabilities’ (Burton 1999: 106) an Industrial Museum was established in temporary premises. This eventually became the Royal Scottish Museum in 1904. The Museum opened a branch in Bethnal Green in east London, and is now the Museum of Childhood, which is still part of the V&A.

The late nineteenth century

The retirement of Cole in 1873, and the organisational changes that were carried out then coincided with an economic downturn (the ‘Long Depression’ or ‘Great Depression’ experienced in Europe and north America, conventionally dated to 1873-96), all hampered further development. Another significant change was the renaming of the science collection as the Science Museum in 1885, with the remainder becoming the Art Museum. There had been ongoing discussion over the name for the emerging art museum but from 1899 it was formally the Victoria and Albert Museum (Art), until 1909 when, on the opening of the impressive façade along the Cromwell Road, it became simply the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The V&A in the twentieth century

The V&A in the twentieth century developed according to sponsorship and the whim of the directors. It relies heavily on external funding for redisplay schemes. It attracts little government interest but its foundation is an interesting example of state sponsorship of design for educational purposes rather than fine art for aesthetic ones.

The National Gallery

Foundation: the British Institution for Promoting Fine Arts in the United Kingdom

The early nineteenth century witnessed increased Parliamentary interest in the arts in Britain and a greater enthusiasm by the educated, politically influential and wealthy in society for more public access to fine art. People also saw the need for a national gallery in London – motivated not just by national pride but also by the aspiration that such a gallery would help improve British design and help British manufacturing as well as supporting the development of artists in Britain (Crookham 2009: 7).

A series of happy co-incidences brought about the foundation of the National Gallery collections and the establishment of the National Gallery itself. In 1823 Sir George Beaumont, a wealthy amateur artist, Tory landowner, Trustee of the British Museum and Member of Parliament, offered to give his own collection of pictures to the nation, provided they were housed in appropriate surroundings. In 1824 John Julius Angerstein, a merchant and Lloyd’s underwriter, who had 38 paintings of extremely high quality, died and there was anxiety that his pictures would go abroad. In 1824 the British Government purchased Angerstein’s collection for £60,000 along with his house in Pall Mall where the paintings were first displayed to the public. At first these were left displayed there.

The public and the National Gallery

The Gallery was at first very much private, lodged in Pall Mall near the gentlemen’s clubs. Only 200 visitors could be admitted at one time (though one wonders how they all fitted in to a medium size domestic residence). Nevertheless the Gallery was popular with 24,000 people between May and November 1824 (Hooock 2003: 261). With the decision to build a purpose built

National Gallery building in Trafalgar Square the idea of the social purpose of the Gallery became apparent.

The first purpose built National Gallery building was completed in 1837 by William Wilkins and opened to the public in 1838. There had been discussions about removing the Gallery from the centre of London where it suffered from pollution. However, it was understood that the reason for a new Gallery was to increase the space in which visitors could stand so they could see the paintings, as well as increase the hanging and storage space of the institution. Removal of the Gallery to the suburbs was considered to be a barrier to access by the working classes and there was increasing interest in the idea that art could be for all, not just those who had a high level of formal instruction in its appreciation.

For Whitehead this interest in the education of the lower orders of society led the curators to develop a historical hang in the gallery. Art was to be shown as a 'link in a great train, which receives an influence from the one preceding it, and imparts an influence to the one following. Each work is thus illustrated and made intelligible, while instruction is combined with enjoyment' (Waagen 1857: 234, cited Whitehead 2005: 27).

Thus the scene was set for the expansion of the public art institution in the second half of the nineteenth century. This was driven by the idea that art was somehow ennobling and would spiritually enrich visitors, as well as keeping them away from less desirable occupations.

The National Gallery in the twentieth century

The Gallery remained open during the First World War but during the Second World War the collections were dispersed for safety, finally ending up in a disused slate quarry in Wales. The significance of the collection was recognised by Churchill who, upon being asked should the collection be shipped abroad for safety, responded that Britain should 'hide them in caves and cellars, but not one picture shall leave this island' (quoted in Crookham 2009: 96 – 100). The National Gallery proved to be a significant and iconic institution in wartime. Despite the fact that its collections had been dispersed it held concerts and its director, Kenneth Clark, instituted a popular Picture of the Month scheme with paintings brought out of store. Every night the month's picture was placed in a special basement store to shelter it from bombing. So important was this scheme to public morale that the Gallery and the government were determined to continue it despite the risks of bombing raids. By December 1945 the collections were back in the Gallery.

The new Sainsbury wing opened in 1991 and coincided with a time when the Gallery was undergoing refurbishment.

The Tate

As late as the 1890s, British painting was poorly represented at the National Gallery, although it was well represented in some private collections, and there were several examples of private individuals collecting, exhibiting, and sometimes bequeathing British art to the nation in the nineteenth-century. The original Tate Gallery, at Millbank in London, opened in 1897 to rectify this deficiency. Its official name was the National Gallery of British Art, but it became popularly known as the Tate Gallery after its founder Sir Henry Tate, a sugar refiner and factory owner who offered his collection to the nation and paid for a building to house them. The Tate Gallery became its official name in 1932. (The summary here, up to the mid-1990s, draws heavily on the

work of Spalding's *The Tate: A History*, 1998, unless otherwise stated). The National Gallery, at Trafalgar Square, was the parent organisation to the new National Gallery for British Art. In addition, the collection was subject to the Royal Academy, and to some extent Tate himself, for the remainder of his life. A constant theme running through the early history of the Tate is its difficult relationship with the National Gallery, and controversies surrounding way in which the Chantrey Bequest, a fund for the purchase of art, was administered by the Royal Academy.

The Tate in the twentieth century

The First World War saw important developments at the Tate, in particular the Curzon Report (1914-16). This proposed the rationalisation of collecting policies pursued by the Tate, the National Gallery, the Victoria & Albert Museum and the British Museum with regard to British art, and its recommendations eventually formed the basis of its constitution. The Tate benefited from the establishment of its own Board of Trustees, though finances and collecting remained the remit of the National Gallery. Its mission was also expanded when in 1917 gallery was also made responsible for the national collection of international modern.

The Tate finally re-opened in 1921, being delayed by the departure of the Department of Pensions, which was quartered in one part of the Gallery during the First World War. During the Second World War, the buildings were badly damaged during air raids, but the collections had been moved to safer quarters in 1939. The gallery continued to make acquisitions, thanks to generous bequests. Following the war, it took some time to restore the buildings, and the Tate was not able to open fully until 24 February 1949. During the twentieth century a succession of Directors developed the professional expertise of the Gallery. The Museums and Galleries Act of 1992, and a final break with the Civil Service in 1996, resulted in the Tate gaining almost complete responsibility for its affairs.

Tate Modern

Stevenson, as Chairman of the Tate Board, announced in December 1992 that the Tate planned to redefine the collection as a Tate Gallery of British Art and a Tate Gallery of Modern Art, and acknowledged that new buildings would be needed. Nicolas Serota, as director of Tate, drove through an ambitious expansion policy, which illustrates the importance of the director. Without any government backing, he acquired the Bankside Power Station for a new modern art gallery and a £50 million grant from the National Lottery fund towards the costs, reckoned at around £134 million. "New Labour, as a symbol of cool Britannia, adopted this new museum that developed entirely independently of government guidance and outside its policy.

The Imperial War Museum

The Imperial War Museum is unusual because it was founded as a result of a government initiative as a direct result of the impact of the First World War on Britain and a desire not only to remember the dead but also to support domestic morale. It was designed to collect material from the Dominions and India, and was concerned with the experiences of ordinary soldiers and civilians as much as the technology and tactics of war. The Treasury funded it from the start and collection started before the war's end. An Act of Parliament established the museum in 1920 and it was opened at the Crystal Palace on 9 June. The King's words on the opening have often been quoted since:

it stands, not for a group of trophies won from a beaten enemy, nor for a symbol of pride in victory, but as an embodiment of and a lasting memorial of common effort and common sacrifice through which, under the Guidance of Divine Providence, Liberty and Right were preserved. (George V, 1920, quoted in Condell 2002: 31)

Thus this was not a triumphalist monument to victory but a sober memorial to suffering and death. In 1930 it was proposed to move the museum to The Royal Bethlehem Hospital (sometimes known as 'Bedlam'), in Southwark. The museum opened there in 1936.

In 1940, its remit was extended to cover the new conflict, and it started collecting immediately. Following the Second World War, the museum re-opened, and an Act of Parliament in 1953 extended its collecting policy to include all conflicts in which Britain and the Commonwealth had been engaged since 1914. Since 1976 the museum has opened four other branches. These are: Imperial War Museum Duxford, HMS *Belfast*, Imperial War Museum North, Churchill Museum and Cabinet War Rooms (since 2010, the Churchill Museum).

In the case of the Imperial War Museum, its branches are specifically devoted to certain aspects of Britain and war, some of which are integral to an understanding of British national identity. For example the Cabinet War Rooms and the newly formed Churchill Museum within that site, represent and foreground some important elements of Britain's sense of identity in the twentieth century such as Britain as the champion of liberty (Watson 2010).

The museum is an executive non-departmental public body under DCMS, The Imperial War Museum Act of 1920 and other more recent legislation defines the management of the museum. A Board of Trustees was established, and the Prime Minister, the Foreign, Defence and Culture Secretaries appoint trustees; Commonwealth countries appoint seven further members, and the British monarch appoints the President of the Board.

In terms of finances, the museum gains around fifty per cent of its income from its grant from DCMS, with the remainder coming from other sources (Imperial War Museum, n.d: 10). These include the activities of its trading arm and its development trust. These figures indicate that, like other national museums in the UK, the IWM has a sophisticated approach to funding and is not entirely dependent on government funds.

Conclusion

National Museums in the London in the twenty first century look to international comparators as much as European ones. Historically, Britain has, Janus-like, faced both ways – towards Europe and towards the rest of the world. National government control of these museums has been, and continues to be, at arm's length. Interest in them is intermittent. The result is that individual directors, keepers, curators, benefactors and donors exert a great deal of influence. Thus these museums can be seen as products of a form of enlightened capitalism, which allowed them to develop in serendipitous fashion reflecting not so much the aims and aspirations of government as the vision of individuals within cultural circles. The Labour Government of 1997 – 2009 adopted a more instrumentalist approach to culture and to museums generally. This was unusual. It remains to be seen how the new coalition government will approach this issue.

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The authors: Dr Sheila Watson is a lecturer in the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, England. Dr Andrew Sawyer is a Research Associate in the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, England.

Notes

- ¹ The Museum of Practical Geology was established in 1835, and after several moves became part of the Natural History Museum in 1986.

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Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values
The British Museum	1759	1753	Sir Hans Sloane, Parliament Aristocrats	Parliament and Trustees	World Cultures: Archaeology, Natural History, Art, History, Ethnography, Sculpture; Books and Manuscripts	Universal
The Royal Armouries Tower of London	Mid sixteenth century	English royal collection from the late Middle Ages	Monarch	Crown. Now Parliament Governed by Board of Trustees	Arms and Armour	Mainly European with focus on England and Britain, but some other cultures represented such as Japanese. Universal claims.
The National Gallery	1824	1823	John Julius Angerstein, merchant, Sir George Beaumont, Parliament	Parliament at arms length through a Board of Trustees	Art	Western Europe
Sir John Soane's Museum	1837	1833	Sir John Soane, Parliament	As above	Art and Architecture	Soane's personal tastes – mainly Western European, with Egyptian and Oriental collections.
Victoria and Albert Museum	1852	1851	Prince Albert, Sir Henry Cole and the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851, Parliament	As above	Design, Art, Sculpture	Universal

National Portrait Gallery London	1856	1846	Philip Henry Stanhope, 5 th Earl of Stanhope, various historians such as Macaulay and Parliament.	As above	Art	National
The Natural Museum of Science and industry called the Science Museum from 1909	1857	1851	Prince Albert, Sir Henry Cole and the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851, Parliament.	As above	Science, Medicine, Technology	Mainly British science, medical and engineering successes but universal principles.
The Wallace Collection	1897	1890s	Aristocracy, Lady Wallace	As above	Art, Furniture, Armour	Universal
The Tate London	1897	1897	Aristocrats, Sir Henry Tate, sugar magnate	As above	British Art and International Modern Art	National and universal
Imperial War Museum, London	1920	1917	The War Cabinet	As above	Social and Military History relating to conflicts in the twentieth century	British, empire and Commonwealth.
Museum of Childhood, Bethnal Green	1920s as museum with collections on childhood	1872 as a branch of V&A.	V&A	As above	Childhood Material	Universal
National Maritime Museum London	1937	1934	Royalty, aristocracy and the middle classes & shipping magnate	As above	Maritime Collections including Fine Art and Social and Industrial History	National but moving towards universal.
The Natural History Museum London	1963	1753	British Museum	As above	Natural History	Universal

Royal Airforce Museum Hendon	1972	1960s	RAF	As above	Aircraft	Britain
National Railway Museum at York and Shildon	1975	1975	National Museum of Science and Industry	As above	Railways	Britain
Imperial War Museum Duxford	1976	1976	Imperial War Museum (IWM)	As above	Large Military Collections	British and commonwealth.
HMS <i>Belfast</i>	1971	1967	IWM and HMS <i>Belfast</i> Trust, retired Naval staff	As above	Ship	National
National Media. Museum Bradford	1983	1983	National Museum of Science and Industry	As above	Media	Britain
World Museum Liverpool	1986	1986	Aristocrats and middle classes as local museum 1860/61. Local and national politicians in 1986.	As above	Natural History Ethnography, Palaeontology, Geology, Science, Ancient Civilizations, Archaeology	Universal
Walker Art Gallery Liverpool 'The National Gallery of the North'	1986	1860	Middle class philanthropists; local and national politicians	As above	Art	Western Art

Lady Lever Art Gallery Port Sunlight	1986	1986	Established by soap millionaire in 1922, as local museum; local and national politicians in 1986.	As above	Art, Textiles, Furniture, Ceramics, Ethnography	Universal
Sudley House, Liverpool	1986	1986	Emma Holt Middle class philanthropist; local and national politicians	As above	Victorian house and contents – British, European and Chinese	Universal within a domestic British setting.
Mersey Maritime Museum	1986	1986	Middle class enthusiasts and collectors in 1862; local and national politicians 1986	As above	Maritime	Liverpool Britain and the World.
Churchill War Rooms (from Cabinet War Rooms and Churchill Museum)	1989	1984	IWM and private sponsors, mainly American	As above	WWII, Churchill	National
Tate Liverpool	1988	1982	Tate Trustees & Merseyside Development Corporation	As above	Art	Universal
Tate St Ives Cornwall	1993	1960s, 1988	Tate Trustees	As above	Modern British and International Art	Modern British art movement that has international significance.
Royal Armouries Fort Nelson	1995	1995	Royal Armouries	As above	Fort Holding Military Collections	International

Royal Armouries Leeds	1996	1990	Royal Armouries	As above	Arms and Armour from all over the world	Universal
Tate Britain	2000	1992	Tate Trustees	As above	Art	National
Tate Modern	2000	1992	Tate Trustees	As above	Art	Universal
Imperial War Museum Manchester	2002	1990s	IWM	As above	Warfare	Universal
Royal Armouries Frazier International History Museum, Louisville USA	2004		Royal Armouries Trustees and Frazier Museum Trustees	As above	Armour	Universal
International Slavery Museum Liverpool	2007	1994	Trustees	As above	Social History, Ethnography	Universal



National Museums in Bulgaria: A Story of Identity Politics and Uses of the Past

Nikolai Vukov

Summary

The history of Bulgarian national museums exposes several major realms of the past that received abundant representations and that have been used as sources of identity politics since the end of the nineteenth century. The interest in the archaeological heritage found in Bulgarian territory, the reassertion of medieval state glory through remnants of the Middle Ages, the glorification surrounding the national liberation struggle of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the pride with the rich ethnographic and folklore heritage – were those cornerstones through which the nation portrayed itself as having got deep roots in the past and as bearing a ‘unique’ cultural specificity. The purpose of the current report is to trace – through the functionalization of these main historical realms – the construction and representation of national identity in Bulgarian museums from the late nineteenth century through the post-communist period. Based on analysis of the development of three national museums in the Capital (those of history, ethnography, and archaeology) and two museums dedicated to national heroes (in Karlovo and Kozloduy), the report will outline the major points in national identity politics in Bulgaria, its carrying out through museum institutions and its reflection in various museum units across the country. By paying attention to the establishment of museum institutions, the institutional changes, and the main overtones in historical representations during and after the communist period, the report will shed light on the uses of the past in Bulgarian museums and on the general tendencies guiding its representation in the course of a century and a half.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actor	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Archaeological Museum	1905 (as People's Museum) 1906 (established as Archaeological Museum)	1869 1892-3 (established as People's Museum)	Bulgarian Learned Society, Ministry of Culture and Education, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences	State	National History, Archaeology, Traditional Culture and Art	Territorial representation and universal values	Bulgarian and Balkan History, Pre-History, Antiquity to the Middle Ages	Ottoman religious architecture, former mosque (15 th c.), in the city center, Sofia.
National Ethnographic Museum	1905 (as People's Museum) 1906 (established as Ethnographic Museum)	1869 1892-3 (established as People's Museum)	Bulgarian Learned Society, Ministry of Culture and Education, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences	State	Traditional Culture and Folk Art	Territorial representation and universal values	Bulgarian and Balkan Territories, Bulgarian population, the early modern period to the contemporary period	Viennese baroque style, originally Ottoman building turned into a royal palace (1879-1940s), in the city center, Sofia.
National History Museum	1984	1973	Ministry of Culture, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences	State	National History, Archaeology, Traditional Culture and Art	Territorial representation and universal values	Bulgarian History, Balkan History, European history, Pre-History to Modern History (including Ottoman rule)	Socialist Architecture (1970s) outside Sofia at the Vitosha mountain.

<i>Vassil Levski</i> National Museum in Karlovo	1937	1933	Karlovo Municipality, National History Museum in Sofia	State	History related to the national hero Vassil Levski, Family history, Archival documents, Works of art	Territorial representation and universal values	Bulgarian History, History of the Karlovo area (mid-19 th c.)	19 th c. architecture, at the city centre, Karlovo.
Radetzky Steamboat National Museum in Kozloduy	1982	1878 1960s (recon- struction)	Kozloduy Municipality, National History Museum in Sofia	State	History related to the national hero Hristo Botev, Regional History, Archival documents, Monuments	Territorial representation and universal values	Bulgarian History, history of Kozloduy area, late 19 th c.	19 th c. steamboat, located by the Danube River, Kozloduy.

Introduction

The national liberation and emergence of the new Bulgarian nation state in 1878, after five centuries of Ottoman rule, gave an impetus to a range of initiatives related to the preservation of the national past and its consolidation around core notions of national identity, historical heritage, and cultural belonging. With the systematic attempts to cast off and overcome the Ottoman legacy, to construe modern national profile and to root the latter in traces referring to ancient, medieval, ethnographic and national revival periods, national museums in Bulgaria provide good grounds for comparison with other museums across the European continent. Furthermore, developments of museum institutions in the twentieth century offer fruitful opportunities to position Bulgarian museums within a wider European context, especially in light of professionalization in the discipline of the interwar period, the shaping of national identities along communist lines after 1944, and the reorientation of museum policies after 1989. The task of the country report on Bulgaria is to elicit the main guidelines of Bulgarian national museums for producing national identities and for involving the past into political, historical and cultural discourses about national specificity and authenticity.

Starting to appear in the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the first museum collections in Bulgaria were based in the activities that the so called *chitalishta* (cultural centers, cultural houses) performed in different parts of the country throughout several decades before the national liberation. Although in principle, they did not have a specialized museum focus (but rather educational and general cultural one), many of them preserved material and documentary traces that would later form the basis of museum units. After 1878, the role of *chitalishta* was further enhanced and – together with continuing their significance in maintaining local and regional cultural activities, they laid the basis of a network that would soon gain nationwide dimensions. The synthetic character of these institutions (which served simultaneously as libraries, galleries, museums, and cultural clubs) has largely determined the overall profile of museum institutions in Bulgaria until today. Whereas the origins of cultural practices related to the preservation of national and regional history can indisputably be linked to such cultural institutions of the late national revival (i.e. between the 1830s and 1870s), the roots of museum collections in Bulgaria date back to the roles of archaeological and learned associations in the late nineteenth century, which were instrumental in initiating museum units in several Bulgarian towns and which maintained museum activity before the emergence of a national museum institution. A crucial role of triggering museum work in Bulgaria was played by the *Naroden muzei* (People's Museum) in Sofia (*see below*), initiated by the Bulgarian Learned Society in 1869 (inaugurated in 1892-1893, and opened to the public in 1905) and developed as an institution that would safeguard the historical and cultural heritage of the Bulgarian nation in all its various realms – archaeology, history, ethnography, art, etc. Aside from its overall importance as a separate institution, *Naroden muzei* was instrumental in giving birth to several specialized museum institutions in Sofia and in other towns of the country, and the guiding role that it had in directing museum work in the course of several decades. It was this institution and its branches that shaped museum policies throughout the entire interwar period and that gave the main overtones in representing national identity prior to the establishment of communist rule.

Following the official inauguration of *Naroden muzei*, the next major dividing line in the development of museum work in Bulgaria was in the years immediately after World War II, when the embracement of the new ideological system under Soviet guidance led to an overall transformation in museum work and exhibition policies in Bulgaria. Whereas many of the existing museums were pronounced as ‘people’s’ (*narodni*) – as an indication of their belonging to the people and the nation, already in 1950s the structure of existing museums was changed in light of major ideological and historiographic postulates, resulting in the formation of two major departments of ‘Modern’ and ‘Most Modern’ (meaning here ‘contemporary’) History in them. Parallel to the creation of specialized museums for the socialist movement, the antifascist struggle, and the socialist construction, the halls about the Most Modern Bulgarian history expanded enormously with a special focus on the partisan resistance, which soon occupied a central place in all national and regional museums of the country. In addition to that, in towns such as Sofia and Varna, museums based on Bulgarian-Russian and Bulgarian-Soviet Friendship were established – with the main purpose being to exhibit traces of historical and cultural collections between Bulgarian and Russian people, and to function as cultural centers for the promotion of Russian and Soviet culture. In many towns of the country, museums units based on the Revolutionary Movement were also established – with the purpose being to focus closely on the socialist movement, the interwar period, and the antifascist struggle. The materials put on display were of a diverse nature (photos, objects, letters, weapons, commemorative data, etc.), but their major purpose was the glorification of the socialist movement and the interpretation of the communist party as the sole motor of antifascist resistance in the country. Whilst shaped as separate units in various museum institutions, these Museums of the Revolutionary Movement had both centralized and national representation as well – by the thus-named museum in Sofia, located in the very center of the Capital, within meters from the National Parliament. Aside from museum representations that were related directly to the history and founding narratives of the ideology in power, the communist period was emblematic also with the use that it made of national history and the new level of representation that it supplied to figures and events far preceding communist rule. Following a decade of relative silence on issues related closely to national history (at the expense of the attention to figures of the socialist movement and the Soviet army), in the early 1960s, the regime gradually demonstrated visible attention to the history of the nineteenth century liberation struggle, frequently depicting it as preceding the socialist movement and the antifascist resistance in the first half of the twentieth century. Together with the enhanced reflection of this historical period in existing or newly-founded museums in the Capital (e.g. the National History Museum – *see below*), separate museum units to Bulgarian patriots and liberation fighters of the nineteenth century were created in the towns of their birth or where they had carried out their revolutionary activity. In the 1970s and 1980s, the sensitivity of the ideology to trace connections to previous historical periods (and thus, to position itself as a special period within a panorama of glorious history) found expression in the expanding of representations to Ancient (mostly Thracian) and Medieval history, and in the affirmation of the nation as an ethnic and cultural unity that encompassed the distant past, the communist present, and the ideologically optimistic future.

The modes of representation established in the period of socialism laid a strong impact on the development of national museums after 1989, particularly in the attempts to overcome some of

the legacy from the communist period. Within years after the political changes, the previous representations on the socialist movement, partisan struggle, and the building of socialism were dropped down from museum displays and, in their place, other parts of museum collections were enhanced. Archaeological and ethnographic heritage gained revived significance and new approaches for its organization and promotion were undertaken. Everyday life in towns of the early twentieth century and folklore traditions of different ethnic and religious communities in Bulgaria started to occupy a regular place in both permanent and temporary museum exhibitions. Although most of the museum institutions remained under state authority, some of them switched their dependence from ministries to municipalities, prompting a general turn in the conceptualization of their status and affiliation to state institutions. Despite episodic attempts for representing the recent past in national and regional museums, the communist period generally remained without an engaged reflection in museum exhibitions after 1989. The previous materials on display were directed mainly to archival collections, rarely appearing in focused expositions. Whereas socialist sites of memory were customarily neglected for involvement in museum networks, initiatives to collect oral histories from the periods of communism until after 1989 resulted mainly in enriching museum's storerooms. In contrast, museum units kept on being actively involved in national celebrations and commemorations, e.g. the national liberation, of the end of World War II, the day of national independence, etc. All these kept on maintaining and reproducing images of the nation, in a way that both resonated about practices in the communist period, and prompted attempts to switch into a different, post-socialist and post-'colonial' mode of representation.

National Archaeological Museum

The idea of creating a Bulgarian national museum dates back to the 1840s and its realization was outlined as one of the main tasks of the Bulgarian Learned Society in 1869. The establishment of the museum institution started immediately after the national liberation of 1878. After the creation of the Narodna biblioteka (People's library) in 1878, a museum collection was set up and it soon developed into a separate department. The expanding of the collection was possible mainly through donations and the activities of schoolteachers in the country, who sent the museum everything that bore value as part of the history of Bulgarian lands. The inauguration of the museum unit as a separate institution (named as *Naroden muzei* – "People's" / "National" Museum) took place in 1892 and was later affirmed by the Decree of King Ferdinand on January 1, 1893. Acquiring the building of the Buyuk mosque for presenting its expositions, the museum organized its collections in three main groups: Ancient Times, Numismatic, and Ethnographic ones. The museum was officially opened for general public in 1905, with the honorable participation of King Ferdinand, ministers, and prominent intellectuals.

The legislative acts issued soon after its creation regulating the collection of antiquities, their sending to the museum and their turning into museum objects played a crucial role in the development of museum work and archaeology as a science, and affirmed the participation of the state in carrying out museum activities. They affirmed also the guiding position of the Ministry of National Education in organizing archaeological excavations and export of antiquities outside the country. Enabling the establishment of the very idea of Bulgarian cultural heritage, the museum continued the Revivalist idea of unification of all lands with a Bulgarian population. The

establishment of the museum was particularly notable in the atmosphere of an overall political and cultural upheaval after the Liberation and the creation of other national institutions for the study of the past and for integrating the Bulgarian people to the cultural traditions of other European nations. Within several years of its creation, the museum was ranked third by its importance in the Balkan Peninsula – after those of Athens and Istanbul. In a way, the museum turned out to be an important institution not only for Bulgarians, but also for the entire Balkan region.

The agenda of gathering all the removable monuments from the territory of the country was carried out with the active collaboration of administrative, military, school and church authorities. Specialized archaeological excavations were undertaken in order to shed light on the history and culture of Bulgaria. The museum was given generous budget subsidies to purchase antiquities and art pieces from individuals and it succeeded to substantially enlarge its funds, particularly those of Numismatics and Ethnography. The latter widened to such an extent that in 1906, together with the archive of the Bulgarian Revival, it was given a separate status and thus laid the beginning of the Ethnographic museum in Sofia (*see below*). With the Law of national education in 1909, the museum was renamed to the National Archaeological Museum, which included departments of Ancient History, the Medieval period, Numismatics, and art. In the 1920s, a separate department of pre-history was formed. The realization of the museum's work was carried out in close collaboration with the Bulgarian archaeological association, which was founded in 1901 and which developed during the 1920s into the Institute of Archaeology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

Parallel to the rich material traces from Ancient times, a major realms of collection and investigation since its foundation were the remains dating back to the Middle Ages, as uncovered during excavations in palaces, fortresses, and churches from the First and Second Bulgarian kingdoms. This attention to medieval times helped turning the department into a second major one in the museum during 1920s, as well as contributed to the solving of important issues in history periodization. Despite the difficulties of the interwar period, the donations and purchases of museum objects continued and the museum had a constantly expanding collection in those years. Major attention was paid to museum's educational activities and its opening to the people, to whom it was created to serve and to whom it sought to present, in a visual and legible manner, the cultural layers across different centuries. During the bombing of the capital during World War II, the museum was partly destroyed and part of its documentation and library funds burned down. The building was reconstructed in 1946 and two years later its collections were opened to the public. Substantial restructuring of the museum was undertaken at the time and its Art Department was separated to form the basis of the National Art Gallery. A new institution was formed – the Archaeological Institute with Museum and it was included in the system of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, to be followed in 1952 by a special office at the Committee for Art and Culture (it later evolved into the National Institute of Monuments of Culture), which took the duty of conservation and restoration of the archaeological monuments still uncovered at excavations. Furthermore, the new state policy for establishing a network of local museums in the country (where the main archaeological findings were to be preserved), strongly limited the input to the museum funds of the museum in the capital.

A major step in reshaping the museum after 1944 was adherence to the Soviet model, and to the principles of dialectics and historical materialism, which meant to emphasize the linear and logical historical development of culture and the internal link between phenomena and processes. In terms of exhibition practices, attention was paid to the complex way of exposition and to reconstructions about how each of the museum objects was used and functioned in society. The exhibitions strictly followed the chronological order and the main phases of human society according to Marxist ideology, i.e. the kin community, slavery and the feudal social orders. In the Prehistory Department for example, a hall on the ‘everyday life and culture of the pre-class and early class society in Bulgaria’ presented the material life and culture of wide people masses. In a very didactical manner as well, the exhibition on the Middle Ages (opened in the 1960s) presented the material life and culture of medieval Bulgaria, emphasizing the glory of the Bulgarian nation and turning it into a tool of nationalist propaganda. A new policy was undertaken in the 1970s, which found expression in the dropping of the museum’s permanent exhibition and organization of numerous temporary exhibitions dedicated to the glory of the national past. Key attention was on the abundant Thracian heritage (whose research was at the core of the historiographic paradigm in that period) and the luminous medieval times with powerful Bulgarian kingdoms, which emphasized the prototype they laid for a modern Bulgarian state. It was largely this logic, which determined the creation of a separate National History Museum in 1973 (*see below*), which actually took many of the collections about the history of the Bulgarian state from the Archaeological Museum, leaving the latter exclusively within the specialized realm of archaeological and numismatic heritage, dating mainly from the periods before the creation of the nation state.

Established soon after the national liberation, the present day National Archaeological Museum occupied a very important place in the cultural life of the Bulgarian state. It was a possibility for the newly-founded state to get back its roots, to assert its own cultural identity and to present itself on the international scene. Located in the center of the capital, in close proximity to the largest buildings of political and economic power, its permanent and temporary exhibitions had a representative role for the cultural heritage and national values of Bulgaria. It was a special point of pride for all political regimes, which directly or indirectly influenced some of its expositions or exhibition policies. Giving birth to several of the national museums – those of Ethnography, of National History and of the National Art Gallery, the museum retains until today its authority and profile as a site where some of the most important collections of the cultural heritage of Bulgarian lands have found their accommodation and representation.

National Ethnographic Museum

The National Ethnographic Museum was created as a separate unit in 1906, when the ethnographic collection of the *Naroden muzei* was given autonomous status by the Ministry of Education. Bearing, as its main purpose, the collection and presentation of the ethnographic heritage in Bulgarian lands, it attracted the collaboration of many prominent intellectuals, researchers, and figures in the fields of art and culture. In the 1920s, the museum was among the richest museum institutions in the Balkans. It developed intensive international activity, with travelling exhibitions of Bulgarian traditional costumes, textiles, and crafts to leading European towns in the first part of the twentieth century. In 1949, the museum was linked with the

Institute of Narodouka (Ethnography / Folk Studies), which was established two years earlier and – as an Ethnographic Institute with Museum – functioned already within the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. In 1954 it was positioned in the former royal palace (together with the National Art Gallery) and had its first big exhibition presented there. The museum collections encompass a wide variety of objects related to home crafts and home interior, agriculture and cattle breeding, carpets, woodcarving, wrought iron, copper processing, jewelry, ritual objects, costumes, embroidery, etc. Together with its permanent exhibition, it has organized numerous temporary exhibitions dedicated to specialized presentations of different realms of traditional arts and crafts. The museum has gotten numerous visits with exhibitions in the former socialist countries as well as in other countries and continents – especially in 1970s and 1980s, on the occasion of the celebrations of the 13 centuries after the establishment of the Bulgarian State in 681. The period after 1989 led to a relative narrowing of the visiting exhibitions abroad, but the interaction with other museum units in the country and particularly those in Sofia continued. A series of new topics found their presentation in museum exhibitions – especially ones related to the traditions and heritage of different ethnic, religious, and cultural minorities in Bulgaria: Bulgarian Muslims (*pomaks*), Roma population, Jews, Armenians, Karakatchans, Aromanians, etc. A separate focus of exhibitions over the last decade has been Bulgarian communities living abroad – in present day Serbia, Macedonia, Banat, Bessarabia, and Turkey. Aside from shedding light on themes that could hardly find representation in museum expositions during the communist period, the impetus to represent Bulgarian communities in different countries of Europe and the world prompted also a new moment in national self-understanding – one touched by resonances of trauma from past historical experience, solidarity with co-nationals residing outside the national state and affirmation of the inextinguishable national identity despite territorial separation.

National History Museum

The National History Museum was created after a decree of the Ministry Council in 1973. Its major purpose was to present the history of Bulgarian lands from prehistory until today and to position it in the context of the general European history. Being one of the largest history museums in the Balkans, it preserves more than 650,000 monuments of culture and a rich archaeological and history archive. Its first exhibition was opened in 1984 on the occasion of the anniversary celebrations of 1300 years after the creation of the Bulgarian State. Initially, the museum was located in the building of the Law Court in Sofia, but since the beginning of the twenty-first century, it was moved to the governmental residence of former communist ruler, Todor Zhivkov. The main exhibition of the museum is arranged in five halls: Prehistory, Ancient Thrace, the Bulgarian Middle Ages, Bulgarian lands in the 15th through 19th c., and Third Bulgarian Kingdom (1879–1946). Among the branches of the museum are the Boyana church of 10th - 11th c., the monastery of Zemen (11th c.), the steam boat ‘Radetzky’ near Kozloduy (the one where Hristo Botev and his fellow fighters landed on Bulgarian land in 1876), the church of ‘Forty Holy Martyrs’ in Veliko Tarnovo, etc. The collections of objects from Antiquity, numismatics, and traditional culture form a regular part of this museum. Among them are, for example, those of uniforms and urban fashion, traditional costumes, furniture, religious and applied art, documents and objects from the period of national Revival, photos from late

nineteenth and early twentieth century, periodicals and printed materials, maps, flags, and stamps, etc.

In terms of structure and collections, the National History Museum virtually copied the initial structure of the *Naroden muzei*, and the Archaeological and Ethnographic museum taken together. Not only had it acquired a large amount of their collections for the preparation of its funds, but it also doubled a substantial part of their representations, however, with an emphasized national and even nationalistic line, which was in line with the new emphasis that was laid on national history during the last two decades of communist rule. Since the mid-1980s, this museum turned into a primary focus of museum visits, at the expense of a relative decrease of such in the two aforementioned museums. The national and state-framed reading of history was complemented as well by a sharp disregard to a modification of representation policies after the end of communist rule. The glorification of the nation, the interpretative halo around the peaks in national history at the expense of dramatic lamentation on national failures and tragic moments, not only characterizes the profile of this museum, but also is indicative of the overall conceptualization of national history after 1989. In terms of collections, the expanding of museum funds continued to increase after the end of communist rule, however this was not accompanied by relevant steps to the representation of the recent past, and national history seemed to have stopped with the end of World War II. Thus, whilst in early 1990s the museum acquired the collections of the previous Museum of the Bulgarian-Soviet Friendship and the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement, none of them was utilized as a possibility for at least a temporary exhibition through a post-communist lens. The museum has been, however, among the most active Bulgarian museums in the last two decades – in terms of important exhibitions in Bulgaria and abroad (mostly one dedicated to Thracian culture and Medieval Bulgarian history), publishing activities, and educational programs. It created a series of exhibitions on “Bulgaria in the Balkans and in Europe,” exhibiting a range of unknown materials about the history of Bulgarian people throughout the ages. Among the most interesting travelling exhibitions that were created in recent years has been the one of 2009 – with unique costumes and arms from Bulgarian history films of the 1960s through to the 1980s – mostly ones dedicated to medieval history and the Ottoman rule.

The Museum of Vassil Levski in Karlovo

The museum of the national hero Vassil Levski – one of the main figures of the nineteenth century struggle for national liberation, was created in 1937 in Karlovo, the birthplace of the hero. The idea for the museum’s creation emerged in 1933, when local authorities undertook steps for the reconstruction of Levski’s native house and opening a museum exhibition about the life of the hero. Carried out voluntarily by local citizens and soldiers from the nearby garrison, the reconstruction of the house in its original form was made on the basis of memory accounts of hero’s relatives and neighbors. In 1954, Levski’s native house was integrated into the state museum network and in 1955, a documentary exposition was built near the house. In 1965 a new exhibition building was constructed, and the older one was turned into a movie hall. Between 1968 and 1992 the house-museum was within the auspices of the town’s history museum and it gained the status of a separate museum in 1993. A year later, a project – initiated by the National Institute of Monuments of Culture – restored the area around the museum, widened the museum

complex, renovated some of the old houses and built several new ones. Among the latter was also a memorial chapel ‘All Bulgarian saints.’ In 2000, the museum of Vassil Levski was proclaimed as a state cultural institute of national significance. It is among the most regularly visited museums in Bulgaria, with around 35,000 visitors annually in recent years.

The museum preserves objects, documents and photos related to the hero, to his family and to some of his accomplices. The collection involves also biographical investigations and literary works dedicated to Levski, works of art and documentary materials about social organizations that worked for the preservation of the hero’s memory. The exhibited materials include donations from Levski’s relatives – as is the case of a family album with original photos of Levski, his brother and his mother. Among the exhibited objects, one can see also the regulations of the Bulgarian revolutionary committee, military uniforms that belonged to members of the Bulgarian legion of the mid-nineteenth century, and the flag of the Karlovo revolutionary committee, found by Levski in 1869. The memorial chapel, built as part of the museum complex in 2000, sought to preserve the memory of the national hero and to emphasize the unity of Christian values, human ethics, and national identity. In the chapel, Levski is depicted in a series of figures of the Bulgarian national pantheon, i.e. among the saints of the ‘Temple of Freedom’ as he used to call the sacrifice for national liberation. The main icon portrays canonized Bulgarian saints and martyrs, including kings, men of letters, and enlighteners. The chapel also preserves an invaluable relic from the hero – a lock of his hair – that was given to the museum unit by the National Museum of Military History. The museum is indicative of policies in representing national history in several respects – the outlined attention to Levski and his turning into an object of a national cult towards the end of the interwar period; the national sensitivity of the communist regime in the later 1950s and 1960s that resulted in similar house-museums to nineteenth century revolutionary fighters; and the revived attention to this national figure after 1990s as an ‘antidote’ to the crisis in representing national history after the discarding of the previous system of representation.

National Museum “Radetzky” Steamboat

Existing nowadays as a branch unit of the National History Museum in Sofia, ‘Radetzky’ Steamboat itself holds the status of a national museum after a Decree of the Ministry Council of 1982. The steamboat is related to one of the most glorious moments in the struggle for national liberation from the Ottoman rule – the landing, in which a troop of 200 rebels under the leadership of Hristo Botev made on the banks of the Danube River of Kozloduy, before entering fights with Ottoman forces in 1876. The memorable event of Bulgarian émigrés landing on national soil and sacrificing themselves for the liberation of their people holds a sublime place in Bulgarian history and has been an object of creative representations in numerous literary and artistic works. The exploit that Hristo Botev and his troop committed has been turned into a powerful reference point in Bulgarian national mythology, and has been an object of commemoration already in the first years after the national liberation. The 120-kilometer-long path of the troop before its defeat in the Balkan Mountains comprised a series of memorial sites, and the landing spot at Kozloduy has been the first one in this series. Such commemorative practices were particularly enhanced after the establishment of communist rule in Bulgaria – when Hristo Botev was proclaimed as being among the first promoters of socialist ideas to

Bulgaria and thus – a key figure in the public pantheon that was celebrated in communist times. In 1964-1966 the steamboat, which carried Bulgarian revolutionaries across the Danube, was renovated with the voluntary input of Bulgarian children and since then it became a museum object of national significance. The museum unit that was formed at this spot preserves historical documents and traces related to the history of Hristo Botev's troop, its stepping onto Bulgarian soil and its legendary path inside territory which was then within the Ottoman Empire. Aside from the memorial complex in the vicinity of the steamboat, the museum is involved in the maintenance of the memorial units along the path of Botev's troop and the organization of regular commemorative events in 'the steps of the heroes' that took place in May each year.

Regional History Museums

The main points outlined with these three national museums in present day Bulgaria are found reflected in the developments of regional history museums in the country – many of which were revealed through the naming and status of nationality at different moments of their development. As has already been mentioned – although for many of them, the ideas about setting up museum collections dated back to the period before the national liberation, the steps for realizing such initiatives most frequently took place in the last decade of the nineteenth and first decade of the twentieth centuries. In the town of Sliven, for example, already before 1878 local patriots were involved in gathering relics referring to Bulgarian medieval kingdoms, but the actual beginning of the museum work was done with the founding of the Committee of the Moscow Ethnographic Society in Sliven in 1878. The committee set, as its goal, to find out about, and research, the traces of old burial grounds, monasteries, churches, and caves in the town and the area. In 1888, a learned society was created with the purpose of exploring the archaeological, historical and geographical specificity of the Sliven region, and a museum collection resulting from their work was opened in 1913 at the local cultural house. The core of the collection was formed by donations from wealthy members of the community. In the town of Vratsa, a museum collection was created and expanded by a family of traders. In 1894, their collection was submitted to the National Library and the National Museum in Sofia. In Veliko Tarnovo, the first initiatives for opening a museum unit were made in 1871, when an idea arose for 'Nadejda' culture house to set up a museum on the basis of the private collections of antiquities by patriotic people from the town. In 1879, the Archaeological association was founded and became engaged in collecting such traces. The first museum exhibition was made in 1914. In Varna, the beginning of museum activities started with the founding of the archaeological museum by the prominent brothers Karel and Herman Shkorpil in 1887. The first exhibition was opened in 1906 with the building of the Girls' high school, where the archaeological museum is located until today. Its first director was Karel Shkorpil, who remained at this position until his death in 1944.

Most of the first regional museums were created as units directly affiliated with existing schools or cultural centers, and at the active initiatives of outstanding intellectuals and researchers. The regional museum of Kyustendil, for example, had its first collection opened in 1897 – in affiliation with the Pedagogical School in the town. The museum was developed with the active participation and supervision of historians and ethnographers as Acad. Yordan Ivanov, Konstantin Jirechek and Yordan Zahariev. In a similar way, the regional museum of Russe was created in 1904, on the basis of the archaeological collections of Shkorpil Brothers and of the

natural historian V. Kovachev, which were preserved in the Russe men's high school 'Knyaz Boris.' In the town of Silistra, the Teachers' Council at the Pedagogical School took the decision to create a museum in 1898 and, a year later, its status was approved by the Ministry of National Education. After the occupation of Southern Dobrudja by Romania in 1913, the Silistra museum collection was transferred to Bulgaria and its objects were sent to the Sofia Archaeological Museum and Russe Regional Museum.

The first decade of the twentieth century witnessed a wave of regional history museums in the country, most of them taking impetus from archaeological excavations initiated by local researchers and coordinated with *Naroden muzei* and its branches in the capital. In Stara Zagora, the 1907 idea of founding an archaeological association, which would build a local museum for exhibiting traces of the past, was realized in 1912, with the building of the town's library and museum. The primary focus of attention at the time was the archaeological excavations at the ancient town of Augusta Traiana. The same year, intellectuals and enthusiasts studying the past of the Burgas area created the regional museum of Burgas, which was initially a private institution under the auspices of the "Debelt" archaeological association. In fact, the primary collections of all museums that were established in different parts of the country were archaeological ones, the reasons being the old Ancient and Roman settlements that many of these towns were built on. The excavation of these remains determined the rich exhibits of ceramics, coins, instruments and jewelry from ancient times that form the core of regional museum units even today. Aside from the archaeological focus and the complex character of museum institutions (combining local libraries, archives, and cultural centers), another important trend of those years involved the attention put on ethnographic collections – as stimulated by the respective museum units in the capital, and by the work of local historians and ethnographers.

As with the aforementioned national museums, the most important changes in the development of those in different regions of the country occurred in the 1940s and 1950s, when they changed their status, restructured their exhibitions and reoriented their overall policies on historical representation. The existing museums were nationalized and their property passed under the auspices of regional councils in the respective towns. Thus, some museums were transformed into People's (*narodni*) museums and then – in the mid-1950s – into museums of regional history. Regardless of their naming, they generally sought to present local versions of the national museum units in the capital. The legislative basis of museum activities was changed and the Soviet experience was widely embraced. With regard to organization and structure, the most important transformations in the communist period were the introduction of two separate departments (of "Modern History" and of "Most Modern History"), with emphasis falling on the establishment of the communist rule and the socialist construction. Despite the dissolution of thematic exhibitions after 1989, the subdivision of museum structure has remained until today. Together with opening new regional museums (e.g. the one in Plovdiv) and their branches in smaller towns, the communist period was also characterized with a clearly-expressed tendency to represent, in separate units, the history of nineteenth century liberation struggle, and to secure a special emphasis on ethnographic heritage – as a testimony of the folk, democratic, and grass-root basis of national culture. These two realms (the struggle for national liberation and the ethnographic heritage) would remain as guides in most regional museums after the dissolution of previous ideology-guided presentations of twentieth century history. At the background of an

overall withdrawal from representations of recent history (yet, notably limited only to temporary exhibitions), museum practice around the country was oriented either to nineteenth century history, or to representations of local traditions, customs and crafts, where the national spirit is believed to have found the most genuine expression.

Conclusion

This overview of some of the most important national and regional museums in Bulgaria permits the following observations. The beginning of most museum collections was laid around the middle of the nineteenth century and gained special impetus in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The first museum collections were created under the auspices or in direct collaboration with schools and culture houses and were usually initiatives of prominent intellectuals, foreigners, or rich tradesmen, who gathered and donated their personal collections. After the national liberation, when the Bulgarian state identified care about the past as an important vestige of national identity, there developed a nation-wide movement for preserving material traces of distant and recent historical periods. The latter especially enhanced with the creation of *Naroden muzei*, the expanding of its collections, and the formation of the separate units of the Archaeological and Ethnographic Museums, and of the National Gallery of Art. Although the approach to the past followed a general line of interest in any material trace, the valorization was primarily on objects and records of outlined time value and uncontested antiquity, which explains the overall attention to archaeological and medieval heritage. By proving roots back into the past – even in centuries that far preceded the creation of the Bulgarian state, the nation could promote the idea of its own long-term and even ‘timeless’ existence and to assert national and state building as being logical steps in national development after a ‘temporary interruption’ during Ottoman rule. In addition to the distant chronological projection that the ancient and pre-historic past provided for national historical visions, an important factor for its regular presence in the archaeological collections in late nineteenth century was its rich occurrence in Bulgarian lands and relatively good level of preservation, and due to the high value that had surrounded it throughout the centuries. The special value that prehistoric and ancient material objects had for the conceptualization of historical and cultural heritage, and their function as vestiges of national and local pride have conditioned their representative status in most regional history museums until today. The latter was particularly fostered by the development of Thracian studies in the 1970s and 1980s, where plenty of ancient objects acquired their interpretation as Thracian ones – i.e. as having local autochthonous occurrence and pertaining to the cultural heritage of Thracian groups. Referring to one of the three main components (alongside with Proto-Bulgarians and Slavs) of the Bulgarian nation, the idea of Thracians and their heritage not only contributed enormously to the study of ancient history, but also helped reading it retrospectively through ethnically specific and quasi-national terms. Reflected abundantly in museum exhibitions over the last three decades in Bulgaria, the idea keeps on resonating in scholarly discussions on ancient heritage in the Balkan peninsular even today.

No less important was the input of medieval history in the conceptualizations of the Bulgarian nation after 1878. Having been a powerful tool in the processes of reviving national consciousness in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the glory of medieval Bulgarian kingdoms played a key role in triggering policies for maintaining historiographic narratives with

material traces from those distant times. Whilst offering an alternative to the centuries of ‘Turkish yoke’ (as the period of Ottoman domination was customarily defined), the Middle Ages provided a firm reference point to the visions of the nation’s historical existence and of its sublime moments in battles and conquering centuries before. In the museum perspective, the finding out about, and preservation of, traces to the medieval period helped enormously in creating museum collections at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the early twentieth centuries, but also in exposing the population of the newly-liberated state with representations of former glory and state might. Albeit somewhat disregarded in the first two decades after 1944, attention to medieval times was renewed again in 1970s and 1980s – accommodated within the ideological master narratives and affirming the luminous times of medieval statehood as prefiguring the glory of the communist state. A similar approach was used in the conceptualization of the national Revival in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and of the national liberation struggle, which were seen as being inherently linked to the struggles for social liberation and with the antifascist resistance, embraced by the ideology as a core of its historical legitimation.

A third major line that found abundant representations in museum exhibitions – from the first ones to those of nowadays, has been ethnographic and folklore heritage, with the accompanying emphases on cultural specificity, uniqueness and differentiation from ethnic, religious and cultural groups in neighboring nation states, as well as within the country. Both in the first years after the liberation, and throughout the entire twentieth century, the presentation of ethnographic heritage was highly exclusive for communities bearing identity different from ethnic Bulgarian and Orthodox ones, and this critically influenced the conceptualization of traditional culture as a realm of the national past. In the first decades after the liberation, the search for authenticity and regional variety within a unified national cultural tradition not only triggered the collection and museumization of a series of objects pertaining to the everyday life of the Bulgarian population, but also made it an inseparable part of succeeding visions of national identity. Dwelling upon the notion of inherently specific and deeply-rooted cultural traits, the collection of ethnographic objects and samples of traditional culture aimed to present the unique spirit of the people as creator of unique cultural products and to distinguish it from other groups with which it has come in contact. Whereas in the nineteenth century this impetus was guided by the widely popular Herderian ideas across all Europe, in the first half of the twentieth century, it evolved into a characteristic form of ethno-cultural nationalism and into a persistent appeal of discovering of the ‘native’ and its productive potential. Expectedly, the presentation of the culture of the people formed a substantial part in the educational and cultural policies of communist Bulgaria, and was a major focus of exhibitions in all museums around the country. With the establishment of a network of regional museums in the largest Bulgarian towns, the ethnographic heritage not only took a major part in presentations of local history and culture, but often made a direct link and often occupied architectural forms of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, turning them as hosts of ethnographic collections. The process ran at the time when there was the issue of ‘Revivalist architecture’ (labeled as representing national awakening, but actually consisting mostly of houses that belonged to affluent tradesmen in the last century of the Ottoman empire and thus followed architectural conventions characteristic for the Balkans and the Middle East in general) gradually reached terminological crystallization. Despite the deep contradictions that they posed in terms of class, ethnic, and national criteria, such houses were used to accommodate the

rich collections of ethnographic objects and were pointed out as epitomizing a unified and timeless national spirit. Whilst turning into a cornerstone for the cultural nationalism of the communist state in its two last decades, the conceptualization of traditional culture as a firm reliable marker of Bulgarian-ness played a key role in the functionalization of this ethnographic heritage after 1989, and in its attaining the role of a major discursive realm in historical representations of the past.

As is visible from the report so far – except for the years after their creation, the most transformative stage in the development of museum institutions in Bulgaria was the first decade of communist rule, when almost all existing museums were changed or restructured, and when many new regional institutions appeared around the country. The reorientation of cultural policies in the footsteps of Soviet examples led to a system of legislative acts, which changed the status of many museums, the most important ones in the capital entering the structures of the Academy of Sciences, and being object of direct control along both ideological and scientific lines. The latter was particularly well expressed in the periodization frames that museum structures followed, where the existing departments of archaeology, ethnography, and national liberation struggle, were complemented by exhibitions and units of “Modern History” (created mainly in the 1950s), and those of the ‘Most Modern History’ (established in the 1960s). On a regional basis, the period was characterized also through the establishment of separate units with a historical focus on the different towns and areas of the country and the creation of new museum buildings for the newly formed institutions. The establishment of these new museums was carried out on the basis of state decrees and was implemented by local history teachers, under the guidance of professionals from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Each of the regional museums possessed a similar and almost identical structure to the others – consisting principally of exhibitions on the main periods of Bulgarian history and a network of historical sites under the museum’s auspices. Thus, undertaking responsibility for the sites and objects related to prehistory, antiquity, and medieval periods in their respective regions, regional museums initiated a series of smaller museum units to the national liberation struggle – frequently set up in native houses of prominent figures of the national Revival. The same was done for house-monuments to participants in the antifascist resistance, who had similar museums opened in many locations of the country, and were a destination for organized visits by school and university students in the course of several decades. One should not miss also the specialized museum units and exhibitions on the Bulgarian-Soviet friendship, as well as on the socialist construction, which formed a mandatory part of exhibition policies throughout the entire socialist period. Parallel to such specialized museum forms, a range of photo exhibitions were set in museum corners of cultural houses and local schools, and were surrounded by programs for their regular maintenance and enrichment.

The multiplication of museum units and the overtly pedagogical policies that surrounded them in the communist period provided a horizon of active overcoming and dissolution after the political changes of 1989, when most of the ideologically-framed museum exhibitions were closed and their contents were either dispersed or transferred to museum collections, hardly ever finding they way to visitors’ eyes. Although in some regional museums the departments of ‘Modern’ and ‘Most Modern History’ were joined together after the end of the communist period, permanent exhibitions customarily did not step beyond 1945, and temporary ones tackled

almost only politically neutral topics, such as social or urban history. Thus, with few exceptions, the communist period (as well as the problematic involvement of Bulgarians in World War II) remained without a specialized museum representation after 1989, which gives a very interesting perspective on the construing of the national history framework after the end of communist rule. The relativization of events that directly referred to recent history triggered the general tendency of focusing on urban culture and every day life of early twentieth century (which was termed under the label of ‘bourgeois past’ during communist times), and of searching for sources of collective identity in the cultural heritage, mostly ethnographic ones. The latter gradually opened to include, in various exhibitions, the traditions of various ethnic and religious groups, insisting thus not only on the multiple historical levels in the cultural history of Bulgarian lands, but on the input of diverse communities and traditions and thus on the overcoming of the historical and cultural nationalism of previous decades. It is this point and the still-pending representation of the past before 1989, which would guide – in my opinion – the new venues of development in Bulgarian national and regional museums in the years to follow.

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National museums in Croatia

Nada Guzin Lukic

Summary

The history of national museums in Croatia is marked by disruptions due to changes in the configuration of supra-nations that have ruled the country at various periods in its history. In 1846, the Illyrian movement, a Croatian national revival movement who were inspired by the Enlightenment, founded the first museum to express national ambitions in Zagreb. The discontinuous history and idea behind this national museum is the focus of this report, culminating with an examination of its successor, the Croatian History Museum. This case study demonstrates how a museum, with nation building as a central part of its mission, can maintain the continuity of a nation through the historical continuity of the institution. A key element of this 'national' idea is the age of the nation and its heritage; museums are well suited to display these elements. This case study also examines institutional changes to the interpretation of the national narrative during this period.

The creation of the Museum of the Revolution of the Croatian people during the Yugoslavian period demonstrates that the interpretation of 'national history' served as a nation-building influence in Yugoslavia. The decommissioning and closure of the museum and its reintegration into the Croatian National History Museum are good examples of this reinterpretation. Croatian nation building has moved in this direction by appropriating the adjacent public space following the country's independence after the collapse of Yugoslavia in the 1990s. This recent period is most representative of the connection between real nation building that transcends all spheres of society and those representative institutions of national culture - museums. The passage of the multinational state of the Yugoslav federation into a nation-state has had a profound impact on Croatian museums.

The construction of new museums in the last decade shows that the important projects of national museums in Croatia are in the art or archeology museums more so than the history museum. In spite of this period that was characterized by nation building after the independence of the country, a national history museum was not responsible for launching major projects. Finally, the creation of a new National History Museum in Zagreb is in progress, which will present the grand narrative of the new nation-state.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Archeological Museum of Split	1821	1820	Monarch, Emperor Franz I, Regional Parliament	Parliament	Archeology	Universal values	Prehistory to Early Christianity.	Modern style, central cluster, center of Split.
National Museum Zagreb	1846	1836	Croatian Parliament, Husbandry society, Monarch	Husbandry society, Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts (JAZU) Parliament	Numismatics, Botanical Art, Archaeology, Zoology and Mineralogy	Universal values, Enlightenment, Romanticism and National revival	19 th - 20 th c.	Neo-classical style, central cluster, center of Zagreb.
Croatian Natural History Museum	c1866	1846	Croatian Parliament, Husbandry society, Council of Museums	City of Zagreb	Natural Science	Universal values	Prehistory to Contemporary period.	Neo-classical style, central cluster in center of Zagreb.
<i>Strossmayer</i> Gallery of Old Masters	1884	1868	Regional Parliament, Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts	Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts	Art Old Masters	Universal values	14 th – 18 th c.	Neo-classical style, central cluster in center of Zagreb.
Museum of Arts and Crafts	1880	1868	Art Society, State. Council of Museums (CM)	Art Society Government	Design, Industry, Textile, furniture	Territorial representation	19 th - 20 th c.	Neo-classical style, central cluster, center of Zagreb.

Ethnographic Museum Zagreb	1919	1874	Private collections State Council of Museums	Government	Ethnology, Croatian culture, Non-European cultures	Territorial representation and Universal values	19 th -20 th c.	Neo-classical style, central cluster, center of Zagreb.
Archeological Museum Zagreb	1945	1866	State Council of Museums	Government state	Archeology	Universal values and Territorial representation	Prehistory to Middle Ages.	Neo-classical style, central cluster in center of Zagreb.
Croatian History Museum	1951	1866	Regional parliament, Council of Museums	Government	Cultural History	National Territorial representation, Ethnic identity	19 th - 20 th c.	Neo-classical (baroque palace), central cluster in Zagreb old town.
Museum of the Revolution of people of Croatia	c1955	1949	Regional government	Government	History, War, Revolution	Universal values	20 th c.	Modern style, central cluster, center of Zagreb.
Archeological Museum Naron	2007	2004	Archeological Museum of Split State (CM)	Government	Archeology	Universal values	1 st c. BC to 7 th c. AD.	Post-modern style. <i>In situ</i> , village of Vid.
Museum of Krapina Neanderthals	1966	1966 2010	State	Government	Geology Paleontology	Universal values	Prehistory	Post-modern style. Museum <i>in situ</i> , Village of Krapina.
Museum of Contemporary Art	1954 2010	1954 2010	State CM	Government	Art	Universal value, Territorial representation	1950 onwards	Post-modern style. Solitary location in New Zagreb.

Introduction

The history of national museums in Croatia is deeply marked by its political history, where the country is on the periphery of all the political and cultural power centres. A national museum is a concept as broad as each notion that comprises it. If it is assumed that a museum participates in the creation, preservation and transmission of national identities, then the definition of national identity, the way it is developed and *imagined*, as well as its characteristics, are key elements of its study. The term *national museum* illustrates the national importance attributed to a museum, reflecting a particular cultural and political identity as well as administrative and territorial divisions (national, regional and municipal museums). The current government and laws manage the attribution of national importance. So, from what moment do we consider a museum to be national – a term, which, by definition, means an institution that collects, studies and displays collections recognized to be of national interest? Which national interest or which identity does the museum reflect in different historical contexts? Which nation does it promote in multinational countries?

This complexity is specific to national museums in countries such as Croatia, where the process of establishing cultural institutions is influenced, and often hampered, by the reigning authority. The national public museum in Croatia was founded relatively lately. Museums, by their connection with a territory or a region, strengthen regional identity, making them suspicious in empires or federations where the central power tries to control local, national identity. Indeed, the central authorities, in this case Vienna, Budapest or Belgrade, had to approve the creation of regional cultural institutions. For example, Emperor Franz Joseph I encouraged the founding in 1820 of the first public museum in Croatia, the Archaeological Museum of Split, created to collect remains of the ancient Roman Empire. Taking into consideration the time it took for leaders in Vienna to make a decision (30 years), the creation of a Croatian national museum (*narodni muzej*) can be considered blocked.

Museums are, in principle, collections of objects; traces of the past carefully protected, studied and documented, on a scientific basis. On the other hand, their position as a creator and promoter of national heritage combined with high operating costs makes them dependent on political powers. Generally, the discourse in national museums is supported by scientific research, documents and artefacts that serve as tangible proof. Indeed, museums rarely present false documents or objects, except in extreme cases of power abuse, in time of crisis (conflicts) or under totalitarian regimes. However, through the selection of certain documents or objects, and their implementation and interpretation, they can serve ideological narratives or, sometimes, support opposing ideas. Indeed, what is selected and exhibited in a national museum becomes the official representation of national culture. Those in power, through targeted discourse, influence perceptions of national history and its components. Generally, museums serve to demonstrate evidence: documents and original objects, which support a discourse on history and national heritage as well as on its characteristics and its constitutive elements.

The most convincing demonstration of this hypothesis is the changing discourse in Yugoslav national museums after 1991. Becoming solely Croatian, Slovenian, Bosnian and Serbian national museums, these same institutions suddenly changed their narratives. Once the Yugoslav idea was

discarded (the unification of Southern Slavs), it was replaced by a national discourse specific to its nation-state. Museums had to reconsider their missions and replace their discourse. Institutions have been redeployed and adapted to the new national situation. The impact of disturbances such as the fall of empires and political regimes, followed by territorial, demographic, social and cultural reconfigurations, change and redefine national components. Chronological divisions that consider these periods of political unrest are required when studying national museums, as they are products of these changes. In the case of Croatia, the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire or the division of Yugoslavia changed the idea of the Croatian nation. Opposition to the Empire (of the Habsburg's and, after 1878, of the Austro-Hungarian Empire) in the middle of the nineteenth century defined The Croatian nation. The proposal of a Croatian nation reinforced the idea of a common culture and the brotherhood of the Southern Slavs, carried out in Yugoslavia. After 1990, there was a detachment from this same idea by strengthening attachments to the Habsburg Empire and European identities. How are these reconciliations and dissociations reflected in the narratives of national museums and exhibitions? The replacement of museum narrative in the 1990s demonstrates this change.

After a brief overview of the cultural policy in Croatia and the origins of museums and the foundation of the first national museum in the mid nineteenth century in Zagreb, this study of museums in the twentieth century is divided into three parts: the interwar period (1918-1941), history museums during the Yugoslavia period (1945-1990), and Croatian national museums between 1990 and 2000, ending with new national museums built after the year 2000.

National museums and cultural policy in Croatia

Almost all museums in Croatia belong to public authorities and are under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture. There are some exceptions, such as the ecclesiastical collections and a few special institutions, for instance the Mestrovic galleries, administered by the Meštrović Foundation, and the Strossmayer Gallery within the Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences (HAZU). Since 2003, some private museums have also opened, such as the Museum of Broken Relationships in 2010.

Museum activities, according to the Museums Act (1998), concern collecting, preservation and the study of civilizations, as well as cultural and natural resources. This law also demands networking "to apply a unified or universal professional approach in the practice of the museum's activities." Museums must be connected to the system of Croatian museums. The concept of a central advisory museum (*matični muzej*) characterizes the network of Croatian national museums. Museums considered central advisory institutions have authority over other museums. The Museum Act defines the mission of the central museum (*matična djelatnost*) and assigns the following tasks: monitoring and scientific assistance, the implementation of professional training and management of museum policies and finally, work in the network of museums. The Minister of Culture, on the recommendation of the Council for Museums, attributed the central advisory museum with its status, mission and tasks. The trend toward centralization has dominated in the first decade of independence in Croatia.

After 2000, some decentralization tendencies have appeared within new, specialized museums, like the Archaeological Museum Naronia built *in situ*, the Museum of Krapina Neanderthals (the museum of evolution), or the projects undertaken in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Rijeka, counterbalancing the concentration of museum activities and governance in the capital.

Building national museums

The first museums in Croatia 1750 - 1850

Several publications focus on the history of museums in Croatia (Humski, 1986) and (Maroević 1993, Vujić 2007). The first, *Pregled povijesti muzeja u Hrvatskoj 19 i 20 Stoljeće (do 1945) s bibliografijom*, is foremost a bibliographical work. *Izvori muzeja u Hrvatskoj* (The origins of museums in Croatia) by Žarka Vujić traces the origins of the collections, history of collecting, and the foundation of museums according to the perspective of historical museology. Linking the phenomena of collecting with the idea of a museum and the development of professions and museology gives the most accurate and comprehensive portrait of this phenomenon. Several articles in journals, such as *Muzeologija* and *Informatica museologica* or *Vijesti i konzervatora muzealaca*, published since the 1950s, with their thematic issues on various types of museums, also trace the history of these institutions in Croatia. Exhibition catalogues, such as "*150 years of the national museum*", are the main sources used in this draft report. First, some facts about precursors of public museums in Croatia are presented. Even if, from a methodological point of view, they are not national museums, nor museums themselves, acknowledging their existence and learning about them allows for a better understanding of the later foundation of these institutions.

The chronological divisions proposed by Eunamus start in 1750, coinciding with the foundation of the first *lapidariums*, in Dubrovnik and Split. This collection of stone fragments from the city of Naronia, the Ancient Roman colony, located at the mouth of the River *Naron* (Neretva) or Salona is not a museum, but it reflects the first archaeological collections that represent the base of institutions that emerged later on. In fact, as in other European countries, private collections were established early; some of them from the Renaissance period: like gardens (Arboretum, botanical garden in Trsteno near Dubrovnik fifteenth century), interest in geology, epigraphs and numismatics, collections of natural history specimens, mineralogical collections and antiquities from the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. Since the sixteenth century, foreign travelers and local scholars have been interested in the rich archaeological remains on the Adriatic coast, such as the Palace of Diocletian or the arena of Pula, which has been known in Europe since the eighteenth century. Several private collections were established during this period, such as the museum of Ivo Aletin in Dubrovnik or the cabinet of the world by the Danieli family in Zadar. Religious communities founded *lapidariums*, like the ones mentioned above in Dubrovnik and in Split in 1750 (*Museum of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Split*), with the monuments of Salona.

For centuries, Croatia was under the domination of its neighbouring countries (e.g., Austria, Italy, and Hungary). One of the consequences is that many objects and monuments were taken to Italy or to Austria. Throughout the nineteenth century, objects of importance were sent to the royal cabinet

of Vienna and Budapest (Humski, 1986: 8). Italian abbe and natural historian Alberto Fortis, in *Viaggio in Dalmazia* in 1774, was already writing about epitaphs from Narona that were sent to Italian museums. In fact, trade in antiquities has existed for centuries and many stone fragments were dispersed around Europe. For example, in the mid 1990s, numerous headless sculptures were discovered in archaeological excavations in Narona. One was of Livia, wife of Emperor Augustus - but the sculpture's head was in Oxford. In fact, in 1878, British archaeologist and curator sir Arthur Ewans had acquired the head of Livia for the Ashmolean Museum. In 2004, antique sculpture parts were reunited and returned to Croatia (on loan in the Archaeological Museum of Split). The collection of classical antiquities in Dalmatia was encouraged by the Court of Vienna, which sought the best samples for its museums. As mentioned in Vujić (Vujić, 2007: 152), it is difficult to judge these practices according to the contemporary perspective. The presence of museums and a consciousness of safeguarding cultural heritage, which are today widespread, were at that time only germinating. The destruction of monuments of antiquity, used by the local population as construction material, is not unique to Croatia. The complexity of the bibliography of the objects in collections is specific to each locality, and only their comprehensive study can provide information on practices widespread in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

While other European national museums appeared in the eighteenth century, we cannot consider Croatia to have had a national museum until the mid-nineteenth century. Furthermore, Croatia, until 1848, was not united - it was divided into three zones: Dalmatia, Slavonia and Military border (*vojna Krajina*). The middle of the nineteenth century saw the emergence of nations, marked in Croatia by the public and official use of the Croatian language in state institutions. The foundation of institutions that collect, study and communicate knowledge and objects related to the nation accompanied this process. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, several museums were created in Central Europe (Budapest 1802, Prague 1818, Ljubljana 1821), but Croatia was still divided, its institutions came later on. The first museums were founded in Split in 1820; Zadar, the centre of Dalmatia, in 1830 and in Zagreb, the centre of Croatia and Slavonia, in 1846.

The Archaeological Museum in Split was founded by decree of the Dalmatian government in Zadar after a visit of Emperor Franz I to Dalmatia in 1818 and A. Steinbuchel the director of the Imperial Museum in Vienna. The museum collected artefacts of the ancient Romans in Dalmatia, an epigraphic collection (collection of Latin inscriptions), and coins. The first museum building was erected next to the walls of the Diocletian palace. The present building was built in 1914. Frano Bulić, a Catholic priest, archaeologist and conservator was Director of the museum since 1886. One of the major actors in the development of archaeology and of the museum, he also initiated the construction of the new building.

The Provincial Museum in Zadar was founded on the initiative of the Austrian Lieutenant in Dalmatia, who encouraged the collecting of flora, fauna and objects related to life in the region, in addition to the classical antiquities (Humski, 1986: 39). Even though it was conceived as the Austrian province of Dalmatia's regional museum, it did not receive the approval of Vienna (Maroević, 1999; 200), which was given to the Archaeological Museum of Split. These first museums raise the question of the definition of national museums in the multinational states of the nineteenth century,

and in the period of nation building in Europe. In fact, to the central powers, due to their local perspective, these museums were more part of the Empire as regional or provincial museums than they were national museums.

Towards a national museum

The nineteenth century was marked by the fight for the use of the Croatian language and the mobilization of intellectuals against germanisation and the magyarisation policy. The Illyrian renewal movement (1830-1848), inspired by the Enlightenment, German romanticism and panslavism, introduced a national consciousness. This movement advocates for a modern nation based on the idea of unification of the Southern Slavs, perceived, at the time, as the descendants of the Illyrian people. Societies like the Husbandry societies of Croatia and Slavonia, and the Central Illyrian Cultural and Publishing society were created at this time. In 1836, Ljudevit Gaj and other members of the movement proposed the creation of the National Museum (Narodni muzej) in order to strengthen Croatian cultural identity and to collect artefacts that supported it. This museum was gradually filled with collections from supporter's donations and members of the movement. The Museum, opened to the public in 1846, was part of a broader plan aimed at protecting and promoting the Croatian language and culture. The museum shared its space with the Husbandry Society (Gospodarsko Drustvo), the Reading Room (library), and the Casino, in a palace called the National Hall (*Narodni dom*). The National Hall became the centre of cultural and political life at the time. This universal museum consisted of diverse objects: numismatics, botanicals, shells and minerals, insects and plants, antiques and curiosities, and like every self-respecting European museum in the nineteenth century, an Egyptian mummy. Mijat Sabljarić, a pensioned major and member of the Husbandry society, was one of the first administrators and donors of the collection. Later on, the collections were developed into disciplines: archaeology, botany, numismatics and the natural sciences. The Museum was not recognized by the government in Vienna until 1866, when, on the initiative of Bishop J.J. Strossmayer, Emperor Franz Joseph I ratified the *Status and Organization of National Museum*. The Museum became officially recognized as a national institution under the auspices of the Croatian Parliament. The Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts (JAZU), founded the same year, administrated the museum. Josip Juraj Strossmayer, bishop and one of the most important Croatian intellectuals at the time, also initiated, based on his collection, the foundation of the Art gallery (1886) with JAZU (Strossmayer's Old Masters gallery today presents paintings from the fourteenth to nineteenth centuries). Under the JAZU (1867-1878), the National Museum (developed with donations) expanded its collection and adopted a more scientific approach. The first curator of the museum was Šime Ljubić, trained in history and archaeology in Vienna. He enlarged and classified collections, edited the first publication by the museum, and corresponded with experts in the field of archaeology. Šime Ljubić tried to transform the museum from an "educational institution for raising national self-consciousness" (Luetić, 2001) into an institution that applied the most scientific approaches of that time. The museum's space quickly became inadequate for the growing collection. However, even after the formal recognition from Vienna, the National Museum never had its own building and its history remains an unfinished project.

The development of sciences in the late nineteenth century led to the specialization of collections and, consequently, of European museums. From 1887 on, the National Museum can be divided into three departments: archaeology, zoology, and mineralogy. That same year, the museum ceased to be administered by JAZU, and came under the administration of the Government and the Department of Religion and Education. (*Zemaljska vlada-odjel za bogoslovlje i nastavu*). The three main collections, under the direction of specialized curators, continued to be developed. The National Museum, and thus the idea of a universal museum, was dismantled and ceased to exist officially in 1939. Its three departments were formed into separate museums: the Museum of Natural Sciences, the Museum of Archaeology (formed in 1945 and given its own building), and the History Museum of Croatia, formed in 1951.

In 1946, the Museum of Serbs in Croatia was founded, with a collection of ancient manuscripts, icons, church fabrics and other objects from Serb monasteries and churches. "Its purpose is to study and use the exhibits to demonstrate the political, economic and cultural development of Serbs in Croatia" (Bauer, Nemeth, 1957; 106). The Museum of Serbs in Croatia became an independent institution in 1953, and in 1962 it was integrated into the History Museum. This museum raised the question of majorities and minorities in national museums in various periods of time, and the homogenization of historical narratives according to the definition of the nation and its components.

In fact, several museums in Zagreb were formed or inherited collections from the National Museum. The universal museum, based on the model of similar European institutions at the time, remained an unfinished project due to lack of consensus and resources, but also by lack of a clear concept of the nation itself, and thus the institution that it is supposed to embody. According to Ivo Maroević "...The National Museum in Zagreb had a political significance, its establishment did not please the Viennese court, because it meant the development of the national self-consciousness of Croatian people [...] In an important time in history, it played the role of a national museum, but soon after it was granted its rules, it was divided into individual sections, which organizationally and spatially were dispersed over time into specific museums. Thus Croatia [...] remained the only country in this part of Europe that has not kept its National Museum as a central national museum institution." (Maroević, 1999 : 201).

The saga of the first national museum also serves as a contemporary national mythology. The long struggle for the nation is embodied by the national museum, including the first initiative of the Croatian Parliament dating from 1836, but it was only approved 30 years later by Vienna (1866). Indeed, in 1996, the three museums (the Archaeological Museum, The Croatian Natural Science Museum, and the Croatian History Museum) celebrated the 150th anniversary of the National Museum. The exhibition and symposium entitled "Museum 1846-1996" accompanied the commemoration. The history of the National Museum, marked by difficulties and failures, makes it an unachieved project that was once again attempted by the Museum of National History in Zagreb, starting in 2007. The production of historical continuities, in the absence of a universal national museum, as had been created in the nineteenth century in other European countries, presented a challenge for the actors in this initiative.

Another national museum, founded in the late nineteenth century, saves and interprets national culture. The Museum of Arts and Crafts was an initiative of the Association of arts and its president, Izidor Kršnjavi. This “collection of specimens for master craftsman and artists” was founded in 1880 in Zagreb. The school of arts and crafts quickly joined this objective. Today, it is a national museum of artistic production and material culture in Croatia. According to the Museum’s website, “The Museum of Arts and Crafts has the significance being the most important national museum documenting the material culture of life in the castles and palaces, depicting the practical, everyday lives of Croatian nobility and the bourgeoisie, in the countryside and the city, over many centuries of our history. With its rich holdings, in which there are a considerable number of foreign items, the museum transcends the national sphere and makes a significant contribution to the study of European heritage.” In fact, the traditional culture of everyday life is shared between two national museums: the Ethnographic Museum, that interprets and exhibits folk costumes, popular art, handicrafts and rural culture, and the Arts and Crafts Museum which emphasises bourgeoisie and the upper class Croatian society.

The National Museum of the interwar period 1918-1941

Important changes marked the museum scene in Croatia in the two decades of the interwar period. These changes are influenced both by museum trends in Europe and the local context, strongly marked by the reconfiguration of the country following World War I and the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The unification of South Slavs occurred following the Treaty of Versailles in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. At the same time, Italy took possession of the territories on the Adriatic coast and several islands. The monarchy of Yugoslavia started in 1929. The creation of the first Yugoslavia (1918-1941) drew from this complex political context, which has an impact on existing museums and the creation of new institutions. Museums in a changing political environment are built within the dialogue of opposition and integration.

From a perspective of the national museum, the most significant event of this period is the Cultural and Historical Exhibition presented in Zagreb, in 1925, in celebration of 1000 years of the Croatian Kingdom. According to several authors, this exhibition was created with the background ambition of creating a museum of national history by bringing together objects dispersed throughout various institutions. It is perceived as the continuation of the national museum idea of 1846, which presented its history and heritage as a way to learn more about the country. The central exhibition of this event was held in the Pavilion of Arts, which played an important role on the cultural scene during the interwar period. The celebration of the 1000th year of the Croatian Kingdom also initiated the creation of museums in Šibenik, Varaždin and Slavonska Požega (Humski, 1986: 8). These museums had a cultural and educational role: teaching history and regional heritage in order to strengthen the national consciousness. However, the constitution and the representation of national heritage experienced difficulties in a multinational political context aggravated by the domination of the majority nation in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (Lukić, 1998: 35).

National history museums in Socialist Yugoslavia 1945-1990

While a part of Yugoslavia, Croatia's capital had two national history museums: the Museum of the Revolution of the People of Croatia and the Museum of History, inheritor of the first National Museum of 1846. Museums of revolution have always formed a separate category in museum typology. Along with the monuments of the revolution, the memorials and institutions of the history of the revolution form a network supporting the narratives of the socialist revolution, nested within the theme of resistance to fascism. Redeployment, review, reorganization and even the closure or incorporation of other collections and museums of history were all publicly voiced prior to the fall of socialism and the break-up of Yugoslavia. In fact, in the 1980s, their relevance, based on the form in which they had been presented, was openly questioned. Therefore, the process of change had already begun, but further events hastened this peaceful transformation.

The latest issue of *Informatica museologica*, published by the Museum Documentation Centre of Yugoslavia (MDC), in the seminar section entitled "New museums and the new displays", organized in 1989, criticizes museums of the people's revolution and the labour movement (*Narodne revolucije i radničkog pokreta*). Critics point out that there are many of these museums, all under control of the Communist Party, with exhibitions carried out under their control, both in terms of design and in interpretation. The presentation of a selective national history, the importance given to World War II and the socialist revolution in detriment to other historical periods, was more and more highly criticized. The discourse of these museums is misappropriated, Gregory (1996: 29) suggests that "Message may continue to be projected to a changed society, which has quite different policies and goals from those of the society." Indeed, the narrative loses its meaning when not adapted to its context.

In the case of the Museum of the Revolution of the people of Croatia, in addition to presenting a selective national history according to the powers of the time, it occupied a building politicized by various regimes. Located downtown and designed by sculptor Ivan Meštrović as a monument to the glory of Yugoslavia's King in 1938, it was originally a Salon of Fine Art (*Dom likovnih umjetnosti*) (1938-1941), then a mosque (1941-1945), the Museum of the Liberation (1949-1955), the Museum of the Revolution and, finally, the Museum of the Revolution of the people of Croatia (1960 -1991). Since 1991, several projects, among them a *Great Croats Museum* and a Museum of the Army, were considered for this coveted place. Finally, it became the Croatian Association of Artists (*Hrvatsko društvo likovnih umjetnika-HDLU*). The issues that lead to its particular fate during the recent wars in Croatia reflect the complexity of the relationship between politics, ideology, war, arts, architecture and museums.

The national museums in Croatia after 1991

In the 1990s, war forced the closure, transition and redeployment of museums. All institutions and museums needed to adapt to new realities: national independence and political, economical and cultural transition. These complex environments brought out questions of national history and heritage. Museums of the Revolution lost their relevance and have been transformed, dismantled or destroyed. For example, several Slovenian museums have been transformed. In 1994, in Ljubljana,

the Museum of Revolution became the Museum of Contemporary History and in Celje, the Museum of Recent History. Dismantlement implies the transfer of collections to another museum, mostly the history museum, and the closure of the original museum. This was the case for the Croatian Museum of Revolution; its collections were transferred to the History Museum. Destruction mostly affected museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while in 1994 the Museum of Revolution in Sarajevo became the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most of the Revolution Museums in Yugoslavia were founded in the 1950s, particularly those located in the region (*Zavičajni muzeji*), were divided into two parts: one on the history of the socialist revolution, the labour movement and World War II, and one on local heritage. In several cases, the ‘memorial’ collections were simply dismantled and transformed into regional museums.

In Slovenia, the revision of World War II and the Socialist period was conducted with an approach of continuity rather than rupture, in a more critical perspective. Thus, the permanent exhibition "The Slovenes in the 20th century", opened in 1996 at the National Museum of Contemporary History, presents the political, economical and cultural history of the nation. This exhibition sparked the conception of another exhibition titled "The Dark Side of the Moon" at the same institution. The latter focuses on what the first failed to present, namely totalitarianism in Slovenia between 1945 and 1990. In the second part of the 1990s, Slovenian history museums offered different points of view of the recent past.

However, there is a lack of review of critical artefacts and documents related to this period in contemporary history in Croatia. The Croatian History Museum, a museum that has repatriated the collections of the former Museum of the Revolution, instead offers the interpretation of more distant periods to build the grand narrative of the nation. An example of this can be found in exhibitions on heroes, symbols and the founding events of the Croatian nation, like the exhibition on Ban Jelačić, an emblematic character of the nation in the nineteenth century (The memories of the ban-the Jelačić legacy”, a historical exhibition, November 2009 - October 2011; “Josip Jelačić and the struggle for the Austria as the association of free nations”, and a section of exhibition “1848 in Croatia”, December 1998-may 1999). The museum, as a product of modernity, is a space of historical grand narratives and heritage, where the main hero is usually a nation, or, in the case of nation states, an ethnic group. The keyword is selection: the historical period, objects and characters are selected to create the image of the nation that the museum wants to present of the nation.

Conclusion

The relationship between the national past and national museums in Croatia is ambiguous. National history is very important to the political public discourse, but on the other hand, museums of contemporary art and of archaeology are being built. In fact, even if a nation’s history takes up a great deal of public space, the Croatian History Museum in Zagreb, successor of the first National Museum, is still in an inadequate building, lacking space and unfinished. Only recently (2007), has the government approved the project of relocation and redeployment of the museum to an old industrial tobacco factory, recognized as an industrial heritage site. This project is currently underway.

There is dichotomy in processing museum material, and in the selection and interpretation of the past. On one hand, there is the oldest history: new museums are built about the ancient past, for example the Museum of Krapina Neanderthals aims to educate about prehistoric life. (Krapina is the Palaeolithic site discovered at the end of nineteenth century) or Narona Archaeological Museum in Vid, inaugurated in 2007. On the other hand, we have the future, personified by the Museum of Contemporary Art (MSU) in Zagreb. Recent history, however, like that of the twentieth century, is somewhere in between. It is still under the influence of the current political ideology and social climate, hence causing controversy. The least controversy is related to the archaeological collections of antiquity and, even more so, to prehistoric times.

The Museum of Contemporary Art (MSU), opened in 2010, is the most important national museum project in Croatia since the creation of the new state. The successful implementation of MSU did not go smoothly; it was affected by political competition as confirmed by various sources and articles from the period preceding and following the construction of the museum (newspapers, 2008-2010). The creation of national museums funded by the government is an occasion and a place for political promotion. If you leave out the political disagreements, this can be explained by a number of historical, cultural and professional factors. Historical: the first museum of Modern Art was founded in Zagreb in 1954. Although it is in an inadequate building (a residential house in the upper town), the museum's professional work, collecting during its tenure, and new artistic practice on the national (Croatian and Yugoslavian) and international levels, has led to it becoming an indispensable institution of contemporary art in this area. In fact, the contemporary art museum in Yugoslavia was built in Beograd (founded in 1958 opened in 1965). Its mission was to cover the contemporary art of the country. The tradition and collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb, and its national and international recognition enabled its continuity, and contributed to its final realization. In other countries created by the division of Yugoslavia: Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Serbia, there are projects for such national museums: *Museum ars aevi* in Sarajevo and a project of Contemporary Art Museum redeployment and reconstruction in Belgrade.

Despite the differences between each nation-state formed in the 1990s, there are similarities in the museum field. Interest in museums of contemporary art is a symptom of new trends and changes in society. At the same time, we can see a paradox, because actual artistic works on the present and recent past are a reaction to problems in society, revealing the actual situation. In some ways, recent history is more present in contemporary art museums than in history museums. Recent artistic practices and interdisciplinary approaches, along with the new aesthetics, suggest individual views of the past, but also propose pluralistic narratives on the collective (national) past.

The evolution of national museums follows the political, cultural, territorial, demographical and technological changes of the society they evolve within. Institutions change names, move to new buildings, lose artefacts and acquire new objects for their collections. They sometimes lose themselves in successive ruptures or redeployments, as was the case with the first national museum in Croatia. History is selective, and the history of museums confirms it. Comparative studies, such as this one, allow for the tracking, comparing and better understanding of the changing puzzle that is European museum history.

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National museums in Cyprus: A Story of Heritage and Conflict

Alexandra Bounia & Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert

Summary

Cyprus, as a former colony with a turbulent history, falls under the category of the “new emerging nation-states” (Aronsson 2011: 47). Museums are employed to construct, reinforce and project specific national narratives. Run exclusively by various ministries and the vertical bureaucratic system of decision-making that entails, these museums project a cultural policy that is unavoidably influenced by political situations. Far from being representative of universal values, the museums on both parts of this divided country focus on their territorial identities and claims. The construction of direct, strong narratives amidst political and cultural conflicts often implies silencing minority voices or voices of opposition to the prevalent narrative.

Archaeology, the discipline that brings a nation closer to its distant roots, is used to support claims on the land. The emphasis that the Greek Cypriot government and other bodies place on archaeology (majority of the museums in South Cyprus) is justified within the discourse of Hellenism and its twin pillars: antiquity and Christianity. On the other hand, the Turkish Cypriot administration places more emphasis on the historical aspect rather than the archaeological one. Its main museums focus on aspects of the Ottoman past of the island – claiming, in this sense, their share of it.

The establishment of museums in Cyprus seems to fall into three main phases: the first one extends from the last quarter of the nineteenth century until 1955; the second refers to the period between 1955 and 1974 and the third to the period after 1974. Each of these phases has its own character, which is defined by the historical events of the period, but also by the cultural preoccupations and influences Cyprus receives during this time, while it retains in the case of the two subsequent phases certain characteristics of the previous periods.

The first phase is characterized by colonial influences along with a strong wish to claim ownership of the local cultural heritage by local agents. The beginning of the interest in cultural heritage has its roots into the colonial appreciation of the Hellenic past of the island. This phase ends with the struggle against British rule starting in 1955. Due to the dominance of archaeology during this phase, the *Cyprus Museum* was chosen as a case study.

The second phase is characterised by the need to commemorate the struggles and suffering of both Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. This phase starts with the struggle against British rule (1955-59) and ends with the Turkish invasion in 1974. One Greek Cypriot (the *Struggle Museum*) and one Turkish Cypriot museum (the *Canbulat Museum*) are used as case studies for this period.

Finally, the third phase is characterised by the need to preserve and promote a growing sense of national identity. At the same time, Cyprus was looking towards the west for a European future and eventually signed the accession to the EU in 2003. The *State Gallery of Contemporary Art* will help us demonstrate the conflicts between the old and the new.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Cyprus Museum	1909	1882	British Archaeologists, Greek Cypriot intellectual elite	State, Department of Archaeology	Archaeology	Cyprus Archaeology	Neolithic period to Roman period.	Purpose-built, Neo-Classical building(1909), within city walls, Nicosia, Republic of Cyprus.
Struggle Museum	1962	1961	State, Church, EOKA fighters	Greek-Cypriot Community, Cultural Services	History	Presentation of EOKA struggle (1955-59), commemorative.	1955-1959	The Old Archbishopric Palace, new modern wing (2001), Nicosia, Republic of Cyprus.
Canbulat Tomb and Museum	1968	Unknown (likely 1968)	State	Turkish-Cypriot Community	History	The story of <i>Canbulat</i> , Ottoman conquest of Cyprus.	16 th -19 th c.	Housed in a bastion of the city's castle, Kyrenia (TRNC).
State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art	1990	1962	State, artists	State, Cultural Services	Art	20 th c. Cypriot Art	20 th c.	Existing Neo-Classical mansion (1925), Outside the old city walls, in modern urban area of Nicosia, Republic of Cyprus.

Note: For a complete list of national Greek Cypriot museums see Appendix 1. For a complete list of “national” Turkish Cypriot museums see Appendix 2.

Introduction

This paper is going to focus on the history of the national museums of Cyprus and in particular on those that have been more active in the creation and negotiation of national values on the island. For the purposes of our discussion, we will use as a starting point, the definition of the national museum as a collection and display “claiming, negotiating, articulating and representing dominant national values, myths and realities” (Aronsson 2011). Museums will be explored as “historic and contemporary processes of institutionalised negotiations of what values will constitute the basis for national communities and for dynamic state formation” (Aronsson 2011). We are going to argue that the history of Cypriot museums can be divided into three main phases from their creation until today and we are going to illustrate these through specific case studies. Each of these phases is related to major restructuring moments in the island’s history and therefore expresses different cultural, social and political needs and understandings. Having said that, these needs and understandings do not cease to exist with the end of each phase. On the contrary, the history of Cypriot museums can be best understood as a layer of different expressions. Even though the division of the history of Cypriot museums into three main phases is an artificial one, it helps us explore how the development of museums is related to issues of identity formation and nation definition in the periods under question.

It is necessary to mention right from the start that the authors of this report have great respect for the actors involved in the creation of all these museums and our approach aims to be as objective and academic as possible, taking into account our own personal affiliation to one of the ethnic communities of the island (the Greek one).

National museums and cultural policy in Cyprus

As a result of independence from British rule, the Republic of Cyprus was established on August 15th, 1960. Less than fifteen years later, the island was divided into two parts since a Turkish military operation (Peace Movement, according to Turkish historians) had, as a result, for the island to be divided until today. 38% of Cyprus was, in 1983, declared an independent state under the name “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” (TRNC), which the international community has still not recognised. Negotiations regarding the re-unification of the island have been continuous but unsuccessful ever since. In May 2004, the Republic of Cyprus was admitted to the European Union despite the continued division. This has been the latest act in a long and rather adventurous history for this small island, which has been inhabited since the Neolithic period, almost 11,000 years ago.

This section will provide an overview of the cultural policy of the Republic of Cyprus as well as an overview of its museums. In addition, an overview of the museums in the TRNC will be provided. Even though TRNC does not have the status of a nation-state and therefore a discussion of national museums presents difficulties in strictly speaking technical terms, there are still institutions in this part of the island, which first receive state funding for their operation and second, are considered institutionalised representations of identity. Therefore, they fall within the scope of our research.

The cultural policy of the Republic of Cyprus

According to the Antiquities Law of December 31st 1935 and its Amendments no. 48 of 1964, no. 32 of 1972, no. 92(1) of 1995 and no. 4(1) of 1996, the Republic of Cyprus designates as cultural property all antiquities declared as follows:

Antiquity means any object, whether movable or part of immovable property which is a work of architecture, sculpture, graphic art, painting and any art whatsoever, produced, sculptured, inscribed or painted by human agency, or generally made in Cyprus earlier than the year AD 1850 in any manner and from any material or excavated or drawn from the sea within the territorial waters of Cyprus and includes any such object or part thereof which has a later date been added, reconstructed, readjusted or restored: provided that in the case of such works of ecclesiastical or folk art of the highest archaeological, artistic or historic importance, the year AD 1940, shall be taken into account in place of the year AD 1850. (DGCULT 2004: 34)

The same Law introduced the creation of the Department of Antiquities, which, since the independence of Cyprus in 1960, is under the Ministry of Communications and Works. The Department of Antiquities is responsible for ancient, Byzantine, Medieval and Ottoman culture (DGCULT 2004: 9). Its aim is to protect cultural property as described above, but also “to use ancient monuments and archaeological museums for educational purposes and cultural activities as well as for the stimulation of cultural tourism” (Department of Antiquities, n.d.). More specifically, the Department is responsible for “the management of the archaeological heritage of Cyprus” and in particular for the following:

... systematic and rescue excavations, as well as archaeological surveys; establishment, management and operation of archaeological museums; conservation, restoration, protection and promotion of Ancient Monuments [...], archaeological sites and monuments of architectural heritage.

As far as the museums are concerned, the Department of Antiquities is responsible for the management and running of the Archaeological Museum (Cyprus Museum) in Nicosia and for the district and local Museums. These are national, in the sense of offering protection to the national cultural heritage as described in the relevant legislation above, but also in the sense of being financed by the State. In addition, the Department, during the last few years, contributes to the establishment of private/thematic museums, consulting individuals or other interested bodies and offering its personnel’s expertise (Hadjikosti, 2010).

Other government bodies are also involved in cultural matters in Cyprus. The Ministry of Education, established in 1965, was also given responsibility for culture (later renamed “Ministry of Education and Culture”), whereas the Ministry of Interior is responsible for the protection of architectural heritage (through the Department for Town Planning and Housing) (DGCULT 2004: 9). The efforts of the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture are directed towards cultural development and the encouragement of contemporary Cypriot culture: “the creation of cultural awareness and sensibility, promotion of contemporary cultural values, boosting development of contemporary cultural life and assistance to contemporary Cypriot cultural creators.” (DGCULT 2004: 12). In this respect, the Department is also responsible for

purchasing works of art for the State collection and, created the State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art (DGCULT 2004: 22) to house it in 1990; simultaneously, Cultural Services finance the Struggle Museum (DGCULT 2004: 11), a historical museum created in 1960.

In 2004, the year the accession of Cyprus to the European Union took place, the government of the Republic participated in the National Cultural Policy Review programme of the Council of Europe in an attempt to investigate and debate over the aims, models and outcomes of their policies. The two reports (Ministry Report and Experts Report) published in 2004 (see DGCULT 2004 and Gordon 2004 respectively) were followed in 2010 by a new one, approving the creation of a unified authority for culture, in order to address cultural policy issues at a national level in a more coherent way (DGCULT 2010). The establishment of this authority is currently in progress in Cyprus and will unify the management of museums financed by the State irrespective of their collections and themes (Paraskevas 2010). This unified authority for culture will potentially make up a General Secretariat for Culture, which will include a Department of Contemporary Culture and the Department of Antiquities.

The initiative of searching for and complying with the guidelines provided by a European authority illustrates both the interest of the Republic into taking full advantage of the European expertise from the moment it entered the Union – Cyprus has been looking westwards since the nineteenth century, as we will discuss further on – but also into establishing its presence within the European cultural landscape – considered a semantic differential with Turkey and TRNC, and therefore an asset in the political arena as well.

In the field of local government, cultural departments and services have been created in most municipalities of Cyprus, since the 1990s. They develop cultural activities by organising festivals and other events, but also by creating and running museums and other cultural institutions (DGCULT 2004: 9). Cultural activities are also developed by cultural societies, as for example, the Association of Cypriot Studies, which runs the Museum of Folk Art, and the cultural arms of banks, such as the Cultural Foundation of the Bank of Cyprus, the Cultural Centre of the Laiki Bank and the Cultural Department of the Hellenic Bank. Very active in cultural and museum matters are also other foundations, such as the A.G. Leventis Foundation, the Pierides Foundation, the ARTos Foundation, the Pharos Foundation, the Lanitis Foundation, and so on (DGCULT 2004: 9).

Some of those societies and foundations go a long way back in historical terms such as the Association of Cypriot Studies, which was firstly created in 1937, whereas some of the private foundations reflect individual interest in cultural heritage matters that also go a long way back, as for instance, the Pierides Foundation which reflects the family's interest in the cultural affairs of the island since the end of the nineteenth century (Koudounaris 1993; Rystendt 1994).

National Museums of the Republic of Cyprus (Greek Cypriot Museums): an overview

The Department of Antiquities of the Ministry of Communications and Works of the Republic of Cyprus today runs 15 national museums. Ten of those are archaeological, one historical and four ethnographic. Furthermore, the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture runs two museums: the Struggle Museum and the State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art. Appendix 1 presents all the museums in the Republic of Cyprus that are fully funded by the government in table format.

Nevertheless, the exact number of museums currently on the island is not yet known. An unofficial and incomplete survey conducted in 1998 by the Leventis Municipal Museum of Nicosia offered the result that there were 51 institutions using the name ‘museum’ in their title in the Republic. Twenty were established and run by local authorities, twenty-five by foundations and other non-profit organisations and six by individuals (DGCULT 2004: 42). Other research undertaken in order for a guidebook to Cypriot museums to be written in 2004, mentions a total of thirty-seven museums, including state-run and non-state ones. Out of those, twelve were archaeological, six Byzantine, four historical, seven ethnographic, five museums of natural history, three art galleries and finally there was the postal museum (Michalopoulos 2004). Despite the differences in numbers between these two research studies, there are two things that are obvious: first, the pre-eminence of archaeological museums (18 in a total of 37), and second that the establishment of non-state museums in Cyprus is thriving (if the state museums are 15, then all the others are non-state, a fact which makes them the majority in both studies). This is a reflection of a very specific emphasis on archaeology on the one hand, and on an interest in almost every community of the island to create its own museum, either in an attempt to safeguard and promote cultural heritage, or in order to promote cultural tourism and therefore to have a developmental impact on the relevant community, on the other hand (for a similar tendency in Greece, see Bounia 2010). As far as the latter issue is concerned, apprehension for the creation of a “wholly unplanned museums pollution” was expressed in the Council of Europe Experts report (Gordon 2004: 43) and it has also led to the realisation of the need for a “national evaluation” of these institutions in order to deal with this issue in a strategically viable way. As a result, the Law 58(1)/2009 “For the Recognition of Private and Local Authorities Museums” was recently introduced, where a set of criteria for evaluating such museums is offered.

Nevertheless, these museums are also reflections of understanding of the national culture, in the sense that they allow individual or local authority agents to present their own views about how ‘Cypriot identity’ has been formed and what it means to belong to it. Interestingly, while state run museums emphasize archaeology, private and municipal museums place their emphasis on ethnography and the church of Cyprus is responsible for Byzantine museums and sites. This is probably an issue to be explored at a further stage of this research.

Cultural heritage and museums in the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus (TRNC): an overview

After 1974, responsibility for the care of cultural heritage in the north part of the island has been an issue of debate between the two communities. The Department of Antiquities of the Republic cannot have access to the archaeological sites, monuments and museums of the northern part, whereas many international organisations and individuals have reported serious amounts of damage and thefts. Looting of important sites and monasteries, relocation of icons and other valuable artefacts, the neglecting and dispersal of museum and private collections are among the cultural ‘crimes’ attributed to the occupation forces. The Republic of Cyprus as well as the Cypriot Greek Orthodox Church has initiated the return of precious historical artefacts that had been offered for sale in auction houses in Europe and the US (Stylianou 1997; Augustinos 1998; Knapp and Antoniadou 1998, Tenekides 1994; Constantinou and Hatay 2010).

In practical terms, and despite the fact that the TRNC is not recognised as a state and therefore does not have legitimate access to international aid, the administration of the north part of the island undertook some works on cultural heritage, such as emergency works in the foundations of the former St. Sophia Cathedral, now the Selimiye Mosque, funded by the UN; responsibility for the care of most of the church monuments fell after the events of 1974 to Evkaf, the Kibris Vakiflar Foundation set up in order to manage religious property already at the beginning of the twentieth century. For the monuments falling within the category of antiquities, the Turkish administration of the northern part created its own Department of Antiquities and Museums in legislation enacted in 1975. The scope of the department is “to protect and manage ancient monuments, museums, artefacts, a number of ancient buildings including old Ottoman and Venetian houses, churches as well as mosques and inns” (TRNC Department of Antiquities and Museums, n.d.).

On the official website of the department, it is declared that “the aim of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is to preserve and restore not only its own Turkish Cypriot heritage but also that of Greek Cypriot and other civilisations (past and present) within the context of Cypriot art”. To the criticisms of the Greek Cypriot side and the international community for neglecting and/or supporting illegal activities and plundering, TRNC’s Department uses arguments such as “progress has been limited because of inadequate financial resources, shortage of skilled labour and Greek Cypriot embargo, which prevents aid-flow to Northern Cyprus from international organisations such as UNESCO”. And the arguments continue by claiming that illegal “digging” is viewed with “extreme seriousness by the authorities” and that all the important sites are indeed open to the public and efforts are made for the monuments to be restored. Needless to say that antiquities are at the centre of the dispute and questions of what constitutes heritage and whose heritage this is lies at the centre of this debate.

The Department of Antiquities and Museums in Northern Cyprus lists 15 museums on its website as well as an online museum (see Appendix 2). It is interesting to note that this list does not include the District Archaeological Museum of Ammochostos (Famagusta), which was located near the site and is mentioned by the Greek Cypriot authorities as plundered. In addition, similar claims are made by the Greek side for the Cypriot Folk Art Museum and the Shipwreck Museum, both in Kerynia.

In addition to the above, there are two more museums jointly run by the Department of Antiquities and the Military. There is the National Struggle Museum, opened in 1989, to “remember and teach about the struggles undertaken by Turkish Cypriots from 1878 to the present day” (see TRNC Public Relations Department, n.d.). Additionally, a new Museum was established in Kyrenia, entitled Museum of Peace and Freedom, to commemorate Turkish and Turkish Cypriot soldiers who died during the 1974 events. The Museum is dedicated to the memory of Commander Ibrahim Karaoglanoglu. It is complemented with a monument and an open-air display of military vehicles confiscated from the Greek army during the 1974 events.

The Department of Antiquities and Museums of TRNC also mentions an on-line museum – a Museum of Fine Arts, which includes a virtual collection of paintings, sculpture and ceramics, fashion and design, photography, cinema and caricature. Artists are all of Turkish or Turkish Cypriot origins and the current cultural production of this part of the island is promoted through this site.

The history of national museums in Cyprus

The establishment of museums in Cyprus seems to fall into three main phases: the first one extends from the last quarter of the nineteenth century until 1955; the second refers to the period between 1955 and 1974 and the third to the period after 1974. The division is rather schematic and there is a lot of overlapping, but it still provides a useful tool for presentation and analysis of the creation of the national museums on the island. Each of these phases has its own character, which is defined by the historical events of the period, but also by the cultural preoccupations and influences Cyprus received during this time, while it retains, in the case of the two subsequent phases, certain characteristics of the previous periods. Table 2 provides an overview of the historical phases, the political events that marked them, as well as the resulting national priorities. Finally, the selected case study museums for each phase are listed.

Table 2

Museum Historical Phases, Political Events, National Priorities and Case Study Museums

	Political Events	National Priorities	Case Study Museums
Phase 1: before 1955	1878-1960 British Rule	Presentation and promotion of ancient Hellenic past Reinforcement of Hellenic Identity	1. Cyprus Museum (archaeological)
Phase 2: 1955 - 1974	1955 – 1959 Struggle against the British rule 1960 Independence	Commemoration of struggles and establishment of a national narrative and identity	2. Struggle Museum (documents the struggle against the British rule) 3. The Canbulat Museum (historical/ folk)
Phase 3: 1974 - today	1974 Turkish occupation of almost half of the island 2004 Cyprus joins the EU	Preserving and promoting national identity Looking towards the west and a European future	4. The State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art

The first phase is characterized by colonial influences along with a strong wish to claim ownership of the local cultural heritage by local agents. The beginning of the interest in cultural heritage has its roots into the colonial appreciation of the Hellenic past of the island. This phase ends with the start of the struggle against the British in 1955. Due to the dominance of archaeology during this phase, the Cyprus Museum was chosen as a case study.

The second phase is characterised by the need to commemorate the struggles and sufferings of both Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. This phase starts with the struggle against British rule (1955-59) and ends with the Turkish invasion in 1974. One Greek Cypriot (the Struggle Museum) and one Turkish Cypriot museum (the Canbulat Museum) are used as case studies for this period.

Finally, the third phase is characterised by the need to preserve and promote a growing sense of national identity. At the same time, Cyprus was looking towards the west for a European future and eventually entered the EU in 2004. The State Gallery of Contemporary Art will serve as the case study here and will help us demonstrate the conflicts between the old and the new.

Phase I: National museums before 1955

Brief historical overview

Cyprus is an island with a long and rather adventurous history. It was firstly inhabited in the Neolithic period, approximately 9000 years BC, probably from people of the near East. In the second half of the third millennium BC, the discovery of copper on the island and the subsequent processing and trade of the metal throughout the Eastern Mediterranean attracted new settlers, this time probably from Anatolia. In the fifteenth century BC, Cyprus (then called Alasia or Asy) appears to have come within the sphere of the influence of Egypt. A little later, around 1400 BC, the Mycenaeans settled the island. Around 850 BC, Cyprus began to be peacefully settled by the Phoenicians who remained on the island in peaceful co-existence with the Mycenaeans and the local population until the end of the fourth century BC. Different rulers followed, such as the Assyrians (709 BC onwards), the Egyptians (565-546 BC), and the Persians. Alexander the Great's campaign in Anatolia brought the end of Persian rule; after Alexander's death, Ptolemy, the king of Egypt prevailed another suitor, Antigonos, and his dynasty's influence lasted until the middle of the first century BC. The Roman Empire was followed in AD 300 by the Byzantine, which lasted until 1191, when Richard the Lionheart and his allies conquered the island. Rejection of the new rulers by the inhabitants forced Richard first to sell the island to the Knights Templar and then to offer it to Guy de Lusignan from Jerusalem, whose family produced the rulers of the island until 1489 (Frankish period), when it came under Venetian rule. This lasted until 1575. The Ottomans arrived on the island in 1571 and their rule lasted until 1878, with the ceding of Cyprus to Britain, in return for support in the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-78. The island remained under British Administration until 1960 when the independent state of Cyprus was established.

Cypriot antiquities and identity struggles

Already in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Ottomans had realised that in order to be able to participate in the modern world, they should "westernise" certain beliefs and practices; among them, the preservation of the material remains of the past. As a result, in 1869 the first Ottoman Museum, the Imperial Museum, was created in Istanbul, while legislation aimed at protecting cultural heritage was also first introduced (Shaw 2003). Of course, the relation of Islam and antiquities is rather complex. In the beginning, Islam did not receive Graeco-Roman history and remains into what we now call "its cultural heritage". On the contrary, it regarded the material remains as spoils and was impressed by their fantastic wealth. The consequence of this is that Islamic governments (the Ottoman Empire among them) never concerned themselves in practice with pre-Islamic antiquities. Even more significant and directly relevant to present concerns is the fact that, as their legislation (Islamic Law) came to be formulated out of religious principles, it did not address itself to questions concerning what we call "antiquities" (Wright 2001: 262). It was only under the European-inspired reformist movement (the Tanzimat, the

Destur), which took place between 1865 and 1875 that the Ottoman government started preparing policies and legislations based on principles other than the religious ones, and therefore an interest in the protection of antiquities was created. However, there was frequently a considerable lapse of time before new policies and legislations were actually promulgated. As a result, the Ottoman Antiquities Law (*Asar-i-Atica*) in Cyprus, although based on concerns which had already a past in the Ottoman understanding and policy was only promulgated in 1874, when major looters/amateurs had already taken from the island large numbers of important antiquities (Balandier 2001). The Ottoman Antiquities Law was issued in March 1874 in French, under the title: “*Reglements sur les antiquités*” (Wright 2001: 265; Stanley-Price 2001: 267-8). Despite the fact that all the provisions that subsequently became canonical in regulating antiquities were there, the only provision that gained prominence was the one that allowed the Government to acquire a one-third part of the finds of any excavation for which a permit was granted. The other two parts were given to the owner of the land and to the excavator (Karageorghis 1985b). This perspective was to influence subsequent legislation and became an issue of debate in the years to come.

On the other hand, the British did have a different perspective on classical heritage. The classical past was considered the “cradle” of European civilization and this belief was widely used to legitimise European colonialism in every respect (see Most 2008). The British administration used this claim in its own colonial activities (Given 1998; Hamilakis 1998, Silberman 1998, van Dommelen 1998, Sant Casia 1998; Leriou 2007). In the case of Cyprus, though, things were a bit more complicated. Greek Cypriots considered the British a great philhellenic power that would liberate them from the “barbaric” Turkish rule and let them unite with Greece (Knapp and Antoniadou 1998: 21). Interestingly, when Sir Garnet Wolseley, the first High Commissioner arrived in Larnaca in 1878 to take over from the Ottomans, he was welcomed by Sophronios, the Archbishop of Kition, who declared: “We accept the change of Government inasmuch as we trust Britain will help Cyprus, as it did with the Ionian islands, to be united with mother Greece, with which it is naturally connected” (cited in Hunt 1990: 265; also see Coldstream 1981, 1982; Tatton-Brown 1982; Peltenburg 1982; Dakin 1981; Karageorghis 1982; Mallinson 2005; Runciman 1982; Hitchens 1997). In the beginning, the British intellectuals who were coming to the island under various capacities highlighted the Greek character of the island as much as possible. Myres (1899), for instance, one of the first people to work at cataloguing the antiquities of the Cyprus Museum, highlighted the “Hellenic” character of the Cypriot past and therefore provided intellectual support to those who believed in the *Enosis* (Union) of Cyprus to Greece. It is this intellectual community, comprised of the British philhellenes/antiquarians/archaeologists and the Greek Cypriot intellectual elite that promoted the creation of our case study museum, the Cyprus Museum, as an undeniable, material expression of the Greek-ness of the island. In other words, the Greek Cypriots used the liberties and ideas of the British, in order to reinforce their Hellenic identity, thus supporting the ever-growing nationalist movement demanding *enosis*. It is in this light that the individual and communal attempts towards the promotion of archaeology of Cyprus should be seen, as for instance, the encouragement that was provided to Swedish archaeologists to excavate, even at the expense of the newly established Antiquities Law of 1905.

The voices that supported an interest in the medieval past of Cyprus were fewer and rather isolated. With the exception of G. Jeffery, a British architect who served as Curator of Monuments (Pilides 2009), and his efforts towards the promotion of the medieval past (also in

line with an interest in the medieval past developed in Europe, and more specifically in France during this period), the local Greek intellectual elite was not interested in that. The medieval past of the island consisted of a number of different rulers, from the Lusignans to the Ottomans, and therefore, did not support the ideal of the *enosis* or Greek-ness of the island. It was only natural then that this particular period was the first to be adopted by the Turkish Cypriot community that supported Jeffery's work in an attempt to claim their own contribution to the island's past (Pilides 2009). The interest in the medieval past from the Greek Cypriot community developed later in the 1920s, in a specific light: that of the Byzantine past and therefore the Christian influence on the island. Taking into account that the relationship with Greek civilisation has been twofold, based on antiquity and the Christian ideals, it was a natural turn on behalf of the Greek Cypriots. This interest in the Byzantine past and subsequently to the "folk" past is in line with a similar interest that had started to develop in mainland Greece from the end of the nineteenth century onwards and in particular in the late 1910s to 1940s (Plantzos and Damaskos 2008; Hadjinikolaou 2003; Azgin and Papadakis 1998). The active agents for this part were, once again, Greek Cypriot intellectuals, either of the clergy or of education and arts (Eliades 2008). Through societies such as the Society of Cypriot Studies, they promoted the connection to the Greek past through a promotion of the Hellenic identity of the island.

Case study museum: The Cyprus Museum

Since this first phase of the history of national museums in Cyprus is dominated by archaeology and the reinforcement of a Hellenic identity, the Cyprus Museum, the largest and oldest archaeological museum in Cyprus, is selected as the case study for this phase.

The date usually given for the foundation of the Cyprus Museum is 1883. In fact, the museum was formally established on June 15th, 1882, as the result of a petition approved by the British High Commissioner of the island, Sir Robert Biddulph (Stanley-Price 2001: 267; Pilides 2009: 63). A Museum Committee was also approved that day (Pilides 2009: 63 and notes 186ff). There are two versions as to whom should be given credit for founding the museum. In one of them, Ohnefalsch-Richter, in 1893, claimed credit for himself in having formed a committee for the foundation of a Cyprus Museum after securing the intervention of Gladstone in England to put pressure on this issue on the then High Commissioner of the island. There may be some truth in this claim, but there is no proof in terms of surviving material. On the contrary, there is substantial evidence in favour of the second version, that Lieutenant H. H. Kitchener should be given credit for the museum. Kitchener was then in Cyprus carrying out his topographical survey of the island. Most probably he was the author of the letter to the Editor of the *Cyprus Herald* of May 10th, 1882. The letter, signed by 'An Archaeologist', put forward some practical suggestions regarding the creation of a Museum of Antiquities in Nicosia. This was not the first time that the idea for the creation of a museum on the island had been raised. Correspondence and editorials published in the *Cyprus Herald* in 1882 referred to the revival of the idea regarding the formation of a Museum of Cypriot Antiquities; and also to previous suggestions of forming local museums in Larnaca and Limassol.

Three weeks after this letter though, a deputation went to see the High Commissioner with a petition to found an Island Museum of Ancient Art. The petition was signed by the Cadi of Cyprus, the Archbishop of Cyprus and the Mufti of Cyprus (i.e. the leaders of the main religious

communities). The reasons given in favour of founding a museum were the positive influence that it would have had on the mind and the cultivation of taste; as an island rich in antiquities, it would help promote the study of history and would attract savants and foreigners to study antiquities. The museum, thus established under the supervision of the Government of Cyprus, would be considered a permanent national institution. The High Commissioner approved the creation, the committee was named and Kitchener was appointed its Curator and Honorary Secretary (Stanley-Price 2001: 267-8). The key role of Kitchener in setting up the museum was recognised by both the Greek and Turkish communities when he left the island in March 1883.

The Museum Committee approved, in a second meeting in December 1882, a budget that included the fitting up of a room. It is confirmed that two of the new Government Office rooms were being used for the deposit of objects assigned to the Museum.

In the beginning, the collections were not organised, so were liable to damage from those using the government offices; furthermore, the collections were not open to the public. There must have been occasional visitors, but the museum was far from meeting its goals. It was five years after its creation that the President of the Museum Committee, High Commissioner Bulwer, intervened to remind the members of their aims. In June 1889, the Committee took a lease on a house at number 7, Victoria Road, within the walled town, in what was then an Armenian quarter. It was to be rented for one year at £21. There was good security, since a caretaker and his wife were to be appointed at £12 p.a. The collections were installed on the two floors of the house, and the plan was published in Myres and Ohnefalsch-Richter's catalogue of the collection prepared in 1899.

In his preface to the catalogue, Sir John Myres criticizes the government for failing to spend any funds on maintaining and properly storing the collection. Storage and cataloguing were quite inadequate. When loans were made from the collection, for instance to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1887 in London, a number of items went missing and never returned.

The museum opened its doors to the public nine years after the initial decision was made, on May 16th, 1891. It was open every Saturday and on certain holidays from 2-6 p.m. (Merrillees 2005: 6). Within a few years however, as the necessary funding and care were lacking, the Museum in Victoria Street was in a dilapidated state, evident in Jeffery's description of 1904 (Pilides 2009: 63).

In the meantime, on April 10, 1901, a circular was issued entitled "Memorial to Her Majesty Queen Victoria" referring to a public meeting held in the Theatre at Nicosia under the presidency of the High Commissioner, which resolved that a museum building should be erected in Nicosia by public subscription as a memorial to Queen Victoria. The museum was to be named after her, as a "worthy home for a collection of the relics of the ancient civilization of the Island" (Pilides 2009, Appendix V.1).

In 1905, under the governorship of Sir Charles King-Hartman, the Legislative Council voted on a new Antiquities Law, similar to that of Greece and Italy. This Antiquities Law of 1905 would govern all aspects of the preservation of monuments, creation of museums, excavations, etc. The main provision of this law is that antiquities are the absolute property of the government and all collectors should furnish lists to the Museum Committee; private owners were prohibited from altering the acknowledged character of ancient monuments without permission of the Museum Committee, and powers were given to the Museum Committee to acquire ancient

monuments and to make grants to private owners for maintaining and preserving ancient monuments (Karageorghis 1985b; 1932 Report, quoted in Pilides 2009: 653). The press of the period discusses in length the new legislation, reports the decision to create the museum (the plan for the architectural design of the new museum to be offered by the Greek government), and makes explicit the relation between the decision regarding the building of the museum and the need for a new legislation to prevent illicit excavations and exports of antiquities.

The new museum building was to be constructed from private subscriptions, after a competition regarding its architectural design. It had to be appropriate and to make it possible for the building to expand in the future. The plans of the National Museum of Athens and the Delphi Museum were requested from the Greek government for study. Different plans were also submitted: Edgar Feneck (Chief Foreman in the Dept. of Public Works and Store) submitted his proposal on August 28th, 1906; Theodore N. Fotiadis offered his plans on November 26th, 1906; Nicolaos Balanos submitted his plans, soon afterwards. A sub-committee examined the three suggestions and reached the conclusion that Feneck's plan was too costly despite its many advantages, Fotiadis' plan, although prettier did not allow for expansion, whereas the plan by Balanos firstly was already built in Athens, and secondly it was supervised by the General Curator of Antiquities in Athens and by the Professor of Archaeology at the University of Athens; furthermore, the committee believed that Balanos' plan "possessed an archaic simplicity, combined with the necessary grandeur of the chambers whose numbers could easily be increased subsequently" (Pilides 2009: 67). The execution of the plan was entrusted to George Jeffery, who was going to come into an understanding with Balanos. After a trip to Athens and collaboration between the two, they agreed that Balanos would kindly supervise the execution of an exact copy of the portico of the small temple of Athena Nike on the Athenian Acropolis to serve as the entrance to the Museum, while Jeffery would supervise the construction of the building in Nicosia (Pilides 2009, Appendix V.1).

The enactment of the Antiquities Law of 1905 and the creation of the Cyprus Museum had to increase the interest in the archaeology of the island as a result. The reports in the newspapers of the period, as well as the minutes of the Museum Committee brought forward a concern for the museum and the monuments. The newspaper reports were particularly important for building up awareness and public respect for monuments, thus condemning looting and export of antiquities. This concern has been intense between 1905 and 1915, but declined after 1915 and until 1925, probably because of WWI and its aftermath (Pilides 2009: 56).

The new building was ready in 1909 and in March the collections were transferred from the Victoria Street building to the new museum. By May of the same year, the portico was also in place. Greek archaeologists, such as P. Kavvadias, G. Soteriadis and members of the Athens Archaeological Society were invited to offer their help to the arrangements of the new museum; while already, in 1908, the position of the curator of the museum had been offered to Menelaos Markides, who was sent to Oxford to study archaeology so that he was up to his role. Markides officially undertook his responsibilities as a curator of the museum upon the completion of his degree in January 1912.

The collections of the Cyprus Museum were greatly augmented by the first large-scale excavations carried out by the Swedish Cyprus Expedition from 1927 to 1931, directed by Professor E. Gjerstad (*Chroniko*, 2009 and Rystedt 1994). The 1905 Antiquities Law restricted all

exports of antiquities from the island. Nevertheless, in March 1926, there was already a concern, expressed in the press that the ban on exports did not make Cyprus an attractive destination for foreign excavators anymore. Museums and archaeological missions from abroad put pressure on the authorities of the island in order to be able to export objects that they had unearthed during their research. The Swedes had sent such a letter to the governor of the island, Ronald Storrs, on October 13th, 1926. Storrs asked the Museum Committee to interpret the 1905 law as broadly as possible in order to be able to encourage the Swedish Expedition. In December 1926, a letter was sent to the Swedes saying “the wishes of the members of the proposed expedition... will receive sympathetic consideration together with as liberal an interpretation as maybe legally permissible of actual and future legislation” (*Chroniko* 2009: 11; also State Archives, Nicosia/983/1913: Red 72-1). As a result, the 1905 law was amended in 1927 and 65% of the findings were exported to Sweden. On the positive side, the expedition had material from all periods to enrich the Cyprus Museum as a result, from the Neolithic to the Roman era; while at the same time it added immeasurably to the archaeology of Cyprus, which began to mature as a discipline.

The expansion of the collections led to further expansion of the museum building. Two side galleries and the eastern towers were added in 1914-16, a lecture theatre and store rooms were added on the north side in 1917-18; further additions were approved and carried out in 1923 through the supervision of Jeffery. Additions have been continuously made in the museum, since further works are recorded for 1935; offices were constructed in 1937 and 1938, while a substantial extension along the north side of the building was constructed between 1959-1961 (Karageorghis 1985b; Pilides 2009: 69-72; Dikaios 1961: xiv).

The Department of Antiquities was created in January 1935 by the enactment of a new Antiquities Law. The first director was J.R. Hilton, succeeded in 1936 by A.H.S. Megaw, an architect who remained in this post until 1960 (Karageorghis 1985b). It was under this law that the Cyprus Museum became fully official/national, in the sense that it became part of the administration and was also financed by the State. The 1935 law also introduced a new era for Cypriot archaeology, since both Cypriot and foreign archaeologists were encouraged to undertake research projects on various parts of the island more actively.

Among the archaeologists involved in this period's work, we should mention Porfyrios Dikaios, who was responsible for the excavations at Khirokitia and other Neolithic sites. He was also the director of the Cyprus Museum and wrote its catalogue in 1947.

The 1935 Antiquities Law remained in force without major amendments in Part IV (Museum and Advisory Bodies) until 1964, four years after the independence of Cyprus from the British, when the law was amended so that museums could be created by the Council of Ministers of the newly established Republic of Cyprus. The Cyprus Museum remained under the control and management of the director.

Phase II: National museums established between 1955 and 1974

Turmoil and commemoration

This was a period of turmoil for the island of Cyprus, but it was also the period when the new Republic of Cyprus was created. Museums were used to serve the ideologies of the period and

each community of the island established its own cultural *foci*, in an attempt to tell their own stories.

The anti-colonial struggle of 1955-1959 led many museums that had been created in the previous period, to close and interrupted social and cultural life in many ways. In contrast to other colonial territories, anti-colonialism in Cyprus did not lead to the demand of self-government and independence; instead, the Greek-Cypriot community aspired to the *Enosis* (Union) of the island with Greece. This was quantified in 1950 when a plebiscite took place that resulted in 96% of the votes being in favour of the union. The lack of any response from the British though, led, in 1955, to an organised anti-colonial uprising, led mainly by George Grivas and his followers who had formed the National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters (known as EOKA) (Hunt 1982: 255-7). Turkish Cypriot nationalism was soon to follow and in 1958, the equivalent organisation was created by Turkish Cypriots, called TMT (Turkish Resistance Organisation). This community was satisfied by the current *status quo* and was opposed to the idea of a union with Greece, which would lead them into an ethnic minority status. Unification with Turkey was their suggested option, or possibly the partitioning of the island between Greece and Turkey. Vital negotiations between the two communities and the British took place in Zurich and resulted in the creation of an independent republic in 1960, where both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities were encouraged to co-exist while two different assemblies were formed: the Greek Cypriot one with 80% of the total population and the Turkish-Cypriot one with 18%. The outcome did not satisfy either of the two, and both continued to pursue their separate objectives.

After 1960, the years that followed saw the increase of funds available for the cultural affairs of the island and the Antiquities Department's needs: excavation, repairs and restoration of ancient monuments, in collaboration mainly with the Church authorities and the Evkaf, were among the activities that were encouraged during this period; the encouragement was most probably part of an effort to ground the new Republic into its cultural past, but also to encourage new economic developments, such as tourism and modernisation.

New premises for museums in various districts were made available: Famagusta, Larnaca, Limassol and Paphos acquired new museum buildings. Site museums were also developed at Episkopi (Kourion House) and Kouklia, whereas a smaller site museum of a didactic character was built in Salamis (Karageorghis 1985b). In 1966, the Dowager Lady Loch, a former resident of Kyrenia, donated to the department a house overlooking the harbour to be used as a museum. She also donated a large collection of objects of folk art. Therefore, the creation of a Folk Art Museum came under way (Department of Antiquities 1966).

Nevertheless, during the first few years of the Republic, between 1963 and 1964, the problems continued with inter-communal conflicts between Greek and Turkish Cypriots (Hunt 1982; Hill 1952). Therefore, apart from the archaeological museums and activities, which were recognised as a cultural standard and supported by the central government, new museums were established during this phase, in order to commemorate exactly this social and political upheaval. These museums started as community attempts; to acquire a more official status as the two communities grew apart.

Since museums are considered to be objective, authentic and credible more than other media (Sandell 2007), they were considered the perfect medium to form and reinforce historical

narratives, explain violence as a necessary form of sacrifice, and construct a sense of national identity and pride for both communities. As in the case of other memorial museums, images of the past were used to legitimize current political ideas (Goulding and Domic 2009). According to Dickinson, Blair and Ott:

...public memory is understood by most, if not all, contemporary scholars as activated by concerns, issues, or anxieties of the present. That is, groups tell their pasts to themselves and others as ways of understanding, valorizing, justifying, excusing, or subverting conditions or beliefs of their current moment (2010: 6)

Similarly, the museums created in this phase choose to “remember” and thus commemorate certain aspects of their history and ignore other aspects according to current political events ((see Toumazis 2010). Both the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities wanted to commemorate the strength of their feelings of injustice and oppression. The creation of a museum seemed like a material expression of these feelings and a propaganda medium that would allow firstly, to educate contemporary and future generations and secondly, to again make their claims to the land and their history.

The largest Greek Cypriot museum of this kind is the Struggle Museum and will serve as our case study. In the northern part of Nicosia, two other museums, created more or less at the same time, express the other side of the coin. The Museum of Barbarism (called by some more dispassionate voices, Museum of Dr. Nihat Ilhan) was established in 1964 in order to commemorate the atrocities Greek Cypriots committed against the Turkish Cypriot population of the island. Also, the National Struggle Museum (created after 1974) commemorates the Ottoman and Turkish struggles for a presence on the island. Despite the fact that these museums exhibit a similar repertoire of objects and photographs, the messages communicated change according to the context, the museum’s central narrative and the preconceptions of the viewer (Papadakis 1994). Similar images and objects in both Greek and Turkish Cypriot museums seem to serve as a reminder of the suffering and struggles of the people they represent, create symbolic boundaries between “us” and “them”, and become an efficient didactic tool for young school children who did not experience any of the events.

The second case study we chose for this period is the Canbulat museum because it is another example of a museum that becomes a didactic tool for young generations and aims at reinforcing the Turkish Cypriot identity of the island. It started its life as a community museum in 1968 and acquired a more official status after the events of 1974. Without being a memorial museum in the sense that Dr. Nihat Ilhan’s one is, the Canbulat museum explores a part of the historical past of the island that was of particular importance for the Turkish Cypriot community, for the shaping of their identity as our discussion below will argue.

Case study museums: The (National) Struggle Museum and the Canbulat Museum

The first museum of this category to be established was the Struggle Museum (previously known as National Struggle Museum) currently under the Ministry of Education and Culture. The Assembly of the Hellenic Community established the Museum on January 26th, 1961. The Decision, which was published in the newspapers of February 23rd, 1961 reads as follows:

The Assembly of the Hellenic Community decides the establishment of a Museum of the Liberating Struggle of the Cypriot people and authorizes the Selection and Administration Committee to do any necessary action as well as the Financial Committee to inscribe all expenses in the budget of 1961. (Demetriou 2008: 7).

Christodoulos Papachrysostomou, who was a fighter during the EOKA struggle, undertook the direction of the Museum. The Museum was firstly housed in a building donated by Zinon Sozos, another patriot fighter, in 25, Iras Street in Nicosia. The inauguration of the exhibition took place on April 1st, 1962. In 1966, the museum was transferred to the Old Archbishopric Palace where it remained until 1996 (Papadakis 1994; Papachrysostomou 1977; Stylianou and Demetriou 1991). From December 1996 until April 2001, the museum was temporarily housed in a neoclassical building at 7, Kinyra Street. In the meantime, a new wing was added to the previous building and a new exhibition was organised. The new exhibition was inaugurated in April 2001. The cost for the construction of the new building was undertaken by the Ministry of Education and Culture along with the Archbishop of Cyprus, while the A.G. Leventis Foundation financed the museological work undertaken for the new exhibition (Demetriou 2008: 7).

The aim of the museum has been to “keep alive the memory of the struggle for liberation of the Greek Cypriots against the British, which was organised by the National Organization of the Cypriot Fighters (EOKA) from 1955 to 1959”. (Michalopoulos 2004: 37). The museum is simultaneously an archive of the memories regarding the liberation war. It has an active collecting policy and presents the public photographs, documents, personal belongings of the heroes of the liberation war, reconstructed scenes from various heroic incidents and so on.

The Struggle Museum aims to present not the art of a specific historical period of the island, but a political and national historical event. Interestingly, despite the fact that the museum was created in 1961, i.e. during the first year of the Republic and when the Turkish Community of the island was still part of it, the museum does not include the Turkish Cypriot Community in the narrative. On the contrary, in the re-exhibition of 2001, the Turkish Cypriots are represented as “fooled” by the British powers and participating in their atrocities (Papadakis 1994).

The Canbulat Museum (or (D)Janbulat Museum) in Famagusta is also a museum created during this period to express a different historical perspective. It was established in 1968 as an ethnography/commemorative museum by the Turkish Cypriot community (Keshishian 1970). It commemorates the heroic story of Janbulat Bey who bravely fought the Venetians in 1571, when the Ottoman rule of the island was established (Gunnis 1936). The visitor goes through a series of exhibition cases housing various artefacts; to end up in the inner sanctum of the museum where the tomb of Canbulat is located, surrounded by insignia and flags. Apart from the tomb, the museum houses “Turkish purses, bridal dresses, night-gowns and pilgrim’s headscarves from the 19th to the 20th centuries” and then “17th century Turkish china bowls and plates, Venetian 15th century cups and plates, and, further on, Bronze Age ware and artefacts labelled as of Anatolian, Syrian and Egyptian origin” (Scott 2002a: 219). Although the nationalist character of this museum has been debated (Scott 2002a), the variety of artefacts exhibited, along with the lack of interpretation point towards an understanding of the Ottoman past that emphasises the multi-national and multi-cultural roots of the island of Cyprus.

Various interpretations about the establishment of this museum have been offered (Scott 2002a): from the one that presents it as a pragmatic response to a touristic need, to the one that

claims the museum is a statement on Cypriot-ness. In any case, the museum echoes the attempts of Turkish Cypriots to locate themselves on the island and thus legitimise their status as equal inheritors of the past and the present of the land. Canbulat becomes the much-needed Cypriot hero of Ottoman origins, a symbol for Turkish Cypriot identity.

Both the Struggle Museum and the Canbulat Museum aim at projecting a sense of national identity, of struggle and sacrifice and therefore of a rightful claim to the island. Both museums have, as their main aim, to educate future generations and commemorate the past. However, while other similar museums abroad desire to also promote tolerance, the avoidance of future violence and peace (Williams 2007), there seems to be no such attempt with these two museums. The narratives do not include the other side of the coin and a clear separation between “us” and “them” is established. Priority is given to a clear, straightforward nationalistic narrative.

Phase III: National museums in Cyprus after 1974

Ongoing troubles between Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities led to the military junta, then in power in Greece, to attempt a coup to remove president Makarios in 1974. In response, and using their role as a guarantee-power, Turkey invaded and occupied the northern end of the island. The old walled capital, Nicosia, has since been divided in two parts (from Paphos Gate to the west and just north of Famagusta Gate in the east). Around 180,000 Greek Cypriot refugees were resettled in the south, while 71,000 Turkish Cypriots were forced to move to the north and were mostly accommodated in the vacated Greek Cypriot property. Following the Ottoman example, Turkey re-settled 60,000 Turks in the north. UN forces patrol, to this day, the Green Line and the Turkish military continue to occupy the north parts of the island. In 1983, the Turkish administration of the north formalised itself as the “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” (TRNC), but as an occupying power is not recognised as such by any State except Turkey, nor by international organisations. Since 2003, an agreement was reached between both sides to open crossing points for people to move between the two parts and some trade was allowed. The access has caused major emotional responses for many, since Greek Cypriots found their former properties occupied by Turkish Cypriots and vice versa, or in some cases, sold to foreign owners; a number of high profile lawsuits is in progress to this day.

The events of 1974 meant serious disruptions in the works of museums and cultural authorities of the island. All archaeological activity stopped at once, sites (like Enkomi, Salamis, Old Famagusta, Kyrenia, Soloi, Vouni Palace) were abandoned, just like churches (as for instance, Antiphonitissa and Kanakaria) and museums. Greek Cypriot specialists from the Department of Antiquities left behind the archaeological museum of Famagusta, the Folk Museum of Kyrenia and the Shipwreck Museum of Kyrenia (which was ready to be inaugurated in the castle of Kyrenia in 1974). The Cyprus Museum, which is only a few hundred meters from the Green line, was evacuated from valuable objects. Some were taken for safety to the southern part of Cyprus; others were shipped to Greece, where they were exhibited in special galleries in the National Museum of Athens until 1979. It was only then that the archaeological and museum work returned to what was going to become normal from then onwards (Karageorghis 1985b).

The third phase in the history of the Cypriot museums started after 1974 that also saw the division of the island into two parts. Each of the two sides developed its own different perspective encouraged by political as well as cultural aims and priorities. At the same time, the

Cyprus Republic aiming for a European future was determined to promote (and create) its own artistic history. After a short overview of the museum scene in the Republic of Cyprus and the TRNC, the case study of the State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art will be used to demonstrate conflicts between the old and the new.

Preserving a national identity while looking towards a European future

The Republic of Cyprus focused on the museums and sites that were still in their care. It continued placing emphasis on archaeology along the lines already described above, and excavations by both Cypriot and international experts were encouraged as well as the exhibition of Cypriot antiquities in museums all over the world (Karageorghis 2004). In addition, a campaign started immediately after 1974 for engaging international professional and cultural bodies, like ICOMOS, ICOM, UNESCO and so on, for the protection of historical monuments that were left in the northern part of the island and therefore beyond the protection of the Department of Antiquities.

In 1982, the Department of Antiquities was reorganised and a new branch was created under D. Christou, assisted by E. Egoumenidou. This new branch started to deal more actively with monuments of folk architecture and folk art, individual houses and compounds of houses that have been declared ancient monuments. As a result, new folk art museums were created: the Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios Mansion was inaugurated in 1987 in Nicosia (Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou 1991; 1993; 1995); the Patsalos Museum of Embroidery and Silversmith in Lefkara opened in 1986; the Katsinioros House and the village of Fikardon started being restored in 1984. In addition, the Museum of Folk Art in Yeroskipou, which had been created in 1978, was re-organised and enlarged (Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou and Phiouri 2008). Thus, the Department of Antiquities was able to make a new contribution towards the preservation of Cypriot cultural property, conserving and presenting for the people of Cyprus relics of their immediate past (Karageorghis 1985b). In 1985, the Medieval Museum of Cyprus opened in the Medieval Castle of Limassol (Karageorghis 1985b) and new more specialised museums opened in different sites [such as in Idalion (2007), Polis-Chrysochou (1998), Maa (1996) and so on] (Bruno 1996; Gazi 1997; Flourentzos 1996). The efforts of the Greek Cypriot side have received many awards (Europa Nostra awards among others) and international acclaim (Scott 2002b).

However, a new country, especially one with European aspirations, found itself in need of defining its own art history. And since this history was initiated and constructed by Greek Cypriots, the narrative seems to be organically evolving from the Greek and Byzantine identity of the island mixed with European art influences. The State Gallery of Contemporary Art, inaugurated in 1990, the same year that Cyprus submitted an application to enter the EU, will serve as our case study for this phase.

In the north, the Turkish administration was not in a position to develop at the same pace, due to lack of recognition as a state. Access to international bodies and financial help was not available and that is also true of professional expertise. It is only after 2003, and because of the border between the two sides of the island being opened, that tourism has started in the northern part of the island and therefore, interest in cultural endeavours has increased.

In terms of the museums of this part, we can divide them into three main categories: the first consists of museums that had been already established before 1974 and the TRNC has

undertaken their management and operation. In this category, we can include the Lapidary Museum (which is the one that Jeffery created in 1928), the Kyrenia Museum of Folk Art, and the Shipwreck Museum in the castle of Kyrenia. If one reviews the material advertising these museums, but also sites, like St. Hilarion Castle and Bellapais Monastery, both important Christian sites that had already been developed as tourist destinations before 1974, he/she cannot miss the emphasis placed on the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic character of the sites.

The second category includes icon museums: these have been established after 1974, in an effort to display respect towards Christian remains and therefore compliance with “religious rights”. The creation of those museums, itself often criticised as “dislocating religious artefacts” as well as for inappropriate conservation, has been a political argument towards the Greek Cypriot accusations of disrespect of their cultural heritage, but also of allowing, if not encouraging, illegal looting and pillaging.

The third category of museums is that of historical/memorial museums referring to particular periods of Ottoman and Turkish history of the island as well as commemorating heroes and personalities involved. Some of those museums already existed before 1974 as expressions of the Turkish Cypriot Community, such as the Dervishes Museum in Nicosia (1963), the Canbulat museum in Famagusta (1968), as well as the Museum of Barbarism (1963); these were all communal initiatives at first, which acquired official status with the change of administration. There have also been new additions to this category: the Museum of National Struggle was created in 1978 on the Turkish side of Nicosia to present a different perspective on recent history; the Dungeon and Museum of Namik Kemal, a nationalist Turkish author, exiled in Cyprus in 1873, was created in 1993 in Famagusta; whereas the Museum of Peace and Freedom commemorating the Turkish losses during the 1974 events was created in 2010 in Kyrenia.

All the different categories and museums seem to share themes echoed in broader debates of a national and political character: the possibility for peaceful co-existence in Cyprus (in some cases denied, in some cases encouraged) versus the inevitability of conflict and tension; notions of “pure” national identity based on a primary reference to a motherland outside the island versus an emphasis on local sources of identity, where heterogeneity becomes a valid model for a nation-state (or for an “imagined community”) (Scott 2002a: 225).

Case study museum: The State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art

The establishment of the State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art can be seen in the light described above: a continuation of Cypriot culture to the present day, reinforcement of national cultural identity, along with an interest in the development of fine arts and cultural tourism. As we will see, the political events in Cyprus as well as the cultural policy of the country influenced the collection and exhibition of the State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art.

According to the State Gallery catalogue “no forms of art were produced during the whole of 19th century other than ecclesiastic and folk art” (Nikita 1998: 11). The Ottoman period is also painted as the “darkest period in the culture of the island” (Nikita 1998: 16). There is evidence that the first attempts to exhibit and promote artistic production were initiated and supported by British officials. The first art exhibition in Cyprus was organized in 1931 by the Department of Lands under the management of its director and with the support of the British governor. This first “art exhibition” included only two Greek Cypriot artists among many British artists. The “art

exhibition” became a yearly affair and by 1939, the number of participating Greek Cypriot artists surpassed that of the British artists (Nikita 1997). Interestingly, Turkish Cypriot artists do not appear to present work in these exhibitions.

Despite the subsequent production and exhibition of works by British, Turkish Cypriot and Armenian artists, only the work of two British and two Turkish Cypriot artists is currently exhibited in the galleries of the State Gallery. An explanation given by one of the main actors in the creation of the State Gallery, Dr. Eleni Nikita, is that those early exhibitions included work by mainly amateur artists and it was only after the 50s that young Cypriot artists started arriving from their studies abroad and exhibiting quality works worth collecting. Nevertheless, the collection and exhibition of works seems to support a historical narrative of a purely Cypriot art, and more specifically of a Greek Cypriot art.

The beginning

The State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art in its present location opened in June 1990. However, the idea for the creation of such a gallery was born as early as 1962.

In 1960, after the independence of the island, two community assemblies were created to serve the needs of the Greek and Turkish communities respectively. In 1962, the Greek Community Assembly created a department called the Department of Cultural Development. This department was responsible for the first cultural policy of the Ministry of Education that has not changed considerably throughout the years. According to Nikita (2009):

The Department of Cultural Development followed a policy focused on the Greek civilization. The main axes of the Department’s cultural policy were the preservation and development of the specificities of the local civilization, the introduction and nurturing of all elements of the modern Greek civilization and those of the ancient Greek civilization, which are directly related to contemporary life and the introduction and assimilation of those elements of modern international civilization which are consistent with the spirit and the traditions of the Greek people, the moral and intellectual content of Greek history and the spirit of Christian religion.

As we will see, this Greek-centred policy unavoidably influenced the collection and exhibition of works in the State Gallery.

One of the first decisions the department took was to start purchasing artworks from emerging Cypriot artists in order to support local art production and galleries as well as to create a core collection for a future state gallery. The first artwork, by Christophoros Savva, was purchased in 1962 and since then, a yearly budget was allocated for the purchase of artworks (Schiza 1997). A more systematic approach towards collecting started around 1970 when the department formed a selection committee for purchasing artworks and started keeping a record of the purchases (Kyriakou 2011).

When the Ministry of Education was established in 1965, more serious thought was given to the creation of a State Gallery. The plan was to create a multi-purpose cultural centre that would include a State Art Gallery, a library and a venue for hosting cultural events. Architect Manfred Lehmbrock completed the impressive architectural plans for such a building in 1974 and its construction was planned for the near future. Unfortunately, the Turkish invasion cancelled any plans for strengthening the cultural infrastructure of the island since survival issues became a

priority (Nikita 2011). Since 1974, the annual budget of Cyprus always includes an amount for the construction of a State Gallery, but no president has taken the decision to proceed with such a plan.

Meanwhile, the artworks were steadily increasing in number but the public (and taxpayers) had no access to them. The works were stored in a small office room in the Ministry of Education. In 1979, the French Cultural Centre in Nicosia, which had its offices at Menadrou str. 1E, was moving and the cultural department saw this as an opportunity to occupy that space. The department decided to move the State Collection in the basement of the building and to create a small temporary exhibition space that would be open to the public. On November 25th 1980, the *State Collection of Contemporary Cypriot Art* was opened for the first time to the public.

From the 86 works exhibited, 56 belonged to the government and 30 were on loan from artists. The selected works were considered the best examples of Cypriot art from the beginning of the twentieth century (State Collection of Contemporary Cypriot Art Catalogue 1980). From the 55 artists represented, two were Turkish Cypriots and one Armenian Cypriot.

An opportunity to move to a larger space arose in the mid 80s when a Cypriot neoclassical mansion dating from 1925 (the house of the family of Michalakis Kouloumbis) became available. Due to the house's small restrictive spaces, this was considered a temporary solution until a proper art gallery could be build. From 1987 to 1990, the mansion (previously "Hotel Majestic") was restored in order to serve as another temporary home for the state collection. On June 28th 1990, the president of the Republic of Cyprus, Georgios Vassiliou, inaugurated the State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art.

Selection of works

At the time of the opening, the gallery owned about 1000 artworks of which 120 were selected for permanent exhibition. The rest of the works remained in storage or were lent out to various governmental offices in Cyprus and abroad. A special committee (consisted of Niki Loizidi and Nicos Hadjinikolaou, professors of history of art in Greece, the Cypriot artists George Kotsonis and Andreas Efesopoulos, who represented the Cyprus Chamber of Fine Arts, Valentinos Charalambous, a specialist in ceramics and ex-professor of the Academy of Fine Arts in Bagdad and Eleni Nikita, art historian and Senior Cultural Officer at the Ministry of Education and Culture) undertook the responsibility of selecting the works of art to be exhibited in the gallery. The aim of the special committee was "to succeed in the most adequate possible presentation of the artistic course of Cyprus from the beginning of the 20th century up to the present day" (Nikita 1998: 11). The criteria for the selection of specific works were artistic merit of the highest degree. As a result, the works selected for exhibition were the works considered as the most representative of the actors and movements of Cypriot art in the twentieth century, up to the 1990s.

Apart from the Greek Cypriot artists, the collection of the State Gallery includes works by British artists who live(d) and work(ed) in Cyprus, like Glyn Hughes and John Corbridge. Turkish Cypriot artists are also represented in the collection, although not adequately in the gallery space. According to personal communication with Giorgos Kyriacou (worked at the Ministry for the period 1969-1976) and Eleni Nikita (worked at the Ministry for the period 1977-2009), the Ministry was actually purchasing works by Turkish Cypriot artists in the 60s and early 70s but

then almost stopped with the events of 1974. When the crossing between north and south opened in 2003, a climate of hope and collaboration was in the air and that resulted in a number of joint exhibitions between Greek and Turkish Cypriot artists. The Ministry of Education and Culture, in the same spirit, purchased some works by Turkish Cypriot artists who exhibited in South Cyprus. However, as the years passed and no solution to the Cyprus problem was apparent, the excitement turned into disappointment and collaborations became less and less. Nevertheless, the collecting of Turkish Cypriot artists (as well as artists belonging to other minorities, such as the Armenians) has not ceased. The visibility problem is expected to be solved with the creation of a new branch of the State Gallery, which will provide larger and more adequate space for the exhibition of works from the post-independence period onwards, including the recent years, when a more active collecting policy has been in place, which includes works of artists from other ethnic groups (Paraskevas 2010).

The special committee responsible for the exhibition considered the structure and character of the interior and style of the neo-classical building and avoided drastic alteration to the building spaces. The small and restricting areas and the absence of large surfaces for exhibiting works excluded from the outset large works, particularly constructions, installations in space and works which use contemporary materials. This is another reason that explains the limited representation of the young generation of artists.

In 1995, the State Gallery closed due to renovations and for the purpose of the renewal and enrichment of its collection. An ad hoc committee was appointed for this purpose. The selection of new works was made according to the same criteria set by the first committee whose main objective was the historical presentation of the course of contemporary Cypriot art and not the personal artistic course of artists (Nikita 1998). During this renovation, more works from the 1960s were added because it was felt that 1960, the independence year, was a crucial turning point in Cypriot art. The State Gallery retains this focus and is currently organized chronologically on three floors.

Art historians in Cyprus see the year 1960 as a year separating two eras:

a) The era that aimed at strengthening national identity and nurturing a fear towards anything foreign.

b) The era where a new generation of artists embraced international trends while rejecting the older local traditions (Danos 2006; Nikita 2009).

Before the country's independence, some artists, such as Diamantis, Kanthos and Paul Georgiou, were consciously trying to project a national identity through their works by emphasizing the natural environment and peasants of Cyprus, as well as current political events (Danos 2006; Nikita 2009). Fittingly, the morphological attention of the works was on ancient, Byzantine and folk art – the three pillars that supported Greek heritage and identity. A key figure in this attempt was the artist Adamantios Diamantis who was also the initiator of the foundation of Cypriot Studies and the first director of the Folk Art Museum in Nicosia (Diamantis 1973).

On the other hand, the new generation of Cypriot artists who were mainly active after independence saw, as their prime objective the synchronization of Cypriot art with international trends and a break with the past but this separation unavoidably created conflict between the old and new generation of artists. Characteristically, Stelios Votsis, a Cypriot artist who claimed that

the foundations of the new Cypriot art were laid in the 60s, when asked what kind of art he and his colleagues were engaged in mentioned

Structural abstraction. Not pop-art. Not because we can't or because we don't have the skills to do it, but as a reaction to the fact that art must have...a fairy-tale, in other words, figures, little donkeys, sunsets, etc. So, the new generation wanted to break the taboos, the shackles of the conventional. (Nikita 2009: 16).

The new Cypriot artists' struggle to become a part of the international avant-garde and break from the representational and often romantic notion of the landscape and its people was successful. Nowadays, most contemporary Cypriot artists follow international trends.

The State Gallery is the home of both generations of artists. The first and second floor features the work of the 'fathers' of Cypriot art who worked before 1960. The second floor allows a dialogue between the older and newer generation while the third floor shows the work of artists working after 1960. As the gallery houses the conflict between the old and new generation of artists, it also houses another conflict: the need to establish and reinforce a strong Greek Cypriot art identity and the desire to move forward towards the future, follow international trends and steer away from nationalism. A look at the temporary exhibition program of the gallery shows that the first ten years of its operation (1990-2000) the gallery aimed at achieving the first need. From 2000-02, some attempts were made to change this but continuous structural and storage problems forced the gallery to stop all temporary exhibitions after 2002.

Temporary Exhibitions

The first temporary exhibition took place in 1994 with a retrospective exhibition of Adamantios Diamantis. His paintings praise the purity of the Cypriot landscape and its people. Following that was retrospective exhibition by Tilemachos Kanthos (1995), a contemporary of Diamantis who was deeply influenced by the events in 1974 and is well known for his vivid woodcuts of suffering and terror. Another artist who is considered to be a "father" of Cypriot art is George Paul Georgiou. Byzantine and folk art influenced him and he was one of the few painters who painted artworks related to the 1955-59 struggle during its occurrence (from opening speech of the exhibition opening). He was given a retrospective exhibition at the State Gallery in 1999.

Apart from the exhibitions highlighting the art of the "fathers" of Cypriot art, the State Gallery featured art from Greece in an effort to strengthen its connection with the motherland and encourage collaborations. The State Gallery hosted the exhibition "A century of Greek Painting – from the liberation till 1930" in 1996, the exhibition "Greek Painting: the thirties" in 1997, and the exhibition "Greek Art – 20th century" in 1999. Characteristically, in 1999, Ms. Elisavet Papazoi, the Greek Minister of Culture met with Mr. Ouranios Ioannides, the Cypriot Minister of Education and Culture and discussed different ways the two countries could collaborate with cultural projects. Ms. Papazoi mentioned that Greece and Cyprus do not need a common vision of culture since "our forefathers already made sure we already have a common vision" (Schiza 1999). In addition to ties to Greek institutions, the State Gallery also formed ties with Russian art institutions. The exhibition "Masterpieces of Russian Icon Painting" in 1989 connected Russia with Cyprus by highlighting their common religion.

The exhibitions between 2000 and 2002 seem to be different in the sense that they focus on modern and contemporary art more than the exhibitions organized in the previous years (see Table 3 for a complete list of temporary exhibitions). However, due to the fact that each time a temporary exhibition was organized, all the works from the temporary collection needed to be stored in less than ideal conditions, the gallery stopped organising temporary exhibitions in 2002. In addition, a report from the office of the Commissioner for Administration (Nicolaou 2003) pointed out serious problems with cataloguing, registering, loaning and storing artworks. Also, problems with insurance and the need for better control of all the procedures were pointed out. A second report by the Ombudsman (2010) pointed out problems with security, loaning management and lack of specialized personnel. Nevertheless, there is an effort on behalf of the Ministry to create better conditions for the artworks and improve procedures: updating of security systems and digital cataloguing is currently under way despite the delays, mainly due to bureaucracy and involvement of various governmental departments. There is also the expectation that specialised personnel and general management issues will be solved with the creation of a new legal entity, the Foundation “Cyprus Museum of Contemporary Art”, whose establishment depends on political decisions and a budget. The Ministry expects considerable progress to be made within 2012 (Paraskevas 2010).

Table 3

Temporary exhibitions organized by the State Gallery

Date	Exhibition
1994	Retrospective exhibition of Adamantios Diamantis
1995	Retrospective exhibition of Tilemaxos Kanthos
09-10/1996	“A century of Greek Painting – from the liberation till 1930” (Organisation: Ministry of Education and Culture, Cultural Services & National Art Gallery of Greece-Alexandros Soutzos Museum)
09-10/1997	“Greek Painting: the thirties”
02/1998	“Masterpieces of Russian Icon Painting”
04-05/1999	Retrospective exhibition of Georgiou Paul Georgiou (Organisation: the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Leventis Foundation)
10-11/1999	“Greek Art – 20 th century” from the Rhodes Municipal Gallery Collection
06-08/2000	“From the Chisel to the Electron” (Organisation: Nicosia Arts Centre, the Pierides Gallery, Cultural Services, the cultural services of Laiki Bank and the British Council)
10-11/2001	“The Russian Avant-Garde”
10/2002	Retrospective Exhibition of Marios Loizidi (Cypriot artist, lived in Greece)
11-12/2002	“Opi Zoyni: Imaginary Environments” (Greek artist)

Source: The archive of the State Gallery

The gallery is currently planning to move its contemporary art collection to a new building, while maintaining its collection predating 1960 in the existing space. In 2005, the works in the storage

space were moved once more at a new building that is being renovated to host Cypriot art after 1960. Unfortunately, this is still considered a temporary solution until a proper State Gallery is built.

Conclusions

Cyprus, as a former colony and with a turbulent history, falls under the category of the “new emerging nation-states” (Aronsson 2011: 47). Museums are employed to construct, reinforce and project specific dominant values and national narratives. Run exclusively by various ministries and the vertical bureaucratic system of decision-making that entails, these museums project a cultural policy that is unavoidably influenced by political situations. Far from being representative of universal values, the museums in both parts of Cyprus focus on their territorial identities and claims. This lack of flexibility does not exist when it comes to private or municipal museums; therefore, these are usually in a better position to offer more balanced and complex narratives.

The fundamental conflicts over the interpretation of history and its presentation in the public sphere echo, in the case of Cyprus, the serious conflicts regarding borders and territorial claims. Archaeology, the discipline that brings a nation closer to its distant roots is used to support claims on the land. The emphasis that the Greek Cypriot government and other bodies place on archaeology (majority of the national museums in South Cyprus) is justified within the discourse of Hellenism and its twin pillars: antiquity and Christianity. These are the national powers invested in the museums of the State, but also in the institutions funded by other bodies, such as the Church and learned societies. The first phase of the history of national museums in Cyprus focuses on archaeology and the promotion of the country’s ancient Hellenic past. Although recent years have seen attempts towards a more balanced presentation of history (see, for instance, the privately run Leventis Municipal Museum of Nicosia), the creation of museums in Cyprus expresses the decision to select and “freeze” moments of the island’s long and turbulent history by placing them into museum settings and thus taking them away from memory and towards official, institutionalized and therefore uncontroversial histories.

The Turkish Cypriot administration places more emphasis on the historical aspect rather than the archaeological one, where there is a disadvantage compared to the Greek Cypriot side. Its main museums focus on aspects of the Ottoman past of the island – claiming, in this sense, their share of it. There is an attempt to justify the separation, by placing emphasis on the impossibility of co-existence between the two communities and the suppression received; simultaneously, and with an eye to the international community and in particular to the European Christian community, both in political and in touristic terms, an effort is made to present an open-minded approach towards the religious “Other”, i.e. the orthodox monuments and the Byzantine cultural heritage. In this sense, the existence of the icon museums itself becomes a political argument and a material proof against allegations that aim to alienate the Turkish Cypriot community from the European community as a political and economic entity.

Cypriot museums bear the difficult task of telling the story of an island from two different angles. On the one hand, there is the Greek Cypriot version focusing on the long-standing Greek presence on the island and the Greek origins of Cypriot civilisation. On the other hand, the Turkish Cypriot version claims their right to be part of an island whose history has been long, heterogeneous and multi-cultural. Unfortunately, these narratives are not usually found in any

one museum. The construction of direct, strong narratives narrated by a state amidst political and cultural conflicts often implies silencing minority voices or voices of opposition to the prevalent narrative. Described as the “silent narrative of public amnesia” (Aronsson 2010:33) this is more apparent in museums that deal directly with conflict such as the case study museums in the second phase presented in this paper. These kinds of national museums become propaganda tools directed towards the young generation (Greek and Turkish Cypriots respectively) since they do not encourage negotiation of history, memory and identity where minorities and opposing choices can be juxtaposed in order to provide a more complex and realistic account of events.

The third phase of the history of national museums is a continuation of the previous two but with a new layer added to it. After 1974, Cyprus is turning to the west for a European future and thus museums such as the State Gallery of Contemporary Art emerge dynamically (at least at first). The State Gallery provides a good example of internal and external conflicts that shape its collection and exhibition program.

In conclusion, museums are entrusted by their creators, either specific individuals or communities, with the double task of building national identity within the communities and of communicating this identity to others, visitors and tourists. However, this is an ongoing narrative, whose ending waits to be seen. And cultural heritage lies at the heart of it.

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Annex table 1

Greek Cypriot Museums

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Cyprus Museum	1909	1882	British Archeologists, Greek Cypriot intellectual elite	State (Antiquities Dept.)	Archaeology	Cyprus Archaeology	Neolithic period to Roman period	New, specially-built, Neo-classical building, 1909. Within the city walls, Nicosia.
Struggle Museum	1962	1961	State, Church, EOKA fighters	State (Cultural Services)	History	Presentation of EOKA struggle (1955-59)/ Commemorative.	1955-1959	The Old Archbishopric was complemented with a new wing, modern construction, 2001, Nicosia.
Paphos District archaeological museum	1966	1936	State	State (Antiquities Dept.)	Archaeology	Archaeological findings found in the area of Paphos.	Prehistory to Roman	Purpose built; modern building, Paphos
Larnaca district archaeological museum	1969	1936	State	State (Antiquities Dept.)	Archaeology	Archaeological findings found in the area of Larnaca.	Prehistory to Roman	New purpose-built; modern, Larnaca
Local archaeological museum of Kourion	1969	1937	State	State (Antiquities Dept.)	Archaeology	Archaeological findings found in the area of Kourion.	Prehistory to Roman	Building of 1930s (re-use), Kourion
Local archaeological museum of Palea Paphos in Kouklia	1970		State	State (Antiquities Dept.)	Archaeology	Archaeological findings found in the area of Kouklia.	Prehistory to Middle Ages	Medieval fortress, Kouklia

Limassol district archaeological museum	1975	1948	State	State (Antiquities Dept.)	Archaeology	Archaeological findings found in the area of Limassol.	Prehistory to 19 th cent.	New (1975) purpose-built; modern, Limassol
Yeroskipou museum of Folk Art	1978		State	State (Antiquities Dept.)	Ethnography/ Folk art	19 th and 20 th c. Cypriot folk art	19 th -20 th c.	18 th century mansion – house museum, Yeroskipou
Katsinioros house in the village of Fikardou	1984?		State	State (Antiquities Dept.)	Ethnography/ Folk art	Furniture. Embroideries, costumes, lacework etc.	19 th -20 th c.	Restored village building, Fikardou
The Hatziyorgakis Kornesios Mansion	1987		State	State (Antiquities Dept.)	Ethnography/ Folk Art	Covers the Byzantine, Medieval and Ottoman periods.	19 th -20 th c.	18 th century mansion – house museum, Nicosia
Limassol medieval museum	1987?		State	State (Antiquities Dept.)	History	History of Cyprus from the 3 rd c. AD until the 18 th c.	Medieval to 18 th c.	Medieval castle, Limassol
Patsalos museum of traditional embroidery and silverwork in Lefkara	1988		State	State (Antiquities Dept.)	Ethnography/ Folk art	Furniture. Embroideries, costumes, lacework etc.	19 th -20 th c.	Local house – house museum, Lefkara
State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art	1990	1962	State, Artists	State (Cultural Services)	Art	20 th c. Cypriot Art	20 th century	Existing neo-classical mansion (dated in 1925). Outside the old city walls, in the modern urban area, Nicosia.

Museum of the Mycenaean Colonisation of Cyprus in Maa	1996		State	State (Antiquities Dept.)	Archaeology	Copies of archaeological artefacts.	Mycenaean	New building; modern, Maa
Archaeological museum of Marion-Arsinoe	1998		State	State (Antiquities Dept.)	Archaeology	Archaeological findings found in the ancient city of Marion.	Prehistory to Roman	New purpose-built, neo-classical facade, Marion-Arsinoe
Larnaca Fort			State	State (Antiquities Dept.)	Archaeology	Archaeological findings from the Byzantine period and 2 photographic exhibitions.	Byzantine period	Castle, Larnaca
Local archaeological museum of ancient Idalion	2007		State	State (Antiquities Dept.)	Archaeology	Archaeological findings found in the area of ancient Idalion.	Neolithic to Roman	New building; purpose built; modern, Idalion

Annex table 2

Turkish Cypriot Museums

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Canbulat's Bastion and Museum	1968		State	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	History	The story of Canbulat/ the Ottoman conquer of Cyprus	16 th -19 th c.	Housed in a bastion of the city's castle, Famagusta.
Lapidary museum	1928	1903	George Jeffrey/ State	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	Architecture	Architectural fragments	Antiquity to Ottoman period	Venetian house; in the centre of the old city, Nicosia.
Museum of Barbarism	1963	1963	Turkish Cypriot Community / then TRNC	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	History	A house documenting a murder	1963 event	House in the middle of the city where the events occurred, Nicosia.
Mevlevi Tekke			State	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	Ethnography/ Folk art	Folk art	16 th cent.	16 th century building, Nicosia.
Dervish Pasha Mansion	1988	1978	State	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	Ethnography	Ottoman artefacts	19 th -20 th cent.	Mansion in the centre of the old city, Nicosia.
Namik Kemal Dungeon and Museum	1993		State	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	History	Celebrates the life of Namik Kemal – a «nationalist» poet and novelist	19 th cent.	Ottoman building, built on the ruins of a Venetian one, Famagusta.
Aghios Ioannis church and Icon museum	After 1974		State	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	Culture/ Art	Byzantine icons	Byzantine period	Byzantine church

St. Barnabas monastery and museum	After 1974		State	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	Archaeology	Cypriot pottery from the Neolithic to the Roman period	Byzantine period	Byzantine monastery
Iskele Icon museum	1991		State	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	Culture/ Art	Byzantine icons	Byzantine period	Church
Archangelos church and icon museum	After 1974		State	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	Culture/ Art	Byzantine icons	Byzantine period	Church
Kyrenia Shipwreck Museum	1976?		Started as an initiative of the Republic of Cyprus / then TRNC	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	Archaeology	Houses a hellenistic shipwreck and archaeological findings	Prehistory to Roman period	Castle of the city, Kyrenia
Decorative Arts Museum		1966	Started as an initiative of the Republic of Cyprus / then TRNC	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	Ethnography/ Folk art	Cypriot Folk Art	19 th -20 th cent.	Colonial villa, Kyrenia
Cypriot Folk Art Museum	1974?		Started as an initiative of the Republic of Cyprus / then TRNC	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	Ethnography/ Folk art	Cypriot Folk Art		Traditional local house – house museum, Kyrenia
Güelyurt Museum of Archaeology and Natural History			State	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	Natural history and archaeology	Natural history and archaeology		Old archbishopric palace, Morphou
St. Mamas Church and Icon Museum	After 1974		State	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	Culture/ Art	Byzantine icons		Church

National Struggle Museum	1989		State/ Military	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museum/ Military)	History	Covers the years 1878-1974	1955-1974	Purpose-built, modern building, inside a military camp, Nicosia
Museum of Peace and Freedom	2010		State/ Military	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museum/ Military)	History	Commemorates Turkish and Turkish Cypriot soldiers who died in 1974	1974 events	Combines an exhibition in a modern building with an open air display and a cemetery; close to where the events took place, Kyrenia
Museum of Fine Arts - online			State	State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums)	Fine Art	Virtual collection of art	Contemporary	Virtual



National Museums in the Czech Republic

Péter Apor

Summary

National museum institutions in Bohemia were formed in two distinct areas: art and sciences. Although the Picture Gallery of the Society of Patriotic Friends and the Patriotic Museum, established in 1796 and 1818 respectively, were the creations of enlightened aristocrats as elitist institutions to improve local taste and civilization, they became crucial in shaping Czech nationalism since the 1830s. As a consequence, historical and archaeological collections began to be built. As Czech society increasingly started to participate in the modernization and industrialization process of late nineteenth century Austria, applied and decorative arts emerged as the unique marks of a distinctively modern Czech national identity. Two museums originally devoted to industrial production illustrate this development, the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures and the Museum of Decorative Arts. Historical identity inseparable of the idea of building a Czechoslovak nation after 1918, began to emerge at the Vítkov Hill monument, which was revitalized after 1989 as a major site of historical exhibitions.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Museum	1818	1796	Aristocracy	Private until 1934, thereafter owned by the state.	Natural History and Science, Archaeology, History, Numismatics	National and Universal	History of civilization	Purpose built (1891). Neo-Renaissance, central location in Prague.
National Gallery	1796	1796	Aristocracy	Private until 1934, thereafter owned by the state.	Art	National and Universal	History of European art	Purposed built, Neo-Renaissance, located downtown Prague.
Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures	1862	1862	Private, business educated middle-classes	Private, until 1932, thereafter state.	Industrial Design, Applied Arts, Global Ethnography	Universal and National	History of civilization	Purpose built historicist, central, location Prague.
Museum of Decorative Arts	1885	1885	Middle-classes	Private foundation, then nationalized.	Applied and Decorative Arts	National and Universal	History of civilization	Purpose built, Neo-Renaissance, 1901, central Prague.
Vítkov Hill Monument	1938	1929	Government	State	Memorial to the WWI Czechoslovak legion	National	20 th c. history	Memorial building (1938), Prague-Zizkov.

Introduction

The Czech National Museum (*Národní muzeum*) is currently the main museum institution of the Czech Republic. The Museum obtained the name 'national' following the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the foundation of the first Czechoslovak Republic after WWI. The origins of the state, which currently hosts the museum as a national institution, is historically connected to the second wave of founding Christian kingdoms in Europe around the year 1000 BC, when feudal monarchies were established in Poland, Hungary and Bohemia. Although, Czech kings in principle accepted feudal subordination to the Holy Roman Emperor, in practice Bohemian rulers acted independently and the Kingdom of Bohemia remained an independent medieval state up until the early sixteenth century. The Habsburg dynasty ascended to the Bohemian throne in 1526-27, which brought the Czech lands into a conglomerate dynastic state consisting of Austrian, Hungarian and Bohemian provinces. Following the defeat in the 30 Year War, in which the Czech aristocracy and political elite fought against the Habsburgs, the Bohemian lands were integrated into a centralized imperial system of governance. Besides, imperial, and mostly German, newcomers loyal to the dynasty replaced the original regional Bohemian aristocracy.

Yet, a regional identity within the Bohemian elite remained strong and, completed by romanticist democratic nationalism, contributed to the shaping of Czech national identity during the first half of the nineteenth century. The Kingdom of Bohemia remained integral to the Austrian part of the Empire subsequent to the 1867 compromise between the dynasty and the Hungarian political elite, which granted large-scale autonomy to Hungary. Although, the Czech political elite developed a program for similar autonomy, the reshaping of the dynastic empire in federal terms was never realized. During WWI, the Czech political class was increasingly attracted to the program of an independent Czechoslovak nation state, which was indeed founded during the peace treaties. The first Czechoslovak Republic was imagined as a 'Czechoslovak' nation state by its elite, however this vision proved to be an illusion by the 1930s when Slovak separatism also increased.

The republic lasted until 1938, when it fell to the aggression of the Third Reich. The re-creation of Czechoslovakia following 1945 ended in the formation of a Communist dictatorship, in which the relationships of Czechs and Slovaks remained troublesome despite the attempt to regenerate Czechoslovakia as a federal state of two nations. Modern Czech national identity was also shaped by the Soviet intervention in 1968 and the emergence of the idea of Central Europe as a distinct historico-geographical region between Western and Eastern Europe cultivated by critical intellectuals in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The fall of Communism brought independence and also the dismantling of the Czech and Slovak common state and the birth of an independent Czech Republic in 1993.

Cultural policy and the concept of the National Museum in Bohemia

The Czech National Museum was founded on April 15th, 1818 by a ceremonial act of the Bohemian Society of the Patriotic Museum. The Society, which consisted of Bohemian aristocrats motivated by the confidence of the Enlightenment in the relevance of art and sciences for the furthering of civilization, was headed by Count Kaspar Maria Sternberg (1761 – 1838),

himself an internationally renowned palaeontologist. Count Sternberg was one among the Bohemian regional aristocrats who cultivated the idea of art and learned societies and also the man to found the Society of the Patriotic Friends of Art in 1796. This society of aristocrats established the Academy of Fine Arts, a training school in arts in 1800. Shaped also by Count Sternberg's personal interest in botany and mineralogy, the Museum originally collected material related to natural history and geology. In this perspective, the Museum was founded as the regional branch of the typical universal Enlightenment museums, however, it also claimed a certain national mission manifested also by its first official name, Patriotic Museum (Vlastenecké muzeum v Čechách): to improve the general conditions of the Fatherland.

Count Franz Anton von Kolowrat-Liebsteinsky (1778–1861), governor of the Bohemian Lands and would-be member of the Austrian State Council responsible for the Interior and Finances supported the idea in Vienna believing that the improvement of culture would divert attention from politics in Bohemia. Endorsed by the Viennese government, the Museum remained the property of the Society of the Patriotic Museum, which actually administered the institution up until 1934.

The elitist concept that considered the Museum an institution of rooting civilized knowledge and manners in a country was gradually replaced by the idea of national museums keeping and forging national identity and culture. Count Sternberg actually donated to the Museum a palace in the castle that was replaced by another in the downtown middle-class area bought by the Society in 1847. Although members of the mostly supra-national imperial aristocracy donated the collections, Czech patriotic intelligentsia with a clear nation-building program performed the actual museum activities.

In Bohemia, the renowned historian, Frantisek Palacky (1798-1876) was crucial in reshaping the vocation of the Patriotic Museum in these terms. Although, the Museum had already undermined the dominance of the upper class in erudition as it promoted universal access for all citizens, Palacky understood its role not only in regional terms, but also in cultural ones as an institution fostering Czech language culture. Since 1825, he had become the first editor of the *Journal of the Patriotic Museum in Bohemia*. Since 1830, he had been a member of the Society of the Patriotic Museum and ten years later, he became the leading person of this institution. An important part of Palacký's program was the consistent nationalization of the museum and marginalization of its aristocratic character by making it openly accessible to broader audiences. Accordingly, in 1827 he suggested founding two parallel museum periodicals: one in German and the other in Czech. Palacky was also strongly involved in the 1831 foundation of *Matice česká* fostering the publication of Czech language, science and literature.

Palacky, the historian, was a member of a generation influenced largely by romanticist ideas of the historical roots of nations that connected cultural identity to the venerable history of statehood manifested most spectacularly by medieval kingdoms. Palacky himself strongly encouraged the collection of historical objects and, indeed, was crucial in founding the historical collections of the museum. The era spanning from the 1830s to the 1840s was, in fact, crucial for the museum's development - during this time it definitely has become a national museum. According to the shift from the universal-regional towards the cultural understanding of the nation, the Museum was renamed the Czech Museum in 1848, in the heights of revolutionary fervour in Prague, a movement Palacky crucially influenced.

This development was not seriously hampered even when, after the defeat of nationalist revolutions in 1848–1849, the most prominent personalities had to leave the museum and it had to be renamed the Museum of the Bohemian Kingdom in 1854. This meant a clear attempt to detach the institution from a cultural and ethnic concept of the nation and to highlight its territorial status. The museum was under constant surveillance of the Austrian bureaucratic apparatus and had to struggle with financial problems. Therefore it was unable to continue its nation-building program and increasingly turned towards scientific activities. Especially in the 1860s, the museum supervised and supported the establishment of a network of regional museums, which contributed to the shaping of local national middle classes and intellectuals. Even if the central museum suffered from serious crisis in the second half of the nineteenth century, it was still regarded as the central institution by (Czech) regional museums.

The museum continued to be one of the most important scholarly institutions in the Czech lands. The Czech elite considered it crucial for pursuing scientific research at an internationally commensurable level and endorsed its further professionalization and expansion. Science remained the core of its collection and exhibition policies, particularly botanic studies and palaeontology. The strong historical legacy of Palacky, however, also helped the improvement of the archaeological collection.

The building in downtown Prague, however, proved to be not only insufficient for housing the expanding collections, but also unable to visually represent national pride related to the concepts of civilization and technical progress. A new and magnificent building started to be planned in 1876 when the Prague City Council offered a sizable piece of land in Venceslav Square. Following a competition, architectural design began in 1883 and construction works in 1885. The new neo-renaissance building of the Museum opened in 1891.

After 1918, the emerging Czechoslovak state inherited the relatively stable and well-developed museum organization of the Czech part of the new republic, especially in comparison to the Slovak part. The main problem the Czechs concerned the National Museum (renamed in 1918), as its mission and a field of activities appeared unclear in the new political context. Since the last third of the nineteenth century, the museum lost its dominant position in Czech culture and scholarship (Charles University in Prague became a more influential centre). Besides, as the imperial Austrian authorities had closely monitored its activities, it could not significantly shape the Czech nationalist movement.

The political elite of the Czechoslovak republic, in general, showed only a minimal interest in the problems of museums, except the National Museum. The state administration was actively participating in its management through representatives of the Ministry of Education and National Culture on the directorial board of the Society of the National Museum. The emerging Czechoslovak nation state considered the Museum in Prague as the central museum of the Czechoslovak nation and tried to manage museums in Slovakia as regional institutions. The government sought to centralize the infrastructure of museums in the Republic and created the Museum Department in the Ministry of Education and National Culture in 1920. However, as museums in the country, including the traditional Bohemian institutions and the emerging Slovak ones were private property, the Ministry had little capacity to influence museum policy.

In 1928, the territory of Czechoslovakia was divided into four “lands” (Bohemia, Moravia-Silesia, Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia). In 1934, the National Museum was taken under the

direct administration of the 'Bohemian Land' and it became the duty of the Land Council to finance the National Museum. The Museum, therefore, virtually became a state property, which solved its financial problems and fostered the professionalization of the museum's activities.

The communist government nationalized the museum in 1949 and a special Museum and Galleries Act of 1959 regulated its mission and activities. In May 1964, the Museum was turned into an organization of five professionally autonomous components: the Museum of Natural Science, the Historical Museum, the Naprstek Museum of Asia, African, and American Cultures, the National Museum Library and the Central Office of Museology. A sixth autonomous unit, the Museum of Czech Music, was established in 1976.

Currently, the Czech National Museum manifests itself as a genuine institution whose primary purpose is to contribute to nation building efforts. As director Michal Lukeš puts it in the 2009 annual report of the Museum, its "mission is to contribute to the formation of national identity". The Museum, however, does not equate this mission with the production of abstract cultural meanings. On the contrary, it sees itself a truly important social institution: one that creates communities by providing meeting places and invites visitors to learn and have fun. The Museum seeks to fulfil this mission through a variety of permanent and temporal exhibitions, but also by publishing activity and lecture series and by organising teaching programs and broader cultural events.

The National Museum currently consists of five thematic museum institutions - the Museum of Natural Sciences, the Historical Museum, the Library of the National Museum, the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures (part of the National Museum since 1932), the Czech Museum of Music (part of the National Museum since 1984) and two technical and administrative departments – the Department of Economic Management and the Department of Central Exhibiting and Collecting Work. The National Museum collects material concerning natural history, archaeological objects of prehistory and history, ethnography, numismatics, history of theatre, history of physical education and sport, prehistory and ancient history of the Near East and Africa, and non-European ethnography, particularly Asian culture.

The Department of Prehistory and Protohistory contains a rich collection of pre-historical artefacts, however its main assets are objects of Greek and Roman arts and crafts. Among its most appreciated objects are a painted dish of Nikosthenes, a glass bottle from the port of Puteolo, and a gilded silver rhyton. The Department of Classical Archaeology collects and displays objects of medieval history with a focus on Czech and, in certain cases, Slovak territories. Its activities are concentrated on constructing a great narrative on Czech historical glory by highlighting objects commemorating canonical Czech historical persons, particularly those related to the core of Czech historical national identity, the Hussite movement of the fifteenth century (a significant proportion of the medieval collection is dedicated to the weapons used by Hussite warriors). Besides, objects are employed to represent the progressive narrative of civilization. Exhibitions concentrate on spectacular masterpieces of high culture such as a silver tiara from the twelfth century; Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque jewellery; the reliquary of St. Eligius; or Bohemian porcelain and glass from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The Department of Ethnography collects the material culture of Czech and European rural societies. Yet, the focus of the department is on Slavic peoples, associating Czech cultural identity to ethnic Slavic heritage and components. The core of the ethnographic collection derives from

the late nineteenth century and exhibitions therefore, could highlight the transformation of traditional Czech society into an increasingly urbanized modern milieu, a core component of Czech national identity that claims a distinct position for itself among the allegedly dominant rural East-Central European nations.

The Department of Numismatics is based on the original donation of Count Sternberg. Currently, its ambitions are to complete a collection of coins that were used and are still in use in the territory of the Czech Republic. Although, the department possesses a large quantity of 'foreign' coins, its territorial focus clearly marks the intention to 'nationalize' the history of the Czech lands by representing a continuous historical trajectory from antiquity up to the present. The Department of Theatre, originally a part of the National Museum Library, was created as a separate entity in 1930. It highlights the lively theatre and opera scene of Prague commensurable to that of Vienna since the eighteenth century and thus connects Czech identity to instances of a sophisticated high culture and the 'Golden Age' of the Habsburg Empire.

The National Gallery (Narodni galerie)

Arguably, the first national gallery in the Bohemian Kingdom was founded on February 5th, 1796. The Society of Patriotic Friends of Art, the group of enlightened aristocrats of the kingdom that also initiated the National Museum, established the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague. In addition, they also decided to open their collections of pictures to the broader public and founded the Picture Gallery of the Society of Patriotic Friends of Art, which is the direct predecessor of the current National Gallery. These aristocrats had a clear, even if somewhat elitist, nation-building agenda: to 'elevate the deteriorated taste of the local public', as the Society formulated its intention. The improvement of a sophisticated artistic taste in Czech lands was, and still is the mission both the staff and directorate of the Museum maintains. The original Picture Gallery displaying works of art produced before the end of the eighteenth century was completed by a collection from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in 1902, when Emperor Franz Joseph I founded the Modern Gallery in Prague.

Following the creation of the Czechoslovak nation state, the two complementary galleries became the central institution of art in the republic obtaining, thus, a manifestly national status of collecting and displaying works of art. In 1949, the two collections were nationalized by the new Communist state as the National Gallery.

In general, the Gallery has two complementary missions concerning national identity. On the one hand, it focuses on what is generally considered the height of Czech national arts: the building of a collection of Czech cubism highlighted by *Don Quixote* by Otto Gutfreund, *Military Funeral* by Vincenc Benes and an array of paintings by František Kupka. Besides, the Gallery also aims at creating a representative collection of Czech and Slovak artists. On the other hand, the museum intends to develop into an institution of national pride as an internationally renowned collection of extraordinary works of art. In addition to icons of European modernism such as Picasso, Rodin, Gauguin, Cezanne, Monet, Van Gogh and Renoir, the Gallery is an important museum of Viennese fin-de-siècle painting, notably Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele.

Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American cultures

The museum was founded by Vojta Náprstek, a renowned cultural figure in late nineteenth century Prague as a museum of industry in 1862. Náprstek considered his institution an

important site of documenting the technology of contemporary industrial production as well as fostering the development of new technologies. It was a completely private institution established by its founder's collections from the 1862 London World Exhibition and displayed in his house. Náprstek transformed his institution from a museum that merely recorded practices of the past into a thriving centre of emerging industrialists, inventors and cultural elite. The museum, hence, contributed to the shaping of a modern Czech middle-class and also of a modernist national identity by commemorating the achievements of national industry.

This networking role of the museum laid the grounds for the ethnographic collections as visitors to Náprstek house regularly donated collections from their study trips in far away countries. In 1932, the Land of Bohemia took over the administration of the museum, transported its collections to special museum departments in Prague except for the ethnographic material, which was used to form the basis of a new museum, the Náprstek Museum of General Ethnography. This Museum was incorporated into the National Museum as a special autonomous institution following WWII. In 1962, it acquired its current name Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures.

Museum of Decorative Arts

The Museum of Decorative Arts was founded in 1885, motivated by the idea of the corruption and degeneration of everyday taste and aesthetics that industrialization was believed to trigger. In this respect, the Prague museum was a counterpart of many similar museum initiatives in Europe. In fact, the South Kensington Museum in London (the current Victoria and Albert Museum), and more importantly the Viennese Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und Industrie meant direct stimuli for the Czech collections. Vojtěch Lanna, the most prolific donor and sponsor of the institution, was greatly impressed by decorative and applied arts exhibited at the Paris World Exhibition in 1867, which was the experience that led him to establish his own collections. Besides the obvious transnational context of the Museum, the founders had a clear national agenda as well. On the one hand, the idea of the Museum was to improve the taste and style of industrial design in the Czech lands following the model of nations believed to be more advanced at that period, particularly, Britain, France and Austria. On the other hand, the museum also aimed at demonstrating the creative spirit and sophisticated taste of Bohemian industrial design and developing a unique Czech style. The museum, thus, was shaped by the objective to construct a national identity reflecting the modern conditions of urbanization and industrialization discernible both for desired Czech citizens and foreigners.

The Museum of Decorative Arts obtained its current building in 1901, designed by Josef Schulz, the architect of the National Museum main building, in a similar neo-renaissance style. The building itself is appreciated as a work of art, reflecting the confidence in the educational capacity of good design. This is a purpose that the Museum currently also subscribes to. It manifests a mission to demonstrate the possibility of creating harmony between function, quality and beauty and to exhibit objects providing inspiration to follow the example in an entertaining mode. The Museum, thus, has a nation-building function in the contemporary global world: it is able to demonstrate the Czech nation as integrated among the nations of modern urban civilization and also the capacity of this nation to meet the challenges of the rapid transformations of contemporary cultures and societies.

The Vítkov Hill Monument

The Vítkov Hill Monument was constructed as the core component of the new post-1918 Czechoslovak national identity. The memorial, which was built over ten years between 1929 and 1938, was officially called the 'National Revival Memorial'. This, and the fact that it was meant to commemorate the deeds of the Czechoslovak legion fighting against the Central Powers in WWI, elucidates that 1918 was considered by the new elite as the resurrection of the long dormant, but truly existing Czechoslovak nation. Yet, as the memorial was completed, with a huge equestrian statue of fifteenth century Czech Hussite general, Jan Žižka who defeated Crusader anti-Hussite troops here in 1420, it soon became the symbol of a particularly distinct Czech national identity. The Germans were well aware of this fact and turned the memorial into a storage of weaponry during the occupation years, from 1939-1945. The post-war Communist dictatorship abused the cultural and ideological potential of the memorial and tried to establish the claim of the Communist Party as a national political force by connecting the memory of the chief party leader, Klement Gottwald with the implications of the history of the Hussite wars: Gottwald's mausoleum was situated within the memorial between 1953 and 1962 and further Communist leaders were also buried here.

After 1989, the Communists were gone, but Žižka remained the core symbol of the post-communist Czech national identity emphasizing a long-term historical legacy of democracy and equality. Members of the Czechoslovak legion were also kept inside the memorial thus making the focus on Czech statehood and national independence clear. Remarkably, the refurbished memorial was turned into a space for exhibitions. The major exhibition on modern Czech and Slovak history, 'Crossroads of Czech and Czechoslovak Statehood in the 20th Century' was installed here in 2009-10. The exhibition discovered five milestones of this history: 1918: the foundation of the Czechoslovak Republic; 1938-1939: the end of the first Republic and the Munich Agreement; 1948: the Communist takeover (coup d'état in the terminology of the curators); 1968: the Prague Spring reform movement and the creation of the new federal state; 1989-1992: the Fall of Communism and the birth of the two new independent republics.

The exhibition ignores aspects of social history such as social transformations, the mentality of various classes and their relationships to political changes or opportunities for adaptation to the socialist dictatorship and also other possible milestones like 1945, the expulsion of German occupation armies and subsequently indigenous ethnic German inhabitants from Czechoslovakia. As a consequence, the exhibition simply reproduces the myth of Czech(oslovak) national history as the democratic island founded by Masaryk, fought against and oppressed by two dictatorial foreign powers and eventually liberated and re-created by the new post-Communist democratic republic(s). Accordingly, the exhibition neglects the troublesome occurrences of the Holocaust and the extermination of Czech Roma tolerated or even supported by groups from domestic society.

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National museums in Denmark

Henrik Zipsane

Summary

From royal and private collections at the beginning of the 19th Century, the monarchy established what would become the two main national museums in the country – one for art *Statens Museum for Kunst* (The State Art Museum) and one for archaeology, ethnology, ethnography and history *Nationalmuseet* (The National Museum). No doubt the archaeology museum was, from the very beginning, significant in creating a historically founded Danish nationalism that can be detected in the composition and priorities of the national museums. A young democratic Denmark continued on the same path and established a series of regional satellites. Then, in the last quarter of the 19th Century, we see two private initiatives which both aimed to reach the people with feelings of Danish nationalism. One, by establishing a national picture gallery, may be seen as coming from the right *Det Nationalhistoriske Museum på Frederiksborg Slot* (The National Historical Museum at Frederiksborg Castle) and one, by establishing a folk museum including an open air museum after Swedish inspiration, may be seen as coming from the left - *Dansk Folkemuseum* (The Danish Popular History Museum). A few decades into the 20th Century, the later of these initiatives was incorporated into *Nationalmuseet* (The National Museum).

Besides the establishing of several aspect or disciplinary museums during the 20th Century, museum history in Denmark seems to have been relatively calm with only a few disturbances created by the establishing of independent national or semi-national museums among the former colonies in the North Atlantic. That development also seems to have gone from a case with Iceland that was not altogether easy to a more harmonious case with the Faroe Islands. Finally it went on to the successful role model case with the establishing of a national museum in Greenland. However one way to interpret the isolated hot-tempered debate regarding the transfer of early medieval Icelandic manuscripts in the 1960s from Copenhagen to Reykjavik is the traditional popular mythological relation of the stories told in the manuscripts to the special role of archaeology and especially Viking age archaeology in Denmark since the early 19th Century. Taking away the manuscripts from Danish soil was, for nationalistic forces, like amputating the roots of Danish national identity.

Government control of the national museums in Denmark seems to have made museum development relatively harmonious whilst discussions about collections or special artefacts like the Icelandic early medieval manuscripts and the Danish victory lion in Isted have been placed outside the professional museum world since the private right wing and left wing national museum initiatives in the later part of the 19th Century.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Museum <i>Nationalmuseet</i> (NM)	1819, 1892, 1929-36 1989-92 (major changes)	1807	King, Aristocracy and Civil Society	State	Archaeology, Cultural History, Ethnography	Territorial, ethno-national and universal	Stone Age to contemporary society	Baroque palace in central Copenhagen.
The National Gallery of Denmark <i>Statens Museum for Kunst</i> (SMK)	1827, 1896 1969- 70 1992-96 (extensions)	1754	King, Aristocracy, civil society	State	Danish and Western European classical art	Primarily territorial	1500-1900	Neo-classical building, in central Copenhagen.
The Museum of National History <i>Det nationalhistoriske museum</i> (NHM)	1882	1878	Private initiative by capitalist and industrial elite, endorsed by parliament.	Private foundation	Art (portraits merited citizens moments history)	Territorial	1500 to contemporary society	Re-built renaissance castle, North of Copenhagen.
The Danish Folk Museum <i>The Open Air Museum, Dansk Folkemusuem, Frilandsmuseet</i> (DF)	1886 1920	1879 1901	Private initiative by academic and radical elite in Copenhagen, support from capitalist establishment, endorsed by parliament.	Private under state control, later state owned	Cultural history (popular history in 17 th to 19 th c.). Agricultural Denmark with houses from lost territories.	Territorial	1700-1900	Rural houses originally in central Copenhagen. Moved north of the capital (1901).

Introduction: The roots

The primary roots of national museums in Denmark – meaning creating collections intended to reflect national history for the public and by that creating a sense of national collective memory – is found in *Det kongelige kunstkammer* (The Royal Chamber of Art, hereafter DKK) established during the 17th Century. This royal collection of both natural, cultural and art objects was a result of both collecting on behalf of, and donations to, the king and even absorbing different private collections from noble men and academics. Even noble collections from defeated princes were merged into DKK as was the case in 1751 when the vast collections from Gottorp Castle in Slesvig was made a part of the Danish royal collections.

During the last decades of the 18th Century and the first decades of the 19th Century, parts of DKK were removed to form their own collections. That was the case for the collection of coins, the collection of natural history and even most of the art collection. The latter seems to have primarily consisted of portraits at that time. None of these collections were museums in the modern sense as they were primarily intended for scientific use and as memorabilia by royal decision. The collections had no popular educative purpose before the end of the Napoleonic wars. The collections were considered private and were status symbols for the princes who had created them or conquered them.

With the loss of Norway in 1814, the need to shape ‘Danishness’ grew and this tendency became even stronger after the loss of the German speaking provinces of Sleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg in 1864. During the 19th Century, a system was established with four museums in Denmark who could all claim to be national museums as their collections reflected national history and they had a public educative purpose. They all claimed to exhibit the history of Denmark and/or the Danish people. Their more or less official task would be to contribute to national pride and to foster nationalism in citizens (Feldbæk 1991-1992).

The very different periods of foundations: 1819-1827 and 1878-1885

Nationalmuseet

First out was what would become *Nationalmuseet* (The National Museum, hereafter NM). In 1807, the Danish king created a special commission – *Den kongelige Kommission til Oldsagers Opbevaring* (The Royal Commission for Ancient Collections Preservation) – to provide an overview of the collections and the cultural environment in the kingdom which reflected its ancient past. The Commission and its enthusiastic and effective secretary Christian Jürgensen Thomsen took the initiative to create and open *Oldnordisk Museum* (The Nordic Ancient Museum, hereafter OM) in 1819 in the Trinitatis Church in Copenhagen. The museum was open to the public and Mr Thomsen created a system in the archaeological collections with focus on material that actually became a governing principle in Nordic archaeology for generations and his systematic approach to archaeology even made its mark internationally. It would probably be accurate to say that the success of Christian Jürgensen Thomsen’s invention of the archaeological three period system, based on the material of the findings, provided an important background on the sustainability of the archaeological field as the basis for a narrative on the roots of the Danes. Thereby it became the ammunition for Danish nationalism. To a large extent we owe to Mr Thomsen for

archaeology becoming the primary tool from the past during the first waves of Danish nationalism.

It is significant that the establishing of a museum for ancient history was carried out at the same time as different commissions from 1821 onwards were working on proposals on what to do with the rest of the collections in DKK. In 1832, the collections of the OM were transferred to better premises at Christiansborg Castle in Copenhagen and Mr Thomsen even got responsibility for what was then remaining of the collections in DKK. The collections from personal belongings of the kings of Denmark were gathered at the small Rosenborg Castle in Copenhagen and the large natural collections were made into a natural museum. The paintings were made into a museum of their own – see below.

By the Danish constitution of 1849, a distinction was made between the private royal and the publicly owned collections and it was decided that the publicly owned collections should be given permanent residence in *Prindsens palais* (The Palais of the Prince) which is located near the Christiansborg Castle and is still the main premises of the museum. In 1892, the museum got its present name *Nationalmuseet* (NM) as it absorbed other smaller collections such as ethnographic as well as coin and medal collections (Mordhorst 2003 & Rasmussen 1979).

NM has, since the beginning, been situated in the *Prindsens palais* in the middle of Copenhagen. The building was built for the royal family between 1743-1744 as home for the crown prince – later Frederik the Fifth. In 1849, it was transferred to the new Danish State after the abolition of absolutism the year before. It had also been used for many different things, over the next decades, among them some museum exhibitions, before it finally became home to the new NM in 1892. Twice there have been major reconstructions. The first time was in 1929-1936 where several complementary buildings were created when the original garden of the royal home was included in the building and the second time in 1989-1992 where the area for exhibitions was made much larger. The roots in the old royal town house are however, visible in several areas of the NM.

Statens Museum for Kunst

The collections of paintings in RCA from 1827 formed the new museum called *Det Kongelige Billedgalleri* (The Royal Picture Gallery, hereafter DKB) that was open to the public as was the case with OM a few years before. Unlike other parts of the old royal Chamber, the picture gallery had, from the middle of the 18th Century, established a major collection of paintings from other parts of Europe. Paintings on order from the king were bought in Europe from Italian, Dutch and German schools. The acquisition of the collections from Gottorp Castle in Slesvig even brought in a major, mainly German collection of paintings.

The 19th Century saw the development of high quality art in Denmark. The result of the establishment of artist education professionalization in the middle of the 18th Century in Copenhagen by *Det Kongelige Danske Kunstakademi* (The Royal Danish Art Academy); this development was recognized by the DKB why the collections of Danish contemporary art was a major task during the whole 19th Century.

The museum was, from the beginning, housed in Christiansborg Castle and the collections were rescued from the great fire of that castle in 1884. A new building of impressive monumental

style stood ready in 1896 and the museum was reopened under its modern name *Statens Museum for Kunst* (The State Art Museum, hereafter SMK) (Rasmussen 1979).

The museum building was constructed between 1889-1896 on what was then part of the new area in Copenhagen. It was, at the time, the first building in Denmark created and built for museum use without being a reconstruction of an earlier building. Italian renaissance inspired the architect.

Already in the 1920s there were several plans for an extension of the building but it was in 1969-1970 that the government finally reconstructed the interior of the building to make room for larger exhibitions and the fast growing collections. Between 1992-1998, a new modernist building was erected and connected to the original renaissance building in order to create more room, especially for sculptures.

Det Nationalhistoriske Museum på Frederiksborg Slot

By accident, the royal renaissance castle Frederiksborg burned down in 1859. Only the castle church and a reception house were rescued. Many saw this catastrophe as a tragedy and a national collect of contributions was successful in helping to rebuild the castle.

With private donations as well as contributions from the government and the king, it was possible to rebuild the castle and already in 1865 – just one year after the Danish defeat in The Second Slesvig War and the reduction of the kingdom to a minor marginalized European state – the Frederiksborg castle was rebuilt and considered ready for interior design. The plan from the beginning of the national collection process had been to re-establish the castle for royal use but since then the old king had died, the new king was not as popular and the country was in a severe economic situation after the war. The government would not invest in a new royal home.

The old castle had a major private royal collection of paintings, among other things, but only some 300 paintings had been rescued so there were grounds for claiming that a major part of national heritage had been lost.

One of the more potent industrialists in Denmark during this pioneer period of Danish industrialization was brewer and founder of Carlsberg, I. C. Jacobsen. He was interested in history and saw the need to create a reference frame for popular understanding of the importance of the situations that were of major – and mainly political – importance in national history. The brewer managed to gather interest and moral support for his project from the capitalist and industrial elite in the country but it was important for him that the project, as such, got associated with his name as it suited his ambitions in regard to positioning in society. Mr Jacobsen was inspired by what he had seen at Versailles in France and he thus proposed to the government that a national history museum be established at Frederiksborg Castle. He also declared that he would donate the money necessary for the establishment of the museum. The proposal was approved and, in 1878, the museum was formally established and, in 1882, it was opened to the public under the name *Det Nationalhistoriske Museum på Frederiksborg Slot* (The National Historical Museum at Frederiksborg Castle, hereafter NHM). The museum was organized as a special branch of the Carlsberg Foundation and remains so to this day (Rasmussen 1979).

Dansk Folkemuseum

When the former art director at Tivoli and present director of Panoptikon in Copenhagen Bernhard Olsen visited the World Exhibition in Paris in 1878, he experienced the three

dimensional way in which Arthur Hazelius, the founder of *Skandinavisk Etnografisk Museum* in Stockholm (later renamed *Nordiska Museet*) showed full scale vivid glimpses of Swedish popular history. Bernhard Olsen wanted to do something similar in Denmark and in the following year, 1879, he succeeded in creating something similar at an exhibition on traditional crafts hosted by the Danish Industrial Association and others in Copenhagen. The interest for this way of exhibiting cultural history was immense and in the next five years a committee with Bernhard Olsen as the driving force collected funds nationwide to create the basis for a new popular museum. In 1885, *Dansk Folkemuseum* (The Danish Popular History Museum, hereafter DF) opened in Copenhagen with several full-scale interior exhibitions of note especially that of rural popular cultural history from the 17th and 18th Century and that of craftsmen. Mr Olsen, in many ways, represented the new academic and bourgeois radical elite in Copenhagen that, shortly after the national tragedy of territorial loss to the Austrians and Prussians in 1864, saw Danish nationality closely connected to its agricultural past before modernisation began from 1869 onwards. In that respect, Mr Olsen's initiative was in practical opposition to the heritage brought about by Mr Thomsen, the founder of what became NM in the early 19th century and who had put an emphasis on the archaeological past.

Already during the primary collecting and preparatory period before the opening, the committee had some financial support from the government. Just a year after the opening, a division of labour between DF and OM (later NM) was negotiated which, in reality, ordered that DM should concentrate on cultural history between 1660 -1849 – the epoch of Danish absolutism. According to the same agreement, the new museum would get governmental support via yearly grants. In reality, the museum was made public but strived to have its own leadership and governing structure while the private committee would continue as a board and Bernhard Olsen himself would be the director of the museum.

Following his role model in Stockholm, Bernhard Olsen also wanted to create not only full-scale interiors but also environments with full-scale houses and the documentation and collecting of such houses began immediately. In 1896, DF was able to show the first houses erected in a corner of Rosenborg Castle garden in central Copenhagen. There was, however, no political will to let the Open Air Museum grow at this location and in 1901 the collection of houses was placed in what was called *Frilandsmuseet* in Kgs. Lyngby just north of Copenhagen. Both indoor exhibitions still in Copenhagen at the former Panoptikan building and the Open Air Museum were loyal to the period which DF was supposed to exhibit and therefore, houses and interiors collected in long lost southern Sweden (under the Danish crown until 1658), Norway (under the Danish crown until 1814) and from Sleswig-Holstein (under the Danish crown until 1864), were shown.

In 1920, when Bernhard Olsen retired, DF, including the Open Air Museum, was incorporated into NM as a special department and the private committee ended its work (Christiansen 2000 & Rasmussen 1979).

The establishment of national museums in Denmark is characterized by initiatives early in the 19th Century and a new museum surge in the later quarter of the same century. The first period is marked by an attempt to bring order to the chaos of the royal collections and at the same time make them publicly accessible. In this work especially, the establishment of OM with its connection to initiatives to preserve ancient traces in the landscape of Denmark made an impact

on the visualization of national characterization in Denmark. The intense period just before and after 1880 saw two very different private initiatives with the establishing of NHM and DF. Both initiatives were born from the loss in the war of 1864 and both had the ambition to stimulate national identity but used different methods and furthermore, got the arsenal for such an effort from different places. For NHM, the main method was to exhibit paintings that showed important moments in the narrative of national history. For DF, the method was to exhibit everyday life for common people who could be proud of their life and their efforts to survive and develop the country.

In between the period of government initiatives for national museums from 1819-1827 and the private initiatives for national museums from 1878-1885, we can actually find an initiative that demonstrates how the whole idea of the national museum was being communicated to the population through the establishment of a large provincial museum in each of the Danish dioceses. These could be the regional storerooms and exhibitions for OM. The initiative seems to go hand in hand with the spirit of the first Danish constitution of 1849 and the ambition of getting the nation state visible in all parts of the country. The initiative came from the central administration and was passed through the young parliament. During a very short period of time, diocese museums were established in Ribe (1855), Odense and Århus (1860), Viborg (1861), Aalborg (1863), Randers (1872) and finally Maribo (1879). After this effort of spreading the sense of the national museum throughout almost all dioceses, this development stopped relatively abruptly. The reason for that can probably be found in the new centralistic policy from the national museum (Rasmussen, 1979). The issue of these provincial museums has however never really been researched.

Both NM and SMK, with beginnings in 1819 and 1827 respectively, grew out of OM during the absolute rule of a relatively large kingdom in Northern Europe. They formed in 1892 and 1896 respectively using their present day institutional names when, for little more than a generation, democratic rule of law had been the case in one of the smallest national states in Europe. This young democratic nation state tried, through provincial satellite museums, to engage the public nationwide. This was possibly realized as a top-bottom and academic initiative which therefore paved the way for private right and left initiatives such as NHM and DF. Also possible is that the final structuring of NM and SMK in the 1890s should be seen as a response to the private initiatives. The critical position at what became the NM, toward both provincial museums and DF, is well known. In the end, NM got control of the situation and took over DF in 1925.

The aspect or disciplinary national museums in Denmark

During the 18-1900s, a number of specialized museums were established and the character of their collections or of their theme one of these has defined each museum. Even though the collections or themes intend to cover Denmark, the museums themselves are dominated by their specific collections or theme and have no formal intention of creating a sense of national belonging for the public.

The first such specialized national museums in Denmark were *Det Kongelige Naturhistoriske Museum* (The Royal Natural Museum) and *De Danske Kongers Kronologiske Samling* (The Danish

Kings Chronological Collections) both established in 1821 and *Den Historiske Våbensamling* (The Historical Collection of Amour) established in 1838.

The next expansion of specialized national museums came with *Danmarks Fiskerimuseum* (Fishery Museum of Denmark) founded in 1888 and *Dansk Landbrugsmuseum* (The Danish Agricultural Museum) founded in 1889. The last museum in the first wave of specialized national museums founded in Denmark was *Det Danske Kunstindustrimuseum* (The Danish Museum of Decorative Art) in 1890.

Where the first of these museums established in 1821-1838 all had their roots in DKK from the 16-1700s, the royal private collections as well as all the museums founded in 1888-1890 came into being on an initiative from national organizations of stakeholders. Each of these organisations could be found in the spheres covered by the museum's thematic collections. The private character of the museums did not exclude financial support from the government. This development is quite similar to the development seen above for the real national museums and even the timing is interesting since the private initiatives for national museums came in 1878-1885. Furthermore, the first wave of private initiatives for specialized aspect national museums came shortly afterwards in 1888-1890 and was branch-initiated; whereas the roots of the private initiatives for national museums can be characterized as bourgeois industrialist and bourgeois academic.

The founding of specialized aspect museums with ambitions of national coverage in their collections and narrative has continued. The following is a list of such foundations but it is probably not complete as there exists museums with very special collections amassing everything from clocks or radio receivers to aeroplanes and posters, all of which claim to be "The Danish Museum of", however, they are not officially registered.

- *Musikhistorisk Museum* (Music Historical Museum) - founded in 1898 by an association of individual enthusiasts.
- *Medicin-Historisk Museum* (Medical Historical Museum) - founded in 1907 by the Copenhagen University – in modern time re-named *Medicinsk Museum*.
- *Dansk Postmuseum* (Danish Post Museum) - founded in 1907 on the basis of a major private collection. The museum was established by the government agency for postal service that today also runs and governs the museum. In 1931, the museum changed its name to *Dansk Post og Telegrafmuseet* because of the governmental merging of two agencies. Furthermore, in connection with a modernisation of the museum in 2004 its name changed to *Post & Tele Museum*. The agency was formally privatized and changed into a registered company in modern times.
- *Den gamle By – Danmarks Købstadsmuseum* (The Old Town – The Urban Museum of Denmark) - founded in 1909 on a private initiative in connection with a national exhibition on urban life. The museum remains private but is recognized by the government.
- *Danmarks Tekniske Museum* (The Danish Technical Museum) - founded in 1911 by the Danish Association of Industrialists. The museum remains private but is recognized by the government.

- *Dansk Jernbanemuseum* (Danish Railway Museum) - founded in 1928 by the government agency for railroad service and is still governed by that agency which has been formally privatized and changed into a registered company in modern times.
- *Gilleleje Museum* - founded in 1929 as both a local museum and a national fishery museum because of vast collections in this area. The museum was founded by a local history association. That association still governs the museum and it is even recognized by the government.
- *Handels- og Søfartsmuseum* (The Maritime Museum) - founded in 1931. It was created by and is, even today, still largely run by the maritime branch but recognized by the government.
- *Jagt og Skovbrugsmuseet* (Hunting and Forest Museum) - founded in 1942 by the government and is still solely run by the government.
- *Dansk Pressemuseum og Arkiv* (Danish Media Museum and Archive) - founded in 1955 by an association primarily composed of the media sector. The museum changed its name to *Danmarks Mediemuseum* (Media Museum of Denmark) in 2003.
- *Orlogsmuseet* (The Navy Museum) - founded in 1957 by the navy. In 2004 it merged with *Tøjhusmuseet* formerly called *Den Kongelige Våbensamling* (The Royal Collection of Armour) and is still governed by the government.
- *Dansk Fiskeri- og Søfartsmuseum* (The Danish Fishery and Maritime Museum) - founded in 1962 on a private local initiative and is still governed locally but recognized by the government
- *Arbejdermuseet* (The Working Class Museum) - founded in 1983 by the Labour Unions. They still govern it but the government recognizes it. In 2004, the museum merged with *Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv* (The Labour Movements Library and Archive).
- *Kvindemuseet* (The Womens Museum) - founded in 1984 by an association of enthusiasts that still govern the museum but the government recognizes it.
- *Immigrantmuseet* - founded in 1995 as part of a locally-governed museum but it is recognized by the government

The list uncovers some characteristics. First of all, the driving force of establishing more museums with national coverage has not been so much by the government as it has by local or branch forces. Secondly, there has been some local competition where at least three localities have founded fishery or maritime museums with national or at least semi-national aspirations. That also reflects the development of some border conflicts between the parallel founding of many local museums and the national museums, especially that of the aspect national museums. From time to time a local museum has a self-imposed national responsibility for an aspect of history or a special type of object. In the list above, such developments and even some frictions are seen in the initiatives in Gilleleje with a fishery theme early in the 20th Century and in Farum at the end of that century with an immigration theme.

The separatist national museums within the Danish kingdom

The three northern Atlantic territories of Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Greenland have all developed semi-national or national museums as more or less integrated parts of the process by which they have created their own national identity that is clearly separated from Denmark and a Danish national identity. It is naturally very difficult to see the construction of separate national identities of the northern Atlantic territories separated from the construction and development of the Danish national identity. Furthermore, it may also be disputable whether or not development in this sphere for each of the territories has brought influence from one to another.

Iceland

For Iceland, a parliament was established with an advisory role in 1845 and that may be perceived as a starting point for an Icelandic separatist movement. Almost one hundred years later, in 1944, separation from Denmark was completed. The formation of a national museum in Iceland was closely related to this development. In 1851, the Danish government allowed for a special assembly to be called in Iceland for discussions about the constitutional future of Iceland. The timing, from the point of view of the Danish government, could have been better as the First Slesvig War had just been brought to an end – a war which, at its core, was not only about independence for the mostly German speaking duchies under the Danish crown but was also about the spread of parliamentary democracy. As Icelandic representatives went too far - for Danish tastes - with their aspirations for independence, the government in Copenhagen sent the assembly home and the first real attempt to find common ground in the discussions ended.

One initiative coming from this early unfortunate and confrontational development was the founding of a national museum for Iceland in 1863 that took place on a private initiative from the painter Sigurður Guðmundsson. The name of the museum was *Þjóðminjasafn Íslands* that can best be translated as “The Memory Collections of Iceland”.

After full independence in 1944, the museum functioned like a national museum in all archaeological, cultural history and art history aspects. The hot-tempered discussions in the 1960s about the return of the early 13th Century Icelandic Saga manuscripts from Denmark were formally an archive or library dispute and did not involve the museum but were probably symbolic in relation to the heritage shared between the former colony and Denmark in the first decades after the separation. It is, however, important to also mention that the collaboration between the young national museum in Iceland and NM in Copenhagen has been very dynamic and open. Major parts of the Icelandic collections in Copenhagen are now deposited in the national museum in Reykjavik.

The Faroe Islands

Føroya Forngrípagoymsla (The Faroe Historical Collections) - founded in 1898 and was the result of an initiative by writer and political nationalist Jóannes Patursson in 1890 with direct inspiration from an important meeting about the preservation of Faroe cultural heritage just before Christmas in 1888.

It was, from the beginning, a private museum depending on the volunteer work of a few people. In 1916, a historical society for Faroe history was founded and this association took some responsibility for the museum. It was, however, still difficult to get enough resources to carry out

the normal activities for this museum. In the 1940s, a bond between a Faroe historian with special interest in Viking history – Sverri Dahl – and the museum was established with a special focus on the Viking era that became equally important for the museum and the characteristics of Faroe collective cultural historical identity.

During the 2nd World War, the Faroe Islands were occupied by British troops while German forces occupied Denmark. After the war, it was clear to both the locals and the Danish Government that restoration of a county governing arrangement was not what the Faroe islanders really wanted. The proposal, with a solution from the Danish government, was not satisfying to the Faroe negotiators and in 1946, the local parliament held a referendum on the Faroe Islands accepting the Danish ‘offer’ or seeking independence. The referendum resulted in a majority voting for independence but the Danish government immediately abandoned the parliament. New negotiations led to legislation for the Faroe Islands with some degree of home rule beginning in 1948.

It was in the atmosphere of the aftermath of this development that the Faroe parliament, in 1952, decided that the *Føroya Forngrípagoymsla* (The Faroe Historical Collections) should officially be renamed *Føroya Fornminnisavn* (The Faroe Historical Museum). The status, in modern times, is undisputedly that of a semi-national museum for the Faroe Islands. The staff know it and the Faroe Islands local government and parliament know it and it is symbolic that, in recent times, the address of the museum homepage has become: www.natmus.fo.

Grønland

In Greenland, it took longer than in the other northern Atlantic territories to gather enough interest and support for constructing a national identity and the need for a semi-national museum. A reason for that may be found in the composition of the inhabitants in Greenland. With a relatively large number of the inhabitants being first or second generation immigrants from Denmark, often these people held much higher regard for social and cultural capital. During most of the 20th Century, it has not been in the interest of this group to challenge the question of national identity.

Greenland was officially a Danish colony up until 1953 when Greenland was transformed into a County. In 1979, this status was replaced by legislation much like the one for the Faroe Islands regarding home rule. Development in Greenland was in many ways considered at least 30-40 years behind. That also goes for engagement in the heritage and identity of the people in Greenland that may be seen as having been even further behind that of Iceland and the Faroe Islands.

In 1968, *Grønlands Landsmuseum* (Greenland County Museum) was founded on a joint initiative from locals and museum people as well as the Ministry of Culture in Denmark. After the introduction of home rule in 1979, the large Greenland collections in NM in Copenhagen were divided up and a major part was relocated to Greenland. In 1991, the Greenland government decided to give the museum a formal national status and to merge it with the provincial archive for Greenland that had been established in 1982. The new institution was, from 1991, renamed – in native Inuit language - *Nunatta Katersugaasivia Allagaateqarfialu* or in Danish *Grønlands Nationalmuseum og Arkiv* (Greenland National Museum and Archive). This organization exercises full traditional national museum – and archival – responsibilities and tasks. Also, for this museum

there has been a great deal of help from NM in Copenhagen much the same way as it had been for Iceland. Actually, the repatriation process for collections, combined with depositions of large collections from Denmark to Greenland, has been used as a role model in literature from UNESCO (Pentz 2004).

The study of relation between politics, professionalization and the museums

The classic work on Danish museum history is still the 30 year old monograph “Dansk museumshistorie” by Holger Rasmussen. It is a solid and relatively detailed description of both the museums and the politics that formed them. Unfortunately, it only covers cultural history museums but art museums are left out.

The roots from the 17th and 18th centuries are thoroughly analysed recently by Camilla Mordhorst in “Genstandsfortællinger. Fra Museum Wormanium til de moderne museer” from 2009. Otherwise modern museum history and the historical development of art museums will be partially found in a number of articles and monographs about individual museums.

Works on national identity development however, compensates to some degree at least, for the political background and the cultural history context surrounding the founding and development of the national museums. The most central works are the anthology “Dansk identitetshistorie” edited by Ole Feldbæk 1991-1992 and the voluminous monograph “Nationale symboler i Det Danske Rige 1830-2000” by Inge Adriansen 2003. In the later part of the 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th Century, development in Denmark is characterized by a struggle between some academic historians and archaeologists who focused on political history as the ‘real’ or important history on the one side and on the other side, academic historians and archaeologists who saw the historical development of everyday life for ordinary people as the central issue which would preoccupy both research and museums. Palle Ove Christiansen wrote, in 2000, the monograph “Kulturhistorie som opposition. Træk af forskellige fagtraditioner”. The argumentation in this book, to a large degree, explains the founding of the non-governmental national museums in the 1870s and 1880s.

Recent developments in regard to restructuring of the Danish museum landscape in the 1970s using new museum legislation and again in the beginning of the 21st Century with the merging of many museums on local level as well as on national level are less studied by historians. The changes in the 1970s however, are well documented and even explained by Holger Rasmussen (see above) in his work from 1979. As well, the most recent political development on central level is documented in easily accessible documents from the Cultural Department.

Combined with some interviews of central researchers and public servants, it should be possible to get an impression of the national museum’s role and their relation to the ongoing constructing and reconstructing of the nation state.

In Peter Pentz’s article from 2004, “Utmut-Return: the return of more than 35000 cultural objects to Greenland” an in depth description and analysis of the repatriation process between Denmark and Greenland is found and is considered a good starting point for the study of the formation and development of the separatist national museums.

Conclusions on harmony and disharmony in the museum evolution

The narrative of the development of the museums in Denmark may look very harmonious not least in comparison to that of other European countries.

From royal and private collections at the beginning of the 19th Century, the absolute monarchy established what would become the two main national museums in the country – one for art, SMK and one for archaeology, ethnology, ethnography and history, NM. No doubt the archaeology museum was, from the very beginning, especially important in creating a historically founded Danish nationalism that can be detected in the composition and priorities of the national museums. Maybe the search for national roots in archaeological findings was a way of finding national roots despite the fact that the early 19th Century absolute Danish monarchy ruled over a conglomerate state with Danish, Norwegian and German languages and cultures (and even the special dialects and languages in their own right on the North Atlantic on the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland).

A young democratic Denmark continued on the same path and established a series of regional satellites. By the time of the democratic breakthrough in 1849 and even more after the loss of the German speaking duchies Slesvig and Holsten, there had grown a need for seeking a national identity in the rapidly changing and even disappearing rural society and to do this without replacing the older tradition of archaeological engagement.

In the last quarter of the 19th Century we see two private initiatives which both aimed to reach the people with the feelings of Danish nationalism. One with establishing a national picture gallery may be seen as coming from the right NHM and one with establishing a folk museum including an open air museum after Swedish inspiration may be seen as coming from the left - DF. A few decades into the 20th Century one of these initiatives – DF – was incorporated into NM. Especially the DF follows the path of seeking the roots of national identity in rural society where as the NM had continued the dedication to archaeology. By incorporating the DF in NM in the 1920ies archaeology and rural romance finally merged.

Besides the establishment of several aspect or disciplinary museums during the 20th Century, museum history in Denmark seems to have been relatively calm with only a few disturbances created by the establishing of independent national or semi-national museums among the former colonies in the North Atlantic. That development also seems to have gone from a case with Iceland that was not altogether easy to a more harmonious case with the Faroe Islands. Finally, it went on to the successful role model case with the establishing of a national museum for Greenland. However one way to interpret the isolated hot-tempered debate on the transfer of early medieval Icelandic manuscripts in the 1960s from Copenhagen to Reykjavik is the traditional popular mythological relation of the stories told in the manuscripts to the special role of archaeology and especially Viking age archaeology in Denmark since the early 19th Century. Taking away the manuscripts from Danish soil was, for nationalistic forces, to amputate the roots of Danish national identity. There appears to have been no similar discussions or popular debate about other collections in relation to the establishing of national museums in the North Atlantic territories. The representation of lost territories in Danish museums and especially NM also has its special preconditions. Collections of North Atlantic and German origin are to be found in Danish national museums and major collections have been transferred out of what is now Denmark. That is even the case for smaller parts of collections with Norwegian roots whereas

collections with roots in landscapes which since 1658 are part of Sweden have seldom been discussed. That probably has to do with two different circumstances. First of all, even in the first half of the 19th Century when the formation of Danish national museums began, it was quite long ago – more than 150 years – since the eastern provinces became part of Sweden. The histories of the provinces were not really used by the Danish absolute monarchy or by the democratic state to construct Danish nationalism. It was quite a different matter with the North German provinces which were lost in 1864 – an intense period in the formation of Danish national identity. Secondly, we can actually find a few traces of how the histories of the Southern Swedish landscapes were used in Danish nationalism. At the DF, a few houses from Scania were collected to be placed at the Open Air Museum. This was when DF was still all-private and certainly a place for popular storytelling. DF used more labour to get houses and farms from the lost provinces in Northern Germany and that also required using more economic resources.

One may ask the critical question why development of museums in Denmark seemed to be relatively peaceful. We also remind ourselves about the situation in Denmark with a reduced kingdom after the loss of Norway in 1814 and later the loss of the duchies of Sleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg in 1864 and thereby becoming a member of the group of small European countries. Denmark has even had its hard experiences during both world wars when a large contingent young Danish-speaking people were forced to fight in World War I and Nazi occupation during World War II. The political outcome of that history has been a situation where Denmark was a close follower and ally to the United Kingdom until the 1940s and since then an even closer follower and ally to the United States of America. For many years, Danish nationalism was more or less defined as being not Germanic. In spite of relatively objective reasons for fostering a Danish nationalism, the national museums do not seem to have been used in an especially strong way in any defence of such nationalism when challenged. Maybe the explanation behind the relatively harmonious national museum history in Denmark can be found in the tendency to place nationalism as a political process outside the museums.

The Isted Lion and the unchallenging national museums

The case of the Isted Lion may illustrate that point. In short, the history is about a monument with a lion that was created in 1859-1860 to commemorate fallen Danish soldiers during the 1st Sleswig War and specifically in the battle of Isted in 1850 – the last battle with a Danish victory. In 1862, the statue was placed in the old Flensburg churchyard where many of the fallen Danish soldiers had been buried. The statue and the gesture were the result of a major nationwide collection and was one of the many efforts in a young democratic Denmark after 1849 to foster national pride. After the 2nd Sleswig War in 1864, Flensburg was under Prussian rule and the statue was brought to Berlin where it was placed at the Military Academy in Berlin-Lichterfelde. The symbol of Danish victory was now a symbol of Prussian, and from 1871, German victory. Its popularity was not to be mistaken. Already in 1874, a German banker financed a copy to be placed southeast of Berlin in Heckeshorn by Grosser Wannsee. This lion was called “Der flensburger Lowe” (The Flensburg Lion). It was supposed to mark the final Prussian victory in 1864. In Denmark it was, in popular terminology, called The Falls Lion. The situation with the lions did nothing for Danish self-esteem.

In 1945, after World War II, a Danish journalist persuaded American troops to bring the original lion from Berlin to Copenhagen as a gift to Denmark and, in October of 1945, the Danish king and the government had to show themselves as grateful at a public venue in front of the press. The statue was placed just nearby the *Tøjhusmuseet* (The Royal Collection of Armour). The symbolic location of the lion at the gate of a museum that is supposed to illustrate Danish military history is interesting and was probably the natural choice in 1945. There seems to have been no direct involvement by the museum in choosing this place (Björn 1993 & Adriansen 2003).

Nationalist forces in Denmark could feel some sort of revenge. However the history does not end here. Since 1945, nationalist forces in Denmark and in the southern part of the former duchy of Sleswig have tried to push for a return of the statue to its original location in Flensburg in Germany. The ever-changing Danish governments have been arguing that such a question would only be a political matter if and when the city of Flensburg would ever contact the Danish government about such a request. Again and again, responsible journalists and the occasional politician, but no museum people, have said that a repatriation of the lion to Flensburg and Germany could be misunderstood as a Danish sign of animosity if not aggression. That was absolutely unneeded at a time when the relationship between the two countries should instead be a role model to follow by other parts of Europe.

Around 2000, Flensburger got competition from a group of citizens in Fredericia in southern Denmark not far from the present day border to Germany. The entrepreneurial group in Fredericia said that the second last battle ever to be won by Danish troops had actually taken place in Fredericia just a few weeks earlier than the battle at Isted. It would be good to bring the lion to a place of victory and Denmark could not wait forever for a hypothetical repatriating of the lion to Flensburg. The museums in Fredericia, even though they document and display the military impact on the history of the city, were never involved in this process.

Suddenly, in the summer of 2009, city council in Flensburg almost unanimously decided to ask the Danish government to return the lion. The government had no choice but to take the request seriously and preparation for the return is now in progress and the lion is expected to be in Flensburg sometime during 2011. Now the Danish government is claiming that the lion is coming home and will be a symbol that the time of conflict between Danish and German cultures is over. In the few weeks after the majority decision by city council in Flensburg, there were, of course, initiatives to protest and even a revival of the proposal of moving the lion to Fredericia. The Danish government rely on the populist Danish right wing party for their majority in parliament and actually had to promise that party, in public, to return the lion to Flensburg (Kristoffersen 2009)

The Danish museum world have not been involved publically what so ever in the discussions about the lion. Only comments on the restoration has been seen and then one comment by the director of *Tøjhusmuseet* (The Royal Collection of Armour) who said that he was a little sorry to say goodbye to the lion which for many years has had its place by his museum. That is all!

The case illustrates how national politics in many ways, and especially when it includes controversy, has been lifted out of the Danish museum world. The museums are supposed to conduct their relatively harmless work with collecting, preserving and displaying traces of the material and immaterial past – not much else. The legal basis for all museums in Denmark, being

particularly precise, points out that the task of the museums is to collect, preserve, register, mediate and research. In this way the government not only shows the direction of national museum work in the country but also says how precisely to conduct it. This reflects an approach to heritage thinking which has not taken any influence from academic development under a century. In the Danish context, we also find that it is not in the Department of Culture but in the Department of Education where the government develops the concept of a Danish national narrative in 2008 that is supposed to be a fundament of common knowledge for the citizens. This narrative includes both the first democratic constitution in 1849, the loss of the German speaking duchies in 1864 and their return, through decision in popular referendum by the northern part of Slesvig, in 1920. The museums are supposed to be a backbone for these narratives and there is no incentive to question that. (Nielsen 2008 and Grønder-Hansen 2008)

The case of the Isted lion does not seem to be stuff that may engage the majority of Danes today and even though some nationalist forces show great and passionate interest; the museums are passive. When a Minister of Education takes initiatives on national history narratives, museums are not included in the composition.

The relatively harmonious development of museums on a national level in Denmark may, in this light, be interpreted as the result of a process by which the museums have become rather harmless tools of the government. This is the result that, through the system of museum legislation, combines a very traditional perspective of what the museum is and the way which the museum gets its financing. With this in mind, it is even more interesting in regard to the role of private sponsorships in Danish national museums – both the four pioneering museums with roots in the 17-1800s and the specialised museums, primarily those of the 20th Century. When NM, in the 1990s, had the primary building complex in Copenhagen repaired and restructured, sponsoring from a major private fund had made it possible. A whole new section of 21st Century buildings in *Den gamle By – Danmarks Købstadsmuseum* (The Old Town – The Urban Museum of Denmark) between 2008 and 2014 is privately financed as are the new buildings for a completely restructured *Handels- og Søfartsmuseum* (The Maritime Museum) which should be opened in 2014. On a smaller scale, private money, in the same way, is very important or even dominating throughout the Danish cultural scene when it comes to infrastructure and buildings which attract a major amount of visitors. That seems to be a characteristic that has developed in recent decades.

The private sponsors are often relatively conservative and patriotic. The attraction of these sponsors to the national museums goes hand in hand with the de-politicized museums. The museums themselves are perceived as everything but provocative.

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National Museums in Estonia

Kristin Kuutma

Summary

In order to describe the rationale and practice of establishing national museums in Estonia, our research group chose four major institutions: the Estonian History Museum, the Estonian National Museum, the Art Museum of Estonia, and the Estonian Open Air Museum. These museums are not listed here with the intention of presenting a hierarchy, either past or present, but rather of following a chronological sequence. On the other hand, the initiatives and processes that led to their founding appear inherently related, if not more than institutionally: the National Museum was originally conceived as a counterpart to the History Museum in order to defy the prevalent ethnic representations; the founding of the Art Museum was initiated inside the National Museum institution, to defy geographic placement; the Open Air Museum was conceived and initiated by the staff of the National Museum. In general, the history of museums in Estonia can be characterised by various oppositions, based on ethnicity, locus, or political agenda. In the nineteenth century, the earliest museum initiatives were related to territorial divisions and aspirations for national identities under the rule of the Russian Empire first by the Baltic Germans, whose example was followed later by ethnic Estonians. The national ideas that circulated among the Estonian intellectuals interpreted (peasant) folk culture as the historical legacy of the Estonian nation. Folk heritage was seen as a substitute for genuine Estonian high culture. To this overall frame of national discourse was related a claim concerning salvage ethnography – to preserve valuable representations of the past. Therefore the major endeavours in the early twentieth century were defined by ethnographic interests, which may explain the eventual nature of the current major museum institution that is called the Estonian National Museum. National arguments have been supported by ethnographic arguments both in professional and public narratives through different times and political regimes.

In the following article, the 'Introduction' gives a synopsis of the political history of Estonia, followed by an outline of the development of the museum system in the contemporary socio-political context. The four case studies stand in chronological order and each of them is provided with a summarising annotation. The historical and political developments of Estonia are most prominently addressed in the presentation of the Estonian History Museum. The other museum cases should be read against this backdrop to a certain extent. Due to changing political powers, all four museums have been renamed several times along with changing actors. Though missing in the summary table, those details are provided in the Annex table at the very end of the article.

Research for this report was carried out with the assistance of Ergo-Hart Västriik, Pille Runnel, Marleen Nõmmela, and Art Leete.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Estonian History Museum	1864	1842	Civil society	Civil society (original) Independent state agency (present)	Archaeology, Numismatics, Social and Political History	Territorial representation	8000 BC to the present.	Various existing buildings, located in the centre of the capital, the Old Town of Tallinn.
Estonian National Museum	1909	1860s 1907	Civil society	Civil society (original) Independent state agency (present)	Ethnographic collections	Territorial representation	12 th c. to the present.	Various existing buildings located either in the city centre or in solitary location (Raadi Estate), in Tartu.
Art Museum of Estonia	1916	1911	Civil society	Civil society (original) Independent state agency (present)	Visual Art	Territorial and universal	13 th c. to the present.	Various existing buildings, most prominent the Kadriorg Palace. Post-modern building (2006), Tallinn.
Estonian Open Air Museum	1957	1913/1925	State	Ministry of Culture (original) Independent state agency (present)	Rural Architecture, Ethnography	Territorial representation	19 th and 20 th c. rural architecture.	Park area by the sea, complex of re-located rural buildings, Tallinn.

Introduction

In the nineteenth century, Estonia was part of the Baltic Provinces of the tsarist Russian Empire, in its northwestern corner. At the time, present-day Estonia was administratively divided into two provinces: *Estland Provinz* (*guberniya* according to the administrative term in Russian) in the northern half, and *Livland Provinz* in the southern (which extended to modern Latvia). These provinces were integrated by the Baltic *status provincialis* (*der baltische Landesstaat*) that recognised and preserved the Baltic German nobility's (feudal) rights in Estonia and Livonia. The ruling landowning and administrative power was in the hands of the Baltic German minority, while the ethnic Estonian majority were rural peasants who only gradually emancipated from landless serfdom during the first half of the century. Thus, the commencement of the museums occurred understandably in the Baltic German setting and carried the label of ethnic identities and political contradictions: first in the context of Baltic German identity under the administratively dominant Russian rule, then of the burgeoning ethnic Estonian identity to contest either of them, with an aspiration to gain cultural and eventually political independence. The 'Estonian national awakening' cultural movement that sprang forth in the second half of 1800s advanced the aspiration of national statehood in concurrence with the turbulent years of Russian Revolution at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The independent Republic of Estonia was proclaimed in the turmoil of the First World War in 1918. Although the two-year War of Independence followed this declaration, after the Tartu Peace Treaty of 1920, Estonia became a democratic parliamentary republic. This new state underwent a number of economic, social and political reforms; the Baltic nobility lost their privilege, their large estate holdings were redistributed among the peasants and War of Independence volunteers. The Estonian national claim was made predominant, ensuing a period of cultural advancement, including the proliferation of museums, both as civil society or public office initiatives. Notwithstanding, the historical division of territory had brought about a rivalry between two cities, the intellectual centre and university town Tartu in south-central Estonia, and the economic draw and established capital Tallinn on the northern shore. This is also reflected in the location of museums of national merit and scope in Estonia, while the re-imagining of the centre-periphery tension has continued.

Prior to the Second World War, Estonia was occupied under the aegis of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between Nazi Germany and the Stalinist regime, and annexed (together with Latvia and Lithuania) by the Soviet Union in 1940. During the war, Estonia was occupied by Nazi Germany in 1941, and then reoccupied by the Soviet Union in 1944. The alternating occupations meant, by 1945, the total reorganisation of the museum system according to the Soviet rule and ideological agenda, where everything 'national' was substituted by 'state' (nation and state were not considered equivalent), and administered by the pattern set in Moscow. During the Soviet period, the previously predominant national arguments disappeared from the official discourse, glossed over by a different ideological rhetoric; the organisation of agriculture into collective farms and the centralised Soviet industrialisation programme with forced population shifts denoted radical change in the representation of the socio-economic history; along with everything else, cultural activities became subject to the total political control of the Communist Party. This meant a complete 'rewriting' of the narrative in the museum

representation, alongside transformations and relocations of museum collections. However, for the local institutions the significance of ‘national’ became unofficially equated with ‘ethnic Estonian’, with a particular agenda of preservation and safeguarding regardless of the official façade.

The end of the 1980s saw the rise of civic movements, the earliest being those of environmental and cultural heritage protection, which included popular rallies with mass singing. This process, which worked towards the goal of the reinstatement of democracy and independence, was dubbed the ‘Singing Revolution’.¹ Estonia succeeded in regaining independence in 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed. Initially, the transition was difficult, but the economy rebounded and showed a level of stability among other post-Soviet or Eastern European countries. Estonia transformed its status and political standing upon entry to the European Union in 2004.

In the last two decades, the status and function of the national museums radically changed again. They have both thrived as repositories of heritage and memory, but also struggled with economic difficulties. On the other hand, all four museums under scrutiny in this report have made considerable effort to transform themselves into modern institutions of culture, and also to become memory institutions for the independent state of Estonia. And yet, the national narrative presented in these museums mainly continues to bring forward the imaginary, based more on exclusions than inclusions, reflecting the historical traumas of ethnic Estonians, although the discrepancies of the representation and target audience are gradually being acknowledged.

National museums and cultural policy in Estonia

The process of institutionalisation denotes, in essence, relocation from the margins to the centre – the establishment of canons, the conceptualisation of paradigmatic truths and the fixation of socio-cultural practices or products in a meaningful, manageable and celebrated format. The formation of a cultural/academic institution – both from the perspective of matter and practices – involves categorisations, exclusions and inclusions in identifying the knowledge to be sought and the representations created. This process is never neutral or impersonal; it is inspired by socio-political agendas as well as reverberated personal histories. In knowledge, we are dealing with human concepts and their deployment, which depend on judgements made by an agent, and applications determined by particular legitimations. The making of museums, i.e. the establishment of depositories for past repertoires, and for records of past cultural practices and artefacts, has inherently served the purpose of creating a national cultural heritage. However, the value-laden conceptualisation of heritage depends on the historical context and a particular socio-political situation.

The origin of national museums in Estonia is related to the developments of nineteenth century interests in collecting as part of cultural or learned societies, following the previous private collections of curiosities, minerals, archaeological findings, samples from nature, etc., assembled mainly by (amateur) scholars or university intellectuals.

The division of the Baltic Provinces into the *guberniyas* of Estonia, Livonia and Courland (from north to south, covering roughly present-day Estonia and Latvia) meant for these territories the administrative distribution into Estland and Livland Provinces, which gave rise to the historical rivalry of two cities: Tallinn (then Reval) as the ‘economic capital’ of Estland Province; and Tartu

(then Dorpat) as the intellectual hub of Livland Province, the ‘capital’ of which was actually Riga. These divisions also criss-cross the national narratives of later times.

In Tallinn/Reval, the first public art exhibit was organised in 1798, and the first public display of curiosities and antiquities dates back to 1822, when local pharmacist Johann Burchard arranged an exhibition of his collection, called *Mon Faible*. The first museum initiatives of Tartu/Dorpat were related to academic settings and learned societies. The earliest academic collections were founded with the University of Tartu/Dorpat as the *Naturalien Cabinet*, or (*Akademische*) *Naturhistorische Museum* in 1802 and *Museum der Kunst der Universität Dorpat* in 1803, although access to them was limited until their opening to the general public in 1862. Nearly all learned societies found in the Baltic provinces declared interest in collecting antiquities from their native region, while an important role was played here by the *Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands zu Riga* (Riga Society for the Study of History and Archaeology in the Baltic Provinces of Russia), founded in 1833.

In 1838 in Tartu/Dorpat, the *Gelehrte Estnische Gesellschaft* (Learned Estonian Society, GEG) was founded with the goal of establishing an ‘Estonian’ museum. Considering the socio-political situation of Baltic German domination in the administration and social functions in urban settings as well as in intellectual initiatives in general at the time, it is important to point out that the GEG practised a membership policy that allowed intellectuals of ethnic Estonian origin to join. In 1843, the university setting also gave rise to the *Central-Museum vaterländischer Alterthümer* at the University of Tartu/Dorpat, but their collection was joined with the GEG collection of antiquities in 1860 to establish a more substantial *Das vaterländische Museum zu Dorpat*. Eventually, the Estonian National Museum was founded in Tartu, in the early twentieth century.

In the north, in Tallinn/Reval, these initiatives were paralleled by the founding of the *Estländische Literärische Gesellschaft* (Estonian Literary Society, ELG) in 1842. This regional society of learned men was, however, in contrast to the more liberal approach in Tartu, exclusively for the members of Baltic German origin. Among its founders were public servants, lawyers, doctors, pastors, artists and most of all teachers, whose activities were channelled through several (initially six) departments dedicated to the study of history, local lore, literature, art, nature and healthcare. According to the first annual report in 1844, the ELG immediately started a collection of historical and natural objects as well as art, while the idea of the museum was already formulated in the first statutes, which encouraged the society ‘to foster a profound study of our homeland through its history, arts, manufacturing, technology and nature research’ (cf. Kuldna 2002: 12).

On the other hand, the ethnic identity of the Baltic Germans started to gain particular weight during the last decades of the nineteenth century because of the administrative Russification policy of the tsarist authorities, which put special pressure on both the Baltic German - as well as ethnic Estonian self-representational agendas and their dedicated cultural institutions - by making them manifest their ethnic background in a more pronounced way. The role of cultural societies also grew rapidly among the ethnic Estonians, which led to initiatives of collecting ethnographic material from rural areas and initiation of an Estonian museum (distinct in the ethnic origin of objects, though universalist by concept). However, these Estonian initiatives could only materialise in the twentieth century, by which time this community had acquired enough economic sustainability to start public collections and establish dedicated societies for the formation of museums. At the same time, these undertakings were inherently related to the

process of imagining a political autonomy and self-government because they formed a social arena for the exchange and expression of ideas about an independent state formation. On the other hand, Estonia was an agrarian country, and the wave of museum initiatives likewise corresponded with the general modernisation period starting in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

When the Republic of Estonia was established in 1918, museums presenting a particularly ethnic Estonian narrative could obtain certain state support, though the predominant activities were related to governing and registering collections. As all the major museums were initiated, and continued to be managed by particular museum societies or foundations, the state apparently did not want to intervene in the question of ownership because of the fear of losing public financial support, as the young state lacked the means of providing the required subsidies to these cultural institutions. However, in every respect, the Estonian National Museum undoubtedly held the highest priority and position both for the state and for the national narrative.

The devastating results of the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact at the end of the thirties led to the *Umsiedlung* (resettlement) of the Baltic Germans, which left a mark on the national narrative that has only recently been addressed from various aspects. In 1940, the sly manipulation of the accession of Estonia to the Soviet state saw the abolition of all societies and the appropriation of museums to state ownership; institutions were closed, redistributed and reorganised: private bodies or foundations governed by respective societies were nationalised while 13 museums (out of a total of 39) whose scope did not match Soviet ideology were liquidated (Kukk 2009: 692; Raisma 2009a: 790). The Soviet museum system, which initiated the status of a central state museum (*riiklik keskmuseum* in Estonian), was meant to erase or censor the previous historical (and particularly national) narratives, purge collections of ‘suspicious’ material and introduce a centralised system of museum governance and management (including ideological monitoring) in order to introduce a new, Soviet narrative of state and nation. This was particularly obvious in history museums, thus making them into specialised propaganda institutions in the Soviet cultural and academic sphere. On the other hand, it raised the status of those museums that focused on purely ethnographic research and collection. The reception by the public was ambiguous towards such manipulations: history museums were not consolidating institutions in the Soviet period as such institutions were mainly visited under the obligatory visiting programme (introduced in schools, factories, enterprises, for tourist groups), while an ethnographic museum exhibition enjoyed ardent public interest due to the presentation of relatively uncensored ethnic (peasant) history. An art museum would likewise denote a place for acquiring cultural information with more option to avoid Soviet propaganda by its focus on the aesthetic. The second half of the 80s saw a strong shift in the self-narrative of the Soviet state that allowed the ideas of secession to emerge in the public arena, turbulently in the Baltic countries, Estonia included. This phase brought a strong affirmation of the national narrative and a manifold reclaiming of national history that foregrounded all museum institutions as retainers and narrators of the previously forbidden.²

By the end of the 1980s and early 1990s, museums acquired newly found significance as places for the representation of the national narrative and the recovery of the previously hidden or censored national memory. Thus, they also played an important part in the restoration of the independent state. On the other hand, due to the collapse of the previous economic system, as

well as cultural regulations and management, museums found themselves facing tremendous hardships in the early 1990s. During the long 1990s, all museums had to learn to re-invent themselves to a certain extent, to fight for their existence, to acquire new skills and principles of modern museology. Their role in public activism increased tremendously. The Estonian Museum Association was established in 1988 as an NGO to acknowledge and value the work of professionals preserving and protecting cultural heritage in museums; today, the membership of the association exceeds 300. It organises regular seminars, conferences and fieldtrips and publishes a professional magazine *Muuseum* (Museum).

Eventually, the Museum Act was passed in 1996 (with minor changes in 2001 and 2003, to correspond more with current administrative and legislative conditions). The Act provides the bases for the activities of museums and the organisation of museum collections. It regulates the activities of state-owned museums, municipal museums and museums of legal persons in public law. A state-owned museum is a state agency in its particular field and is administered by the relevant ministry. The functions and organisation of management of a state-owned museum, the rights and obligations of its director, the structure and other important matters relating to the organisation of activities of a museum are provided for in the statutes, which are approved by a minister. Museums are then free in planning their activities and in replenishing their collections. The Museums Board, an advisory body in shaping museum politics in Estonia and operating within the Ministry of Culture, consists of representatives of museums and founders of museums. The Board can make proposals and express opinions concerning all issues arising from the Museum Act. The Museums Board has the right to examine the activities of a museum and the condition of museum collections on-site.

Today there are 13 central museums, 4 city museums and 14 district museums, with the total number reaching 200. At present, the cultural-historic discourse seems to prevail without an explicit national narrative for museum professionals. However, at the highest administrative level, national arguments have been made central in the contemporary development of Estonian museums in general. The most prominent aims of the strategic plan for the development of Estonian museums are: to support the sustainability of the Estonian national identity and culture, to develop and adapt Estonian culture to world culture, and to prevent the disappearance of the Estonian nation (*21. sajandi Eesti muuseumid 2006-2015*; Estonian museums in the 21st century, 2006–2015). In conclusion, this seems still to reverberate with the agenda of the 1990s: in the newly established independent state, a particular kind of national narrative had to be reaffirmed and re-instated before it might start creating room for a new, more inclusive narrative in which ‘Estonian’ could stand for a multitude of experience and expressions.

Case studies in chronological order

The Estonian History Museum

This is a museum that was founded by a politically dominant ethnic group on a territorial principle in one of the provinces of a large empire, to present a Universalist collection. When the Baltic German domination ended with the establishment of the Estonian Republic, the museum became relatively marginalised without being incorporated into the national imaginary due to its linkage to the previously ruling German minority, although the collections were acknowledged as

outstanding. Under Soviet rule, the museum was transformed into a propaganda institution in order to rewrite history from the Marxist-Leninist perspective of communist socio-political progress, including previous economic strife and class struggles, with the clear goal of erasing the memory of an independent Republic and an attempt to introduce a teleological narrative of making the 'new Soviet nation'. When the Soviet Union fell and independence was re-established, the museum quickly re-invented itself in the framework of presenting an Estonian national narrative (which testified to the superficial success of the Soviet agenda), and found its goal in re-instituting itself as a memory institution of the Estonian state. Thus this museum continues to enjoy an important political function.

This museum was initially conceived as an undertaking by the *Estländische Literarische Gesellschaft*. From the very beginning, the learned society took the initiative to establish a local history museum with a manifold profile. Their collections were systematised according to the eighteenth century *Kunstkammer*-type museal division: antiquities and rarities, including art and ethnography ('proper cabinet of art'); coins ('cabinet of coins'), and natural objects ('cabinet of natural history'). The scope of the collections was not, however, limited solely to findings from the territory of Estland Province, but was, from the very beginning, quite diverse, incorporating curiosities from places like Greenland, Alaska, Kamchatka, China, Japan, etc.

After these were finally systematised and proper space was found in the medieval St. Knut Guild Hall in the centre of Tallinn/Reval, where the ELG eventually started to rent rooms for a display of its collections and library, the *Estländische Provinzial-Museum* opened its doors to the general public in 1864. In arranging its activities and structure, the *Provinzial-Museum* apparently followed the example of the National Museum in Nuremberg, presenting a universal collection content-wise (Kuldna 2002; Raisma 2009a). Soon after the opening, the museum began to organise informative lectures and exhibitions, bearing in mind the educational role of the museum in disseminating knowledge to the local community (i.e. the Baltic German citizens of the Estland Province). For example, the *Provinzial-Museum* initiated a series of art exhibitions that proved to be a sign of the commencement of public 'art propaganda' in Estonia. The museum also carried out archaeological excavations, and organised restoration and conservation of important pieces of ecclesiastical art and architecture. The scope of the museum gradually became more concentrated on the so-called *Heimat*-region (i.e. Estland Province) in its collection activities in order to support a particular territorial identity, while the display of curiosities from far away countries served the purpose of sharing knowledge about universal values (an educational function).

In addition to financial donations from ELG members, the city government, the Chivalry of Estland Province (*Estländische Ritterschaft*) and the Great Guild of Tallinn, which were all institutions run by Baltic German nobility, sponsored the *Provinzial-Museum*. It was mainly members of the ELG that donated new items to the museum, although public appeals were also published in newspapers to collect, for example, ethnographic items. The largest contributions turned out to be personal archives and collections of outstanding antiquarians and scholars like those of pharmacist Johann Burchard³, academicians Karl Ernst von Baer, Ferdinand Johann Wiedemann, and others. The first (partial) catalogue of the museum collections was published in 1875; the second, a complete catalogue, appeared in 1892, reflecting the wide scope of the deposits that were divided at that time into 19 collections (including archaeological items from

Estonia, the Baltic Provinces, Russia, and abroad; antiquities from Egypt, Greece and Rome; ecclesiastical objects; items of clothing and household items; ethnographic items from ethnic Estonians or other peoples of the world; historical objects; coats of arms and seals; bank notes, coins and medals; collections of portraits and other works of art; documents and autographs and objects of natural history). The items collected from Estonia were kept in a separate collection from those acquired from abroad, while ethnographic items collected from ethnic Estonian peasants were regarded as remaining outside of 'the Baltic German cultural domain' (cf. Raisma 2009a: 784).⁴ The *Provinzial-Museum* hosted sizeable holdings of natural history: geology, entomology and botany, although remarkable prominence in the ELG was given to the study of history and cultural heritage; the largest and fastest growing collections were those of archaeology and numismatics thanks to systematic activities in this field (cf. Tvauri 2005). The *Estländische Provinzial-Museum* was an institution promoting territorial identity, but at the same time it focused on the Baltic German narrative interpretation of regional history in one of the Baltic Provinces of the Russian Empire, with the majority ethnic group relatively marginalised. It similarly lacked specific rendering to the Empire, leaving it as only a backdrop to the sites of origin of collection items.

In 1911, the *Provinzial-Museum* was transferred to another location, a large nobleman's town house at Toompea (Domberg), bought by the *Estländische Literarische Gesellschaft*, an act that boosted the museum's activities. It had managed to become an important centre of city cultural life with its exhibitions and educational lectures, and developed into the major museum in Estonia. For example, in 1912/13 the ELG had 760 members and the respective museum society ca. 100 members. Many outstanding scholars became eagerly engaged with collecting and the collections, considering the expanded space for public display. Yet the fate of the museum was seriously threatened in the course of the First World War and the turbulent changes in the Russian Empire, although luckily its collections survived and remained intact when the ELG refused to transfer their museum collections to Russia when the state authorities so demanded in 1917.

After the establishment of the independent Republic of Estonia in 1918, at which time Baltic Germans lost their privileged status and this museum enterprise lost its donors, the museum and its founding society reorganised themselves: it was renamed first the *EKÜ⁵ Provintsiaal-Muuseum* (the ELG Provincial Museum), and then the Museum of the Estonian Literary Society, in 1926. It continued to be an essentially Baltic German institution that at first, struggled under the condition of the reduced means of that community, but the museum managed to regain its position and stability by the 1930s. The museum became a symbol of Baltic German ethnic identity (Kuldna 2002: 59), i.e. the identity of the minority group in the newly born Republic of Estonia, where earlier hierarchies were turned upside down. After the successful War of Independence, Estonian authorities confiscated most of the landed property of the Baltic Germans and cancelled their feudal privileges, making them ordinary Estonian citizens who were granted legal cultural autonomy. Consequently, all cultural institutions acquired special meaning to this minority ethnic group, as they had lost their previous political and economic status.

The museum continued to be governed by the *Estländische Literarische Gesellschaft* while additional financial support was acquired from the Cultural Endowment of Estonia. The Ministry of Education registered the collections of the Museum and the Museum had to compete with

other new museums, established as national institutions. In the 1930s, the Museum display was rearranged according to chronological and thematic principles.

This development was interrupted by the consequences of the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact, which led to the *Umsiedlung* of the Baltic Germans, among whom most of the ELG membership left the country, which was soon followed by the Soviet nationalisation of all institutions and the liquidation of volunteer societies.

In 1940, the Museum of the Estonian Literary Society was appropriated by the Soviet state and, on the basis of its historical, ethnographic and archaeological collections, the State History Museum of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic (*Eesti Nõukogude Vabariigi Riiklik Ajaloomuuseum*) was founded.⁶ According to the introduced Soviet museum system, the reorganised institution was granted the status of a central state museum (*riiklik keskmuuseum*)⁷, which also entailed regulation and distribution of ideological and institutional guidelines to other local historical museums. With the obvious aim of destroying the previous museum system, as well as of eradicating the national narrative of independent Estonia, museum collections were rather substantially re-distributed between the central museums (with little regard to museum professionals or local interests). The History Museum received some collections of the former Museum of the War of Independence, the Estonian Police Museum, the Estonian Postal Museum, the Estonian National Museum, etc. (Rosenberg 1961: 52; Raisma 2009a: 790). Substantial parts of its previous collections were divided between other museums, in order to build up the Soviet system of thematic museums. For example, the *Provintsiaalmuuseum* collections of sculptures and paintings were taken over by the State Art Museum, while the impressive Natural Science collections were transformed into a separate State Museum of Natural Sciences (*Riiklik Loodusteaduste Muuseum*), founded in 1941 (cf. Kukk 2009: 698–699). This redistribution of the museum collections was continued after the Second World War with the return of Soviet rule.⁸ After the Baltic German specialised museum personnel had left in 1940, a new staff of Estonian scholars was recruited who also took care of the museum holdings during the war and German occupation, as well as participating in the re-evacuation of the collections after the war and attempting to adopt the demands of Soviet ideology in their museum displays. Nevertheless, in 1945–46 the whole administrative and scholarly staff of the History Museum were arrested and repressed by the Soviet regime (Annist 2002). This was followed in the early 1950s by an additional political repression of the personnel, and by the purge of politically sensitive objects, which included documents and items that referred to independent statehood, as well as items deemed insignificant, i.e. without relevant historical or artistic value according to the Stalinist ideological or aesthetic norm. For example, 185 paintings, 307 graphic sheets and 46 plaster sculptures were destroyed, and more than 400 kg of artefacts made of precious metal were melted down in 1951, while in 1953 more than 14 kg of photographic negatives were smashed (Peets 2005; Raisma 2009a: 789–790). In addition, the document archives were newly systematised and censored, so that, by 1960, more than 111,500 items had been handed over to the State Central Archive (Rosenberg 1961: 53). Thus, the memory deposit of the museum was changed drastically, mainly in respect of the Estonian national narrative concerning the first half of the twentieth century.

In 1946, the History Museum and the Museum of Natural Sciences were incorporated into the system of the Academy of Sciences of the Estonian SSR, which followed the Soviet model of

centralised research, museum and archival institutions. Between 1946 and 1963, museums were under the control of the central government and financed by the state through the Academy of Sciences. In 1963, the status of museums changed again: since then they have been national institutions governed by the Ministry of Culture.

In 1952, the museum moved to its present location into the Great Guild Hall in the medieval old town of Tallinn where the first permanent display was opened in 1956.⁹ The Soviet agenda in museum policy was to establish an ideological norm, to centralise and systematise all collections, and eventually to present a politically edifying and standard-setting display of historical processes and events. A Soviet museum had to rely on the Marxist–Leninist concept of ideology and history, determined by ‘dialectic materialism’ and ‘historical materialism’. This ideological frame caused the development of a permanent exhibition inherently focused on means of production, positioning as the centrepiece the economic history and (inequalities of) social class (Raisma 2009b: 89–90). The display was based on revolutionary changes, struggle, wars, uprisings, etc., in order to render world history as a dialectic development guided by the idea of progress, leading to the communist future of the proletariat state. Therefore national history had also to be retold in this new teleological format, presenting collective public events and officially recognised moments of strife, where personal memories played no role whatsoever.

In the Soviet framework, museums became institutions of ideology in the clearly hierarchical and highly centralised cultural policy system; the displays presented to the public were controlled by the central government through *Glanlit*¹⁰ (Raisma 2009b: 72). However, regardless of the relatively large number of visits, which were attained by including them on the itinerary of regular tourist routes for visitors from all over the Soviet Union and organising obligatory visits for schools and workers’ collectives, the reception of this new narrative remained ambiguous, and never actually succeeded in eradicating the history that had been censored.

On the other hand, the displays reflected, to a certain extent, shifts in the political focus in the course of time, being related to the interpretation of history in concurrence with the ideological issues highlighted by the Communist Party (who guided the ideological interpretations of the state). In the 1950s and 1960s, the permanent exhibitions set primary emphasis on the Great Socialist October Revolution and its guiding force for the following decades. But in 1974, the new permanent display found its central event in ‘the incorporation of Estonia within the USSR’ in the years 1940–1941 (see Raisma 2009b: 85).

The museum was affiliated with subdivisions over the course of years, apparently also related to the relatively limited space for permanent display. In 1957, the Workers’ Cellar (*Tööliste Kelder*) was established as a small subdivision of the museum, to document and commemorate mainly the labour movement of the ‘oppressive and capitalist bourgeois Republic of Estonia’ (Rosenberg 1961: 62; Sillaots 1982: 66).¹¹ In 1970, the first steps were taken to start a sub-project, the Museum of the Comsomol as a subdivision of the History Museum, although no permanent exhibition was ever opened (Raisma 2009a: 791).

In 1975, an additional exhibition hall was affiliated to the museum at Maarjamäe (Orlov¹²) Palace, where, after a long period of planning, renovation and preparation, the Estonian SSR History and Revolution Museum (*Eesti NSV Ajaloo- ja Revolutsiooni Muuseum*) was opened in December 1987. With this acquisition of space in a coastal park area outside the city centre, the medieval and pre-twentieth-century history display was planned to remain intact in the Great

Guild Hall in the old town of Tallinn. The new subdivision was originally meant, in the 70s, to be dedicated to ‘the Friendship of Nations’, according to the official Soviet slogan of developing unification of the different nationalities in the USSR in the course of the process of forming the new, Soviet, nation. The project was intended to interpret ‘the rise of the Soviet proletariat, multinational working class, the revolutionary movement, the Great Patriotic War, as well as the technological revolution and the friendship between the nations forming the Soviet Union’ (Raisma 2009c: 107). However, the profound changes in the ideological atmosphere over the period of 1985-87 determined the inclusion of the presentation of radically different recent events by the end of 1987. For example, the initial scheme was supplemented with displays presenting the public rallies against the Moscow-planned phosphorite mining in northeastern Estonia, the movement supporting the National Heritage Society and the official recognition of the 1949 mass deportations to Siberia (ibid.: 108). Thus, it may be concluded that this revolution museum was eventually opened when another, actually happening revolution, i.e. the Singing Revolution, was sweeping across Estonia. The quick response to the changing political climate on behalf of the museum staff (and relevant state officials in the Ministry of Culture) testifies to their aspiration to tell a different story of history to that previously planned by administration officials. It became obvious that the poignant and pressing narrative that the museum wanted to tell was that of the Estonian nation, their loss and suffering in recent history.

Following the turbulent change in the late 1980s, the museum was renamed the Estonian History Museum (*Eesti Ajaloomuuseum*) in 1989, while the opening of such new exhibitions as Three-Coloured Estonia (1989)¹³ and Stalinism in Estonia (1990) testified to the general socio-political transformation. During the course of just a few years, the narrative presented in the permanent exhibition transformed into a representation of the Estonian national paradigm, aimed at re-establishing the previously erased and suppressed collective memory and demonstrating and re-affirming national identity in the public domain.

At present, the Estonian History Museum is a state agency governed by the Ministry of Culture (*Kultuuriministeerium*), being one of the 13 central museums of Estonia. The task of a central museum is to represent a particular field of cultural heritage in its entirety, and to supervise other museums in that field. The Estonian History Museum is financed from the state budget. In its mission statement, the museum promotes itself today as the only museum in the country that presents a comprehensive narrative of Estonian history, while the museum sees its task as being ‘to preserve the memory of the Estonian State, the land and the different nations who either have lived or are still living here, to interpret the historical past and to maintain a cultural identity’ (Eesti Ajaloomuuseum). The museum has, on its agenda, a focus on political, social and cultural history with an aspiration of establishing links between local and general European history.

The Estonian National Museum

This museum is inherently intertwined with the narrative of nation-building and state-making, as it was envisioned and eventually founded by the aspiring Estonian nationalists, who first dreamt of cultural autonomy in the period of ethnic Estonian ‘national awakening’ at the end of the nineteenth century. This museum was to represent exclusively the narrative of ethnic Estonians and their cultural expressions. The physical founding of the museum was closely linked to the

burgeoning idea of an independent Estonian state, and hence its prominent status during the period of the pre-WWII republic. Under Soviet rule, the museum lost its facilities and was mutilated into an ethnographic museum-cum-archive in the process. However, it retained a powerful presence in the collective (substantially anti-Soviet) memory of Estonians, which has secured it a prominent position in the national imaginary that has retained the museum in the focus of the national narrative even without other presumed attributes of a national museum.

The Estonian National Museum (*Eesti Rahva Muuseum*, ENM) is today officially considered and venerated as a ‘memory institution’ that had been created as part of a national movement, and has served the cause ever since, although ambivalently under the Soviet regime. However, this definition is problematic when posing the question of whose memory is represented and what does ‘institutionalised memory’ mean. First, it is not located in the capital city Tallinn, but in the university and intellectual hub Tartu in central Estonia. Even the name of this museum is ambivalent – the correct translation of *Eesti Rahva Muuseum* based on modern standard Estonian should be ‘Estonian Folk Museum’, which would better convey its substance and rationale because it has become essentially an ethnographic museum. Notwithstanding this, the name has carried a strong connotation into the present. When the Soviet administrative ruling changed the name to Ethnographic Museum in 1952, there were attempts to restore the original at the end of the 1950s (and occasionally later) with final success only in 1988. And yet there continues to be a significant contradiction in the museum content and the name in English.

The initial idea to establish a museum as a representation of ethnic Estonian culture was formulated in the 1860s by intellectuals of Estonian origin in concurrence with the Estonian national awakening movement. The eventual ENM grew out of the collecting initiatives of mainly two scholarly societies in Tartu: the *Gelehrte Estnische Gesellschaft* (Learned Estonian Society)¹⁴ and the *Eesti Üliõpilaste Selts* (Estonian Students Society, founded in 1870) that collected artefacts of Estonian origin alongside poetic and narrative folklore. These active intellectuals of the period were greatly inspired by similar activities in Finland. The direct incentive for the foundation of the museum came in 1907 with the death of Pastor Dr. Jakob Hurt, whose extremely large and prominent folklore collection needed a permanent repository. The Museum Statutes, written in 1908 (confirmed by the Livland Province governor), provision the museum to be a grandiose institution that houses documentations of folklore, of language, material artefacts, folk music and art collections, a library etc., with a focus on the Estonian peasant culture that appeared to be rapidly changing under the pressures of modernisation and urbanisation at the turn of the century. The first official meeting on April 14, 1909 signified the inauguration date of the new museum named *Eesti Rahva Muuseum* (the Estonian National Museum). Tartu was the intellectual centre of the Estonian national movement in the Baltic German ruled province of the Russian Empire.

The main focus of the museum fell on collecting ethnographic objects and repertoires, which was carried out with the assistance of volunteers: schoolteachers, pastors, artists, writers and students. In the first seven years, about 170 volunteers collected ca. 20,000 material objects from all over the country. In order to introduce the museum idea and raise money for the ENM, the Museum activists gave talks, organised exhibitions, and arranged different donation collecting events for the benefit of the museum; all finances for the support of the museum came from private initiatives. As the ENM did not have its own building, the first temporary exhibitions

were held in rooms at *Vanemuine* Theatre in 1911 and in an apartment acquired from the city authorities in 1913.

The situation improved radically for the ENM with the establishment of the independent Republic of Estonia. In the 1920s, it went under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education; the state started to support the museum financially, but not sufficiently for the construction of a new building. Instead, the state assisted the museum obtaining the property of the Raadi Manor estate, which offered a large mansion for exhibiting Estonian folk culture and where the permanent exhibition was opened in 1927. The comprehensive institution of the ENM (reorganised as a state funded foundation in 1931) comprised other collections of mainly the Estonian Student Society, which formed four autonomous subdivisions: the National Library, the Bibliographical Institute, the Folklore Archives, and the Cultural History Archives. These four were housed together in a separate building. This division was materialised substantially when the Soviet regime, according to the decision of the Council of People's Commissars of the Estonian SSR, nationalised the Estonian National Museum in 1940 and divided it into two distinct institutions: *Eesti NSV Riiklik Etnograafia Muuseum* (the State Ethnographic Museum of the Estonian SSR), which became profiled more narrowly into the preservation and research of material culture; and *Riiklik Kirjandusmuuseum* (the State Literary Museum), which houses the sub-units focused on collecting verbal lore, written documents and books. Raadi Manor was destroyed during the war, though the collections that had been evacuated from the military zone remained largely intact. Thus, in the course of the Second World War, the ENM lost its impressive and rather vast museum facilities, and the majority of the qualified staff fled Estonia in fear of persecution from the re-established Soviet regime.¹⁵

In 1945, the Ethnographic Museum moved into the former courthouse in Tartu city centre with considerably limited display facilities. The war and the following Stalinist period of persecution and oppression meant the loss of this building, as well as severe problems for museum personnel: those who did not flee were forced to resign, particularly in the 1950 political purge campaign following the 1949 mass deportations, and in connection with the forced collectivisation of farms and rural private property. The positions of museum directors and researchers became heavily politicised in general, being censored until the second half of the 1950s. The status and quality of academic ethnographic studies were considerably reduced due to being labelled a 'nationalist' field. The topics Estonian ethnographers focused on were: farm architecture, agricultural tools and traditional costume, all of which celebrated past peasant society. The defined historical perspective on material objects also provided a more comfortable level of evolutionistic descriptive approach, which gave an opportunity to avoid the ideological manipulation related to social contextualisation in the present. Since the end of the 1950s, the development of the State Ethnographic Museum was restored within the framework of the Soviet political and scientific system. Institutionally, it went first under the jurisdiction of the Estonian SSR Academy of Sciences, but by the 1970s it lost its status as a research institution when it became subordinated to the Ministry of Culture (Viires 1993). Consequently, the museum staff was expected to put considerably more effort into the amassing of artefacts or the popularisation activities of temporary or travelling exhibits, with less attention to the study of ethnographic material or the publication of research results, which was in rather sharp contrast to previous scholarly practice. On the other hand, in the 1960s the then ENM director (now again a

professional ethnologist) commenced a campaign to carry out fieldwork among the Finno-Ugric peoples on Soviet territories, which resulted in rather substantial artefact collections in stock; by the 1980s it had also turned the museum into one of the major institutions - in respect to the representativeness of the Finno-Ugric¹⁶ culture - in the whole Soviet Union. For Estonians, research in the field of Finno-Ugric affinities provided certain cultural agency outside the official Soviet framework as well as versatile ethnographic material.

Despite the active collecting, and mainly due to the lack of display facilities, the Museum was ironically unable to exhibit a comprehensive display of Estonian folk culture during the Soviet period; the permanent display had closed in the 1970s (Konksi 2009). Thus the museum became a kind of archive, with distorted capacity to interact with the public – visitors were shown, with pride, the neatly organised depositories. During the period of re-independence in 1991 - the period of ‘the second national awakening’ and the concurrent substantial reforms - the museum’s predominant aspiration was to build its new facilities. Actually, the initiative and rallies to restore Raadi Manor in its historic form had been an important part of the Singing Revolution. The name ‘Estonian National Museum’ was restored in 1988, and eventually a new permanent exhibition was opened in 1994, when the museum was donated additional facilities in the abandoned Soviet-period Railway Workers’ Club. In 1996, the Estonian Parliament adopted a proposal to support the building of three cultural institutions: the Art Museum of Estonia, the Estonian National Museum and the Estonian Music Academy. The plan was to build them one by one; only starting the next once the previous was finished, with the construction of the Art Museum supposed to start in 1999 and of the ENM in 2002. However, even with governmental endorsement, for the latter it still continues to be a project without physical manifestation in the form of construction. First, the decisions regarding these buildings were made in the early 1990s, when, due to turbulent changes, the economic situation was far from favourable to such initiatives. Dedicated efforts to sustain cultural landmarks closely related to the national imaginary were shown, but the priorities were apparently determined by success in the media, and government lobbying by the then directors of these institutions. Finally, the national gallery construction was finished several years later than planned, impairing the efficiency and distribution of financial aid. Today international competitions have been held and blueprints drawn up, and thus the work and the whole development of the Estonian National Museum in the twenty-first century is strongly influenced by the planning of the new museum facilities. In 2008, the ENM Construction Foundation was established and chaired by the Minister of Culture.

The initial idea to restore the one-time museum at Raadi, and the gradual shift in favour of designing a modern building for the ENM also means that conceptualisation of the museum and its social purpose is undergoing change. On the one hand, there has been the necessity to define identities at a time of rapid change by locating and ‘securing old values and repaying history’s debts’ (Runnel et al. 2010). The reinvention of the museum has been closely connected to the questions of collective memory and collective identity, which have, in turn, also been affected by the perceived ‘return to Europe proper’. Because of its fate and its significance in the national imaginary - the historical meaning of the museum in the initial nation-building process, its collections, the site of the magnificent building being substituted by the Soviet airfield – the ENM became part of the negotiations of the wider historical framework of negotiating European and Estonian recent post-war history.

Today, the ENM is one of the thirteen central museums of Estonia, governed by the Ministry of Culture. The ENM is financed from the state budget. ENM collections serve as the bases for the activities of the museum in the field of research and exhibitions. The collections of artefacts are divided into five major groups, containing the largest ethnographic collection in Estonia (more than 100,000 objects), mainly ethnographic artefacts of Finno-Ugric cultures (ca. 10,000 objects) and the items representing more distant cultures (ca. 3,000 objects). The cultural history collection (ca. 20,000 objects) and that of the works of art (more than 1,000 objects) form separate assemblies (Evaluation 2010). The systematic collection activities started directly after the foundation of the museum a century ago, when priority was given to the preservation of the fading peasant culture, with accompanying interest in cultural-historical and archaeological material. The foundation for the Finno-Ugric collection was laid in the 1920s, mainly with objects representing the Livs (a Finno-Ugric ethnic group in Latvia) and Ingrians (in the northeastern border zone with the St. Petersburg region of Russia). Since the 1960s, and with particular efficacy in the 1970s and 1980s, regular annual expeditions were organised to different Finno-Ugric peoples, dispersed in Russia around the Volga region and in the Arctic zone extending behind the Ural Mountains. The basis for the collections representing the peoples of the world was constituted of objects handed over to the museum by the *Gelehrte Estnische Gesellschaft*, as well as the ones donated by the explorers and missionaries (representing mainly Siberian peoples, but also peoples from China, Africa and elsewhere).¹⁷ The objects currently collected are mainly connected with everyday life in Estonia, as well as those representing the Finno-Ugric peoples and ethnic minorities residing in Estonia.

The ENM has a manuscript archive (2,700 volumes with over half a million pages) of mainly field notes by the staff of the museum, by other researchers, and including also materials sent by the ENMs voluntary correspondents.¹⁸ The ENM collections also comprise ethnographic drawings (over 50,000 items), a collection of photographs (200,000 photographs) and a collection of ethnographic film and video footage.

The 1994 ENM permanent exhibition 'Estonia: Land, People, Culture', being developed and opened in the aftermath of the Singing Revolution in Estonia and represents discourse about ethnic identity, presenting a response to the public expectations of the time when it was compiled in the early 1990s. The display primarily covers different aspects of Estonian folk culture in the past: everyday life, holidays and festivities in peasant life and regional aspects of it. Everyday life and livelihood practices are displayed as dioramas or reconstructed interiors to present a span from life in a barn dwelling (household tools and farm equipment from the nineteenth century mainly) to some aspects of life during the Soviet period (interiors through the twentieth century). Part of the exhibition presents mental life and worldview, explaining different dimensions of the concept of the sacred, starting from sacrificial stones and patterns on textiles and costumes with special meaning, and ending with explanations of various rituals related to the farmers' folk calendar.

In addition to Estonians, Coastal Swedes (inhabiting the western coast and islands between the fourteenth century and 1944), and the Russian-speaking Old Believers in the Lake Peipsi region (on the eastern border) are briefly introduced within the framework of regional differences in traditional folk culture, especially clothing. Their representation is embedded in distinct geographic regionality without direct reference to the national narrative. However, the

ethnographic study of Coastal Swedes is more thoroughly internalised into the ethnographic imagery of national past, whereas the folk culture of Lake Peipsi Russians gained attention only recently, since the 1990s.¹⁹ The permanent display refers to the Baltic Germans only indirectly. They are part of the discussions about the economy of the past rather than the ethnic diversity of the country. The permanent exhibition includes a Baltic German manor interior with the remaining parts of the furniture from Raadi Mansion used to introduce an economic unit and styles in furniture history without focused reference to ethnicity. The framework of nation-building is dependent here largely on a class distinction: the Swedish and Russian Old Believer communities have been considered socially equal to the majority group of ethnic Estonians, while the Baltic Germans represented 'landlords', the suppressing upper class and nobility, and therefore inherently alien outsiders to the national imagery.

As the exhibition was opened soon after the nightly singing rallies and newly re-established statehood, part of the display is dedicated to the national identity and patriotism issues under the title 'To Be Estonian Feels Proud and Good' (a quotation from the lyrics of a popular pop-rock song composed in the late 1980s and widely performed during the independence movement). This exhibition was designed, to begin with, with the hope of replacing it within a few years with a bigger and more balanced display (in the new facilities), but it has served visitors now for more than fifteen years without any extensive changes. In its approach to the visitors, it is monological and didactic and although the curators have attempted an approach to the history of mentalities, the collections and available resources apparently limited their choices considerably (Reemann, n.d.). Topics remaining outside the prevailing discourse are presented and tackled with the help of temporary exhibitions, while trying to introduce both cultures from abroad and unravel and interpret different aspects of the modern Estonian society. Since 2004, the ENM has organised an annual film festival called *Worldfilm/Maailmafilm*, presenting anthropological documentaries with rigorous analytic approaches to world cultures. During recent years, the museum has apparently consciously tried to promote new projects related to temporary exhibits, while providing participatory opportunities and information to all kinds of audiences rather than the single target audience of the early 1990s.

The Art Museum of Estonia

This is a museum that initially grew out of the wish to establish a branch of the Estonian National Museum in the capital Tallinn, but due to lack of support for such duplication on the part of the state, eventually focused on art collecting. Its relatively weak position is reflected in its loss of prominent facilities. During the Soviet period, it became a central art institution with major collections and rather strong public recognition when, from the 1960s, the Estonian art scene managed to somewhat distance itself from the Soviet political agendas. During the re-established Estonian state, this museum had gradually received substantial subsidies from the state, including the first original museum building in Estonia. The narrative of the museum, in relation to the narrative of acquiring or losing facilities, likewise reflects the social position of an art institution over time.

In 1911, an idea circulated to set up a distinct art museum in the medieval Town Hall of Tallinn after the building of a new hall, which eventually never happened. In 1915, the Tallinn Department of the Estonian National Museum (*Eesti Rahva Muuseumi Tallinna Osakond*) was

founded by the initiative of a young art student and ENM collaborator August Pulst. The museum managed to open to the public in a few rooms in 1916, despite the ongoing World War. The ENM Tallinn Department aspired for independence, and in 1919 they reorganised into a sovereign *Eesti Muuseumi Ühing Tallinnas* (Association of the Estonian Museum in Tallinn) with their respective Estonian Museum (*Eesti Muuseum*),²⁰ creating thus another museum housing both ethnographic collections and art collections apart from the ENM. This caused rivalry between the two in obtaining the position of primary national importance and in acquiring state subsidies. In the 1920s, the Ministry of Education advocated the idea of establishing the state (national) museum in Tallinn and thus supported the museum in the capital, but the ENM managed to prove itself as the ethnographic and cultural-historical museum. The Estonian Museum gradually concentrated more on collecting works of art of different kind and was therefore affiliated to the Ministry of Education. The art collections were initially started in 1912-1913 when 80 sculptures by renowned Estonian artist August Weizenberg were purchased. During the 1920s, foreign art collections were acquired mainly from nationalised manor houses previously owned by the Baltic Germans, while artworks were also bought from the Baltic Germans and from Estonian artists.

In 1921, the Estonian Museum was housed in Kadriorg Palace, a former summer residence of the Russian Tsars,²¹ where now prehistoric collections, folk costumes, wooden vessels, quilts, art history and cultural history were displayed. A renewed and modernised exhibition opened in 1927, exhibiting a variety (Estonian, Baltic German, West European, etc.) of art as well as ethnographic items on a smaller scale. However, shortly afterwards, the museum was moved to another, less impressive and less spacious building, when Kadriorg Palace was claimed by the Estonian government as the President's residence. Evidently, this museum had not yet managed to establish a relevant social position with their rather small Estonian (art) collections and was unable to hold on to these facilities of historic significance (Kalm 2010: 245). In 1928, the institution was renamed the Art Museum of Estonia (*Eesti Kunstimuuseum*, AME), and its ethnographic collections were handed over to the ENM in the 1930s. During that decade, the museum society of the AME continued to purchase modern Estonian as well as Western European art.

In 1940, in a similar way to the transformation of other museums, the AME was nationalised and renamed the State Art Museum (*Riiklik Kunstimuuseum*). As well, two consecutive museum directors were arrested and deported to Siberia in 1941 (Kukk 2009: 695). During the Soviet bombing of Tallinn in 1944, the museum facilities were burnt down along with a substantial part of the applied art collections and museum library, although fortunately most of the art collections were saved (Kirme 2007: 25–26). After the Second World War, the museum was reorganised into the Tallinn State Art Museum (*Tallinna Riiklik Kunstimuuseum*), and Kadriorg Palace, which had served as a seat for administrative power (Estonian, Soviet and Nazi-German) and was given to the Art Museum once again.²² However, first the museum had to share the building with the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Estonian SSR, which entailed the removal of displays for government receptions (five times in 1946, seven in 1947, and eleven in 1948). In addition, the wings of the Palace were divided into apartments, which left less space for the growing collections. This situation ended only gradually by the turn of the 1950s/1960s.

Museum personnel were oppressed in the 1950 political purge campaign, while the best part of the Estonian art from the first half of the twentieth century was firmly closed into the

repositories. The first exhibitions after the war were still able to present national elements, but since the early 1950s onset of Stalinist repressions, museum display emphasis was laid on Estonian art preceding the October Revolution (for example, it limited to a few artists who had studied in St. Petersburg), and works of art of the so-called Socialist Realist style. In this period, applied (decorative) art began to thrive because of the possibility of focusing the artistic skills and expression solely on the aesthetic; at the same time the style of the 1930s was reintroduced. From the end of the 1950s and the following political thaw onwards, Estonian art has worked out its 'protective mechanism' via applied art (attributed the lowest rank in the hierarchy of art ideology) against the Sovietising trends of Socialist Realism (Helme, Kangilaski 1999: 141). From the 1960s onwards, art and museum policy became more liberal, there were exhibitions on previously forbidden and new modern, more avant-garde, artists. In 1969, when the museum celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, it was renamed the Estonian SSR State Art Museum (*Eesti NSV Riiklik Kunstimuseum*).

If, in 1952 the Museum possessed 16,000 artworks, the collections had grown to 20,000 by the early 1970s, and 120,000 visitors were registered per year. Art life was rather dynamic in Estonia in the 1960s and 1970s, considering the circumstances, while artists from all over the USSR came to Estonia to see exhibitions and to be in contact with local artists. However, the regulations for collecting and exhibiting in museums continued to be strict: the policy of art purchasing followed the general ideological trends of the time; the whole process was subjected to the rigid control of the Art Deposit of the Estonian SSR (*ENSV Kunstifond*). Although from the end of the 1960s the Museum was allowed to arrange exhibitions on Estonian art from diasporas, there was a gradual tightening of borders in the 1970s, so that many works significant in the history and development of Estonian art could only be obtained after 1991 (cf. Helme 2006: 28–29).

An important role in negotiating policies between the authorities and the art institution was played by museum director Inge Teder, who held the post for decades between 1966 and 1991. She was the main initiator of various developments in the Art Museum: a new exhibition policy reaching out to tourists in the summer period, while the winter season was intended for local people. The pride of the museum was a display of international and local applied art that became a calling card of Estonian culture (Polli 2010). This led to the establishment of a special institution for applied art in 1971, and eventually the Museum of Applied Art was opened as a branch of the AME in 1980 (Ajamustrid 2008: 7).²³ This was followed by other specialised branches of the Art Museum in Tallinn (Niguliste and Adamson-Eric) in the 1980s, and also in Kohtla-Järve and Narva in northeastern Estonia, bordering with Russia.

The socially turbulent end of the 1980s and turn of the 1990s did not see a substantial shift in the role of the Art Museum of Estonia in the national imaginary, over and above its already relatively well-established reputation. However, its economic situation deteriorated with the commencement of extensive restoration of Kadriorg Palace, due to which the AME was moved to the Knighthood Building²⁴ in the medieval centre of Tallinn in 1991. Regardless of the severe limitations imposed by these conditions, the museum started to develop new directions in research, namely of Baltic German art, and Estonian avant-garde art of the 1910-20s, of the 1960s, as well as of the Estonian diasporas, with corresponding exhibitions (cf. Levin 1995: 7). In 1993, the new permanent exhibition was opened at Knighthood Building depicting artworks from Estonia dating between the nineteenth century and the 1940s. The collecting process turned

out to be relatively continuous and rather steadily financed during the decade of the 1990s, and consequently the Art Museum of Estonia may possess the most comprehensive collection of recent art in the Baltic countries (Komissarov 2010a: 160). The AME possesses jointly the largest collection of Estonian art through history, which comprised in total approximately 58,000 items in 2009: paintings, the graphic arts, sculptures, plastic arts, precious metal, photographs and video. In 1996, parliament adopted the decision to start the process of constructing a new building for the AME, which eventually took more than ten years due to insufficient state subsidies. The KUMU (*KUnsti MUuseum*) opened in 2006 as the new main building of the AME, an impressive architectural achievement that has granted the museum an opportunity to arrange exhibitions in size unthinkable in any of the previous periods.²⁵

Today, the AME is also one of thirteen central museums in Estonia, governed by the Ministry of Culture. There are five active branches of the museum: Kadriorg Art Museum, Niguliste Museum, Adamson-Eric Museum, and the KUMU Art Museum. Kadriorg and the KUMU are housed in separate buildings, though closely situated, in Kadriorg Park green to the west of Tallinn city centre (and in the neighbourhood of the President's Palace); the two other branches, Niguliste and Adamson-Eric stand on either sides of the same street in Tallinn's old medieval centre. Niguliste²⁶ Museum houses ecclesiastical Medieval and Baroque art from between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries. The Adamson-Eric Museum houses a varied personal collection and temporary exhibits.

The long years of restoration and construction of the new facilities allowed the AME to reorganise its structure and collections: foreign art has been given a section in the Kadriorg Art Museum, while the national gallery and contemporary art have been given sections in the KUMU Art Museum. The permanent exhibition of the Kadriorg Art Museum presents West European (Dutch, German, English, French, Italian) and Russian art from the period between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries. The permanent exhibition at the KUMU Art Museum is divided into three parts: the historical classics of Estonian art (from the eighteenth century until WWII), the exhibition of Estonian art from 1945 until 1991, and contemporary art. The first part, what could traditionally be called a national gallery, 'tracks down changes in the Estonian mentality as well as in art styles' (*Eesti Kunstimuuseum*). It seeks to overcome the historical dichotomy between national and Baltic German and to stress the importance of territoriality and plurality (see Abel 2010), whereas the previous national imaginary concerning art history continuously compartmentalised and drew a sharp distinction between pre-twentieth-century Baltic German art and that of the first professional ethnic Estonians, starting from the end of the nineteenth century. The second part of the display deals in depth with the relationship between the Soviet state and art, showing the dramatic changes in society that took place after the Second World War and introducing different artistic styles and movements that evolved during the decades, juxtaposing them and putting them in context of the developments in Western Europe (Komissarov 2010b). A gallery of contemporary art that presents the more recent major works in Estonian art forms the third part of the museum (Komissarov 2010a). To meet these purposes, the exhibitions are temporary and try to expand the understanding of the aspirations of contemporary art among the general public. Since its opening, the KUMU Art Museum has turned out to be the most visited museum in Estonia.

The AME is considered the most important art institution in Estonia today, and plays an active part in cultural life by organising various exhibitions and different cultural events. The statutes of the AME (2005) state: ‘The main purpose of the AME is to collect and preserve Estonian professional art and foreign art, as well as to study, promote and publish relevant materials. The AME enhances Estonian professional art as a part of national cultural heritage.’ (*Eesti Kunstimuuseumi Põhimäärus*, 2005). The AME aspires to participate in the international communication of visual culture and to mediate its multicultural aspects. The most important of which, for territorial and ethnic identity, are the permanent exhibitions in the Kadriorg Art Museum and in the KUMU Art Museum. The KUMU states its wish to address groups that do not normally visit art museums via its various activities. The AME tries to reach out to the Russian-speaking minority in Estonia by organising special museum events and regular guided tours.

The Estonian Open Air Museum

This museum reflects substantially the Estonian national narrative that relates ethnic history to the rural peasant environment in past centuries. It was founded during the Soviet period, in the 1950s, to represent the agendas of salvation ethnography via authentic examples of historical rural architecture. The museum’s origin dates instrumentally to the pre-war independence period, and through its pre-twentieth century focus created a reservoir of ethnic history outside the scope of Soviet ideological manipulation. Today it continues to be a particular knowledge format that disseminates an ideology supportive of Estonian identity and memory, and is still predominantly exclusive in its ethnic scope.

The genesis of the *Eesti Vabaõhumuuseum*, the Estonian Open Air Museum (EOAM), dates back to visits of Estonian intellectuals to the open-air museums in Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark from 1910. In 1913, the Estonian National Museum initiated the preparatory work required to establish an Open Air Museum near Tartu. However, in 1919 the Association of the Estonian Museum in Tallinn introduced the idea of establishing the EOAM in Tallinn instead. The Estonian Open Air Museum Society operated between 1925 and 1931, continuing to promote Tallinn as a prospective location for the EOAM. Although it didn’t materialise in those decades, the idea of creating the EOAM was publicly promoted by prominent ethnologists working at the ENM.²⁷ They claimed the need to introduce a holistic ‘picture of the people’s past’ to a wider audience (including tourists), so that everybody could ‘enter the past across the threshold of modernity’ (Manninen 1925). Thus, they basically followed the founding trends of such institutions in other European countries, though a lack of resources prevailed. After the Soviet occupation in 1940, a plan to open the Pirita Park-Museum in the coastal area of Tallinn took shape in 1941, but this undertaking was cancelled because of the Second World War.

In 1950, the Union of Estonian Architects re-introduced the plans and preparatory works for the EOAM; the role of enthusiastic architects in the process was remarkable. In 1956, the co-ordination of the preparatory process was taken over by the Ministry of Culture, and the EOAM was officially established a year later in 1957. The design, rationale and construction of the museum-in-making relied substantially on pre-war plans by ENM ethnologists, as well as on their current research for locating suitable buildings all over the country. The Estonian State Open Air Museum (*Eesti Riiklik Vabaõhumuuseum*) opened to the public at the historical Rocca al Mare

manor and estate by the northwestern seashore in Tallinn in 1964. The exhibition of rural peasant architecture with a complex of household equipment was methodologically framed using the ICOM declaration (1957). The Latvian Ethnographic Open Air Museum and the EOAM, as the first open air museums in the Soviet Union, became prototypes for the other open-air museums across the USSR.

The Open Air Museum was an ambiguous project both in its political reference and in the national discourse carried through the Soviet period, although in a slightly hidden form. This museum fit relatively well into the official Soviet narrative of history: it was focused on farming economy, and provided room for presenting the relative deprivation that the Estonian peasantry of the past had had to endure. The economic aspect in this village museum could be promoted according to the ideological requirements of the day: 'The display is based on the Marxist–Leninist methodology of the study of history, by showing peasant farmstead architecture in its historical development and by reflecting the class conflicts of the village society' (Saron 1984: 33). At the same time, the museum collected and presented elements of Estonian history that dated back centuries and therefore could not be censored according to Soviet rules or aesthetics, thus creating a physical space for rendering a narrative of ethnic Estonian history. It was a promotional institution for international and Soviet tourists, and served also as a favoured recreational area for the locals. For example, in 1980 the number of visitors reached a record 151,000 people. The EOAM was considered a site relatively free of Soviet ideology, as the objects exhibited were considered self-referential and so provided with minimal written text (Lang 1996: 58). The collections of the EOAM are basically focused on ethnography and cultural history, representing farmsteads from different cultural-geographic regions of Estonia, displaying reconstructions of peasant lifestyle of the previous centuries. The EOAM is the central museum of rural architecture in Estonian.

Today, the EOAM is subordinated to the Ministry of Culture as one of the state-owned central museums in Estonia. In their promotional texts, the EOAM refers to its collection as representing Estonian 'national' (other terms used as synonyms are 'peasant', 'folk' and 'rural') architecture. The EOAM collects and displays traditional farm complexes representing different ethnographic regions of Estonia (northern, southern, western Estonia and the islands on the western coast of Estonia). The EOAM envisions its role as a memory institution whose task is to preserve, study and display Estonian rural architecture and the peasant way of life, mainly from the eighteenth to the beginning of the twentieth century. However, the museum claims in its promotional material that elements of their display may refer to the Stone Age, thus arguably reflecting at least a thousand years of history, in order to create a direct continuity with the most ancient traditions of peasant Estonians.

The collection displays about 80 rural buildings (12 farmsteads usually comprising a number of adjacent facilities, and several single dwellings or public buildings). Other objects (ethnographic tools, household equipment and folk art items) supplement the collection and help to demonstrate the living environment of the peasants' past. The display is made up of original buildings transported to the museum grounds usually by first being dismantled under the scrupulous care and supervision of museum experts, and then reconstructed precisely. The museum grounds are vast, today covering today a territory of 84 hectares located in a forest and park area on the seashore relatively close to the centre of Tallinn and nearby residential areas.

A more holistic impression of a traditional Estonian village scene is achieved by combining the nineteenth century peasant farmsteads with other houses of certain social functions and public buildings: wind- and watermills, a tavern, a Lutheran chapel dating from the seventeenth century, a Herrnhut prayer house, a village school, fishermen's huts and fishnet cabins. Some of these buildings function as re-enactment facilities, both for edifying and entertaining purposes, mainly in summer, but also in periods according to the seasonal calendar during the rest of the year (autumn fairs, Christmas and Easter celebrations). The village tavern serves food and functions as a concert venue for music and dance performances. At the village school, courses on rural lifestyles and activities are regularly arranged, as well as crafts classes.

Some newer objects of rural architecture (fire station, a farm building from the 1930s) have now also been included in the exhibition to reflect twentieth century changes in rural life. Though notably lacking in the context of the present display so far, there are plans to include several buildings that reflect rural architectural diversity and the modernisation processes alongside more recent developments (a Baltic German summer house, a smithy, a communal warehouse, a village store, a municipal administration building, a house of culture, and an apartment building from a *kolkhoz* village) in the near future.

The modern EOAM explains its goals through the need to collect, to study, and to represent authentic historical rural architecture from all over Estonia, including traditional ethnic minority groups, although so far this is far from apparent. The EOAM has a defined national dimension in its research as well as display agenda, while being predominantly exclusive in its ethnic scope with only the ethnic Estonian narrative presented. It is a particular knowledge format disseminating a particular ideology that supports ethnic Estonian identity and memory. The rural architecture represents values of folk life reflecting the initial phase in Estonian national discourse, and this demonstrates the living conditions and farm landscapes of the period in which the national movement was initiated by teachers and pastors of Estonian origin and spread among the Estonian peasants who constituted the social basis for national awakening in the second half of the nineteenth century. In order to address the multi-cultural dimension, the EOAM plans to open displays to represent the lifestyle and facilities of the historical (rural) ethnic minorities and regional groups in Estonia: the Baltic Germans and the Coastal Swedes, the Russian Old Believers and the Seto. The museum has acquired a number of buildings already, but the lack of state subsidies has so far prevented their reconstruction.

Notes

- ¹ In Estonia, there was remarkably no bloodshed in the course of this process.
- ² Cf. the current project's report on Latvia. The general outline of political history is largely concurrent with Latvia, particularly concerning the Soviet period.
- ³ His Mon Faible collection forms an integral part of the self-narrative of the present Estonian History Museum.
- ⁴ Eventually, in their project to create a museum that represented ethnic Estonians, the Estonian nationalist activists considered the *Provinzialmuseum* to be completely German.
- ⁵ EKÜ=*Eestimaa Kirjameeste Ühing*, literal translation of ELG into Estonian.
- ⁶ A Revolution Museum initially established separately was merged into the Estonian SSR History and Revolution Museum for the short period of June only, in 1941.
- ⁷ In Russian, a difference was made between reference to *gosudarstvennyi* (state) and *natsional'nyi* (national). The Estonian term *riiklik* conforms here with 'state'.
- ⁸ In 1950 the former library of the ELS was given to the Library of the Academy of Sciences of the Estonian SSR, and in 1961 the older and more valuable part of the numismatic collections were given to the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Estonian SSR with the aim of making them accessible for research.

- ⁹ The Museum of Natural Sciences was established in the former premises of *Provintsiaalmuseum*; the History Museum was housed and exhibited in temporary facilities after the war.
- ¹⁰ *Glanlit* = the Main Administration for the Protection of State Secrets in the Press under the USSR Council of Ministers.
- ¹¹ This museum, with a focused pro-Soviet and manipulated political agenda, was closed by the newly established independent Republic in 1991.
- ¹² A prominent family summer residence before the First World War.
- ¹³ The title is an allegoric reference to the national flag of independent Estonia, the three stripes of which are blue, black and white. The flag was not yet officially re-acknowledged at the time, making thus a strong statement to reclaim national history.
- ¹⁴ Cf. the information provided on GEG on p. 5 of the current article. This organisation continues its activities in Estonia, though it turned into an Estonian-language-based organisation after 1918, known today as *Õpetatud Eesti Selts*.
- ¹⁵ The ENM's former director was imprisoned and shot by the Soviets in 1942.
- ¹⁶ Finno-Ugrian affiliation is based on linguistic ties, historically defined by language research. This language family joins Estonians, Finns, Hungarians, dispersed groups in northern Russia and Siberia (e.g. the Komi, the Mari, the Udmurt, the Khanty, etc.), who were mainly rural or semi-nomadic. In the Soviet period, it provided subtle political agency also via the imaginary trajectory outside the Soviet borders to Finland and Hungary, being thus instrumental for Estonians in their self-positioning in several dimensions.
- ¹⁷ In 1937, objects were exchanged with the *Museum für Völkerkunde* in Berlin, as a result of which the museum obtained items for their collections on the peoples of Australia, Oceania and Africa.
- ¹⁸ In 1931, the ENM established a permanent network system of correspondents (*korrespondendid*), that is, volunteer collaborators among the general public. Their task was mainly to respond in writing to printed and publicised questionnaires, by which scholars sought detailed local information on the use and making of farm tools, work practices, etc., to complement the artefacts collected. Except for a hiatus in the 1950s, this system of networking with the audience continues today.
- ¹⁹ The history of relations between ethnic groups in this border region was studied by academics (cf. Moora 1964).
- ²⁰ The name 'Estonian' referred to the ethnic Estonian origin of both objects and initiators of the institution, in contrast to other, Baltic German initiatives.
- ²¹ The building (with the surrounding park) is said to be the most impressive ensemble of Baroque architecture in Estonia and was constructed in the 1720s as a summer residence for the Russian emperor Peter the Great and his consort, Catherine (Ekaterina); hence also the name of the site, *Katherinenthal* (Catherine's Valley, i.e. *Kadriorg* in Estonian).
- ²² Kadriorg Palace has been important as a backdrop to state affairs in the political history of the country. In 1938, an administrative building was constructed next to the Palace, and this today serves as the President's residence. The whole complex has become an important element of the national narrative.
- ²³ Since 2004 the Museum of Applied Art has been an independent state-owned museum under the name the Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design (www.etdm.ee).
- ²⁴ *Rüütelkonna hoone*, originally *Ritterschaft Haus*; this building was housed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia between 1920 and 1940, and by Estonian National Library between 1948 and 1992.
- ²⁵ The KUMU was awarded the European Museum of the Year award in 2008.
- ²⁶ Niguliste being the one-time Baltic German St. Nicholas Church that was severely damaged in the Soviet bombing of Tallinn in 1944, restored only in the 80s as a museum-cum-concert hall and today housing one of the most famous works of art in Estonia, *Der Totentanz* by the Lübeck master Bernt Notke (accomplished in the fifteenth century).
- ²⁷ They were supportive of creating this institution in Tallinn, while arguing that the Estonian National Museum had to focus on academic research and that an open-air museum would have to serve the general public, thus being better placed in a larger city like Tallinn (cf. Saron 1984: 31).

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Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Estonian History Museum								
<i>Estländische Provinzial-Museum</i>	1864	1842	Civil society (<i>Estländische Literärische Gesellschaft</i>)	Civil society (<i>Estländische Literärische Gesellschaft</i>)	Archaeology, Natural Objects, Numismatics, Ethnography, History, Art	Territorial and universal representation (Estland and Livland Province, Russia, and the world)	8000 BC to the present	Existing building, in the centre of the capital, Old Town of Reval (Tallinn).
ELS Provincial Museum (renamed)	[renamed 1918]		-“-	-“-	-“-	-“-	-“-	-“-
State History Museum of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic (renamed and reorganised)	[renamed 1940]		Soviet of People’s Commissars of the Estonian SSR; since 1950s Academy of Sciences; since 1963 Ministry of Culture	Expropriated by the Soviet state	Archaeology, Numismatics, Ethnography, Social and Political History	Territorial representation (historical territory of Estonia)	-“-	Existing buildings in the centre of the capital, Old Town of Tallinn. Current location since 1952, branch facilities since 1975.
Estonian SSR History and Revolution Museum (renamed and reorganised)	[renamed 1987]		Ministry of Culture	State	-“-	-“-	-“-	-“-
Estonian History Museum (renamed)	[renamed 1989]		-“-	Independent state agency since 1996	-“-	-“-	-“-	-“-

Estonian National Museum								
Estonian National Museum	1909	1860s/ 1907	Civil society (Estonian Students Society)	Civil society (Museum Society)	Ethnography, Archaeology, Art, Social and Political History	Territorial (ethnic) representation (Estonia)	12 th century to the present	Existing buildings in city centre of Tartu. Raadi Estate in solitary location in 1922-1944.
State Ethnographic Museum of the Estonian SSR (renamed and reorganised)	[renamed 1940]		Soviet of People's Commissars of the Estonian SSR; since 1950s Academy of Sciences; since 1963 Ministry of Culture	Expropriated by the Soviet state	Ethnographic and Cultural Collections	Territorial (ethnic) representation (Estonia; Finno-Ugric peoples in Russia)	-“-	Existing buildings in city centre of Tartu since 1945.
Estonian National Museum (renamed)	[renamed 1988]		Ministry of Culture	Independent state agency since 1996	Ethnographic and Cultural Collections	-“-	-“-	-“-
Art Museum of Estonia								
Estonian Museum	1916	1911	Civil society (Tallinn Department of the Estonian National Museum)	Civil society (Museum Society)	Cultural History and Art	Territorial (ethnic) representation (Estonian)	19 th and 20 th century	Various existing buildings, most prominent being the Kadriorg Palace.
Estonian Art Museum	[renamed 1928]		Civil society	Estonian Art Museum Foundation	Visual Art	Territorial and universal representation (Estonian, Baltic German, Western European)	-“-	-“-

State Art Museum	[renamed 1940]		Soviet of People's Commissars of the Estonian SSR; later Ministry of Culture	Expropriated by the Soviet state	-“-	Territorial and universal representation (Estonian, Baltic German, Western European, Russian)	13 th century to the present	Kadriorg Palace
Art Museum of Estonia (Kadriorg Art Museum, Niguliste Museum, Adamson-Eric Museum, and the KUMU)	[renamed 1991/2006]		Ministry of Culture	Independent state agency since 1996	-“-	-“-	-“-	Kadriorg Palace and post-modern building in 2006.
Estonian Open Air Museum								
Estonian Open Air Museum	1957	[1925] 1950	[Estonian National Museum] Civil society and state (Union of Estonian Architects; Ministry of Culture)	[Open Air Museum Society] State	Rural Architecture, Ethnography	Territorial representation (Estonia)	19 th and 20 th century rural architecture	Park area by the sea in the capital, complex of re-located rural buildings.
-“-			Ministry of Culture	Independent state agency since 1996	-“-	-“-	-“-	-“-



National Museums in Finland

Susanna Pettersson

Summary

This report analyses the growth of the Finnish museum scene from its early beginnings in the nineteenth century through to the big national museum organizations: the Finnish National Gallery, the National Museum of Finland and the Natural History Museum. The timeframe is particularly interesting due to the historical setting: when the first initiatives to form national collections saw the light of day, the country was in the midst of political turmoil. Separation from Sweden had taken place in 1809, and Finland, as a Grand Duchy of Russia, was searching for a new identity. The nation-building process, driven by Swedish-speaking academics, artists and politicians, was visible in all sectors, from the fine arts to literature, history writing and science. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, language-policy issues divided the field into two separate camps. Favouring either the Finnish or Swedish language became a political matter.

When the country gained independence from Russia in 1917, an express need for national institutions such as national museums became evident. Nationalism reached a peak and was seen and heard in architecture, the fine arts, literature and music. The civil war in 1918 and, later on, the World War did not close the museums, but affected their work on a very practical level. The cold-war period was partly mirrored in the politically appropriate exhibition programmes. The nation's geopolitical struggle only became the subject of exhibitions later on, when it was possible to approach their contents from an analytical distance.

The development of the three national museums has depended on Finnish cultural policy and on politics in general. The nineteenth century was an era of vigorous national development and the creation of institutions, the formation of collections and collecting practices. The twentieth century featured the growth of the museum profession and expertise, and the museums' relationship with their audiences changed. Political changes, the industrialization of the country, a relatively rapid shift from an agricultural society to a service and IT society have affected museums' activities, too. Internationally important trends and issues have been reflected in the exhibition programmes.

One of the central observations is that the crucial factor was the professional expertise used in running the museums, building up the collections and putting them on display. Thus, the success of the big national museums depends not only on the contents of the collections, exhibitions and various programmes targeted on different audiences, but on their human resources.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
The Finnish Art Society (FAS)	1846	1834	Civil Society, Aristocracy	Civil Society	Art	Finnish Art in Western Tradition, international art.	19 th c.	Various apartments until opening of <i>Ateneum</i> , central Helsinki.
Ateneum Art Museum, part of FAS/FNG	1888 <i>Ateneum</i> (collections of the FAS)	1870s	Civil Society, Aristocracy	Civil Society	Art	Finnish Art in Western Tradition, international art.	19 th c.	<i>Ateneum</i> , purpose-built, neo-renaissance, central Helsinki.
Sinebrychoff Art Museum, part of FAS/FNG	1921 (Sinebrychoff Art Collection)	1880s	Private	State	Art	International art, emphasis on Swedish art	17 th – 19 th c.	<i>Sinebrychoff</i> , private house, classical style, central Helsinki.
The Finnish National Gallery	1990	1982	Parliament	State	Art	Finnish Art in Western Tradition, international and contemporary art, furniture.	16 th – 20 th c.	<i>Ateneum</i> , <i>Sinebrychoff</i> , <i>Kiasma</i> (1998-), central Helsinki.
<i>Kiasma</i> , part of FNG	1998 <i>Kiasma</i> (part of FNG)	1990 (1960s)	Parliament	State	Art	Contemporary Art, National and International.	20 th c.	<i>Kiasma</i> : purpose-built (1998), modern style, central Helsinki.

Etnografisk Museum	1760, 1828	1840	University	University	Cultural History	National Pre-History and Culture	Stone age to 19 th c.	Various locations, included in the National Museum, central Helsinki.
The National Museum of Finland	1916	1893	Parliament	State	Cultural History	National Pre-History and Culture.	Stone Age to the present day	Purpose-built in national romantic style; Helsinki
The Finnish Museum of Natural History	1925	1811	University	University	Natural History	National specimens of nature, universal values	Stone age to the present	Old school, (bought 1923), neo-classical style, central Helsinki.

Introduction

The Finnish museum field today consists of more than 1000 museums. Professional museum organizations run a total of 326 museum sites. Compared with the number of citizens – the population of the country is 5.5 million – the number of museums is one of the highest in Europe.

This report analyses the growth of the Finnish museum scene from its early beginnings in the nineteenth century through to the big national-museum organizations: the Finnish National Gallery, the National Museum of Finland and the Natural History Museum. Other museums of national and regional relevance are the regional museums of cultural history (22), regional art museums (16) and museums with national status for presenting a special field, such as design, architecture, theatre and Finnish glass (17). Details of these are given in the appendices.

The vast majority of Finnish museums were originally established on private initiatives. In the nineteenth century, this happened on both a private and semi-public level. Private collectors donated their lifetime achievements to ‘the nation’ and encouraged local authorities to establish museum institutions around their collections. As semi-public institutional bodies, various societies, such as the Finnish Art Society, played a key role by providing an institutional framework for collecting.

Whereas private bodies and private funds drove the early beginnings, two hundred years later, the museum sector forms an important part of the culture industry and is supported by public funding. The State allocates funds for museums on an annual basis and supports the big nationals with substantial sums.¹ Regional museums and museums of national importance also get substantial funding from the state. (Museum Statistics 2009)

The responsibility for developing the museum field is in the hands of the Ministry of Education and Culture, which is the most important policy maker. (Ministry of Education and Culture Strategy 2020) On museum issues, it consults the Finnish Museum Association and, in particular, works closely with the National Board of Antiquities and the Finnish National Gallery. The Museum Act (1996/1166) provides a concrete framework for this.²

Apart from developing the museum field on the policy and stakeholder level, museum-related research also enriches the big picture. Since 1983, museology has been taught at the university level in Finland (Vilkuna 2010: 339). The first professor of museology was appointed in 1998 at the University of Jyväskylä. (Vilkuna 2010) A history of Finnish museums was published in 2010 (Pettersson & Kinanen 2010) and the Finnish forum for museum-related research was established in May 2010, bringing together scholars from different disciplines.

The most significant references for the report cover the history of the big national museums: Mikko Härö’s study on the history of the National Board of Antiquities (2010) and Derek Fewster’s study *Visions of the Past Glory: Nationalism and the Construction of Early Finnish History* (2006) that analyses the formation of the National Museum, whereas Susanna Pettersson’s study *Suomen Taideyhdistyksestä Ateneumiin. Fredrik Cygnaeus, Carl Gustaf Estlander ja taidekokoelman roolit* (From the Finnish Art Society to the Ateneum: Fredrik Cygnaeus, Carl Gustaf Estlander and the roles of the art collection) (2008) covers the early history of the Finnish Art Society and its collection, thus creating the framework for the core collection of the Finnish National Gallery. The institutional developments and the history of the collections of the Natural History Museum

are discussed in various articles and other publications, but the institution still lacks an in-depth study. *Suomen museohistoria* (Finnish Museum History) (2010), edited by Susanna Pettersson and Pauliina Kinanen, provides a general overview of the development of the Finnish museum field, in-depth case studies and complete lists and statistics concerning the founding of the museums, thus forming one of the key sources for the report. A larger number of earlier publications complete the set of references.

The timeframe for this report spans the formation of the collections from the seventeenth century and the academic collecting of the natural history specimens up to the first decades of the professional museums and collection management of the early twentieth century. The rapid growth of the museum sector, organizational changes and the professionalization of the field in the twentieth century will be discussed, as well as the most relevant future challenges for the big national museums. One of the key focuses, however, is the development of the nineteenth century, when institutionalized collecting grew to be a part of civilized society.

The timeframe is particularly interesting due to the historical setting: when the first initiatives to form national collections saw the light of day, the country was in the midst of political turmoil. Separation from Sweden had taken place in 1809, and Finland, as a Grand Duchy of Russia, was searching for a new identity. When the country gained independence from Russia in 1917, the express need for national institutions such as national museums became evident. The civil war in 1918, the world war and the cold-war period were partly reflected in museum history. Political struggles took different forms: at the beginning of twentieth century, language became one of the symbols of nationalism. Culture and its outcomes were rebranded for the Finnish-speaking nation.

Bearing all this in mind, several questions can be asked. What was the institutional role of the emerging collections in relation to the nation in the political environment of nineteenth century Finland? Did the political situation affect the formation of the collections? Once the national museum institutions were finally established, were they able to respond to the needs of their audiences?

Communicating the core contents with the aid of collection displays was the museums' strongest tool in the nation-building process. I will argue that the crucial factor was the professional expertise used in running the museums, compiling the collections and putting them on display – bearing in mind that the other key factors were funds allocated for running the institutions, buildings to house the collections, political trends that either favoured or disapproved of the national institutions, and the relationship with the public at large. Memory organizations such as museums contributed to the nation-building process by selecting, safekeeping, caring for and displaying the national narrative.

Therefore it is essential to analyse the development of the museum profession alongside the institutional history and the surrounding society. Even though it will not be possible to answer all the questions within the limitations of this report, it is interesting to point to where future research ought to look. Such questions include the scientific background of the early museum men, and the innovations and trends in science and art. Was there, for instance, a broader consensus amongst European museum makers that national experts followed? It can also be asked whether there were hidden national agendas or political taboos that the national museum organization would rather not touch, leaving such subjects to the other stakeholders? What

about the future challenges for national museum institutions in a globalized world where Finland no longer represents the cold, dark edge of the world, as described by the nineteenth century museum men?

This report provides an overview of the Finnish national-museum scene by contextualizing the formation of the national collections, analysing the role of three national institutions showcasing natural history, art and cultural heritage, and looking at the challenges that face them within contemporary society.

The nineteenth century context

In Finland the national need to create collections and to establish museum institutions emerged around the mid-nineteenth century. Given the fact that, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the museum field was non-existent, apart from the study collections in Finland's one university – there were no public collections, no exhibitions, and consequently no writing in the press – the developments occurred quite rapidly.

The first collections were established through the efforts of various societies that were founded to promote the arts and culture. It is essential to point out that these nationally orientated collections represented, from a museological point of view, a different philosophy and character from that of the first botanical, zoological, geological and paleontological collections that had already been set up for educational purposes in the seventeenth century, and used accordingly in the university, in the former capital, Turku. The first collections of the new era were formed by the Finnish Art Society (1846), the Finnish Antiquarian Society (1870), and the Finnish Society for Arts and Crafts (1875), and were intended for the nation.

The early nineteenth century brought many significant political changes. In 1809, Finland fell into Russian hands as a result of the Swedish-Russian War of 1808–9. Separation from Sweden resulted in fundamental changes to the political and economic scene. The capital was moved from Turku to Helsinki, together with key functions, such as political organs, the church and university. Helsinki became the centre of finance and commerce, providing an excellent environment for wealthy businessmen who were interested in collecting. Moreover, the political changes had a major impact on the cultural identity of the people. Balancing between East and West became a trademark of Finland for almost two centuries.

Also, the language became an issue as a symbol of the nation. Swedish, Russian and French were the languages of the cultural elite and the governing class. In time, the language of the working class, Finnish, gained strong supporters amongst the Swedish-speaking elite, not least because of the founding of the Finnish Literature Society in 1831. (Sulkunen 2004) Favouring the use of a certain language became a statement in itself. As Finland's leading Hegelian philosopher, J. V. Snellman, put it in his frequently quoted text (1861): "We are no longer Swedes; we can not become Russians; we must be Finns; and further: Swedish is the language of the Swedes, Russian of the Russians; should not the Finns have a right to own their language, and luckily they do own a such." (Fewster 2006, 116.)

During the first decades of the nineteenth century, Finland was swept up in a national movement that was reflected in the arts and culture. The country needed a history of its own and literally created it by writing, composing, sculpting, painting and collecting 'typical' specimens that reflected the character of the country. Meanwhile, the educated class was searching for the

true soul of the nation, *The Kalevala*, the national epic, was published in Finnish in 1835 and translated into Swedish (1841), French (1845) and Russian (1847). Also, an early popularization of Finnish history, *Suomen historia*, was written by Johan Fredrik Cajan and published in 1846.

Acts of concrete cultural work include the opening of the Drawing School in 1848 and the organization of the first public art exhibitions by the Finnish Art Society in 1849 (Pettersson 2008: 83–8). In 1851, Finland started to follow and participate in the world fairs as an independent stakeholder, thanks to its autonomous position as a Grand Duchy of Russia. (Smeds 1996) The first cultural journals, such as *Finske Tidskrift*, founded in 1876, also appeared. Moreover, the first purpose-built building for the beaux-arts and arts and crafts, the Ateneum, designed by architect Theodor Höijer, was erected in 1887 and opened to the public in October 1888.

A relatively small team of cultural activists who were well-positioned in society played the key roles: politicians, economics and academics each contributed their share to the nation-building process. It is worth noting that almost every initiative included academics from the university, thus ensuring that the core contents would be discussed with its students: the latest developments in literature, theatre, architecture, arts and crafts and the fine arts were an important national topic.

Artists kept to this same pattern, which served mutual needs, until they began studying in Paris in the 1880s, breaking free from the heavy academic tradition. This also caused a rupture in the grand, national narrative. The national aspirations to illustrate the nation, to enforce the narrative, were challenged by the artistic need to be independent and creative.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the politically turbulent years of the so-called Russification period under Czar Nikolai II drew artists even closer together and to the nation. Since it was forbidden to be openly nationalistic artists found other ways of contributing to the national narrative. Jean Sibelius composed some of his masterworks, lyrics with hidden meanings were written, and Akseli Gallen-Kallela and others created symbolist paintings to express the nation's political standpoint, its passion to become an independent country. This was finally achieved in 1917 when Finland gained independence.

Although the national museum process had already started at the end of the nineteenth century, and all the necessary preparations and decisions had been made under Russian rule, the young, independent nation benefited hugely from the setting up of national monuments and sites. They simply took on another meaning, now as symbols of the young nation. Museums and their collections played an important role in depicting the story of Finland. The newly built National Museum had been opened to the public in 1916. (Fewster 2006) The collections of arts and crafts had been moved out of the Ateneum and put on display at Hakasalmi Mansion House in 1912. (Pettersson 2010: 181) Natural history collections were given pride of place in the former premises of the Russian school building and were opened to the public in 1925. (Terhivuo 2010: 196) This reflected the intense developments underway in the museum field, and substantial effort was put, not only into opening the already existing collections to the general public, but also into creating new ones.

Opening a museum became a symbol in itself. When the Finnish Museums' Association was established in 1923, the museum field was already growing rapidly. (Kinanen 2010, 62) The biggest growth concentrated on small cities and the countryside. Local museums of cultural

history played an important role in highlighting the local traditions and culture, while the national museums, backed by strong links with the academic field, i.e. universities, monopolized the right to display the master narrative. One of the key observations is that the museum men were practising academics. The keepers of the collections and chairmen of the boards were university professors and lecturers. Accordingly, the national museums were expected to hire the best experts and to educate the future generations of museum professionals.

The clear need to create national museum institutions naturally fell into three categories: culture heritage, art and natural history. Later on, the selection was widened when the first house museums were founded to honour culturally and politically important figures, such as painter Akseli Gallen-Kallela (1961), Marshal Mannerheim (1951), architect Alvar Aalto (1966) and composer Jean Sibelius (1972 and 2007), thus providing an in-depth view into the lives of the nation's key figures. It is worth noting that the majority of such museums came to highlight the national narrative, but were free from any official, policy-level responsibilities.

Examples of the formation of the museum field of the nineteenth century came from neighbouring Sweden and Denmark, and especially from German-speaking Europe. (Fewster 2006; Selkokari 2008; Pettersson 2008) The Finnish museum men of the nineteenth century, such as professors Carl Gustaf Estlander (1834–1910) and Eliel Aspelin-Haapkylä (1847–1917), had travelled widely in Europe, looking for models for the Finnish collection field and for museums yet to be founded.

The earliest public debates concerning the need for national museum institutions had begun already in the 1840s, when the widely travelled philosopher Johan Vilhelm Snellman (1806–81) wrote several articles in one of the newspapers, whereas the 1870s were the key era for the public debate concerning the need for national museum institutions that reflected the nation's character and outcomes. It is to be noted, though, that the natural-history collections were not the focus of this debate. Minerals, bird's eggs and butterflies did not involve such tense political undertones as art and artefact collections intended to highlight the *Volksgeist*, the spirit of the nation. On the other hand, these collections provided a relevant and concrete framework for the 'country'. Plants, soil and animals were building blocks of the beloved environment illustrated in publications such as Zachris Topelius' *Finland framställt i teckningar* (1845), a series of ambitious drawings depicting the most important views of the country from south to north.

The land, its history and the creations of the mankind were anchored in these three categories of collections. The National Museum was to take care of the archaeology and cultural heritage, while the Finnish Art Society covered the fine arts, and the Natural History Museum was sovereign in its own field. Clashes were avoided, although older Finnish art, such as old portraits and religious paintings or sculptures, were categorically the prerogative of the National Museum. This was due to the fact that the Finnish Art Society had defined the history of the Finnish fine arts as 'beginning' when the Society was founded in 1846. Art older than that belonged to a different, historical, category.

The early decades and the mid-nineteenth century can be described as an era of cultural activists: individuals who sincerely believed that it was every civilized man's duty to make a contribution to the nation. Lots of manpower was channelled into cultural enterprises originated by individuals and operated by societies that formed semi-public platforms for cultural activities.

Unlike in many other countries, where the national collections were of a royal origin, Finnish collection resources were literally compiled from scratch. Museums and collections in German-speaking Europe, Paris, London and Finland's neighbouring countries Sweden and Denmark provided examples and inspiration. Cushioned between Sweden and Russia the Finnish collections initially focused on the contemporary, i.e. on nineteenth century material. Documenting the present and purchasing art with the paint still fresh was not the most typical approach during an era that valued *Galeriefähigkeit*, as Friedrich Pecht described it in 1877. A work of art had to deserve its place in a collection. (Sheehan 2000, 94–5)

Art, cultural heritage and natural history in national museums

This section will look more deeply into the history of the big national museums. The nineteenth century had been an era of inspiration and ideology – of national aspirations, the formation of the cultural field, and semi-public actors such as societies that allowed individual participation in the nation-building process. The twentieth century, in turn, was an era of putting things into practice. Museums were founded nationwide, the museum profession developed and an understanding of collection management and of the needs of the audience grew. It was also an era of increasing state support. Towards the end of the twentieth century, museums in general became increasingly aware of their role as a cultural-industry sector that provides services for various target groups.

The museum field grew extensively. Networks of regional museums and regional art museums were created in the 1980s as a part of official, ministry-driven cultural policy. Specialized museums took responsibility for concentrating on specific issues. Topics varied from theatre to sports, from railways to agriculture, military issues and traffic. (Mäkelä 2010; see also appendices) Some specialized museums, such as museums of architecture and design, were set up to promote Finnish culture on an international level, resulting in a number of touring exhibitions, publications and events, and establishing a practice that was adopted by many other museums. This became particularly important from the 1960s on, after the rise of Finnish Design.

The big national museums developed separately from one another, each covering their own range of tasks and responsibilities. Growth and various financial needs created pressure to tailor the institutional structure and the governance of the organizations to make ends meet. Societies were transformed into foundations and foundations into state agencies. Only the Natural History Museum has been able to retain its status as a separate unit in the university. The Ministry of Education and Culture oversaw the majority of these organizational changes.

The Finnish National Gallery

The Finnish National Gallery holds a key position in the Finnish art museum field as the largest art museum in the country and as a museum with national responsibilities. Many of the key activities of current art museum practice were developed within the Finnish National Gallery and its predecessor organizations, dating all the way back to the founding of the Finnish Art Society in 1846 with the original intention of establishing a framework for fine arts activities: from schooling artists to collecting art and displaying it to the public.

Core functions that originated already in the nineteenth century include collection care and management, conservation, exhibitions, libraries and archives, and developing the art museum

profession. The education of the public was implemented with the aid of the ideas of the Enlightenment, since the aim was to bring the fine arts closer to the nation. In its early stages, the university professors and lecturers Fredrik Cygnaeus, Carl Gustaf Estlander and Johan Jakob Tikkanen formed the core of the early museum profession and developed its activities. The early steps toward state funding were also taken as early as 1863, when the Senate decided to allocate funds for the Drawing School, and later by acquiring artworks for the Society's art collection.

The Finnish Art Society was the executive body from 1846 to 1939, when operations were handed over to the Finnish Art Academy Foundation. The Foundation was established in response to the increasing difficulties that the Finnish Art Society had faced when trying to maintain both the collection and the art school, and trying to balance this with the increasing requirements of the art world. The Art Society had been regarded as an old-fashioned organization and its management had faced strong criticism, especially from artists. These turbulent times were reflected in museum-staff turnover. During the two first decades of the twentieth century, the Art Society had had four different keepers of the collection. (Valkonen 1991) The major political changes also affected the Art Society's finances and its ability to function as a cultural institution: Finland became an independent nation in 1917, and drifted into a civil war in 1918. Despite the challenges, the collection was kept open to the public.

There had been previous attempts to reorganize the management of the Art Society. In 1922, a Trustee had replaced the Board. Instead of solving the problem, the situation had become worse, due to the fact that the new organizational body had now come into the hands of the inner elite of the art world. In 1933, the tensions were articulated as a language-political issue. A number of artists accused the Art Society of discriminating against Finnish-speaking artists, while Swedish-speaking artists were more favoured. This relatively fierce debate lasted for five years and ended when the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts Foundation was founded in 1939. (Valkonen 1989; Malkavaara 1989; Pettersson 2010b: 184–5).

During the era of the Foundation, i.e. from 1940s to the end of the 1980s, the Finnish museum scene and art field went through a radical change. A number of new and important museum venues, such as Amos Anderson Art Museum (1965) and Helsinki City Art Museum (1976), were opened in Helsinki, providing alternative views on the fine arts. In the 1950s and 1960s, ambitions for the contents of the collections and exhibition policy grew, and the museum profession became a desirable option for art historians graduating from the university. The art museum was now a platform for international art, showcasing not only individual artists such as Giacomo Manzù (1960) and Paul Klee (1961), but also the most cutting-edge contemporary art of its time (ARS 61). This was mostly thanks to the Director Aune Lindström (1901–84), who had started her career as a curator in 1927 and took over as Director in 1952. (Laitala [Pettersson] 1993)

In the 1970s, political relations with the Soviet Union and the East in general were also represented in the exhibition programme, symbolizing the friendship between the nations. Russian and Soviet art were represented in a series of exhibitions in 1972, 1974, 1976 and 1977. The museum played a role in the larger political drama, carefully scripted by the politicians. (Pettersson 2010b: 186) At the same time, this was the era of the development of the educational programme, with the first museum educator being hired in 1973. The first events for specific

audiences were launched, followed by publications, tailor-made exhibitions and events (Levanto 1991, 2010).

Questions related to space, or the lack of it, were raised on several occasions during the twentieth century. In 1921, Paul and Fanny Sinebrychoff's donation enlarged the collection with one of the biggest private art collections in the Nordic countries. Along with this collection came a building that was opened to the public in January 1960. The museum work done in the Ateneum building had faced severe difficulties due to the fact that the space was not sufficient for both the collections and the temporary exhibitions. In the 1970s, temporary exhibitions were even banned temporarily. This created a certain tension, due to the growing need to organise exhibitions. Displaying the national collection was not enough for the expanding museum scene. To be able to reach visitors the Ateneum also needed temporary exhibitions.

The museum looked for alternative solutions and dreamed of a separate building that would be dedicated solely to art museum use. This alternative was discussed in several forums and even included in the city of Helsinki's development plans. Finally, in 1977, the Ministry of Education and Culture decided to renovate the Ateneum building for the museum, and the art schools were re-located elsewhere. The renovation began in 1985 and the building was reopened in May 1991. Now, for the first time ever, all three floors were dedicated to the fine arts. (Pettersson 2010b: 187) In the spring of 1998, the role and functions of the building were fundamentally altered when the Museum of Contemporary Art moved to the new Kiasma building, designed by the American architect Steven Holl.

The Finnish National Gallery was set up in 1990 to carry on the work of the Foundation. The new National Gallery organization comprised the Sinebrychoff Art Museum, as well as the Ateneum art collection. The Museum of Contemporary Art also began as a new department of the organization, and was assigned part of the exhibition premises in the Ateneum building. The pictorial and archival materials of the information and exhibition department of the foundation and of the Ateneum Art Museum were organized into the Central Art Archives. In addition, a general department was established to provide administrative and other support services. The National Gallery became an umbrella organization, consisting of three separate art museums and a special art archive, which share a centralized administration and support functions. (Vihanta 2010b)

The National Gallery came to its first crucial turning point on the eve of its tenth anniversary in 2000, when the Act and Decree on the Finnish National Gallery were amended. In them, the institution, originally established as a director-led unit, was given a separate board of directors. As part of this, the names of the three Museums were changed. The Museum of Finnish Art got back its original name of Ateneum Art Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art became the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, and the Museum of Foreign Art became the Sinebrychoff Art Museum. Only the fourth unit, the Central Art Archives continued under its former name.

The amendments continued in 2001, when the provisions on the internal organization of the National Art Gallery and its Rules of Procedure were revised. The aim was primarily to improve the prerequisites for the three art museums to pursue independent activities with distinct profiles. The units producing support services for all three museums were modified in response to today's challenges. The National Gallery set up a separate development unit in order to strengthen its

role as a national provider of development and support services for the art museum field. (Pettersson 2010d)

One of the most important assets of the Finnish National Gallery is its collection of 36,000 works of art – from medieval icons to the latest names in contemporary art – and a sizeable archive collection of visual arts spanning the history and memory of Finnish visual arts.

The role of the Finnish National Gallery as the compiler of the national cultural heritage calls for a clear collection strategy. The first collection policies were published as late as 1991 and 2006. In the early stages, i.e. the mid-nineteenth century, the mission was to build as complete a picture of the developments in the history of the arts as possible. Examples of old European art created a narrative framework for the emerging national art. Works were acquired for the sake of representing the story, sometimes even at the cost of artistic value (Pettersson 2008; 2010e).

The twentieth century collection policy can, in turn, be described with the expression ‘filling the gaps’. The nineteenth century Hegelian concept of a complete collection was taken for granted without further analysis or criticism. (Pettersson 2010a) Gaps in the collection were revealed, sometimes with painful undertones and references to the limited resources, and individual artists were added to the story. This was not a problem with Finnish art, which was affordable, but international ambitions faced certain limitations. Thus, only a few examples of international art were added to the collection, while the backbone was constructed around Finnish art, thus enforcing the national character of the collection. Archive material, such as artists’ letters, completed the selection and provided important empirical material for researchers.

Due to the constant lack of funds, the collection was, as it had always been, heavily depending on donations. Towards the turn of the millennium, the new art history, re-reading and re-coding the story of art, affected the formation of the collection. To take one concrete example, a number of female artists were placed in the limelight, to take pride of place in the broader narrative. Some new artist names from the past were also introduced and included in the collection. One of these was Elga Sesemann (1922–2007), who caught museum director Soili Sinisalo’s eye, and this resulted in a series of acquisitions: altogether 17 works were added to the collection after 1994. (Vihanta 2010a) Works of non-traditional character were also acquired: virtual art, documents of performances and happenings, concepts and installations, to mention a few examples. The new collection policy (2006) allowed artists to enter the collection earlier than ever before: instead of representing the establishment, even art school students could make a breakthrough by selling a piece to the National Gallery. (Jyrkkiö 2008; Pettersson 2010e) This, in turn, reflects the rapid pulse of consumer society, also mirrored in the museums’ busy documentation of the contemporary art world and culture.

The trends of the twenty-first century urge the museum field to share collection resources and to make better and more effective use of collections. (Pettersson, Jyrkkiö, Hagedorn-Saupe & Weij 2010) Thus, the Finnish National Gallery also focuses on national and international use of the collection, which will be reinforced from the perspectives of collection management, collection mobility, digital availability, and expertise.

The history of the Finnish National Gallery reflects not only the organizational growth of the institution, but also the growth of and changes in the art field. It also provided an early model for state-supported collection work. The Finnish Art Society, founded on the model of *Kunstvereins*, set the grounds. Once its activities expanded beyond the society’s actual capacity to run them,

part of the operations were handed over to the Finnish Art Academy Foundation. This was in 1939. The following decades were a time of professionalization of museum work, with better collection management, touring exhibitions, new publications, international exhibition programmes, a growing number of staff – and lack of space. Balancing between presenting traditional art, the collection, and contemporary trends became more and more of an issue after the Second World War and the rise of modernism. Art, and especially Finnish Design, were used to brand the nation, and thus were given extra attention. On the other hand, the museum was consciously taking risks, too, by presenting controversial, challenging art that provoked strong audience reactions. The series of ARS exhibitions, organized since 1961, provided a typical forum for such innovations. (Kastemaa 2010)

Towards the end of the millennium, when the Finnish National Gallery was founded and the work was reorganized, it became clear that the traditional idea of ‘national’ had to be re-coded and analysed. Three museum sites offered different approaches to the fine arts. The Ateneum remained the site for the national treasures, while the Sinebrychoff Art Museum offered a gateway to older international art, and Kiasma focused on the contemporary-art scene.

National Museum

The National Museum, as an institution, carries what is probably the most pre-coded role within the historical and contemporary context. As a Grand Duchy of Russia, Finland was fully aware of the symbolic value of the ‘national’ collection and national museum. As Derek Fewster has shown in his study, the National Museums in particular became a site for the ‘history culture’ and a constructor of the modern ethnicity of Finnishness. (Fewster 2006)

Many of the core activities of the National Museum had already been established during the days of Swedish rule. For example, prehistoric fixed relics and monuments were declared to be under government protection in Sweden as early as 1666. The clergy were ordered to provide descriptions of interesting archaeological and geological sites within their parishes. This law was extended a few decades later also to include any valuable metal objects found in the ground.

The most influential early developers of the nascent national museum were Johan Reinhold Aspelin (1842–1915) and Professor Eliel Aspelin-Haapkylä (1847–1917). J.R. Aspelin was eventually nominated as the first state archaeologist in 1885 and remained in the post until his death in 1915. (Härö 2010: 129–31)

The Archaeological Commission was established in 1884 and its first tasks were to take care of and take responsibility for archaeological monuments and sites. It was also already stated at this point that the national or ‘central’ museum would later operate under the management of the head of the Commission, i.e. the state archaeologist. Before the existence of the national museum, all found objects and collections had to be directed to the care of the university museum, which had served as the centre for culture-heritage collections.

The legislation was revised again later in the nineteenth century. The order regarding monument preservation in the Grand Duchy of Finland was issued in 1883. This order was also the starting point for the current Antiquities Act of 1963. The act covers ancient barrows, burial grounds, habitations, rock paintings, sacrificial stones and other places of worship, hill forts, and the ruins of significant buildings. According to the Antiquities Act, any object at least a hundred years old of unknown ownership must be handed over to the National Board of Antiquities.

Shipwrecks a hundred years or older in the sea or other waterway are also protected. Preservation of the archaeological cultural heritage is the responsibility of the Department of Archaeology and the Department of Monuments and Sites of the National Board of Antiquities, and of certain provincial museums.

The core collection of coins and medals had already been established in 1760, but the first official recognition of the collections was in 1828, when they had been moved from Turku to Helsinki. In 1840, the collection was given premises by the university and a name: *Etnografisk Museum*. It should be noted however, that at this point, the term museum referred to a university-run exhibition or collection display rather than to a ‘museum’ as we understand it today. Nine years later, the collection was divided into two separate sections, with coins and medals forming one distinct entity, and cultural heritage the other. Over the years, it was moved and displayed in various settings in the Finnish capital of Helsinki. (Härö 2010: 131–3)

The need for a national museum institution became increasingly evident, with not only the collections, but the institution, too, requiring a building of its own. The most intense discussions went on after the Hunger Years in the 1870s, when the Finnish Art Society and the Society of Arts and Crafts also joined in the public debate. Various options were discussed. One solution was to establish an Art Academy based on the classical model and to put the fine art collections under its roof. Another was to combine the fine arts and arts-and-crafts collections with art education. The third model, which entered the discussion later, played with the idea of uniting the collections of the Finnish Art Society and the future national museum. (Pettersson 2008) These alternative approaches reflected a genuine need to fight for a national-museum institution.

In 1893, the Finnish nation received a major donation from Herman Frithiof Antell (1847–93), the country’s first professional collector, who left all his possessions to the state. His wish was to encourage the State to establish a national museum and to continue acquiring objects and art for the collection that he had begun when he was living in Paris. (Arkio 1975; Talvio 1993) This bequest speeded up the museum process by providing substantial funds for developing the existing collections.

The search for an appropriate site for the building began, and numerous different plans were made before an official architectural competition was held in 1901. Architects Herman Gesellius, Armas Lindgren and Eliel Saarinen submitted the winning proposal. The building was finished in 1910, but it was not until 1916 that the interiors and displays were completed and the actual opening of the national museum could take place. (Wäre 1991; Härö 2010: 137)

In 1908, the Commission changed its name to the Prehistoric Committee. It provided a multidisciplinary platform for historians, linguists, lawyers, art historians, archaeologists, architects and ethnographers, thus forming a basis for the future museum profession in the cultural heritage sector. The setting up of the prehistoric, historic and ethnographic departments in 1912 rearranged the organization. This was followed by further administrative changes in 1917, 1920 and 1925. (Härö 2010: 131–2, 138)

Whereas the work of the Finnish Art Society had been aimed at visually presenting the nation and its culture by showcasing nature, the landscape and the people, either painted on canvas or sculpted in marble or wood, the Finnish Antiquarian Society and Archaeological Commission worked to promote the importance of the prehistoric material and of monuments and sites as significant elements of the cultural heritage. Understanding the built environment, archaeological

finds and ethnographic material also played a major role. This was also the material that was closest to the nation's heart. Understanding the development of living, everyday items, such as plates and spoons or tables and stools, was a topic that spoke directly to the people. It was best displayed in an open-air museum, Seurasaari – Fölisö, which was opened to the public as part of the national museum organization. (Härö 2010: 137)

The first collection displays at the National Museum repeated the organizational division into prehistory, history and ethnography. Ideas and inspiration for collection displays had been drawn from Berlin, Stockholm and other cities. (Selkokari 2010; Härö 2010: 138) Unlike its sister organization, the Finnish Art Society and the Ateneum, the National Museum was a centre of ambitious academic research. Each new task, such as restoration work on ruins, castles and churches, led to new research initiatives. Co-operation with the university was vital and resulted in extensive publications that created the intellectual body for twentieth century art history in Finland. It is worth noting that, as Mikko Härö has pointed out, the antiquarian disciplines and art history were not brought together until Lars Pettersson (1918–93) took over as professor of art history at the University of Helsinki in 1951. (Härö 2010: 139)

During the twentieth century, the collection and documentation policy was refined and planned. Compared with the acquisition process for the national art collection, this task had clear aims and objectives. Churches, mansion houses and other notable buildings and interiors had to be documented. By 1925, the museum had begun to document whole villages, including both their material and immaterial culture. New methods, such as filming, were introduced immediately after the Second World War. Changes in society, politics and trends were also reflected in the museum's documentation work. If the Ateneum did its share by arranging exhibitions of the Soviet art in the 1970s, the National Museum, in turn, started documenting working-class culture. (Härö 2010: 140)

The collection has grown relatively large in numerical terms. Today, the archaeological collections include ca. 30,000 main features; the Historical Collections ca. 135,000 objects; the Ethnological Collections ca. 85,000 objects; Finno-Ugric Collections ca. 16,000 objects; the Ethnographic Collections ca. 26,000 objects, and the Coin Cabinet collections ca. 170,000 objects. The Maritime Museum of Finland's collections contain ca. 15,000 articles. (www.nba.fi) In order to devise sustainable collection strategies for the future, the National Museum has been working since 2009 on a nationwide collections policy for the cultural-history sector. (www.nba.fi/fi/tako)

The biggest institutional reorganization took place in 1972, when the National Board of Antiquities was established to oversee all the legally mandatory work, such as preserving ruins, archaeological sites and shipwrecks. The National Museum became a department of the National Board of Antiquities. The other three departments were research, built heritage and administration. By the end of 1973, the number of staff had exploded to 234 persons. (Härö 2010: 142–3) This was a clear attempt to organize the growing field of work under a single umbrella organization. Simultaneously, the National Board of Antiquities became the most important official body representing the museum field.

The latest streamlining of the organization took place in 2010, after the appointment of the new Director General, Juhani Kostet, and was announced in January 2011. According to this reorganization, the core processes of the National Board of Antiquities are protecting the cultural

environment, caring for the cultural environment, archives and information services, and developing the museums field and the National Museum. (NBA press release 5.1.2011) The content remains the same as before, but the work is internally differently organized.

The National Museum and the National Board of Antiquities have developed out of a passionate desire to establish a national museum for the vast organization governing the country's legally mandatory museum work. The story of the nation is told not only by collections of objects, but also by mansion houses, castles, shipwrecks and ruins. The organization has a wide range of legally required duties and responsibilities, and this 'invisible' work still forms a major part of its activities. Given the fact that the responsibilities are so vast, it can be asked whether, conversely, this ties the hands of the organization: a position of authority requires stability and rules out risk-taking.

As part of the larger umbrella organization, the National Museum has adopted a safe and rather neutral role, which does not involve overly harsh criticism or questioning. The collection displays create an overall image of the story of the nation from the ice age to the present. It provides in-depth analyses and reinterpretations, and contributes to the writing of the national scholarly history, but does not seek to provoke. The temporary exhibition programme focuses on themes of general interest and does not emphasize difficult topics, such as the political traumas of the civil war, sex, gender, ethnic minorities or disabled people in contemporary society, to name a few examples. In the new millennium, these issues have taken pride of place in the exhibition programmes of regional and specialized museums.

Natural History Museum

The earliest history of the Natural History Museum dates back to the seventeenth century: the Academy in the city of Turku. The Academy created the basis for scientific research on nature, and the collections grew accordingly. The collected specimens formed the most important, empirical material. The growth of the collection loosely followed scientific trends. For example, the first writings about birds, mammals and insects appeared after the mid-eighteenth century, and this was immediately reflected in the collection. Collections of early connoisseurs were acquired: for example, the shell collection of Professor Herman Spöring (1749) and the mineral collection of counsellor of commerce Henrik Kalmeter (1753). Donations were also important. (Terhivuo 2010: 193–4)

Professional connections and interactions between scholars provided a solid basis for the collection work. Wide-ranging travel around the world, to North America and other continents, resulted in sample collections of seeds and plants. When Carl Reinhold Sahlberg (1779–1860) took up his post as keeper of the collection in 1813, the collection included 10,000 mineral and 12,000 plant samples. Most of the collection was destroyed in September 1827, when the city of Turku burned down. (Terhivuo 2010: 194)

The collection had to be re-established at the university of the new capital, Helsinki. An extensive network of travellers was called in to perform this duty. Ships' captains, army officers and wealthy businessmen were advised to bring samples back to Finland. The collections were opened to the public at the end of the 1850s. They were also enriched in 1858 by a substantial donation of plants and animals by *Societas pro Fauna et Flora Fennica*, which had re-collected the plant specimens destroyed in the Turku fire. (Terhivuo 2010: 195–6)

The idea of a larger museum entity, a national Natural History Museum, began to be formulated at the same time as ideas about a public fine arts collection, a collection of arts and crafts, and a national museum were being debated in narrow academic circles, and also in the press. The new museum would bring plants, minerals and mammals all under the same roof. It is worth noting that the initiator of this idea was Magnus von Wright (1805–68), a painter and conservator who became famous for his bird paintings and stuffed animals. He was also a Board member of the Finnish Art Society, and thus well aware of the cultural aspirations concerning museum institutions and collections.

It took more than 130 years before von Wright's vision of a national natural history museum organization was realized: the university collections, which had been open to the public on various sites, were granted national status as late as 1988. In this context the collections that had been administrated as part of university departments were brought together to form departments of the new museum organization. In 2004, the botanic garden was also included in this organization (Terhivuo 2010: 195–6) Today, the vast collections include some 13 million samples, the majority of them insects.

The museum has always operated at several venues in Helsinki. Since 1925, the core collections have been displayed in the former Russian school building. The botanic garden in Kaisaniemi Park and the mineral cabinet, with its representative meteorite collection on the university museum's premises, belong to the same organization.

The collection, like many others, has benefited from the lifetime achievements of private collectors. At their best, the major purchases created highlights in the collection display. One of the best examples was the bone collection belonging to Professor of anatomy, Evert Julius von Bonsdorff, which was purchased in the 1950s, and put on display for more than forty years. Important donations have included collections of spiders, molluscs, crustaceans, bird eggs, butterflies and bryophytes. (Terhivuo 2010: 197) The formation of the collection has been affected by private collectors' expertise and their ability to put time and effort into the collecting work. Thus, for example, politically turbulent times and war overshadowed these private initiatives.

As Juhani Terhivuo has pointed out in his study, the collection's most important task was to serve scholarly needs, and so the collection was initially only open to the public for four hours on Sundays. Apart from showcasing the story of Finnish flora and fauna – the 3D version of nature that had been carefully illustrated in paintings and depicted in novels – the collection embraced the whole world. In the 1950s and 1960s when travelling abroad was the exception rather than the rule, the Natural History Museum represented for many visitors the only real contact with exotic animals and plants. The museum quickly became one of the most popular domestic travel destinations. (Terhivuo 2010: 196) One of the signature pieces in the collection was – and still is – a two-headed calf.

Compared to the other two national museum institutions the Natural History Museum has differed most in its relationship with the public. In the nineteenth century, the Finnish Art Society was already targeting its exhibitions on the widest possible public, the 'nation', in line with the ideals of the Enlightenment. Guided tours of the collections were already being held early on, and the museum's publications aimed to deepen understanding of the fine arts. The most recent activities have ensured that the collections are available online. The National Museum also

worked to educate people by providing exhibitions for special target groups, arranging events and extending its publishing policy from scholarly publications to books with commercial potential. For the Natural History Museum the broader public played a secondary role until the last decades of the twentieth century, when audience feedback encouraged the museum to extend its opening hours, develop its exhibition programme, and to create special touring exhibitions. For instance, in 1988–2004, the Natural History Museum produced 26 touring exhibitions.

The Natural History Museum has clearly become a museum of the people. In 2010, after the reopening of the museum, it achieved record audience numbers with 152,000 visitors, thus attracting substantially more visitors than the National Museum. (See the appendices) This transformation from a somewhat closed institution into a visitor attraction has raised the museum's organization onto another level. At the same time, it continues to be a study collection and serves as the centre of guidance and information for other natural-history museums in Finland.

Professional expertise and relationship with the public

The history of the national museum institutions is, in the majority of cases, also the history of the development of the museum profession. (Palviainen 2010) Thus, it is important to realize that institutions and their key actors, the gatekeepers, have defined the philosophical discourse about what had value in arts and culture, i.e. what mattered most. Special attention must be paid to the power figures in the field, those who had close connections with or were part of the academic, political or business world – and their idea of the public.

Any attempt to understand the formation of the national or European museum field requires a closer look at the professionals and their networks. Whom did they meet? Which books did they read? Which were the museums to visit and the places to go? What were the elements that the museum men from different nations shared? The same goes for mapping out the contemporary museum field. Professional networks, international initiatives, conferences and various venues, both on site and online, provide platforms for creating strong professional bonds. Public funding is probably one of the most efficient facilitators for this kind of professional exchange of ideas and expertise; many recent examples include European Union funded projects that bring museum professionals and scholars together.

The development of the Finnish museum profession and the impact of the national institutions have not been studied systematically. Nevertheless, certain aspects can be highlighted in the history of the development of the museum profession. In this context, it is worth noting that all three case studies in this report, i.e. collections of natural history, cultural history and fine arts, have been linked to the university from the very beginning of the collection and museum activities.

The Natural History Museum was initially a scholarly institution primarily serving the various academic needs. Thus, ideas of audience interest did not affect collection displays, publication policy or other programming, and the museum profession within the Natural History Museum did not develop with the same aims and objectives as the rest of the museum sector. Museum staff were university staff with an obligation to teach and work with the students. The collection was a tool for that work.

The first collection displays and exhibitions at the newly opened National Museum were closely connected with the research interests of the leading museum personnel and with courses at the university. Mikko Härö says in his study that even the earliest publications by J.R. Aspelin and Eliel Aspelin-Haapkylä, the makers of the National Museum, can be interpreted as representations of the museum display. (Härö 2010: 137) In his study, Derek Fewster points out that the displays divided the nationalists: even before the official opening of the National Museum, it was considered a relative failure, and Swedish and Finnish nationalists discussed a possible need to erect a better monument to the 'ethnic traditions' that they represented. Plans for a Central Museum of Swedish Finland and a *Kalevalatalo* (Kalevala House) were made, but they did not lead to concrete action. (Fewster 2006: 307)

Whereas Aspelin and Aspelin-Haapkylä implemented their scholarly ideas within the thick walls of the National Museum, analogous aspects can be traced in the life's work of Professor Carl Gustaf Estlander. He was Chair of the Finnish Art Society, initiator and founder of the Society of Arts and Crafts, and author of several books, including *De bildande konsternas historia* (1867). He taught art history and literature at the university, wrote about the arts, not only in his books, but also in the daily press, bought art and arts and crafts to the semi-public collections, and was partly responsible for displaying them – and most importantly, founded the biggest-ever art institution in the country, the Ateneum.

It is important to understand from where he had learned what to value in the arts and why, and who his closest professional allies were. Mapping out his interests we learn, just to mention a few examples: that he admired the 'father' of all museum men Gustaf Waagen (1794–1868), to whom he paid a visit in 1859; that he adored the collections in Berlin and Dresden; and that he was deeply influenced by the work of the founder of the South Kensington Museum, Sir Henry Cole (1808–82). His academic contacts included Swedish art historian Professor Carl Rupert Nyblom (1832–1907) and art historian Lorentz Dietrichson (1834–1917) from Norway, both of whom were members of the team that worked together on the Nordic journal *Tidskrift för Bildande Konst och Konstindustri* (1875–76). He took part in the famous art historians' conference in Vienna in 1873 and visited several world fairs. A similar list could be compiled for each and every one of the gatekeepers from the nineteenth century up to the present, showing their mutual interests and possible dislikes, but reconstructing this network is beyond the scope of this study.

Estlander's writings, scholarly work, teaching at the university, public debates and proceedings as a gatekeeper of the fine arts and arts and crafts all followed the same logic as Mikko Härö suggests when analysing the writings and collection displays of J.R. Aspelin and Eliel Aspelin-Haapkylä. This was not at all an exceptional pattern at the time, when the same power figures held several key positions and were also connected to each other nationally and on a Europe-wide basis.

During its first decades, the formation of the Finnish museum profession went hand in hand with the academic world. This was due to the fact that the professionals were professors and lecturers who took responsibility for the collections on a part-time or voluntary basis. Later, when the workload increased and more time and devotion were needed, the profession required specialists who would concentrate solely on museum issues. This resulted in a situation in which the separation between the university and the museum became a reality. Professors no longer worked for the collections, nor did they make the acquisitions. The most visible distance emerged

between professors of art history and the museum professionals responsible for the fine arts collections at the Ateneum. The museum's publications did not receive the same scholarly respect as, for instance, the results of the highly ambitious research program at the National Museum.

Since they first opened, the Finnish National Gallery and the National Museum have been audience-driven, educational institutions, whereas the Natural History Museum has focused solely on scholarly activities. It should also be noted that the development of the Finnish school system provided direct links with the youngest audiences. For example, after the opening of the National Museum in 1916, 7500 school children visited the site with their teachers (the total number of visitors was 52,000).

When the Finnish Art Society was founded and the Drawing School established, the role of the art collection was clear: it was to provide models for future artists. In 1863, the art collection was also opened to the public and special attention was paid to members of the working class. By the time of the opening of the Ateneum in 1888, it was clear that the collection was intended to educate the whole nation. (Pettersson 2008) The needs of audiences were discussed and different services, such as lectures, began as soon as the Ateneum was opened. The library was also open to the public.

J.R. Aspelin had already said in 1874 that: "the nation wants to get to know itself and its predecessors memories from the past." He was of an opinion that the national museum should illustrate the development of the nation. (Lamminen 2010: 110) This view was very similar to the idea of representing the story of art as a continuous narrative. (Pettersson 2010a) The story needed explaining and various methods were used, guided tours being one of them. Initially, one of the duties of the keepers of the collection was to be available to anyone who had questions about the works and objects exhibited. During the first decades of the twentieth century, museum staff still guided groups, and this was regarded as part of the daily routine as late as the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1970s, the institutions hired full-time museum educators and this work began to expand.

After the Second World War, museums and libraries took on the task of being places for continuous learning. Carl Gustaf Estlander had already emphasized the Ateneum's duty to educate, and his followers Johan Jakob Tikkanen, Torsten Stjernschantz and Aune Lindström specifically implemented these ideas. Lindström's background gave her a special interest in education: apart from having a PhD in art history, she had been trained as a teacher.

In the cultural-historical context the educational role of the museums probably matters the most, although, at the beginning of the twentieth century, there was no common scheme adopted by both schools and museums. This approach only entered school curriculums after the war, when use of the national collections became essential. Still today, the majority of school classes visit all the national museums at least once during their basic education. Political decisions, such as free entry for all under-18s, have been made to encourage use of the collections. Inviting young audiences into the museums is regarded as an investment in the future.

The big national museums have succeeded in creating a lasting relationship with the public. As museum-visitor statistics show (see appendices) the national-museum institutions were among the top 10 most-visited museums, with an annual turnout of more than 100,000 visitors per site. Since the 1990s, online visitors have also formed a specific group of interest. It can be argued that part of that success comes directly from the privileged position of the national museum

institution. Those who visit one or two museums during their lifetimes are more likely to choose a national museum site than a venue with less national visibility and importance.

The twentieth century arc of professional development typically leads from the academic museum man and university professor to the multitasking museum professional who needs to know the public and to master many subject fields. The museum professionals who used to produce authoritative information for the ‘uneducated masses’ in the nineteenth century are now, after the turn of the millennium, facing the realities of the social-media society. Instead of lecturing from the top down, sharing the contents and building them up together with target groups now provide fertile ground for learning. This requires not only a different mental approach from museum professionals, but also the ability to speak another language. This is an especially tricky challenge for national-museum institutions dealing with hard-core contents.

Since the 1970s and especially the 1990s, the three national museum organizations have reacted to the changes by hiring new staff: education officers, information and marketing staff, and web and gallery hosts, who test out alternative ways of interacting with audiences. The stories of the national collections have been told using various methods and media. After the breakthrough of the Internet, the national museums have also started to operate online. Only the Finnish National Gallery, online since 1995, has used the Internet’s potential to create different learning environments around specific themes.

Concluding remarks: national museums and contemporary society

The development of the three national museums has depended on cultural policy and on politics in general. The nineteenth century was an era of intense national development and the creation of institutions, the formation of collections and of collecting practices in general. The twentieth century was marked by the growth of the museum profession and expertise, and museums’ relationships with their audiences developed. Political changes, the industrialization of the country, a relatively rapid shift from an agricultural society to a service, and IT society all have affected museums’ activities, too. Internationally important trends and issues have been reflected in exhibition programmes; sometimes because it has been politically wise to do so (for example, Soviet art), sometimes for reasons such as global awareness (for example, climate change).

Around the turn of the millennium, thanks to the international museological debate, the big national museums became increasingly conscious of the problematic role of a ‘national’ museum, and started actively participating in the process of defining and re-defining the positions of the museums. Publications such as Raili Huopainen’s *Tulevaisuuden museossa* (In the future museum) (1997) and Susanna Pettersson’s *Tulevaisuuden taidemuseo* (The Future Art Museum) (2009) showcased the problems to be tackled and suggested various strategies for the future. These issues were also discussed at the Ministry of Education and Culture. One of the milestones was the *Museum 2000* programme, which included relevant suggestions for the whole museum field, but prompted severe criticism. (Museum 2000) Many of the suggestions presented in the programme have now been taken on board, ten years after its original launch date. One of the most important facilitators for this positive change has been the new professional approach adopted by the big national museums: traditionally, the National Museum and the National Gallery have not co-operated closely at all, but, since 2006, the field has changed thanks to new leadership and changes of attitude.

In 2010, the national museums have, for the first time ever, established a Director's forum, where general directors Juhani Kostet (NBA), Risto Ruohonen (FNG) and Leif Schulman (NHM) can openly discuss all the relevant issues and decide on matters of mutual interest. Bringing the fine arts, cultural heritage and natural history together around the same table helps highlight aims and objectives, such as better use of collection resources on a nationwide level, development of collection strategies, planning of collection centres, and mobility among professionals. Issues of a practical nature, such as cost-effective management of museum buildings and lack of storage space, have also been brought up.

Running the museums, developing the collections, funding the work and responding to the needs of the audience create ongoing debate. Questions to be pondered include the future role of the national museums in contemporary society. Should the national museums take even more responsibility for cultural services on a national level, and, for example, produce more touring exhibitions? Should the national museums encourage the smaller stakeholders to make more effective use of national collection resources by lending items on a long-term basis? Should the whole museum field jointly outline collection policies from now on, as the national-collection policy initiative TAKO suggests? Should museums document more, collect less, and concentrate on quality?

Such questions have implications for the museum profession, too. Members of the younger generations should be capable of taking over even the most marginal expert areas. A successful generation shift requires co-operation and planning by the museums and universities as educators of the future workforce. Thus, one of the real challenges is taking a holistic view of the future needs of both research and museum practice.

When analysing the requirements for the national museums' operations and operational environment a number of issues must be highlighted. It is essential to be aware of the other programme providers in the culture industry, to monitor the likes and dislikes of audiences, to use new methods, such as social media, when addressing specific target groups, to find new partnerships and networks both nationally and internationally, and to train staff to face the museum work and environment of the twenty-first century. The key issue, however, is still the same as in the nineteenth century: bringing the contents to the public.

From the viewpoint of their collections and the professional expertise of their staff, all the national museums are eminently poised to respond to the demand for cultural services. The development of the information society impacts on the operating environment. To fulfil the demands of accessibility to the culture heritage and collection resources, all the museums need to put the emphasis on the digital availability of their collections, secure the long-term safekeeping of digital resources, develop their databases, and provide targeted online services for various audience groups. International cooperation and EU projects in the culture sector anchor the national museums in European cultural cooperation. This means, among other things, an emphasis on the mobility of collections and of museum professionals. However, as indicated in the evaluation documents on the Finnish National Gallery (2010), limited State finances are also reflected in the budgets of cultural institutions and museums. The rise in fixed costs that are beyond the museums' control is diminishing the funds available for actual museum work.

According to the same analysis, more stringent State budget financing means that corporate sponsorship agreements concluded by museums take on even greater financial significance. A

tighter economic climate is conducive to a greater number of multi-actor collaborations and projects, both nationally and internationally. International collaborative and touring exhibitions present an opportunity, even though these undertakings have also become more expensive and access to them is subject to increasing competition.

In order to achieve maximum cultural and political impact, the big national museums need to be visible and to reinforce the significance of the visual arts and cultural heritage in debate in society. They act as a builder of the cultural information society and, through their activities, serve as an important supporter of culture and promoter of research, as well as a builder of citizens' identities. As the nation's central museums, they emphasize professional expertise and expertise in the museum sector.

The success of the big national museums depends not only on the contents of the collections, exhibitions and various programmes aimed at different audiences, but also on human resources. Thus, increasing attention should be paid to the skills and qualifications of staff and their professional development, as well as to wellbeing at work and enhancement of workplace communities. Opportunities for creative work must be maintained and reinforced, while also time seeking ways to cope with higher work volumes and work pressures.

One of the most fundamental questions, though, is what will be the role of the 'national' in the future. What kinds of organizations will be considered national in character? Will these consist of only the state-funded organizations with clear national responsibilities? Or will there be new national platforms that replace the traditional venues? Who will decide on the national narrative in the future... academics, scholars, and museum professionals? Or should people, the makers and consumers of culture?

Notes

- ¹ In 2009: Natural History Museum had 151 staff members and a budget of 9,7 million euros; National Museum 174 staff members and 12,6 million euros; National Gallery 231 staff members and 26,7 million euros.
- ² Within the Finnish legislation there are also other laws governing museums and their activities as well as ancient monuments and national cultural heritage, and laws touching on museum activities: Antiquities Act Museums; Act Museums Decree; Act on Restrictions to the Export of Cultural Goods; Act on the Protection of Buildings; Copyright Act; National Board of Antiquities Act; Finnish National Gallery Act on the Financing of Education and Culture; Act concerning State Indemnity for Art Exhibitions.

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Appendices

Regional Museums

Name of the museum, city	Founded	Regional status
Keski-Suomen museo, Jyväskylä	1931	1980
Kuopion kulttuurihistoriallinen museo, Kuopio	1883	1980
Lahden historiallinen museo	1924	1980
Pohjanmaan museo, Vaasa	1895	1980
Joensuun museot, Joensuu	1917	1980
Pohjois-Pohjanmaan museo, Oulu	1896	1980
Satakunnan museo, Pori	1888	1980
Tampereen museot Vapriikki, Tampere	1969	1980
Etelä-Karjalan museo, Lappeenranta	1909	1981
Etelä-Pohjanmaan maakuntamuseo, Seinäjoki	1962	1981
Helsingin kaupunginmuseo, Helsinki	1911	1981
Kainuun museo, Kajaani	1930	1981
Kymenlaakson museo, Kotka	1927	1981
Tornionlaakson maakuntamuseo, Tornio	1914	1981
Turun museokeskus, Turku	1958	1981
Hämeenlinnan kaupungin historiallinen museo, Hämeenlinna	1893	1982
Lapin maakuntamuseo, Rovaniemi	1975	1982
Porvoon museo, Porvoo	1896	1982
Savonlinnan maakuntamuseo, Savonlinna	1983	1985
Tammisaaren museo, Tammisaari	1906	1985

Regional Art Museums

Name of the museum	Founded	Regional status
Helsinki Art Museum	1968	1993
Hämeenlinna Art Museum	1952	1983
Joensuu Art Museum	1962	1980
Jyväskylä Art Museum	1998	1981
Kemi Art Museum	1947	1981
Kuopio Art Museum	1980	1988
Lahti Art Museum	1950	1981
Lappeenranta Art Museum	1965	1986
Mikkeli Art Museum	1970	1981
Nelimarkka Art Museum	1960	1995
Oulu Art Museum	1963	1983
Pohjanmaa Museum	1895	1983
Pori Art Museum	1979	1982
Rovaniemi Art Museum	1986	1993
Tampere Art Museum	1927	1980
Turku Art Museum	1891	1981

Specialized Museums

Name of the museum, city	Founded	National status
Suomen käsityön museo (handicraft), Jyväskylä	1888	1993
Suomen rakennustaiteen museo (architecture), Helsinki	1956	1993
Suomen Urheilumuseo (sports), Helsinki	1938	1993
Designmuseo (design), Helsinki	1875	1993
Tekniikan museo (technics), Helsinki	1969	1993
Suomen lasimuseo (glass), Riihimäki	1961	1994
Suomen valokuvataiteen museo (photography), Helsinki	1969	1994
Teatterimuseo (theater), Helsinki	1962	1994
Työväenmuseo Werstas (working class culture), Tampere	1988	1996
Suomen Rautatiemuseo (railways), Hyvinkää	1898	1997
Suomen Ilmailumuseo (aircraft), Vantaa	1972	1997
Mobilia auto- ja tiemuseo (vehicles), Kangasala	1986/1994	1997
Sámi Museum – Saamelaismuseo (Sámi culture), Inari	1959	1999
Forum Marinum, Turku	1936	2004
Metsämuseo Lusto (forest), Punkaharju	1988	2010
Maatalousmuseo Sarka (agriculture), Loimaa	1992	2010

Visitor numbers, example

Today, the big nationals form a significant part of the cultural industry as the following statistics show. The top 10 sites in 2010 were:

<i>Ateneum Art Museum (FNG)</i>	225 000
Helsinki City Museum	172 640
<i>Kiasma (FNG)</i>	165 000
<i>Natural History Museum</i>	152 000
<i>National Museum (NBA)</i>	109 645
Turku Castle	108 054
Design Museum	101 504
Häme Castle	95 680
Merikeskus Vellamo (NBA)	88 315
Modern Art Museum Emma	82 200

(Finnish Museums Association, press release 14.1.2011)



National Museums in France

Felicity Bodenstein

Summary

Since the opening of the *Muséum du Louvre* in 1793, France has developed an important network of state funded national museums, the majority of which are dedicated to art historical displays. This is especially the case for the majority of museums run by the *Réunion des musées nationaux*, a network that manages the largest group of national museums in France. It is striking that, at any given time throughout the country's history, some of the most important creations of national museums came about as a direct result of the personal initiative and implication of the country's leaders, whether they were kings, emperors or presidents. This proves the extent to which the museum was, and is, in France, an explicitly national enterprise of great political prestige and symbolic value. National museums have, since the Revolution, been a strong factor in the French nation building process and a clear definition of their administration, in terms of central state ownership, provides the best frame for their identification.

The Louvre, which obviously stands out as France's most important national museum, may best be defined as a 'Universal Museum' and thus as a reflection of the Enlightenment philosophy that greatly influenced the French Revolution, and the political agenda behind the establishment of the museum itself. However the breath of its scope, which has always strived for universality, is also the result of France's status as a former Empire. Its collections were very much formed and defined during the era of Napoleonic expansion and, although it cannot be considered to be a colonial museum, it has throughout history benefitted from France's relationships with colonies or areas of great political influence. The museum has contributed to founding France's identity on values and ideas that places it beyond its national and political borders.

The clearest tendency that may be observed in the evolution of France's national museums over time is geographic and related to the country's extremely centralised form of government. This means that the great majority of national museums are indeed concentrated in and around the area of Paris (approx. 70%) with a remarkable number of major institutions situated along the banks of the Seine river: the Louvre, Trocadéro (musée de l'homme), Quai Branly, Orsay etc. They are also, by far and away, the most visited (DEP, 2010: 34).

The second very clear tendency is the definite hegemony of the art museum that has received its own administrative structure with the RMN, a phenomena which should be considered as significant when observed in relation to the, relatively speaking, small contingent of history museums. Scientific, historical and technological museums tend to be directly related to one of the other government ministries and form less well-coordinated networks.

These facts indicate that a choice of France's five most important national museums (out of the eighty museums given in the annex) may neither be representative from a geographical point of view nor from a disciplinary one. It can only consider those institutions whose prestige has made them France's most famous ambassadors of culture – both for the French themselves and

internationally (France is the country with the greatest number of tourists visiting every year). The central hegemony of the Louvre over the world of French museums has already been stated. In choosing five major national museums, an attempt was made to encompass a variety of disciplines and territories, however categories related to France's ideology of culture guided the selection that mainly seeks to give an idea of the significance of these institutions in terms of the national paradigm. It tries to illustrate the main ideologies that appear to be at work in the policies and programs responsible for the development of France's national museums: the promotion of universal values (mainly of art); the illustration of national origins, culture and history and the representation of national grandeur and commemoration. One might add a more contemporary ideological tendency that has been put forward in policies behind the most recent national museum creations: the desire to represent diversity and to establish places of cultural dialogue (*Cité de l'immigration, Musée du quai Branly*). The following table provides basic information on five of the most well known and visited of France's national museums. Each museum will be considered as a case study at the end of this report, and taken as the most representative example in a specific genealogy of museums read as the expression of the ideologies outlined above.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Musée du Louvre	1793	1793	Royal collection, nationalised (1793) by Revolutionary government. Today run by the RMN, Ministry for Culture.	State owned, managed as an autonomous national museum. Établissement public administratif.	Antiquities, Greco-Roman, Egyptian, Oriental etc. Decorative Arts, Fine Arts, European old master paintings, Islamic civilisations.	Oriental antiquities (+Islam), Egyptian ant; Grec-Rom-Etr ant; Paintings, Sculpture, Decorative Arts Europe (middle ages to 1848).	10 000 BC to 1848	Renaissance, classical extensions (17 th -19 th c.), Former royal residence.
Domaine national de Versailles: Musée des châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon.	1798 1837 (history museum)	1798	Former royal residence, nationalised. Today run by the RMN, Ministry for Culture.	State owned, managed as an autonomous national museum. Établissement public administratif.	Architecture, Urbanism, Decorative Arts, Religious Art, Fine Arts and History	Royal apartments with their decors. History of France from the 16 th to 19 th c.	17 th to 19 th c.	Former royal palace rococo style. Versailles, Ile-de-France.
Musée d'archéologie nationale de Saint-Germain-en-Laye	1867	1862	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. Service à compétence nationale.	Archaeology, Prehistory, Protohistory	Archaeology and history of France	Prehistory to 300 AD	Former royal palace, early Renaissance. Saint-Germain-en-Laye.

National museum of the Army, Hotel des Invalides	1905	1896	Ministry of Defense, Société des Amis du Musée de l'Armée	State owned, managed as an autonomous national museum. Établissement public administratif.	Military History, Art	European arms and armoury. Military souvenirs. Tomb of Napoleon Bonaparte, Displays dedicated to WWI and WWII. Memorial Charles de Gaulle.	Prehistory to 2000	Invalides (17 th c.), home for war veterans, Paris.
Musée Quai Branly and Pavillon des Sessions (Louvre)	2006	1878, 1937, 1960	Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Research	State owned, managed as an autonomous national museum. EPA	Ethnography, Art	Museum of the art and civilization of non-European culture, Africa, Asia, Oceania, and the Americas.	500 AD to present day	Purpose built museum (Jean Nouvel), post-modernist, Paris.

Introduction: Important historical stages in the development of French national museums

The French Revolution, from *biens nationaux* to national museums

It would be difficult to imagine a more explicit relationship than that which can be observed between the defining political moments of the French nation-state and the establishment of the principle of the national museum. Between 1789 and 1870 every important political regime change has been related to the development of a specific museum project: Napoléon's Louvre, Charles X's new antiquities gallery in the Louvre (1827); the king Louis-Philipp's at *Musée d'histoire de France*, Versailles (1837) and Napoléon III's *Musée des Antiquités nationales* (1862).

The radical origin of this principle is of course, the French Revolution, a foundational moment for museum history due in part to the fact that this unprecedented political upheaval brought about one of the most massive transfers of property in European history (from the Church, clergy, aristocracy, royal houses, etc. to the new state). This transfer and the confiscations of cultural property in other European countries during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars provided the material basis for some of France's oldest and largest museums (although the majority of the collections confiscated internationally were returned after 1815).

The Revolutionary period developed the principle of *biens nationaux* or national possessions that were to be recognized as national heritage or *patrimoine* (Poulot, 1992). A set of criteria was progressively established in order to identify and conserve those objects of sufficient artistic and historical importance as to be deemed worthy of being transmitted as national heritage to future generations. In order to fulfil this objective and to make pedagogical use of these objects, a series of museums was founded on the basis of sometimes already existing royal or ecclesiastical collections: *Museum du Louvre*, the *Museum d'histoire naturelle*, the *Musée des Arts et Métiers* and the *Musée des Monuments Français* (though this museum no longer exists, it has become an important paradigm for national art and history museums in France). At the same time, a centrally organized network of municipal museums was organised by national decree of the Minister for Interior, Jean-Antoine Chaptal in 1801 (*décret Chaptal*). The revolutionary period has become paradigmatic in French museum history as the foundational period of invention and the establishment of first policy of national heritage although recent studies have also shown that the development of the notion of a public museum largely predates the Revolution. By opening the Louvre, the leaders of the Revolution brought to fruition a cultural and social idea that can be observed in the discourse of philosophers, critics and statesmen from the 1750's onwards. Institutionally, the *Ancien Régime* also made several attempts to create a public gallery for the presentation of the king's collection that predate the famous opening of 1793 (McClellan, 1994; Pommier, 1995).

In subsequent decades, two other major museums were to find their home in former royal palaces: Louis-Philippe's *Musée d'histoire* transformed Versailles in 1837, whilst under Louis-Napoleon the Second Empire and the history of France were celebrated in the *Musée des Souverains* (created in the Louvre); in parallel, the castle of Saint-Germain-en-Laye became the site of a representation of France's ancient origins in the *Musée des Antiquités nationales*. The Revolution founded the national museums and formulated an ideology of democratic access underlining the educational and socially elevating potential of public collections. However in practical terms, many museums were in a very chaotic state after having received a massive influx of material and

many measures needed to be taken in order to implement its ideology coherently. The 1848 Revolution provoked a second wave of political voluntarism in this area, promoting public appropriation of the collections through extensive cataloguing operations, a policy that was continued under Napoleon III. It included major reforms to renovate and restructure the state's museums undertaken by the count Nieuwerkerke that sought to rationalize the distribution of national collections in terms of new disciplinary evolutions (Granger, 2005).

National museums during the Third and Fourth Republic (1871-1959)

The Third Republic has received less scholarly attention than the period of the French Revolution, yet it was an extremely important period for museum history with an unprecedented wave of new museums opening across the country. The Universal Exhibitions were, as in other countries, catalysts for important museum creations, such as France's national ethnographic collections established in the Trocadéro palace in 1878, later to become known as the *Musée de l'Homme*. It was here too that the architect and restorer of historical buildings Eugène Viollet-le-Duc installed a major museum for architectural casts: the *Musée de la Sculpture comparée* later renamed *Musée des monuments français* in reference to the museum created at the end of the 18th century by Alexandre Lenoir, cf. case studies below. It displayed a history of architectural styles in France and compared antique with mediaeval-modern French sculpture, in order to show that the French medieval and modern productions were of equal quality to work of the Greeks and the Romans. However this demonstration quickly came to be considered as superfluous and the museum's name was changed when this comparative museography was abandoned – retaining only the French monuments in its presentation.

In terms of general museum administration, the most important event was the creation of the RMN in 1895. It was a response to the difficult financial situation of France's national museums and a competitive reaction fuelled by national rivalry especially with Germany and England (Callu, 1994: 443). The RMN's role was above all designed to help finance acquisitions and to handle the question of donations. From 1921 it also developed a *service commercial* which became an important part of its activity, including the publication of museum catalogues, reproductions of all kinds and the commercialisation of other related souvenir type products for museum visitors. The creation of the RMN did not however resolve the problem of limited public expenditure during this period that may also be characterized by the important contribution and patronage of collectors and sponsors (Long, 2007).

The discourse related to important donations that expanded or founded so many collections during this time is very much coloured and motivated by strong nationalist impulses. The direct impact of private initiative can be seen with the establishments of national museums related to gifts made to the state such as the *Musée national de la Légion d'Honneur et des Ordres de Chevalerie* first created through the initiative of medal holders. Amongst the RMN museums based on the collections of artistes or private collectors, we also find the *Musée Guimet* (1889, Paris); the *musée Magnin* (Dijon, 1937), the *Musée Gustave Moreau* (Paris, 1898) ; the *Musée Rodin* (Paris, 1911) ; the *Musée Jean-Jacques Henner* (Paris, 1926) and the *Musée franco-américain du château de Blérancourt* (1924). The museums of the *Institut de France* are also excellent examples of private initiatives that gave way to national museums.

Cultural policy and French Museums between 1959 and 1990

The role of André Malraux and the creation of a Ministry of Culture in 1959 do not appear to have had great consequences for the development of national museums (Boylan, 1992: 92). Their financing was not increased. Their administrative situation however became more complex as a split was operated between those museums managed by the ministry of Education and the ministry of Culture – with the ministry of culture mainly taking over the art historically orientated museums already part of the RMN.

In the 1960's the museum as an institution came under great criticism, its role as a provider of democratic access to knowledge and artistic beauty was violently questioned. It was attacked for its inertia, its inability to adapt and the absence of a truly pedagogical approach. The now famous sociological study carried out by Pierre Bordieu and Alain Darbel (1966), translated as *The Love of Art: European museums and their Public*, showed that the museum was not as open to all classes of society as it claimed. According to these authors, the museum was designed for the expectations of an ideal visitor who was more educated than the average citizen, let alone the socially disadvantaged citizen. The national museum and its treasures were thus to be read as the prerogative of the upper class and visitors were not thought to share equally in the wealth of knowledge that the museum could offer. This sociological perspective directly impacted on how museums were henceforth to define their pedagogical mission and it greatly influenced the conception of a wave of new national museums that were established in France in the 1970's and 1980's. Jacques Sallois characterized this period as one of 'unprecedented development' (Sallois, 2005: 3), especially remarkable as it did appear to be the direct reaction to this time of great pessimism about the role of museums in society.

The following two decades may also be characterized by the important developments in the system of public financing for museums. The *Loi-programme des musées* was adopted in 1978 facilitating major renovations and massive overhaul projects in museums across the country with a further important expansion of the budget under the ministry of Jack Lang (1979-1986). These major investments on the part of the government also profited new projects (such as the *musée Picasso* and the *musée d'Orsay*) and such significant renovations as the *Grand Louvre* project. They brought the museum back into the public eye in a more positive way and were also paralleled by an unprecedented wave of new museums established in medium and small towns across the country: forty-one museums were completed in the provinces between 1988 and 1991 (Boylan, 1992: 108).

This renewal was also fuelled by the concept of the *écomusée* or ecomuseum, a newly defined term coined by the Minister of Environmental affairs, Robert Poujade, in 1971 and whose ultimate goal was community development (Poulard, 2007). Indeed, although interest for the principle was expressed by representatives of central government – indeed the politics promoting this *nouvelle muséologie* were also firmly supported by the Lang ministry in the 1980s - it was more particularly conceived of for the representation of local concerns, to take into account natural, human and cultural environments (Poulot, 2004). It was also used to deal with pressing social issues such as the decline of major industrial regions such as *Le Creusot*. One should add that although the term *nouvelle muséologie* (Desvallées, 1992) translates easily into *New Museology*, it was in fact first used in France amongst museum professionals of the 1980s such as Georges-Henri

Rivière and is not necessarily equivalent with the concepts expressed in Peter Vergo's famous anthology (Vergo, 1989).

Boylan remarks on the fact that government support for national museums seems to be indifferent to right/left wing changes in power, as a relatively consistent consensus concerning their importance exists at the highest levels (Boylan, 1992: 111). One cannot help but consider the important presidential initiatives in the sphere of national museums in the last quarter of the 20th century as striking echoes of the regal or imperial tradition of establishing new museums practiced by the French sovereigns of the 19th century: Georges Pompidou made his direct contribution with *Beaubourg* (1971); Valéry Giscard d'Estaing was instrumental in the development of the *musée d'Orsay* project, the *Cité des sciences* and the *Cité de la Musique* (1978); François Mitterrand played a vital role in the establishment of the archaeological, site-museum Bibracte – where the results of the digs are presented alongside a museum of Celtic civilisation across Europe; and most recently Jacques Chirac played a decisive role in the creation of the *musée du Quai Branly* (Price, 2007). Even more recently, a new project for a Museum of national history has been the object of direct and voluntary statements by the current president Nicolas Sarkozy.

A new approach to museum building was developed in reaction to the critique of the museum as an elitist institution with undertakings such as the *Beaubourg* project (*Centre Pompidou*). President Georges Pompidou announced the plan for a new national Centre for Contemporary Arts in December 1969. Its conception might be considered as the national version of the series of *maisons de la culture*, those polyvalent culture centres that had began making their appearance all over the country in local contexts under the Malraux ministry. The Centre Beaubourg was to be impressive by its size and scope, integrating different functions including the museum, the library and a centre for experimental contemporary music (IRCAM). The chosen architecture for the museum (Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano) was to make a modernist, iconoclast statement in the heart of historic Paris.

Cultural policy and French National Museums since 1990

A strong specificity of the general organisation and structure of the French museum landscape is that the vast majority of its institutions today belong to a nationwide coordinated network, the *Direction des musées de France* (DMF). All museums fulfilling a specific set of criteria may become part of this network, whatever the governing or financing body managing it may be. Its role is to help promulgate a national policy in terms of museography, public access and pedagogy and its influence goes beyond that of national museums *stricto sensu*. The DMF was formerly a service of the Department of Education and up until 1945, it actually only managed its thirty national museums and to a certain extent exercised a kind of power of inspection and control over the museums of the provinces as they are called, that is to say the major municipal museums of France's larger towns. The DMF was radically transformed in 1991, it is now related to the Ministry of Culture and to the Ministry of Education, and has aimed to become an organisation which, as the title implies, attempts to coordinate the activities and the policy of all of France's museums, managing such nationwide events as the *Night of Museums* (*Nuit des musées*).

The expansion of the DMF's responsibilities to create an all-inclusive network of French museums is supported by the 2002 law defining the legal criteria that need to be met in order for

an institution to claim the title of *Musée de France* whether it be state-owned or owned by any other non profit-making private or public legal entity (all state-owned museums however automatically received the title). In return the museums that fulfil these criteria, related to their function and social utility, may benefit from state funding and the services of expertise provided by the DMF. This newly formed family of museums is governed by the *Haut conseil des musées de France*, a council that is made up of 7 representatives from central government, 15 from local government and professionals from the museum world.

In parallel to this, another major reform has led to the development of a new system of museum management and financing. National museums have, like the *Réunion des Musées nationaux* itself, been transformed into autonomous state establishments that manage their own budgets and profits directly and may also turn to private funding to complete their budgets for acquisitions and to expand their activities. Private input has increased inside of public institutions through a series of laws relating to patronage and sponsorship (Benhamou, 1998). In 1968 the first law on *dations* was passed – during André Malraux’s time as Minister of Culture. A *dation* (not to be confused with donation) allows private parties to pay their heritage tax in the form of art works that they have inherited, rather than through cash payments. However, in 2003, a new law considerably increased tax incentives, this time for companies who can benefit from tax cuts by becoming patrons of France’s national museums.

Since 2000 one can also observe a tendency to decentralize cultural institutions and their management. In 2002 a law introduced a new type of public establishment of cultural cooperation (*établissement public de coopération culturelle*) allowing the government to share financing with regional or departmental governing institutions. The case of the Louvre-Lens and Pompidou-Metz are examples of this as well as illustrations of an effort to decentralize the concentration of national museums and art works in the Paris and Ile-de-France area (Benhamou, 1998).

In 2007, a new Agency of Museums (*Agence France Museum*) was created to provide support to an important international project, the *Louvre* in Abu Dhabi (in fact eleven of France’s major national museums will contribute to this project); another example of such an international agreement is the Centre Pompidou in Shanghai. These examples will be interesting to follow, as they will determine how France’s national museums function in the context of a global society, where museums such as the Louvre export their expertise and their image, whilst remaining nationally funded institutions.

The Public in French national museums: overview

Public access to national treasures was a major ideological banner in the promotion of national museums during the Revolution. The political objective for the creation of the Muséum du Louvre was clearly defined from the outset by the Minister of the Interior, the citizen Roland in 1792: ‘It should be open to everyone. This will be a national monument. There will not be a single individual who does not have the right to enjoy it. It will have such an influence on the mind, it will so elevate the soul, it will so excite the hearts that it will be one of the most powerful ways of proclaiming the illustriousness of the French Republic’ (quoted by Duncan and Wallach, 1980: 56). Throughout the nineteenth century however it is clear that two types of public were

given privileged treatment: artists and foreigners, both were usually allowed to access most collections even on days when these were closed to the general public.

Access remained generally free of charge until 1921 when, after a long and vigorous parliamentary debate, a law was passed allowing museums to charge a limited entry fee (Sundays excepted). In 1989, the Sunday exception was revoked, however a largely acclaimed decision in 2000 introduced free access for all on the first Sunday of every month. Debates have remained lively concerning the question of admission, which of course appears to be a vital element in any move toward cultural democratisation, and special conditions are maintained for children under 18, the unemployed and senior citizens. In terms of the public in national museums it would appear that, according to visitor statistics, the determined investment made by the government since the beginning of the 1970s has paid off with visitor figures that have tripled between 1980 and 2000 (Sallois, 2005, 95).

The professionalization of the curator: overview

Not only does France have a usually unified and centralized system of museum management but in terms of professionalization, it benefits from two major institutions that provide specific courses of education for museum professionals. The first goes back to 1882, when the *École du Louvre* was created to provide a solid education for those entering the ranks of the rapidly increasing number of museums in France. Up until then, the image of the average curator was that of the artist or the dilettante amateur using his time in the museum to pursue his own interests and research.

Another major period of reflection in terms of professionalization began in the 1970 and was related to the increasing emphasis being placed on museum pedagogy, creating a wider variety of professions with new specific roles related to different levels of what has come to be known as cultural mediation.

More recently, the *École nationale du Patrimoine* (ENP) founded in 1990, bestows upon its graduates the official title of *conservateur des musées nationaux*, its objectives, structure and system of recruitment are based on the same principle as the famous *École nationale de l'administration* (ENA). The creation of this school has led to a wealth of discussion on the education and profile of museum staff in France and the history of this profession. Admission is based on an extensive and rigorous art history and history exam and once admitted, students follow a two-year programme of general courses on the administration and mediation of collections as well as doing several internships. This system is very much a French exception, which trains curators first and foremost as polyvalent general managers rather than recognized specialists in the field related to the collections under their responsibility. Museums run by other ministries than the Ministry of Culture may also recruit according to different criteria, depending on the museum's specific field. It should also be noted that, in comparison to other countries, there is a general absence of museums in universities although these are also state owned and run by the Ministry of Education that is second only to the Ministry of Culture in terms of the number of national museums that it manages.

One of the aims of the creation of the *Institut national d'histoire de l'art* in Paris, founded in 2002, was to house specialized laboratories for some of France's largest universities as well as the national art history library and the ENP, was to bring the world of the museum and art historical

research closer together. Its creations demonstrate, once again, to what a large extent the French system most essentially equates the museum with the concerns of art history and archaeology.

Categories of national museums in France

The criteria of ownership, in a sense provide the only clear frame of definition, for indeed as a group, France's national museums appear to defy systematic classification (Sallois, 2005: 14). After placing the *musée du Louvre* in a kind of category of its own, Sallois' typology rather haphazardly regroups all of France's museums according to a very nationally specific categories, the first of which are castle-museums, followed by museums dedicated to different types of art, divided into different chronological and geographical types, with an extra category for decorative arts and for history museums (Sallois, 2005: 14-27). Alternatively, one might adopt a disciplinary typology, considering museums as belonging to one of four main groups: art, cultural/historical, ethnographic and natural (Aronsson, 2008, 7). This however does not help us to class such a museum as the Louvre, which is indeed historically to be considered as an art museum, yet it has come to encompass, although from a predominantly aesthetic perspective, cultural, historical and even ethnographic approaches to its collections. It follows that the most effective way of establishing a clear relationship between political history and the country's cultural policy is to consider separately the history of the different administrative structures of ownership and management.

The Réunion des musées nationaux (1895)

The *Réunion des musées nationaux* was founded in 1895 as one of France's first major independently run public law establishments. It came about as the result of long negotiations and debates over the increasingly difficult financial situation of the four French museums what were officially recognized as national museums at this time: the Louvre (1793), Luxembourg (1818), Versailles (1837) and Musée des Antiquités-nationales de Saint-Germain-en-Laye (1862). These institutions respectively displayed ancient art, contemporary art, history and archaeology. The *musée du Luxembourg*, dedicated to the works of living artists, first opened in 1818. Today it no longer exists; contemporary art - not only national - is today presented in the Palais de Tokyo.

In order to allow for a more flexible management of the important acquisition budgets necessary to keep expanding their collections, the museums called for a new administrative structure providing them with greater independence from the direct state control exercised by the Ministry for Education. More particularly it was to allow for a more fluid system of acquisitions financing, thus increasing the institution's reactivity to the art market and encouraging the support of private donations. The RMN's first financial capital was funded by the sale of the diamonds of the former royal house.

Today the RMN is the coordinating and auxiliary institution of over 34 national museums that currently function according to two different systems of management. Indeed, in 1990, the RMN was transformed into an *Établissement public à caractère industriel et commercial* (EPIC). This new administrative status means that whilst it remains an establishment that is state owned and financed, it is run by a regime of private law that allows it to use its own profits to finance its activities. Over 20 of its associated museums remain directly under the management of the Ministry for Culture (through the *Direction des musées de France*) as *Services à compétence nationale*. The

others handle their own budget and are defined as EPA's, *établissements public administratifs* (the Louvre, Versailles and the musée d'Orsay) meaning that they are themselves autonomous in terms of their budget and can use the profits that they generate and reinject them directly back into their own projects. However, they retain their status as public establishments: their staff remains state employees and they are administered according to the public law regime. This means however that these important museums, the most successful and lucrative of the RMN group, have their own budget and no longer contribute to the common 'cash pot' of the RMN as before. An unfortunate consequence of this is that the RMN has less money to distribute to its more modest member museums.

All of the museums however remain affiliated to the RMN as a support organisation that organizes and finances exhibitions, publications and acquisitions. The RMN has become a label that clearly represents France's activity in the field of art museums and related publications. In terms of the territories and disciplines that its museums represent, they are, for the greatest part, exclusively dedicated to the Fine Arts. Although the RMN cannot be exclusively defined as a group of National Fine Art museums, all of its museums do however fall into the category of the most traditional museum types dedicated to art history, history and archaeology collections.

National museums not coordinated by the RMN under the tutelage of the Ministries of Culture, Education, Higher Education and Research, Defence, Finance or Justice

In addition to the easily identifiable administrative group of national museums run by the RMN, we must add as unequivocally national, a group of 20 museums also owned and run by the state but run by other ministries. These museums depend either directly on financing from specific ministries through their departments (i.e. *Direction des musées de France* ; *Direction de la mémoire, du patrimoine et des archives of the Ministry of Defence*) or they are run as autonomous public establishments (either EPA or EPIC) whose main subsidies are provided by a specific ministry. Such autonomous institutions have become the dominant trend in terms of new national museum creations. A series of new titles has also been introduced for these most recent inventions: *Centre Georges Pompidou*, *Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine*, *Cité des sciences* or *Institut du monde arabe*, in order to underline their more multi-faceted and multi-functional nature. In a sense, this illustrates an effort to redefine the concept of the national museum in terms of its form and its activities, based on an ideology developed in the 1960s whose aim it is to break down elitist structures and provide institutions that are more open and welcoming to a wider public.

The relative importance and the types of collections/themes that these state run museums display vary too greatly for us to define any kind of general principle to characterize this group. Their collections do however tend to be based on a pedagogic principle more related to the fields of the sciences, technology and society than to the art world (cf. II this is the direct result of the division of management operated with the creation of the Ministry of Culture in 1959). There is a general trend in the newer institutions to break with the principle of high art as illustrated by the ideology of the Centre Pompidou (cf. III).

Usually considered as a private institution, the *Musée des arts décoratifs* might also be defined as a rather unique exception in this category of national museums created and run by a state ministry. It was founded by the *Union centrale des Arts décoratifs* an associative organisation initiated by

Antonin Proust, in 1882 (he was at the time serving as France's first minister of the Arts and Manufactures). The museum moved into the Louvre palace in 1905, and since then has been related to the state by way of an official convention. Although strictly speaking it remains a private institution, it is housed in a public building and principally financed by the French state; in the museum world it represents one of France's unique examples of cooperation between the state and a private association. Its collections are principally dedicated to the history of the decorative arts in France, and as such it is truly and nearly exclusively national in scope.

Museums of the Institut de France

The status of these museums is somewhat particular and one might question the validity of classifying them as a group of national museums. Indeed, from a legal point of view, they are strictly speaking private institutions run as independent foundations that are managed by the *Institut de France*. Yet the *Institut*, made up of five separate scientific academies whose establishment goes back to the seventeenth century, has always been directly related to state power in a way that is *sui generis*. The *Institut* is a public establishment whose existence was constitutionally defined during the French Revolution. It is directly financed by the state but entirely free in how it handles its own budget. Its mission is to provide an independent body of scholars to serve as a reference to the highest aims of science and scholarship; the Institut indeed describes itself as the 'parlement du monde savant'. Its relatively liberal status has allowed it to become the guardian and controlling body of the roughly one thousand private foundations that it has received over the last two centuries through donations and legacies. The seven museums that are run under its tutelage (see table) all represent the legacies of private collectors, bestowed on the *Institut* between 1870 and 1950. The *Institut* certainly inherited these collections thanks to its specific status as a national institution of the greatest prestige, a public institution that enjoys the benefits of great freedom in its management decisions, an advantage that no other state body can claim to attract private donors. As such it provides an institutional framework that has accepted and provided for the often-constraining conditions accompanying these donations by collectors. The common denominator of all of these collections is that they are to be maintained and presented to the public on the sites and in the manner in which their owners organized them. Such requirements for the maintenance of a private patrimony in its original state could not have been met by the ministry of Education or the RMN. These museums are, in a sense, the direct echo of the taste of individual citizens who desired to make their personal heritage available to the nation. Such collector museums exist in every country but the specificity of this French example is their affiliation, as a kind of group, to a national scientific institution that epitomizes French science and expertise and that symbolizes universal values of art and culture (*académiciens* are famously called *les immortels*). Donating a collection and desiring it to be managed by the *Institut de France* legitimises the private collector in a very clear sense. One may argue that this group of museums represents a national reality in relation to the status of the private collector and the collector's role in the establishment of national heritage. Furthermore, the museums themselves are the repositories of collections of national magnitude: i.e. the Musée Marmottan holds one of the most important collection of impressionist paintings in France; the duc d'Aumale's beautiful collection displayed as the *musée Condé*, in the *château de Chantilly* which for

centuries belonged to one of the most powerful families in France, represents the second largest collection of old master paintings in France after the Louvre.

Relating ‘peripheral museums’, owned by municipal or regional administration to the national principal

Many major regional or municipal museums may be considered to represent nationally significant values, themes, subjects yet including them would mean opening a too vast number of museums up to our classification and it seems very difficult to establish criteria which could legitimately allow us to include some but not others. However, as shown by Daniel Sherman ‘the national and local dimensions of French museums are intertwined’ (Sherman, 1989: 5). The creation of France’s major municipal museums was not only the result of the individual initiative of each town but also of a clearly defined policy emanating from the central government in Paris. From this perspective it seems necessary to outline certain aspects of the history of their establishment.

A decree issued in 1801 by the minister of the interior, Chaptal, founded the principle of a government policy for France’s main municipal museums (Pommier, 1986). This policy was intended to distribute across the country those objects of artistic value that the Louvre could not and did not need to absorb. It was a gesture of conciliation that was to appease the difficult relationship between the capital and the provinces in the wake of the revolutionary conflicts that had pitted different parts of the nation against each other. The decree named 12 major cities, that already had a museum structure, which were to receive art works that had been confiscated or looted across Europe by the revolutionary and Napoleonic armies – it was an attempt to organise the redistribution of the vast quantities of art treasures nationalized during the Revolution (cf. II A). Throughout the nineteenth century before the creation of the *Direction des musées de France* (cf. II), state commissioned inspectors travelled the country to report on and advise on the future of the municipal museums. This advisory role was also supported by the continuing systems of redistribution that had been initiated in 1801 (DMF/Musée du Louvre, 2007). The Louvre clearly became the model for what a museum should be and its existence is echoed in the collection policy and construction of new museums across the French territory throughout the Nineteenth century.

No national history museum exists in France today; recent debates have tried to establish a project for a new institution (directly called for by the president Nicolas Sarkozy in 2009). It is interesting to observe that, in the absence of such a national institution, the most complete museums on the subject of the nation’s political, social and territorial history are the regional and city museums (Musée Gadagne of Lyon, Musée Arletan, the musée Alsacien in Strasbourg, the musée du château des ducs de Bretagne of Nantes and the Musée d’Aquitaine à Bordeaux). In some cases, national models are appropriated and used to express regional identity, allowing regions to appear as nations within the nation. The Félibrigien movement, a local academic movement dedicated to the langue d’Oc and the culture of the southern regions of France, for example initiated the *musée Arletan* in the hope of locating the culture of a « nation provençale ».

In terms of national identity, museums such as the *musée Carnavalet*, a museum of the history of Paris, are particularly important. *Carnavalet*, although dedicated to the history of the city is also very much a museum of the history of the French Revolution. Indeed a certain number of museums that are not state owned but which illustrate past conflicts that were of national

consequence thus appear to be particularly important for the narrative of national history in the museum: the Centre d'Histoire de la Résistance et de la Déportation de Lyon, Mémorial de Caen, Historial de la Grande Guerre, Mémorial Charles de Gaulle. This is also true of a series of museums related to the bicentennial commemoration of the French Revolution: Historial de la Vendée, Musée de La Révolution Française. It may be noted that the most important creations in terms of memorial museum in the last fifty years have not been national but regional or municipal, a phenomenon that needs to be taken into consideration.

Museums of the Former French Colonies

The museum has been identified as an integral part of the colonial system and post-colonial studies have, in the last two decades, contributed to showing how the nation promoted and justified its colonial action in these institutions (Oulebsir, 2004; Taffin, 2000; Gaugue, 1999). It should be added however that this post-colonial analysis took place later in France than in the anglophone world and appears to be developing according to somewhat different theoretical premises (Forsdick; Murphy, 2003).

The only clearly national museum directly related to the colonies in France was built relatively late in comparison to other European nations - the *Musée de la France d'Outre-mer*, constructed for the Colonial Exhibition in Paris in 1931 (Dias, 1998: 22). Made permanent after the exhibition, it presented, up until 1960, a history of the French Empire from the crusades to contemporary times and an art museum dedicated to the diversity of indigenous art forms and their influence on France. The relative tardiness of the creation of this museum also holds true for the museums founded in the colonies themselves. Just as we might question the relationship between the establishment of a network of national museums and the larger provincial and regional institutions, the history of museums created in the former French colonies should be considered in order to ascertain how they can be defined in relation to the national institutions of the Metropole. In a sense this question inverts our subject and we find museums that were colonial but that became the basis of the future national museums in the colonies after their independence.

The museums created in the French colonies were all due to the initiative of scientific and historic societies more or less directly related to the colonial governments in place. Whilst one may consider some of them to fall more clearly in the category of private or associative initiatives, some were directly promoted and influenced by state officials and clearly part of colonial policy.

The case of Algeria (conquered in 1830) and the creation of the *Musée algérien du Louvre* in 1845 shows that the first reflex of the Metropole was not to create museums in the colonies but to bring back the objects to Paris and exhibit them there (Oulebsir, 2004: 18). However, the French that began to settle in Algeria quickly started working against this exodus of cultural heritage to the Metropole by creating historical societies and administrations to check this movement. In 1853, the mayor of Constantine, Alphonse Étienne Zoepfell, proposed that the French State finance the creation of a museum in each of the three principal provinces of Algeria in collaboration with the municipal governments in place (Oulebsir, 2004: 107).

Yet only one museum really grew out of a state financed initiative: the project proposal for *Musée-Bibliothèque of Alger* was made as early as 1833 by the civil treasurer Stanislas Bresson to the Ministry of War. It was here that the antique objects that were not to be sent to France from the

three provinces of Constantine, Oran and Alger were deposited. The collection began to be seriously organized and structured in the 1850s. It was placed under the administrative control of the prefect of Alger but from 1848 onwards it was directly financed by the *ministère de l'Instruction publique* (Ministry for Education). Its collections quickly gained considerable notoriety, it became Algeria's principal museum and was soon more important than the *Musée algérien de Paris* situated in the Louvre which actually closed during the 1860s (Oulebsir, 2004: 111). Today it is Algeria's *Musée national des antiquités et des arts islamiques*.

The clearest national-colonial initiative was the creation of the *Musée national des beaux-arts d'Alger*, inaugurated by Paul Doumergue, President of the French Republic, on the 5th of May, 1930. It was founded on the basis of the former municipal art museum and was established to celebrate the centenary of the colonisation of Algeria. Today it is Algeria's national art museum, one of the largest on the African continent. Another museum was created to celebrate the centenary: the Maréchal Franchet-d'Espéray museum (also known as the *musée de l'Armée d'Afrique, Musée historique de l'Algérie*). It was situated in the middle of the old city and was modelled after the *Musée de l'Armée* in the *Invalides* in Paris. For Oulebsir, these museums were different from earlier establishments in that they did not seek to present local culture but to clearly establish a French history of Algeria (Oulebsir, 2004: 194).

This may not be said of the case of the *École française d'Extrême-Orient*, created in 1900 at the bequest of the *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* and the Governor General of Indochina. Here, the motivation was mainly to organize scholarly activities and it was hoped that the establishment of a museum would contribute to preserving the cultural heritage of the area (i.e. the EFEO took charge of the archaeological dig at Angkor from 1907 onwards), it was created at the same time as the *Directoire des musées et des monuments historiques* (the colonial government agency for heritage management). The EFEO soon expanded to include a library and a museum in Hanoi (1902), the *musée Louis Finot* was built to exhibit the results of archaeological expeditions. During a new reopening in 1929, Finot declared that it would serve the triple purpose of being a 'scientific, educational and touristic' institution (quoted by Wright, 1996: 127). Wright (1996: 127) goes on to state that 'The École Française d'Extrême-Orient sought to study and display the art of a nation, but that nation – and therefore the 'culture' being presented – was itself an artificial creation. France assembled the colony it called Indochina during thirty years of conquest.' The rooms were each dedicated to the memory of a French military hero, government official, or scholar who had served in Indochina and the objects were labelled first in French and then in *Guoc Ngu* which is a Latinised transcription of Vietnamese (Wright, 1996: 128). In the years that followed the EFEO expanded this initiative into a network of five other museums founded on the same principle in Danang, Saigon, Hué, Phnom Penh and Battambang. Interestingly, since 1958, the building in Hanoi houses the first National Museum in Vietnam dedicated to the history of its territory from prehistory to 1945.

The history of museography in French West Africa begins later and coincides with the history of the IFAN, the *Institut Français d'Afrique Noire*, a federal institution which was created in 1936 to 'stimulate scientific research in every domain and to ensure liaison and coordination' by the Governor General of the *Afrique occidentale française* (Ravenhill, 1996: 266). It was run until 1965 by Théodore Monod of the *Muséum d'histoire naturelle* in Paris who modelled on his home institution a number of research centers and museums throughout French West Africa (i.e. Dakar, Saint-

Louis, Abidjan, Conakry, Bamako, Niamey, Porto-Novo, Ouagadougou, Douala etc.). Whilst French museum building in Asia and North Africa was very much based on the fine arts paradigm, here, of course the emphasis was very much on ethnography.

This rapid overview of course leads us to consider the current situation of museums in the French *Départements d'Outre-mer* (the last remaining territories related to the former colonial empire, they are also some of the oldest of France's colonial conquests). It is sufficient to underline here the notable absence of any kind of 'national' museum in the four current *Départements d'Outre-mer*: la Guadeloupe, la Martinique, la Guyane et la Réunion.

Case studies in chronological order: Principles/ideologies underlying France's National Museum's

The Louvre and the *Quai Branly* two manifestations of Universal Values

Occupying a former royal palace situated in the very centre of the French capital, the Louvre indeed does exemplify what Duncan and Wallach termed as the 'Universal Survey Museum', a type of museum that they claim to be 'not only the first in importance, but also the first museum type to emerge historically, and (which was) from the beginning identified with the idea of the public art museum.' (Duncan and Wallach, 1980: 55). Before its opening, Diderot's famous *Encyclopedia* had dedicated an article to what it hoped the 'Louvre' might become. The institution was the direct intellectual product of the encyclopaedic principle of the Enlightenment, as implemented by the Revolution. Although the Louvre was indeed conceived of in light of an encyclopaedic or universal principal, it did so with some limitations: the productions of French artists and national monuments had at first little or no role to play in the establishment of the collections, nor did 'Exotic' collections, and the main accent was of course generally placed on Classical Antiquity and the Renaissance. At first it was mainly made up of a collection of old masters and classical antiquities, but it rapidly evolved towards a collection principal that was as widely inclusive as possible of different foreign civilizations and periods - including any cultures for which objects and materials became available to the French state.

It has, throughout its existence, served strong political and ideological causes 'born of three parents, republicanism, anti-clericalism and successful aggressive war' (Hudson, 1987, 4) and never more so perhaps than in 1803 when it became known as the *Musée Napoléon*. Until 1816, it was to be the home of the magnificent artistic war trophies that Napoleon's armies brought back to France from across Europe becoming the largest exhibition of art visible to the public anywhere. The *Musée Charles X* (1827) widened its scope to include Egyptian antiquities that were met with immense success, and so throughout the century new discoveries led to the development of new departments and specialities. The Louvre also came to house the arts of Asia, these were however sent to the *musée Guimet* after the Second World War. The *Grand Louvre* project and the highly controversial Pei pyramid (completed in 1989 and marking the bicentenary of the Revolution) changed the physiognomy of the building opening it up to the city and the public in a radical new way. The most recent independent department created in the Louvre is that of Islamic art (2003) it may in part be attributed to the initiative of the former president, Jacques Chirac (1995-2007) who declared his intention of reinforcing the universal vocation of the Louvre by presenting the exceptional contribution of the Islamic civilisation to the course of

world history¹. The slogan brandished was already the *'dialogue des cultures'* that has since become the main catchphrase of the *musée du Quai Branly*. Jacques Chirac also used the Louvre to make a clear political statement concerning the universal status of the so-called primitive arts by promoting the opening of the *Pavillon des Sessions* (2000), an exhibition space situated in the Louvre Palace, though independent in terms of administration and conservation. It is dedicated to presenting as veritable masterpieces in a modernist display environment, under the same roof as the Venus de Milo or the Victory of Samothrace, some of the most beautiful pieces of the collections of the *Musée des arts africain et océaniens*.

This museum is a kind of permanent antenna of the *musée Quai Branly* (2006) an 'embassy' (the term is used on the museum's own website) for extra-European art lending this most recent national museum creation a part of the Louvre's aura of artistic universality and placing this project firmly in filiation with these values. It is interesting to consider this policy also as a way of distancing the collections from the colonial context that was, of course, related to their presentation in the *Musée des arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie* of the *Palais des colonies*- built for the 1931 colonial exhibition (it first housed the *Musée de la France d'Outre-mer* and it was Malraux ministry that transformed it into a Fine arts museum).

The museum's creation became the subject of violent debates, as its incorporation of ethnological collections from the *Musée de l'Homme* was accused of eliminating the ethnological perspective to embrace a purely aesthetic (universal) vision of extra-European arts, which for many detractors was a displaced form of eurocentrist thinking. The universal values represented by since the Louvre's creation have thus been ideologically expanded to include ideas of diversity and cultural dialogue and have been projected onto other national museums. In terms of the western arts, the *musée d'Orsay* and *Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou* in a sense chronologically pursue and complete the programme of the Louvre. Meanwhile the celebration of diversity became the *leitmotiv* of the creation of the *Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration* (2008) in the *Palais des colonies* former home of the collections now in the *pavillon des Sessions* at the Louvre and at the *musée Quai Branly*.

From the Musée des monuments français to the Musée national du Moyen-Âge and the Musée des Antiquités nationales de Saint-Germain-en-Laye: National origins - art, history and archaeology

As already observed, national antiquities found no place in the Louvre when it was created, some rare examples of archaeological finds on French soil could be seen at the *Cabinet des médailles et antiques* of the National Library since the end of the eighteenth century. Another museum born during the Revolution was founded to specifically house the historical heritage of France's *Ancien Régime*. The famous nineteenth century historian Jules Michelet considered the *Musée des monuments français* and the *Louvre* in relation to each other as "two immense museums" both born out of the Revolution. In describing the celebrations of the *fête de l'unité* that took place on the 10th August 1793, he wrote that the Revolution had for the occasion opened two institutions. The Louvre was described as the museum of nations, the universal museum where every country was represented by immortal works of art, whilst Alexandre Lenoir's *Musée des monuments français* (Poulot, 1992) – created from a revolutionary depot of stone monuments in a former convent (today the *École des Beaux-Arts de Paris*) was presented as a treasure of sculptures taken from

convents, palaces and churches (Michelet, 1979: 549). The museum established an entirely new kind of national narrative based on a chronological presentation of French art. Lenoir's creation was closed in 1816 under the Restoration but it set a museographical example that greatly influenced the development of museum practice in the nineteenth century as a means of expressing the growing popular interest for national history and archaeology.

Lenoir's example was first and most famously followed by the collector Alexandre du Sommerard who established a large personal collection of antiquities in the medieval *hôtel de Cluny* that formed the basis for what is today's national collection of medieval art (Marot, 1969). His collections were bought by the state after Sommerard's death in 1843 and combined with the ruins Gallo-Roman Thermal baths beside the *hôtel* becoming the first national museum of art and archaeology.

Despite the appropriate setting that these ancient ruins provided for the presentation of archaeological collections, a new project for a separate archaeological museum developed (Marot, 1979: 316-319). It became the personal project of Napoleon III (1851-1870), who, aided by some of the most accomplished antiquarians of his day, published a monumental biography of Julius Caesar (1865) and funded and organized for the first time in France important and systematic digs of archaeological sites related to the *guerres des Gaules*, episodes of particular importance for national identity. In 1862 he decreed the creation of an archaeological collection for Gallo-roman and Celtic antiquities in the former castle of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, it was opened to the public in 1867, on the day of its inauguration he ceremoniously handed over to the library of the museum a signed copy of his Caesar biography. On display were the Emperor's own collections, the results of digs, a collection donated by Boucher de Perthes illustrating the new discipline of pre-history but also a collection offered by Frederick VII of Denmark which was to form the basis of a display dedicated to comparative archaeology. Indeed, the museological model for the museum was the *Römisch-Germanisches Museum* of Mainz, founded in 1852 by Ludwig Lindenschmidt. Saint-Germain adopted the same extensive use of plaster casts and its chronological organization in terms of the succession of different populations. The museum's first mission statement in 1866 proclaimed that 'the aim of the *musée de Saint-Germain* is to centralize all documents pertaining to the history of the different races that have occupied the territory of the Gallic empire from the most far off times up until the era of Charlemagne; to class the documents in a methodical fashion; to make their study possible for the public and to promote education' (quoted on the museum's website: http://www.musee-antiquitesnationales.fr/homes/home_id20392_u112.htm, accessed on the 15 October, 2010)².

The tradition of digs thus inaugurated by Napoleon III to find the site of the siege of Alesia and the last stand of Vercingetorix was pursued into the beginning of the twentieth but came to a brutal halt in 1914, when the archaeologist Joseph Déchelette passed away. The research begun under the Second Empire had identified, on the mont Beuvray in Burgundy, a major Gallic capital. The site lay dormant until the 1980s when François Mitterrand visited the site and declared it to be of national importance. He greatly encouraged the establishment of a research centre and museum for Bibracte, an *in situ* pendant to the project of Napoleon III at Saint-Germain.

Domaine national de Versailles and Les Invalides: National glorification and commemoration

In this section we will consider two buildings, whose architecture epitomizes the heritage of the reign of Louis XIV, the *Château de Versailles* and the *Invalides*, as they have both come to house museums that glorify the nation and have become the site of distinctive forms of national commemoration.

After the Louvre, the museum of the former royal residence at Versailles is the second most visited museum in France. It is, in fact, the product of a series of museographical projects that go back to the presentation of the royal collections under Louis XIV. After the Revolution, most of these were sent to Paris and much of the royal furnishings were sold. The people of Versailles protested against the pillage and neglect that befell the palace and, as early as 1797, it was decided that it should become home to a special museum of the French school of painting to complement the collections of the Louvre. During the Empire, Napoleon formulated a project to install a series of panoramas in the gardens of Versailles that were to be pictorial celebrations of victorious battles. The symbolism of Versailles was too strong for it to become a royal residence again after the return of the monarchy in 1816. However no real project took hold until the king “of the French People”, Louis-Philippe (1830-1848) decided to use the castle for his historic program of national reconciliation. The *Musée de l'histoire de France* (1837) whose creation he personally oversaw was clearly dedicated “to all the glories of the French nation” as engraved on the facade of the palace. The museum based a major part of its narrative on the illustration of France’s military past, with the famous *Galerie des batailles* (Gaetgens, 1984) and was very much founded on an artistic rendering of the major, one might say mythical moments of France’s political past. At the end of the twentieth century, the director of Versailles, Pierre de Nolhac (1859-1936) began a century long resuscitation of the Versailles of the *Ancien Régime*, restoring the kings and queens apartments to their former glory. This tendency continues today, recent renovations have included the recreation of the gilded entrance and roof. The history museum established in the nineteenth century has given way to a museum that is above all known as a series of period rooms that recreate the palatial residence of the former kings of France from Louis XIV to Louis XVI.

The *Musée de l'Armée* was founded in the *Invalides* in 1905, in a building that also owes its existence to the initiative of Louis XIV. Built as a military hospital in the seventeenth century, it is also home to two religious establishments, the church of *Saint Louis des Invalides* and the church under the dome where the tomb of the emperor Napoleon is situated since 1841. In terms of the collection, it was formed as a fusion of the Artillery museum and an already existing historical army collection. The *musée de l'Artillerie* first opened in 1797 as a revolutionary museum housed in the former convent of the Jacobins and its first collections were based on the arms that had been confiscated during the taking of the Bastille. The proximity of Napoleon’s tomb, already an important attraction for visitors, before the creation of the museum, has caused it to appear to be, first and foremost, a place of commemoration of the military accomplishments of Napoleon Bonaparte (Westrate, 1961: 83).

In a direct sense, the *Musée de l'Armée* (1905) was created in the same mode of national glorification as the museum created by Louis-Philippe at Versailles in 1837 (Barcellini, 2010: 13). By the end of the nineteenth century after the crushing defeat of 1871, the military theme had

taken on a particular significance and the creation of this museum appears as a strategy to give France renewed faith in its military power (Barcellini, 2010: 11). The museum's mission is clearly expressed from the first as providing a place for patriotic and military education and vocation, to provide models and information for painters of military history and finally of course to celebrate the glories and the grandeur of France's army (Barcellini, 2010: 43). Although the museum only ever entertained a very tenuous relationship with the French Army proper - for example it never received any material for displays directly (Westrate, 1961: 90) - it was able, through donations and acquisitions, to accumulate considerable amounts of material during the Great War. The museum had managed to remain open throughout the war, during which time it had become a place of popular pilgrimage, so after 1918, it established more memorial or commemorative forms of display. This period reinforced the army-nation relationship and the museum's role in a discourse of national unity. Its museography has been described by Westrate (1961: 84-86) 'as topical, and no effort is made to provide a comprehensive description of French military history'. He points to the disproportionate attention given to the figure of Napoleon, with a hall dedicated to his 'family and personal items ranging from dishes and clothing to the bed in which Napoleon died. Such objects normally are not found in a military museum'. He praises the display of armour as one of the best in Europe and points out the existence of an unusual display dedicated to model soldiers of all nations.

The entrance fee for tourists visiting the tomb of Napoleon greatly contributes to the financing of the museum, so much so that Westrate claims that it is nearly independent of the Ministry for Defence, which exercises its control rather loosely – today it is indeed run as an autonomous national institution. Its museography recently underwent complete renovation under the so-called *Athena* project. It was, in recent years, also considered as a possible site for a future museum of national history, the idea has since been abandoned and the new museum is now to be installed within the buildings of the national archives. In conclusion to her study of the museum's history, Barcellini (2010) comments on the role of the museum today and its future, stating that although professionals have called for important changes to be made in terms of the exhibition and ideological principles of history museums, the same cannot be said for the *musée de l'Armée* nor for military museums in general. She maintains that these institutions do not principally aim to provide a scientific history of military questions but that their main mission is directly related to an ideological and commemorative role, a fact that constitutes the essence of the museum itself and as such cannot be altered. Whilst Westrate wrote (1961: 87) that: 'Its future is well assured because it functions as an instrument of patriotism and plays a somewhat supporting role to the suitable memorialization of a major national hero', Barcellini (2010: 240) points out that the disappearance of an obligatory military service in France and the changing nature of the army-nation relationship are a direct 'menace' for the museum's future. In the same vein of national glory but also of commemoration we also might place the *Musée Clemenceau - de Lattre, National museum of the Two Victories*, the *Mémorial Charles de Gaulle* (2008) and the group of six national museums dedicated to the Napoleonic legend.

Notes

- ¹ « L'objectif est de conforter la vocation universelle de cette prestigieuse institution afin qu'elle puisse mieux faire connaître à son vaste public la contribution exceptionnelle des civilisations de l'islam à l'histoire de l'humanité », <http://www.teheran.ir/spip.php?article988>.
- ² 'le musée de Saint-Germain a pour but de centraliser tous les documents relatifs à l'histoire des races qui ont occupé le territoire de la Gaule depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'au règne de Charlemagne ; de classer ces documents d'après un ordre méthodique ; d'en rendre l'étude facile et à la portée du public ; de le publier et d'en propager l'enseignement'.

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Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Style Location
<u>Museums of the Réunion des musées nationaux</u>		<u>RMN was created in 1895.</u>	<u>The RMN is the auxiliary institution of the museums in this category. Some have become autonomous institutions themselves but under public law (EPA)</u>	<u>RMN is since 1990 an <i>Établissement public à caractère industriel et commercial</i>. (state establishment run under private law)</u>			
Musée du Louvre	1793	1793	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif</i> .	Antiquities, Greco-Roman, Egyptian, Oriental, etc. Decorative Arts, Fine Arts, Extra-European civilisations: Islam	The museum presents Western art from the Middle-Ages to 1848, as well as the civilisations that preceded it and influenced it. 7 departments: Oriental antiquities (+Islam), Egyptian ant; Grec-Rom-Etr ant; Paintings, Sculpture, Decorative arts and prints. A section is also dedicated to the history of the museum itself.	Paris, former royal palace
Domaine national de Versailles: Musée des châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon	1837	1798	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif</i> .	Architecture, Urbanism, Decorative Arts, Religious Art, Fine Arts, History	Royal appartments with their decors, museum of the History of France from the 16 to 19 th c.	Versailles, former royal palace

Musée national de la Céramique à Sèvres	1934 (+musées nationaux)	1824	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	Decorative Arts and Ceramics	French ceramic art from the 15 th to the 17 th c. A complete panorama of the productions of the Sèvres manufacture.	Sèvres, Ile-de-France
Musée national du Moyen Age - thermes et hôtel de Cluny	1843 (bought by the state), 1907 (joined RMN)	1835	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	Archaeology, Religious Art, Decorative Arts, Fine Arts, Photography, Manuscripts, Numismatics, Ethnology	French history, art and archaeology from Gallo-roman to the middle ages.	Paris, former Roman Thermes and Cluny medieval gothic hotel.
Musée de la porcelaine Adrien Dubouché	1881 (nationalized)	1846	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	Decorative Arts and Ceramics	Ceramics and pottery from the Antiquity (Greco-Roman, oriental), French from medieval times to present day.	Limoges
Musée d'archéologie nationale de Saint-Germain-en-Laye	1867	1862	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	Archaeology, Prehistory, Protohistory	Archaeology and history of France, mainly objects from digs on French soil.	Saint-Germain-en-Laye
Musée Guimet (+ Musée d'Ennery en annexe)	1889	1879	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif.</i>	Far Eastern antiquities, Religious Art, Fine Arts	Asian art and archaeology, military arms, musical instruments, manuscripts, coins etc.	Paris (initialement Lyon)
Musée Gustave Moreau	1903	1898	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	Fine Arts	Atelier and home of the artist Gustave Moreau with an important collection of his work and the objects he owned during his lifetime.	Paris

Musée national de Malmaison et Boi-Préau	1906	1903	RMN, Ministry for Culture, Musées nationaux napoléoniens.	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	History, Thematic	Napoleon museum, reconstituted appartments, art of the Empire era.	Rueil-Malmaison
Musée Rodin	1916	1911	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif.</i>	Fine Arts	Works by Auguste Rodin, Camille Claudel and other contemporary artists.	Paris
Musée national de Préhistoire, les Eyzies de Tayac	1920	1913	RMN, Ministry for Culture, Musées nationaux napoléoniens.	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	Prehistory	Prehistorical finds from the South of France.	Périgord
Musée national de la Maison Bonaparte		1923	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	History	History of the family of Napoleon Bonaparte.	Ajaccio, Corse
Musée Jean-Jacques Henner		1926 (donation by the family)	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	Fine Arts	Paintings and drawings by the artist.	Paris
Musée national de l'Orangerie des Tuileries	1927		RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif</i> of the Musée d'Orsay.	Fine Arts	Presents most notably Claude Monet's "Nymphéas" but also the Jean Walter and Paul Guillaume collections.	Paris
Musée franco-américain du château de Blérancourt	1931	1924	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	History, Fine Arts	Thematic history museum documenting the relationship between France and America, military and diplomatic history. Some art collections.	Picardie

Musée national du château de Pau		1929	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	History, Fine Arts, Decorative Arts	Castle of Henri IV, restauration began by Louis-Philippe in 1848.	
Aquarium tropical - palais de la Porte dorée		1931	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif</i> of the Cité de l'Immigration	Ichthyologie	Aquariums of tropical fish	
Musée national Napoléonien de L'Ile d'Aix et musée Africain	1959	1935	RMN, Ministry for Culture, Musées nationaux napoléoniens	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	Decorative Arts, Fine Arts, History	Objects and souvenirs related to the life of Napoleon. The baron Napoléon Gourgaud also had an important collection relating to Africa and its wildlife which came to the the African museum.	
Musée national Eugène Delacroix	1971	1932	Société des Amis d'Eugène Delacroix, RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif</i> of the Louvre.	Fine Arts	Collections of art and objects having belonged to the painter Eugène Delacroix.	Paris
Musée des civilisations de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée: formerly: musée national des Arts et Traditions populaires	1969	1937	RMN, Ministry for Culture		Archaeology, Ethnography, History, Technics and Industries	National folk art and popular traditions.	Paris

Musée national Magnin		1937	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	Fine Arts	Paintings and drawings of the French, Flemish, and Italian schools of the the 15 th to the 18 th c.	Dijon
Musée national du Château de Compiègne. And National car and tourism museum		1943	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	Fine Arts, Architecture, History, Decorative Arts	Museum dedicated to the art and history of the Second Empire. The castle also houses a collection of vintage cars.	Compiègne
Musée de Port-Royal des Champs	1962	1952	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	History	Thematic history museum on the Jansenist movement, works by Philippe de Champaigne.	Magny-les-Hameaux, Ile-de-France
Musée Clemenceau - de Lattre, National museum of the Two Victories		1959	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	History	Thematic, commemorative, establishes an historical parallel between the two men who signed the peace treaties putting an end to the World Wars.	Mouilleron-en-Pareds
Musée national Picasso La Guerre et la Paix de Vallauris		1959	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	Fine Arts, Contemporary Arts	Art by Picasso	
Musée national Fernand Léger de Biot	1967	1960	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	Contemporary Arts	Pieces from the artists workshop	Biot, Côte d'Azur

Galeries nationales du Grand Palais	1966	1964	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif.</i>	Fine Arts	Dedicated to the presentation of temporary art exhibits of national and international importance.	Paris
Musée et Domaine nationaux du Château de Fontainebleau	1986 (ouverture du musée Napoléon Ier)	1964 (beginning of the restauration by Malraux)	RMN, Ministry for Culture, Musées nationaux napoléoniens	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif.</i>	History, Fine Arts, Decorative Arts	Restored interiors of the Renaissance castle, museum dedicated to Napoleon Ier.	Fontainebleau, Ile de France
Musée de la Renaissance - château d'Ecouen	1977	1964 ca.	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	History, Fine Arts, Decorative Arts	Part of the collections of the musée de Cluny, mainly French Renaissance, collections of all kinds.	Ecouen, Ile de France
Musée national Message Biblique Marc Chagall	1973	1967	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	Fine Arts	Works by Chagall on the Bible.	Nice, Alpes-Maritime
Musée national Picasso	1985	1974	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned, part of the RMN. <i>Service à compétence nationale.</i>	Fine Arts, Contemporary Arts	Collection of work by Picasso and his contemporaries.	Paris
Musée d'Orsay (+le Musée Hébert)	1986	1978	RMN, Ministry for Culture	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif.</i>	Fine Arts, Decorative Arts	French arts from 1848 to 1914	Paris

<u>National Museums under the control of government ministries (but not RMN)</u>							
Musée du Cabinet des médailles et antiques		1793 (opens completely to the public)	Ministry for Culture and Communication; Ministre of Education.	Department of the National Library, Bibliothèque nationale de France	Numismatics, Archaeology	History, universal numismatic collections, greco-roman and gallo-roman archaeology.	Paris
Muséum national d'histoire naturelle		1793	Ministry for Higher Education and Research	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif.</i>	Mineralogy, Biology, Paleontology, Anatomy, Ethnography	(Includes the Musée de l'homme, created in 1937).	Paris
Musée des Arts et Métiers	1802 (galleries first opened)	1794 (creation of the Conservatoire)	Ministry for Higher Education and Research	State owned, administered as part of the Conservatoire national des arts et métiers.	Technology, Mechanics, Electronics, Communication ...	Scientific instruments, objects illustrating the evolution of technology in specific areas such as motors, communications, construction... historical presentation of technological evolution.	Paris
Musée national de la Marine	1827	1801	Ministry of Defense (rattaché à la Marine nationale en 1920)	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif.</i>	History, Ethnography, Art	History of maritime transport, modèles and art related to sea faring.	Paris, palais de Chaillot, with succursales: Brest, Port-Louis, Rochefort, Toulon.

Musées de la monnaie		env. 1830...	Ministry for Finance	State owned, run by the National mint	History, Numismatics	History of French coinage	
Museum of the History of France of the National Archives		1867	Ministry for Culture and Communication	State owned under the Direction des Archives de France, section of the Ministry for Culture	History	French history as to be illustrated through the documents of the archives. Mainly temporary exhibits.	Paris
Musée national de l'éducation	1980 (réouverture à Rouen)	1876	Ministry of Education and Research	State owned and run by the Ministry of Education and Research	Pedagogical Science	History of education in France	Paris, depuis 1980 à Rouen
Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine (former: Musée des Monuments français)	2008	1878	Ministry for Culture and Communication	It is an autonomous national institution <i>établissement public à caractère industriel et commercial</i>	Architecture, Art, Urbanism	French architecture from medieval times to the present day, through collections of plastercasts and models.	Paris
National museum of the Army, Hotel des Invalides	1905	1905	Ministry of Defense, Société des Amis du Musée de l'Armée	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif.</i>	Military History, Art	Arms and armoury from prehistoric times to medieval times from all over Europe. Military souvenirs of the most famous monarchs. Displays dedicated to WWI and WWII. Memorial Charles de Gaulle.	Paris
Musée de la Préfecture de Police de Paris		1909	Ministry of Justice	State owned, financed by the Ministry of Justice.			Paris
Musée de l'air et de l'espace du Bourget	1973	1919	Ministry of Defense	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif.</i>	History of air transport		Ile de France

Musée national de la Légion d'Honneur et des Ordres de Chevalerie	1925	1925	Founded be private means financed by members of the legion.	State owned, financed by the Ministry of Justice.	Military Decorations, History	History of France's honors, medals, decorations, and knightly orders from Louis XI Louis XI of France Louis XI to the present, including Napoleonic souvenirs etc.	Paris
Cité des sciences et de l'Industrie and Palais de la Découverte	1986 = Cité des sciences; 2007 union of both museums as one administrative establishment.	1937 (International Exhibition "Arts et techniques dans la vie moderne) = creation of the Palais de la Découverte.	Ministry of Education and Research	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public à caractère industriel et commercial.</i>	Physics, Chemistry, Astrophysics, Mathematics, Biology	Palais de la découverte: permanent exhibit based on the principle of demonstrations / experiments demonstrating fundamental scientific principes. Cité des Sciences et de l'industrie: looks at science in all of its applications to industry and others, temporary exhibitions explore diverse themes concentrating on the state of knowledge today.	Paris, Parc de la Villette and Grand Palais.
Musée de la Poste		1946			History	Cultural and social history of written communication	Paris
Museum Struthof of the former concentration camp Natzweiler.	1980	1965	Ministry of Defense. Direction de la mémoire, du patrimoine et des archives.	State owned, administered by the Direction de la mémoire, du patrimoine et des archives of the Ministry of Defense.	History of WWII	Displays and films dedicated to the history of the camp and its annexes. The creation of the camp, its organisation and the daily life of its prisoners.	Vosges

Musée de la bande dessinée et centre national de la bande dessinée et de l'image	1991	1974	Departmental, Ministry of Culture	State owned, autonomous, <i>établissement public caractère industriel et commercial</i> financed by the Département Charente, and the Ministry for Culture.	Contemporary Art, Popular Culture	History of French cartoons from the 19 th c. to the present day.	Angoulême, in a contemporary building beside the Abbey of Saint Cybard.
Musée national d'art moderne du Centre Georges Pompidou	1977	1970	Ministry of Culture and Communication	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum in association with the BPI and the IRCAM. <i>Établissement public à caractère culturel.</i>	Contemporary Art and Culture	French, European and American art of the 20 th c.	Paris
Musée national des prisons / National museums of prisons	2003	1982	Ministry of Justice	State owned, financed by the Ministry of Justice.	History	History of the penitential system in France.	Fontainebleau, Ile de France
Le musée de Bibracte	1984		Ministry of Culture	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum in association with state, regional and departmental administrations. <i>Établissement public à caractère culturel</i>	Archaeology	Celtique civilisation across Europe, the archaeological site of the Gaulish village of Bibracte.	Mont Beuvray, Bourgogne

Le musée national de la douane / National customs museums		1984	Ministry for Finance	State owned and managed by the National Customs office.	History	History of the administration of customs, it aims to tell a story of France through it's relations with other countries.	Bordeaux
Music Museum of the <i>Cité de la Musique</i>	1995		Ministry of Culture and Communication	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public industriel et commercial.</i>	Art, Music, Culture	Collection of musical instruments, thematic temporary exhibits.	Paris, parc de la Villette
Musée Quai Branly and Pavillon des Sessions (Louvre)	2006	1878, 1937, 1960 (complex history, built up from several museums and collections)	Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Research	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif.</i>	Ethnography, Art	Museum of the art and civilization of non-European culture, Africa, Asia, Oceania, and the Americas	Paris
La Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration	2007	1990 (creation of the Association pour un musée de l'immigration)	Ministry of Education and Research	State owned but managed as an autonomous national museum. <i>Établissement public administratif.</i>	Contemporary History	History of immigration to France in the 19 th and 20 th c.	Paris
<u>Museums of the Institut de France</u>							
Château de Chantilly	1898	1884 (legacy to the state by the duc d'Aumale)		Foundation of the Institut de France	Art History, History	Important paintings collection of old masters, antiquities, library of rare books.	Ile de France

Museum Jacquemart-André	1913	1875	Former private collection run by the Fondation of the French Academy of Fine Arts	Foundation of the Institut de France	Decorative Arts, Art History	Strong points of the collection are Flemish paintings, French eighteenth century, Italian Renaissance, rare furniture.	Paris
Royal Abbey of Chaalis	1913			Foundation of the Institut de France			Ile de France
Musée Claude Monet à Giverny	1980	1966 (legacy to the Académie des Beaux-Arts)		Foundation of the Institut de France	Art History	Impressionist painting	Giverny
Villa Éphrussi de Rothschild		1934		Foundation of the Institut de France	Art History, Decorative Arts	Furniture, porcelaines	Ville-Franche-sur-Mer
Villa Grecque Kérylos	1928	1908		Foundation of the Institut de France	Archaeology, Art History	House museum, replica of an ancient Greek home	Beaulieu-sur-Mer
Musée Marmottan Monet		1932		Foundation of the Institut de France	Art History	Collections of impressionist painting	Paris
<u>Museums of the Regions, major municipal museums whose resonance may be considered as national: a selection of examples.</u>							
Carnavalet, Museum of the History of Paris		1867	Municipal	Owned by the city of Paris. One of the <i>musées de la ville de Paris</i> .	History, Art, Decorative Arts	History of the city of Paris, the French Revolution	Paris

Musée Alsacien de la ville de Strasbourg		1907	Municipal	Municipality of Strasbourg, regional funding.	History, Art, Decorative Arts	Museum of art and traditional cultures, local architecture, costumes, furniture, ceramics etc. Period rooms traditional 'country' interiors.	Strasbourg
Ecomusée du Creusot-Montceau-les-Mines	1973	1972	Regional	Mixed funding from the Ministry of Culture, National fund for the development of the territory, but also regional and local.	History of Industry, Technology, Environmental studies, Society	The first ecomuseum created in France, its aim has been to study the impact of the history of industrialisation in the region on the society and on the territories of its activity.	Creusot, Bourgogne
Centre d'Histoire de la Résistance et de la Déportation de Lyon	1992	1965	Associative, municipal	Department, state, European funding.	History of WWII	Founded by an association of resistance fighters, it is today housed in the former Gestapo headquarters of Lyon. History of the resistance and dedicated to the fight against crimes against humanity.	Lyon
Musée de La Révolution Française	1989	1983	Departmental	Département de l'Isère	National History, Art, Literature	History of the 18 th c. the Revolution and the Romantic period in France through art works and objects of the period.	Château de Vizille

Historial de la Grande Guerre	1992	1986	General couciil of the Somme Department, Ministry of Defense; Ministry for Culture and Communication	Owned by the Department of the Somme, receives joint funding from department, region and state sources and European funding.	Military History	Military and cultural history of WWI in an international perspective.	Péronne
Mémorial Charles de Gaulle	2008		Regional	Region of the Haute-Marne, the museum was also financed by Europe and by State funding.	Biography, History	"Centre d'interprétation historique" a set of displays that illustrate the life of Gen. De Gaulle without any kind of objects.	Colombey-les-Deux-Églises



National Museums in Germany: Anchoring Competing Communities

Peter Aronsson & Emma Bentz

Summary

From 1760-2010, Germany has been marked by several levels of nation-building as well as many different ideological and territorial projects. This inquiry has focused on processes of long continuity, spanning unification in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, adding the most important ruptures and institutional inventions to get a firm-enough basis for conclusions on the institutional role of museums vis-a-vis the state-making process. The most significant periods for the interaction between museums and nation-building can be labelled

1. The struggle, leading to Germany's unification in 1871, where several regions made their bids through museums.
2. Imperial unity on display from 1871-1914. National museums were stabilizing and universalizing the German Empire in the world.
3. Nazi cultural policy, 1933-1945: Comprehensive museum plans for the Third Reich.
4. GDR (German Democratic Republic) national museums between 1949-1990 were dominated by the ideology of socialist culture.
5. The Federal republic, before and after 1990: inscribing Nazi and GDR as pasts contained within brackets.

Germany's history is marked by the processes of unification meeting dissociative forces resulting in dramatic political shifts and the persistence of a complex federal structure. Museums reflect various strategies both within this history and through contributions to stabilizing, reinforcing and materializing ideas of continuity. Balancing the unifying message of the heritage of a Roman – German legacy and later federal structures resulted in a distribution of national museums in Berlin, Munich, Nuremberg and Bonn. A long-standing cooperation and tension between local, regional and national identities with a clear utopian and activist element marks initiatives taken for establishing national museums. What later became national museums often started as private individual or collective elite initiatives aimed at putting certain projects on the political agenda.

The enlightenment ambitions went beyond national borders with the establishment of Humboldt University in Berlin in 1810 and several of the institutions at the *Museumsinsel* as “Universalmuseen”. The scientific and technical scope of Deutsches Museum in Munich captured the rational dimension in German identity politics into the next century. These rational and scientific ambitions coincided in time and helped to legitimize both military national unification and imperial undertakings.

Implicit and explicit historical narratives representing the existence of German culture dominated national museums with a plastic delimitation between a European (Roman), German-speaking and German state as the space of representation. Art and cultural history was more expandable, while political history followed the honours and sorrows of political community.

National museums have, overall, survived with an astonishing continuity when successively changing the goal of state-making from creating the state, an empire, a Nazi state to overcoming that past and creating democratic visions in both liberal and communist versions to, again, healing that division and constructing it as a parenthesis in history. A re-nationalisation process post-1990 again activated investments in museums and reveals again a standing ambiguity in dealing with national sentiments. This is most clearly visible in museum discussions and projects dealing with the NS-legacy versus demands for “Normalisierung”.

As opposed to many European countries from France to Greece that have a high level of centralization within the field of culture, both culture and cultural politics is, in Germany, mainly dealt with on a regional level within each *Bundesland*. This can partly be explained by the terrifying experience of a centralized rule and the misuse of art and culture for political ends made during the NS-regime (Klein 2003):71). After the war, one sought to prevent this through legislation by reducing state influence within the cultural policy sphere through the foundational law (GG article 5(3) and 30). A federal - and thus fragmented - Germany was also something desired by the Allies. However, a decentralized Germany was nothing entirely new. An on-going interplay between regional and central forces in representing the state was one of the long-term phenomena, although driven by various logics: In the mid-19th century, the relative strength and actual outcome of the unification process was naturally open-ended which allowed for several strong suggestions, while mid-20th century dynamics was determined by the urge not to repeat the mishaps of a strong national ideology. The current trend seems to lend itself to stronger nationalizing forces in the field of memory politics.

The overarching argument of the role played by national museums in the making of the German state and nation is that it has provided a platform for a cultural constitution only slowly negotiating changing ideas of what it means to be German and how to relate to local, regional and transnational communities. Hence, the main impact of the museums is to secure ideas of continuity in the midst of dramatic political change.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Germanic National Museum <i>Germanisches National-Museum</i>	1852	1852	Aristocracy (1852), Parliament from (1866)	Private 1852-1866, state 1866-1920, <i>Stiftung</i> 1921-	Archaeology and Art	German-speaking cultures	Pre-history to 1650 (opening), 1800 to 1900, contemporary culture (1990-)	Conglomerate: national and later functionalist and post-modernist. Central location, in Nuremberg.
German Museum of Science and Technology <i>Deutsches Museum (von Meisterwerken der Naturwissenschaft und Technik)</i>	1925	1903	Engineers, major economic elites and political corporations at all levels	<i>Rechtsfähige Anstalt des öffentlichen Rechts</i>	Cultural History, Technology and Natural Science	Universal values, education	Modern	Modern style, solitary on an island, near old Bayerische Nationalmuseum, central Munich.
House of the History of the Federal Republic of Germany <i>Haus der Geschicht der Bundesrepublik Deutschland</i>	1994	1982	<i>Bundestag</i> , Helmut Kohl	<i>Stiftun</i> , state level	Contemporary History (post-1945).	German Political History, Western and Eastern Germany contrasted	Germany after WWII, FRG/GDR	Post-modern style 1989-94. Part of the “Museumsmeile” and modern political offices, in modern administrative centre of Bonn.
German History Museum <i>Deutsches Historisches Museum</i>	2006 (temporary since 1991)	1983	<i>Bundestag</i>	State	German Political and Cultural History	German culture	100 BC to 1994 AD	Baroque, <i>Zeughaus</i> (post-modern annex (I. M. Pei), next to Museumsinsel and old Royal quarters, central Berlin.

Introduction

Germany has been a nation in dramatic making during the formative years of national museums. A structuring dynamic resulted between, on the one hand, the long standing idea of the Holy Roman empire of the German nation, politically crushed by Napoleon, but immanent in German politics at least up until the Second World War and, on the other hand, a fragmented and multi-centred political and cultural map before the unification but also in the Federal constitution of the republic that provided plenty of space for museums to act on.

Furthermore, the rapture of Nazi- and communist policy the creation of two German states, challenges the continuity of the old institutions and the need for re-interpretation of the historical legacy. A rapid move from a historical culture dominated by pride in German culture and its societal manifestations, to one of repugnance and public guilt can be observed. Some of the more important periods and ruptures that interacted with national museums are then:

1. The strive for unification, 1871: *Museumsinsel* and Humboldt collection/university, the cultural institutions in Berlin were one of the important nuclei for representing national ambitions as were Bavarian initiatives in Munich and Germanisches Nationalmuseum of Nuremberg.
2. The Imperial unity on display, 1871-1914: An enormous expansion in museum representation takes place. National museums are stabilizing and universalizing the German Empire in the world.
3. Nazi cultural policy, 1933-1945: Comprehensive museum plans to be fulfilled after the victory, some realized as with the building of *Kunsthalle* in Munich. Gradual influence over already established museums but in many dimensions, professional practice prevailed. Jewish museum professionals were, as part of the general policy, gradually removed. Major damage was done to many buildings and also, to some extent, to collections during the war.
4. GDR national museums, 1949-1990: Dominated by an ideology of narrating the progressive role of the working class, of violent class struggle and of the Communist Party as leading to the establishment of present day communist society as the end of history. Art is especially favoured for the role of museums and monuments in the service of breeding socialist culture.
5. The Federal Republic, before and after 1990: Constructing the democratic and modernization heritage and eventually inscribing Nazi and GDR eras as pasts contained within brackets.

The first period is marked by several attempts at taking a leading role in the unification process of Germany, most clearly in the case of Bavaria, playing with the notion of a Bavarian nation (state) in the nineteenth century. Gradually these nationalisms, the most elaborate initiated by Ludwig I in Bavaria, were turned into regionalisms in an Imperial and later Federal Germany (Weichlein 2004). For Prussia, as the eventual victor, this ambition transformed new levels: “German historiography in Imperial Germany moved from portraying Prussia’s vocation in Germany to highlighting Germany’s alleged vocation in the world“ (Berger 2010).

1945 was a major dividing line in national self-understanding. It marked the end of glorification of state-making through expansion and the beginning of relating to the recent past

as best memorialized with sorrow and grievances. However, the more distant past could still be a source of pride.

In the same period, until 1989, it was possible to 'blame' the other Germany to be the true inheritor of the dark Nazi legacy. Both Germanys could also use the same parts of the more distant past - but in parallel ways and in very different political contexts. This can be exemplified with the Martin Luther Jubilee of 1983, celebrating and commemorating the 500 year anniversary of his birth, which gave occasion to two large scale exhibitions, one at GNM in Nuremberg and one at Museum für Deutsche Geschichte (MfDG) in East Berlin (Niven and Paver 2010: Introduction, 342).

The divided federal/state structure of cultural heritage politics underlined the complexities of commemoration work in Germany both in the unification process of the nineteenth century, in the post-war period and after die Wende. In 1952, the Landeszentral für politische Bildung (Federal Agency for Civic Education) was founded. With sub-departments in the different federal states, it took up the regional work of educating through remembering first the democratic tradition and resistance and then later, the atrocities ([http://www.bpb.de/die_bpb/XXOFDN,0,Die Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung.html](http://www.bpb.de/die_bpb/XXOFDN,0,Die_Bundeszentrale_f%C3%BCr_politische_Bildung.html)). The system expanded to former GDR after 1990 and provided a national counterpart to the better-known investments in museums and memorial sites (Erinnerungsort, Denkort, Mahnmal).

There is a longstanding debate on the peculiarities of the German historical trajectory, a possible Sonderweg where the balance between continuity, normality and radical broke from circulation around the understanding of the role of the Nazi-regime 1933-45 and the Holocaust and thus, had a longer trajectory (Berger 2003, Grebing et al. 1986, Smith 2008). An evident urge from post-war generations to make the Nazi period an exceptional and isolated epoch in political, cultural and academic spheres has been challenged by others stressing continuities in both the biographies of intellectuals and the plasticity of cultural knowledge utilized by subsequent regimes (Östling 2010, Lehmann and Oexle 2004a, Lehmann and Oexle 2004b). This can probably also apply to some of the national museum institutions, however these negotiations are less well researched compared with the recent critical discussions within relevant academic disciplines like ethnology, history and archaeology, although the Nazi period itself has recently been researched fairly intensively for some museums (Vaupel and Wolff 2010).

National museums and cultural policy

Napoleons legacy

With the decision to make hitherto private collections accessible to a wider audience and to display these collections in separate buildings, a step towards democratization of the cultural heritage was made. This process was already completed when the first national museums in Germany were initiated and inaugurated around 1850. However, since this development forms a fundamental prerequisite for the existence of the specific category of museums under study in this report, it deserves brief mentioning.

The process of opening up art and antiques collections, primarily belonging to monarchs and princes began in the 18th century but gained additional pace after the French revolution (Vieregge 2006: 74). The kings of Prussia, electors and kings of Bavaria, Saxony and Dresden, dukes of

Württemberg in Stuttgart and the Elector of Hessen in Kassel were among the active collectors opening up their private treasures to the public sphere. However, before 1815 they did so acting more towards their own *Land* and only later contributed to various visions of the pan-Germanic community (Grossmann 2006). Staatliche Kunstsammlungen in Dresden celebrates in year 2010, 450 years since inauguration by Kurfürst August in 1560, which is something of a record. Its nationalisation was finalized in 1918.

One early example of a public accessible art collection is the *Gemäldegalerie (today: part of the Landesmuseum)* in Mainz; Germany's first public museum "in städtischer Hand" (Wöhler 2006). The museum itself is an example of the production of museums in the Napoleonic age. Not only were objects confiscated and centralized to the Louvre, but later also decentralized to important provincial towns such as Mainz. A shipment of 40 paintings from Paris readily established this museum in 1803 as one of several French provincial museums with a strong relationship to the Imperial centre of that epoch. This was the result of a dynamic fed by the trauma of the Napoleonic wars and the strong standing of Hellenistic heritage. On the other side of the Rhine, in Frankfurt, one of the first, non-noble private museum initiatives can be found. In 1816, the will of private art collector Johann Friedrich Städel (1728-1816), a banker, resulted in the foundation of a *Kulturinstitut* – with the aim of hosting his large art collection and supporting talented artists (<http://www.staedelmuseum.de/sm/index.php?StoryID=13> [29 January, 2011]). A museum was inaugurated in 1833. It was Städel's will that five persons belonging to the Frankfurt bourgeoisie should manage the organisation and administration of the museum. Later, a museum society was founded (in 1899). Inspired by Enlightenment ideas, Städel, who did not belong to the nobility but to the bourgeoisie, explicitly wished the museum to be accessible to the public. In 1878, a new building was erected to host the vast art collections. Throughout the years, the collection has been enlarged and today it counts as one of Germany's most important art collections, consisting of paintings and sculptures from the fourteenth century to modern art.

Along the Rhine, museums have been built to host memory of the Roman heritage and the Roman Empire in the German nation. The most prestigious is the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum (RGZM), also situated in Mainz and founded to act foremost as a research institute where the exhibition should act as a *Schausammlung* for researchers, a purpose that was already outspoken at the time of the foundation of this central museum in 1852 and advocated by its founder Ludwig Lindenschmit der Ältere. Another important foundation is the Römisch-Germanisches Museum in Cologne, inaugurated in 1974. Until then, the collections had been part of the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum. A new building was planned and built between 1967-74, prominently placed immediately next to the famous cathedral and above an equally famous Dionysus mosaic (discovered in 1941) which is now integrated into the museum itself. The museum hosts archaeological finds primarily from the Roman and Merovingian periods; reminding the visitor of Cologne's glorious past and legacy.

The bourgeoisie gained successive access to the collections strengthening their position as an emerging civil factor of power of the later nineteenth century. But the members of the bourgeoisie were not only passive visitors but also active contributors to collections and founders of museums. By doing this they contributed to the changing meaning of the public sphere to include themselves as pivotal carrier of values of citizenship, art and science for the nation.

Other early actors on the museum scene were the universities responding to empiricist ideas of knowledge. The establishment of Humboldt University in Berlin in 1810 was closely connected with the utilization of collections for empirical scientific investigation, the modern university. In doing so collaboration with the older collection of the Berlin castle was complemented with new endeavours. The scientific legitimacy of collection rose by this link and made them even more politically valuable (Horst Bredekamp, oral presentation 20091022, conference at Bode museum, Berlin).

German unification and the museums

One of the most prominent examples of a private collection turning into a publicly accessible museum is the Altes Museum in Berlin, complementing the scientific collections of Humboldt with marvellous pieces of art to the glory of the city and its patrons. Many of the objects on display were Prussian pieces of art that had been confiscated by Napoleon but now had been returned, after his defeat in 1815 (Gaehtgens 2001: 86). The founder of the Altes Museum was Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm III but a museum commission, presided by Wilhelm von Humboldt, led the work from 1810 and onwards. In 1830, the museum was opened to the public. Architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel's Altes Museum was constructed as a museum of peace in strong contrast to the Musée Napoleon in Paris, a museum of war trophies. The educational ideal was aimed at educating the nation more than enhancing Prussian identity (Wezel 2009). Together with the neo-classical *Glyptothek* in Munich, the two museums demonstrated a subtle twist of the enlightenment reference in an anti-French direction by turning to Greek aesthetics rather than the ideals of Rome. Erected between 1816 and 1836 by K F Schinkel and Leo von Klenze respectively, both buildings set standards of architectural aesthetics that spread throughout the western world (Buttlar 2009).

The Neues Museum, which opened in 1859 as the Royal-Prussia museum, in turn originally had ambitions as a universal museum. A more nationally-inclined art collection opened in 1876 (later named Alte Nationalgalerie). Also at the Spree island and enhancing the royal custodians were a mixture of collections that opened in 1904 as the Kaiser Friedrich-Museum, from 1956 called the Bode museum after the prominent early twentieth century Berlin museum director Wilhelm von Bode, emphasising professional continuity in the then GDR museum. Lastly the Pergamon museum was opened in 1930 to host the monumental reconstructions of Middle East excavations by German archaeologists showing off their scientific skill and imagined imperial responsibilities to safeguard the cradle of civilisation. This finalized and added to the complexity of the *Museumsinsel* in Berlin, before it was bombed in WWII. In many Berlin museums, the continuity of collections were gravely disrupted by both war damage and from moving them around between the monumental houses; buildings that signaled continuity in themselves.

With the start of the nineteenth century the era of national museums had begun in Europe. The Germanisches Nationalmuseum (GNM) in Nuremberg was initiated in the first half of the nineteenth century, would be inaugurated in 1852 and has remained open and active at the site since then (see case study, p. 20).

Contemporary to the museum in Nuremberg were the Bavarian national museums. They started off in the classical tradition of the sixteenth century Roman Antiquarium of the ruling Wittelsbach Residenz in Munich. A *Glyptothek* was opened to form the core of Königsplatz in

1830, later to be complemented by several buildings to form a complete national *Kunstareal*. The Walhalla in Regensburg was conceptualised at the same time and opened in 1842 to display the most important Germans who, by using a classical paraphrase, 'of Pantheon to be successively renewed' (Regensburg 2007). The Propylaea opened in 1862 renewing and explicating the bond between an ambition to continue the tradition as the heir of the Roman empire of German nation, by celebrating that the son Otto of Ludvig I was elected the first king of the newly established Greek state. (Stolz 1977; Traeger 1987). Bayerisches Nationalmuseum was initiated in the 1840s and opened in 1867 by King Maximilian II to meet outright political demand. It was viewed as a defender of the dynastical position in the political system. Personally influenced by the historical museums of Paris, the design emphasized the role of the nobility in defending universal values of science and art in its specific Bavarian setting with collections of historical paintings, original and castings of high art, rather than to center on religious or popular culture – an outright alternative to GNM. With the defeat of Bavaria as a major independent actor in the battle for unification in 1866, a new director conveniently turned the dynamics towards detailed professionalization, arts and crafts, romantic and theatrical medievalism rather than promoting a dead political cause (Glaser 1992). Subsequent modernization added new epochs and logics while promoting a greater respect of the historicity of the original plans as an overriding value (Volk 1992). The museum then became more and more a historicized *Gesamtkunstwerk*, an ideal work of a multi-dimensional performance of art in itself, and a museum over its own history.

The national system of museums was more or less set already when the unification of Germany came about at the end of the nineteenth century. Hence national museums anticipated, legitimated and naturalised the later outcome – and relocated other alternatives like the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum and the many regional museums by promoting a regional identity, adhering to high universal values and being framed by the overall German nation as both a cultural and political ideal.

Imperial expansionism

The time from unification in 1871 until the outbreak of World War I was a time of expansion not only for German industry but also for the cultural sphere. During the first decades of the twentieth century, between 1900 and 1920, 210 museum buildings were erected – a number that almost corresponds to the total number of museums founded during the nineteenth century (Hein 2009: 155). In some cases, already existing museums needed more room for their collections whereas newly founded museums, mostly ethnographical or arts and crafts museums (*Kunstgewerbemuseum*) needed proper buildings for exhibiting their collections. These new museums were erected foremost in towns that – due to a lack of noble or state initiatives – had formerly lacked important collections, such as Mannheim for instance (Hein 2009:155). The technical and science museum founded in Munich as Deutsches Museum in 1903 constituted a renewed attempt for Bavaria to regain a leading role of German modernization rather than commemoration.

The museums received state support to a various extent and private persons acting as patrons, contributed to the growth of already existing collections and societies (*Museumsvereine*) by supporting a certain museum and its activities, grew in number. Two prominent examples of the time are the Kaiser Friedrich-Museums-Verein founded 1896, lead by Wilhelm von Bode, and

the Städtischen-Museums-Vereins in Frankfurt am Main (1899). These societies can best be described as exclusive clubs, reserved for persons belonging to the wealthier parts of society. This well-off bourgeoisie would support museum work financially and were often active in decision-making on which objects to buy (Hein 2009: 156). The founding of museum societies reached its peak before WWI and almost came to a complete stop during the Weimar Republic.

The initiation and inauguration of the national gallery (today: *Alte Nationalgalerie*) on the *Museumsinsel* in Berlin can serve as an illustration of the national sentiments of a united Germany during the Wilhelmine era (1888-1918) and how this was represented in the museum sphere. Starting with the building itself, the architecture of the gallery is monumental and pompous; the ideal being the antique Corinthian temple. From the beginning onwards, the idea was to create a *monument* rather than a *gallery* (Forster-Hahn 1994: 156f). Situated on a podium, it overshadows all other museums on the Spree island and its monumentality is underlined. A voluminous stairway leads the visitor to the entrance where the inscription 'Der Deutschen Kunst MDCCCLXXI' can be found; referring to the year of unification in 1871 and signalling the new national orientation of the empire (Forster-Hahn 1994). Among the statues in front of the building, Friedrich Wilhelm IV, sitting on a horse, and Germania as patron saint of the arts, can be found. Portraits of Emperor Wilhelm I and his wife Augusta were placed in the entrance hall. The interior contained references to the German Middle Ages in history, tales and art and other pieces of art emphasised the weight of the monarchy.

When the gallery was inaugurated symbolically on Wilhelm I's birthday in 1876, it hosted the collection of consul J H W Wagener, who had donated his paintings and sculpture collection to the emperor on the condition that the collection would be displayed in a special building. Wilhelm I accepted this and the gallery was to be a "Grund zu einer vaterländischen Galerie von neuerer Künstler" (Wilhelm I, quoted in (Forster-Hahn 1994: 158). This event coincided with other attempts to make the Prussian government initiate the foundation of a national gallery. So even if the national gallery was originally the result of Wagener's will, it went hand in hand with existing national sentiments of the time.

To exhibit Wagener's collection - mainly consisting of paintings from the 1820ies, together with paintings ordered by the emperor, depicting the battles that led to German unification and glorifying Prussia and the new united empire - was problematic and also debated in the years after the inauguration. One key question concerned whether the museum should exhibit contemporary art, more liberal and international, or if the gallery should be a "shrine for the national" (Forster-Hahn 1994). The second director of the museum, Hugo von Tschudi, sought to solve the problem by re-arranging the art and thereby dividing the exhibition into two parts: one showing national history and one showing contemporary and modern art. He also decided to buy French impressionist art, which was highly controversial (Paul 1994). Since it wasn't allowed to buy foreign art with money coming from the national gallery, Tschudi received financial donations from patrons (most of them belonging to the Jewish bourgeoisie) allowing him to incorporate paintings by i.e. Renoir, Cézanne and van Gogh in the collections of the national gallery (Girardet 1997: 64f). Tschudi's procedures resulted in protests and hurt national feelings. Also, the emperor was part of the opposition since he wasn't amused at finding foreign art represented in the national gallery of a united Germany. Tschudi was fired in 1909 but his art buying policy and ways of arranging the gallery became an inspiration to other museums in

Europe. After the decline of the empire, the third museum director, Ludwig Justi, continued the direction that Tschudi had staked out and invested in expressionist art. There was however no longer any room for his ambitions or international direction when the NS-era began in 1933.

German dilemmas

During the Weimar Republic (1918/1919-1933), Berlin stood out as the cultural capital of Germany and indeed of Europe in the interwar years whereas Potsdam was, to many, an unpleasant symbol of military Prussia. Thrown between the Golden 1920s, a financial crisis and creative modernism ("Durchbruch der Moderne"), with exploding mass culture and consumption, the museums were not in the centre of the debate, even if they did occur. The foundation of Deutscher Museumsbund in 1917 hosted debates already set in earlier decades. Among its members were many of the museum directors responsible for buying foreign art, who were met with ever harder criticism for being Un-German.

In spite of dramatic political changes and subsequent pressures on all parts of society, most museums kept a strong conservative and professional course in the inter-war period with only minor concessions. Neither realization of totalitarian political demands was needed nor had time to develop before 1945.

The plans for changing the cultural policy were elaborate during the Nazi period. Grand plans for future public culture were made in Berlin and Linz. In Munich, the infamous exhibition on so-called 'degenerated art' was held in 1937, inaugurating *Haus der Kunst*, which was established for the "real" German art. Both an administrative centre and a memorial for Nazi heroes were established in the immediate vicinity of the old Königsplatz as the beginning of a new Pantheon to the martyrs of 1923.

Planning for the monumental representation of German culture and grandeur incorporated from 1934 included a grand expansion of the *Museumsinsel* to a Museum metropolis on both sides of the river Spree. On the south side, close to the *Zeughaus*, a World War museum was to be erected and plans for an ethnological museum that was later renamed 'Rassekundemuseum', museum of the history of races. On the north bank, a Germanisches Museum, an Ägyptisch-Vorderasiatische-Islamisches Museum and a nineteenth century cultural history museum was to be established (Preiß 1994). The turn of luck in the war in 1943 put all these plans into the history books, except the future developments of the *Zeughaus* by both GDR and a later united Germany with DHM opening its permanent exhibition in 2006 (see below p. 25).

After 1945, a divided Germany built parallel institutions. In GDR this meant an emphasis on the didactic power of visual art and plastic instalments like the huge Soviet war memorial in Treptow; celebrating the outcome of the war and GDR's friendship with the Soviets. An urge to showcase positive and progressive traits in the German past to be forerunners of GDR and socialism interacted with an identification of all autocratic, fascist and evil predecessors in the past to be linked to the emergence of FDR (Scharnovski 2010). Meanwhile, in West Berlin, the parallel idea of a (never completed) modernist pendant to the *Museumsinsel* took form in the shape of a *Kulturforum*, starting with prestigious housing for the philharmonic orchestra, and expanded with the national library, *Neue Nationalgalleri*, *Gemäldegalerie* with old European masters and an arts and craft museum – among other attractions. Fine arts and performance were emphasized rather

than ethnic and historic community and civilisation. The need and timing for reconstructing the past on the national level was not ready and issues of guilt had to be dealt with more thoroughly.

Regional and national identity

In a recent study on the history and development of culture politics in Germany, Bernd Wagner stated that it was only with the 1970s that cultural political praxis and arguments for such changed profoundly in Germany, something that also affected the museums. After the Second World War, the FRG had simply reconnected with the praxis and definitions that had existed before the National Socialist *Machtübernahme* (with the exception of some concessions made to the Allies). The new catchwords of the 70s were “culture for all” and “Culture - a civil right”, challenging the statist and private conceptions of museums both in the empire and in the Nazi period. The new aims can be subsumed as a democratization *of*, participation *in* and emancipation *through* culture (Wagner 2009: 18). Attempts from the 1980s to revamp interest in academic regional *Landeskunde* (regional studies) were part of an ambition to wash away the Nazi stains connected to local, regional and peasant culture, *Heimat*, as ethnic Blut und Boden versions of the past, and connect with the ideas of cultural history from below (Buse 2010, Aronsson 1998).

Although not a national museum, the re-opening of the historical museum in Frankfurt, the post-war economic and financial centre of Germany, in 1972 can serve as an example of how these notions affected the museum sphere. Following already mentioned catchwords, there was a desire and an ambition to reach beyond an audience merely consisting of members of the traditional *Bildungsbürgertum*, a term – which, even today, is sometimes also used in a critical or negative way – to describe parts of society consisting of well-educated citizens with a lively cultural interest, and to display history from below, i.e. social- and everyday life history. This forms part of a turn in public history connected to the movement to the left in politics in the same decade in Western Europe also affecting institutional representation of the past in Germany (Schörken 1981, Schulze 1994).

This was accompanied by a new pedagogical concept that sought to replace the traditional, esthetical way of presenting art and history. The museum in Frankfurt was interesting also in the sense that it included controversial themes in German history, post-1850, in its permanent exhibition. According to Mälzer, 1850 had often constituted a time boundary for exhibitions – with the exception of art museums (Mälzer 2005:39). Due to this, the exhibition in Frankfurt later became a point of reference in the discussions on the contents of the DHM in Berlin.

The second half of the 1970s also saw the production of a number of historical exhibitions, often focusing on influential dynasties in German medieval and post-medieval history, such as ”Die Zeit der Staufer – Geschichte, Kunst, Kultur” (1977, in Stuttgart) or ”Wittelsbach und Bayern” (1980, in Munich). For a compilation on German history exhibitions that have taken place in the Federal Republic of Germany during the period 1960-1990, see Müller 1992.

These large scale exhibitions were regional initiatives financed by the *federal state* hosting the respective exhibit (in the tradition of *Landesausstellungen*, existing since the 1950s but the scale was different now and more ambitious). In the case of the Staufer-exhibition, the exhibition was the result of Baden-Württemberg’s wish to celebrate its 25th anniversary as a federal state. The exhibition placed the south-eastern part of the FRG in a constructed historical continuity with the Staufer and contributed to the fostering of regional identity (Mälzer 2005: 42ff).

These exhibitions articulated each *Bundesland* as a historical community, and only indirectly as parts of Germany as a whole. They were means of openly promoting regional, rather than national, identity – symptomatic for the federal structure of the country – but at the same time possible to interpret as an expression of German culture for the visitor. The historical exhibitions all had a high number of visitors, many coming from other *Bundesländer* and thus yielded greatly positive responses, something that brought about reflections on a newly awakened interest in the German past.

Until 1981, when an exhibition on Prussia opened in West Berlin, temporary history exhibitions had foremost dealt with and displayed fragments of a comfortably distant past. With “Preußen. Versuch einer Bilanz”, this was no longer the case. Prussia only officially ceased to exist in 1947 and was thus part of both modern history and politics. It goes without saying that this could not be as uncontroversial as exhibiting medieval art and crafts or knighthood. The mode of exhibiting Prussia quickly became a starting point for a more general, intense debate among historians. What role was to be attached to Prussia in German history and in national identity? Furthermore, by expanding upon the first question, how should German history be presented by historians?

The initiative to exhibit the many facets of Prussia came from Dietrich Stobbe, a social democratic politician and, at the time, mayor of West Berlin. He proposed the exhibition to be located in the heart of the FRG capital; in the Reichstag. This idea was however rejected by the *Bundestagsverwaltung* and the exhibition finally took place in the newly renovated and re-opened Martin-Gropius-Bau, situated immediately next to the Berlin wall. The main entrance of this 19th century building had been blocked by the presence of the wall and immediately next to the building the former head quarters of the Gestapo had been situated. Since its destruction in WW2, the area had been “laid fallow” and its history neglected. After the Prussia exhibition, the uncomfortable spot became a debated topic in West Berlin culture politics (Thijs 2008: 106f). Today, the area hosts the, partly open-air, exhibition “Topographie des Terrors”. It should be added that the Martin-Gropius-Bau came to host several temporary history exhibitions of the DHM during the renovation of the *Zeughaus*.

His proposal evoked strong reactions and an intense debate followed on the political aims of exhibiting Prussia and on how to characterize the state. Despite the debates preceding the exhibition, or perhaps partly as a result of them, half a million visitors attended the exhibition, and the time seemed to have come for a permanent exhibition on modern German history. In fact, preliminary plans had already been made by the senate in 1978, but an amendment stated that one wished to await the public reactions and response on the Prussia exhibition before further action was taken (Mälzer 2005: 52). In connection with the Prussia-exhibit, appeals for a new history museum also came from publicists, most prominently Peter Jochen Winters in the FAZ (FAZ 15.8.1981, reprinted in (Stölzl 1988: 50f)). With the *Regierungserklärung* made by Christ-conservative Chancellor Helmut Kohl in 1982, a new history museum in Berlin and an exhibition on contemporary history in Bonn officially became part of the over-regional political agenda and the scale of the debate changed (for DHM, see p. 25 and Haus der Geschichte, p. 29).

On a political level, the 1980s were dominated by the Christ-conservative party lead by Helmut Kohl, an era that lasted from 1982 to 1998. During this period, a number of museum and cultural heritage projects were initiated as part of a proposed strategy of “Normalisierung” of

German historical culture, with varying support and success. This was intimately connected to the process where Germany paid an open tribute to its guilt for the Second World War and the Holocaust in particular in public culture (see p. 17), one facet of the *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, of coming to terms with the past. Politicians in opposition, as well as other critics, feared a too-fast historization as well as a relativization of the NS-period during the conservative reign (<http://www.hdg.de/stiftung/geschichte-und-organisation/entstehung/>).

Unified Germany

With reunification, the museum landscape met new and large-scale challenges: two different museum polities and assemblies of collections had to be united (Gaehtgens 2001:100ff). The sudden influx of objects formerly under communist custodianship had to be managed and new buildings were necessary. At the same time, many of the older museums had suffered during GDR and needed thorough renovation.

The complicated federal structure was implemented in all of the united Germany adding the need to deal with an east-west divide. Official national exhibitions like those in DHM in Berlin and Haus der Geschichte in Bonn emphasized the political otherness and totalitarian character of a Stasi-regime, while other museum responses representing GDR had a wider range of perspectives, from the accusatory victim perspective in the former Stasi headquarters right after the fall of the wall, over the adventurous stories of migration in spite of the wall at Check-point Charlie to Haus der Geschichte in Wittenberg and DDR Museum Berlin right in the vicinity of Museuminsel. They had to be driven by both more civil and commercial logics and took a more complex negotiation of nostalgia (or “ostalgie”), hands-on and living witness narratives to meet audiences in remaking the understanding of the past. “Die DDR gehört ins Museum!” was the call to former GDR citizens from the East German history museum, already adjusting to a new role in June 1990 (Lazda 2010).

The act of placing something in the museum was always directed in two contradictory directions of values, geared by political interest in directions towards the future: the selection enhanced the represented phenomenon as important, regardless if it is a monument meant to be inspirational or deterring (Nietzsche 1874). The establishment of an antiquarian relationship means to place the object and its phenomenon firmly outside the living reality of the present, as part of the past, pointing to a desirable future.

Turning to the current structure of the cultural sphere, constitutional law states (GG article 5(3) and 30) that administration and management within the cultural sector is the responsibility of each *Bundesland* and is clearly stated in the juridical expression “Kulturhoheit der Länder”. The so called “Kulturhoheit der Länder” does not only include the field of culture but also education. Questions on and presentation of German culture *abroad* is however under direct state responsibility (Secretary of State and the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media). This is emphasised anew in the most recent reform of the federal system that took place in 2006. Translated into the museum sphere, this means that a majority of the ca. 6000 museums existing in Germany are organised in the form of “öffentlicher Trägerschaft”, meaning that they are financed and run by either the *Bundesland* or smaller administrative units within a single *Bundesland* such as urban districts or municipalities. The state itself only has formal custodianship of a handful of Germany’s museums. Museums belonging to this category are generally assigned

a national importance such as the Haus der Geschichte in Bonn or Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin.

To what extent should the state interfere in questions regarding cultural policy and cultural politics? It is generally agreed upon that the *Bund* is solely responsible for the presentation of German culture abroad, but it has a more controversial role within Germany. Despite an explicit division of labour stated in the constitution, there has been a tendency over the past 20 years that the *Bund* plays a more active role in cultural matters. For instance, during the conservative era between 1982 and 1998, Chancellor Helmut Kohl was a major driving force in the foundation of both Haus der Geschichte in Bonn and Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin.

These dynamics mirror the post-war structure of European cultural policy, by default being a national prerogative, but in reality being stimulated both as identity politics and as a means for cultural industries to prosper in the wake of a post-industrial society (Fornäs 2011). See for example the authoritative interpretation of EU-history on <http://www.ena.lu/> and the struggle for an Museum of Europe at <http://www.expo-europe.be/en/site/musee/musee-europe-bruxelles.html>. A parallel project of House of European history promoted by the European Parliament 2008, due to open in Brussels 2014.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+IM-PRESS+20081216IPR44855+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>. The name resembles the one in Bonn and the clear political drivers are similar. The tendency towards more centralised initiatives in cultural policy has a legal basis from 1992, when it became one of the 32 areas of action after adoption of the Treaty of Maastricht.

The activation of cultural policy over the last two decades can be traced both to the cultural sector as part of an economic infrastructure, and as a revitalization of the recognition of it as part of identity politics in a globalized world – hence new efforts from various centres of powers to invest in museums.

An example from left-wing policy may illustrate that the tendency is not to be reduced to a conservative phenomenon, but rather in tune with more fundamental shifts. In 1998, a national minister post for "Kultur und Medien" was founded during the socialist-green party coalition led by Gerhard Schröder (Official homepage:

<http://www.bundesregierung.de/Webs/Breg/DE/Bundesregierung/BeauftragterfuerKulturundMedien/beauftragter-fuer-kultur-und-medien.html> [17 July, 2010]). The minister was supposed to give financial support for projects and institutes of over-regional character (and therefore of national importance). Furthermore, supporting the cultural offers in the capital of Berlin ("Hauptstadtkulturförderung") was, and still is, emphasized as one important task. Another task is to support institutes situated in the 'new' (post-1990) federal states in the eastern parts of the country. These institutes, for example the Bauhaus in Dessau, Deutsches Meeresmuseum in Stralsund or Deutsches Hygiene-Museum in Dresden, are considered especially valuable and important and have been given the epithet "Kulturelle Leuchttürme" (cultural highlights). The report with a list of these institutes can be downloaded:

<http://www.bundesregierung.de/Webs/Breg/DE/Bundesregierung/BeauftragterfuerKulturundMedien/Kulturpolitik/KunstundKulturfoerderung/NeueLaender/neue-laender.html> [17 July, 2010]. Support is administrated through the *Kulturstiftung des Bundes*, a foundation in existence since 2002, manifesting its specific responsibility for culture in the new federal states (Klein

2003:132). The foundation also supports institutes considered as being of national importance: Stiftung Haus der Geschichte, Deutsches Historisches Museum, Jüdisches Museum. Furthermore, two showrooms (Martin-Gropius-Bau in Berlin and Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in Bonn) for temporary exhibitions are financed by the state.

Two examples of *Bund/Land* arrangements are the *Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz* (founded in 1957 and in charge of 15 museums in Berlin, among others the museums of the *Museumsinsel*) and the *Kulturstiftung der Länder* (founded 1987). This latter foundation becomes involved in museum politics when a single institute can't afford to buy objects within the frames of their own budget. Its purpose is to prevent objects representing national identity to be sold to other countries. Until 2005, the state had contributed to secure and define 150 objects including works by Joseph Beuys and the Quedlingburger Domschatz as parts of a national heritage (Klein 2005:120f).

The *Museumsinsel* was heavily bombed during the war and in gradual decline during the GDR period. A new revised plan for the *Museumsinsel* was presented already in September 1990, making its symbolic significance in national politics clear. The plan has, since then, undergone a number of modifications and additions. The merging of collections at the Museumsinsel has been presented in different *Masterplans* and work is still not completed. The Masterplan III from 2001 aims at moving various ethnographic museums that have been located in Berlin-Dahlem (Museen für Völkerkunde, Ostasiatische und Indische Kunst and Europäische Kulturen) back into the centre, in the vicinity of the Museumsinsel, which, in turn, is in close vicinity to both Humboldt University, the Reichstag and the Government quarters of the new capital. It has been suggested that these museums would merge into being a part of the Humboldt-Forum that is to be located at the Berlin castle that first has to be rebuilt. This would symbolically close the historic circle since the origin of the old collections came from exactly that castle more than 200 years ago. However, the future of this project is open to discussion since it was communicated (June 2010) that the start of construction has been postponed until the spring of 2013 as a consequence of the global financial crisis. A provisional arrangement is made (<http://www.humboldt-box.com/konzept.html#middle> [22 August 2011]).

Since 1999, the Museumsinsel has been declared a UNESCO world heritage site. The word 'national' is seldom heard in discussions concerning the Museumsinsel, instead the site as a European and global museum is emphasised and, in a Masterplan publication from 2000, the assemblage of museums was declared "größtes Universalmuseum der Welt" (Schuster 2000: 18).

A subject hitherto not touched upon is the question of silences in a museum context in today's Germany; i.e. whose history is missing or only partly represented? Parallel to the struggles of minority groups such as the Sinti and the Roma to be acknowledged as legitimate victims of the Holocaust, other migrant groups sought to become relevant in a national history narrative. Post-war Germany saw the arrival of large amounts of 'guest workers', many of them of Turkish origin, invited to counter-balance the domestic shortage of labourers. The history of these migrants, of whom many – despite original political intentions – stayed for good in Germany, had long received only limited attention in research, museums and archives. As a reaction to this, the organisation DOMiD was founded in 1990. Initially, it focused on the history of Turkish migrants but, with time, the scope has become wider and, since 2005, the abbreviation stands for "Dokumentationszentrum und Museum über die Migration in Deutschland e.V" (www.domid.org). One of the organisation's outspoken aims is the foundation of a migration

museum, dedicated to the history, culture and art of migrants in Germany. During the last 10 years approximately, the subject of migration has received increased museum attention – the, possibly first, overview exhibition opened in Cloppenburg in 1998 (Beier-de Haan 2005:16, note 13). Since then the Deutsches Museum, for instance, has devoted temporary exhibitions to the question of migration and migrants (in 2005/2006 and 2009/2010 respectively). This autumn, another exhibit will open in Berlin, in the Kreuzberg Museum, titled “Orte erzählen (Migrations-)Geschichte“. The exhibit is to be inaugurated on the 30th of October, on the 50-year anniversary of the German-Turkish Anwerbeabkommens, a treaty that signified the starting point for Turkish immigration to Germany. Even if the amount of initiatives, exhibitions and debates have increased in number since 2000, there are still no concrete plans for a museum on migrants and migrations since no political consensus on the issue exists and financial means are lacking. One example of a state initiative is the “Projekt Migration” (2002-2005) organized by the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (http://www.kulturstiftung-des-bundes.de/cms/de/sparten/trans_und_inter/archiv/projekt_migration.html) [1 februari 2011]).

At last, a special category of museums that can be considered to be national in the sense of proudly carrying ideals of Enlightenment to the honour of the patron; namely the so-called “research museums” (*Forschungsmuseen*) were created. According to article 91b, added to the constitution in 1969, non-universitarian institutes of over-regional importance can - if agreed upon - be financed both by *Bund* and *Länder* together. In 1977, after long discussions and the evaluation of 300 institutes as possible candidates, 46 institutes were selected for this specific form of support. They were registered in the so-called “Blaue Liste”, a prestigious catalogue that remained stable in numbers until German re-unification, when 34 new institutes were added. Today (July 2010), it contains 86 institutes. Two institutes playing a role in this report belong to this group, namely the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg and the Deutsches Museum in Munich. All in all, eight research museums receive this special form of support. The other research museums are: Deutsches Bergbau-Museum (Bochum), Deutsches Schiffahrtsmuseum (Bremerhaven), Museum für Naturkunde (Berlin), RGZM (Mainz), Senckenberg Gesellschaft für Naturforschung (Frankfurt) and Zoologisches Forschungsmuseum Alexander Koenig (Bonn). Maintenance, as well as evaluations are administered by the Leibniz-Gesellschaft (until 1997: Wissenschaftsgemeinschaft Blaue Liste).

The scientific status of the museum as a knowledge institution is the basis for its being legitimate and as voicing the political values framing the nation. Hence there is no necessary contradiction in being scientific and politically useful. The outright political use as propaganda is often triggered out of desperation, the will to rapidly change or a lack of resources, but in the long run, institutional investment in narratives founded in knowledge secures the factuality as a firm basis for political action.

In the last two decades, politics have been developed in the tension between a reworking of the national past in the face of integration of east and west, by explicit demands for *Normalisierung* in relation to the role of the Nazi-past and simultaneously by an expanding Western commemoration of the Holocaust. Germany is, in all that, a central focus, but in a discourse that goes beyond the national and approaches, on the one hand, the need to build a defence against what is representing the absolute evil, and, on the other hand, the strengthening of the European

ethos as being a political custodian responsible for the defence of universal human rights – not only a powerful economic contractor.

Holocaust

Cultural policy in Germany is intrinsically - and during the 1980s increasingly so - bound to treating the legacies of the Nazi period and WWII. During his legislation periods, Helmut Kohl made initiatives towards a *Normalisierung* which needed to be balanced by initiatives to commemorate Jewish culture and the anti-Semitic crimes resulting in the death of six million Jews and large groups of other minorities, increasingly demanding representation. Many of the initiatives were responses to civic activism at home and abroad. Among the most important museums and *Mahnmale* initiatives were the musealization of Jewish heritage (today 80 museums exists), concentration camps, memorials in Berlin but also the voluminous *Reichsparteigelände* in Nuremberg was part of that movement, all illustrating the interaction between local, regional, national and international politics of history. Increasingly the Nazi past becomes part of the broader historical commemorative culture on all territorial levels.

The last decade has seen the inauguration of two projects that, in different ways, commemorate aspects of Jewish life and *Schicksal*, fate: the Jewish Museum Berlin (opened to the public in 2001) and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin (publicly accessible since 2005). Both of these prestigious projects have a long prehistory of controversies preceding their realization. In the case of the memorial, it took 17 years before the 20,000 m² *Mahnmal*, with an underground info centre added to it, could be completed. Disagreements on location site, design, contents and, last but not least, the necessity of such a site for commemoration resulted in a process. The debates surrounding the realisation of the *Mahnmal*-idea were quickly historicized and are analysed in detail in a number of publications (Cullen 1999; Haardt 2001; Stavginski 2002; Thünemann 2003 and Leggewie and Meyer 2005). The first initiative came from historian Eberhard Jäckel, who, after a study visit to the Yad Vashem in Israel in 1972, repeatedly put forward the notion that the Israeli memorial on the Holocaust in “the country of victims should have a counterpart in the country of perpetrators”; Germany (quoted in (Seuthe 2001: 265)). In 1988, he found support in the publicist Lea Rosh. Together they founded an initiative in favour of the erection of a Holocaust memorial. It was Rosh that initiated a public debate, gaining prominent supporters in i.e. Willy Brandt, Günter Grass and Christa Wolff. Political support for the project was hesitant and only after official support from the Central Council of Jews in Germany and the World Jewish Congress official political support was received (Seuthe 2001: 267ff). This meant that the Bund agreed to finance 1/3 of the realization costs. In 1994/95 and again in 1997, architectural competitions were launched and, after many turns and modifications, an agreement in favour of Peter Eisenmans ‘Field of Stelae’ (version II) was made. Federal elections in 1998 delayed the project’s realisation further. With a new red-green government in 1999, a resolution was passed in favour of building the memorial and the creation of a foundation. It is a federal foundation where committee members come from *Bund* and *Länder* as well as from other museums and organisations. Financial support comes mainly from the state. The outspoken purpose of the foundation is to commemorate the Nazi genocide on European Jews. It is further stated that the foundation contributes to the “die Erinnerung an alle Opfer des Nationalsozialismus und ihre Würdigung in geeigneter Weise sicherzustellen” (Stiftung

Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas, Stiftungsgesetz, §2). This broad formulation not exclusively mentioning the Jews – although the *Mahnmal* explicitly commemorates the Jewish Holocaust victims - might be seen as an answer to controversies at the early stage of the project when representatives for Sinti and Roma in Germany objected to a solely Jewish *Mahnmal*, seen as “a selection of victims of first and second class” (quoted from Seuthe 2001: 269). No agreement was found and in 2007 a formal decision to erect also a *Mahnmal* for murdered Sinti and Roma was agreed upon. This should be situated in Berlin Tiergarten. Construction work began in 2008 and the commemoration site is still not completed. The foundation states a responsibility also for the memorial for murdered Sinti and Roma during NS-regime as well as prosecuted homosexuals during the same period. The foundation act can be found under: <http://www.stiftung-denkmal.de/dasdenkmal/stiftung/stiftungsgesetz> [23 November 2010]. Construction work would finally begin in 2003 and with the inauguration in 2005, 60 years after the end of WWII, a large scale; national memorial commemorating Jewish victims of the Holocaust was prominently placed in the heart of Berlin, close to Brandenburger Gate and the Tiergarten. The location of the *Mahnmal* at the very political centre of the capital is emphasised in the statutes of the foundation and put forward as a ‘confession to historical responsibility’. It is further put forward that “Die Erinnerung an die Verbrechen des Nationalsozialismus gehört zum Kern des staatlichen Selbstverständnisses der Bundesrepublik Deutschland“ (Stiftung Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas,

<http://www.stiftung-denkmal.de/dasdenkmal/geschichte/idee> [23 November 2010]). This statement of commemorating victims in the face of the capital can be regarded as one necessary voice to allow and balance for other investments in the heritage landscape making bids for *Normalisierung*, such as the reinterpretation of Die Neue Wache. This memorial has changed its meaning with the political regimes since 1818. It was, in 1993, transformed from being a place for the victims of the Nazi-regime to all victims of war and violence. Many perceived this as an illegitimate act of levelling, debated fiercely in the public sphere (Stölzl 1993, Selling 2004, Carrier 2004, Cullen 1999).

With the inauguration of the Jewish Museum in Berlin in 2001, another long-term project surrounded by controversies reached its finalization. The idea to found a museum dedicated to Jewish culture in Germany was formulated in the wake of the exhibition “Leistung und Schicksal” in 1971; the first post-war exhibit on the history of Berlin Jews (Offe 2007: 307). As a first step, the “Gesellschaft für ein Jüdisches Museum in Berlin e.V.“ was founded. A collection was built up and temporary exhibitions were shown in different locations. In 1988, the scale changed when an architectural competition on “Erweiterung Berlin Museum mit Abteilung Jüdisches Museum” was launched. The current political situation between GDR and FRG added a further dimension to the project: In the same year, GDR had proclaimed its intention to rebuild the Neue Synagoge (built 1859-1866, destroyed 1943). Even if the foundation of a new Jewish Museum in West Berlin can’t be said to be an immediate *Gegengründung*, a certain need for profiling was felt in the constant ideological race of arms between the two German states.

The FDR initiative foresaw the planned exhibition on Jewish culture as part of the town museum of Berlin, something that the first museum director, Amnon Barzel, objected to. This developed into a strong official controversy when Barzel was fired by the *Kulturbehörde*. Objecting to this decision, the chairman of the Jewish Community viewed the action taken by the

Kulturbehörde as showing resemblance with the discharging of Jewish persons from prominent positions in the museum sphere during the NS-reign. Further debate followed regarding which version of Jewish-German history was to be presented in the museum. When Michael Blumenthal was appointed new director in 1997, an exhibition concept was quickly developed. Its result is the permanent exhibition “Zwei Jahrtausende Deutsch-Jüdische Geschichte” which is supplemented with different temporary exhibitions (JüdischesMuseumBerlin 2001). The permanent exhibition is foremost concerned with aspects of Jewish life in Berlin and Germany. The visitor is faced with a traditional chronological arrangement highlighting different themes, illustrating the cycles of tolerance and intolerance and prosecution.

When the exhibition was opened in 2001, the Jewish Museum was independent from the Berlin town museum and its formal custodianship is now in the hands of an *öffentlich-rechtliche Stiftung*.

The winner of the architecture competition was Daniel Liebeskind with the architectural concept ‘Between the lines’ that foresaw a zigzag-shaped building with three main axes metaphorically representing the Holocaust, exile and emigration and the much-spoken-of voids; the non-accessible (with one exception) empty spaces symbolizing the loss (of human lives, of culture) that the Holocaust resulted in. This very dominant, highly active and intertwining architectural language marks a sharp contrast to an exhibition in many ways, especially in regard to conventional structure and composition, which has inspired also other national museums dealing with controversial and post-colonial heritage, like the one in Canberra (Naomi Stead). Today, both German sites have a national dimension, as they constitute central places for understanding and commemoration of Jewish life in Germany.

Outside Berlin, a number of commemoration sites and exhibitions dedicated to the terrors of the NS-reign were initiated in the course of the 1980s. This process is exemplified using Nuremberg where the exhibition ‘Fascination and violence’ opened only in 2001. However, it developed from a predecessor at the Zeppelintribüne that opened in 1985 at another location in the megalomaniac 11 square kilometre area designated but never finalized as a showroom for the National Socialist regime. Originally, the area was an early twentieth century recreation ground, that later was picked for its symbolic value of being part of the mediaeval Imperial city of Nuremberg, to become one *Reichsstadt* together with Berlin, Munich and Linz. Now it has the quality of a ruin and has been incorporated in the context of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* and Holocaust tourism (Macdonald 2009). An exhibition dedicated to the Nuremberg trial was inaugurated on 21 November 2010 (<http://www.memorium-nuernberg.de/index.html>).

The narrative is of Nürnberg as an industrial city being taken by the Nazis, against the will of the majority, for propaganda reasons. It shows the complex design of the propaganda to create both a sense of joy, community, coherence and obedience. Chronologically it follows the birth of the party to the Nuremberg trials and interviews with Jewish survivors. A poster shows how Hitler used GNM for a major exhibition – a role not reflected at all at GNM itself.

Formally this is a city museum, but it writes itself into the national work with the Nazi past where the region, Freistaat Bayern, the Federal republic and powerful donors also play roles as stakeholders and custodians. The wider area encompasses a view reaching to the medieval castle. In the south the modern gigantic trade fair is negotiated with sport facilities and more ruins from the Nazi era, still not domesticated and eventually used for parking, car races or music concerts.

At the nearby Volksfest area, the playground is still used as such on the backside of the gigantic but unfinished Congress hall. Other cities are making their bids to this historical culture. In the middle of the Nazi quarters of Munich an NS-Dokumentationszentrum is now being erected and will be opened in 2013: Erinnerungs und Lernort.

It is worth noting that many initiatives originated from private persons, organizing themselves into interest groups. Their efforts only hesitantly resulted in political response and political implementation but they did not originate from the political sphere. This was, as we have seen, also partly the case with the DHM in Berlin that was only partially incorporated in a national political agenda and also with the Stasimuseum in Berlin, and several initiatives around Prora (the Kraft Durch Freude complex on Rügen), just to mention a few examples (<http://www.stasimuseum.de/verein.htm>). In Prora the official museum 2005 of this largest NZ structure in Germany meets several other initiatives, one by civic association in defence of the communist endeavours and another private entrepreneur making an eclectic approach to maximize the number of visitor. Together they show a typical unresolved plethora of suggestions on how to interpret the local past as part of national history: trauma, pride or nostalgia. Once on a political level, both projects generated debates and strong sentiments resulting in prolonged realisation times. With the *Mahnmal*, there was a wide spread fear among politicians that Berlin would turn into a 'city of remorse' with its many sites commemorating different NS-atrocities. This is however not an invention of neo-liberal society, but part of the dynamic mobilization and perhaps at the very core of establishing a deeply national relation in the diachronic creation of national museums, since their very origin in the early 19th century.

German national museums

As outstanding examples of national museums in Germany, we will present Germanisches Nationalmuseum, created before and in the unification of Germany and Deutsches Museum as part of the modernization process of the imperial state. Then the Deutsches Historisches Museum, representing the legacy and transition of *Die Wende* and the recent attempts to formulate a new German history for its citizens, is presented. The last example is the Haus der Geschichte; representing the political-historical education of a western liberal citizenry and national self-understanding of FRG.

Germanisches Nationalmuseum (GNM), Nuremberg

This institution was created in a noble circle of Antiquarians acting in the wake of 1848 and German unification. Cultural unification seemed for the moment a more urgent project than easily radicalized political projects. It is one of the many forms of *Denkmäler*, places of memory, created to host the formation of German national ideas before and around 1848: Luther, Gutenberg and Schiller as well as mythological figures of Hermann and Germania connected to battlefields of the past, and national museums for Bavaria in Munich and the pantheon of Walhalla in Regensburg (Bott 1992).

Under the protection of the future king Johann in Dresden and by initiative and substantial contribution of Freiherr Hans v. Aufseß, it was founded in 1852 and eventually located in the prestigious old imperial city of Nuremberg.

This was not a self-evident location as a capital did not exist, but Vienna as an alternative was too readily associated with the past Imperial structure. A tension between the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum in Mainz (founded 1852) and the Nuremberg initiative was also at hand (Böhner 1982: 21). The attraction of Nuremberg in the midst of romantic medievalism, home of Albrecht Dürer, as the most German of all German cities was however successfully argued. At the same time, the ambitious goal was to create a "Generalrepertorium über das ganze Quellenmaterial für die deutsche Geschichte, Literatur und Kunst, vorläufig von der ältesten Zeit bis zum Jahr 1650". In order to succeed both materially and with legitimacy, both the administrative and scientific councils were recruited from all German provinces and among the most prolific profiles of the age, among them Alexander von Humboldt and Leopold von Ranke, leading university builders and historians. (Grossmann 2006: 303).

After being appointed the first director, the private donation of books and artefacts from von Aufseß accompanied him. When he withdrew in 1866, the Bavarian government created a foundation and declared the collection inviolable. The museum received a steep increase in funding by the Norddeutschen Bundes and later the parliament to support the appropriation of the richest possible documentation of German culture in archives, books and artefacts, open to the public in the museum and for further dissemination through publication (<http://www.retrobibliothek.de/retrobib/seite.html?id=106657>. 1885-1892, 7. Band, p. 181). Already in 1852, it was intended to be apprehended as the common property of the German nation, 'als Gemeingut des deutschen Volkes', despite its private origin. Later it speaks in singular mode on the building, "Eigenthum der Deutschen Nation" to be compared with the inscription of the Bavarian Nationalmuseum of dynastic origin: "Meinem Volk zu Her und Vorbild" (Volk 1992:191). The initiator, procurators, donators as well as the message of the collections and exhibitions were united in the explicit drive to form a national representation for a Germany in the making, to equal other major nations in Europe and create a node, momentum and showcase for a national movement on a scientific and material fundament (Burian 1978). This was a unique calling in its explicit historical and national ambition while representation of fine art, classical culture and civilisations was well represented in, for instance, Dresden, Berlin, Frankfurt, Mainz or Munich.

With the foundation of the German nation-state in 1871, the museum officially became the national museum for German art and culture. The flow of donations increased in the late nineteenth century, helping to represent Germany as "united in diversity" not only through language and history, but also, and more deeply so, through regional variations in culture from everyday lives of peasant cultures to originals and pieces of arts highly regarded as national gems, such as the original manuscript of Wagner Meistersingern (Grossmann 2006:307).

In the end of Weimar republic these investments helped to make Nuremberg with its medieval imperial past as the home of the German emperor, and GNM as a modern representation of German culture, to the preferred place for the Party rallies of the Nazis in the 1930's. First the mediaeval city centre itself was used as the stage and later an entire complex was erected - though only partly finished - to make this one of the leading cities of the Third Reich. In 1937 GNM opened an exhibition "Nürnberg, die Deutsche Stadt. Von der Stadt der Reichstage zur Stadt der Reichsparteitage" (Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände, the exhibition "Faszination und Gewalt", visited 10 March 2010). This triggered the accession of

armour and the racial laws helped expanding the collection. However Hitler never visited the museum personally and it did not occupy a central role in Nazi cultural policy.

After the war, collecting artefacts from the expelled Germans, added a function as *Heimatsgedenkstätte*, a place to contemplate loss of territories and modes of lives of Germans expelled from Eastern Europe. Among the leading profiles were at this stage still two persons prestigious enough to later become *Bundespräsident*. As late as 1952 the *Bundespräsident* could state the museum as “die Fluchtburg der deutschen Seele” (Bott 1992:173). Today it has been argued it has one of the best collections to represent a reunited Germany, due to its uninterrupted presence and work (Grossmann 2006). After WWI GNM took the judicial form of a foundation and from the 1970’s is a member of the *Leibniz-Gesellschaft* organizing several prestigious museum institutions.

The formulation to cover German culture and language wherever it was manifest in Europe, pushed the horizon for its collection first set to 1650, in the early 20th century to 1800 and now to contemporary artefacts, made it a dynamic vehicle for unification and expansion, not confined to actually existing political borders. Hence the continuity and general cultural focus became more emphasized in the contemporary museum, than the genesis of the nation. The original building was destroyed in the WWII and has been expanded around the centre of a Cartesian monastery from the 14th century.

Gewerbemuseum, an industrial design museum founded in 1869 by Faber (Faber-Castell) and the predecessor to MAN, was later bought by the state of Bavaria and donated to GNM in 1989. As an industrial museum it keeps close to its roots and acts more like a museum over an industrial design museum rather than a contemporary museum of work or design.

Added around the cloister are a conglomerate of medieval buildings, historicizing 19th century buildings and modern Bauhaus look-alike to cover an area of 28000 m² or nearly 6 football arenas of exhibitions. A major expansion in 1993 opened for a more audience and market-oriented caretaking of the visitor with shop and dining. No digital gadgets, or even experiment with touching objects are at hand. The massive materiality, hidden in a labyrinth of buildings and objects, dismantle a too grand, linear or expansionist approach to German culture, finalized by the explicit Israeli piece of art in the entrance. The maps continue to imply a narrative of German tribes existing before the Romans and slowly creating the culture over thousands of years. There is a striking continuity to the original goals of the museum running below concessions to contemporary political demands.

This illustrates well the changing “vanishing point” for narrating Germany in the last decades from the Prussian unification to the Holocaust, but also the continuity for older layers national conceptions were the territory and the map was at the basis for visualizing unity (Smith 2008).

The Holocaust culture was by the 1990’s present in Western historical culture, and here by the work of the Israeli artist Dani Karavan: „Straße der Menschenrechte“, the Avenue of Human Rights (<http://www.aski.org/portal2/cms-askiev-mitgliedsinstitute/askiev-nuernberg/>). In the entrance hall there is also a mark of the other trauma of the German state trajectory. Nothing in the historic exhibit reflects the existence of a communist GDR, but a large scale artwork by Rafael Rheinsberg covers the wall in the foyer and builds on the fact of the Wall falling down and display signs with now obsolete street-names (Strasse der Befreiung, Ho-Chi-Minh and Skandinavien) collected from the communist era.

The guided tour, as the contemporary presentation of the museum, underlines the collection as one of art and cultural history, as it happens to be mainly collected in the German-speaking world. Maps in the prehistoric department give an indication of the contents of each exhibition box, presenting artefacts as representation of tribal cultures, German, Northern, Angles etc. As something of a paradox seems to be the proposition in the exhibition that systematic archaeological collection started only in 1881 and national protection came about only in 1907-1914. The ethnological exhibitions represent also farmer's houses and cultures from other parts of the German speaking world, i. e. Switzerland. It has a very formal and comparative aesthetic and does not signal nostalgia. Objects speak for themselves here. In the exhibition of bourgeoisie art, a more analytical and critical framing is at hand, being proud of artists who resisted the nationalism of the period. Pieces of individual art express the high standing of Nuremberg artisans and artists in later epochs, combining into a strong story of national representation from pre-history until today, surviving all the turmoil as an institution and representing the durability and value of national culture.

Christoph Stölzl summarizes: "The idea of a "greater Germany", in its positive sense, is kept alive in the Nuremberg museum, in the interest in the engulfed connections between German culture and Europe." (Authors translation, Stölzl 1992:16) The transnational formulation and organization of the museum has repercussions. It has established a possible long-term continuity for the purpose of the museum collection and exhibition, regardless of political turmoil. It did from the beginning and still does cover German cultural history in Austria, Switzerland, Bohemia, Siebenburgen and the Netherlands, both in artefacts and in the presence of stakeholders from other nations in advising the museum. The absence of direct historical national narratives (chronologies of political strife, battle scenes) makes this possible without to much opposition (Bott 1992). The possible expansionist reading of the programme is tempered by an under-communication of its political relevance. Culture, more than politics, keeps continuity alive. On the other hand, the political relevance of the museum, for good and bad, is less obvious. Berlin might see other opportunities for large-scale investments, be it under the regime of Wilhelmine Germany, Adolf Hitler or a united Germany after 1991.

Deutsches Museum (DM), Munich

On the 1st of May, 1903, engineer Oskar von Müller posted an initiative to found a "Museums von Meisterwerken der Wissenschaft und der Technik" for the education of the public and the representation of the achievements of technology and science to culture in Germany. This German museum constituted a new take on the idea of national identity compared both to the GNM and the Bavarian Nationalmuseum and was, from 1905, called Deutsche Museum, the collections first hosted in the old Nationalmuseum, indicating its high status right from the beginning. It was built on the tradition of showing technological and cultural advancement at the world fairs and materialized as museums in several countries (Science museum, London 1853, Technisches Museum, Vienna 1907), hence combining the Universalist idea of education with national education, competition and glory. It might however, be argued that the sense of technological modernity stressing economic, technological and scientific progress rather than ethnic community and ancient roots as one possible mode of modern nationalism got a stronger

standing in Germany than in many other nations (James 1989). For Bavaria, this was also a possible niche to explore while the political centre in the empire decisively had moved to Berlin.

The timeliness can be traced already by the massive support at the foundation, documented in a monumental support both by scientists like Röntgen and Planck and the political and economic elite. The museum itself has an elaborate exhibition of its history dating the jubilee of 2003. (Wilhelm Füßl, Deutsches Museum, München, in: Historisches Lexikon Bayerns, URL: <http://www.historisches-lexikon-bayerns.de/artikel/artikel_44474> [18.02.2010]). In 1925, the building on *Museumsinsel*, planned to be finished already in 1915, was inaugurated and complemented with a library in 1932. The funding was secured by generous donations that also secured the necessary national legitimacy by donations from the *Reich*, Bavaria, Munich, other provinces and prestigious elites representing different corporate interests. The most generous private donation was from the organized iron industry. It is estimated that more than 3 million visitors were attracted to the preliminary venues. An interesting mixture of emphasizing the power of tradition and the rational invention is part of the negotiation. A Pantheon of men of science covers the wall of the auditorium. The hammer that was used to put the first building block at place in 1906, in the legitimating presence of Emperor Wilhelm II, is a replica of the hammer used by the Pope in 1550 to open the closed Holy Gates of St. Peter for celebrating. A new era was thus symbolically opened combining traditional values with new hopes.

The basic categorisation and principles for collecting was formulated at the start, followed scientific convention, and are still valid today, balancing the historic exposition of the cultural history of technology science, told with a context of these being independent movers of history rather than dependent outcomes of social forces and cultural constructs. Text, models and artefacts as examples rather than authentic objects were meant to build a learning environment but did and still do, at the same time, testify to progress of German industry and science.

NS rule meant a successive pressure to make changes in the committees that influenced the work of the museum. The library was used for outright propaganda exhibitions such as “The eternal Jew” and on “Bolshevism”. Jewish and communist members of the staff were eliminated. But there was also a shared fascination for technical development thriving both before and after the Nazi period initiatives which enabled the first large scale special exhibitions on Motorized vehicles, New materials and Television. Plans for a more radical remake, focused solely on contemporary technology, as opposed to the cultural historical context given in DM, under the name of *Haus der Deutschen Technik* was, due to the war, never implemented.

After the war, new fields of technology such as nuclear science and computer technology slowly and gradually have been incorporated, leaving the historical aspects less central and getting closer both to the ideal of the 30s and the establishment of contemporary Science Centres over the world. In 2010, a plan for reinvigorating and expanding the museum for 400 million Euros had been announced. As before, it is the Bund, Freistaat, city and private sponsors in combination that are going to make this happen. Audi/Volkswagen picked up the ethos of the tradition of modernization through advanced technology when launching the motto – *Vorsprung durch Technik* in the 1970s. The challenge is now taken for Europe in the face of enhanced overseas competition, and again reflected in museum investments.

DM museum testifies to the possibility of building wealth and identity in a shared rational scientific endeavour that is already part of the enlightenment’s museums. It oscillates between

this universal endeavour and a more cultural historical drive to show both technical achievements as part of localized historic developments and paying tributes to heroes of science as representing the grandeur of both the city, state and German culture.

Deutsches Historisches Museum (DHM), Berlin

Even though the Deutsches Historisches Museum (hereafter: DHM) lacks the epithet “national” in its name, it can be considered to be the youngest of the German national museums, displaying the country’s history from the first century BC until the 1990s in a European context. Proposed and initiated in the wake of the unexpectedly successful temporary exhibitions on German history around 1980 (see above) it was not until 2006 that a permanent exhibition - “Deutsche Geschichte in Bildern und Zeugnissen aus zwei Jahrtausenden”- could be inaugurated in the museum in Berlin (Ottomeyer and Czech 2007).

What followed on the first proposals to create a museum – coming from publicists as well as from the political sphere - was years of intense public and political debate, commission work and hearings, where an abundance of opinions *pro et contra* the initiative were put forward. The controversies over the creation of a new history museum in Germany have resulted in a vast amount of literature on the subject. Here only main points are put forward (Stölz 1988, (Mälzer 2005)). From the beginning on, the project was highly controversial and by many regarded with scepticism: was it at all possible to exhibit German history and if so, was it desirable at all (and how to do it)? The big question mark mainly referred to how to handle and weight the darkest chapter in German history; the era of National Socialism and the Second World War, in a museum context. Critique came especially from left-wing representatives, who feared an attempt to historicize the recent past as a mode of closing the chapter without an adequate *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. It is important to note that the discussions on a history museum partly ran parallel with the so called “Historikerstreit”, triggered of by an article in the FAZ (6.6.1986) by historian Ernst Nolte, resulting in a debate on the singularity of the NS-crimes. This suspicion originated in the fact that Christian democrat (CDU) Chancellor Helmut Kohl announced his intention to build a national history museum in Berlin (as well as the plans for the *Haus der Geschichte* in Bonn, dedicated solely to German post-war history) in his government statement of 1982. With this statement, the project reached another level, leaving the foremost Berlin-internal discussions and instead becoming part of a national agenda and one feared a “Flaggschiff konservativer Geschichtspolitik der Ära Kohl”. The museum in Berlin was to be completed and inaugurated in 1987, when Berlin would celebrate its 750th anniversary and Kohl intended the new museum to be a gift to the town. Helmut Kohl was one of very few persons who used the word “Nationalmuseum“ when describing the plans for a history museum in Berlin. With reference to the political and ideological experiences made in Germany in the 20th century, and especially during NS-reign, other discussion participants found the name improper and tended to avoid it (Beier- de Haan 2005: 78f).

A further political dimension of the project had more to do with the relation between the western and eastern parts of the divided Germany than with internal politics in the FRG. Since its opening in 1952, the *Museum für Deutsche Geschichte* in GDR, situated in the Zeughaus Unter den Linden in East Berlin, had been a thorn in the flesh to many politicians in the FRG. Here a socialist national history and a Marxist master narrative were presented in a continuously

expanding exhibition. Since the respective German capitals had, as Hans-Martin Hinz put it, a “Schaufensterfunktion” for the different political systems and ideologies existing in western and eastern Germany respectively, much money was invested in the cultural infrastructure on both sides of the wall, resulting in a number of so called “Gegenründungen”, meaning that there existed, for instance, two *Stadtmuseen* and two *Nationalgalerien* (Hinz 2006: 322). In this ideological arms race, the DHM was the youngest and also the last of these foundations.

In 1990/1991, history took a new turn that affected the planned history museum in a very concrete way. With the fall of the Berlin wall and reunification, the GDR museum was closed and its collections integrated in the DHM. Also, the building, the baroque 17th century *Zeughaus*, fell into the hands of the DHM. Having been criticized for its limited collections, the DHM all of a sudden had access to a vast amount of objects representing German history. Furthermore, with reunification, the plans to build a new museum along the Spree, in the government quarters, were abandoned since new governmental buildings were needed after the decision to make Berlin the capital of the reunited Germany. The *Zeughaus* therefore was a suitable solution; and not without a certain symbolic value. After six years of renovation, it was reopened in 2004 and since 2006 it hosts the museum’s permanent exhibition. Temporary exhibitions can be found in a modern extension that, as is so often the case since the 1990s, spectacular in its architectural expression and designed by an internationally reputable architect (I. M. Pei).

Turning to the aims and contents of the DHM, the basic ambition with today’s museum can be summarized as an attempt to show German history in an international, foremost European, context. This has been its outspoken aim since its official foundation in 1987, when Kohl identified the museum project as a “national task of European rank” and intended the creation of a place for self-reflection and self-knowledge. This should contribute to answering questions on where “we come from, who we are as Germans, where we stand and where we’re going” (Kohl 1985 quoted in (Stemmler 2000: 35f)). In the permanent exhibition, inaugurated almost 20 years after this statement was made, these original intentions were translated into eight main questions: *Germany – where is it situated? The Germans – what kept them together? Who reigned, who obeyed, who offered resistance? Which beliefs did the people have, how did they interpret their world? How did the people make their living? With whom, against who? Conflict and cooperation in the society: What leads to war, how does one make peace?* And the last question: *How do the Germans see themselves?* Worth noting is that the ‘we-form’ used in the political document of Chancellor Kohl now is lacking. These main questions are listed in the catalogue from 2006 and, according to Czech, projected in the foyer of the *Zeughaus*, immediately confronting the visitors when entering the building (Czech 2006:16). *Pers. Comm.*: This was however not the case during my visit (4th of August, 2010).

In accordance with a post-modern and post-colonial perspective, the permanent exhibition has – explicitly - no ambition to provide the visitor with a master narrative on the becoming of Germany or other nation-related subjects. It is stated in the catalogue that the museum is dedicated to factual-critical information on the different, synchronic or diachronic political developments in Germany. Contradictions and discontinuities should be seen as reflecting the real complexity of the political history rather than as lack of a stringent argumentation (Czech 2007: 15). The museum has hosted major investigations into the construction of national myths (Flacke 2004a, Flacke 2004b).

This “non-master narrative” of German history is told by more than 8000 objects, ranging from early medieval helmets to a marble bust of Voltaire to the large terrestrial globe that once belonged to Joachim von Ribbentrop. The latter has been prominently placed so that also museum visitors outside of the permanent exhibition can see it. One of the most charged objects in the exhibition is a model showing the second crematory in Auschwitz with around 3000 clay models: men, women and children queuing, undressing and entering the gas chambers. The original, made by Polish sculptor Mieczyslaw Stobierski, was produced for the commemorative exhibition in Auschwitz in 1947 and since then further examples have been produced. An oak bench – a silent witness from the halls where the Nuremberg process took place - once more remind the visitor of war atrocities before, rather abruptly, a well-polished VW-Beetle serves as an eye-catcher in the part of the exhibition that deals with the post-war *Wirtschaftswunder*.

The permanent exhibition in DHM is much a result of the public debates foregoing its production. To some critics, this has resulted in a too neutral, too smooth exhibition (see contributions in Kirsch & Zündorf 2007). However, according to Burkhard Assmus, judging from comments in the museum’s electronic guest book, the majority of visitors leave the museum content and with a positive impression (Assmus 2007, p. 12, note 30). Online guest-book can be found on-line (http://www.dhm.de/cgi-bin/da_guestshow?latest [28 January, 2011]).

Impressions by a non-German visitor are that the European component is most obvious for the younger decades whereas the time pre-1945 is loaded with national symbols, that have been reproduced many times before and thus make up a part of the national attributes, no matter how European the scope of the exhibition might be. It is however, interesting to note that, for the front cover of the catalogue, one has chosen the painting *Abschied der Auswanderer* from 1860, made by Antonie Volkmar. Parallel to a current renationalising tendency in Germany, this might be symptomatic for a second trend in German society, namely the widespread discomfort with one’s own country resulting in many German citizens migrating to what is perceived to be more friendly countries, such as Norway and Sweden in the north and Spain in the south (their dreams and adventures being well-documented in different television shows).

It could be argued that, by using the collective noun German and Germans in an objectifying and trans-historic manner, it reproduces an essentialist conception of national identity on a discursive level. This is all the more enhanced through the central task of treating the issue of collective guilt over Nazi-crimes to humanity. Who is guilty? Are all current German citizens, by their association with the state, or only ethnic descendants of the perpetrators? All too often, the latter seems to be communicated and hence securing an ethnic interpretation of nationhood as a strong element, even when labelled as carrying the burden of guilt and repentance (Selling 2004).

Major actors in the case of DHM, regarding realization, financing and management are again determined by Germany’s federal structure with its *Kulturböheit der Länder* (see above). Even if Chancellor Kohl intended the museum to be a gift to the town of Berlin, it was not that simple. An agreement between *Bund* and *Länder* for a shared custodianship (*Stiftung öffentlichen Rechtes*) had to be found for the organisation of the project. Finally, the result was that the federal states acknowledged that the state had partial responsibility for the representation of national and international history and in this specific case the “Pflege des Geschichtsbewusstseins” was made a common task. The divided responsibility is reflected in the structure of the board of trustees,

which today is made up by 5 members of the *Bundestag*, 5 members from the *Bundesregierung* and 5 members from each of Germany's 16 *Bundesländer*. Further, the agreement meant that the *Bund* would finance renovation- and building costs as well as the museum's running costs.

Since 2008, the foundation „Stiftung Flucht, Vertreibung, Versöhnung“ (Federal Foundation Flight, Expulsion, Reconciliation) is administered by the DHM due to a governmental decision. The purpose of the foundation is to "im Geiste der Versöhnung die Erinnerung und das Gedenken an Flucht und Vertreibung im 20. Jahrhundert im historischen Kontext des Zweiten Weltkrieges und der nationalsozialistischen Expansions- und Vernichtungspolitik und ihren Folgen wachzuhalten.“ (homepage: <http://www.dhm.de/sfvv/index.html>). This is a controversial institution since it also focuses on remembering Germans forced to leave their homes as victims of the war.

Die Stiftung Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (HdG), Bonn

Bonn became the capital of BRD after WWII, in the wake of Berlin being a divided city. Today, when the official function of the capital of the unified Germany is back in Berlin, Bonn is working on its trademark as the home of democratic culture, in contrast to the totalitarian heritage of Berlin and the capitalistic dynamic of Frankfurt. The Museums Mile is launched akin to the Mall in Washington, Museums Mile in New York or in Munich: a kernel of cultural and scientific institutions that invite visitors and citizens and are surrounded by government bodies and democratic institutions in a mutually legitimizing act.

The urban imprint is not as impressive and do not have the monumental apparition as its older sibling. All buildings are anti-historicist, modern and post-modern concrete, signalling a place outside history, as a contemporary novelty rather than stressing continuity with the past. The reference is made to a radical break with tradition, placing the past within brackets and emphasizing appropriation of a modernist and democratic culture with a short historical horizon. The German Sonderweg gives way to a secured modernization as *Normalisierung* strategy.

With the *Regierungserklärung* made by Helmut Kohl in 1982, an exhibition on contemporary history in Bonn officially became part of the over-regional political agenda. It was contested as an overt politicization of historical culture and coincided with the *Historikerstreit* in 1986 that concerning alleged attempts to compare totalitarian regimes of Germany and the Soviets, hence level the uniqueness of the Nazi evil, especially the Holocaust. In 2005/06, raising the issue of German *Vertriebene* in a temporary exhibition also pushed the borders of silences.

The opening in 1994 was a big media event as was the re-making necessitated by the rapid changes and reinterpretation of recent history of unification and globalization as the exhibition opened in 2001. Even more important was the explicit goal of revitalization of communication. Through a narrative and emotional take on the audience the central didactic endeavour also reflected on the investment in visitor research to understand how an attractive and profound imprint is made on different audiences, also "*Alltagsmenschen*". The content is a history of the advances of democratic politics and market economy, hence narrating in the tradition of *Gesellschaftsgeschichte* while both were reaching out for narration and experience as forms of communication. The room for personal heroes was mostly filled by politicians as responsible for progress or in the case of Easter Germany, disaster.

The format has formed a template for other cities to follow also for 'the new' regions to encompass the historical culture of a unified Germany by focusing on twentieth century history or, as it is called in Germany, *Zeitgeschichte*. The Council of Europe in 1996 even declared this museum a model for all countries to follow. In the catalogue, both conservative and social-democratic Chancellors are quoted for their recognition of the need for history to secure a united Germany and a democratic political system.

The museum in Bonn is one out of three centres belonging to the foundation. Further centres are situated in Berlin and Leipzig. „Zeitgeschichtliches Forum Leipzig“ opened in 1999 and focus on resistance and repression, the peaceful revolution in GDR and unification. “Ziel des Forums ist die Befestigung der Demokratie und des antitotalitären Konsenses in der Bundesrepublik sowie die Aufklärung über die zweite deutsche Diktatur“(Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 2003, Schäfer 2006).

Free admission, open 9-19, school-classes and adults moving on the 4000 m2 exhibition floor, a café, an information centre to visit the history of Germany visualized with 7000 objects, massive swarms of text, posters, statistics and monitors are among the numerous features. As a backbone, a political-chronological theme starts with the end of war, the early infamous deconstruction of industrial power, the wise implementation of the Marshall plan, and western inclusiveness leading onwards to European integration. Popular resistance to Nazi-policies but nevertheless a historical responsibility for the war crimes was taken by the BRD, in the follow up of the Nuremberg trials and the Auschwitz trials in the 60s and by Willy Brandts apology – and his Nobel Peace Prize is on display. The east-west divide is a one-sided theme all the way to the final exercise on Time Island, where values are tested and counted, among them difference between Osis and Wessis.

The historical peak is reached with Adenauer: political unity, stability and wealth thrived in 1956-63. He became a model for future politicians and his (alleged) death mask is on display. From here onwards, the discomfort spreads as radical criticism from the left to terrorism and also environmental threats. Growth in the economy turns into a growing deficit and you leave the exhibition with a feeling of uncertainty and challenge.

All texts are in German only, but the English speaking audience can have a written guide to accompany their visit. It shows that the main intended audience are not tourists or cosmopolitan Germans but rather children and ordinary citizens to be fostered in recent history and prepared for difficulties to come.

Further down the Mile, in the *Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany, Bonn), with temporary exhibitions on Byzantium and contemporary painting, a completely different scene is set. An older cultivated audience is having a cup of tea or a glass of wine in the Foyer. The entrance fee is 8 EUR for Byzantium alone. A cheap introduction, for the summer tour, is given on classical antiquity, reminding of the old second empire, East Rome. The old idea of a German – Roman connection is vitalised in a highly aesthetic form for another audience and is preparing for other actions and desires than in Haus der Geschichte.

Germanische museum set the openly national aim of the scientific collection to represent the political community and interpreting the direction of history in the mid nineteenth century. Later museums act in these tensions according to the possibilities and demands of the day. HdG is

original in pushing the story up until contemporary issues, but still reflects the urge to convince citizens that they are part of a natural community that is reflected in the contemporary political national order, situated in a European context. The need for loyalty to the destiny of the nation is moulded by the ongoing negotiations and tensions in a long-standing tradition.

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Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style	Location
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden (consisting out of 12 different museums today)	1560	1560 (Kunst-kammer)	Royal initiative (Kurfürst August)	Federal: Freistaat Sachsen	Art and Cultural History	Germany and Europe	Middle Ages-Contemporary	Baroque, royal buildings, partly erected to host collections of art.)	In the heart of Dresden centre of power.
Landesmuseum Mainz	1803	1803 (Art gallery)	Napoleon, French art policy	Federal: Rhineland-Pfalz	Art and Cultural History	Primarily federal: Rheinland-Pfalz	Prehistory-Contemporary	Already existing building: Kurfürstliche Marstall (1776-67)	Central near the Kurfürstliches Schloß and RGZM.
Altes Museum (Museumsinsel)	1830	1822	Royal (Friedrich Wilhelm IV)	Foundation with federal states and state	Art and Archaeology	Universal	C. 1000 BC-Roman	Museum building by Karl Friedrich Schinkel, neo-classical, 1823-30	Part of a central cluster made up by the Museumsinsel-ensemble and other Royal buildings.
Städel Museum	1833	1816	Initially civil society/ bourgeoisie	Civic foundation	Art	Germany and Europe	14 th Century-contemporary	Museum building by Oskar Sommer, 1878, historicism/neo-renaissance, new building to be inaugurated autumn 2011	Situated on the "Museumsufer", on the southern bank of the river Main, outside of the old town centre.
Germanisches National-museum	1852	1852	Aristocratic 1852, parliament from 1866	Private 1852-1866, state 1866-1920, Stiftung 1921-	Archaeology and Art	National, German-speaking cultures	Pre-history to 1650 at opening, 1800 to 1900, and contemporary now	Conglomerate: national and later functionalism and post-modernist.	Central and accessible. Within the town walls and opposite the railway station.

Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum	1854	(1841), 1844	Ludwig Lindenschmidt der Ältere	Foundation since 1870, Leibniz Gemeinschaft	Archaeology	European/ Limes	First humans – Middle Ages	Kurfürstliches Schloß etc. New building under construction	Central, in different parts of Mainz.
Neues Museum (Museumsinsel)	1859	1841	Royal (Friedrich Wilhelm IV)	Foundation with federal states and state	Art and Archaeology	Universal – national, Europe and Mid-East	Prehistory- Middle Ages	Neo-classicism/ historicism. New architecture by David Chipperfield 2003-2009	Part of a central cluster made up by the Museumsinsel-ensemble.
Bayerisches Nationalmuseum	1855	1840's	Initially royal	Federal/ Bavaria	Art and Cultural History	Bavaria, southern Germany	C. Early Middle Ages- 20 th c.	National historicism. Gabriel von Seidl, 1894-1899	Part of constructing modern Boulevard.
Alte Nationalgalerie (Museumsinsel)	1876	1841	Donation by J.H.W. Wagener	Foundation with federal states and state	Art	German national	18 th -WWI	Neo-classical temple building by F. A. Stüler 1866-76	Part of a central cluster made up by the Museumsinsel-ensemble.
Pergamon-museum (Museumsinsel)	1930	1907	Expansion from Bode museum	Foundation with federal states and state	Art and Archaeology	History of civilisation, universal	6 th C. BC- Middle Ages	Three-winged museum building erected 1910-30	Part of a central cluster made up by the Museumsinsel-ensemble.
Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum (since 1956: Bode Museum) (Museumsinsel)	1904		Royal (Kaiser Wilhelm II)	Foundation with federal states and state	Art and Sculpture	Germany, Byzantine/ Mediterranean, universal	C. 3 rd Century -Middle Ages	Museum building in „Wilhelminian baroque“ by Ernst von Ihne	Part of a central cluster made up by the Museumsinsel-ensemble.
Deutsches Museum (von Meisterwerken der Naturwissenschaft und Technik)	1925	1903	Engineers, major economic elites and political corporations at all levels	Rechtsfähige Anstalt des öffentlichen Rechts	Cultural History of Technology and Science	Universal values, education	“From the beginnings till the-present day”	Museum building by architect Gabriel von Seidl, construction work began 1909, later additional buildings	Central in Munich, but due to its location on an island in the river Isar very prominent/ solitary.

Römisch-Germanisches Museum	1946 (separate museum)	1861 (part of Wallraf-Richartz-Museum)	Initially private, today: town of Cologne	Federal: Cologne and Nordrhein-Westfalen?	Archaeology	Local, regional, European context	Prehistory- Early Middle Ages	Museum building constructed 1967-1974	Central, immediately next to the Cathedral in Cologne.
Neue Nationalgalerie	1968		Federal: Land Berlin	Foundation with federal states and state	Art, foremost 1900-1945	Germany, modernity, universal	1900-1945	Modernist museum building by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1968)	Kulturforum, compensate Museumsinsel during FRG/GDR-times.
Haus der Geschichte	1994	1982	Bundestag, Helmut Kohl	Stiftung, state level	Contemporary History (after 1945)	Germany after WW2, FRG/GDR	1945-today	Post-modern	Part of the "Museumsmeile" and modern political offices.
Jüdisches Museum Berlin	2001	1971	First civil society, later also Bundestag	State, federal foundation	Jewish-German History and Culture	Jewish – German cultural continuity	0-2000	Existing baroque building and post-modern building by Daniel Libeskind (2001)	Semi-periferal
Deutsches Historisches Museum	2006 (temporary since 1991)	1983	Bundestag	State	German Political and Cultural History	German culture	100 BC to 1994 AD	Baroque, <i>Zenghaus</i> , and post-modern annex (I. M. Pei)	Central next to Museumsinsel and old Royal quarters.



National museums in Greece: History, Ideology, Narratives

Andromache Gazi

Summary

Greek national identity has been moulded on a threefold historical scheme that was initially sketched in the second quarter of the nineteenth century and had been crystallized by the first decades of the twentieth century. This scheme evolved gradually according to changing political and ideological circumstances. The sense of identity was initially based on Greece's affinity to classical antiquity that was exalted to a revered model. When this affinity was disputed, the - previously discarded - Byzantine heritage was reassessed and accepted as an integral part of national heritage while aspects of folk life started being studied in order to provide evidence of the unbroken continuity of the nation down the centuries. Thus, by the end of the nineteenth century Greeks could pride themselves for being the heirs of a famous classical heritage, an important Byzantine legacy, and of a living folk tradition some aspects of which - it was believed - might be traced back to antiquity. This ideological process had been consolidated by the 1920s and has since served as the backbone of national master narratives.

National museums such as the National Archaeological Museum (henceforth NAM), the Byzantine and Christian Museum (henceforth BCM), the Museum of Greek Folk Culture (henceforth MGFA) and the National Historical Museum are entrenched in this scheme, support the master narrative and present the notion of an eternal Hellenic spirit that guides the nation through different historical periods. Thus, Greek national museums perpetuate national myths and make official collective memory visible. As large proportions of collective memory is supposedly embodied in emblematic objects of national significance, the public is expecting national museums to act as treasure-houses of national memory, and this is indeed one of the main reasons instructing museum visiting. Moreover, as significant national institutions museums are normally seen as places that tell 'the truth', whereby 'truth' represents nationally sanctioned views of the nation's trajectory. Ruptures, silences, difficult heritage or other voices are hard to be accepted, although significant shifts have been under way for more than a decade now.

This report maps the dynamics of establishing national museums in Greece and provides an overview of the most important national museums in the country through a discussion of selected case studies. For the purpose of this research, which was part of *EuNaMus' Mapping and Framing Institutions 1750-2010* project, a 'national museum' is defined as an institution owned and controlled by the state, which claims and is recognised as being national and which articulates and negotiates national identity and knowledge with public exhibitions. A national public position and a focus on the national narrative are at the core of the investigation.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Archaeological Museum	1893	1866	Archaeological Service	State, Autonomous status, Ministry of Culture	Archaeology	Territorial representation, National narrative	Greek Neolithic to Late Antiquity (7 th millennium BC to 5 th AD)	Neoclassical architecture, city center, Athens.
Byzantine & Christian Museum	1930	1914	Archaeological Service	State, Autonomous status Ministry of Culture	Byzantine Art and Culture	Byzantium as a multifaceted society, a rupture to the national canon.	Early-Christian period (4 th c. AD to 12 th c.)	Contemporary architecture, city center Athens.
Museum of Greek Folk Art	1918	1918	Ministry of Culture	State, Ministry of Culture	Art and Crafts	Territorial representation, National narrative (main building) new approach (branches)	Mid- 17 th to 20 th c. AD	1970s architecture, city center, Athens.
National Historical Museum	1962	1882	Private Society	Historical and Ethnographical Society	History	Territorial representation, National narrative	Fall of Constantinople (1453) to the Greek-Italian war (1940-41)	Neoclassical architecture, city center, Athens.

Introduction

In the pages that follow, I will first trace the circumstances that shaped Greek national identity in an attempt to place national museums formation within this development. As the subject cannot be treated thoroughly within the space of this report, only those events and conditions that played a decisive role in this process will be singled out.

My discussion will make use of Tziovas' (2007; 2008) distinction of four models in the perception of the Greek past. The *symbolic* or *archaeological* model presupposes a distance between past and present which may be bridged at a mainly symbolical level by the revival of the classical past, the purification of monuments from any traces of later historical phases, the changing of place names, and the imposition of a 'purified' language. In contrast, the *organic* or *romantic* model sees the past as living in the present. Nostalgia for the loss of a great past is replaced by nostalgia for the loss of authenticity. As Tziovas (2007: 9) remarks, the first two schemes do not aspire at creating a dynamic Greek 'myth'; rather, they act either passively by adopting a ready-made European myth on the superiority of ancient Hellas, or defensively by shaping the tenet of national continuity when the race's purity is disputed. A dynamic view of Greek identity is, for the first time, put forward by a third scheme which Tziovas names *aesthetic* or *modernist*. This also presupposes the presence of the past in the present, but the relation between the two is now seen as rather aesthetic than historical. The past lives in the present as a manifestation of style and aesthetics. According to this scheme, the notion of continuity is not endangered as it acts 'underneath'. Finally, the *critical* or *post-modernist* scheme sees the past as open to continuous interpretations and rearrangements. The notion of historical continuity is set aside; precedence is now given to the study of disruptions, silences and neglected periods. Certainly, these are not the only models for perceiving the past, but they may be instructive for understanding the forces that shape museum exhibitions.

History, ideology, and changing notions of 'national' heritage

Modern Greece (see Koliopoulos and Veremis, 2002; 2010) was established as an independent state in 1830, following a seven-year revolution against the Ottoman rule. In the meantime, count Ioannis Kapodistrias had been elected as the state's first governor. After his assassination in 1831, the so-called 'protecting powers' (Russia, France, Great Britain) imposed the Bavarian prince Otto A' as king. Otto was well imbued in the classicist atmosphere of the royal court in Munich. Both he and his Bavarian court were determined to restore Greece to a condition worthy of ancient precedent (Hyxley 1998: 16). From then on the cultural orientation of the new state would be 'influenced and indeed distorted, by the burden of Greece's classical past' (Clogg 2002: 71).

For the Greeks the affinity with the classical past was the only 'title of honour' they could use in their effort to consolidate a distinctive national identity. In this affinity the Greeks saw the ideological and political justification for the existence of a Greek state after four centuries, and Europe found a moral justification for her intellectual debt to the Greeks. As classical monuments were the only 'ready' national symbols for use, archaeology became the national discipline *par excellence* and was invested with considerable ideological and political value. The two

main agents of archaeological activity, namely the Greek Archaeological Service and the (private) Archaeological Society, were founded as early as 1833 and 1837 respectively.

Proving the ancient origin of modern Greeks was essential in nation-building ideology for yet another reason. In the 1830s Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer (1830 and 1836) had published his views that contemporary Greeks had no biological relation to the ancient Greeks as they were heavily mixed up with the Slavs from the sixth century AD onwards. Attempts to refute Fallmerayer's theory had a long-lasting effect on Greek intelligentsia (Veloudis 1982). Yet, if the biological link between modern Greeks and their ancient predecessors was broken, their cultural link could easily be proven. Thus, history, archaeology, and early folk studies embarked on a plan to bring to light evidence of the unbroken evolution of the Greek nation from antiquity down to the nineteenth century. This shift also signalled a mental change in the conception of national time: from the scheme of revival to one of continuity (Liakos 2008a: 208).

In contesting Fallmerayer, Spyros Zambelios was the first to acknowledge the Greek character of Byzantium. Ancient Greek civilization, he argued, had not faded away, but had been creatively reshaped as it met with Christianity during the Byzantine period (Loukatos 1992: 62-63). The work of Zambelios paved the way to a comprehensive national history to be written. Konstantinos Papareghopoulos, the founder of Greek national historiography, undertook this project. His seminal work, *History of the Greek Nation, From Antiquity to Modern Times*, was published in five volumes from 1860 to 1874. In this, Papareghopoulos conceived and narrated the entire course of the Greek nation down the centuries adopting the tripartite distinction of the nation's main periods (*ancient Hellenism, medieval Hellenism, and modern Hellenism*) already introduced by Zambelios. The basis for the formation of national identity in Modern Greek society was thus set, and the concept of the diachronic continuity of Hellenism, as an essential part of nation-building ideology was introduced. Since then Papareghopoulos' tripartite scheme would constitute 'the race's gospel' (Kyriakidou-Nestoros 1993: 41).

And yet, as has rightly been remarked:

This official historical theory that was established by the end of the period stood as a simple logical construction. It did not transcend consciousness; it did not reach the level of mentalities: there the ancestors' position was jealously kept by the ancients. (Polites 1993: 107)

This observation is critical in explaining the strength of the classical paradigm that colored Greek mentalities for a very long time; arguably until today.

In the 1850s, irredentist ideas which have been working under the surface for sometime were crystallised in the concept of the 'Great Idea', that is the aspiration of equating the Greek state with the Greek nation through the incorporation of all people who were considered Greek within the Greek territory. From then on, and in parallel with the evolution of historiography, irredentist aspirations colored the socio-political and ideological climate of the country. As an ideological instrument the 'Great Idea' was transforming itself according to changing political, economic and social circumstances at least until the 1880s (Kremmydas 2010: 107-12), if not, as is usually held, until 1922. The 'Great Idea' influenced notions of continuity in space and time, and thus weighted heavily on the formation of national narratives. A reappraisal of Byzantine heritage initially, and then of that of modern Hellenism (1453-1830), was an indispensable theoretical

requirement for the state's irredentist aspirations. Yet, this theoretical scheme was not easily endorsed in practice: mainstream Greek archaeology would be very late to embrace both Byzantine archaeology (initially as a study of Christian religious art), and Prehistoric archaeology (with the only exemption of what could be viewed as a prelude to classical civilization; see Kotsakis 1991: 67; cf. Voutsaki 2003: 250-51).

A growing interest for preserving a wider range of monuments manifested itself around the turn of the century, with the foundation of the Ethnological and Historical Society in 1882, the Christian Archaeological Society in 1884, and the Greek Folk Society in 1908. Yet, it was not until 1914 that a Byzantine museum was established in Athens, while the 'National Museum of Decorative Arts' (today the Museum of Greek Folk Art) was founded in 1918. Nevertheless, despite the theoretical restoration of later phases in the history of Hellenism, antiquity remained a powerful model.

On the political level, the second half of the nineteenth century saw major attempts at reforming the state, reorganizing the economy and modernizing institutions. In 1862 Otto was dethroned, and the Danish Prince William George was enthroned as King George I of the Hellenes. Borders were extended with the annexing of the Ionian Islands in 1864 and of a large part of Thessaly in 1881. In 1897 an unfortunate war against the Ottomans led to a 'humiliating' Greek defeat and debased national pride. 1897 marked a turning point in Greek awareness: the disillusionment following the defeat in war brought about a desire to 're-examine everything from scratch' (Yanoulopoulos 1999: 179), and an effort to redefine a sense of national identity. The search for a new identity included a renegotiation of the relationship with antiquity.

Thus, at the turn of the century Greek society found itself in a clash between traditional ideas and new social needs that could not be satisfied through the traditional schemes put forward by intellectuals or other social agents. Two different national ideologies were fiercely confronting each other with language providing the major battlefield. Proponents of demotic language saw it as a mechanism for the general reformation of Greek society. Proponents of the 'pure' language strongly resisted any reform. Of course, much more than language was at stake: concepts of society and education, attitudes toward the past and its uses. In 1911, the struggle would ease temporarily with the adoption of *katharevousa* (pure language) as official language of the State (see Stavridi-Patrikiou 1999, 2000 and 2010: 113-141; Frangoudaki 2001; Mackridge 2010).

As Leondaritis (1983) remarks, the dominant ideological model that followed a traditional-ethnocentric scheme was so powerful that it could not easily be displaced by reformist attempts. Clearly, the notion of national identity based on ancient Greece was very persistent and would survive until well into the twentieth century.

On the political level, mobilizations aiming at reforming the political life of the country culminated in the 1909 'Ghoubi revolt'. Eleutherios Venizelos, one of the most prominent figures in the history of modern Greece, was recalled from Crete to undertake the economic and political modernisation of Greek society (Dakin 1972: 183-189). The ten-year period (1910-20) that followed was marked by efforts to shape Greece as a modern state. At the end of this period, Greek irredentist aspirations in Asia Minor, initially reinforced by the Great Powers, led to the painful 'Asia Minor Catastrophe' in 1922. Some 1.200.000 Greeks were uprooted and flooded Greece as refugees.

The defeat of the Greek forces signalled the final cancellation of all remaining traces of the 'Great Idea': irredentist aspirations came to an end, and the Greek nation was once and for all equated with the Greek state. This would deeply upset the quest for national identity. Until then Modern Greek ideology was about national integration and Greek cultural identity was 'introvert' as the main issue for the nation was continuity and unity in space and time. Now the quest for cultural identity becomes 'extrovert' in an attempt to define Greekness (Hellenicity) dynamically (Tziovas 1989: 51), and in direct conversation with Europe. Indeed, this was the first time that the search for a distinctively Greek identity was modelled neither on imposed European models (antiquity) nor on defensive attempts to prove the cultural continuity of the nation (Byzantium, Modern Greek heritage).

In the 1920s, the notion of Greekness comes dynamically to the fore bringing about a clear Helleno-centric character as Greeks are now called to redefine a sense of heritage and to reinvent their tradition. 'Return to the roots' is a central quest shared by intellectuals, artists, architects, and researchers (Hadjinikolaou 2003: 14). As a consequence a strong interest in folk art and vernacular idioms develops in architecture, festivals, domestic furniture.

The trends initiated in the 1920s would intensify during the next decade. Indeed, the 1930s marked a significant break with both the *archaeological* and the *romantic* scheme of viewing the past. The so-called 'Thirties Generation', a group of writers, artists and intellectuals, sought the essence of being Greek in archetypal forms of Greekness as expressed mainly in artistic creation, literature and folklore. This is what Tziovas (2007) calls the *aesthetic* or *modernist* model of looking at the past. Interestingly, however, Greek intellectuals - especially artists - now 'discovered' and appropriated Byzantium as a source of 'indigenous modern art' (Kourelis 2007: 429). Greek modernism included elements of both Byzantine and vernacular culture as manifested, for instance, in modernist Greek architecture and painting of the time.

In 1936, Ioannes Metaxas establishes a dictatorship that would last until 1941. Metaxas envisaged the creation of a 'Third Greek Civilisation', a civilisation that would mix the best elements of 'Greekness from time immemorial' (Carabott 2003: 26). Although his turn to antiquity was a distinctive one in that he turned to societies that promoted collective over individual achievements and had an austere character (like ancient Sparta and to a lesser extent ancient Macedonia; his vision also comprised a quest for what is authentically Greek and highlighted elements of 'traditional culture'; see Hamilakis 2007: 169-204). In the years to follow a latent turn to the past and tradition would manifest itself in many aspects of intellectual and social life, especially literature (Vitti 2000), but also research, museums, and fashion. Folk studies, in particular, were employed to serve the ideal of a national culture based on notions of 'popular authenticity' (Tziovas 1989: 149).

Greece came out of World War II practically destroyed. The euphoria that prevailed immediately after the liberation ignited changes in the wider intellectual environment. The glorification of collectivity, of 'people', of 'nation', etc., prevailed, especially among the Left. The defeat of the communists at the end of the Civil War (1945-1949), however, would mark a new turn to antiquity as a symbol of the intellectual revival of the country. As Hamilakis (2009: 27) observes, "Cultural continuity with the ancient Hellenic past was never seriously challenged, even by the 'others' of the nation, such as persecuted leftists and communists of the pre-war and post-war years". Post-war archaeology, in particular, preserved - and perhaps even reinforced - its

Hellenist orientation. The worship of Hellenism led to theoretical isolation which kept Greek archaeology away from intellectual developments taking place elsewhere (Morris 1994: 12; Kotsakis 1991). This had a definite impact on museum exhibitions.

In the 1950s, the country entered a long period of economic and social recovery with the financial help of the American Marshall Plan. Major public works were undertaken, urbanisation grew, and Greek society was rapidly transforming itself. Archaeology and preservation now entered the tourism agenda as Greece started deploying its cultural attractions as a considerable means of finance. The large-scale cultural regeneration of the 1960s - mainly evident in music, cinema and literary production - was interrupted by a harsh dictatorship that lasted from 1967 to 1974. During those years, the regime emphasized the notion of a distinctive Hellenic-Christian civilisation.

The restoration of democracy in 1974 and Greece's accession to the European Community in 1981 would signify the beginning of a new era which employed the notion of the Europeanism of Greek culture for asserting its place in the new landscape. The late 1970s and the 1980s brought about a renewed interest in the use of antiquities as 'symbolic capital' (Hamilakis and Yalouri 1996) for emphasizing the country's position in the world. Archaeology was now called upon to substantiate the dissemination of ideological messages about Greece to an international audience: starting from 1979 a number of large Greek exhibitions organised by the Ministry of Culture were sent abroad (e.g. to France, USA, Australia, Canada) aiming at either consolidating Greece's position within the EU, or reminding the eternal (and international) ideals of ancient Greek art, or even boosting up national pride among Greeks of the Diaspora (Mouliou 1996).

From the late 1980s onwards, significant changes have taken place in many fields which concern us here: a growing self-awareness and critical approach has been adopted in the fields of history (Kitromilides and Sklavenitis 2004, Liakos 2004) and archaeology (Hamilakis 1993 and 1992-1998, Eugenidou 1993); museum studies were introduced in Greek universities (see *ILISSIA* 2008, Vemi and Nakou 2010); specialized museum professionals started being employed by state museums; and cultural anthropology emerged as a discipline overtly distinctive from traditional folk studies (Toundassaki 2003; Avdikos 2009; Gefou-Madianou 2009). But these changes are not reflected in cultural policy, theory and practice yet alone in 'national' imagination. Popular views of history, archaeology and heritage continue to be anchored in deeply rooted national myths, and attempts at revisiting such myths trigger fierce reactions (see Stathis 2007).

In contrast, celebrating national myths is usually well received. The opening ceremony of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, for instance, offered a - highly, but not unanimously, praised - series of *tableaux vivants* celebrating Hellenism down the centuries: 'Emphasis on continuity..., a celebration of the all-time classic Greek ideal..., an allusion to some of the eternal Greek values ... all suitably packaged for worldwide broadcast ... throughout...' (Plantzos 2008: 11). Not surprisingly, the majority of these *tableaux* related to the ancient rather to the Byzantine or modern periods.

Clearly, national pride and national identity continue to be based on the reminiscence of Greek antiquity (Liakos 2008: 219-20), and it is this period that the Greeks repeatedly return to in their effort to project themselves in a post-modern world (Mackridge 2008). Within this climate, shifts observed in academia and research are difficult to infiltrate the level of mentalities and to be translated into concrete policies and practices. Museums are not exempted from this rule.

In the pages that follow, I will attempt to place Greek national museums within the frame outlined above in order to analyze their dependence to or deviation from the canonized national ideals of each particular period. Before going to this, I will briefly sketch out the structural system within which Greek museums operate.

Greek cultural heritage: the administration system

Legislation

The legal system of protection of cultural heritage has always been closely intertwined to changing notions of national identity, and as such has always heavily depended on state intervention (Voudouri 2010).

The first archaeological law, the work of Bavarian Georg Ludwig von Maurer, was instituted in 1834 (Voudouri 2003: 18-30). It declared that '*all antiquities in Greece, being works of the ancestors of the Greek people, are considered as national property of all Greeks.*' Interestingly, protection vaguely referred to '*works of art from the very ancient times of Christianity to the so-called Medieval Times.*'

The second archaeological law, enacted in 1899, established the complete property of the State on all antiquities without exceptions. Provision also extended – although in a rather negative way – to medieval antiquities. At a legal level, this law reflects the 'Hellenisation' of Byzantium by means of the 'Papareghopoulian' narrative (Voudouri 2003: 63). In practice, protection was exclusively geared towards classical antiquities, and attempts at 'purifying' monuments to their initial glory, led later phases into destruction.

In the course of the twentieth century, the scope of protection was gradually extended so as to include Byzantine and Post-Byzantine monuments along with significant modern monuments and historic sites. The third archaeological law (No. 5351), a highly protectionist piece of legislation, was enacted in 1932 (for a comprehensive discussion see Mouliou 1998).

In 1977, a Directorate of Folk Culture was established in the Ministry of Culture. Despite its rather restrictive title, this service was entrusted with the protection of a large part of Modern Greek heritage ranging from traditional architecture and modern material culture to collection, museums, folk music and dance (Hadjinikolaou 2003: 17). The Directorate was later renamed as Directorate of Modern Cultural Heritage.

In the 1990s, the concept of *diachronia* was revived in the official rhetoric of the Ministry of Culture. In the words of the then Minister, E. Venizelos:

In the Ministry we are interested in highlighting the diachronia of Greek culture' and 'this diachronic axis is very much at the core of the Ministry's concerns, for it is directly related to museums and exhibition policies, to the promotion of Greek culture abroad...'
(Venizelos quoted in Mouliou 2009: 236-37)

In 1997, Law 2557 'Institutions, measures and actions for cultural development', and then Law 3028 'On the protection of antiquities and cultural heritage in general', in 2002, established the legal framework that was necessary for putting into practice this political doctrine (Mouliou 2009: 237). Protection now covers cultural heritage of all periods, with internal chronological divisions corresponding to different degrees of protection. The list of properties is widened to include intangible heritage and historic landscapes. Important steps are taken towards the organisation of the museum sector and the improvement of museums operation, and a *Museums Council* is

established for the first time in Greece in 2002. The Council has an advisory and consultative role, and is responsible for suggesting museum policy to the Minister.

Management

The main body responsible for policies on cultural heritage and the Arts is the Hellenic Ministry of Culture (and Tourism, today) that was founded in 1971. At Ministry level, the *General Directorate of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage*, consisting of eight central Directorates, is responsible for issuing policies and monitoring work in this field. Of interest here are the Directorates of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Antiquities, and of Modern Cultural Heritage. At regional level, all archaeological and museum work is undertaken by regional services known as 'Ephorates' (Ephorates also follow the division into prehistoric/classical, Byzantine/post-Byzantine.). Today, there are 39 Ephorates of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities and 28 Ephorates of Byzantine Antiquities. Things are much more complex as regards Modern Heritage as its protection is split among many departments: movable cultural goods and folk museums are controlled centrally from the Directorate of Modern Cultural Heritage, while monuments and other architectural structures are managed by units coming under the General Directorate of Restoration, Museums and Technical Works (things are further complicated by the fact that responsibility for traditional architecture, for example, is also regulated by The Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change).

The Ephorates of antiquities are staffed by archaeologists outweighing, by a certain a percentage, all other professionals. Given this and the fact that, with the exception of eight major museums which function as autonomous administrative units (The National Archaeological, the Byzantine and Christian, the Numismatic and the Epigraphical museums in Athens, the Archaeological Museum and the Museum of Byzantine Culture in Thessaloniki, the Herakleion Archaeological Museum in Crete, and the Museum of Asiatic Art in Corfu), all state archaeological museums operate under the relevant regional Ephorates, it is easy to understand that museum operation is just one out of a myriad other tasks - ranging from excavation to bureaucracy - entrusted to archaeologists working in the Archaeological Service. The shortcomings of this system are obvious and have often been criticised (Voudouri 2003: *passim*).

The new *Organization of the Ministry of Culture*, which was passed in 2003 (Presidential Decree no. 191, 'Organisation of the Ministry of Culture', FEK A' 146, 13/6/2003) tried to remedy some of these inefficiencies. One major initiative was the establishment for the first time of separate units of 'Museums, Exhibitions and Educational Programs' within the Ephorates of Antiquities. Units of 'Museographic research and artistic planning of exhibitions' have also been created within the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens, the Archaeological Museum and the Museum of Byzantine Culture in Thessaloniki, and the Herakleio Museum in Crete. Interestingly, such a unit is not anticipated for the largest museum in the country, the National Archaeological Museum in Athens. The *Organization* further provided for twelve posts of archaeologists with a post-graduate degree in Museum Studies (4 out of these posts are in the central service in Athens; the remaining 8 are allocated to the autonomous museums referred to above). The 2003 *Organization* also set the criteria for selection to positions that rank high in the hierarchy such as Directors and Unit managers. Here again, archaeologists are given precedence over other professionals even if the post in question refers to museum and exhibition planning.

Museums

Archaeological museums (Byzantine included) form the largest group of museums in Greece, followed by folk museums. Then come art museums and galleries, which are normally municipal, history museums, maritime museums, university museums, natural history museums and technology museums. Other categories are underrepresented. The outline that follows will thus be based on the evolution of archaeology and folk museums.

The 'pioneer period' (1829-1874) of museum development was characterized by the effort to collect antiquities and safeguard them in 'museums'. Already in 1829 Governor Kapodistrias '...ordered the establishment of a *national museum*' at Aegina, then capital of the country, 'for collecting into it whichever relics were threatened with destruction or were in danger of becoming a pray to foreigners...' (Gazi 1993: 77).

The first archaeological Law (1834) introduced the foundation of public museums in Athens where 'the rarest of finds' were to be deposited, and provided for the establishment of local museums in the provinces, but this was not implemented until the 1870s. Throughout the nineteenth century legislation provided mainly for the organisation of major Athenian museums such as the NAM, the Acropolis and the Numismatic Museum. The 'formative period' (1874-1900) was characterized by the organization of the large Athenian museums, and the creation of museums in the provinces. A marked improvement in museum practices took place during the 'expansion period' (1900-1909). To that period, all museums in the country (with the exception of the National Gallery which was established in 1900, and some early museums established at the University of Athens) were archaeological and solely devoted to classical antiquities.

Other types of museums started being established in the first decade of the twentieth century, but the strong emphasis on archaeology continued until the 1960s. The long 'regeneration period' (1948-1976) was a time of intensive reorganization of most archaeological museums; the prevailing interpretive museum paradigm was the 'classical past as linear evolution of art' (Mouliou 2008: 83). In the years 1977-1996 archaeological museums started employing a more empirical and objective analysis of archaeological finds without abandoning the past-as-history-of-art approach. During this period also emerged the need for a more educational and hence more useful to society museum, but this view did not manage to out stage the two earlier interpretative models in the production of permanent displays (Mouliou 2008: 84).

In the meantime, following the rapid transformation of traditional communities after World War II, collecting 'folk art' has become a primary concern of local societies and individuals alike. Many collections are formed all around the country, but no attempt is made at recording information, cataloguing objects or scientific study. Enhanced by the Junta's ideological devotedness to tradition, the expansion of folk museums that characterized the 1970s was informed more by a desire to 'save' vanishing aspects of 'traditional' life than by specific policies. Tradition was fossilized in time as a romantic reference to vanished rural societies, and the notion of identity as a continuously evolving entity was missed (Hadjinikolaou 2003: 17). Thus, although the establishment of the Directorate of Folk Culture in 1977 (see above) signified the state's intention of approaching tradition in a more systematic way, and despite many efforts made since then by both the Directorate and the MGFA to organize local folk museums around the country, these museums have largely kept a very backward orientation, cut off from the dialogue which has been underway in research centers or in academia (Caftantzoglou 2003: 36).

Many more types of museums such as natural history museums and art galleries came into being from the 1980s onwards. The 1980s and the 1990s were mainly characterized by the proliferation of private museums, the growth of educational activities, the proliferation of temporary exhibitions and the introduction of new technologies (Gazi 1999a). The first decade of the twentieth-first century experienced an unprecedented proliferation of temporary exhibitions along with the redisplay of many permanent collections. This period has been seen as a time of great opportunities and of pressing challenges (Mouliou 2008: 84).

In brief, the Greek museum system is heavily dependent on state policy, is highly controlled by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and is predominated by archaeologists who stipulate what is to be allowed in modern Greek culture and ‘continue to produce and recycle aesthetic value for the sake of the nation’ (Plantzos 2008: 16).

Today there are 8 museums in Greece which may qualify as ‘national’ on the basis of their name, ownership, scope of collections and national significance: the NAM, the BCM, the MGFA, the National Gallery-Alexandros Soutzos Museum, the War Museum, the National Museum of Contemporary Art, the State Museum of Contemporary Art, and the New Acropolis Museum. The above museums are state-controlled, have collections of national importance that represent Greek culture from prehistoric times to date, while their displays have a strong focus on national narratives. The only exceptions to this rule are the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Athens and the State Museum of Contemporary Art in Thessaloniki whose collections cover both Greek and international art.

There are 3 more museums which are not state-owned, but hold collections of national importance, and occupy a significant public position in the articulation of national identity: the National Historical Museum, the Benaki Museum, and the Hellenic Maritime Museum.

Case studies

Here, I focus on the NAM, the BCM, and the MGFA. These museums are generally considered as ‘the’ national museums *par excellence* because:

- they cover the three ‘canonized’ periods of Greek history (ancient, Byzantine, and Modern),
- they exhibit important works of national cultural heritage, and inform the public’s understanding of ‘national heritage’.
- they ‘elaborate and diffuse the notion of historical continuity of the nation and its unit in time and space. Moreover, their policies illustrate the national will to hide problems of discontinuity and alterity’ (Toundassaki and Caftantzoglou 2005: 229).
- they are perceived by visitors as places where notions of continuity, heritage and descent can be traced, and also as agents that may boost national morale. They may thus be considered as *loci* of ‘imaginary security’ away from disturbing notions of otherness, discontinuity and contemporary unrest (Caftantzoglou, Toundassaki and Frydakakis 2005).

In addition to the above, a short section on the development of the National Historical Museum in Athens will illuminate how Greek political history is treated.

The National Archaeological Museum

Introduction

The Museum's foundations were laid in October 1866. Construction was based on plans drawn by Ludwig Lange, but the building was completed in 1889 by Ernst Ziller who gave the museum its neoclassical character (Karouzos and Karouzou 1981: 12-13; see also Kokkou 2009). Officially, the museum was established in 1893:

The foundation of the National Museum aims at the study and teaching of the archaeological science, the diffusion of archaeological knowledge among us and the development of love for the arts. For this reason all antiquities which are significant for understanding the history of ancient art and knowing ancient life... are to be assembled in it. (Royal Decree 'On the Organization of the National Archaeological Museum' 31/7/1893, FEK A' 152)

Today it is the largest museum in Greece, housing 5 large permanent collections:

- *The Prehistoric Collection*, which includes works of the civilizations that developed in the Aegean from the seventh millennium BC to 1,050 BC (Neolithic, Cycladic, Mycenaean);
- *The Sculptures Collection*, which shows the development of ancient Greek sculpture from the seventh to the fifth centuries BC;
- *The Vase and Minor Objects Collection*, with representative works of ancient Greek pottery from the eleventh century BC to the Roman period;
- *The Metallurgy Collection*; and
- *The Egyptian and Near Eastern Antiquities Collection*, with objects dating from the pre-dynastic period (5,000 BC) to the Roman conquest.

The main phases in the organization of the NAM are outlined below.

1881-1891: Formative years

Within the decade 1881-1891 and as construction is still under way all antiquities previously housed elsewhere are collected into the Museum, and exhibition halls are gradually opened to the public. At the same time, important work is being carried out in cataloguing collections, and by 1891 the first two editions of a popular guide to the sculpture collection are published (Gazi 1993: 162).

The main responsible for the museum at the time is Panayiotes Eustratiades then General Ephor of Antiquities, one of the most important figures of nineteenth century Greek archaeology (Petraikos 1987: 260, 262, *passim*, and 2007: 72-73).

1895-1909: Shaping the museum

The systematic organization of the Museum is marked by the presence of Panayiotes Kavvadias, one of the most prominent figures of early Greek archaeology, who dominated the field by occupying various crucial posts (Petraikos 1987: 82-84, 108-11, 282-84, and 2007).

Kavvadias actively organized all aspects of museum work and initiated the gradual assemblage in the National Museum of important antiquities from all over the country (Kavvadias 1890-92: 39, n. 1). French archaeologist Salomon Reinach wrote in 1893:

In ten years Pan. Cavvadias obtained results which struck me with admiration... their organization became so perfect that I do not know, in all Europe, any better arranged. The National Museum and that of the Acropolis should be today places of pilgrimage to all those who are accessible to the aesthetic emotion. (*Révue Archeologique* 1893: 237)

In their catalogue of the Museum's vases collection, Collignon and Couve (1902: preface) praised the museum as follows: '... grâce a une excellente installation matérielle, et a un classement très methodique ce musée repond à toutes les exigences et ne ce redoute aucune comparaison'. And, Gustave Fougères, visiting Athens in 1912:

The visitor accustomed to the vain show of European galleries, where the repaired Antiquities appear under flattering appearances, will at first suffer to see so many mutilated statues here. However, he will not be long to appreciate the advantage of a simple but sincere exhibition of original works, of known production, and methodically classed. (Quoted in Philadelfeus 1935: 52)

During this period, the museum is viewed as a national shrine: '... [the Museum] ... became ... a sacred shrine, within which collected treasures of ancient art ... are exposed to the adoration and admiration ... of all those who make the pilgrimage...' (Kastriotis 1908). The museum holds and exhibits the very emblems of national pride. As their symbolic power and appeal was taken for granted, exposing antiquities to public view was enough evidence of the affinity of modern to ancient Greece. The objects' symbolic power was offered to visitors as a 'matter of faith' and as 'objectified value' (Pearce 1992: 203). In this way, the museum symbolised the cultural revival of the nation.

As I have shown elsewhere, the display of archaeology as history of art with the emphasis put on aesthetics rather than on contextual information was not only in accordance with the dominant exhibition model of the time in Europe, but was also a reflection of intellectual 'colonialism' imported from German classical scholarship which was particularly widespread among Greek archaeologists who had studied in Munich, Leipzig, Bonn, Göttingen, or Berlin (Gazi 1993, 1994, 1999b, 2008, and forthcoming).

1909-1939: A national treasure-house

From the late nineteenth century until after World War II, the Museum assumed its paramount role as a national treasure house. No major work was undertaken in the inter war period, apart from the addition of new space in 1932-1939 (Kaltsas 2007: 20).

1941-1944: Occupation

With the outbreak of World War II, the Museum's collections were secured either in places outside the building or in the museum's basements and in holes dug up under the floors. Protected by a thick layer of clear sand, antiquities survived the Occupation (Karouzou 1946).

1946-1966: Regeneration

The titanic task of the post-war reorganization of the Museum was the work of Christos Karouzos, acting director from 1942-1964, and his wife Semni Papaspyridi-Karouzou. An emblematic figure of twentieth century Greek archaeology, Karouzos had a broad humanist education (Kunze 1968; *Nea Estia* 1987; Petrakos 1995). In contrast to most archaeologists of his

generation, he kept away of mainstream archaeological practices (e.g. excavation, cataloguing) and pursued the aesthetic study and appreciation of objects. Karouzos was nurtured within the German tradition of art history, also cherished by both his predecessors and his contemporary archaeologists; but he was the only one who clearly explained his philosophy in a plethora of publications. To him the Museum was primarily a museum of history of art and not of history; he further believed that it was the Museum's obligation to enlighten the artistic character of the ancient works (Karouzos 2000: 137-38). As a proponent of the view that art appeals primarily to the sight, he placed particular emphasis on the deep knowledge and the visual cultivation of the instructor, in this case the museum archaeologist, for transmitting this knowledge to the public (Karouzos 2000: 140-41).

Karouzos worked painstakingly for the Museum's revival. The hard and time-consuming work of un hiding the antiquities was his first priority. The process is well described in many accounts (Karouzou 1946, 1984a, and 1984b; Karouzos and Karouzou 1981: 13-14; Petrakos 1995: 108-10; Touloupa 1997; Kaltsas 2007: 20).

Writes Nobel Prize Poet George Seferis:

They now unearth... the statues. ... the workmen excavate with shovels and pickaxes. If you didn't look at the roof... the walls... this could be any excavation. Statues still sunken in the earth, appeared naked from the waist up... It was a dance of the resurrected, a second coming of bodies... Emotion from this sudden closeness. The bronze Zeus or Poseidon was lying on a casket. I touched him... I thought I touched my own body... (Seferis 1986: 38-39)

At the time of writing (1946), a ferocious Civil War is devastating the country. Seferis' resurrected bodies and the strong feelings they provoke transcend historical time, and function as an allegory to a timeless Hellenic harmony. In this way, the resurrection of the National Museum symbolizes the post-war regeneration of the nation (Leontis 1995).

Foreseeing that the museum's reorganization would take many years to complete, Karouzos initiated a series of temporary exhibitions. From then on and until Karouzos' retirement in 1964, galleries opened one after the other (see Anon 1951, Karouzou 1956, 1957, 1984a and 1984b, Sakellariou 1987, Dontas 1987). Writing about the new exhibition's philosophy Karouzos noted:

Some would ask which were the principles followed by those who set up the exhibition. The answer is that they ... did not study any book ... related to what is nowadays called *Museology* nor did they study some specific prototype because there was no such. They did not follow any *a priori* principle apart from one: how each work of art could be exalted, how it could reveal its beauty and talk at times alone at times with its group, without being disturbed by the architectural or chromatic environment. (Quoted in Petrakos 1995: 110)

Archaeologists who assisted Karouzos confirmed this: 'every time we went into theoretical discussions he said: 'Leave the words. The eye will decide' (Sakellariou 1987: 1136), and reiterated by Semni Karouzou: 'None APRIORI [sic] principle, none aesthetic theory was implemented... One single principle prevailed: how each work of art could be exalted... ' (Karouzou 1984b: 67).

Karouzos remained closely involved in the Museum's redisplay until his death in 1967. The contribution of his wife Semni was of equal – if not of major – importance (Nikolaidou-Kokkinidou 1998: 244-51; Karouzou 1984a; see also Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 2000). In her writings she vividly expressed the aesthetic ideal that guided their thought: 'The works of art

must be presented with lucidity and vividness; knowledge must be concealed behind the visual pleasure for a new element has ... emerged, that is vision' (Karouzou 1956: 849). And,

Works have to be presented in space free, self existent, ... earnest so as to affect and to be understood... Every means of showing off ..., rich showcases, pompous bases ... and the like should vanish so as to concentrate on the [work] itself. Not simply to learn but primarily to be moved [i.e. by it]. (Quoted in Zervoudaki 1997: 30)

The Museum's re-opening was heralded as 'a cultural event of global significance' and as 'an auspicious turning point for the revival of the cultural values in our land' (quoted in Mouliou 1997: 114). The Karouzos' work was not only saluted as 'pioneering' (Kaltsas 2007: 22), but also acknowledged 'as a... national service' (quoted in Mouliou 1997: 130). The Museum now materializes the cultural revival of the country after World War II in the same way that it materialized cultural affinity to classical Greece in the nineteenth century.

The presence of Christos and Semni Karouzos left a clear imprint on a whole generation of archaeologists (see, for example, Romiopoulou 1997: 40), and would have a long lasting effect in museological thinking in Greece. The fact that their work remained 'frozen in time' and was revered as 'sacred', a golden cannon in itself, until the passing away of Semni at the age of 97 in 1994, is very telling of the difficulty of Greek state archaeology to move away from prototypes and accept new ideas. Talking at the first conference of the Association of Greek Archaeologists in 1967 Dimitrios Theocharis, a prominent and influential prehistorian, asserted:

Exhibitions of art such as the ones at the NAM... constitute *aesthetic and scientific peaks*, accomplishments which are perhaps unparalleled in other aspects of Greek life... In the National Museum Christos Karouzos wrote an epic of wisdom, aesthetic completeness and sharpness... Thus we ... now have a model in front of us, a prototype to follow. Exhibitions of works of art in Greek museums will aim at this: the exaltation and promotion of "Greek" with Greek means, simplicity and austerity. In this basic issue there is no second opinion. (Theocharis 1984: 80-81; emphasis in the original)

1966-2004: Safe values

The Karouzos' exhibition remained practically unaltered until the 1990s. Partial attempts at refreshing the museum's profile and redisplaying some collections (Romiopoulou 1995) were not enough to face the challenge of new museological theory and practice. Changes were rather aesthetic and museographical than museological / ideological (Demakopoulou 2001). In the words of one of the museum's directors in the 1990s:

The National Museum belongs to the category of large state museums which were founded in the previous century ... in order to house precious collections of works of art ... Their permanent exhibitions have a consciously academic character of *diachronic value*, and they follow tried out display methods. (Demakopoulou 1999; emphasis added)

2004-2009: Missed opportunities

The necessity for a major refurbishment was made urgent by the prospect of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. Starting from 2001, the building had been renovated and its infrastructure was improved. In the summer of 2004 the new exhibitions of the Prehistoric collection (Papazoglou-Manioudaki 2010) and of all sculpture (Vlahoyanni 2010) opened, to be followed in 2005 by the

redisplay of the Collections of Pottery and Bronzes (Proskynitopoulou 2010). All other collections, such as the Egyptian collection (Tourna 2010), were opened by 2009.

The museum's redisplay was the result of intensive collective work by the museum's archaeologists coordinated by current director Nikolaos Kaltsas. The classic scheme of exhibiting objects by collections in a chronological order is preserved while thematic units are now introduced. Yet, the Karouzos' legacy lingered on. This is attested in both academic and popular writings. Long before the opening of the new exhibitions, for instance, the Association of Greek Architects has repeatedly voiced its severe objections to both the structural innovations and the exhibition refurbishment. Interestingly, the Association lamented the end of the Karouzos' era arguing that their exhibition 'was internationally acclaimed and considered exemplary as to its straightforward and plain way of exhibiting' (Rizospastis 2003). In the same vein, journalist P. Katimertzi had commented, already in 1982: 'This Museum should not change. It is a museum of classical museological philosophy, a museum that is Pan-Hellenic and irreplaceable... The National Museum is some sort of sacred cow...'

This view seems to be endorsed by the museum's curators who assert that 'the central idea of the post-war "Karouzean" vision, that is the diachronic continuity of ancient Greek sculpture, is retained in the new exhibition' (Vlahoyanni 2010: 86), the only concession being the provision of contextual information. Or, 'The excellent bronze works impress and "speak" for themselves without elaborate means and additional applications' (Proskynitopoulou 2010: 88). The reappearance of the nineteenth century parlance is astounding. Moreover, the perception of the museum as a national treasure house is revamped: 'The NAM is ... a showcase of national heritage and also an arc of ancient Greek art' (Vatopoulos 2004), '[Athens] best museum [is] the cradle with the most desirable tokens of its heritage...' (Xydakis 2004).

Nevertheless, the new exhibitions have been severely criticized as being a 'close dialogue among archaeologists' and as lacking any concrete message. The museum's plain coloring and atmosphere is accused as being 'suffocating', ostensibly sober and dry thus denoting not only lack of sensibility to the civilization on show but also ignorance of or indifference to current museological tenets (Papadopoulos 2004). The redisplay has further been accused for lack of vision, and for inability to respond to some crucial questions such as 'How does one re-reads Greek antiquity in the contemporary world, how does one communicates national heritage as global?' (Vatopoulos 2003).

Conclusion

The NAM is 'the' national museum in Greece as it represents one of the most deeply embedded and dominant national myths, namely the origin of modern Greece from ancient Hellas. The NAM's master narrative, initiated in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and fine-tuned by the 1910s was initially accomplished by simply putting the antiquities on display as 'objectified truths' and as a matter of faith. Since then, and despite changing perceptions of how to best view and appreciate the works on display – as exemplified by the aesthetic turn of the post-war period launched by the Karouzos', or by the disputable results of the 2004-2009 renovation, the NAM has retained its character as a national 'icon' and a national 'shrine'. This is mainly evident in all exhibition halls that display either well-known or emblematic 'national' objects such as the ones exhibited in the Mycenaean Hall, the Sculpture galleries, and the Vases rooms. This is not the

case with the display of other ‘minor’ collections, such as the Stathatos collection, the Vlastos-Serpieris collection, or the Egyptian collection (Tourna 2010), which could be treated in a less austere and more visitor-friendly way as they obviously do not ‘threaten’ the canonized view of the NAM as a shrine to national ingenuity.

The Byzantine and Christian Museum

Introduction

The BCM was established in the early twentieth century in order to collect, study, preserve and exhibit the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine cultural heritage of the Hellenic territory. Today the museum houses approximately 30,000 objects from all over Greece, Asia Minor, the Balkans and Russia divided into eleven collections: icons, sculptures, ceramics, textiles, wall paintings, mosaics, paintings, manuscripts and printed books, minor works, replicas, and the Loverdos collection. The Museum’s permanent exhibition is divided in two main parts: The first is devoted to Byzantium (fourth - fifteenth c. AD), and the second to the period from the fifteenth to the twentieth century.

The Museum’s official foundation in 1914 marks the culmination of changing concepts and predispositions towards the nation’s past. Let us remind that already in 1834 the first archaeological law provided for the protection of monuments dating from the ‘most ancient times of Christianity or the so-called mediaeval age’, but this was not implemented at the time, as Byzantium was not yet incorporated into the national narrative. The growing acceptance of Byzantium into the national consciousness began with the work of Papareghopoulos in the 1870s. In practice, however, this change of attitude materialized in the last decade of the nineteenth century with the restoration of important Byzantine monuments and the enactment of a new legislation in 1899. As a clear indication of the ideological shift, the term ‘mediaeval Hellenism’ is now officially incorporated in national legislation to replace the 1834 reference to the ‘most ancient times of Christianity or the so-called mediaeval age’.

1884-1914: Preparation

The history of the Museum is closely connected to the foundation, in 1884, of the Christian Archaeological Society the main aim of which was to protect Christian antiquities thus proving the consistent presence of the Church in Greek matters. The driving force behind these activities was Georghios Lambakis. He enthusiastically and energetically collected Christian material and managed to form a very rich collection that was in 1923 incorporated in the BCM. Lambakis’ vision was a religious one: his quest for ecclesiastical objects was intended to provide proof of the unflinching Christian faith and worship from the first period of Christianity to his days. For him the nation’s continuity coincided with the unbroken continuation of the life of the Church (Gratziou 1986: 56): he collects religious heirlooms not national monuments. Reflecting the power exerted by the Church at the time, Lambakis’ views would prove instrumental in shaping the early character of the Museum.

At the same time, attempts at establishing a state Byzantine Museum bore no fruit as the relevant legal provision in 1897 and 1909 never materialized. In 1912 the first chair of Byzantine Archaeology is established at the University of Athens. Adamantios Adamantiou, previously Ephor of Antiquities, takes up the position. In 1913, he composes a memorandum on the

foundation of a 'Central Byzantine Museum' at Thessaloniki, a city with a weighty Byzantine past and important Byzantine monuments, which was just then liberated from the Ottomans. In this, he expresses the view that a Byzantine museum should collect monuments of national history and *not* religious heirlooms. National history had by then incorporated 'mediaeval Hellenism' so Byzantine monuments were not only religious or art monuments but 'also monuments of national life' (quoted in Gratziou 1986: 65).

Having furthered his studies at the *École Normale Supérieure* in Paris, Adamantiou represents a new paradigm towards Byzantium that was initiated in the late nineteenth century and was reinforced by the growth of Byzantine studies and the growing interest in Byzantine art in the early twentieth century. As Kourelis (2007: 391) observes, 'Byzantium was ubiquitous at the turn of the twentieth century' (see also Biliouri 2009). At the same time Byzantium gains momentum in Greece as is revealed in different facets of public life from literature to female fashion and interior decoration (Kioussopoulou 2003: 20).

1914-1923: Formative years

As a result of the above delineated climate, and following growing pressure by the Archaeological Society, the exhortation of renowned Byzantine scholars and the establishment of a position of Ephor of 'Christian and Byzantine Antiquities' in the Archaeological Service in 1908 (Konstantios 1999, 2004, 2009), the museum is finally established in Athens in 1914: 'A Byzantine and Christian Museum is established ... in which are deposited works of Byzantine and Christian art from the first years of Christianity to the foundation of the Greek state, except from those in Macedonia' (Law 401/1914 'On the foundation of the Byzantine and Christian Museum' (FEK A' 347/25-11-14).

Signalling a major ideological shift, Adamantiou, now the museum's first Director, collects objects of national significance and not Christian heirlooms (Gratziou 1986: 68; Konstantios 1999). The museum's character is national (Konstantios 2004: 31). This shift, however, is not reflected in the museum's title which signifies a compromise between the religious understanding of Byzantium by Lambakis and the Christian Archaeological Society, and the understanding of Byzantium as a vital component of national history, as expressed, for a example, by Adamantiou.

1923-1960: Shaping the museum

In 1923 the post of Director is taken up by Georghios Soteriou, Ephor of Byzantine Antiquities since 1915. Immediately after his placement the collection of the Christian Archaeological Society and a significant part of a collection named 'Heirlooms of the Refugees' brought by the Asia Minor refugees in 1922 are incorporated into the Museum.

Soteriou organizes the first exhibition in five halls of the Academy of Athens. Close to his idea that the Museum would become a 'prototype museum for the entire East', he placed objects - and especially sculpture - in environments resembling the space they originally occupied or that from which they were detached. Thus, visitors could gain an impression of an early Christian basilica, a Byzantine cross-in-square church with dome, and a Post-Byzantine single-aisle church (Soteriou 1924: 5).

In the prologue to the Museum's guide Soteriou presents his view of the Museum that is:

the national museum par excellence since its scope is to picture the evolution of the art which developed in the Greek lands from the end of its ancient life [sic] to the liberation of the Race from the Turkish yoke (from the fourth c. AD to 1830)... it is easily understood that the Byzantine Museum presents the civilization of our Fathers as the [National] Archaeological Museum presents the civilization of our Forefathers... Greek Christian works of art stand closer to us, bear the stamp of a religion followed by us too, and exhibit very clearly the marks of a whole circle of ideas, habits and customs in which we still live. (Soteriou 1924: 3)

The idea was not new: already in 1859-60 in his first lecture at the University of Athens, Papareghopoulos asserts 'yet we are more closely connected to medieval Hellenism', and later in 1888 he repeats that the Byzantine period 'is more close to Modern Hellenism than any other period' (quoted in Demaras 1986: 206, 378). Indeed, Papareghopoulos talks of Byzantium in entirely familiar terms creating a sense of intimacy with the society of his own time (Kitromilides 1998: 29). The ideological connotations of this attitude are to be traced in both the intellectual and the political climate of the time. The shock caused by the 'Asia Minor catastrophe' in 1922 led to a period of self-reflection during which the nation had to reconcile with its roots and reorganize its priorities. It was in the Fathers' 'circle of ideas, habits and customs' that the nation should seek the roots of its identity (Gratziou 1986: 72-73).

In 1930 the Museum moves to its permanent premises, the so-called Villa Ilissia, a building complex designed by Greek architect Stamatis Kleanthis in 1848 for Sophie de Marbois-Lebrun, Duchess of Plaisance. The museum was inaugurated in September 1930 on the occasion of the Third International Byzantine Conference held in Athens. In his speech at the opening ceremony, Soteriou describes the Museum as the 'second national Museum in Greece', and reasserts his view on its national significance in providing evidence of the Christian Greek world which still nurtures Greeks in the 1930s (Soteriou 1931a: 649). The new exhibition is based on the principles initiated in the first exhibition at the Academy of Athens:

... the idea of placing the museum objects and particularly the sculptures, in an environment which is reminiscent of the places from which they come or from which they were removed, prevailed. Thus, three galleries on the ground floor were given the form of an Early Christian basilica of the simplest type, a Byzantine cross-in-square plan with dome, and a Post-Byzantine single-aisle church. (Soteriou 1931b: 10)

Thus, Soteriou creates an exhibition space that is recognizable and seems 'familiar' to Christian orthodox Greeks. In structuring the exhibition in imitation of an Orthodox church, he wants to gradually introduce the public to the notion of a Byzantine artefacts exhibition (Katsaridou and Biliouri 2007). As already seen, the 1930s turned to Byzantium as a source of inspiration for modern life (Kourelis 2007: 429-33) and Byzantine objects became fashionable

Lately in Athens many lovers of art, gentlemen and ladies of the high class, manifest a decided inclination for the Byzantine objects... So there are now many Saloons [sic] which are constructed and decorated in the Byzantine style and which deserve a visit. (Philadelfeus 1935: 238)

This may have facilitated Soteriou's efforts to instruct the public in viewing Byzantine art within a museum context, but more research needs to be done in order to assess the impact of such

trends upon the museum itself. Let it here be noted that at exactly the same time, ‘the growing interest in Byzantine art was crystallized in Europe in the *International Exhibition of Byzantine Art* in Paris in 1931’ (Weitzmann 1947: 401), the first exhibition exclusively devoted to this field (Byron 1931).

Soteriou’s museological conception was innovative at the time and despite its didactic orientation, remained basically unaltered until the late 1990s (Konstantios 2004: 35). Gradually, however, the museum was sanctified and became cut off from the city’s life.

1960-1975: Metamorphosis

In 1960 the Museum’s direction is taken up by Manolis Chatzidakis, a renowned Byzantine scholar. The most significant event of the 1960s is the organization of a large exhibition titled ‘Byzantine Art - A European Art’ funded by the Council of Europe. The exhibition was on show at Zappeio Hall from April to June 1964 (for a description and a somehow ‘negative’ appraisal see Beckwith 1964). For three years starting from 1961, Chatzidakis and his team work on a project whose scale is novel to the country. As Konstantios (2004: 37) remarks, this exhibition left its mark on a whole generation and on the Museum itself. It also left a clear imprint on the ideological level as it restituted Byzantine art as an indispensable part of European art. In the exhibition’s catalogue Chatzidakis writes:

... visitors will have the chance of observing the living presence of ancient Greek heritage which was the essential gift of Byzantium to mediaeval art. From this point of view Byzantine art is revealing itself as clearly European and as the only one between East and West that had experienced the values of Hellenic humanism which are recognized as the European values par excellence. (Chatzidakis 1964: 11)

This was in line with developments in Byzantine studies at the time. Dionysios Zakythinos, for example, a leading figure in the field, then Professor at the University and President of the Center for Byzantine Research, had already in 1962 published a seminal article in which he asserted the European character of the Byzantine Empire and its contribution in shaping medieval Europe and anticipating the Enlightenment in the west on the one hand and the national state in Greece on the other (Zakythinos 1962; Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou 1994: 175).

Following these trends, Chatzidakis takes the Museum’s role in substantiating the nation’s unity as granted, and prioritizes its role in the promotion and appreciation of the aesthetic qualities of Byzantine art. As Konstantios (2004: 39) observes, ‘The nation is not threatened any more. Museum objects may be interpreted in different ways as well’.

Throughout the 1960s the Museum is metamorphosed into an active center for research and conservation. Some small scale display work is carried out, but the main exhibition is not changed. Very little work is done during the Dictatorship (1967-1974).

1975-1982: Tiding up

The post-Byzantine art section is redisplayed in the east wing. Extension work is being done and three new exhibition halls are opened by 1982. Yet, no significant changes are observed in exhibition philosophy and the museum retains an outdated character.

1983-1999: Extension

The most significant change since Soteriou's days is the grand-scale project of extending the Museum initiated in the late 1980s with the aim of completely redisplaying its collections. The 1980s are also marked by the introduction of educational programs and the organization of many temporary exhibitions.

In the 1990s the Museum is totally renovated with an impressive extension of 13,000 m², most of which are under ground level. New large exhibition spaces are created; work is completed in 1999.

1999-2010: The golden age

In 1999 the late Dimitris Konstantios is appointed director and initiates the Museum's complete reorganization at all levels. In his words:

... the Museum was unnaturally "sanctioned" not so much because of the objects ... but because of the exhibition rationale and the way it operated. It was a place for the annual visit of pupils, Byzantine scholars and those few visitors who could appreciate ... Byzantine art. (Konstantios 2009: 122-23)

Setting as a central aim the opening up of the Museum to society, and exploiting the administrative autonomy of the Museum to its fullest, Konstantios managed to overcome the rigid structure of state museum management and ventured into previously unexplored by state museums areas such as cultural marketing, communication policies, European programs, and recruitment of personnel specialised in management, communication, museum studies, graphics, publishing, etc. Under his direction the Museum became one of the most vibrant museums in Athens and managed to cast off the outmoded profile that had characterized it since the 1960s.

In designing the new permanent galleries, the BCM takes a completely fresh look, and makes a clear break from the previous narrative:

We did not wish to narrate the national "engaged" history not to smooth any disruptions of 'national' time. We knew that we had to deal with material evidence of a past which is - one way or another - our heritage... We try to make up "short stories", images of aspects of Byzantium and of later periods (fifteenth to nineteenth century)... We do not aim at a "unified national narrative" but at self understanding and knowledge of a complex past. (Konstantios 2004: 42-43)

At a time when the Olympic Games offered a unique opportunity to remind the world of Greece's unbroken cultural production down the centuries, Konstantios (2007a: 19) plainly argues: 'We would not seek after a uniform "national narrative" nor would we try to cover the period having "national time and its continuation" in mind... The notion of a continuous Hellenism was not our aim'.

Byzantium now emerges as a multifaceted empire and society which used types and motifs originating from the Greco-Roman world ascribing new meaning to them, and fused creatively both western and eastern elements within a predominantly Christian society in order to shape a 'Byzantine world' that the Museum was called upon to interpret. Thus, the permanent galleries are structured as follows: the first part is devoted to the transition from the ancient world to Byzantium, and then to an exploration of Byzantium itself through a series of thematic units

deploying various aspects of the state. The second part, titled 'From Byzantium to the modern era', traces developments in politics, society and the arts during the post-Byzantine period. In contrast to previous practices, the new exhibitions are not centred on 'collections' or on 'masterpieces', but on thematic units within a loosely chronological grid (Konstantios (2007a and 2007b)).

Work at the BCM was anticipated by changing perceptions of Byzantium both in academia and in museums. First, there had been a shift in research as Byzantine scholars have started focussing on social history: facets of everyday life, the average Byzantine person, reading and writing, and gender are some of the new issues on the research agenda (Aggelidi 2003). Second, a series of important exhibitions paved the way for the BCM. Thessaloniki set the pace in the late 1980s with the exhibition 'Thessaloniki, history and art' at the White Tower, the city's most emblematic monument. Then, the Museum of Byzantine Culture was founded in the 1990s and gradually opened its exhibition halls from 1994 to 1998: staged in a building that is impressive in its simplicity, large thematic units are incorporated into a vaguely chronological line (For a brief outline see Kourkoutidou-Nikolaidou and Tourta 2002). Finally, in 2001, a large, tripartite exhibition titled 'Hours of Byzantium. Works and Days in Byzantium' was jointly organized in three cities (Athens, Thessaloniki, Mystras) by the relevant Departments of the Ministry of Culture, including the BCM (see the special issue of *I Kathimerini - Epta Imeres*, 25 November 2001). The exhibition was met with enthusiasm as marking a new era in museum exhibiting in Greece (Papadopoulos 2002; Louvi-Kizi 2002).

Work at the BCM can thus be seen as the culmination of the above outlined efforts. Nevertheless, I would argue that this was the first time that a museum's policy was so clearly drafted and so openly put. It was also the first time that a clear statement of a museum's philosophy has been clearly and repeatedly expressed not only in academic writing, but also in the Media:

The fact that our proposal creates an image of the past, does not escape our attention. Our proposal "constructs" a past, by using objects and sources. It is an interpretive approach... We see art not only as an aesthetic phenomenon but also as evidence of culture. The aesthetic value of objects does not vanish if they are included within historical and cultural contexts that imply their function. On the contrary, it rises significantly since aesthetic pleasure is supplemented by the knowledge provided by information.
(Konstantios 2004: 42-43)

Conclusion

The ideological profile of the BCM from the early days to the dawn of the twentieth-first century may be sketched as follows: from Christian heirlooms to national monuments to material evidence of a complex and multifaceted Byzantine past.

Emancipated from the tyranny of a unified national narrative, the Museum has thus ventured into new areas of interpretation, and has come closer to the fourth scheme of perceiving the past that is *critical* and prioritizes the study of silences and neglected periods.

As a consequence, the new galleries include sections on previously disregarded themes such as the Copts in Christian Egypt or the period of Frankish occupation in Greece. What is more interesting is the Museum's effort to talk about the life of Greek communities during the period of the Ottoman rule, and to tackle issues of 'Greek' identity as formed during, for instance, the

eighteenth century (that is, the period preceding the 1821 uprising). In this way, the BCM has introduced a new look to Byzantium and Byzantine society; a look, however, which is not always welcome by visitors. Some entries in the visitors' book are revealing of the difficulty of some members of the public to come to terms with historical 'truth'. They are also very telling of the strong association of Byzantium and the Church in the eyes of a large proportion of the population:

'Nice exhibition but one-sided, and rather "hostile" to Orthodox Tradition'

'How did you render the museum like this? Ten years ago the experience of the visit was captivating. Now ... there is neither a wealth of icons nor any devoutness.'

'And why in the central room do you write transition to "MEDIEVAL"???? Byzantium? Was Byzantium Medieval age? But no! Correct it...'

 (Gotsis and Konstantios 2007)

A final comment concerns the Museum's effort to address issues of diversity. A recent example is its active involvement in the European project *Roma Routes*. This choice was not accidental as the first presence of Roma populations in Europe is recorded on Greek territories during the Byzantine period. As part of this project a series of events (exhibitions, film shows, discussions, etc.) titled *Gypsies at the Byzantine and Christian Museum* was organised at the Museum from 23 May to 12 June 2011. Members of the Roma communities of Greece were for the first time invited not only to show their work at a respectable national museum but also to co-curate the exhibition of this work (see Triantafyllou 2011).

The Museum of Greek Folk Art

Introduction

The MGFA is the central state folk museum in the country. Its collections focus on Greek folk art from the seventeenth to the twentieth century and are divided in the following sections: Embroidery, Weaving, Costumes, Masquerades, Shadow Theatre, Silverware, Metal ware, Pottery, Woodcarving, Folk Painting, and Stone carving.

Today the Museum consists of four annexes:

- the Central Building, housing permanent exhibitions;
- the Tzisdaraki Mosque, housing the Kyriazopoulos folk ceramics collection;
- the so-called Bath-house of the Winds, the only remaining Public Baths of Old Athens, and
- the House at 22 Panos str., Plaka, housing the Museum's latest permanent exhibition *'Man & Tools. Aspects of labour in the pre-industrial world'*.

The background

Towards the end of the nineteenth century efforts to care for material evidence dating from 1453 to 1830 were gathering momentum. In 1887, Nikolaos Polites officially introduced the term 'folklore' for the study of the people (*laografia* in Greek) instead of the previously used terms 'traditions', 'customs', etc. (Loukatos 1992: 66). In 1908, he founded the Greek Folklore Society, in 1909 the journal *Laografia*, and in 1918 the Folk Archive (today the Hellenic Folklore

Research Centre of the Academy of Athens). Polites is considered to be the founder of the discipline in Greece. Under his influence, Greek Folk Studies were shaped into a national science that was enrolled to the national cause of diachronia. In fact, 'folk studies in Greece were created with one and only purpose: how to connect Modern Greek people to their ancient predecessors' (Kyriakidou-Nestoros 1993: 19).

Research was initially confined to the 'monuments of speech' in order to trace similarities in language and oral tradition. This trend would color the development of Greek folk studies up until the 1950s. At the same time, care was given to the study of 'traditional' customs. In 1911, for instance, Kallirhoe Parren, one of the most prominent figures of early Greek feminism, founded the Lyceum Club of Greek Women, which apart from serving the cause of women's progress, also aimed at the 'recovery and safeguarding of Greek customs and traditions' (Bobou-Protopapa 1993: 51).

1918-1923: Formative years

Against this background, the 'Greek Handicrafts Museum' was established in 1918 as an initiative of poet Georghios Drosines, and archaeologist Konstantinos Kourouniotes. According to its foundational law, in the Museum are deposited:

... Handicrafts which are to be found in Greece and in all countries where Greeks reside, and date from the [years] after the fall of Constantinople to the foundation of the Greek Kingdom... These handicrafts may be embroideries... costumes, domestic furniture and vessels made of any kind of material, tools... and weapons (Law 1407/1918 'On the Foundation of a Greek Handicrafts Museum', FEK A' 101)

Interestingly, the term 'handicrafts' covered not only objects of art but also common, everyday things. In practice, the Museum initially collected items that bore decoration, had some artistic value and could be interpreted as testimonies to the continuity of Greek art. Collections included embroideries and textiles, and objects were bought from antiques shops or art dealers, a fact showing that already in the first quarter of the twentieth century folk art had acquired commercial value (Hadjinikolaou 2003: 14).

The museum was under the tutelage of archaeology and aesthetics (Toundassaki and Caftantzoglou 2005: 237). The terms 'folklore' and 'tradition' were missing from its foundation texts; what is more, Nikolaos Polites, the founding father of Greek Folk studies, was not included in the Museum's Board, which however included men of letters, artists, and archaeologists (Hadjinikolaou 2003: 14).

1924-1956: Shaping the museum

In 1923 the Museum was renamed as 'National Museum of Decorative Arts' in conformity with the ideology of the time and the models established by other European museums such as the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the Musée de l' Homme in Paris (Romaïou-Karastamati 1995: 155-56). The Museum now aims at

the creation of national decorative art in its various applications ... by means of collecting decorative works from antiquity up until our times, mostly of Greek origin but also of other nations ... insofar as they are considered useful for study and comparison with the Greek

material. (Decree of 22-8-1923 'On the renaming etc. of the Greek Handicrafts Museum', FEK A' 245)

This brings about a change in both the Museum's character and the chronological limits of its collections: objects of Greek decorative art from antiquity to the present are to be collected in order to form a *national* collection of decorative arts. Collections are also enriched with archaeological material insofar as this is appropriate for testifying the continuity (in form, motifs, and techniques) of Greek art.

In 1924 archaeologist Anna Apostolaki is appointed curator and then in 1932 director of the Museum. Apostolaki belonged to a new type of educated and emancipated women of the middle classes that emerged during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Nikolaidou and Kokkinidou 1998: 239-41). Her main interests included the comparative study of ancient and contemporary folk textiles. Apostolaki works with real zeal in order to organize the Museum which was then housed in the so-called Tzisdaraki Mosque.

In 1932, the Museum changes again its title into 'Museum of Greek Folk Art' to return to its previous name 'National Museum of Decorative Arts' in 1935. From then on, and despite the fact that up until the 1950s folk studies in Greece continue to develop as a national discipline; the Museum's collecting policy 'had been to collect works of art, entire, "beautiful" objects' (Romaïou-Karastamati 2009: 12). The emphasis on a collection of decorative objects as representative of the nation at a time when academic folk studies were serving the nationalist project may be interpreted as a 'safe' option 'for surpassing the tension between the immense variety of cultural forms and the national necessity' (Toundassaki and Caftantzoglou 2005: 237-38). Paradoxically then, while the Museum's character is national, its development did not run in parallel to the development of folk and anthropological studies in Greece, a trend that carried on until the 1990s.

1956-1980: The golden age

In 1956 the Museum enters a golden age under the directorship of folklorist Popi Zora, who in 1959 established its name definitively as 'Museum of Greek Folk Art' as more representative of the efforts to collect and promote the artistic creation of Greek people. Zora reorganizes the exhibition at the Mosque that re-opens to the public in 1958.

For her the Museum was the work of a lifetime. Initially devoted to the collection of objects from around Greece, she also managed to 'repatriate' many items that were bought from European dealers especially in Paris. Implicating the notion of 'folk' that prevailed at the time, she would much later recall:

... people who had collections... didn't know what to do with them, they kept objects in their chests, they found a place with a name, it was a museum..., and anyway [objects] found a place in a showcase... and this satisfied them [the collectors]... Money was always a problem of course, but ... I didn't encounter significant difficulties. It was perhaps the notion of folk art... that moved them ...for I didn't encounter difficulties. (MGFA 2007)

In 1973 the Museum is transferred to its current premises; space is still inadequate but much larger. One year later the first exhibition is ready (Megas 1974).

While her understanding of 'folk' is rather conservative and her view is art oriented, Zora is very keen to establish the MGFA as a prototype museum. In the 1970s she orchestrates the MGFA's complete reorganization and pioneers in many fields of museum operation such as conservation of textiles, temporary exhibitions, public lectures, publications, educational programs, collaboration with European museums. Gradually, the MGFA is established as the 'national' museum of folk art and contributes to the establishment of many folk museums around the country.

1981-2008: New readings

In 1981, archaeologist Eleni Romaiou-Karastamati takes up the Museum's directorship. In the 1980s, following a trend initiated by Zora, all the Museum's curators are sent abroad to further their studies in Ethnology, Cultural Anthropology, Museum Studies, and Conservation. In the decades to follow the Museum is bursting with activities, and establishes a very friendly and active profile.

In 1989, permanent exhibitions are renovated mainly with the provision of textual information and visual aids. Prominence is given to the features that formed the cultural identity of modern Greeks in the period from the seventeenth to the beginning of the twentieth century. However, no coherent central narrative is followed; rather, piecemeal glimpses of folk art are offered ranging from traditional costumes, embroidery and hieratic vestments to ceramics, wood-carving work, figures from the Greek shadow theatre, weapons used during the 1821 Greek uprising, and ecclesiastical heirlooms brought by refugees from Asia Minor.

Many temporary exhibitions are set up in the 1980s and the 1990s. Among them, 'Olymbos on Karpathos. Ethnographic pictures of today', set up in 1994, arguably marked the beginning of a new understanding towards material culture (Kaplanis 2003), while at the same time retaining a traditional communicative approach.

In 1999, a team was formed to develop an exhibition based on a collection of tools donated by the Society for Ethnographic Studies. In the words of the MGFA's Director:

Accepting such a donation overturned the Museum's collection policy, the main focus of which had been to collect works of art, entire, "beautiful" objects. For the first time the Museum's Registry would include humble tools, practical objects in the service of traditional craftsmen. The permanent exhibition "*Man and Tools...*" is the first tangible result of a new way of thinking about, exhibiting and interpreting traditional culture. (Romaiou-Karastamati 2009: 11-12)

The aim was to present a 'folklore collection' that would break new ground in a 'national museum' (Nikiforidou 2009: 41). Indeed, there was a - rare for a national museum - ideological unanimity and the approach taken was whole-heartedly embraced by the MGFA's director. As a consequence, the '*Man and Tools*' exhibition is the first concrete example of a new way of interpreting the MGFA's collections. It may be seen as the culmination of a series of wider changes observed in both the Museum's collecting policy and the interpretation of its collection initiated in the 2000s. Thus, the new permanent exhibition raises questions that are at the centre of current discussions on folk culture but are rarely addressed to in Greek folk museums; namely, questions of continuity and discontinuity of 'traditional' life in contemporary society, the idea of difference as opposed to stereotypical images of the past, a realistic approach to traditional life as

opposed to the usual romantic gaze into the past, hidden aspects of labour such as children's work, etc. (Nikiforidou 2009). Further, the importance of multifaceted interpretation of themes was central to the team's approach: 'We show them [i.e. visitors] that there are many ways to look at an object, this is important to us' (Polyzoi quoted in Gatou 2009a: 77)

The exhibition was completed in 2003. Through the extensive use of many interpretive voices and a clear effort to engage visitors in contemplation between present and past, it manages to overcome the customary static, a-historical, 'folkloric' images of the majority of folk museums in the country (Caftantzoglou 2003). The positive impact of this approach to visitors and its success in engaging them in the exhibition has been confirmed by a summative evaluation study (Gatou 2009b).

Conclusion

The MGFA's foundation may be seen as the final step in the process of consolidating the tripartite evolution of Hellenism in the early twentieth century: since there was already a National Archaeological and a Byzantine Museum the missing link of modern Hellenism would be provided by the establishment of a national museum for material evidence dating from the fall of Constantinople to the foundation of the Modern Greek State (Hadjinikolaou 2003: 14).

Overall, the Museum's character has not changed. In the Museum's official website, for instance, we read: '... objects representing one of the most splendid branches of Modern Greek Folk Art, which has a strong tradition and presence from ancient times to the present day'. Interestingly, however, the Museum has adopted a completely different approach in more recent endeavours such as the permanent exhibition '*Man and Tools...*' which adopts a *critical* scheme at looking at the past.

The MGFA presents us with some very interesting paradoxes. First, it evolved rather insulated from changing notions of 'folk' culture and 'traditional' life in ethnographic research and academia (see above). Second, despite the fact that it has always been seen as the 'national' museum in the field, its collecting policies had until very recently been geared towards a 'safe' option of collecting the 'beautiful' rather than the culturally representative. Third, although this is not evident in the museum's profile as shaped in the central permanent exhibitions, the MGFA has throughout its long history been innovative in many fields such as education, training of personnel and curation of collections.

The National Historical Museum

Historical outline

The history of the Museum begins with the foundation of the Historical and Ethnological Society in 1882 (Lappas 1982; Demakopoulou 1982). The Society aimed at 'the collection of historical and ethnological material and objects for elucidating the middle and more recent history and philology ... of the Greek people and the establishment of a Museum and Archive comprising these monuments of national life' (Royal Decree of 27-3-1889 'On the approval of the statutes of the Historical and Ethnological Society in Greece', FEK A' 85).

The Society's views reflect the dominant ideology of the period: 'influenced by the unified concept of the History of the Greek Nation according to Konstantinos Papareghopoulos' teaching, all members had understood the national duty of promoting the mediaeval (Byzantine)

and modern Greek history' (Statutes of the Historical and Ethnological Society). Eloquently enough, Papareghopoulos himself supervised the Society's first public exhibition titled 'Display of Monuments of the Sacred Struggle' inaugurated on 25 March 1884 to coincide with the national commemoration day of the 1821 Greek uprising. The exhibition was a huge success and led to many donations to the Society. For a number of years the Museum was housed in one large room in the Polytechnic School, and was described as 'a sacred pilgrimage' to the nation's history (Mazarakis-Ainian 1994: 5) in tune with notions also expressed in relation to the NAM (see above).

The museum was officially founded in 1926 (Decree of 21-5/5-6-1926 "On the foundation of a Historical and Ethnological Museum", FEK A' 185) with the aim of collecting monuments referring to the history, and the public and private life of the Greek Nation from the fall of Constantinople forward (Lada-Minotou 1995).

In 1960 the museum moved to its permanent home, the Old Parliamentary Building, and opened to the public in 1962. Its collections are divided into nine large sections: paintings, engravings and graphic arts (including maps), architectural drawings, sculpture, flags, weapons and memorabilia, coins and seals, costumes and jewellery, household and professional apparatus (including ceramics, embroideries, utensils).

Narrative

Through its permanent exhibition the Museum narrates the story of the Greek nation from 1453 to 1940 (Greek-Italian war). The display is 'populated with named heroes and their artefacts' (Aronsson 2010: 33); usually objects connected to emblematic figures of Greek history such as warriors of the 1821 Greek uprising, prime ministers, etc. To a large extent the Museum acts as a site of pilgrimage to the heroic spirit of the ancestors. A telling example is the heart of Konstantinos Kanaris, celebrated hero of the 1821 naval battles, which is exhibited in an urn bearing the epigram: 'Heart of Kanaris we salute you'. Interestingly, this practice is also adopted by the Historical Archive-Museum on the island of Hydra where the heart of admiral Andreas Miaoulis is displayed in a silver urn. Although extreme, these two examples illustrate an approach according to which objects act as symbols of national pride; they are entrusted with the role of keeping alive the memory of great men and heroic times thus reinforcing and perpetuating official history. As a site that produces and confirms official history, the Museum also acts as a companion to textbooks; not surprisingly, school groups heavily attend it.

Comment

Today, the Museum retains its conservative character and shows no signs of a will to open up to the public, yet alone to other voices:

We have no visitors book... there have been no negative remarks so as to make us change or add something. The same holds true for evaluation: there was no negative experience so far, so the need has not arisen. (Galanopoulou 2010: 72)

Despite its stated objective which also includes the study of public and private life of the Greek nation, the Museum retains a strong emphasis on political history which is narrated as a series of acts of great men illustrated by iconic objects such as flags, weapons, seals, personal memorabilia and the like. This paradigm is followed by traditional history museums all over the country.

It is only recently that social history museums emerged in Greece as a consequence of societal changes and demands, and developments in Greek historiography. Interestingly, these new museums directly tackle issues of difficult heritage such as exile, World War II persecutions, etc. (Hadjinikolaou 2011). Examples include the *Museum of the Asia Minor Hellenism 'Filio Chaidemenou'* (Athens), the *Municipal Museum of the Kalavryta Holocaust* (Kalavryta), the *Museum of Democracy* on the island of Ai Stratis (a notorious place of exile), and the *Museum of the Ai Stratis Political Exiled* (Athens; Pantzou 2011). These new museums break away from official narratives as they deal with neglected periods, confront silences and deploy personal memories and oral history as a means of talking about the past. They aim at elucidating difficult and traumatic periods in order to diffuse discussion about them outside the confines of academia. In doing this, they move towards a *critical* approach to the past.

Discussion

This report has attempted to examine the main national museums in Greece by mapping their development in view of their dependence to or deviation from the canonized national ideals of each particular period. As it has been shown, Greek national museums function within a strict legislative and operational scheme. State control facilitates museums' dependence to official, sanctioned views of the past, and makes any shifts in the ideological paradigm difficult to implement. As a consequence, national museums – and Greek museums in general – are normally very slow in adopting a *critical* approach to the past; an approach which would be open to continuous interpretations and would give priority to the study and presentation of disruptions, silences and neglected periods.

More specifically, Greek national museums have perpetuated the canonized master narrative that was adopted by each particular period. Overall, the *archaeological* model has persistently and recurrently acted as the 'golden canon' for the construction of Greek national identity. Similarly, Greek antiquity has always represented a 'title of honour' that contributed to strengthening national self-esteem and boosting the country's image every time this was needed. All other models have been much less compelling, with the exception of the *romantic* model which recurred mainly in periods of political oppression and/or conservatism as a quest for 'return to the roots'.

The predominance of the art-history paradigm and of the 'archaeologist's gaze', as outlined above, comes out very clearly from all case studies: material evidence from the past - be it ancient, Byzantine, or modern - has regularly been studied and exhibited as art. Yet, apart from being an obvious reflection of a long-standing and deeply-rooted intellectual and ideological tradition, this practice may also be seen as a desire to keep away from 'difficult' or simply 'different' aspects of heritage by retreating into safe, neutralised and a-political views of the past; what is described as 'the strategy of exit' (Aronsson 2010: 45-46). This may be said for the NAM's aesthetics-oriented exhibitions organised in the midst of the Civil War in the 1940s, the decorative collections been formed by the MGFA from the 1930s to the 1970s, or the sanctified exhibits of the NHM.

As a rule, national museums have consistently kept away of disturbing issues and have tended to portray a coherent, rounded-up, view of the past which forms part of a wide-spread and well-taught national narrative based on the continuity of the Greek spirit through time. Consequently, reference to or representation of other ethnic, religious or minority groups has been either non-

existent or only accidentally and superficially addressed. This is clearly evident, for instance, in the displays of the NHM that outline Greek history as inhabited almost exclusively by brave men; especially the men that official history has endorsed as national heroes. Or, in the displays of the NAM which present the various civilizations that developed on the Greek lands but do not tackle any social issues such as the role of women or the position of slaves in ancient Greek society. Interestingly, the same approach is adopted by the most recent addition to the group of national museums in the country; that is, the New Acropolis Museum. There objects, statues and architectural structures are displayed as icons to be adored for their aesthetic merits and no attempt is made at elucidating the social milieu that gave birth to them.

Returning to the specific case studies examined in this report, the NAM has consistently acted out as place of pilgrimage to the nation's ancient roots, while the BCM has pioneered in breaking the national canon of historical continuity but has not as yet fully endorsed a comprehensively critical approach. Both museums may be said to follow and to a large extent reproduce developments in their relative fields, although the NAM is clearly more reluctant to change. The MGFA is a more complex case: conservative with an emphasis on well-established, largely a-historical views of 'tradition', but with significant innovations in other areas of museum work such as education and outreach programs. It has largely developed away from developments in the field of folk studies and cultural anthropology, but has managed to 'catch up' lately by introducing a much more critical approach to material culture and the past in its new permanent exhibition at 22 Panos street. The NHM is the most conservative as it has retained the character of a shrine to the nation throughout its long history. In contrast, new social history museums that have lately been developed put the emphasis on neglected themes very much in tune with initiatives already observed in the BCM and the MGFA.

With reference to diversity, there is clearly no representation of ethnic groups within Greece in the permanent displays of all case studies examined here. In general, national museums only tackle sensitive or neglected issues in their temporary exhibitions or other programs such as the *Gypsies at the Byzantine Museum* series of events mentioned above.

Similarly, difficult modern historical and national traumas are normally not dealt with. In the permanent exhibition of the National War Museum in Athens, for example, there is reference neither to the traumatic period of the Greek Civil War (1945-1949) nor to the harsh years of the military Junta (1967-1974). On the contrary, incidents that boosted patriotic feelings among the Greek population, such as the conflict with Turkey over Cyprus, are narrated (Aronsson 2010: 33).

A final comment concerns the role of national museums as seen by their audiences. Because of the highly centralized educational system, there is a high degree of uniformity in the Greeks' perception of their collective memory and identity. This identity, along with language, monuments and antiquities, has come to be seen 'in an a-historical way as something eternal and unchanging' (Mackridge 2008: 303). As national imagination is nurtured by strong myths, the public expects museums to display history as taught at school, as propagated by the Media, the Church, politicians, etc. When the view of historians is confronted with popular views of history, culture, and tradition the result is not always welcome as the example from the BCM's visitors' book referred to above illustrates.

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National Museums in Hungary

Péter Apor

Summary

The national museums in Hungary are relatively easy to define. The term covers a set of institutions connected to a structure of state owned, centrally financed institutions, which came into existence during a process of expansion and specialization of the collections of the original Hungarian National Museum. The Hungarian National Museum (1803) was founded with the idea to follow the model of imperial capital Vienna as well as other major European capitals as an institution to foster national culture and civilization in the Kingdom of Hungary, which its elite considered a largely independent cultural and political unit within the Habsburg Empire. The museum, hence, was meant to promote national identity and all its subsequent expansions and branches were considered parts of a homogenous national culture and erudition. Consequently, governments and elites ordinarily stressed their connection to the state and the importance of central funding.

Through a systematic exploration of the main turning points in its history, the current report addresses the foundation of the National Museum in Hungary, its implications for its further development, the structure of ownership, the history of its collections, the process of professionalization both in terms of staff skills and the generation of specialized museums. Besides, it follows the trajectories of the various identities – national, civic, historical, revolutionary and communist – these museums intended to shape.

The National Museum was founded in the early 19th century as a civic, aristocratic and middle class initiative. Originally, it was owned by the nation, governed by a board of trustees and supervised by the imperial administration via its Hungarian commissioner, the Palatinus (*nádor* in Hungarian). Its collections were enriched by various private donations coming from various segments of the society, such as aristocratic or middle class urban families.

Since the emergence of civil constitutional administration, 1848 in Hungary, the National Museum has been supervised by one of the ministries of the national government, regularly ministries of culture or education. It was considered an autonomous institution governed by a board and maintained by an endowment, but also benefited from state sponsorship up until 1949, the introduction of communist dictatorship. During the 1870s, a professional system of collection was developed. Professional art historians were responsible for acquisitions funded mostly by the state, whereas archaeologists were employed and excavations were sponsored. This led to the rapid expansion of collections and the foundations of specialized museums at the turn of the century: Museum of Natural History, Museum of Ethnography, Museum of Applied Arts, Museum of Fine Arts, National Gallery.

These museums together created the system of the Hungarian National Museum under various titles, thus transforming the original National Museum into a historical museum, as it was actually called in certain periods. The structure of the National Museum included the National Library and Archives until the end of WWII. In 1949, the National Museum and all the other

specialized museums became state owned, state funded individual museums. They lost their autonomous governance, and received annual central funds. This institutional structure virtually remained in effect following 1989. The network of national museums are supervised by the Ministry of Culture or Education and governed and funded by the state.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Museum	1803	1802	Aristocracy	National, central supervision	Art, Archaeology, Numismatics	National and universal	History of civilization	Purpose built classical style, city centre, Budapest.
Museum of Applied Arts	1872	1872	Government	State	Industrial Design	National and universal	19 th -20 th c.	Purpos built, fin-de-siècle, downtown Budapest.
Museum of Fine Arts	1906	1896	Government	State	International Art	Universal	History of civilization	Purpose built historicist style City centre, Budapest.
Museum of Ethnography	1947	1947	Parliament	State	Non-European cultures, Hungarian peasant culture	National and universal	18 th -20 th c.	Former eclectic court building, city centre, Budapest.
National Gallery	1957	1957	Government	State	Hungarian Art	National	Middle Ages onwards	Former historicist royal palace, castle, Buda Castle, Budapest.
Natural History Museum	1996	1991 (1890s)	Government	State	Science, minerals and fossils	National and universal	Geological and Pre-history	Former neo-classicist military school, former <u>Ludovika Academy</u> , Budapest.
House of Terror Museum	2002	2000s	Government	Conservative party	History of Fascism and Communism	National and European	Post-war history	Former security police headquarters, city center, Budapest.

Introduction

The historical context of the establishment of the National Museum in Hungary already marks many of the most important problems that emerge in front of any historical and sociological analysis of the institution. First of all, the historian has to tackle the trouble with comprehending the term ‘national’ in this specific context. Whereas, national museums ordinarily are taken for granted to equal the centrally founded, state funded institutions frequently associated with national ruling dynasties, the Hungarian one was established independently of and, to a certain extent, even against the representatives of the state and royal court.

The accurate assessment of the historical contexts of the founding period, therefore, requires a comparative analysis in two respects. First, a comparison with museums founded in close association to political centres and elites can eloquently elucidate the level that the desire of demonstrating national particularities in relation to other national representations affected the birth of these museums, which, as a consequence, appear inherently having transnational agendas from the period of their genesis. Second, a comparison with other East-Central European small nations sheds light on how their imperial contexts and the accompanying need for manifesting national particularities defined the context of their respective museums.

The extent and quality of historical scholarship on the National Museum in Hungary is very uneven. The best studied aspect is the shaping of national identity, particularly in the late nineteenth century historicist period, through art, especially fine arts and architecture. The National Museum in this approach is usually considered either a work of art in itself or an institution framing the uses and consumption of art. The focus of scholars is usually on various symbols and symbolic activities, whereas their main interpretive means is culture. As a consequence, there are abundant opportunities to explore the connection of the shaping of national identity in its association to the practices and concepts of civilization, education, science and humanistic scholarship.

In general, there is very little social history that has been written concerning the National Museum. Questions related to the sociology of owners, curators, staff and visitors are virtually seriously understudied due to the fact that the museum has been hardly conceived an object of social history or institutional sociology. This fact provides the historian with stimulating research perspectives into the various concepts, aims, expectations and mentality of various social and cultural groups connected to, networked in, or used the museum in any other ways.

The foundation of the National Museum

Since the late Middle Ages, the history of Hungary, or more precisely of the Kingdom of Hungary, has been inherently entangled to the Habsburg dynasty. Following the Ottoman military advance during the mid-sixteenth century, the Turks occupied two-thirds of the medieval kingdom directly or indirectly. The Hungarian political elite of the Western and Northern parts sought support and defence with the Habsburgs and ordinarily supported the ascendancy of the dynasty to the Hungarian throne. Yet, usually encouraged by the Transylvanian elite, the Ottomans or other European competitor dynasties to the Habsburgs, the Hungarian nobility succeeded in preserving its feudal autonomy and rights, occasionally as a consequence of recurrent popular revolts and wars of independence. Hence, parts of the Hungarian Kingdom –

following the war with the Ottomans at the end of the seventeenth century – had an ambivalent status within the Habsburg Empire. Formally, the country remained an independent kingdom having members of the dynasty as kings, but preserving institutions of self-government. Yet, central imperial institutions set in Pozsony-Bratislava and Pest became the crucial foci of policy making in the country. The Hungarian elite normally integrated with the imperial aristocracy, were educated in Vienna and usually took positions within the imperial administration and the army since the mid-eighteenth century.

Enlightenment ideas and the rise of nationalism generated a new wave of Hungarian movements of autonomy, this time embedded in the context of liberalism, constitutionalism and desires for modernisation. Following the wave of revolutions in 1848 and a domestic revolt in the city of Pest, the Kingdom of Hungary was transformed into an autonomous, constitutional state having its own independent parliamentary government with the king in Vienna as the head of the state. The defeat of revolutionary nationalism in 1849 and the weakening of the Empire in European international politics during the 1860s led to a compromise between the dynasty and the Hungarian elite. The Empire was transformed into a quasi-federal state of Austria and Hungary in 1867, in which the Kingdom of Hungary enjoyed broad domestic autonomy, but endowed important rights such as foreign policy and defence to the central imperial administrations. Following the defeat in 1918, the imperial state was dismantled and Hungary, having lost two thirds of its former territories, became an independent country carrying the burdensome legacy of imperialistic nationalism. After the collapse in World War II, a communist dictatorship was established in 1949 and Hungary remained part of the Soviet bloc until 1989.

Conventionally, the foundation of the National Museum in Hungary is accurately attached to the 25 November 1802, when Count Ferenc Széchenyi, one of the richest magnates of the Westernmost parts of the Hungarian Kingdom, declared the donation of his formidable collection of prints, works of arts and numismatics to the nation. Ordinarily, his act of generosity is related to the birth of the modern Hungarian nation. In fact, the first decades of the nineteenth century generated the first wave of overarching projections and debates among members of the political, social and intellectual elites on how to improve the economic, social and spiritual state of the country and its inhabitants. ‘The nation’ was the term Széchenyi himself used, in reference to the fact that his intended institution was envisaged as independent and distinct from both the dynasty and the imperial state.

The term ‘national’ in this context meant in principle a civic, that is to say an openly accessible institution, at least in theory by all citizens of the country. Nonetheless, the concept had ethnic connotations as well since it sought to establish the idea of a ‘Hungarian nation’ distinct from ‘Austria’, but embracing all citizens of the Kingdom to the imagined community of Hungarians. The foundation of the museum, thus, was part of the emerging Enlightenment emancipationist liberalism, which sought to realize ‘civilization’, ‘modernization’ and ‘progress’ within the political communities of ‘nations’. Yet, these projects of nation-building were not corresponded by manifest state-building attempts, at least not in terms of statehood independent of Austria or the Habsburg dynasty. The National Museum in Hungary was an initiative of the national elites, but not of the state. Count Széchenyi was part of the group of modernising aristocrat families at that time with a typical Enlightenment erudition and interest. Members of these families frequently ambioned political and courtly careers in Vienna by the Habsburg dynasty, kings and queens of

Hungary. Since the opportunities for independent critical political projects were restricted, many of them subsequently turned to other spheres of public career like art connoisseur, scholarship or economy.

Ferenc Széchenyi himself was educated in Vienna between 1774-1776, in the Theresianum College, founded by Queen Marie-Therese to gather and train the future multinational imperial elite. He was particularly interested in archaeology, bibliographical studies and history and married to the daughter of a similar aristocrat family, Julianna Festetics. His professors included contemporary highly erudite scholars such as the Italian, Martini, in philosophy of law, Joseph von Sonnenfels in political science and István Schönwieser, a distinguished archaeologist of the period. After finishing his education, Széchenyi pursued the career typical of young aristocrats at that time. He occupied a position in provincial legal administration in 1776. Subsequently, in 1784, he was elevated to the office of the Royal Commissioner (*őispán*) of Győr county. These services opened opportunities for him to enter the sphere of high politics: in 1785 Széchenyi became the Royal Commissioner (*bán*) of Croatia.

Nonetheless, he resigned from his offices the next year due to his disappointment with the rigidity and resistance of the imperial administration to modernizing reform initiatives. The failure of a political career turned Széchenyi's interest towards other types of public activity, mainly promoting activities and programs of erudition. He became one of the most important sponsors of literary culture in Hungary during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The count supported such important authors, poets and literary scholars as Ferenc Kazinczy, Mihály Csokonai Vitéz and János Batsányi. Besides generating exceptional creative art, literature was also the area shaping radical political ideas in the period. The authors Széchenyi supported were radical critiques of the Habsburg administration influenced by Enlightenment rationalism. He employed József Hajnóczy as secretary, a man who was the most important legal theorist of Enlightenment rationalism in Hungary, a future conspirator in the Hungarian Jacobin republican movement, subsequently executed in 1795. As a consequence, Széchenyi created the core of civil society and public sphere in his own court.

This particular society of intellectuals directly influenced Ferenc Széchenyi to begin collecting books, antiquities and numismatics, and seriously consider the foundation of a public library. His collections, when the count donated it to the nation, consisted of 11 884 printed works, 1150 manuscripts, 142 volumes of maps and lithography, 2019 paintings of coat of arms and 2675 coins including 702 golden pieces. His deed of founding a public institution of erudition, the museum, won the general sympathy and appreciation of European learned societies for him. The learned societies of Warsaw, Brno (contemporary Brünn), Jena and Göttingen as well as the Academy of Arts in Vienna elected him as their member.

The idea of the national museum seems to emerge from an establishing modern type of civil society; even if exclusively aristocrat and noble families originally formed it. Civil initiatives, private funding like collections or estates and networking completed by an idea of self-education and civilization made the museum an opportunity for shaping a new modern type of public sphere in Hungary. Private libraries and collection activities created sites of public societies, hence, generated an early form of clubbing. Aristocrat families became involved in systematic collection activities in the second half of the eighteenth century. Members of the Teleki or Esterházy families accomplished regular journeys abroad, appropriating models of collection and

purchased objects. The focus of interest was on antiquities, stone works, numismatics and art. Well-to-do urban middle-class collectors soon followed their example. Sámuel Bruckenthal's and János Fáy's chambers in Brassó-Brasov-Kronstadt and Debrecen, respectively soon gained fame among their audiences. Collections of colleges, like the one in Nagyenyed and Debrecen played a great role in disseminating a culture of historical interest and Enlightenment erudition.

As a matter of fact, this emerging civil society provided the background for the establishment, sustaining and using the museum. The growing interest in the Pest middle-class in antiquities and collection during the first decades of the nineteenth century provided both the audience and some of the donators of the new museum. The Brunszvik family in the 1820s and Matyas Kindli, the famous furrier, who was the first donator following Ferenc Széchenyi, played such a role. Nonetheless, the major sponsors of the museum remained of aristocrat origin. István Marczibányi enriched the collection of antiquities by chalices, glasses, china, mosaics and weapons, whereas the archbishop of Eger, László Pyrker laid the foundations of a future gallery by the donation of his gallery of 190 paintings including 113 Italian works of art.

The first exhibition of the National Museum opened in 1803 in the cloister of the Order of Paul in Pest. The Museum Hungaricum, as it was frequently called during the early nineteenth century, was considered the institution of National Collections, which was envisaged to embrace all components of national scholarship and art. A treatise on the future of the museum from 1807 called upon upper class families to grant public access to their private galleries meant to be the ornaments of the nation.

The central authorities had already had a building planned in 1807 by the famous classicist designer of Pest, József Hild. Nonetheless, this plan was subsequently rejected due to the relative inaccessibility of the original construction site. As new land was difficult to acquire, the second plan by Mihály Pollack was made ready only in 1826. The enormous costs of its construction broke the principle of noble non-taxation and made a step towards comprehensive public taxation: Act no. 36 of the general assembly of 1832-1836 decided to finance the building from specially levied noble taxes. This raises the second important question: how did the national museum contribute to the formation of this civic publicity and modern type of mentalities and to what extent was its genesis the result of such aspirations?

The issue of ownership forms an inherent part of this aspect. Whereas the museum formally was made a property of the whole nation, it had strong connections to the central government in Vienna, as well. Although the museum was born due to a private donation, turning it into a public institution required royal approval. Salaries for its original small staff were secured through state funds. As a national institution, the government of the museum was attached to the office of the "*nádor*" of Hungary, who was a person mediating authority between imperial and regional Hungarian organs. Although the *nádor* was officially elected by the Hungarian orders, he was also considered the representative of the Viennese court in Hungary and, in fact, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this office was occupied by Habsburg archdukes.

Modern museums, generally, became the sites of embodying the myth of progress and civilization. These institutions collected and exhibit history, art and ethnography to provide a spectacle of the process of Western civilization and a temporalized vision of self-confident progress. They intended to reveal these achievements to the broader masses, while providing education in the principles of modern civility for them. The National Museum in Hungary made

no difference in these regards. Its founders longed to develop the institution into a site of national education and for the good of the fatherland. Nevertheless, the focus on improving a *national* civil culture and community made the relationship of universal civilization and national education problematic. How did the ‘nationalisation’ of erudition contribute to the appropriation of ideas of universal progress and how did its eventual modes shape national political cultures? The National Museum in this respect embodied the intentions of the Hungarian political and intellectual elite to shape national culture in terms having ethnic implications. The museum envisaged a set of institutions that disseminate Hungarian linguistic culture, a historical sense of Hungarian noble-classes and the identity of the Hungarian royal state.

The building of the Hungarian institution was the first purpose-built museum construction on the continent: a fact that was ordinarily exploited to enhance national pride of Hungarians, but generally stimulated no impact in its scholarly study. Scholars of architecture and design generally claim that Mihály Pollack, the architect, who directed the construction between 1837 and 1847, created a similar building to that of the British Museum in London and the Altes Museum in Berlin, but was more conscious of its future use as a museum. His classicist design appears to be more affected by Paris architect Nicolas Durand, than his British or German contemporaries.

In general, museums during the nineteenth century were considered temples of art capable of easing men exhausted by the struggles of everyday life and to elevate them to a higher plane by means of erudition. Contemporary museum architecture logically discovered a model in the temples of antiquity. This pattern provided a structure of easily accessible exhibition spaces connected to a central inner courtyard, which resulted in an architecturally homogenous and coherent block. The halls provided by this organization were envisaged to be organic parts of the system exhibition rooms in the logic of a successive set of hall of columns, entrance hall and vaulted hall. Such museum plans as, for instance Palladio’s ones, had been already made available and impacted on European architecture. The drawings of Valadier and Durand, published in 1807, obviously influenced Pollack himself.

In the 1840s-1850s, the director of the National Museum, Ágoston Kubinyi, considered his museum primarily as an institution of public education. He had 36 rooms at his disposal to realize this program of civilization. The first floor preserved the original Széchenyi library in 14 rooms reflecting the extraordinary importance of literate culture in the contemporary conceptions of public education. Eight further rooms housed the core of the would-be historical collections, the exhibition of antiquities consisted mostly of works of art and numismatics. According to contemporary ideas of distinguishing nature and civilization, the exhibition of natural history in 14 rooms displayed not only botanical, zoological objects and minerals, but also a few artefacts of ethnology or folklore bearing little significance for the museum at that time. In spite of the manifest relevance of the museum for erudition and scholarship, the first exhibition opened in the permanent building concerned industry. The National Works of Industry Exhibition organized by Lajos Kossuth, the liberal politician who shaped the modernization program of the country to a great extent, was launched on 11 August 1846, when decorative works were still going on in the architecture. The idea of the museum as a carrier of national civilization, and the importance of industry as the harbinger of national modernisation were inherently linked together during this period.

Considering these issues, it is fruitful to study the association of the national museum to other institutions of public civilization and education. The library as a site of scholarship and erudite humanistic discussions had been a long-awaited improvement among intellectuals in Hungary. Various workshops of humanistic scholarship started to operate early in the eighteenth century. As a matter of fact, the National Museum of Hungary was operating in close symbiosis with contemporary scholarly and art associations for a long period. What is more, the original foundation of the National Museum contained objects ordinarily associated with a modern museum like works of arts and historical or ethnographical artefacts to a remarkably little extent. The most important collection of the national museum in Hungary originally was its relatively significant library, which acquired the first permanent building among the entire holdings.

The initiative of founding an Academy of Sciences in the early nineteenth century was closely associated to the parallel project of the museum. It was suggested that the Society of Scholars be located in the Museum where the library, a collection of antiquities and other extraordinary sources was considered to be available for scientific research in 1809. Consequently, it is very tempting to explore the connections of the Hungarian National Museum with the idea of the classical Museion as a site of general erudition and investigate its transfers as well as its regional comparable counterparts or contrasts.

The birth of professional museums

In reality, the National Museum functioned as the centre of all learned and other public activities in the capital and in Hungary in general up to the 1870s. As the foremost public building in the capital, it hosted the House of Lords of the Hungarian Parliament up until the new Parliament building had been finished in 1904. The first constitutional government of Hungary in 1848 incorporated the National Museum into the central administration under the supervision of the Ministry of Public Education. As the autonomous-independent Hungarian government fell in 1849, the commander of the imperial troops, Haynau proposed to transport the property of the museum to Vienna. His idea was, probably, the first instance that generated a sort of heritage war as the public in the capital and the country was outraged, which eventually hindered the realization of the plans.

During the period of absolutist-interventionist imperial administration, the National Museum, in practice, existed as a non-governmental civic organization maintained by private donations and funding. Yet, the imperial administration recognized its importance as a public institution and tried to cope with its constant deterioration by the means of ad hoc commissions sent by the Royal Governor's Office in Hungary. The museum, in general, remained unable to substantially develop its collections or public activity, therefore its gallery kept being the main attraction.

In 1872, the property of the museum included 90 000 numismatics, 4038 Stone Age objects, 383 Egyptian, 3087 Roman, 568 early medieval objects and 654 weapons. This decade witnessed the first genuine professional directors organizing museum activities, Ferenc Pulszky as chief and Flóris Rómer as deputy. Flóris Rómer organized a network of provincial museums attached to the National Museum, which contributed to the improvement of professional collection and preservation activities in the country. The National Museum opened its first permanent archaeological exhibition in 1870, and this year 140 000 visitors saw the museum. Albeit, these numbers seem truly impressive, one has to note that, in a period preceding the spread of

technologies of visual amusement (cinema, television, etc.), museum-going was a regular activity of the educated middle-classes that met their demand for ‘civilized’ forms of spectacle. Except a few articles in professional journals of history and archaeology about the recent collections of the museum, there is no evidence for any broad advertisement campaign related to the exhibitions.

The board of the museum managed to raise funds for buying the formidable art collection of the Esterházy family in 1871, which secured the founding core of the National Gallery (*Országos Képtár*) and led to the birth of the independent Museum of Fine Arts in 1902. Most probably, this significant acquisition contributed to the increasing interest in the National Museum, which a decade later in 1880 was visited by 330 000 persons.

Parallel to the increasing professionalization of the national museum, other thematically organized special museums were established: first, various exhibition halls for arts like the National Gallery, Museum of Fine Arts and the Hall of Arts, then scientific collections like the Museum of Ethnography or the Museum of Science. The appropriate assessment of this specialization demands a proper historical contextualization. This was a period of growing specialization of museums throughout Europe, which needs to be studied in the context of the establishment of professional scientific disciplines with their various methods of investigation, inquiry, sources, relationships to objects and representation. Museums were part of this process, while providing sites for developing these distinctions. Scientific achievements, at the same time, became objects of national pride and esteem. Therefore, specialized museums were also vested with the obligation of representing national identity.

In the midst of the Millennium years, in 1896, a few members of the Hungarian parliament suggested turning the National Museum into a pure, but professional historical museum of Hungary. Modern political thought was inherently connected to a philosophy of history based on the secular teleology of straight-forward progress and the general laws of human development. Modern states and political classes, therefore, incorporated their self-identities in a temporal logic as either outcomes or harbingers of universal history. Nations, as forms of modern political consciousness, planted their identities in the unbroken continuity of past, present and future. The politics and rituals of history, consequently, became inevitable in modern civic activities and politics. Hungarian society had developed a rich tradition of historicized political culture and an extraordinary sensitivity to historical culture at least since the suppression of its revolution in 1849. In Hungary, political rights and authority regularly are justified on the basis of solving or taking sides in pending issues and controversies of the nation’s past. Political culture and credibility were affected, to a great extent, by positions one occupied in questions such as catholic-protestant disputes, pro-Habsburg or pro-independence arguments and progressive or traditionalist political courses.

Whereas the Millennium ceremonies in 1896 proudly claimed the achievements of the country in modernization and civilization by suggesting for Hungarians a modern secular civic political identity, the second important component of the celebrations was a magnificent spectacular historical exhibition in the city park. Besides, the demonstration of progress and creativity of the nation, the political elite also desired to represent its long term historical continuity in terms of state building, political governance and high culture. The organizers of the Millennium historical exhibition constructed a palace unifying historical architectural periods, early medieval, gothic, renaissance and baroque, into one homogenous building. ‘Historic reconstruction’ in the

exhibition meant an ambivalent approach, though. On the one hand, the various parts of the palace integrated faithful replicas of original buildings. However, the entire structure was not an authentic facsimile of any historical buildings: rather it realized a mixture of different historical styles, structures and copies of details from different original buildings. Yet, it did not mean to represent the contingency and heterogeneity of a multi-cultural style in a 'post-modern' style. The castle itself was meant to represent the integrity and organic development of the historical development of the nation by means of displaying the succession of historical styles in an architecturally coherent structure. In turn, the building hosted a professionally organized, high quality historical exhibition displaying the characteristics of everyday life, high culture, military and political life in various periods of the history of the Hungarian nation.

The National Museum, when it was proposed to develop it into a historical museum, was imagined to continue exhibiting the Millennium concept of historical identity in a permanent form. The National Museum in Hungary, ripped of its original universal focus, gradually became an exhibition space of history and an institution of identifying objects of history. This development resulted in national identity becoming bound to historical representations. The National Museum claimed that the nation equalled its history. Whereas, this period marked the integration in a typical historicist European culture, a further comparative investigation could elucidate to what extent this partly accidental historical specialty of central National Museums contributed to this process.

The Museum of Applied Arts

The Museum of Applied Arts was founded in 1872 based on the collections of the National Museum. In the late nineteenth century, these types of museums were considered more as exhibitions of industry or industrial production than art. As such, these, at the same time, reflected the belief in the progress of industrial civilization and the capacity of art to transform pure technology into aesthetic and means of culture. The museum was founded and financed by the central governmental budget. The government financed the construction of its new building designed by leading fin-de-siècle architects, Ödön Lechner and Gyula Pártos. Fin-de-siècle architecture and applied arts of Budapest and Hungary, in general, are considered the golden age of pre-WWI Hungarian culture and, indeed, this was a period of unprecedented national self-confidence based on the pride of civilization and prosperity. This was a period that was looking for a way of giving a national form to culture after believing it could establish the foundations of the modern nation. Architecture and applied arts were particularly regarded as the typical means of shaping special national culture by giving a unique form to it. Lechner's architecture, in an art nouveau style of ornaments aspiring to manifest this imaginary national spirit, was considered the perfect housing for applied arts, the characteristic objects of modern Hungarian national pride.

In between the two wars, public funds dried up, which triggered not only serious cuts in the budget of the museum, but also its incorporation back into the homogenous organization of the National Museum. The Museum of Applied Art became an independent institution following the end of WWII, in 1948. During the communist period, the museum received a castle building on the outskirts of Budapest to keep its considerable collection of furniture and the Museum of East Asian Arts. Yet, the fall of the communist system brought a period of stagnation. The budget of the Museum of Applied Art remained seriously insufficient so it was impossible to expand the

collections or reconstruct the building. As a consequence, although the museum enjoys a fairly considerable amount of popularity among the public due to its well-received temporary exhibitions in various topics like fin-de-siècle art and architecture, it still lacks a permanent exhibition.

Post-communist Hungarian culture, when seeking to re-establish connections to non-Communist traditions and pan-European canons, has rediscovered the fin-de-siècle period as an obvious choice. This sensitivity, which sprang also from the revitalized concept of Central Europe in the 1980s as an expression of the non-Soviet cultural roots of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, reshaped the history of the Habsburg Empire as the last multi-cultural European tradition of these nations taking the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as the Golden Age of this particular 'Central European civilization'. The popularity of the Museum of Applied Arts, thus, is also an expression of the idea of Hungary returning to Europe as a truly civilized Western nation.

The Museum of Fine Arts

As the original building of the National Museum became incapable of hosting the abundant collections of various objects, publications and works of art, the government decided to establish a new, independent gallery for housing paintings, sculpture and other works of art in public property of the nation. The Millennium Act in 1896 declared the foundation of the Museum of Fine Arts. The application process for architectural design was opened in 1898 and the construction works started in 1900. The new museum opened its gates in 1906.

Originally, the museum board purchased plaster casts instead of original antique works of art. However, since the beginning of the twentieth century, the museum has systematically expanded its collection of original Egyptian, Greek and Roman art. Besides the antique acquisitions, the curators had ambitions to set up a considerable classical statue and plastic collection. This was based on the purchase Károly Pulszky (the son of Ferenc Pulszky, director of the National Museum) had accomplished in the late nineteenth century in Italy.

The most important collections of the museum include the second largest Egyptian museum property in Central Europe, a considerable ancient collection exhibiting Greek and Roman art and the Old Gallery. The Egyptian collection originally was kept in various museums throughout the country and was brought together for the first time in 1939. Since Hungary does not pursue systematic excavations in Egypt, the collection is expanded mostly by irregular private donations. The antique collection even displays a sample of Greek and Roman, Hellenistic and Latin objects. Its most unique part is the works of art representing the early culture of Cyprus. The Old Gallery consists of formidable collections of Italian, Dutch and German renaissance and Spanish painting originally gathered by the Esterházy family, which the state bought in 1870. It contains 2400 objects, of which the internationally most significant part is the Spanish one. It is the most important European collection in the field together with the Ermitage in St. Petersburg. In addition, the museum houses a modern gallery of nineteenth and twentieth century works of art which are dominated by French romantic paintings and sculpture. Currently, the Museum of Fine Arts is sustained by the central budget. Its task is to collect, store and exhibit foreign art as a special museum, the National Gallery was established in 1957 to keep Hungarian works of art.

Museum of Ethnography

The origins of an independent museum of ethnography in Hungary date back to the second half of the nineteenth century. Although, the National Museum as the central institution of scientific collection always possessed objects that qualify as ethnography, professional systematic ethnographic work started in the late 1860s as far as museum culture is concerned. Albeit, nowadays visitors and the broader public tend to consider the Museum of Ethnography as mainly an institution that studies folklore and peasant culture in Hungary, the foundation of ethnographic collections was linked to overseas expeditions of Austrian and Hungarian scholars in Asia. Thus, the ethnographic interest in Budapest appears to accord with contemporary general European tendencies to establish the discipline of civilization in terms of anthropological studies.

Corresponding to contemporary conceptions of anthropology meant to collect artefacts and objects of 'peoples of nature', the Hungarian initiative to study East Asia embraced the simultaneous study of nature and tribal societies. Accordingly, the government commissioned János Xántus, a distinguished scholar of natural history to participate in the Austrian-Hungarian East Asian expedition in 1868. Xántus spent a year in Borneo and Java and his collections provided the foundations of the ethnographical department of the National Museum established in 1872.

In spite of the fact that this anthropological concept met expectations to represent the Hungarian nation as part of civilization and empire, the collection was received with substantial criticism because of its ignorance of Hungarian national ethnography. Nineteenth century public discussions tended to consider national identity based on a continuous existence of original ancient national qualities allegedly preserved by peasant culture and mentalities. This comprehension generated the discipline of indigenous ethnography and exhibitions of folklore. Hungarian ethnographers started to systematically collect peasant objects from all over the country in 1873 and set a spectacular exhibition in 1885 as part of the National Exhibition in Budapest. The new head of the Ethnography Department of the National Museum, János Jankó, wished to establish an Ethnographic Village modelled on of the Swedish Skansen. His efforts proved to be successful when the national Millennial Exhibition in 1896 displayed a village of 24 peasant dwellings selected from 23 counties of the country.

Following the constant accumulation of objects and staff, the Museum of Ethnography became independent in 1947. The collection was moved to the centre of Budapest in 1973, to the building where it currently resides. The main task of the museum is to demonstrate the traditional culture of the Hungarian people, the conventional duty of national ethnography. Yet, during the first decade of the twenty-first century, the museum staff made considerable efforts to develop an attitude of self-reflection and to re-think the origins, history and contemporary role of ethnography in society and culture. The museum regularly organizes exhibitions benefiting from its significant anthropological collections to shed light on such concepts such as time, among other things.

The National Gallery

The National Gallery was founded in 1957 as a special institution to exhibit and study Hungarian art. In the year of its foundation, the museum possessed 6000 paintings, 2100 statues, 3100 numismatics, 11 000 drawings and 5000 graphic prints. First, it was situated in the current

building of the Museum of Ethnography, however, in 1959 the government decided to move the collections to the castle of Buda as part of its policy to construct an outstanding locus of national culture and education combining the National Library, a museum for contemporary history and the gallery.

The new exhibition site was opened in 1975 and currently it displays the entire history of art in Hungary from the eleventh century up to day. The museum exhibits medieval stone works, religious art, renaissance and baroque works, but its most important collections are the modern Hungarian art, paintings and sculpture from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and contemporary art, which includes works of art representing all important modernist movements such as expressionism, surrealism, constructivism, non-figurative art, and various avant-garde tendencies like pop-art.

Nineteenth and twentieth century works of art had been acquired by the former staff of the National Museum, predominantly through private donations, civil associations and the municipal body of the capital. Since 1945, contemporary art has been purchased through a centralized system operated by the Ministry of Culture. In 1974, the National Gallery decided to install a permanent exhibition of Hungarian contemporary art including domestic avant-garde of various kinds. This collection, which was set up by the sponsorship of the central government Art Foundation (*Művészeti Alap*), currently displays Hungarian avant-garde from the early twentieth century as well as a balanced sample of official and non-official art in the late communist decades.

Hungarian Natural History Museum

The Natural History Museum was part of the National Museum in various institutional frameworks up until 1963, when it became an independent organization. As such, it was originated from the general collections of the early nineteenth century National Museum. In fact, its independence, as all other specialised disciplinary museums, was part of the process of professionalization and specialization of museum collections during the second half of the nineteenth century, which also affected the Hungarian state. During the founding epoch of museum culture in Europe of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, museums were generally considered as sites of erudition and culture to be rendered available for all citizens; hence, their collections embraced all fields of contemporary science or knowledge.

Accordingly, the core of the collections of the future Hungarian Natural History Museum was established by a donation from count Ferenc Széchenyi's wife, Julianna Festetics. Her 1803 'gift to the nation' meant the first collection of natural science in the modern sense in the history of Hungarian museums. It consisted of selected minerals from the territory of the contemporary Kingdom of Hungary. During the first decades of the nineteenth century, the National Museum gradually increased its natural history collections by donations and acquisitions and soon became able to exhibit botanical and zoological objects as well as paleontological fossils.

As the collection started to expand, professional staff and organization became necessary. In 1870, the natural history collections were turned into independent departments within the framework of the National Museum, while simultaneously the number of staff was tripled. Since 1870, the natural history collections had consisted of three departments: zoology, mineral and fossils and botanical. The departments used their increase in resources to raise the level of

scholarly work and started to publish a periodical, *Journal of Natural History* (*Természettudományi Füzetek*) in 1877.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the collections of natural history in the National Museums had already exceeded the capacity of the central building. During the last decade of the century, leading natural scientist and Member of Parliament in Hungary, Ottó Herman, regularly convened with the Ministers of Education and Culture to establish an independent museum and construct a new building. Yet, apart from sketching architectural plans and designs, funds remained insufficient for starting larger scale construction works. In 1933, the natural history departments within the National Museum became a semi-independent organization as the National Natural History Museum supervised by the National Museum.

Nonetheless, the acute lack of space was not fixed and remained the greatest issue troubling the museum staff up until 1989. That year, the government decided to move the collections into the castle of Buda. The museum was renamed the Hungarian Natural History Museum in 1991, but this measure did not speed up the process of transportation. In 1994, the decision to move the museum into the huge building of the former Ludoviceum, a military training academy, then used by the university of Budapest, proved to be crucial. The renovation and re-structuring of the building were started and the first exhibitions opened in 1996.

As natural sciences claim to be universal and their findings inimical to national particularities, the Hungarian Natural History Museum is not an obvious institution for constructing national identity either. Yet, its exhibitions, which in many cases focus on the geological history of the geographical areas of contemporary Hungary and the Carpathian basin, on the flora and fauna of these territories and pay respect to the achievements of renowned Hungarian-born scientists, contribute to the shaping of an awareness of national belonging and cultural intimacy.

Turning points in the twentieth century

A short-lived communist dictatorship following the end of WWI when Béla Kun's First Hungarian Soviet Republic introduced a profound reorganization of the structure of the National Museum. The soviet government secluded the library and the natural history collections from the central body and sought to transform the National Museum into an institution with an ethnographical and cultural historical profile. The secession would conform to early Bolshevik concepts of progress based on scientific, technological and material increase, hence demanding the highlighting of natural history and sciences in distinct museums, whereas representing the development of human civilization as a cultural superstructure based upon these foundations. Nonetheless, as the Hungarian Soviet government proved to be short-lived (133 days) and was in constant war with its neighbours, it had no opportunity to pursue a concise museum policy in the country.

The dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy triggered conflicts concerning the appropriate allocation of its museum heritage. The Hungarian National Museum was involved with two such competitions. The fall of the dictatorship of the proletariat was followed by a short period of Romanian occupation in Budapest. Since the Versailles treaties ending WWI granted large territories of the former Hungarian Kingdom to neighbouring states, particularly Transylvania to Romania, 1919 brought the most clear-cut conflict of museum heritage related to the National Museum. The commandment of the Romanian occupation forces declared the right

to objects that allegedly originated from the territory of Transylvania. The staff of the museum sought defence by the Entente Military Mission officers. Following a month of tensions, the Entente commissioner sealed the entrance of the National Museum, thus, preventing the transportation of objects up until the Romanian troops returned to their homeland. A second success for the Hungarian National Museum in conflicts concerning contested heritage occurred in 1921 when the Venice Treaty granted approximately 1000 artefacts to Hungary from the previous imperial collection housed in Vienna. This acquisition included the sword of king Ulászló II and the full plate armour of King Louis II from the early sixteenth century.

The interwar governments, while they followed the initiative of the Hungarian soviet leadership in re-arranging the museum structure, cultivated a distinctly nationalist agenda concerning museums, considering them as means to demonstrate the superiority of ethnic Hungarian civilization, culture and education in the Southeast European region. Two acts concerning the National Museum in 1922 and 1934 regulated the organizational structure of the institution. The 1922 act unified the various museums and central archives and libraries into the super-organization, University of Collections (*Gyűjteményegyetem*). In 1934, the authorities created the Council of the Hungarian National Museum as the body to supervise museum, archival and library collections. The National Museum was granted autonomy, but it was not completed with sufficient public funds. In fact, the small central support rendered the autonomy symbolic. The government established the Historical Museum in the central building of the National Museum in 1936. This Historical Museum still contained the Museum of Applied Arts and the Museum of Ethnography as its departments.

The Museum was clearly under-funded, therefore, the government attempted to balance the lack of public funds by creating a private foundation, the Association of the Friends of the Hungarian National Museum (*Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum Barátainak Egyesülete*) in 1926. Although it proved unable to significantly sponsor the activities of the museum, enough funding was gathered to reconstruct and redecorate the central building in 1926-27. Private funding was acquired for archaeological research, as well. In 1931, the Savings Bank of Külső-Szolnok County sponsored excavations. Similarly, one of the periodicals of the museum was funded by the business sector, by the Guild of Breweries and the Society of Sugar Factories.

The cultural establishment actually cultivated a fairly elitist concept of museums considering them as basically institutions of high culture, scholarship and erudition and giving less weight to their general power of public education and civilization. The Historical Museum organized only three long-term exhibitions between 1919 and 1944. As a contrast, the museum issued three academic series in archaeology and cultural history during this period.

Likewise, its major historical exhibition covering the periods from early medieval Hungarian history up until the nineteenth century could be rightly criticized for its elitist aristocratic perspective. This historical exhibition focused on the culture, life style and erudition of the noble classes, pursued a history of bellicose spirit and appreciated the eighteenth century Habsburg court civilization. In turn, it largely neglected the representation of the lower classes, particularly, peasants, avoided the interpretation of the peasant revolt in 1514 and also ignored the history of the Enlightenment and its impact on Hungarian political thought. It is remarkable that the permanent historical exhibition of the National Museum during the interwar period ignored the nineteenth century, identifying it still with a form of 'recent history' having direct political

implications for the present. As a consequence, national history was represented as a certain heroic continuity of national struggles for invaders like Ottoman-Turks or Habsburg related Germans. In general, it refused to deal with the nineteenth century, hence the recent past full of controversies and contradictions, by transforming this period as an object of art history to be displayed in the Museum of Applied Arts.

The end of the war in 1945 obviously meant a turning point in the history of the National Museum. This was triggered not only by the substantial damage the building and collections of the museum suffered, but also because the new democratic government introduced organizational modifications. In this year, the government started to establish the Museum of Applied Art and the Museum of Ethnography as independent institutions, which finally took place in 1948 and 1947, respectively. Nonetheless, in terms of organization, all the independent museums once formed parts of the collections of the National Museum, belonged to one super-structure, the corporation of the Hungarian National Museum. This central museum institution consisted of the National Archives, the National Library, the museums of Fine Arts, of History (the old National Museum proper), of Archaeology, of Applied Arts, of Ethnography and of Natural History. The corporation of the Hungarian National Museum was supervised by the Ministry of Religion and Education and, although, the majority of its funding came from state budget, formally it was sponsored by its own endowment that could also be enriched by private donations.

In the post-war period, the most important exhibition of the National Museum proper, the Historical Museum, was the centennial exhibition commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 1848 revolution. Whereas, the event itself had already become the core of Hungarian historical identity in the late nineteenth century, the post-war democratic government hoped to benefit from its mythical capacities to create its own historical legitimacy. Nonetheless, when the anniversary finally arrived, the government was already dominated by the communist party, which abused the ceremonies in an attempt to construct its own national history and ideological purposes. Despite the communist dominance, the exhibition in March 1948 obtained enormous popularity and received 1 000 000 visitors.

The institutional structure established in 1945 proved to be temporary as, in 1949, soon after the communist takeover, the new government issued a new act on museums. This measure was part of the general process of nationalisations, taking all public institutions of education and culture into central organization and control. Although, this step limited the autonomy of the National Museum and incorporated its staff and collections into the system of centrally directed organs of transmission and mediation of political/ideological objectives, it also concluded the unpredictability of the financing of the museum. The 1949 act on museums created a new institution of supervision, the National Centre of Museums and Monuments (*Múzeumok és Műemlékek Országos Központja*, MMOK). First, the new communist authorities initiated professional training of museum specialists in 1949 and declared archaeological sites exclusive state property. This provided a certain level of protection for scholarly investigations, but also guaranteed party authorities could abuse state power in organizing historical studies and representations. The new state and party elite directed a profound re-formation of exhibition halls in the National Museum extending it to more recent periods and adding space for temporary exhibitions, as well.

In 1951, a new director, Ferenc Fülep was appointed to head the National Museum and two years later, in 1953, it became part of the institutional network of the Ministry of Public Education. The centralized structure and the relatively favourable funding resulted in spectacular professional achievements, as well. In 1958, the archaeological department of the museum installed an exhibition on life in the Stone Age, which used technical components that were largely experimental in their time such as mobile structures and flashing effects in order to create a more life-like representation of the period. As well, the museum leadership made an effort to attract more visitors by introducing such popular programs as special Sunday tours and prices.

The last new museum, so far, based upon the collections of the National Museum was found in 1964. The Museum of Contemporary History, which reflected the general concern of the communist parties to represent the period of socialism as a unique and exceptional period in the history of mankind, proved to be provisional. Following 1989, its collections including a significant archive of photographic records returned to the National Museum as it took over the communist created institution.

The National Museum organized more than 150 exhibitions and received approximately 4.2 million visitors between 1945 and 1964 and an additional 1.8 million between 1965 and 1977. In 1977, the museum consisted of eight departments: the Archaeology, Medieval, Modern, Numismatics, Historical Portrait Gallery, Central Archaeological Library, Database and Restoration departments. Whereas the main task of the museum was to prepare the presentation of objects related to the history of the country, the Archaeological Department contributed particularly to pre-history exhibitions. Yet, even these periods were associated to the framework of an abstract ideal national history and were depicted as the particular pre-history of Hungarians. The exhibition the department organized in 1961 was titled “The History of the Peoples of Hungary before the Conquest (of the Magyars)”.

A new, profoundly reorganized exhibition of the National Museum, titled “The History of Hungary since the Conquest to 1849”, was opened on 31 May 1967. Contemporary critiques praised the exhibition as the first one since the war that could benefit from the diverse collection of the museum and create a demonstration the quality of the institution deserved. Official criticism admitted that the exhibition could not unfold the entire course of Hungarian history in the space provided, but praised its competence to highlight the crucial historical turning points, thus, eventually, offered a thorough and balanced insight into its topic.

The displayed objects were, in general, selected and arranged to produce the impression of a temporal continuity of civilization and the national political unit. Archaeological objects evoked the various components and great periods of human civilization like work, leisure, religion and cultic life, household or war. Civilization in the exhibitions was seen as the progress of skill, taste and sophistication of elite culture: if those works of art or everyday objects once owned by the upper classes were chosen to be displayed. Spectacular examples were provided by objects like the Scythian golden deer found near the town of Mezőkeresztes in 1928, the bust of Roman emperor Valentinian II or the Langobard jewels from Szentendre. The most highly valued treasures of the museum from the Middle Ages included a Byzantine golden crown, the death jewels of Béla III, king of Hungary and his wife Anna of Antiochos, king Mathias’s glass and a lavishly decorated Ottoman leather robe. The most spectacular items in the collection of the

Modern Department were various objects of aristocratic families including weapons, clothes, furniture or jewels.

The historical exhibition remained in use up until 1996; hence, it reflects the official representation of Hungarian history of the post-1956 consolidated communist authorities searching for a compromise with the majority of Hungarian society. In fact, the museum exhibition seems to directly reflect the official consensus on the master narrative of Hungarian history that the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences was working on. The initiative, which was meant to provide the public with a profound professional, Marxist history of Hungary in ten volumes, was actually in use throughout the last decades of the socialist dictatorship as the foremost authority regarding the knowledge of the past. The volumes, in fact, represented a curious consensus of positivistic, objectivist scholarship, the primacy of national state-centred history and a post-Marxist three layered perspective on the past based upon the hierarchy of economics, society, politics and culture.

In 1963, the institution incorporated five other museums of exceptional national importance: the pre-historic exhibition site in the village of Vérteszőlös, King Mathias's castle in Visegrád, the Rákóczi castle in Sárospatak, the Lajos Kossuth Memorial Museum in his birthplace Monok and the Mihály Károlyi Memorial Room in his former palace in Budapest. While these are doubtlessly significant sites of archaeological and historical heritage, the organizational structure embracing them into one institution created temporal associations among them. The Vérteszőlös part is situated on an important European pre-historic site of excavations with thousands of objects and a reconstructed Stone Age settlement.

In relation to important sites of national cultural and political heritage, this exhibition implied the continuity of civilization in the territory of the country. The Visegrád Palace is an exceptional renaissance architecture well known as the centre of culture during King Mathias's reign. Ferenc Rákóczi, the owner of the Sárospatak castle and leader of an anti-Habsburg revolt in the early eighteenth century together with Lajos Kossuth, the pro-independence revolutionary leader in 1848 were known as the harbingers of national liberty and statehood. Mihály Károlyi was the ill-fated President of the short-lived Republic of Hungary in 1918, just after the collapse in the war and before a communist coup by Béla Kun. The Hungarian communist leadership sought to transform his figure into a predecessor of pro-communist leftist progressive politics during its attempt at building broader social legitimacy in the 1960s. After the death of Károlyi while in exile, his corpse was brought home and officially reburied in 1962.

Two important temporary installations completed the permanent exhibition during this period. The centennial demonstration of the 1871 Paris Commune opened in 1971 was meant to represent the international commitments of the Hungarian communist system as well as an attempt to anchor the history of socialism to a mythical foundation stone in the nineteenth century. The second important exhibition performed a similar function. The 500th anniversary of the birth of György Dózsa who was the leader of the 1514 peasant insurrection cruelly executed, also meant an opportunity to project the communist system backwards and provide a historical depth to the modern revolutionary movement as well as to inscribe the history of the system into a model of national identity based on peasant-populist ideas.

The focus on statehood and centralised power structures, as one of the important myths of the communist type of meta-histories, could comfortably integrate such classical elements of

Hungarian historical culture as the symbols of the medieval kingdom. The Sacra Corona and the accompanying regalia, which were commonly – and (partly) rightly - known as the property of the first king of Hungary, St Stephen, returned to the country from the United States where they had been kept since the end of WWII until 1978. These were situated in the National Museum in a centrally located exhibition hall and soon became one of the most favourite objects of museum-going Hungarians up until 2000 when they were transported to the hall of the Parliament. In a similar logic, the seat of Stephen's father - Prince Géza and the archbishop of Hungary - the castle of Esztergom joined the National Museum in 1985. Originally, these steps had a twofold aim: to strengthen the loyalty towards the state by emphasising the central role of a strong state in Hungarian history and to construct a controllable space for developing patriotism and national identity within the frameworks of the communist state. Nevertheless, the emphasis on these historical myths contributed to the emergence of a more conservative type nationalism that re-discovered pre-war identities connected to religion, Christian statehood and the supremacy of Hungarian civilization.

Apart from the general lack of public or private funds, this flexibility of historical culture in the late Kádárist dictatorship explains why the permanent exhibitions in the National Museum remained untouched up until 1996, the year of its profound refurbishing. The new permanent exhibition of the National Museum opened in 1996, as part of the national celebrations of the 1100th anniversary of the Hungarian conquest. Conditions to install a comprehensive spectacular exhibition became favourable in 1993 when the collections of the Hungarian Natural History Museum were transported to its new location. This provided an opportunity to finish the technical modernisation of the museum building by installing micro-electronic equipment and up-to-date mechanics.

As a consequence, the entire formidable space in the museum became available for a grand historical exhibition. The conveners were hesitant whether to focus on the objects themselves and to situate them in the centre of the exhibition or to utilize them as illustrations to various displayed historical epochs. Eventually, as the ultimate purpose was to provide an overall picture on the historical development of the Hungarian people, they decided to design an exhibition that was able to convey a general comprehension of particular historical periods. The organizers desired an exhibition where the visitors, at first sight, encountered the totality of the spectacle of various rooms, which, as they hoped, could evoke the unique atmosphere of each represented epoch. Rooms dedicated to particular periods were decorated with different colours according to the desired emotional impact associated to each age. The conveners, thus, emphasized the sublime nature of the foundation of the state, the stubbornness of the people and the ability to look into the future of the generation of the 1830s' great reforms.

Part of the exhibition, which opened in March 1996, covered the history of the conquest itself. It was conceived as an opening, a sort of introduction to the historical exhibition proper, which consisted of two parts: one concerning the periods of eleventh to the seventeenth centuries (the founding of the medieval state until the re-conquest of the country from the Ottomans) and a second one covering the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (the anti-Habsburg revolt of Duke Rákóczi until the millennium in 1896). The concept underpinning the organization of the installations was based on the utilization of exceptional objects allegedly able to represent general

tendencies and the highlighting of connections of Hungarian history to broader European contexts.

The structure of the exhibition pursued a chronology of political periods and reflected the history of the idea of Hungarian statehood. Thus, the rooms were divided into the following sections: the age of the Árpáds (conquest and early medieval history, the country was ruled by the ancient Árpád dynasty), age of the Angevins (the conventional period of Hungary as a great power in the fourteenth century), age of Sigismund (conventional period of high culture and early conflicts with the Ottomans), everyday life in the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries (renaissance high culture in Hungary), age of Mathias (the canonical culmination of national kingdom), the tripartition of the country (the Ottoman rule, the accession of the Habsburgs and the Duchy of Transylvania), Transylvania in the seventeenth century (canonically Transylvania as the defender of Hungarian statehood), Count Rákóczi's revolt ('kuruc' insurrection, conventionally the attempt to establish an independent Hungarian absolute monarchy), Hungary in the eighteenth century (conventionally the period of national stagnation, but peaceful civilization), the age of reforms (the canonical period of national awakening, first half of the nineteenth century), the war of independence in 1848 (failed attempt to establish an independent Hungarian republic), the second half of the nineteenth century (the period of modernisation, but dependence on Habsburg interests), Millennium (the golden age of Hungarian empire and civilization), the century of survival, 1900-1990.

This permanent historical exhibition in the National Museum emphasizes the homogeneity of the nation and is reluctant to highlight the multicultural context of the history of Hungary. It is not inimical to the multi-ethnic structure of the historical Kingdom of Hungary, that usually depicts this in terms of immigration to Hungary and the tolerance of Hungarian society to accept newcomers and which gives the impression of a continuous, ethnically homogenous Hungarian nation, the subject of history. Besides, the exhibition discusses the formation of the multi-ethnic Hungary in the context of the Ottoman conquest and the fall of the medieval national state, endowing the narrative with a clear tragic overtone even with implications of the dismantling of the national state after 1918, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

The period that troubled most the conveners of the historical exhibition was, not astonishingly, the twentieth century, that is to say the contemporary past. The coordinator of this particular installation argued that it was virtually impossible to represent the history of the last ninety years, as it had been so abundant with dramatic turns and the number of events to be evoked drastically increased. Therefore, the organizers decided to confine the narrative to the frames of political history that determined the everyday experiences of Hungarian citizens. In general, this exhibition tried to avoid confronting controversial interpretations and rather chose to provide a patchwork-like organization of contemporary history, which clearly reflected the troublesome relationship of Hungarians to their recent past. The exhibition also discussed the Holocaust and the extermination of Jews in Hungary. Yet, it occurs in the context of the representation of the general tragedy of the nation – wartime losses, military defeat, starvation and the siege of Budapest – emphasizing the homogeneity of experience. In general, this is a typical strategy of museums in Hungary to avoid evoking past traumas that may raise the troublesome issues of social responsibility, but emphasizing an imagery of national solidarity, instead hoping to neutralize puzzling questions.

In spite of significant attempts by a few museums, notably the Museum of Ethnography and the National Museum proper, to re-arrange their exhibitions in order to reflect upon the increasing diversity of contemporary Hungarian society, the dominant impression one can obtain from Hungarian museums confirms the image of Hungary as a nationally, ethnically, culturally and fairly homogeneous country with a few regional variations. Whereas, the Museum of Ethnography successfully deconstructs this image by its thematic exhibitions demonstrating the diverse approaches to universal concepts or practices, its permanent exhibition, “The Traditional Culture of the Hungarian People”, forges the rural societies of the country into one homogeneous culture. Typically, ethnic minorities, most importantly the Roma and also Germans, Slovaks, Romanians and others are not integrated into mainstream permanent exhibitions in Hungarian national museums. Their cultures and history are normally represented in provincial local museums or temporary exhibitions in the central museums of the capital. This fact elucidates the typical approach towards the ethnic or linguistic diversity of contemporary Hungarian society, which ordinarily considers these cultures in terms of folklore and turning them into exotic, often curious additions to the core of the Hungarian body politic.

The representation of ethnic Hungarian groups in neighbouring countries, most importantly in Romania (Transylvania) oscillates between the approaches of the exotic and the ethnic. Often, Hungarian minority groups are depicted as resilient folkloric relics inimical to the impacts of modernization and globalization or simply as natural members of the homogenous ethnic body of the Hungarian nation ignoring the particular trajectories these societies ran since 1920. Yet, up to date the topic enjoys less popularity than it might have been expected: no national museum has installed any permanent exhibition devoted specifically to Hungarian groups outside the current borders of the country.

The House of Terror

The particular narrative of ethnic homogeneity is the most strikingly spectacular in the recently founded House of Terror Museum, an exhibition space devoted to the history of Fascist and Communist dictatorships in Hungary. The House of Terror was inaugurated on 25 February 2002 as a non-governmental organization administered by a public foundation, but benefited from an exceptional amount of tax-payers' money. It was claimed that this museum was built to commemorate the victims of dictatorial rule in the country. In reality, the museum creates a history of continuous occupations by German and Soviet military forces, respectively, and the establishment of domestic Fascist and Communist dictatorships as a direct consequence of foreign intervention. On the one hand, the exhibition artificially isolates the short-lived Arrow-Cross rule from the longer history of domestic anti-Semitism and pro-fascist ideologies and politics. On the other, it depicts an entirely ahistorical picture of the socialist dictatorship turning it into a period of uniform barbarity and violence seceding from the history of oppression, therefore, the broader social and cultural history of constructing, reshaping and dismantling the regime. Hungarian society, as a consequence, appears an accidental victim of an ideological conflict as if it had homogeneously resisted those alien intrusions.

The exhibition on the House of Terror is embedded in a broader politics of history marked by the transportation of the Hungarian royal crown from the National Museum to the Parliament in 2000 and even by the preface to the new constitution accepted in 2011. This politics of history

imagines the Hungarian nation a set of eternal values continuously existing since the rule of St Stephen, first king of Hungary. These qualities manifested themselves in the times of national glory such as in the revolutions of 1848 and 1956 and fell victim to the tyranny of great powers in both world wars in Trianon and Jalta, respectively, and during the Communist regime.

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National Museums in Iceland

Arne Bugge Amundsen

Summary

Iceland was not established as an independent state until the twentieth century. Nevertheless cultural enterprises like museums and collections were important elements in the nation building process in Iceland during the previous century. The museums chosen for this report have heavy references to the cultural and political struggle in Iceland to become acknowledged not only as a part of the Danish(-Norwegian) empire but as a nation with a separate and distinguishingly different past.

Icelanders, both in Iceland and in Denmark, had a part in the ideological and political struggle for establishing a national identity. Not until the last quarter of the nineteenth century was a certain political independence developed in Iceland. Museum initiatives started among Icelanders academically trained in Copenhagen in order to create separate collections of objects related to Icelandic national history (museum 1) or to make it possible for Icelanders to experience Danish and international art of high quality (museum 2). When Iceland became an independent state with its own national institutions in the early twentieth century, the Icelandic state used the two museums as important vehicles for developing a national identity and for securing public access to, control of and listing of both the historical and archaeological remains of the nation's past and public access to the works of new generations of national artists. The interaction between national museums, the Parliament and the Government has been very close during the twentieth century, and the focus of the national museums has been on the preservation of the national identity and on the display of the works of national artists.

At its re-opening in 2004, the National Museum of Iceland continued its earlier strong emphasis on displaying and narrating the history and the genealogy of the nation through the centuries. At the same time, museum authorities introduced another perspective: Iceland as a young nation of immigrants with a vivid interaction with foreign countries past and present.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actor	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
<p>The Antiquarian Commission</p> <p>The National Museum of Iceland (1911)</p>	1863	1863	Private initiative, Parliament	State	Archaeology, Cultural History	Icelandic history	Time of Settlement (870s) to the present day	<p>Several attics in Reykjavik until 1950.</p> <p>In a modern building outside city centre after 1950.</p>
<p>The National Gallery, 1916-1961 part of 1)</p>	1884	1884	Private initiative, Parliament	State	Art	Icelandic and International	Mainly 19 th and 20 th c. Art	<p>The House of Parliament until 1950 when it moved to National Museum of Iceland. Moved again in 1987 to the modern style Fríkirkjuvegur 7 located by the City pond.</p>

Introduction

Reviewing museum history of Iceland makes it necessary to give a more extensive survey of the political and cultural history of the country. The first more permanent settlers in Iceland were refugees from Norway, but among them were also persons of e.g. Celtic origin. The first wave of settlement took place in the period ca. 870-930. However, relations with Norway continued to be quite close. In 930, the first common assembly, the *Alþingi*, was established. Around the year 1000, the *Alþingi* accepted Christian religion as the official Icelandic religion and in 1152-1153, Iceland was included as part of the Norwegian Archbishopric of Nidaros.

As a consequence of the political processes in both late medieval and early modern history in Scandinavia, Norway and Iceland became parts of the so-called Kalmar Union from 1397 and later of the Danish Empire established under the rule of the House of Oldenburg since the late fifteenth century. Iceland had, since 1262, been under the sovereignty of the then independent Kingdom of Norway. Under Danish rule Norway, to a certain extent, both kept and developed separate legislation and economy, while Iceland from 1602 was the object of Danish trade monopoly. The monopoly was formally abolished in 1783, but for all practical reasons continued into the nineteenth century. In 1814, European Post-Napoleonic politics resulted in Norway being established as a separate country with its own constitution while Iceland for decades remained an integrated part of the Kingdom of Denmark.

A rural population dominated nineteenth century Iceland and natural disasters and medical epidemics had, by 1800, heavily decreased the population to ca. 40,000. Slowly, the population started to increase and an urban centre developed during the first decades of the century, but with few institutions aside from administrative ones. In 1900, the population of Iceland had increased to 78,000.

During the nineteenth century, Icelandic elite educated in Copenhagen took part of the new European romantic ideologies of national integrity and individuality. Hence, the demands on Icelandic national and political separatism were vividly argued and continuously agreed. In Iceland the small group of intellectual and cultural elite were looking for distinct expressions of national identity following the traditional nineteenth century thematic standards: language, landscape, material culture, historical remains, popular narratives, myths, and ethnic origin. An important arena for developing national identity was literature and art. Many of the leading members of this Icelandic elite were poets and writers, and they expressed their opinions and strategies in their own journal, called *Fjölnir*.

A political independence movement also developed, with *Jón Sigurðsson* (1811-1879) as the most prominent member. In 1843, a new, consultative parliament – the *Alþingi* – was founded. The end of Absolutist rule in Denmark in 1848 meant the establishment of a Danish Constitution and Parliament and for years relations between this Parliament and the *Alþingi* were heavily disputed. Not until 1874 did Denmark grant Iceland home rule, a separate Constitution and its own separate Parliament. By the end of the nineteenth century, the various efforts made on behalf of Iceland had their desired result. The revised Constitution of 1903 gave Iceland its own Government and a minister for Icelandic affairs, residing in Reykjavík, was made responsible to the *Alþingi*. In 1918, both countries signed an Act of Union recognizing Iceland as a sovereign Kingdom in personal union with Denmark. From 1918, Iceland had its own national

flag. Its foreign affairs and defence interests were represented by Denmark. This personal union was ended in 1944, when Iceland was declared a republic (Hjálmarson 1993. Ødegård 1998).

National museums in Iceland

Due to its political development as a part of the Kingdom of Denmark, the museum situation in Iceland was distinctively different from the one in Norway during most of the nineteenth century. In contrast to Norway, Iceland had kept a spoken and written language of its own, a fact that became an important point of departure for the development of a strong national identity during the nineteenth century. This fact also explained the strong emphasis on myths, folklore and sagas as symbolic highly valued elements in the national cultural identity developed in Iceland and with numerous expressions in museum collections and artistic and literary works. On the other hand, Iceland had no museums or museum collections of its own, and all archival and museum collections related to the history of the country were kept in Copenhagen. During the centuries under Danish rule, Icelandic material had been continuously included in the Royal Collections of the House of Oldenburg formally established in the middle of the seventeenth century. Objects from Iceland were also collected by the Royal Committee for the Preservation and Collection of Antiquities (*Den kongelige Kommission for Oldsagers Bevaring*), established in Copenhagen in 1807 with the Historian *Rasmus Nyerup* (1759-1829) as its Secretary, and by the Royal Museum of Nordic Antiquities (*Det kongelige Museum for Nordiske Oldsager/Oldnordisket Museum*), established in 1819, and later on the National Museum of Denmark (*Nationalmuseet*), founded in 1849 on the basis of the Royal Collections (Jensen 1992. Skandinaviska museiförbundet 2000/2004).

Another central institution for Icelandic historical objects was the *Arnarnagnæan Manuscript Collection*, bequeathed by Icelandic scholar and antiquarian *Árni Magnússon* (1663-1730) to the University of Copenhagen in 1730. Typically enough, the leader of the nineteenth century independence movement in Iceland, *Jón Sigurðsson*, worked in the Arnarnagnæan Manuscript Collection during his years in Copenhagen in the 1830s, and parts of his cultural and political legitimacy obviously had its origin in his intimate knowledge of the Icelandic medieval saga and law manuscripts. However these manuscripts were not included in an Icelandic museum collection but transferred to the University of Iceland (www.arnastofnun.is).

Enshrining the origins of Icelandic society, and preserving a written language closer to modern Icelandic than Shakespeare is to modern English, the Saga literature served as both inspiration and justification during the Icelandic struggle for independence. The first claim made by Icelanders after achieving independence in 1944 was not unexpectedly the return of ancient Saga manuscripts (Greenfield 1989). Icelandic authorities had, in fact, claimed the right to parts of the manuscript collection since the 1830s, and the first “repatriation” of a small part of the documents took place already in 1925. 1,807 Icelandic manuscripts were transferred to Iceland between 1971 and 1997 (Nielsen 2002) after years of hard political negotiations, but as the total number of manuscripts being preserved in Icelandic archives and institutions exceeds tens of thousands, we understand that the Copenhagen collections were important but hardly the only sources of repatriation. From the 1500s, Icelandic Sagas and literature engaged and spread to the European academic society (Sigurðsson & Ólason 2004).

Several of those manuscripts, regarded as the culturally and historically most valuable, have been put on display in the National Library in Reykjavík, but central historical manuscripts are also to be found in the National Archive, the National Museum and the Árni Magnússon Institute (Sigurðsson & Ólason 2004). The Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies was established in 1972 as an academic research institute answering directly to the Ministry of Education and keeps some of the most important *medieval* manuscripts. A carefully selected range of those are permanently on display in the Culture House's featured exhibition; *Medieval Manuscripts – Eddas and Sagas*. The Culture House, former premises of the National Library, is however not a museum, but a "heritage building" – regarded as one of the most beautiful in Reykjavík – serving as "a common centre for Icelandic cultural heritage institutions with high-quality exhibitions on selected national treasures" (www.thjodmenning.is. www.arnastofnun.is). All Icelandic Sagas are, moreover, available online due to a digital project involving both the Árni Magnússon Institute and the University Library of Iceland (<http://sagnanet.is/>).

Worth mentioning in the context of national museum narratives is a small but intricate exhibition at the Reykjavík City Museum in the old city centre. *Reykjavik 871±2* is an exhibition based on archaeological excavations of the ruin of one of the first houses in Iceland. It examines the life and works of the first settlers and was awarded "Best Design of Digital Experiences in Museums" in the Nordic countries by Nodem in 2006 as a three-dimensional image demonstrates how the hall may have looked. An exhibition guide discusses accounts of the exploration and colonisation of Iceland (www.minjasafnreykjavikur.is. www.reykjavik871.is).

Case studies in chronological order

In 1863, the national museum of Iceland was formally established. The specific background for the establishment was a donation of 15 antiquities from the vicar Helgi Sigurðsson with the explicit condition that it should be included in a new, Icelandic national museum. A certain funding was granted from the Government in Copenhagen, and even more from the Alþingi after 1874. The museum started to build up a historical collection and to register Icelandic material kept in Danish Museums. Jón Árnason (1819-1888) was its first curator. Jón Árnason had, from 1848, also been the librarian at the newly established National Library in Reykjavík. He was highly influenced by German scholars Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm and their collections of popular narratives and myths. Between 1862 and 1864, he published substantial volumes of folkloristic material from Iceland still being regarded as classical editions of their kind (e.g. *Íslenzkar Þjóðsögur og Æfintýri - Icelandic Folktales and Legends*, ed. Leipzig).

Shortly after Jón Árnason was appointed to be the manager of the museum, a second curator was employed, the painter Sigurður Guðmundsson (1833-1874), who at an early stage argued the necessity of building up an antiquarian collection in Iceland. The museum was named the Antiquarian Collection (Forngripasafns Íslands) until 1911, when the name was officially changed to the National Museum of Iceland (Þjóðminjasafn Íslands).

Before it was installed in a separate building in 1950, the National Museum was housed in different buildings in the capital, among others the Reykjavík Cathedral (until 1879), the House of Corrections, the Parliament (from 1881), the National Bank and the National Library. In 1944, when Iceland was declared a republic, the Government decided to build a new National Museum. Its location was Suðurgata 41, just outside the city centre where we find a modern building of

three floors stretching over an elongated rectangular base with a low, stylized tower attached to the rear end. The entrance is unexpectedly located at the rounded short wall on the opposite side, thus the museum building is referred to as “stylish” and “sleek” (www.thjodminjasafn.is).

As a result of its central role in building up an antiquarian collection, the National Museum also became administratively responsible for all archaeological sites in Iceland. All archaeological finds were, by law, declared national property and should be delivered to the National Museum to be conserved and included in the museum collection. As a consequence, the National Museum has also played a major role in archaeological excavations in Iceland. In 2001, the *National Archaeological Heritage Agency* was finally established. This institution succeeded the National Museum as administrative responsible for the archaeological sites (Sverrisdóttir & al. 1988).

The National Museum also owns and keeps old Icelandic buildings in different parts of the country. The first building to be listed in the Historic Buildings Collection was a chapel in 1930. At present, the Buildings Collection consists of more than forty different edifices, including turf houses, turf churches, stone and timber buildings and wooden churches (Sverrisdóttir & al. 1988. Björnsson 1994).

The largest public collection of images – prints, postcards, photographs and portraits – in Iceland is part of the National Museum as well as the ethnological and folkloristic collection covering both rural and urban topics. Iceland’s largest public collection of images is preserved by the National Museum. The collection consists of approximately 4 million photographs, mostly taken by individual photographers in the period 1866-1993.

Regarding the ethnological and folkloristic collections, their original focus was the pre-modern agrarian society in Iceland with emphasis on old working methods and the use of traditional Icelandic tools and utensils. In the early 1980s however, the focus started to shift from old agrarian culture to modern and urban life and culture. The ethnological archives of the National Museum contain approximately 15,000 accounts and some specialized collections (Sverrisdóttir & al. 1988. Björnsson 1994. www.thjodminjasafn.is).

In 2004, the National Museum of Iceland was re-opened after having been closed for several years of refurbishment. In 2003, the museum authorities explicitly marked a distance from the older way of displaying: “Whereas formerly objects and their history were paramount, explained by referring to [suggestion:] sagas and tales, now the history of Iceland itself will be brought to the forefront, with the exhibits serving to highlight that history. (...) The exhibition design is based on museum visitors discovering the answer to one all-important question: How does a nation come into being?” (Þjóðminjasafnið 2003: 21).

On its official web-page, the museum articulates its role in this way: “The role of the National Museum is varied, reflecting its legal obligation as national centre for the preservation and management of cultural heritage, cultural research programmes and promulgation of knowledge and information which relates to the cultural heritage of the nation” (www.thjodminjasafn.is/english). The permanent exhibition is strictly chronological. In 2006, the European Museum Forum rewarded it a special commendation as being the best museum in Europe that year.

The official guidebook of the new permanent exhibition is structured along the chronology of the exhibition. In some introductory remarks, however, the museum authorities also reflect on how the new exhibition should be interpreted. The emphasis is still predominantly on the

development of the Icelandic Nation and its “uniqueness as the youngest nation in Europe”. At the same time the continuous development of a nation is underlined as well as the fact that in a period when immigrants to Iceland have increased in number, it should be remembered that the first Icelanders also were immigrants eventually forming “a single nation” (Making a Nation 2008:10-11).

Iceland also has a *National Gallery* that was founded as a private collection open to the public in 1884. The first collection consisted of donated pieces of art, mainly by Danish artists. The collection was owned by *Björn Bjarnason* (1853-1918), an Icelandic lawyer living in Copenhagen, and established with the explicit aim of giving his fellow countrymen the possibility of studying fine art in a separate gallery. In 1900, the collection consisted of 74 paintings and 2 sculptures, mainly by Danish artists.

A work made by an Icelandic artist was not acquired for the collection until 1902, when a sculpture – ‘Outlaws’ – by *Einar Jónsson* (1874-1954) was included. This acquisition took place at the same time as Einar Jónsson was granted a two-year stay in Rome by the Icelandic Parliament. In 1909, Einar Jónsson had his own atelier and private residence in Reykjavík paid for by Parliament. In return, he agreed to donate all his artistic works to the State of Iceland. Accordingly, his inclusion in the collection of the National Gallery was closely connected with the political and cultural strategy of developing a new generation of national artists in Iceland at the beginning of the century. Most of the works of the sculptor are in public places and in the Einar Jónsson Museum, which was officially opened in Reykjavík in 1923 (www.skulptur.is/index.e.html).

In 1911, the collection acquired its first painting – ‘Repose’ – by *Þórarinn Þorláksson* (1867-1924). He had also been awarded a grant from Parliament to study abroad. Þórarinn Þorláksson was mainly interested in painting Icelandic landscapes and historical sites, like Þingvellir, where the old Icelandic Alþingi had gathered.

Continuously expanding, mostly by private donations, the National Gallery stayed an independent institution until 1916 when the Parliament of Iceland decided to make it a part of the National Museum. The National Gallery was housed in the House of Parliament in Reykjavík until 1950, when it was transferred to the new building of the National Museum.

In 1961, the National Gallery was made an independent institution with a new and separate location from 1987 drawn by Iceland’s most famous architect Guðjón Samúelsson (1887-1950) responsible for several important institution buildings in Iceland. The Gallery is defined as a national museum in Iceland. The central part of the collection is Icelandic art from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and thus the collections aim at presenting the key works of national artists in the formative period of nation-building. In addition, the collection includes international art and works by modern Icelandic artists are continuously acquired. At present, the collection consists of approximately 10,000 works (<http://www listasafn.is/>).

An important part of the National Gallery collection today is the works by *Ásgrímur Jónsson* (1876 - 1958). Painting in an Impressionist style, he mainly painted Icelandic landscapes but he also made illustrations of Icelandic sagas and popular folk tales. Returning permanently to Iceland in 1909 after several years of study abroad, he became very influential to other Icelandic artists, especially with regard to landscape painting. After Ásgrímur Jónsson’s death, his works and his home were donated to the Icelandic nation and a separate museum was inaugurated in

1960. However, the Ásgrimur Jónsson Collection was changed into a section of the National Gallery in 1988.

Important themes in the National Gallery's collection of early nineteenth century Icelandic artists are national landscapes, heroes both from the time of the first Norse settlement and from the Icelandic national and cultural independence movement in the nineteenth century, as well as motives from the Saga literature, popular narratives, religion and myths - in short: The artistic motives of highest symbolic value in the nation-building of Iceland (Kvaran & Kristjánsdóttir 2001).

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National Museums in the Republic of Ireland

Andrew Sawyer

Summary

As the current director of the National Museum of Ireland has noted, ‘to understand the National Museum of Ireland both as an institution and in terms of tradition from which its collection evolved, is in some ways to understand the complexity of modern Ireland itself’ (Wallace 2002: 1). Wallace’s references to evolution and tradition highlight the significance of the past in the life of the Republic of Ireland, a past closely linked to Britain. In her comprehensive analysis of Irish museums, Bourke concluded that their development followed a route similar to British, and latterly American museums. They did not devolve from princely possessions, but were built on objects from antiquarianism and private collections, with funding from government or scholarly societies. The difference in Ireland is that this development coincided with the emergence of the nation-state (Bourke 2011: 427).

The emergence of the Irish state was marked by conflict. It is remembered in popular culture, for example in the films *Michael Collins* (Jordan, 1996), about the nationalist leader, and *The Wind that Shakes the Barley* (Loach, 2006), about the tragedies of the Anglo-Irish War and the Civil War. Each film, successively, broke all box office records in Ireland. They address the 1916 Uprising, the Irish War of Independence (1919-1921) and the Irish Civil War (1922-1923), which were pivotal in Irish history. In brief, until the 1920s, the entire island was part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and museums in Ireland were part of that wider context. An Anglo-Irish elite, though largely Protestant (Anglican) and British in outlook, nonetheless contributed to the development of distinctly Irish learned societies and institutions, including early museums. In the north-east, industrialisation in Belfast, and earlier immigration, led to museums more influenced by Dissenters (Protestants who rejected Anglicanism) and commercialism. As British governments began to contribute to funding, they also began to shape and eventually to take control of key Irish museums. The Gaelic Revival of the 1880s, however, celebrating Ireland’s Gaelic past (a ‘golden age’), was reflected in museum collections with a growing interest in Irish antiquities. The 1916 rising, attempts by the British to impose conscription (1918), the Irish War of Independence and the Civil War reshaped Irish society.

After independence, national museums were largely ignored by governments faced with harsh economic conditions, despite having provided substance to the emerging, nationalist ‘Gaelic Revival’. Towards the end of the twentieth century government attitudes changed, and with EU help, funding was increased. Expansion enabled new approaches to Ireland’s history and new avenues for art. Pre-historic antiquities began to make room for displays on the Viking and Anglo-Norman contributions to Irish culture. More recently, there is a measure of awareness that the Republic of Ireland, formed on the basis of a distinct cultural identity, now faces the challenge of a more pluralistic, multicultural society, which Bourke reflects on in the context of Irish museums (2011: 423-6).

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Museum of Ireland, Archaeology	1908	1890s	Politicians in Dublin	Semi-autonomous organisation under the aegis of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht*	Archaeology and Medieval History	National	Prehistory to ca. 1550	Victorian Palladianism. In Kildare Street, near other branches of the NMI, the National Gallery and Irish government at Leinster House, Dublin.
National Museum of Ireland, Natural History	1908	1890s	National Museum of Ireland	As above	Natural History	Universal	Pre-history to present times.	Influenced by South Kensington and designed to match Leinster House. Near other branches of the NMI, the National Gallery and Irish government at Leinster House. Dublin.
National Museum of Ireland, Decorative Arts and History	1997	1997	National government	As above	Decorative Arts and History	National	Ca. 1550 to the present day.	Neo-Classical military building (18 th c.), large barracks built by the British, Situated near the town of Omagh 2 km from the centre of Dublin
National Museum of Ireland, Country Life	2001	2001	National government	As above	Folklife	National	Ca. 1845 to 1950s.	Turlough Park House in Victorian Gothic style (other galleries in modernist building. Sited in countryside (County Mayo), western Ireland.

* The Gaeltacht refers to the part of Ireland where Gaelic is still spoken as a first language.

Introduction

The past plays a greater role in Ireland than is common in the British Isles. In fact, 'it has often been said the Irish history, even from the earliest times, is current affairs' (Bardon, 2001: xi; see also O'Mahony and Delanty, 1998: 11; Jackson, 1999: 1; Brett, 1996: 8). This history is also contested, among academics and more widely, not least because 'much of what Irish, British and American politicians and commentators have to say about contemporary Irish problems has been given a historical gloss', and 'some popular ideas about history have been used to justify political extremism and even violence' (Coohill, 2008: 4; see also Dixon, 2008: 18-20). Hence Crooke's comment that 'in order to understand the values held in Ireland that underpinned the establishment of a public museum, one must consider how important 'the past', and the institutions that manage the past, were to Irish nationalism' (Crooke 2000: 100).

Traditionally, Ireland has been divided into four provinces (Ulster, Connacht, Leinster and Munster). The Republic of Ireland is made up of three of these provinces, Connacht, Leinster and Munster, together with three counties from Ulster (making up twenty-six counties in all). The remaining six north-eastern counties of Ulster form Northern Ireland, which remains part of the UK. The current population of the Republic is around four and a half millions.

Historical background

The island of Ireland has been subject to external influences from prehistoric times and developed a rich Celtic culture. In the fifth century Christianity was adopted and Ireland's monasteries were renowned for their learning. The Romans never established a presence in Ireland, but by the ninth century Norse raiders were settling there and founded Dublin. Anglo-Norman adventurers arrived in 1169, and the island became subject to English monarchs. An Irish Parliament was formally established in 1297. In practice English authority declined in the Middle Ages, until it was re-established by the Tudors. Rebellions (and, in English minds, the threat of foreign intervention), were met with occupation by English troops and a policy of 'plantations', that is, establishing English (Protestant) settlers on the land. In the 1600s, rebellions and foreign interventions were countered by firm, if not brutal suppression by Cromwell during the Commonwealth (1649-60) and later by King William III of England. Confiscation of land and discrimination against Catholics followed, leading to the dominance of the 'Protestant Ascendancy'.

From the seventeenth century onwards, the Ascendancy shared a cultural outlook with British and other European elites and formed learned societies along similar lines. They were mainly landowners, and largely Anglican (the Anglican Church is the 'established church' in Britain and associated with government). The Ascendancy nonetheless represented an Anglo-Irish nationalism, resisting union with Britain until the late 1700s. An Act of Union abolished their Parliament in 1800. Meanwhile, in the countryside, a range of factors such as absentee landlords and harsh conditions for tenants led to unrest. As Irish society became increasingly polarised, attempts by Irish MPs and Britain's Liberal Party to provide Home Rule in the late nineteenth century were defeated. In line with developments elsewhere in Britain, the nineteenth century saw increasing government funding and control of museums, with collection being transferred to government ownership in 1877 as the Museum of Science and Art.

The later nineteenth century also saw a renewal of interest in Ireland's Celtic past, known as the Gaelic Revival. Historically, Celtic refers to a diverse pre-Roman tribal culture in Europe. The modern form of their language still spoken by some Irish, Manx and Scots is referred to as Gaelic, and Gaelic is also used more broadly as a cultural definition. This Gaelic Revival became associated with movements towards independence. At the same time, tensions were rising between those who wanted to remain part of Britain ('Unionists', mainly Protestants living in the north-east of the island) and those who wanted independence ('nationalists', mainly Catholics). Renewed British attempts to legislate for Home Rule were seen as a threat by Unionists, and the more extreme supporters of both sides became engaged in clandestine activities and arms smuggling with a view to possible conflict, when the First World War started. Although many Irish supported Britain (some hoping for Home Rule after the War), and troops were raised throughout Ireland, a minority of nationalists opposed this.

On Easter Monday 24 April 1916, extreme nationalists seized key points in Dublin (the 'Easter Rising') and declared an independent Irish Republic. British troops quickly regained control and the insurrection lasted little more than a week. Initially the rising met with bewilderment in Ireland, as it had not been expected, it had caused a great deal of death and destruction, and some families had members fighting for the British in France. However, the British quickly tried the survivors in a military court and started executing them by firing squad, causing revulsion in Ireland, and some embarrassment in London. By 1918 the British were desperate for recruits to make up for losses in France, and conscription was imposed, further alienating the Irish, many of whom resisted it. In the 1918 General Election, the Irish Parliamentary Party was practically wiped out by the nationalist Sinn Féin party: its MPs refused to sit in the British parliament at Westminster, and met in Dublin instead as a precursor of Dáil Éireann, the Irish parliament.

The Anglo-Irish War (1919-21) saw nationalist forces (the Irish Republican Army) engaged against British troops and their specially recruited units, the 'Auxiliaries' and the 'Black and Tans', who had a reputation for brutality. The war was a propaganda victory, at least, for the Irish. Tortuous negotiations led to the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921. This was negotiated with the British threatening full-scale war if there was not settlement. As a result the Irish Free State was established as part of the British Commonwealth, with an option for the six counties in the north-east to remain part of the UK. The Dáil, by a narrow majority, approved the Treaty, but the President of the Republic, Éamon de Valera (1882-1975) and his deputies resigned.

A brief and murderous Civil War followed in 1922 and 1923 in the Irish Free State, over whether to accept the Anglo-Irish Treaty or reject it in the pursuit of a more complete independence. Meanwhile in Northern Ireland there was sectarian violence whilst the Unionist administration was accused of persecuting Catholics. The war caused many casualties and lasting bitterness. Two of the Republic's main political parties, Fianna Fáil (anti-treaty) and Fine Gael (pro-treaty), were to some extent defined by the Civil War. This split is in contrast to the more common left/right division of politics in the rest of Europe (Prager, 1986; Dunphy 1985).

W.T. Cosgrave emerged as leader of the pro-treaty faction in the Irish Free State and took a hard line against anti-treaty forces, authorising many executions. Constitutional means were used to dismantle remaining links with the UK, and in 1937, in a series of legislative reforms driven by de Valera, the Irish Free State became Éire. Further changes led to the Republic of Ireland being

founded in 1948/49. Trade disputes with the UK, particularly in 1932-38, caused some damage to the economy. Culturally, the new state took note of the Catholic Church's view and of Catholic sensibilities, censoring films and publications, whilst challenging economic circumstances constrained museum development. During the 'Emergency' (the Second World War), Eire maintained a neutral stance, and de Valera adroitly avoided entanglements with the Axis whilst providing some covert support to UK and American efforts. Thousands of Irish served in American and British forces.

After the Second World War, and several decades of relative peace, violence escalated in Northern Ireland, a period known as the 'Troubles', lasting from about 1967-1998. The Republic engaged from time to time with the British government in search of a solution. The Good Friday Agreement of 1998, which brought a cessation of violence in Northern Ireland, received overwhelming support from the Republic's population (albeit on a modest turnout) in an all-Ireland referendum.

The Irish economy is generally seen as performing poorly from the 1920s to the 1950s, but it improved in the 1960s and unemployment and emigration were both reduced. Membership of the European Economic Community in 1974 had some positive impacts and from the late 1980s, the economy enjoyed considerable success. Museums benefitted significantly from this from the 1990s, with significant funds coming from the EU. The financial crises following 2007 had a severe impact (Coohill, 2008: 195). The Catholic Church remains an important element of Irish society, although its influence was in decline from the 1950s, and it was further damaged in the early 2000s when it was rocked by scandal, particularly around child abuse.

Many of these events are addressed in Ireland's national museums: the Celtic 'Golden Age', the Vikings and Anglo-Normans are covered at the National Museum Archaeology branch in Kildare Street; at the Decorative Arts and History branch at Collins Barracks, Dublin, 'Soldiers and Chiefs' covers the period from 1550 to the present. It includes sections on Cromwell, King William, the Ascendancy, the role of the Irish in the British Empire, and the complex events around the First World War. Also exhibited are sections on the War of Independence and the Civil War, together with more recent history such as that of Irish troops serving in the United Nations and collaborating with UK forces against terrorism. The Easter Rising is addressed in 'Understanding 1916', whilst the Decorative Arts collections, numismatics, and some overseas collections are also here. Dublin is also home to the National Museum's Natural History branch, at Merrion Street, whilst at Turlough Park in County Mayo, the Museum of Country Life exhibits the way of life of the rural Irish from 1850 to 1950, and includes exhibits on the period after the 1845 famine, struggles over land (the 'Land War' of the later nineteenth century), Home Rule agitation and changes to land ownership after independence. Kilmainham Gaol, managed by OPW, addresses the 1916 rising. At the same time, the development of Irish art from the eighteenth century, and in a European context, is on show and the National Gallery.

Historiography

Against this background, the historiography of Ireland can be challenging since history is still so significant. Traditional nationalist historiography tends to see Ireland as subject to endless (mis)rule and interference by English powers since 1169, invoking the brutality of Cromwell's reconquest (1649-50), and the harsh Penal Laws (late 1600s) as examples. The trauma of the Great

Famine of 1845, which had a major impact on the demography, politics and culture of Ireland, remains a point of contention among historians, in particular, the extent to which it was deliberate genocide on the part of the British (Coohill, 2008: 74-78). The Republic is also affected by events in the North: the Troubles, including atrocities such as 'Bloody Sunday' (30 January 1972, when British paratroopers shot and killed demonstrators), and occasional atrocities since, such as the 'Omagh bombing' (15 August 1998, when an Irish nationalist bomb resulted in twenty nine deaths), have impacted the Republic and its politics.

However, narratives assuming 'that the "British" inflicted on the "Irish" 700 years of conquest and colonisation are no longer given much credence in historical writing', according to O'Mahony and Delanty (1998: 33). There is more support for a thesis that looks to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as significant in shaping the outlook of three major religious groups (Catholics, Anglicans and Dissenters), so that by the nineteenth century we see polarisation between Protestant and Catholic, respectively opposed and in favour of independence for Ireland (O'Mahony and Delanty, 1998: 33; Jackson, 1999:1; Kinealy, 2004: 480).

The quest for independence, and its definition, has been a recurring and contested theme in Irish history, but the development of the journal *Irish Historical Studies* from the late 1930s played a role in countering simplistic interpretations, and the historiography of the period has itself been analysed and outlined (Coohill, 2008: 2, 3; Jackson, 1999, 2-5; see also Dixon, 2008: 2-18 for the north east). Marxist writers such as the nationalist James Connolly (1868–1916), emphasized class, with the unionist working classes are portrayed as being held to the unionist cause by a marginal superiority over their Catholic fellows. Connolly's arguments were in tune with later Marxist historians in general, and had the support of left wing political groups (Michael Farrell took a similar approach in his *Northern Ireland: The Orange State* of 1980). More recently, 'revisionist' or 'liberal' views emerged from the 1950s to the 1990s, with professionally trained historians developing more sophisticated approaches to an Irish history that was much more complicated than the traditionalists would suggest. Their work was typified by liberal and inclusive interpretations and the broad sweep of history.

National identity and museums

Given its troubled history, national identity in Ireland is a complex issue. In terms of the Republic, O'Mahony and Delanty sketched the development of Irish national identity during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, quoted here at length:

In the first instance, the formation of a modern, mass national identity, and its institutionalisation in a nation-state, gained momentum in the late nineteenth century and continued until the late 1950s. In this period, Catholic southern Ireland shared in the cultural anti-modernism and political authoritarianism of much of the Catholic part of Western and Central Europe, including Italy, Spain, Portugal, Hungary and southern Germany though, unlike these other countries, democratic institutions were preserved. In the second phase, which began later in Ireland, and continues to the present, a gradual shedding of the extreme versions of anti-modernism came with a slow acceptance of growing secularisation, state welfare provision, sexual liberation, more pronounced individualism. However, in a third phase, which begins somewhere in the second phase and runs alongside it, the international

return to explicit themes of the nation is also happening in Ireland. This return to the nation has two strands: it has been both backward looking in the sense of seeking a return to the certainties of traditional, Catholic Ireland, and also forward looking, accommodating itself in a somewhat uneasy way to social change whilst seeking to create a new cultural nation-code extending beyond existing institutional frameworks. (O'Mahony and Delanty, 1998: 5, 6.)

National museums have responded to a challenging past and evolving Irish identity. Two examples illustrate this. The first is Kilmainham Gaol, managed by *Oifig na nOibreacha Poiblí* (the Office of Public Works, a state agency). It was built in 1796 and key players in rebellions were gaoled, and in some cases executed here. In particular, in 1916, the British executed nationalists at Kilmainham after the Easter Rising, and in 1922, during the Civil War; the Irish Free State executed Irish prisoners here, before closing the gaol and abandoning it to the elements in 1924. The site with its painful memories may have presented for the Irish government after the Civil War. In any case, it became something of a shrine and the Kilmainham Gaol Restoration Society, founded in 1960, with many veterans 1916-24 among its members, worked to preserve it. In 1966 de Valera, who had inspired the anti-Treaty movement, and was now President of the Republic, opened a new exhibition there commemorating the Easter Rising.

The Office of Public Works took over the Gaol in the mid 1980s, appointing Pat Cooke as Curator. By now the Troubles in Northern Ireland, and revisionist approaches to Irish history, threatened to render the site of interest only to hard line nationalists. In an article in 2000 (from which this information is drawn) Cooke notes that the Troubles, and the rise of a new generation who had forgotten many of the details of the war for independence, presented challenges (2000: 8). He explains how the Gaol needed to address a wider audience whilst still presenting the events of 1916-24 in a straightforward way without 'deconstructing' the history of the period. As he noted, 'it is one thing to describe nationalist passion as a form of delusion in a discursive essay; it is another thing to stand on the spot where a man was shot by firing squad and say to yourself: "this man died for a delusion."' the site remains loaded with emotion for visitors, and could be described as a reliquary housing a museum (Cooke, 2000: 7). Cooke's article describes how, by choosing an exhibition layout that was 'non-linear', and without a fixed route, the Museum strove to allow people more freedom to interpret the past.

A second example is the significance given to Ireland's Gaelic past. Societies such as the Royal Irish Academy (henceforth, RIA) were, by the 1850s, focussing on Irish material (Cooke, 2000: 104). But this Irish past took on a nationalist tone with the 'Gaelic Revival' of the 1880s. This permeated Irish society, and nationalist leaders such as Collins and Pearse greatly valued this Gaelic past, perhaps because 'the vision of an ethnic golden age told modern Irish men and women what was "authentically theirs" and how to be "themselves" once again in a free Ireland' (Smith, 1991: 67). This emphasis on a Gaelic past was emphasised in the new Irish Free State, and Wallace noted that prehistoric archaeology, especially Ireland's ancient Celtic culture, was privileged at the expense of medieval historical archaeology, including the study of the Viking Age and Anglo-Norman invasions, until the 1960s (Wallace 2008: 166).

The discovery of the remains of a significant Norse settlement during work at Wood Quay in Dublin in the 1970s helped to change this. It turned out to be perhaps the most important site of

its kind in Europe, yet it attracted criticism from some quarters. Perhaps the museum could have done more to gain acceptance that ‘the Vikings and the heritage of urbanisation [were] as much a part of Ireland as the Celts or as any of the prehistoric peoples’ (Wallace 1989: 24), but since then it has created a Viking gallery to display the finds, and in 2001 opened *Medieval Ireland 1150-1550*, including sections on the Anglo-Normans. These are significant shifts from a monolithic, ancient Celtic past. Here, the National Museum and Kilmainham Gaol are examples of the museum’s role in shaping national pasts.

National museums and cultural policy in the Republic of Ireland

Ireland under British rule

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries an Anglo-Irish elite, largely Anglican (and therefore hostile to both Catholics and Dissenters) dominated the political and economic life of the island. Two of the societies they founded proved to be particularly significant: the Dublin Society (founded 1731), which was to become the Royal Dublin Society when George IV became patron in 1820 (henceforth, the RDS); and the Irish Academy, founded in 1785 and the Royal Irish Academy from 1786 (henceforth, the RIA). Because of concerns with the primitive state of agriculture in Ireland, the RDS was from the start very concerned with agricultural improvement, rather than science. Trinity College (the Ascendancy’s university) also played an important role in enabling the evolution of private collections into the public sphere as national museums (Bourke, 2011: 29).

The Ascendancy were certain of their Britannic identity, in that they moved easily in the legal, legislative, military, geographic and social milieu of the British Empire, but their interests were closely linked with land and possessions in Ireland, and even those from the Protestant north east would have seen themselves as ‘Irishmen’ (Bardon, 2005: 213). They were ready to confront what they perceived as impositions from the London, and concerned with improvements in trade and agriculture. They were also closely linked with English garrisons in Ireland, and they had to take account of the mass of the Irish, who were Catholic. In the north-east especially, society was increasingly marked by sectarianism, which could explode into violence. The American War of Independence and the French Revolution heightened fears of revolution, or of invasion by foreign powers as a step to the conquest of Britain. Dublin was the Ascendancy’s capital and was graced with a range of fine buildings in the eighteenth century. Leinster House was built by James FitzGerald, Earl of Kildare, in the 1740s, on a site south of the Liffey river (Berry, 1915: 98), and other magnates followed his example and built houses there, creating a fine Georgian city centre.

Leinster House was later sold to the Dublin Society, in 1815, which moved its collections there. Croke (2000: 70-73) suggests that these learned societies were, by the end of the 1780s, reflecting Anglo-Irish insecurity, and served as an attempt to insert themselves into Irish history. Thus, whilst formal state promotion of museums was not a feature of the eighteenth century government in Ireland, nonetheless, the ruling elites did play a key role in founding collections that showed early signs of, and would become, national museums.

By the late eighteenth century the Ascendancy was waning, and the abolition of the Irish Parliament in 1800 was a sign of this decline. Although Irish MPs now sat at in Britain’s

parliament at Westminster in London, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, electoral reform and land reform imposed by that parliament would break the Ascendancy's dominance.

In the nineteenth century, British concerns about social control and the needs of an educated workforce, together with concerns about poverty and unemployment in Ireland, prompted efforts to educate the wider population. This reflects Bennett's argument that by the mid-nineteenth century, the 'governmentalisation of culture' was aimed precisely at the modification of the thoughts, feelings and behaviour of the wider populace (Bennett, 1995: 19-20). From the eighteenth century to the mid nineteenth century, then, these concerns were significant drivers for the formation of the collections and institutions that would, in many cases, form the basis of Irish national museums.

Among the societies established during the Ascendancy, four developed collections that would eventually make up the national museums, three were in Dublin, and one in Belfast. These were the RDS, the RIA, Trinity College (associated with the Ascendancy), and Belfast Natural History Society, associated with the growth of new industrial and commercial classes in the north-east.

The RDS (as the Dublin Society) was founded (by members of the existing Dublin Philosophical Society) in July 1731. Its objectives were 'to educate those concerned in the first principles of successful farming, and in endeavouring to promote industries which might afford employment', (Berry, 1915:6). Its members proved extraordinarily influential, and it was 'one of the most successful Irish Enlightenment bodies of the eighteenth century' (Bourke 2011: 33) As part of its activities, the RDS developed a collection, open to visitors, from as early as February 1733 (Scharff, n.d.: 2), making it perhaps the earliest museum in Ireland. In 1792, its acquisition of the Leske's cabinet of minerals formed the basis of its natural history collection, which was kept with other collections in the Society's Hawkins Street House until 1815 when they were moved to Leinster House. In 1857, the RDS opened a new Natural History Museum nearby in Merrion Street. It is now the NMI's Natural History Museum.

Trinity College (that is, the University of Dublin) had been founded by Queen Elizabeth I and was closely associated with English rule. James Patten, surgeon to Captain Cook on his second expedition to the Pacific in 1772-75, had presented his own collection from that expedition to the College. The minutes of the Trinity College Board of 22 July 1777 record that a room was to be prepared to house it. (Freeman, 1949). Patten's contribution formed the basis the museum. It moved to a new, imposing building (now housing the Geology Department) built in the mid-nineteenth century, which was designed by Thomas Deane and Benjamin Woodward (O'Dwyer, 1997: 132). The geological and zoological collections became increasingly important in the museum (they are now held there on the top floor), whilst the ethnographic collections would become part of NMI's collections.

The RIA had for some time had an interest in, and collected antiquities. When, in 1846, Jens Worsaae (1821-1885), a noted Danish archaeologist, visited Britain, he read two papers at the RIA in Dublin, demonstrating how the law of treasure trove had been reformed in Denmark, enabling museums to enhance their collections. By contrast, in Britain, valuable items would (in theory) be handed over as 'treasure trove' to the government and melted down for bullion. Inspired by the Danish example, legislation was promoted so that finders were to be offered compensation for handing over treasure trove. These changes were effected in 1861 and henceforth the RIA obtained 'first refusal' on any treasure trove, together with the role of valuing

it, and an annual budget of £100 for purchases (Wilkins, 1961; Dawson, 2007). Meanwhile, in 1851 it sought larger premises, in part to find room for its growing collection of antiquities. This collection was organised into a new display and catalogued, in anticipation of the British Association visiting Dublin in 1857. However, it proved difficult for the RIA to manage the collection, and it transferred the collection to the Museum of Science and Art – by then, effectively a national museum - in the 1890s, where it still a significant part of the NMI displays.

In the nineteenth century Belfast, in the north east of Ireland, was growing into a major industrial city with a range of societies. As with much of the surrounding area, Protestants, often Dissenters rather than Anglicans, made up a majority of the population. An important early museum was that formed by the Belfast Natural History Society (itself founded in 1821). Its museum opened to the public in 1833 in a new building. In 1909 it was taken over by the Corporation's principle museum, which itself was looking to move to new buildings on the outbreak of war in 1914. These institutions would go on to become part of National Museums Northern Ireland, and their history and subsequent development may be considered as part of the history of Northern Ireland.

Besides these four institutions, there were other initiatives. Robert Kane, a prominent Irish chemist who had helped to found the *Dublin Journal of Medical Science* and was elected to the Royal Irish Academy in 1832, published *The Industrial Resources of Ireland* in 1844, stressing the need to utilise the country's resources to ensure future prosperity. He pressed for the establishment of a teaching museum, which was instituted in 1846. It became the Museum of Irish Industry and Government School of Science applied to Mining and the Arts and had a very strong educational role (Coolahan, 1981: 121). Although the museum had a short life (1845-67), it is notable that Kane insisted on it being open to all regardless of gender, and on its offering a 'united' (i.e. non-denominational) education, which drew sharp criticism from some quarters. Lectures were delivered in the evenings as well as during the day and were free, and used the museum's collections, laboratories and staff. Audiences of over one hundred often attended them. These features led Cullen (2000: 99) to regard it as 'one of the British government's most innovative experiments in education in Victorian Ireland'.

The initiative would move towards London in the nineteenth century, but the RDS museum was popular and called itself the 'National Museum of Ireland' in a catalogue as early as 1832 (Bourke, 2011: 184). The Society was, by now, in receipt of government funding from London, where policy was to make its collections available. With the establishment the Government Schools of Design in Dublin in 1849, the Society had to make room for them on its own premises.

In common with Britain's elites, the Ascendancy families also collected fine art. As participants in the Grand Tour, they naturally collected art from other countries, but Irish artists also received patronage (Bourke, 2011: 75), so that Ireland's 'great houses' contained the basis of a national collection. However, despite efforts by for example the Society of Artists, there was no gallery for exhibition and teaching. Later, John Ellis, a landscape painter, opened a gallery in Dublin in 1792 to exhibit fine art, and although it eventually failed (its collections being purchased in 1810 by the RDS), Bourke noted that his ideas showed foresight (2011: 85).

The Royal Hibernian Academy had been established in 1823 as a result of the work of a group of artists, among them supporters of a national gallery. However, there was little progress until an

International Exhibition was held in Dublin in 1853. It was modelled on the Great Exhibition at Crystal Palace in London in 1850 (though the RDS had been holding exhibitions since 1834, see Turpin, 1980: 2). William Dargan, who had profited from building railways, sponsored the 1853 exhibition. This was in a context where, after the famine of 1845, and increasing agitation for Home Rule, an enhanced role for commerce and industry was seen as essential. It included an exhibition of paintings and antiquities, and, finally, provided the impetus for a permanent gallery, with funding raised by the 'Dargan Committee' and an Act of Parliament in 1854 establishing a 'National Gallery for Ireland'. The building itself (now the 'Dargan Wing') was designed by Francis Fowke, based on early plans by Charles Lanyon, and was completed in 1864. The first director was George Mulvaney, who had been Keeper of the Royal Hibernian Academy's collections.

The National collection was thus built up by purchase and endowment. In 1897 the Dowager Countess of Milltown indicated her intention of donating the contents of Russborough House to the Gallery, including a large number of paintings, and this prompted construction from 1899 to 1903 of what is now called the Milltown Wing, designed by Thomas Newenham Deane. Another substantial bequest came with the untimely death in the sinking of the director of the Gallery, Hugh Lane in 1915, but this was disputed and a large part of this bequest initially went to the Tate, in London, which caused some controversy.

A series of enquiries by London resulted in an Act of Parliament transferring the RDS collections and buildings to the government, and the creation of the Museum of Science and Art, with the Natural History Museum becoming one of that museum's divisions. At the same time, parts of Trinity College's collections were transferred to the new museum. The RIA transferred its collection of antiquities to the museum when it opened a new building in Kildare Street in 1890. In the galleries there was a shift of emphasis to the Irish antiquities inherited from the RIA. The objects were very much in tune with a rising interest in Ireland's Gaelic past. The establishment of a Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction shifted control of the Museum of Science and Industry to Dublin, and in 1908 the institution (which now had a nationalist director, George Noble) was renamed as the National Museum of Science and Art.

Thus by the end of British rule, rich collections, many originating with the Ascendancy, had coalesced into major collections: the National Museum of Science and Art at Kildare Street, of which the Natural History Museum on Merrion Street was a division, and National Gallery with its growing art collection. All their buildings were grouped closely around Leinster House, where the museum had additional accommodation and where the RDS lecture theatre was sited.

Analysis: state formation and national museums to 1922

To what extent were early collections national? Certainly Bourke suggests that Ascendancy society was discussing the possibility of a national gallery by the end of the eighteenth century (2011: 81, 87), though here 'national' was perhaps the concept of a landowning Anglican elite – certainly the learned societies of the eighteenth century represented the Ascendancy (Adelman, 2005: 415). But they were losing power, and as their influence waned, they 'thought the Union [of 1800] would represent a return to the *status quo ante*, instead of which it witnessed its marginalisation' By the 1830s, it can be argued that the collections of the learned societies were coming under increasing influence from London.

Crooke has argued persuasively that by the mid-nineteenth century, antiquarians and other key figures in the learned societies conceived a distinctly Irish culture in their collections, and took a patriotic, Irish view of their activities. Nonetheless, most of these antiquarians did not desire independence and many were critical of nationalist ambition (Crooke 2000: 68-99). Similarly, Bourke (2011: 251-54) detects a strong national consciousness, a desire for a 'self-reliant, self-controlled, self-sufficient Ireland' (253). With hindsight, it is clear that by the 1900s, Home Rule or moderate Irish nationalism seen in the context of the British Empire, was – like Redmond's Irish MPs – about to become irrelevant. The celebration of Ireland's Gaelic past in Ireland's museums was an indication:

By 1890, when Robert Kane died, his brand of nationalism was out of step with the culture of the Gaelic revival [...] the political and cultural changes in twentieth-century Ireland and a different image of the national identity marginalised science, its institutions and its scientists for several decades. (Cullen, 2009: 111)

Between 1916 and 1918, a militant nationalism came to prominence which, combined with Britain's reaction, drove the agenda in new directions.

Irish national museums emerged from the Ascendancy, to which they owed much, in step with wider British developments but with distinctive Irish features. The collections, based on elite collecting and the work of the societies, and the expertise, knowledge and audiences around them, formed a nexus that the London government could absorb, and the trend towards collections to serve science and art (that is, in modern terms, technology and design) was felt strongly in Dublin as London exerted more control. Nonetheless, Dublin institutions continued to express an Irish identity, and resonated with Anglo-Irish nationalism and ambitions for Home Rule. Ireland had a national museum and a national art gallery, both grouped, with other institutions, around a 'cultural quarter' centred on Leinster House.

However, the Gaelic Revival, which sidelined London's 'science and art' agenda, was perhaps outflanking Anglo-Irish nationalism culturally and it was certainly being overtaken by more extreme nationalism. The rise of armed sectarianism, bitter struggles among the political elites in Westminster and Ulster over Home Rule, and the tensions around the First World War and British army recruitment would be challenging enough: the Easter Rising, and Britain's response, tipped the country into crisis.

These events cut Northern Ireland off from Dublin, where the country's national museum was emerging, Northern Ireland would have to start afresh, and Belfast's Natural History Museum, which came under the control of Belfast corporation, would form the basis of a national museum for Northern Ireland.

The Republic of Ireland's heritage after independence

In 1922, Michael Collins requisitioned the RDS Lecture Theatre at Leinster house for the early meetings of the lower house of the Irish parliament, the Dáil Éireann (it, and the Oireachtas, that is Ireland's parliament, is still based there). The entire building was acquired by the state in 1924. Following independence in 1922, the Irish Free State became responsible for the upkeep and development of the national museums. In general, the new state took over the existing British system: ninety-eight per cent of the civil administration transferred to the Free State in April

1922, which ‘emerged with a unusually large number of relics from the *ancien régime*’. (Jackson, 1999: 276). As Jackson notes, these administrators were not popular, but did give continuity.

Responsibility for the National Museum passed to the Department of Education in 1924, and remained there for sixty years. A Committee of Inquiry reported on the National Museum in 1927 (including the ‘Lithberg Report’, considered below), but initially the new state faced great economic challenges and showed little interest in museums during this period. Bourke (2011: 338-9) noted that in 1969 and 1973 internal reports for the Irish Government indicated that the National Museum was an under-used resource and had not been managed very well by the Department of Education, but these seem to have had little impact.

Although the Irish economy ultimately expanded beyond agricultural exports and tourism (the ‘Celtic Tiger’), tourism has played a very significant role in the Irish economy. Besides its economic role, tourism can also be seen as a framing and structuring history and identity, for both visitors from outside the country and inhabitants who may be tourists (Ashworth and Larkham, 1994). Irish policy directives have from time to time sought to shape the telling of Ireland’s past in tourism, for example in rejecting a chronological approach to Ireland’s complex history, which tourists may find perplexing, to one driven by themes (Johnson, 1999).

Moving control of the National Museum to the Taoiseach’s Department in 1984 was followed in 1993 by further moves. Currently the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht oversees the National Museum, through its Cultural Institutions Unit. More significantly, the status of the National Museum was changed to that of an ‘autonomous semi-state organisation’ in the National Cultural Institutions Act of 1997.

The Cultural Institutions Unit funds ‘National Cultural Institutions’ in different ways. The National Library of Ireland and the National Museum of Ireland are autonomous and funded by direct grant. Secondly, several organisations receive grant-in-aid: the Chester Beatty Library (a public trust), the Irish Museum of Modern Art and the National Concert Hall (both listed as companies), and the Crawford Art Gallery in Cork. Other museums receiving some form of funding from the Department are the Hunt Museum, the National Print Museum and the Foynes Flying Boat Museum, though these are ‘other bodies’, not regarded as national cultural institutions, whilst the National Gallery of Ireland is funded by the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht Affairs (Cultural Institutions Unit 2011)

The National Gallery of Ireland, the Chester Beatty Library and Museum, and the Irish Museum of Modern Art.

The National Gallery of Ireland had benefited under Walter Armstrong, who was director from 1892 until 1914, and had overseen major building works and acquisitions. Sir Hugh Lane, a noted Dublin collector, became director in 1914 but his death in 1916 (when the *Lusitania*, on which he was travelling, was sunk by a German submarine), led to some complications. He had left his personal collection to London, but a codicil appeared to bequeath it to Dublin. In any case the bequest went to London’s National Gallery, remaining a source of dispute for many years, until agreement was reached in 1959 to show the pictures in Dublin from time to time, and from 1993 most of the paintings are now exhibited permanently in Dublin.

Like other museums, the National Gallery suffered from a lack of government interest in the decades following independence. However, it continued to benefit from gifts and bequests, and

was again extended in 1962 with a new wing designed by Frank DuBerry of the Office of Public Works. This (the Beit Wing) opened in 1968, housing additional galleries and a library. Most recently, the Millennium Wing, opened in 2002, was built, on the designs of London based Benson & Forsyth, after an international competition.

In 1978 the National Gallery received from the government the paintings given to the nation by Chester Beatty and in 1987 the Sweeney bequest brought 14 works of art including paintings by Picasso and Jack B. Yeats. The gallery was also given some further contents of Russborough House when Alfred Beit donated seventeen masterpieces, including paintings by Velázquez, Murillo, Steen, Vermeer and Raeburn. It is thus an attempt to present European art and the Irish contribution to it. Currently, having been made an autonomous National Cultural Institution in 1997, the Gallery operates under the aegis of the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht Affairs.

Alfred Chester Beatty (1875-1968) was an American mining magnate who had a remarkable collection of Oriental artworks and books. He became a naturalised British citizen in the 1930s, but moved to Dublin in 1950. With the encouragement of senior figures in the Irish government he established his collections in Ireland. The somewhat collection included European, Asian and Egyptian artefacts, and the Islamic collection is of international importance. The museum is a Charitable Trust but receives ninety per cent grant-in-aid from the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism (Bourke, 2011: 302-3). The institution has a strong educational agenda and its website states that:

The purpose of the Library, having regard to its duty of care, is therefore to contribute new value to the cultural life of Ireland at home and in its relations with peoples and cultures everywhere. (Chester Beatty Library 2011)

Originally sited in the suburbs of Dublin, the collection moved to the Clock Tower Building in Dublin Castle, a central location and popular with tourists. Bourke notes (2011: 306) that its collection is of particular relevance to a multi-cultural society.

There was a growing interest in modern art, due in part to a series of modern art exhibitions held from 1967 onwards which gave an international edge to the Irish modern art world and exposed Ireland to new trends. The Irish Museum of Modern Art was established in 1990, in a seventeenth century building, the Royal Hospital, which had been a home for old soldiers, and was modelled on Les Invalides in Paris. The inaugural collection consisted of over two hundred Irish and international works gifted by the Gordon Lambert Charitable Trust for Modern Art (Bourke, 2011: 311-2).

Government and professional bodies

A range of government and professional bodies have played a role in Ireland's national heritage and have been indicative of the government's stance on museums. The Heritage Council, established in the 1960s, is an indication of a growing realisation of the importance of heritage. According to the organisation's website:

[...] the Local Government Act of 1963 recognised the need for more rational planning throughout a wide range of areas. This led to the establishment of An Foras Forbartha which set

up six committees in 1964. One of these, the Committee of Nature and Amenity, Conservation and Development, identified a number of pertinent issues. (Heritage Council n.d.)

These included the unrealized extent of Ireland's heritage, the fragmented nature of State responsibility for various parts of heritage, and the frequency with which heritage interests were relegated to secondary importance.

The Office of Public Works maintains the Irish Government's buildings (except schools and hospitals). It is significant because some of these are national monuments and historic properties. One of the most significant of its properties is Kilmainham Gaol, near Dublin, built in 1796, and opened as a museum in 1971, referred to above.

In 2001 the Council of National Cultural Institutions (CNCI), a statutory body, was established under the Heritage Fund Act. The purpose of the Council is to facilitate the pooling together of talent, experience and vision of the directors of the national cultural institutions in furtherance of the national cultural interest, and to make recommendations to the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism on proposed acquisitions using the Heritage Fund Act, 2001. The Council includes the directors of the National Museum, the National Gallery and the Irish Museum of Modern Art (CNCI n.d.).

Analysis: state formation and national museums after 1922

Besides rich collections, the Ascendancy had bequeathed a cultural quarter, around Leinster House, to Ireland. With the arrival of the new government there in 1922, the new state had a cultural and administrative nexus. However, the Irish Free State and its successors faced many difficulties including a poor economy, and the economic situation remained difficult until at least the 1960s. Also, it is easy to forget that Ireland has a population of around four and a half million. Several European cities have larger populations.

As we have seen there was a growing awareness of the significance of heritage in the 1960s. In the 1970s, the National Museum garnered public support for its attempts to preserve the archaeological site at Wood Quay (considered in detail in the case study below). Meanwhile, in the upper house of the Irish parliament, it was admitted that 'our National Collections, which are a priceless cultural asset, fared better at the hands of former alien governments' (quoted Bourke, 2011: 339).

These events are perhaps clues to the government's administrative changes from the 1980s, which began to address the issues and emphasised tourism. The 1997 Act was significant in giving the National Museum its own Board and some control over its destiny during these changes. Considerable investment then took place, aided by the EU and marked by the opening of two new sites by the National Museum and a third by the OPW. Bourke (2011: 290-91) also links these developments closely with Irish politics. Mary Robinson, elected president in 1990, brought a strong cultural impetus to government. There was in any case a growing interest in heritage, the economy was growing rapidly, and the EU was able to provide additional resources.

However, the relative neglect of museums from independence until the 1980s still needs investigating (Bourke, 2011: 440). Perhaps the recent past in particular was seen as difficult for both the Irish and British tourists. The decline of the Anglo-Irish elite in the nineteenth century (and their ultimate destruction in the early twentieth century) may have contributed by destroying the basis for patronage. This is presumably the point Fitzgibbon (2009: IR-1) makes, that 'in a

country with little tradition of patronage, institutional or otherwise, the arts were seen as a luxury, which the new state could not afford. Thus the story of this period is one of official neglect.’ A more subtle analysis is presented by McGonagle, formerly director of IMMA, who suggested that ‘for places like Ireland, initially colonised and now post-colonial ... the idea of value was always thought to lie somewhere else’ (2007: 38). McGonagle goes on to argue that ‘one response has been for institutions and art production to mimic those of elsewhere or have such models imposed’ (2007: 39), and this was disempowering. The 1998 Good Friday agreement, he suggests, stressed ‘parity of esteem’ and thus marked a turning point and an acceptance of difference. Hence, the creation of the IMMA allowed the ‘right question’ to be asked at the end of the twentieth century: what is it to be Irish when ‘Irish’ has become a question rather than an answer (2007: 44).

Case studies in chronological order

The National Museum of Ireland is made up of four museums (archaeology, natural history, decorative arts and history, and country life). It is one of the oldest museums, including some of the original Royal Society of Dublin collections. These were acquired when it was established, with the RDS existing Natural History Museum as a division, by the London government in 1877. It is also the largest museum, in terms of visitor numbers, with nearly a million visitors to its four sites in 2010 (Cultural Institutions Unit n.d.). There are of course other institutions which receive national funding, as noted above, but of those only the National Gallery is funded, like the NMI, by direct grant; others, which are public trusts or guarantee licence companies, receive some grant-in-aid. Given their age, size, and their relationship with the government, the four museums making up the NMI have been chosen as case studies.

The Irish Parliament had funded the RDS generously in the eighteenth century. It had a very wide range of activities besides its collections, especially around education. However, when the Irish Parliament was dissolved in 1800, the RDS found itself increasingly reliant on Westminster, yet reluctant to surrender its independence. Whilst it obtained funds from Westminster towards a new building to house its natural history collection, which was opened to the public in 1857, there were signs that RDS control of the museum, and its other activities, would be challenged by Westminster.

Jarrell (1983) argued that this represented British colonial and centralising policy. Adelman quotes some evidence that it was seen that way at the time: the British government was accused of aiming ‘to quietly obliterate the last traces of Irish nationality and Dublin metropolitan rank, to complete the provincialisation of both island and capital, and to root out every independent Irish institution’ (*Freeman’s Journal*, 1877, quoted in Adelman, 2005: 415).

Turpin (1982) traced this ‘take over’ in some detail. The RDS sought government funding in aid of its existing Drawing Schools in the later 1840s, noting that its natural history museum could provide content (Turpin, 1982: 2,3). Some funding was granted after negotiation. Meanwhile in London, Henry Cole was appointed head of the new Science and Art Department, which increasingly (and somewhat brutally) gained control of the School from 1853 (Turpin, 1982: 10; Bonython and Burton, 2003: 158). Competition between the RDS and the Museum of

Irish Industry led to the establishment of a Committee of Lectures at Dublin Castle from 1854 to 1865 to manage the expertise of both (Cullen, 2000: 106).

A Royal Commission in 1864 interviewed key witnesses, and the general response was that Irish control was best because local leaders understood the country, that they could respond to Ireland's needs more effectively, and, significantly, that the Irish did not have confidence in the London government. A further Commission in 1868 discovered the same doubts about control from London (Crooke, 2000: 109). However, Sir Henry Cole, director of the Department of Science and Art in London, whilst condemning past British policy in Ireland, still pressed for control of the collections on the basis that they could be run better with expertise from London.

The RDS already had its Natural History Museum, opened in 1857. It was designed by F.V. Clarendon, an Irish architect based in the Office of Public Works, but reflected the ideas of Fowke, associated with the South Kensington Museums. Bourke (2011: 190-1) argues that that it was increasingly seen as a national collection by the senior staff, and saw its role in part to explain the natural history of Ireland. Adelman (2005: 414) claimed that the staff in the natural history section 'aspired to the status of the national museum of natural history (and later geology) for Ireland,' and that in fact the museum already fulfilled that role. 'In the minds of its curators and Dublin's scientific elite, the Dublin Natural History Museum was not a stagnant survivor of an earlier and less scientific period of natural history, but was integral to the future of Irish natural history.'

This sense of ownership by the natural history staff was carried forward when it became a division of the Museum of Science and Art. Adelman highlights the balance of tension between cooperation with South Kensington, and a desire to promote the Irish nature of the museum and its collections – it was not to be a 'poor cousin' of London, nor should it ignore its Irish audience. She argued that the reorganisation of natural history exhibits (from 1896) to reflect Darwinist theory represented a deliberate alignment of the museum with US and European practice, not British (Adelman 2005: 417). Adelman goes on to suggest that leadership in the National Museum was typified by a loose 'patriotic nativism'.

During 1875 Dudley Rider, Viscount Sandon, who had a strong educational agenda, visited Ireland and in 1876 the London government formally approached the RDS and RIA to 'request' support for a merger of some of the Dublin collections under the Department of Science and Art. The RDS was informed that 'the time has now arrived when the wants of the community at large have outgrown the useful action of private societies' (Turpin 1982: 15). The Dublin Science and Art Museum Act of 1877 saw the RDS relieved of its responsibilities for some activities including the Natural History Museum, and the Museum of Science and Art established. The new museum originally continued in Leinster House, and it was intended that this area should become something of a cultural quarter along the lines of South Kensington in London:

The plan was to create a public educational complex filling Leinster Lawn in south Dublin. This complex eventually included a museum housing antiquities, handicrafts and anthropological items; the Natural History Museum; the National Gallery of Art; and the National Library. (Adelman, 2005: 415)

The RDS Natural History Museum formed a division of the new museum along with Art and Industries. The museum was now the responsibility of the Department of Science and Art, which

was also responsible for the South Kensington museums in London. Thus policies and strategies relating to the development of museums in Dublin were linked inextricably to the British State's vision for their role. Crooke (2000: 129) notes that this was an imperial museum established to promote the development of Britain and Ireland. However, it also embodied some of the rising Anglo-Irish tensions. The dispute over the Broighter Hoard, a collection of first century objects found near Lough Foyle in County Londonderry in 1896, which were obtained by the Trustees of the British Museum, is illustrative: after some heated debates, questions in the Westminster Parliament, and a court case, the Hoard was assigned to Dublin.

The first director of the new museum was W.E. Steele, and the collections emphasised technology and design. In 1883, Valentine Ball succeeded to the post, and in 1884 he visited America and Canada to study museums there. On his return supervised a more narrative approach in the natural history collections. Electric lighting, Sunday opening, and printed labels and guide books were introduced.

However, new buildings were planned for the National Library and the Museum of Science and Art. The initial competition for the design led to protests, as no Irish designs were included, so a new competition was held, won by T.N. Deane and his son T.M. Deane (the elder Deane had worked with Woodward on Trinity College's museum). The award represented a 'growing sense of national self-determination' in Bourke's view (2011: 194).

The new building was opened in 1890, on Kildare Street, facing the new National Library (also created as part of the 1877 Act) and flanked by Leinster House. It was clearly regarded as a national museum by some (and was referred to as such in the opening ceremony: Bourke, 2011: 195). Although the RDS retained accommodation at Leinster House following the 1877 Act, these comprised mainly of a lecture hall, laboratories and offices. These were renovated in the 1890s, the lecture hall in particular being upgraded to a high standard (Berry, 1915: 326-8).

The arrival of the RIA's antiquities to the new building in 1890 provided an immediate attraction (Bourke, 2011: 199) and was in tune with the Gaelic Revival. Whilst not a nationalist, Ball was patriotic and encouraged his staff to visit America and Europe (but not, apparently, England - Adelman, 418, 419). Colonel G.T. Plunkett succeeded as director of the Museum in 1896, retiring in 1907.

Meanwhile, in 1899, control had passed from London, via the Agricultural and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, to the new Dublin based Department of Agriculture, Trade and Instruction (DATI). This move was led by Horace Plunkett,¹ an Anglo-Irish unionist who favoured Home Rule or even some form of independence, and who had been instrumental in establishing DATI. Grants relating to technical education formerly administered by the Department of Science and Art in London were henceforth managed by DATI, which brought the museum under its remit.

George Noble (1851–1948), who was Count Plunkett in the papal nobility, replaced Colonel Plunkett. Noble formally changed the name of the museum to the 'National Museum of Science and Art, Dublin' in 1908 (it was already being called the national museum informally). Emphasis shifted increasingly to Irish antiquities, and Noble developed the use of the museum by students and schools, seeing significantly increased visitor numbers (Bourke, 2011: 324-7; O'Connor Lysaght, 2004). However, his son Joseph took part in the Easter Rising in 1916 and was executed, and Plunkett left the museum (he later served briefly in the Free State government as a minister).

Robert Francis Scharff (1858-1934) was born in Leeds, England, and joined the Dublin Museum of Science and Art in 1887, becoming Keeper in the Natural History division three years later. He held this post until 1921, and in the last few years he was acting director of the museum. Thus he was in charge of the museum at a very difficult time. Scharff had studied at universities in Edinburgh, London and Heidelberg, and had an international profile as a leading zoologist, and Adelman (2005: 422) notes that he strongly defended the museum's efforts to gain national importance and international stature. Scharff worked hard to keep the museum open as the country became increasingly unstable after the outbreak of the First World War. The museum closed briefly in 1916 due to the Easter Rising, but continued with several exhibitions to retain public interest (Bourke, 2011: 329). In 1921 the museum was renamed the National Museum of Ireland.

During the Civil War (1922-1923) the museum remained closed in line with government instructions. The new government had taken over part of Leinster House, including some of the natural history collection's space. Following the establishment of the Irish Free State, the museum came under the Department of Education, but the Irish Free State faced many challenges, and it was some years before it could turn its attention to the museum, which it did when the Minister of Education, Prof. J.M. O'Sullivan, commissioned an enquiry, with Dr. Nils Lithberg, director of the Northern Museum in Stockholm, as its special advisor. Its report, presented in 1927, was not revolutionary: 'Gone were the romantic sentiments of the pre-independence era and more practical concerns were addressed' (Crooke, 2000: 142). The report was mainly concerned with a definition of the museum's purpose, management structure and public role. It suggested that the Irish archaeological collection 'receive the most prominent position in the Museum, so that the visitor at his first entrance should at once recognise its national character' (Committee of Enquiry Report, 1927, cited Crooke, 2000: 144).

The impact of the report was limited because the Department of Finance opposed additional expenditure, and with the promotion of the archaeological collections, Crooke contends that the new government lost interest in the museum. Once the archaeological collections were once again fore grounded, the Irish Free State turned to tackle social and economic problems (Crooke, 2000: 146-147).

Dr Adolf Mahr, appointed as Keeper of the Antiquities Division of the National Museum in September 1927, became the director of the Museum in 1934. Mahr was a noted archaeologist and is warmly remembered by many of those who met him. Kibride-Jones (1993: 30) provides a useful description of the atmosphere before the war: 'everyone was happy because everybody felt free, and having thrown off the foreign yoke were eager to build for the future. It was most heartening to an outsider like me [...] to see such enthusiasm and desire to succeed.' Besides improving the administration of the museum, Mahr brought a new level of professionalism to its archaeological activities, and it benefitted from his experience and help from Harvard University in the USA in carrying out some very significant excavations (Raftery, 1988: 23). It is also clear that despite the conflict around independence, collaboration between professionals in Ireland and those in London continued amicably (Bourke, 2011: 334).

However, Mahr was also a member of the Nazi Party, and his activities in Ireland caused increasing concerns. Being in Germany on the outbreak of war, he became involved with Ribbentrop's propaganda division, in particular the Nazi radio service Irland-Redaktion (Wills,

2007: 193-94). De Valera had supported his original appointment, and after the war suggested his reinstatement, but this was discouraged on the advice of Irish security chiefs (O'Donoghue, 2006) or possibly English pressure (Raftery, 1988: 23). Joseph Raftery, an experienced Celtic archaeologist of note, replaced Mahr in 1949, succeeded in turn in 1954 by Dr. T.A. Lucas.

In 1949 Thomas Bodkin, who had served as director of the National Gallery, submitted a *Report on the Arts in Ireland*, which highlighted the failings of heritage institutions and the need for action on the part of government. He recommended that the National Museum be transferred from the Department of Education to the control of a department of art or similar, under the Taoiseach (or Prime Minister, see Bourke, 2011: 336).

The collections remained focussed on Ireland's Celtic past. Directors such as Joseph Raftery 'agreed with the then received orthodoxy that early Irish society was familial, rural, and hierarchical, a world in which towns [such as Viking Dublin] had no place' (Wallace 2008: 169-70) Not unreasonably, perhaps, Irish archaeologists and academics wanted to understand the origins of their rich Celtic past, and the Vikings and Anglo-Normans were seen as 'foreign'. Archaeology was a celebration of indigenous Irish culture. The establishment of the Irish Folklife division in 1974 recognised the importance of its folklife collections, which would find a home in the new Country Life Museum at Turlough Park in 2001.

The National Museum remained part of the Department of Education until 1984, when it was moved to the Taoiseach's Department. This enabled some improvements in management and some control over policy. A second move to the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands followed in 1992/3. This was significant, since for the first time the cultural sector had permanent full ministerial representation. The museum was later moved to the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, but is currently listed on the Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht's website, where the Cultural Institutions Unit 'seeks to create an environment enabling the National Cultural Institutions to flourish through the provision of financial resources and an appropriate policy framework' (Cultural Institutions Unit 2010).

Changes in departmental names and arrangements are fairly common, and of much more significance was the National Cultural Institutions Act of 1997, which defined a policy framework for Ireland's national cultural institutions, and made possible a new governance structure, by which the National Museum gained an independent board. The Board of Trustees is made up of 15 persons, and their role is:

To maintain, manage, control, protect, preserve, record, research and enlarge the collection of museum heritage objects for the benefit of the public and to increase and diffuse in and outside the State knowledge of human life in Ireland, of the natural history of Ireland and of the relations of Ireland in these respects with other countries. (National Museum of Ireland, 2008)

The director's role is 'to manage and control generally the administration and business of the Museum and perform such other functions as may be determined by the Board of the Museum' (Anon 2008). It can be argued then, that the 1997 Act 'brought about the most important legal and structural changes in the governance of the Museum since the enactment of the Dublin Science and Art Museum Act of 1877, approximately half a century before the foundation of the State' (O'Mahony, 2008: 6).

In addition to its national remit, the Museum has a specific role in relation to archaeology and antiquities legislation. This includes the fact that all archaeological objects found in Ireland are State property, including those from archaeological excavations. The Museum also has a consultative role in relation to the issuing of excavation licences and Ministerial directions and consents, as well as administering licences to export archaeological objects. (Fitzgibbon, 2009: IR-27; Ó Floinn, 2008: 44).

Meanwhile, from the 1990s, more funding was available for culture and the arts, in particular with the European Union providing considerable help via structural funds. The National Museum had a share of these funds and they helped with several new projects, including the conversion of the Michael Collins Barracks to the Museum of History and the Decorative Arts in 1997. This and the development of a new museum at Turlough Park, were major developments for the National Museum. Although the later twentieth century saw significant increases in funding, the 2007 financial crisis has taken its toll, and between 2005-2009 the National Museum has seen cuts of around twenty percent in its funding (Fitzgibbon, 2009: IR-11).

The National Museum is now organised as follows:

Organisation	Division	Location
Archaeology and History	Irish Antiquities	Kildare Street, Dublin
Decorative Arts and History	Art and Industrial	Collins Barracks, Dublin
Natural History	Natural History	Merrion Street, Dublin
Country Life	Irish Folklife	Turlough Park, Castlebar, Co Mayo

It may be useful to note the connection between the buildings and Irish history. A powerful Ascendancy magnate originally built Leinster House, home to the embryonic national museum of 1877. South Kensington, though designed in Ireland by an OPW architect, influenced, in terms of its design, the Natural History Museum of 1857 and was intended to complement Leinster House. The competition for the 1890 building in Kildare Street appears to have caused some controversy until Irish architects were appointed (Thomas Newenham Deane and his son). As for Collins Barracks, built in 1702 as the ‘Royal Barracks’, it has a significant history: ‘the esplanade in front is the site of Croppies Acre, a mass grave containing the bodies of the 1798 and 1803 insurgents, and the backdrop to a soup kitchen during the Great Famine’ (Anon 1997). The Museum of County Life is housed in part in a ‘big house’ belonging an Ascendancy family (the Fitzgeralds), associated with British rule (and also designed by Deane). The barracks and others like it were clearly part of a network of domination, but have been successfully recast as museums that celebrate Ireland’s past as a people and a nation.

Conclusion

Museums in Ireland have their roots in the Anglo-Irish elite, who, despite their implication in Britain’s imperial project in Ireland, did have their own sense of an Irish identity, and as such their collections were Irish and they bequeathed the basis of national art, archaeology, and natural history museums to the Free State. However, the Ascendancy was always divided from the mass of the population by religion (Catholics of course, but also Dissenters), and because they were associated with the British occupation (Collins Barracks is an eloquent expression of that reality).

There was a colonial aspect to Irish history and any sense that their collections were ‘national’. With the abolition of the Irish Parliament in 1800, London became increasingly involved in Irish museums, culminating in the 1877 Act, which created the Museum of Science and Art, itself beginning to be regarded informally as a national museum. By the 1900s these museums were formally being recognised as national institutions, and the Gaelic Revival lent great importance to the collections of antiquities, so that they supported a renewed Gaelic identity. Yet, after independence, the new state had neither the resources nor the inclination to support national museums, and they appear to have languished for decades, for reasons which are not entirely clear.

However, EU membership, political changes in the 1980s, powerful economic growth, a burgeoning tourist industry, and perhaps a willingness to look with fresh eyes at a difficult history (hence the popularity of that history in other media, such as films), have all contributed to significant new investment in national collections. Many of the buildings now serving as museums, of which four belong to the National Museum, another to the National Gallery and another to the Irish Museum of Modern Art, could be seen as emotionally charged reminders of Britain’s imperial project and the domination of Ireland by a small elite. However, they are not presented that way by the national institutions. Instead, they are used as a platform for a modern independent state with strong European links, increasingly at ease with its past. For some observers at least, the agenda has moved on to how museums will interact with a more pluralistic society in future (Bourke, 2011: 422-426; McGonagle, 2007).

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Dr. Andrew Sawyer is a Research Associate in the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, England.

Notes

¹ Plunkett is a common Irish name: Colonel Plunkett, Horace Plunkett and George Noble, Count Plunkett discussed here are three different and unrelated persons.

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Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach
National Museum of Ireland, Archaeology	1908	1890s	Politicians in Dublin	Semi-autonomous organisation under the aegis of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.*	Archaeology and Medieval History	National	Prehistory to c. 1550
National Museum of Ireland, Natural History	1908	1890s	National Museum of Ireland	As above	Natural History	Universal	Pre-history to present times.
National Museum of Ireland, Decorative Arts and History	1997	1997	National government	As above	Decorative Arts and History	National	c. 1550 to the present day.
National Museum of Ireland, Country Life	2001	2001	National government	As above	Folklife	National	c. 1845 to 1950s.
National Gallery of Ireland	1864	1854	Private citizens, London Government	Semi-autonomous organisation under the aegis of Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport.	Art	National and universal	13 th to mid – 20 th c.
Chester Beatty Library	1997	1997	Philanthropy and government	Public charitable trust, under aegis of and with grant-in-aid from Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.	Art	Universal	From about 2700 BC to the present century
Irish Museum of Modern Art	1991	1990	Irish Government	Private company with grant-in-aid from Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.	Art	National and universal	1500 to present day
Kilmainham Gaol	Mid – 1980s	Mid – 1980s.	Private individuals, government	Office of Public Works.	Prison (history)	National	18th century to c. 1916
Crawford Municipal Art Gallery	2006	2006	Learned societies, university, philanthropy	Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and private donors.	Antiquities, Fine Art, Decorative Arts	National and universal	Twentieth century

* The Gaeltacht is that part of Ireland where Gaelic is still spoken as a first language.



National Museums in Italy: A Matter of Multifaceted Identity

Simona Troilo

Summary

The report examines four case studies exemplifying the history of Italy's national museums: the Galleria degli Uffizi of Florence; the Museo Archeologico Nazionale of Naples; the Museo Preistorico ed Etnografico "L. Pigorini" of Rome; and the Galleria d'Arte Moderna – GNAM (with the adjoining Museo delle Arti del XXI secolo – MAXXI) of Rome. Their creation and development relate to diverse moments in history and to particular geographical contexts. The first two were founded before national unification, respectively in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and in the Reign of Naples. They were opened to the public already in the 18th century, in order to celebrate the glory and power of their sovereign. The latter were instead inaugurated a few decades after the birth of the Reign of Italy (1861-1946), when the necessity to strengthen the role of its new capital – Rome – fostered the creation of new museums devoted to 'novel' assets such as technology, prehistory, and modern art. These new museums represented a novelty in the existing museographic panorama, mainly focused on archaeology as well as ancient and Renaissance art.

The four case studies exemplify the issues which marked the development of Italy's museums: the complex relationship between local and national identity; the difficult construction of a state system of heritage protection; the weakness of the state in building a sense of shared belonging from above; the fragility of museums as institutions with their own capacities for initiative and autonomy. This report faces these issues by focusing on the creation of the new state in 1861 and on the organization of a system of national protection characterised by a severe shortage of means and resources and, in general, by unawareness of the social and cultural value of Italy's heritage. The scant capacity of planning of the national ruling classes in the cultural sector was aggravated by the wide resistance against the processes of nation-building which became particularly evident with the sale of ecclesiastical estates (1866). This phenomenon induced not only the growth of the national museums but also, and especially, the founding of a large number of civic museums. Between these two types of museum and between the identitarian processes they promoted, a competition arose, in relation to the idea of nation they respectively propounded.

The complexity of the museum issue became even more evident at the beginning of the new century, when the creation of new government bodies for protection of the national heritage weakened the museum system, depriving it of scientific and managerial autonomy. The needs of the open-air heritage outweighed those of the museums, which thus became of secondary importance. Neglect of the country's museums grew worse under fascism (1922-1943). Rather than museums, fairs and temporary exhibitions were better means for the regime to advance cultural policies with a view to building consensus. And there were also the archaeological sites, in Rome as in the African colonies, which could be used to celebrate *Romanità*, and to affirm an imperialism whose most powerful symbol was antiquity. Museographical experiments were

nevertheless undertaken during the 1930s; but overall the museums were pushed into the background by cultural policies based on public spectacle.

With the birth of the Republic, new democratic perspectives superseded the nationalistic and imperialist contents of Fascism's cultural policies. The museums, and national heritage more generally, were conceived as instruments to foster the collective growth of society. But the principles enshrined in the Constitution were not fulfilled, mainly because, from the 1950s onwards, the national heritage was confronted by unbridled modernization. In the 1960s a new consciousness began to form in civil society. It gave rise to initiatives, campaigns, and movements that shook the immobilism with which the country's heritage and museums were treated. It was, however, in the following thirty years that substantial changes came about in the sector, which as regards museums, significantly improved from the end of the 1990s. It was then that the museums gained scientific and managerial autonomy and once again became institutions of importance to the life of society. This substantial regulatory change, however, was not accompanied by a broader reflection on the role of the cultural heritage in contemporary society. As recent debates have shown, the notion of national heritage continues to be associated with that of a fixed and immovable national identity, anchored to a vague past of greatness which has little to do with society's real mechanisms and dynamics.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Uffizi	1860/61	1860/61	State	State	Art	Universal values	1581-2000	Central cluster Existing building.
Museo archeologico di Napoli	1860	1860	State	State	Archaeology	Territorial representations	1734-2000	Central cluster Existing building.
Pigorini	1875	1876	State	State	Prehistory / Ethnography	Territorial representations	1875-2000	Rationalist Fascist style. Architectural power cluster.
GNAM + MAXXI	1883 + 2010	1881 + 1997	State	State	Art	Universal values	1881-2000 1998- 2010	Neoclassical style Central cluster, Postmodern style Solitary location.

Introduction

The collective imagery often conceives of Italy as an open-air museum, a unique space in which art and history are manifest in the fabric of the country's cities and landscapes – and a territory which, though highly diversified, is uniformly rich in historical evidence. This wealth gave rise to the precocious birth in Italy of the museum as an institution for the display and conservation of objects, and to which specific social and collective value has been accorded ever since the 1700s. It has also been the reason for cultural policies which, as we shall see, have over time promoted different and often conflicting meanings and values. The complexity of Italy's cultural heritage, and of the museums that form part of it, derives in fact from deeply embedded local identities which, even after the creation of the Italian nation-state, maintained their strength and appeal. The local/national relationship is therefore of fundamental importance when studying the Italian case, which precisely because of this aspect provides useful insights into the meaning of the concept of 'nation' and calls into question that of 'national museum'.

This report aims first at outlining the most significant features of cultural policies that used museums to express narratives variable in time and space. It also intends to shed light on the difficulties, conflicts, and ambiguities besetting these policies in a country where rich and composite local identities were deeply rooted. The museums, explored in what follows, are of ancient origin because in Italy it was especially on the legacy from the pre-Unitarian heritage that the idea of the national museum developed over time. Moreover the museums explored are solely artistic and historical ones, because science played a minor aggregative role from the identity point of view. In regard to these museums, I will emphasise their role in different historical periods, by connecting their creation and development to the projects, ideas and ambitions which society had towards them. A state of weakness will then emerge for national museums, which suffered from the state's lack of structural projects, and the existence of a huge heritage outside the museums, towards which limited resources and means were directed over the long period.

The meaning and evolution, over time, of the national narrative in museums will be explored in light of four specific cases: the Galleria degli Uffizi of Florence; the Museo Archeologico Nazionale of Naples; the Museo Preistorico ed Etnografico "L. Pigorini" of Rome and the Galleria d'Arte Moderna – GNAM (with the Museo delle Arti del XXI secolo – MAXXI) of Rome. These museums are exemplary cases for study because their creation and development relate to different moments of history and distinct geographical contexts. As the paramount space of art and its universal values, the Galleria degli Uffizi represents a useful point of departure for examination of the close connection between the local and national in Italy. The Galleria was founded at the end of the 1500s, and it long symbolized the power of a dynasty (the Medici), their state (the Grand Duchy of Tuscany), and their city (Florence). With the creation of the Kingdom of Italy (1861), the Uffizi was transformed into a national gallery, with its territorial rootedness maintained intact. Initially, it was the symbol of Florence as the capital of Italy; thereafter, when Rome became the capital of the Kingdom (1870), it was one of the instruments used by the city that was in search of a cultural vocation to be exploited in economic and touristic terms. The local/national relationship was also crucial in the subsequent period, confirming territorial rootedness as a central feature of the history of Italian national museums.

This feature is also apparent in the case of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale of Naples. Also created before Unification, the museum was conceived as a grandiose cultural complex for a city that the Bourbons aspired to turn into a centre of art and culture. After Unification, the museum became the symbol of an ex-capital that reacted to the inception of the new state with hostility. It represented the pride of a city ‘downgraded’ with the birth of the Kingdom. This factor was of central importance in the history of Naples, and it returned to the fore in the 1990s, when an innovative municipal policy turned the arts into means to generate a ‘Neapolitan renaissance’.

The histories of the Museo “L. Pigorini” and the GNAM are very different. Both of them were created by the state in Rome after Unification (respectively in 1875 and 1883), and they were given a manifold ‘mission’: to strengthen the role of the new capital and give it equal status with the other European capitals; represent the origin and diversified nature of the nation and its position on the scale of civilization (the Museo Pigorini); close the distance that separated Italy from other nations; and redeem modern art from the dominance of ancient and Renaissance art (GNAM). While the Museo Pigorini developed especially in the early 1900s, the GNAM expanded after the Second World War and in more recent years, since it was flanked by the MAXXI (2010). Besides their post-unification creation by the state, the two museums share the feature of having had directors who conditioned their histories and determined their success (Pigorini and Palma Bucarelli). Both exemplify further ways in which the concept of nation was employed to represent and transmit a sense of shared belonging.

National museums and cultural policy in Italy

Museums and galleries in the pre-Unification States (1700-1861)

The great Italian national collections originated from those of the numerous dynastic families which, from the fifteenth century onwards, collected objects with evident celebratory and status-related intent. As the means to affirm power or social elevation, these private collections reflected a desire to possess the wonders created by man and nature in a single space (Olmi 1983). The magnificent Renaissance collections – for example the Galleria degli Uffizi of Florence – had an explicit political purpose: that of legitimating the role of powerful personages and sovereigns who used art and historical evidence to represent their grandeur (Brown 1995). Already in the 1600s these collections were rendered visible by the decision of their owners to exhibit objects to a public of cultured and selected visitors. In the next century, they received further visibility from an Enlightenment whose cardinal principles were reason and education (Pomian 2007). The purpose of this display was to gain consensus by publicizing collections and making them accessible in museums. Collections underwent substantial reorganization for the purposes of order and rationality. In the meantime, they were publicized by guidebooks, catalogues, and inventories intended not only for the travellers on the Grand Tour who traversed the peninsula, but also for local elites, which became aware of the heritage possessed by their cities (Paul, Marchesano 2000).

This greater awareness was accompanied by the need to protect the collections, preserving them against dispersion and enhancing them. Protection of the historical-artistic heritage was a matter of particular importance in some regional states of the peninsula, where the abundance of material induced the promulgation of measures from the eighteenth century onwards (Emiliani

1978). In the Papal State, the French looting of Rome and Quatremère de Quincy's subsequent denunciation of the pillage led to ordinances and prohibitions to combat the phenomenon of dispersion and to safeguard the great collections' integrity. Reprising principles already expressed in the sixteenth century, two edicts were issued in the first decades of the 1800s – the *Editto Doria Pamphilij* (1802) and the *Editto Pacca* (1820) – which, besides banning the export of art works and archaeological finds, affirmed the public and collective value of Italy's artistic heritage, and its function as an instrument of civil education (Curzi 2004). Besides norms and rules to protect that heritage, in the Pontifical State there also arose a conception of the museum as a crucial instrument not just for conservation but also for the preservation and promotion of collective values. The Museo Capitolino, for instance, dated back to 1471, when it was founded to exhibit statues donated to the people of Rome by Pope Sixtus IV (*Musei Capitolini* 2007). Inaugurated by Pope Clement XII and opened to the public in 1734, the museum was an institution important for both the Papal State, whose history and memory it conveyed, and the culture of conservation – in whose development it performed a role of prime importance. More generally, the development of a culture of heritage protection heightened pan-European interest in the 'Eternal City' long studied, explored, and loved by the scholars, artists and travellers who recognized its role as the capital of antiquity (Garms, Garms 1982; Giardina, Vauchez 2000). Their presence and activity contributed to Rome's development and to its transformation into a powerful pole of attraction.

Private collections assumed an early social and collective value also in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, where the grandiose collections of the Bourbons were opened to the public during the eighteenth century. Also, the Kingdom promulgated protective laws in the 1700s, when the discoveries of Herculaneum and Pompeii and excavation campaigns in Campania, Sicily, and Magna Graecia prompted legislation to prevent the export or dispersal of items (D'Alconzo 1999). The ascent to the throne of Carlo III di Borbone in 1734 fostered various cultural initiatives that flanked those of a dynamic urban intellectual class. There ensued the creation of various royal museums in Naples: in 1759, the Villa Reale di Capodimonte, which housed the Pinacoteca Regia and royal collections from Rome; in 1750, the Museo Ercolense of Portici; in 1777 the Museo Borbonico – the transfer to which of the region's main collections made it the Kingdom's central museum. Also instituted at the Museo Borbonico was a superintendency to supervise excavations in the region and to safeguard discoveries. Like the Museo Capitolino, the Museo Borbonico was distinguished by a close relationship with its setting: it conserved and exhibited material from the Vesuvian towns and from southern Italy more generally.

However, the proliferation of initiatives and the legislative originality of the Pontifical State and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies were not matched by the other regional states, although these already possessed numerous public museums in the early nineteenth century. Also in those regions, collections celebrated the glory of the respective sovereign or the state, while art works and historical endowments emphasised the longevity and richness of their lineage and history (Bencivenni et al. 1987). In Tuscany, for example, although uninterested in legislating on the matter, Pietro Leopoldo took action to promote the Florentine art heritage, towards which he was able to direct attention and approval. He promoted the idea of an artistic heritage represented as 'Italian' even before the nation-state came into being. Elsewhere, for instance in Lombardo-Veneto, the absence of protective laws did not diminish the value of museums

founded soon after the great academies of fine arts, like the Gallerie di Venezia or the Accademia di Brera (Milan), which combined conservation with education and thus provided fertile ground for the growth of knowledge and historical-artistic abilities. More complex is the case of the Piedmont of the House of Savoy (or Regno di Sardegna), which did not have specific legislation on the protection of either monuments or the artistic heritage in general. From 1861 onwards, this lack of legislation produced a situation in many respects paradoxical. As we shall see, the small Piedmontese state, which had led the process of Unification fighting against Austria and gradually annexing the other states of the peninsula, found itself exercising direction and control in areas with stricter regulations on conservation. Whence derived, the resistance of local traditions to the decisions taken by the new state in creating the national system of heritage protection (Troilo 2005, 28).

In all the cases described, museums – also the universal ones – expressed the identity of a city or region founded on art and history and fostered by sovereigns, shared by local elites, and respected by the visitors who came to Italy to study or purchase works of art. The fruit of dynastic collections embedded in their local contexts, these museums constituted an incomparable patrimony with which, from 1861 onwards, the newly-founded Kingdom of Italy was obliged to take into account.

1861. Unification: the legacy from the past and projects for the future

The Kingdom of Italy (1861) was created by dismantling the regional states and constructing a single state under the direct control of the Savoy dynasty of Piedmont. In a few years, the administrative system of the Regno di Sardegna, its electoral law, its Constitutional Charter were extended to the newly born Italy. The new state, governed by a ruling class coming mainly from the north of the country, immediately exhibited elitarian characters, which were scantily functional to the promotion of a collective participation in the public sphere (Soldani, Turi 1993). This latter was rendered even more complex by the profound social, political and cultural fragmentation of the country, and by the resistance which in some areas matured against the nation-building, perceived as a “piedmontization” process (Dickie 1999). In order to avert the risk that the recently achieved unity might disintegrate, the state acceded to numerous demands advanced by its heterogeneous periphery determined to defend specific and deeply rooted social and cultural orders. Attempts “to make Italians” by means of a cultural policy designed to build a shared sense of ‘us’ were flanked – and often opposed – by local concerns to emphasise civic identities evoked by the histories and memories of cities and regions (Porciani 1997). This local/national relationship inevitably impacted on the cultural policies undertaken by the state and municipal authorities, and it defined the value and meaning of numerous museums of new and ancient foundation.

In 1861, the new Italian state inherited the rich legacy of collections and art galleries that had developed over the centuries in the country’s regions. Their material and symbolic management was impeded by a paucity of resources in the public exchequers. The costs of unification and nation-building, in fact, had depleted the funds available to the government, which found it difficult to organize an adequate system of heritage protection (Troilo 2005). This inadequacy was exacerbated by scant awareness among the new Italy’s ruling class of the value of its cultural heritage, which was for long used merely to celebrate rhetorically the greatness of the Italian

artistic tradition (Emiliani 1973). In this context, the Kingdom's main museums became *de facto* national, in the sense of being public and state-owned. This technical-administrative change probably had symbolic significance only in the case of Naples, where the Museo Borbonico was renamed a 'Museo Nazionale' by General Garibaldi (De Caro 2003). Elsewhere, the state took over the existing institutes as a complex inheritance already imbued with its own meanings, and which had to be redefined within a country in need of a powerful and legitimating master narrative. For some collections, the Uffizi for example, the theme of the uniqueness of the Italian art museum was resumed, together with the civic value of a collection that continued to impress upon Florence its image as the "Athens of Italy" (Cerasi 2000). For other collections – and these were the most numerous – the bond with the city in which they had grown continued to be a decisive factor in the elaboration of images and rhetoric. The weight of the past therefore marked the value of the great Italian museums, whose civic or dynastic origins continued to determine their meanings.

The richness of the already-existing heritage, the difficulty of nation-building, and severe financial shortages frustrated the endeavour of creating a central national museum in Italy equivalent to those of other European countries. However, some 'national experiments' in this regard were undertaken soon after unification, when it was decided to found a number of national museums *ex novo*. The Museo Industriale Italiano, for example, was founded in 1862 in Turin, and the Regio Museo Artistico Industriale in Rome in 1873 (ICI 1980). Both were intended to foster a modern industrial culture able to steer the country's economic future. These museums soon went into decline, however, and they were converted into collections of art and industry intended to boost an artisanship anchored in the humanistic tradition. This decision to concentrate on the technical-scientific dimension highlights the divide between the new Kingdom's capacities and those of the peninsula's ancient dynasties, whose museums fit awkwardly within the context of the new nation-state. The existence of often-incomparable artistic and historical collections seemingly rendered competition by the state impossible. This awareness soon led to other projects for national museums with specific celebratory purposes.

In 1875, the Museo Preistorico ed Etnografico "Luigi Pigorini" was founded in Rome as part of an ambitious conservation project: the creation of a cultural centre in the ancient *palazzo* of the Collegio Romano, which was to house the new national museum and the new Biblioteca Nazionale "Vittorio Emanuele II" (Cerchiai 2003). The intention was to celebrate the birth of the Italian state by renewing the prestige of its capital. Used for this purpose was a 'minor' heritage – prehistoric and ethnographic – which made it possible to incorporate into the identity discourse the question of the origins of the national community and the forms that it had assumed over time (Guidi 1996). In those same years the Museo del Risorgimento was conceived in Turin to celebrate the role of the House of Savoy in national unification (*Il Museo Nazionale* 1911). The museum – which was opened to the public only in the next century – re-enacted the Risorgimento with the purpose of reconciling differences and conflicts. A few years later, in 1881, the Galleria Nazionale per l'Arte Moderna was founded in Rome with the intention of promoting modern art, a heritage given little value, and in many respects overwhelmed by the ample artistic legacy inherited from the past (Pinto 2005). The fate of the Galleria long remained uncertain because of the state's ambiguous and often ineffective action in regard to the new national museums. Conceived as devices with which to celebrate the nation and to promote a sense of

shared belonging, these museums often languished as spaces effectively functional to their purposes.

Despite the weakness of the state's initiatives, it was evident that the national ruling classes wanted to focus above all on Rome, acquired in 1870 with the defeat of the Pope and made the Kingdom's new capital in the same year. The choice of Rome, the ancient capital of the Church and Christianity, rather than Florence, assumed notable symbolic significance (Brice 2007). The state, in fact, entered into competition with the traditional symbolic power of the Church, developing new architectural and monumental forms, secular and patriotic, and conceiving museographical solutions centred not so much on classicism or art as on hitherto undervalued cultural assets. However, these solutions were, as said, constrained by the country's economic and political difficulties, which often caused them to fail.

There was also another reason for the weakness of the initiatives undertaken at the central level: the urgent priority of establishing a system to conserve Italy's rich 'open-air' heritage. The museum question, in fact, could not be separated from that of the remains, monuments, and ruins ubiquitous in the country. These had to be protected by a system that was still entirely to be constructed. In the years immediately following national unification, discussion on the form that this system should take was marked by the fear that it might threaten the cardinal principle of liberalism: the freedom of private enterprise, which might be restricted by a set of protective laws, rules, and procedures (Fusar Poli 2006). This fear prejudiced the debate on the collective benefit deriving from the national heritage, so that a protective law (Legge Rosadi) was only promulgated in 1909 (Balzani 2003). Until that date, the heritage was safeguarded by laws inherited from the ancient states which forbade the export of objects, punished illegal sales and purchases and organized regional protection agencies. Once again evident was the continuity with a past that furnished instruments with which to regulate the present. These instruments were also used to manage one of most important events of the immediate post-unitary period: the sale of ecclesiastic estates (*Liquidazione dell'asse ecclesiastico*) and the consequent devolution to the state of a large amount of the Catholic Church's historical-artistic assets.

From the sale of the ecclesiastical estates to the construction of the heritage protection system

The devolution of ecclesiastical assets began in 1866 – although in some areas of Italy decrees for the suppression of religious orders and transfer of their property to the state had already been issued in 1861. An enormous amount of ornaments (paintings, sculptures, books, and so on) were confiscated by the public authorities, which thus had rapidly to make arrangements for their storage. This property transfer expanded the already-existing national museums. In Naples, for example, the Museo Nazionale was enriched with numerous objects. In Florence, some of the paintings confiscated were transferred to the Uffizi, while other objects were exhibited in a new national museum, the Museo Nazionale del Bargello. But the transfer of property had other effects as well: it led to the creation of numerous civic museums, which received the items acquired from monasteries, convents and churches in their areas (Gioli 1997). At the same time, the devolution wrought a profound cultural change: goods belonging to the Church moved to secular settings, where their meanings were recast. No longer liturgical and devotional, they became key components of a secular and patriotic discourse based on celebration of the

fatherland and its glories. The political cleavage between State and Church – provoked by the latter’s refusal to recognize the new-born Kingdom of Italy (of which the Pope declared himself a “prisoner”) – augmented this practice, transforming works of art into symbols of different and conflicting powers (Troilo 2005). The museum became the place in which this transformation came about, determining a secularization of protection that in Italy assumed more specific significance than elsewhere. It in fact evoked the cessation of the State of the Church, to the advantage of a state entity that used the cultural heritage to produce a new civic and secular religion: the religion of the Italian fatherland.

As said, this phenomenon benefited not only the national museums but also, and especially, the local ones, which mobilized themselves to press for the transfer of the devolved ecclesiastical property to their exhibition halls (Troilo 2005). This demand, however, ran counter to the government’s intention to create large collections to accommodate the confiscated material; an intention that provoked the municipal administrations into asserting their right to protect objects traditionally cherished on their territories. This claim arose partly from animosity against the imposition of rules by a predominantly Piedmontese ruling class which had never reflected upon the cultural heritage or taken specific action in its regard. Whence derived the idea that conservative traditions long established in many parts of the country were being disrespected. It also reflected alarm at the nation-building process, which was redefining the administrative system and radically changing the role of the cities and the urban hierarchies. Defending the municipal identity consequently became crucial for the local ruling classes, which used the cultural heritage as an important bargaining counter in their negotiations with the state. The need to build consensus for the new institutions of the Kingdom and to avoid identitarian conflicts induced the state to accede to local demands and, in the case of the objects confiscated from the Church, to assign a large part of them to the civic museums. The consequence was construction of a nation-wide system of protection and the network of museums that exists today. The local institutions and communities were able to use the objects allocated to them as symbols of their identities, and to resist every attempt by the state to ‘Piedmontize’ them. This aspect had crucial repercussions on the formation of identity policies in this period. The civic museums, in fact, represented local belonging as the basis for national belonging (Troilo 2005). They narrated the nation through local art and history, and nationhood was imparted through the particular histories of individual territories. This nation competed with that evoked by the state and its projects for nationalization, and it furnished special terrain for processes of identification. Shaped on this basis were territorial identities and the relationships between the museums and the places in which they were situated.

In the first decades of its life, therefore, the unitary state had various matters to deal with. It had to manage the museums inherited from previous centuries; to introduce museums of a new type; to handle the demands advanced by numerous peripheral bodies; and to establish a system for protection of the country’s rich ‘open-air’ heritage. This last aspect became, in many respects, of central importance. Before enacting an organic law on protection, the state set about organizing administrative structures able to apply and supervise protective measures throughout the country (Bencivenni et al. 1987). Instituted in 1875, for example, was the *Direzione Generale degli Scavi e dei Musei del Regno*, headed by Giuseppe Fiorelli, the powerful director of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale of Naples. The *Direzione* administered provincial heritage protection

commissions based at the main museums of the country's various regions. Introduced, again in 1875, were entry charges to public museums with the purpose of improving their finances. Three years later, a *Regolamento per il Servizio nei Musei Pubblici del Regno* was promulgated in order to set standards for the services provided by public museums. In this phase of organizing the heritage protection system, therefore, the museums enjoyed considerable status, which was increased by the sale of ecclesiastical assets and by initiatives intended to enhance their scientific and managerial roles. However, with the subsequent development of a centralized administrative system concerned especially with protection, the museums began to lose their specificity and increasingly became spaces devoted solely to the conservation of collections (Jalla 2003). This weakening of their role became more evident in the first decade of the 1900s with the introduction of the *Soprintendenze*, regional agencies tasked with managing heritage protection. These institutions absorbed museum functions, while the museums themselves lost to some extent their scientific and cultural significance. Also, because of the law finally enacted in 1909, the museums were gradually deprived of autonomy in their own management, and in the organization of cultural initiatives. Their principal functions thus became the conservation, inventorization, and display of exhibits.

Towards the end of the century: old ad new approaches to museums and heritage

In the fifty years following the birth of the state, the museums lost managerial and legal power as their needs were superseded by those of the monuments, remains and ruins with which the national territory was richly endowed. This heritage was the focus of efforts by the state and the public protection agencies, which, however, suffered from a chronic shortage of resources. Yet the weakening of the museums did not entirely impede the birth of new national collections under pressure by scientific and cultural elites, local and national. In the 1880s, for example, the archaeological museum of Cividale del Friuli, founded before unification by the Austrian government, was transformed into a national museum because of the importance of the finds excavated in the small town near Udine. In 1889, the Museo Nazionale Etrusco of Villa Giulia was opened in Rome with the purpose of documenting the Etruscan civilization of Lazio. In these and other cases, the museum served to display the historical-artistic wealth of the nation and, at the same time, its specificity in terms of culture and territorial identity. This specificity was obviously also emphasised by initiatives directly undertaken by local institutions, which often created extremely significant museum installations. This was the case of Milan, where in 1893 the municipality purchased the stately Castello Sforzesco, which housed the civic museum, the Museo del Risorgimento Nazionale, and the Museo di Archeologia e d'Arte. And of Trieste, where in 1872 the municipality installed the notable legacy bequeathed by Count Revoltella in a building constructed for him by the German architect Frierich Hitzig. And of Rome, where in 1889 the Museo Nazionale Romano was created to display the Roman archaeological collections of the Museo Kircheriano and the numerous finds then being unearthed in the city by the urban construction work made necessary by Rome's transformation into Italy's capital. In these cases, too, art and history were valued by local elites concerned to promote territorial identities and become their political and cultural representatives. The museum thus became a means to distinguish and convey values primarily to do with a locality's social dimension.

Diverse interests therefore centred on the historical-artistic heritage, while identity policies of various kinds exploited its symbolic and representative potential. In the early years of the 1900s, the museum/territory bond was reaffirmed by a cultural policy addressed mainly to the rising middle classes (Varni 2002). The latter were interested in phenomena typical of the then nascent mass culture (tourism, leisure activities, the growth of publishing) that bred entirely new desires and needs. The demand for knowledge of the territory and its historical-artistic 'beauties' was met by national-educational actions intended to facilitate the 'appropriation' of Italy's heritage and values by increasingly larger sections of the population (Troilo 2005). These were catered to by publications (tourist guides, photographs, postcards, and large-circulation magazines like *L'Italia artistica*) and institutions (the Touring Club Italiano), which 'democratized' enjoyment of the country's historical-artistic heritage and the places where it was conserved. The museums, together with the so-called "*città d'arte e di storia*", received increasing numbers of visitors; not only experts and researchers but also members of a class interested in new forms of learning and socialization. This class particularly attracted the attention of the fascist regime, which during the 1920s devised a propaganda machine intended to acquire the population's support and to steer its demands and needs (Ben-Ghiat 2001). Under fascism, the role of the museum declined even further, to the advantage of cultural initiatives – shows and exhibitions – marked by what has been termed 'spectacularization'.

The fascist regime: from museums to mass demonstrations

The fascist regime took power in Italy in 1922, after the "March on Rome" had spelled the end of the liberal-democrat national system. In the space of a few years, the "Fascist Revolution" led to overthrow of the political and institutional system, the cessation of individual freedoms, the regimentation of civil society, and state control of the country's economic and productive system (Dogliani 2008). The new totalitarian state created its own myths and symbols centred on the bellicose and imperialist nation shrewdly evoked by public rituals and celebrations. From the cultural point of view, Fascism developed the use of new media – like the cinema – and organized mass demonstrations intended to increase public support for the regime's project of national regeneration, which was to be fulfilled through creation of the 'New Man' (Gentile 2009). To this end, action was taken to inculcate the values of nationalism/imperialism by means of examples celebrating the nation's past and present glories (Russo 1999). Fairs, exhibitions, and shows were organized throughout the country with the purpose of emphasising the existence of a strong community bound together by a common national destiny. Among the most successful of these events were the *Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista* (1932), the Giotto celebrations held in Florence (1937), the *Mostra su Leonardo* in Milan (1939), and the *Mostra Augustea della Romanità* organized in the capital in 1937. Ephemeral but potent, these events were spectacular devices effectively able to build consensus and better able than museums to transmit messages to large crowds (Huber 2011). The museums succumbed to this new phenomenon, given their inadequacy in furnishing images, rhetoric, and narratives that satisfied the needs of propaganda and the policy of consensus.

The 'inadequacy' of museums, moreover, had already been instrumentally denounced by voices raised at the turn of the century in support of the conquest of modernity and the demise of tradition. Intellectuals well-known at national level, like Marinetti and the futurists, and minor

local intellectuals striving to gain visibility, mounted a campaign to affirm the reasons of the future against a concern with the past dismissed as traditionalist and conservative (Gentile 2009; Troilo 2005). They derided museums, libraries, and archives as dead institutions, devoid of value, useless and to be replaced. Modernity, read as creative destruction, as progress predicated on the myth of speed, marked their ideology, weakening the image of the museum and turning it into a 'fossil' of history. This image fostered fascism's "obsessive practice of display" (Huber 2011) which used spectacle to emblazon the nation's vision of the future and its creative power.

Nevertheless during the 1930s, national shows and expositions provided occasions to conduct a number of museological experiments. *The Mostra Augustea della Romanità* – whose celebratory purpose recalled that of the 1911 Exposition for the nation's fiftieth anniversary – was held one year after proclamation of the Fascist Empire, and it marked the birth of the Museo della Civiltà Romana (although this was not inaugurated until the post-war period, in 1955). Also transferred to this museum were objects conserved in the Museo dell'Impero Romano (inaugurated in 1929), which also housed an archive and a centre of Roman studies. As the ideological 'cement' of the regime, the myth of Rome welded together the glories of the present and the past under the banner of an imperialism whose most important conquests were achieved in the 1930s (Gentile 2009). But once again, rather than museums, use was made of other spaces to evoke and communicate the fascist symbology of *Romanità*. Principal among them were the archaeological and monumental sites recovered and enhanced in Rome and certain colonies. In the capital, important archaeological campaigns were launched in the 1920s to bring the traces of ancient imperial power back to light. The opening of Via dei Fori Imperiali, the restoration of the archaeological area of the Colosseum, and the excavation of the Teatro Marcello, were some of the most important initiatives undertaken by the regime, which with its "destructive pickaxe" redesigned broad areas of the city and undertook large-scale urban redevelopment (Gentile 2007, Vidotto 2001). Simultaneously, excavation campaigns were begun in the colonies, especially the African ones, in order to legitimate fascist colonization and to make explicit the "epic of return" to lands once part of the Roman Empire (Munzi 2001). Libya became a country in which archaeological finds and ruins represented the discourse of the empire in powerfully effective manner. Here, colonial museums were also founded (for instance in Tripoli and Benghazi) in order to preserve materials unearthed by the excavations. But these museums were little enhanced and they soon went into decline, while the most important finds were sent to Italy and displayed in its main archaeological museums. These exhibits assimilated the theme of *Romanità* into that of *Mediterraneità*: Rome thus represented the centre of a cultural and symbolic universe that spanned the entire Mediterranean basin and furnished legitimation for the regime and its role in Europe (Rodogno 2003).

From fascism to the republic: transformation and continuity

With the collapse of the fascist regime, the end of the Second World War, and the birth of the Republic, Italy's museums and its cultural heritage as a whole were radically rethought in an attempt to erase the fascist rhetoric and its totalitarian and imperialist vision. This attempt was first expressed by the new Constitution of 1948. Reversing the principles that had defined the cultures of conservation under fascism, the Constitution envisaged heritage protection as a means to enrich the individual and to foster the cultural growth of society as a whole. The nation's

cultural heritage was now construed in democratic terms, so that it became a free collective good. But although the role and function of heritage protection were clearly stated, those of the museums were left decidedly marginal, in a historical and political context marked by the difficulties of post-war reconstruction (Jalla 2003). In this climate, continuity with the past was established from both the normative and operational points of view. For example, inherited from fascism was the law on the “Protection of Items of Artistic and Historical Interest” (1939). Although on the one hand this law declared museums “inalienable property of the State”, on the other it defined them, not as autonomous bodies, but as regulated by provisions concerning, for example, private property or the protection of assets in general (Vaccaro Giancotti 1998). Thus reaffirmed was the absence of a museum’s self-governance – with the consequence that it was still fragile in its functions and social role.

Republican Italy therefore began with reaffirmation of the principle that museums were spaces devoted above all to the conservation of collections. They were conceived as institutions lacking a strong project and collective perspectives and with no managerial autonomy from the *Soprintendenze* and other central agencies (Paolucci 1996).

With these premises, museums continued to perform a role preordained for them. Only seldom were important novelties apparent: for instance, the museological innovations wrought by certain architects (Carlo Scarpa, Franco Albini, and Ezio Bruno de Felice) who were involved in both the refurbishment and restoration of some national museums (for instance, the Galleria Nazionale e Museo di Capodimonte of Naples or the Sicilian Galleria Nazionale) (Huber 1997); or in the experiments conducted by Palma Bucarelli, director of Rome’s Galleria di Arte Moderna, which she transformed into an avant-garde museum (Margozi 2009). More generally, the weight of the past – in terms of the structural and architectural forms of museums as well as their role and function – obstructed change, which was restricted to reorganization of the central and peripheral administration of heritage protection. However, the 1960s saw animated debate on museums and the cultural heritage driven by the strong pressure for innovation exerted by a civil society mindful of the damage that economic growth had caused to the country’s heritage (Romanelli et al. 1980). Since the 1950s, in fact, Italy had undergone the rapid industrialization of some of its areas, the impoverishment of others, and processes which soon transformed the economic and social system (Lanaro 1997). Demographic growth, increased consumption, unregulated urbanization and building speculation negatively affected the same preservation of heritage regarded as the ‘sacrificial victim’ of untrammelled modernization. Private associations like *Italia Nostra* were created for the purpose, on the one hand, of inducing the state to assume a more active role in protecting the historical, cultural and natural heritage, and on the other, to heighten public awareness of ongoing changes in the country (Della Seta 2000). These associations became important participants in the debate on heritage protection, in years when the national press also conducted strident campaigns for action to be taken on the country’s heritage. Thanks to the work of journalists and intellectuals known to the general public, greater awareness of the problems besetting heritage spread through Italy – and some areas in particular (Cederna 1965; Idem, 1975). Also the issue of the museums came on to the public agenda through the efforts of activist researchers and scholars (Bianchi Bandinelli 1974).

This renewed interest in heritage protection and museums induced Parliament to set up a commission to investigate the governmental administrative agencies and carry out a census of

Italy's cultural assets. The Franceschini Commission (1964) – which introduced the notion of 'cultural goods' – denounced the parlous state of the country's heritage and suggested ways to reform the protection system (*Per la salvezza* 1967). As regards museums, the Commission's report recommended that they be made more efficient and given greater autonomy – especially in the case of the largest museums, which were subject to damaging and suffocating control. Notwithstanding the wide debate sparked by the report, however, no substantial change took place in the sector during the years that followed. In 1975, the *Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali* was instituted in a context of strong continuity with the past, and in which only the creation of the regional administrations (1970) created space for innovation (Emiliani 1974). Devolved to the regions, in fact, were powers to legislate on local museums and libraries. Despite wide differences among regional initiatives, this devolution was of prime importance, for it finally invested museums with the legal form of cultural institutes and public services. Furthermore, this important process of regionalization was hampered by the persistence of a certain confusion in the national law, and by a series of regulatory contradictions which for long remained unresolved.

New developments: from the 1980s to 2000

In the 1980s, the efforts of cultural anthropologists and demands by civil society for greater participation in cultural processes produced changes in the national and local museums (Russoli 1981). Whereas these had hitherto served the purpose of promoting scientific-academic culture – as elitist spaces whose use was the prerogative of the select few – they once again concerned themselves with the public's education and leisure. Museums began to address the questions of how to communicate their collections, of accessibility, and of relations with the public. This gradual transformation was encouraged by a series of legislative provisions that sought to give museums the role of promoting specific policies (Bobbio 1992). These changes were part of a progressive shift in the relationship between the state and local administrations brought about by the devolution of powers to regional governments. With regard to cultural heritage management, various competences were transferred from the centre to the periphery, the purpose being to decentralize powers and functions. Reorganization of the *Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali* (1988) and the consolidated text of the law on cultural goods (*Testo unico dei beni culturali*, 1999) then gave rise to a reorganization of the sector still today partly in progress (Cappelli 2002). Further reform of the *Ministero* in the 2000s has led to the creation of new advisory bodies and has granted autonomy to museums. As a consequence, at least on paper, museums have regained their managerial independence and their scientific role.

However, these changes came about without any real debate on the role of cultural heritage in contemporary society, and without any real discussion of its function and significance. The shortcomings of this approach became clear in the early 2000s, when the then centre-right government headed by Silvio Berlusconi created bodies for the selection and alienation of the state's monumental heritage. The measures enacted were strongly contested by intellectuals, politicians and important sections of civil society, which mobilized to thwart what appeared to be a 'clearance sale' of the country's heritage (Settis 2002). The threatened sell-off to private agents of monuments, objects, and archaeological sites also prompted mobilization at international level, with the subsequent revision by the government of some of the provisions envisaged. Certain of the issues debated in those years revealed the limitations and ambiguities of an idea of the cultural

heritage deeply-rooted in the country. Defence of its public and collective value hinged, in fact, on a notion of national identity largely taken for granted and resistant to the cultural demands of a society undergoing profound change. The risks connected with the new state policies, the threats raised by the secessionist parties in the government coalition, and the traditional approach to legislative and regulatory management of the cultural heritage and museums, left little space for more incisive reflection on the relationship between the national heritage and national identity. The latter was represented as closed, abstract, rhetorically grounded on nineteenth-century values, and unable to cope with visions and perceptions arising from different senses of belongings. From this point of view, the debate was a missed opportunity and did little to interrogate the role of the cultural heritage in contemporary society.

Also vague and superficial was the discussion aroused in the same years by the proposal to build a new – and unique of its kind – Museo della nazione (Museum of the nation). Strongly urged in 2002 by the President of the Republic, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, the project was intended to promote solidarity and social cohesion in an extremely fragmented political context, where secessionist propaganda in northern Italy was undermining the idea itself of national unity. In response to this propaganda, the project was intended to recover values from a national and patriotic tradition mainly rooted in nineteenth-century patriotism. But the project soon failed, thereby demonstrating the impossibility to represent a common past and memory and to carry forward an idea that was entirely uncoupled from the social reality. The museum of the nation never came into being. The debate on its creation became a pointless exchange of rhetorical proclamations, while still today the issue of cultural heritage is used for nationalistic purposes disconnected from ongoing social processes.

In sum, the Italian national museums and the Italian cultural heritage continue to reiterate practices and narratives of identity that are extremely vague and conservative. They refer to a tradition and idea of a glorious past that have never been debated. This situation is exacerbated by the extreme paucity of the resources allocated by the state to the culture sector. Italy continues to be a country that, despite the richness of its cultural heritage, invests derisory sums in the sector: the expenditure forecast for the year 2010 amounted to 0.21% of the government budget (Carandini 2010). This figure, together with the short-sightedness of the national ruling class, means that culture is a sector rich with potential but constantly neglected. Consequently, also the state of Italy's museums is one of restrictions and obstacles that will be difficult to remove in the future.

Case studies in chronological order

The Galleria degli Uffizi of Florence: between universalism and localism

The Galleria degli Uffizi is one of the most visited galleries in Italy and among the best known in the world for its art collections. It was founded and developed by the patronage of the de Medici family, whose members gave rise in the sixteenth century to a state – the Grand Duchy of Tuscany – able to act on the international political stage. The Galleria was founded in 1581, when Grand-Duke Francesco I began to transfer items from his family collections to the *palazzo* commissioned by Cosimo I de Medici on a design by Vasari. The Palazzo degli Uffizi had in fact been conceived to house the magistracies and the offices of state, but upon order of the Grand-

Duke its second floor was turned into a museum. The collection had a clear celebratory purpose: its universal nature extolled and legitimated the sovereign, affirming his supremacy (Berti 1979). It was made 'usable' by a provision of 1591 that made the gallery visitable upon request. Throughout the next century, the collection was increased and enriched with bequests from various members of the family, such as Vittoria della Quercia, the consort of Ferdinando II who bequeathed to the *Galleria* paintings by Raphael, Barocci and Titian. The gallery came increasingly to represent the state and the man who personified it with a pedagogical intent that evoked the power of the dynasty and its representatives (Olmi 1983). The latter created further collections during the 1600s, such as the new Galleria Palatina at Palazzo Pitti (1620), whose purpose however, was more aesthetic than systematic and public.

The growth of the Uffizi was nourished in those years by a cultural policy which attracted artists and scholars to Florence, and which attributed strong symbolic value to works of art. The bond with the city became central over time, as the collection assumed increasing identity value for Florence and its elite (Petrioli Tofani 2001). In 1737, the last surviving member of the de Medici family strengthened this bond by bequeathing all the gallery's collections to Francesco di Lorena, the future Grand-Duke of Tuscany, on the condition that they must never leave the city of Florence. This pact of historic importance prevented transfer of the collections or their alienation for dynastic-political reasons. During the 1700s, the Gallery underwent substantial changes in both its structure and composition (Finelli, Tomasello 1999). Inspired by Enlightenment and rationalist principles, Pietro Leopoldo began to break up the collection, dividing it among various institutes of conservation according to their purpose. Numerous items were transferred to the Museo di Fisica e Storia Naturale and the Accademia di Belle Arti, while the Armeria de Medici was alienated. New Etruscan collections were instead acquired, mainly from private collectors in various Tuscan towns, thus enhancing the Gallery's capacity to represent the region's past.

These changes were followed by other changes relative to the display of items in accordance with principles of order and systematicity. This rearrangement was accompanied by the introduction of "didactic apparatuses" (such as descriptions and biographical notices), while the demand for information led to the publication of inventories and catalogues (Barocchi 1982). Commissioned in 1748 was a detailed technical drawing of the entire Uffizi Gallery. Moreover, publication began of the numerous volumes of *Museum Florentinum* sponsored by a society of noblemen. In 1779, the first director of the Uffizi, Giuseppe Bencivenni Pelli, published the *Saggio storico delle Gallerie di Firenze*, the first history of a museum – while in 1782, the antiquarian Luigi Lanzi brought out *La Real Galleria di Firenze accresciuta e riordinata per comando di S.A.R. L'Arciduca Granduca di Toscana*. This popularization served to increase knowledge about the contents of the Uffizi, which now possessed more than 1100 paintings exhibited in a sequence of rooms, and a scientifically ordered Etruscan museum. The Galleria, opened to the public in 1769, was described as "a complete museum adorned throughout its extent; where magnificence competes with elegance, the people's history with the history of art, the best of ancient artifacts with the best of modern ones; where, so to speak, every stone bears the name of an illustrious writer; where every addition warrants similar honour; where those initiated into the mysteries of antiquarianism and good taste find so much nourishment, and those who are not initiated find much ease in becoming so" (Lanzi 1982, 211-212).

During the 1800s, the Uffizi's specialization continued as the Museo Egiziano and the modern art section were transferred to Palazzo Pitti. In 1852 the state archives were moved to the Uffizi. This imposed severe restrictions on the future development of the collection, which became increasingly perceived as representative of "Italian art", rich, manifold, expressed in a variety of forms but nevertheless unitary (Barocchi, Ragionieri 1983). This was a forceful image that accompanied that of the "literary nation" that had seemingly existed before the birth of the nation-state. When the latter came into being in 1861, the Galleria degli Uffizi became state property, whilst its nature as a national museum was reinforced in 1865 when Florence was chosen as the new capital of Italy. Legitimated symbolically and culturally as an artistic city of paramount importance, Florence prepared itself to perform this new role – but then abruptly lost it in 1870 when the capital was moved to Rome (Brice 2007). During the few years in which Florence performed this new function, its art collections expanded substantially. Also, because of the confiscation of ecclesiastical property, the city's artistic heritage grew even richer. The Uffizi became the centre of a system of museums of new and ancient foundation, while its collections were further dismembered under a policy of strict specialization. Many items were in fact moved to the new Museo Nazionale del Bargello created in 1865, to the Museo Archeologico Nazionale inaugurated in 1870, to the Museo di San Marco, and to collections at Palazzo Pitti (Gotti 1872). At the same time, the Corridoio Vasariano, which linked the Uffizi to Palazzo Pitti, was opened; the Teatro Mediceo – inside the Gallery – was converted into the chamber of the Senate; and the Uffizi Gallery's furnishings were enriched. Until 1870, therefore, the city fully acquitted its role as Italy's capital.

The transfer of the capital of the Kingdom to Rome dealt a severe blow to the city élite and its relationship with the national ruling class. Florence's search for a new role induced the allocation of all its resources to construction of a new cultural vocation for the city that was to be spent also for economic and touristic purposes (Cerasi 2000). From 1870 onwards, the municipality's cultural policies sought to promote Florence's image as the "Athens of Italy", doing so through the development of art craftsmanship, cultural associationism, and museum tourism. With this image, the city affirmed its contribution to the country's artistic greatness and created an alternative to a destiny so abruptly terminated. The theme of local identity founded on the urban historical-artistic tradition also promoted social cohesion, while Florence's museums, principal among them the Uffizi, became identitarian spaces of fundamental importance.

With the new century, the fate of the Uffizi came to coincide with those of the great Italian collections, now deprived of an autonomous scientific function and engaged mainly in the conservation and the inventory of objects. Consequently, in the first decade of the twentieth century, the Gallery was equipped with further facilities, such as a library, a photographic archive and a laboratory for tapestry restoration, which ensured better protection of its works. These works were rearranged so that "Florentine artistic genius" and its contribution to the formation of a "national artistic genius" could be displayed even more prominently. Venetian and Florentine painters of the 1400s provided the masterpieces of the collection, while the works of Giotto were transferred to the Uffizi from the Accademia in order to recreate the "essential sequence of Italian pictorial history". Caravaggio and his works were added to these artists in 1922 (Giglioli 1932). But from the celebrations of the nation's fiftieth anniversary until proclamation of the Fascist Empire, other spaces, this time temporary, were used to involve an

increasing number of people in the state's cultural policies. Florence's artistic uniqueness was reaffirmed in this period by a series of exhibitions, such as the *Mostra del Ritratto Italiano* (1911), the *Mostra di Pittura Italiana del '600 e '700* (1922), and the *Mostra Giottesca* (1937), which attracted hordes of visitors either drawn by the fame of the city or driven to do so by the regime's consensus machine. Whatever the case may be, Florence indicated the local route to national and universal glory. In those same years, the Florentine School occupied the first rooms in the gallery's layout, which were followed by those exhibiting the other regional schools.

The Uffizi suffered severe damage during the Second World War, and the restoration work was accompanied by further reorganization of its exhibits, which were no longer ordered into schools but instead chronologically. The "localistic" interpretation of the displayed works was therefore replaced by a perspective more responding to the scientific knowledge of the time. During the 1950s, the idea was conceived of creating the "Grandi Uffizi" through the transfer of the state archives and occupation of the entire building by the art gallery (Berti 1979). Also introduced in this period was a policy of greater openness to the public and greater investment in public education. The Gallery responded to the requirements of civil society, whose demand to participate in the production of culture it acknowledged. After the flooding of Florence in 1966, which devastated the city, the Uffizi underwent further rearrangement intended to solve the problems of the shortage of space and the growth in the number of visitors – which reached peaks of some 11,000 visits a day between 1969 and 1979. Florence thus established itself as a paramount destination for mass tourism, both Italian and foreign, while the Uffizi became one of the most visited galleries in Italy and the world. Besides this openness to the outside, and again in continuity with the past, the Galleria degli Uffizi today maintains a close bond with its city, towards which it addresses large-scale policies of popularization and education aimed, for instance, at schools. The bond with the territory is therefore still central for a museum that in the collective imagination represents the fulcrum of Italian art, of the "national artistic genius" and of the "universal spirit".

The Museo archeologico of Naples: the "universal treasure" and the history of the region

The Museo Archeologico of Naples is one of the most important Italian national museums, especially because of its Graeco-Roman collections. The Museo was created on the behest of Carlo III di Borbone, who ascended to the throne of Naples in 1734. A member of one of best-known families of collectors at the time – the Farnese – Carlo arrived in Naples with a vision of urban modernization and cultural promotion which induced him to take action in the field of art and archaeology. Like other sovereigns of the time, the Infant of Spain saw both the fields of art and archaeology as means to celebrate himself and his dynasty (De Caro 2003). He pursued his project in the dynamic context of eighteenth-century Naples, where intellectuals and researchers animated the city's cultural life with styles and ideas imported from other European capitals (*Da Palazzo degli Studi* 1977). It was in this setting that Carlo conceived the creation of a Museo Farnesiano to house his family's rich and centuries-old collections in Rome and Parma. The idea of transferring works of art, books, and archaeological finds to Naples coincided with the intent to make the city into a great centre of art. It was on these bases that the foundations of the Villa Reale di Capodimonte were laid, and a first museum was inaugurated there in 1759. In this museum, art works from the Pinacoteca Reale and items brought from Rome were gathered.

Their transfer was completed by Carlo's son, Ferdinando IV, who between 1786 and 1787 had the Farnese collections transported from Rome contrary to the wishes of the Pope and in breach of the protective legislation of the Pontifical State. Naples thus became the place in which the sovereign concentrated his riches.

Ferdinando was not only interested in works of art but also the region's antiquities. The prodigious finds unearthed at Herculaneum and Pompeii after 1738 prompted further excavations in the area, and in 1750 the creation of the Museo Ercolanense in Portici. Ferdinando's wealth induced him to conceive a new structure to house the objects from both Capodimonte and Portici. Space was found at the Palazzo degli Studi, the seventeenth-century premises of the university, from which the Jesuits had been ejected in 1767. Ferdinando's idea was of grandiose scope: to convert the Palazzo into a museum flanked by a library, the Società Reale Borbonica, the Accademia di Pittura, Scultura e Architettura, the Laboratorio di Pietre Dure, and the Stamperia Reale. The entire complex was to have a public vocation that reflected the cultural values of the time. The transformation of the building was long and difficult, however, also because of political events that forced the king's flight to Palermo and the transfer to Sicily of numerous works retrieved from the French. But in 1801 the "Reale Biblioteca di Napoli" was opened to the public, and the transfer of materials began from Capodimonte and Portici. With the king's definitive return in 1816, the Real Museo Borbonico was inaugurated as a freehold property extraneous to ownership by the crown.

In those years, the Museum performed a role of prime importance in protecting the Kingdom's historical-artistic heritage. On the museum depended, in fact, the entire administrative structure created by the Bourbons to supervise excavations in the region, to prevent dispersion of the finds, and to conduct surveys (D'Alconzo 1999). The museum was therefore the hub of a powerful centralized system able to direct archaeological activity by virtue of the presence of advanced legislation on the matter; a system unparalleled in Italy except in the Papal States. In this context, the museum expanded, and its nature and importance started to be systematically publicized. Its "universal treasure" was described for the first time by an eighteen-volume Catalogue compiled in 1823 (*Real Museo* 1823). This clearly expressed a conception of the museum as a "temple" made special by the remains from Pompeii and Herculaneum and by the possibility to celebrate the sovereign's glory through them. Erected at the museum's entrance was a marble statue, executed by Canova, of King Ferdinando posing as the sovereign protector of the arts. Together with this statue, a tablet was installed to celebrate Ferdinando's commitment to "the glory of the country" and to "the convenience of scholars". The museum grew considerably in the following years, also thanks to the work of a Commission created in 1848 by the constitutional government to study innovations to its interior design and the excavations in progress in the Kingdom (Gargiulo 1864).

By 1860, therefore, the Museo Borbonico had developed a specific physiognomy. In that year, with the arrival of Garibaldi, it was transformed into a national museum owned by the state. The new title had an important political significance, since it marked a transfer of power that was particularly complex for the former Bourbon Kingdom. The great political, economic and social distance between the country's north and south immediately proved to be of dramatic proportions – so much so that it produced conflicts and resistances which threatened the unity of the country itself (Dickie 1999; Moe 2002). In this context of severe tensions, the museum

constituted a symbol of the power of the ancient state, and of the pride of a vast region which had lost its political and administrative autonomy to become part of a new national structure. From the point of view of heritage protection, this change was also somewhat paradoxical, because the former Bourbon Kingdom, with its advanced laws on the conservation and exploitation of testimonials to art and history, now found itself being governed by a state (the Piedmont of the House of Savoy) devoid of any legal and cultural experience on such matters (Troilo 2005). This discrepancy provoked widespread antagonism against the supremacy of the small Piedmontese state, which had arrogated to itself the role of creating the new Kingdom of Italy.

Yet the Museo Borbonico immediately proved to perform a function of great importance. It maintained control over the heritage protection system throughout the southern regions, also through the efforts of its new-appointed director Giuseppe Fiorelli. Thanks to Fiorelli, the future director of the most important component of the national protection system – the *Direzione Generale Antichità e Belle Arti* created in 1875 – the museum was reorganized from 1863 onwards, and an inventory and a periodical Bulletin were published. The museum was also given the task of organize the confiscation of ecclesiastical property in southern Italy – to the great benefit of its collections.

Moreover, it became an important centre for the development of new scientific and archaeological initiatives (Fiorelli 1873). This function was augmented by hiving off some of the museum's institutes (the *Accademie*), which were congesting its activities. The museum now fully represented the artistic wealth of the region and, hence, that of the entire nation as well. Its art collections also evoked the values of universalism, which augmented the significance of the museum outside Italy. As the 1864 guide boasted, “quite rightly our Museum is held by all to be the richest, the most complete, the best, and the first among those many that exist in the principal cities of civilized Europe” (*Cenni storici* 1864, 12). Implicit in the celebration of the museum was also that of Naples, the former capital of the Bourbon state deprived of so much of its power by the new political order. Thus the museum's ties with its territory were constantly affirmed in an endeavour to demonstrate the region's unparalleled wealth (Migliozzi 1882).

In the early 1900s, the innovations made to the museum's installations aroused strong criticisms in the national press. The director, Giulio De Petra, was dismissed for a purchasing policy regarded as mistaken (1900), while in 1903 the refurbishment undertaken by Ettore Pais was condemned on the grounds that it was excessively modernist (De Petra 1901; Pais 1903). Numerous intellectuals took part in the debate provoked by Pais's actions, creating a national controversy in which personal interests and conflicts internally to the museum sector combined with more properly scientific opinions (Ciaceri 1903). The dispute centred on the break-up of the collections and the creation of exhibition areas gathering the works of greatest aesthetic-philological merit: indeed, again in 1903, the ministry set up a commission of inquiry to investigate the state of the museum. The commission exonerated Pais, thus giving free rein to reorganization of the museum's spaces, concentration into a single area of the picture-gallery, and rearrangement of the archaeological exhibits (*Relazione* 1917).

During the fascist period, the history of the museum replicated that of the other numerous great collections, marginalised by new cultural politics and by the success of other forms of communication and consensus-management. The main development in those years was

reorganization of the Pompeii materials, which were entirely rearranged by director Maiuri with clear popularizing intent (De Caro 2003). Moreover, in 1925 the Biblioteca Nazionale was transferred to the Palazzo Reale and work began on reinforcing the foundations, which lasted until 1937 (Maiuri 1936). During the Second World War, Naples suffered severe bombardment, and numerous works were transferred to Rome and kept at the Vatican Museums; others were stolen by the Nazis and subsequently recovered. The museum did not re-open until 1945, despite the presence on its premises of various offices of the allied forces. The 1950s saw a further major transformation of the museum when the picture-gallery was transferred to Capodimonte in 1957 (De Franciscis 1963). The museum was now entirely archaeological. Since its objects directly referred to the history of the territory, the bond between the museum and the territory was definitely evident. A specific policy of openness to the public was then adopted in response to the greater demand for participation that arose at the end of the 1970s (Pozzi 1986). In those decades, attempts were made to recontextualize exhibits and to reconstruct the histories of the museum's various collections, at the same time leaving space for new acquisitions from archaeological excavations. Pompeii remained the centre of interest because of its symbolic value in a complex social, political and economic context like that of Naples.

During the 1980s, the function of the Museo Archeologico as the region's central museum was partly diminished by the opening of numerous local museums, towards which it sought to perform a linking function through a regional museum network (Pozzi 1986). The central importance of Naples was then forcefully reaffirmed by a cultural policy, which from the next decade onwards, sought to combat the image of the city as decadent and in crisis. Damaged by the 1980 earthquake, lacerated by the subsequent economic, political and social crisis, and suffocated by organized crime, Naples became a proving ground for a centre-left policy to relaunch the city through art and culture in general. During government under the Bassolino mayorship, the urban renewal of the historic city centre, the modernization of numerous infrastructures, and the revitalization of the city, produced the image of a "Neapolitan Renaissance" in which museums, exhibitions, and urban artwork enhanced a sense of local identity (Dines 2004). In those years, the archaeological museum played an active part in this endeavour by hosting important art exhibitions (also of foreign artists), and opening up to the public with new initiatives. Although the enthusiasm later subsided, the museum continued to push for innovation, although its efforts were hampered by a severe shortage of resources.

The Museo Preistorico Etnografico "L. Pigorini" of Rome: the remote roots of the nation

The Regio Museo Nazionale Preistorico ed Etnografico of Rome was one of the new museums created by the Italian state in the first decades after Unification. It was founded in 1875 on the initiative of the Minister of Education, Ruggero Bonghi, and the archaeologist Luigi Pigorini. The institute was conceived as part of a broader project to create a cultural complex in Rome which would comprise the new museum and the nascent Biblioteca Nazionale "Vittorio Emanuele II" in the ancient *palazzo* of the Collegio Romano, the erstwhile site of the seventeenth-century Kircherian collection (Fugazzola Delpino, Mangani 2003). Creation of the new complex responded to the need to celebrate the new capital of the Kingdom and to give it equal status with the great European capitals. The project consequently had a strong nationalistic intent, because on the one hand it ratified the State's definitive defeat of the Church and the consequent

incorporation of Rome into the Kingdom of Italy, and on the other, celebrated the new capital by endowing it with a museum unique in the country. It renewed the national museum panorama, valuing not so much the artistic and classical heritage, on which the attention of the ruling class in Rome had long concentrated, as a 'novel' and hitherto undervalued heritage. Consequently, the cultural policies of the new state were at odds with that of the Church insofar as they addressed secular and patriotic interests.

From the cultural point of view, the creation of the museum responded to other exigencies as well. The first was to conduct historical investigation of Italy's territory, characterized as it was by differences and disparities that profoundly affected the life of the country. As Pigorini wrote to Bonghi in 1875, "it is extremely important to know what of the primitive ages lies concealed in the various areas of the Kingdom, the purpose being to conduct those comparisons which alone can show the similarities and differences among the arts and customs of peoples which, prior to the historical age, held Italy from one end to the other" (Fugazzola Delpino, Mangani 2003, 321-322). This requirement was fully met by the museum, whose collections also comprised exhibits representing 'primitive' peoples still living in various parts of the world. The remotest past of Italy was thus compared to the 'barbaric' present of distant places, in a discourse on civilization that framed the evolution of peoples within an ideal Eurocentric and ethnocentric system. From a social point of view, the museum catered to the need for legitimation expressed by the new national ruling class (Guidi 1996). Consisting mainly of a middle class of northern origin, this found its ideal roots in a reading of prehistory – the so-called 'Pigorini theory' – according to which in remote times the peninsula had achieved cultural unity thanks to a civilization which extended from the north towards the south, creating new forms of settlement and giving rise to Latin civilization itself. Ideally, this process of unification overlapped with the present, representing powerful and effective continuity between the remote past and present events.

The museum was inaugurated on 14 March 1876, the birthday of both King Vittorio Emanuele II and Prince Umberto, who presided over the ceremony. The opening was accompanied by great controversy provoked both by the incompleteness of the installations and by the juxtaposition of the prehistoric and ethnographic collections (Acanfora M.O. 1976). A certain disquiet was also expressed in regard to the power assumed by Pigorini, who put himself forward as a leading expert on archaeology. However, the development of the museum was rapid, also thanks to the efforts of the director, Giuseppe Fiorelli, who worked directly on gathering exhibits, soliciting other collections in the Kingdom to provide them, and applying pressure on local institutions to furnish items from their collections (Lerario, M.G. 2005). His actions exhibited an endeavour to develop national science, a desire to enrich Rome with a museum different from those with which it was already abundantly endowed, and an intent to establish continuities between the nation's remotest past and its present. Fiorelli accordingly urged the local museums to participate in the project for the museum of prehistory and ethnography. This would have given them prestige, as well as representing the nation's cultural diversity.

During the 1880s, the life of the museum was dominated by the activism of Pigorini, who succeeded in turning it into a centre for the planning of palethnological research and excavations in the country (Lerario 2005). From within the museum, Pigorini supervised archaeological investigations throughout Italy, while at the same time organizing courses for university students, who attended lectures on palethnology in the museum's rooms. The museum also sponsored

publication of the *Bullettino di Paletnologia Italiana*, thereby becoming a centre of study and scientific popularization of importance throughout Europe. The expansion of the museum's functions made it necessary to occupy increasing amounts of space, to the detriment of the adjoining Museo Kircheriano, which was gradually ousted from its original premises to make room for extensions to the Pigorini collection. The museum increasingly became an institution for the education of the general public. Conceived by Pigorini as "an open book, with the clearest statement of the chapters into which it is divided" (Pigorini 1884), the museum produced explanatory panels and leaflets to foster learning of its values based on an idea of progress and unity in regard to the nation and its position on the scale of civilization. In 1895, Italy, Europe, Africa, Asia, Oceania were arranged in a sequence of 70 rooms acquired at the spacious Collegio Romano.

In the early decades of the twentieth century the Museum achieved its greatest success in Italy and abroad as its collections were expanded also by large private bequests. Many of the most important ethnographic and prehistoric collections in the country were transferred to the museum, which became a point of reference for scholars both Italian and foreign (Fugazzola Delpino, Mangani 2003). It was, however, in those same years that debate internal to ethnography began to undermine the cultural bases of the museum, which were further weakened by resolutions passed at the first *Congresso di Etnografia Italiana* held in 1911. The increasing distinction between palethnology and ethno-anthropology began to have repercussions on the museum's cultural project, which became problematic in subsequent decades.

When Pigorini died in 1925, his name was included in the museum's title. With the demise of the charismatic function of its founder, the museum was taken over by the *Soprintendenza alle Antichità* of Rome and thereafter went into considerable decline (Fugazzola Delpino, Mangani 2003). The autonomy that it had enjoyed under Pigorini was removed – as happened to the other great museums of the Kingdom, which were brought under the control of the *Soprintendenze*. This situation was exacerbated by the scant interest shown by the fascist regime in prehistory and ethnography, both of which it considered of little importance compared with the celebratory and propagandistic potential of classical archaeology. This "indifference" of the regime was denounced by the new director, Piero Barocelli, who in 1938 described the state of neglect in which the collections had fallen (Fugazzola Delpino, Mangani 2003). The museum lacked funds, resources, and staff, and its collections seemed bound to deteriorate further. It was Barocelli himself who, together with other scholars, published the first guide to the museum with a view to its recovery (Barocelli, Boccassino, Cerelli 1937). In 1940, appeals to rescue the "central museum of Italian prehistory" led to conversion of the Museo Pigorini into the offices of the *Soprintendenza alle Antichità di Roma V*, and to its relaunching in national-imperialist terms (Barocelli 1939). The museum's collections now had to represent the origins of the Italian race and Italy's destiny in the world.

The ambiguous role attributed to the museum by fascism was reversed after the fall of the regime, when the nationalistic and imperialist myth gave way to new political and cultural ideals. During the 1940s the museum was enriched mainly with objects from excavations on the outskirts of Rome and in Lazio, which led to the opening of a new section: the Museo della Preistoria and Protostoria Laziale (1962) (Sestieri 1975). This museum was installed at the new Palazzo delle Scienze, at the EUR complex in Rome, where it was joined by the historical

collection of the Collegio Romano between 1975 and 1977. The new location of the Museo Pigorini in the district designed by the fascist regime for the 1942 *Esposizione Universale di Roma* (which was never held), severed the museum's traditional bond with the city. At the EUR, an extra-urban area to the south of Rome, the Pigorini Museum was flanked with other institutions (the Museo della Civiltà Romana, the Museo dell'Alto Medio Evo, the Museo Nazionale delle Arti e delle Tradizioni Popolari) in an attempt to enhance the cultural value of a marginalized city hinterland. In its new premises, the museum became a 'special institute' denominated the *Soprintendenza Speciale al Museo Nazionale Preistorico ed Etnografico "Luigi Pigorini"*.

After the 1980s, the museum had to come to terms with its complex nature and with the crisis of identity provoked by the death of its founder. The central importance of Pigorini in the conception and development of the museum had in fact complicated the distinction between the institution's history and its collection, and only with great difficulty was it able to relaunch its social function, renewing its installations and rethinking its communication duties towards the public. Today, the museum seeks to make its collections more accessible by means of initiatives designed to foster both museographical research and educational activities.

The Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna (GNAM) and the Museo delle Arti del XXI secolo (MAXXI): from the nation to the contemporary avant-garde

The GNAM and the MAXXI are anomalies in the Italian museum system, given that only in recent decades has contemporary art received explicit attention from the state and its conservative agencies. The two museums have very different origins and histories, in that they were created more than a century apart. The GNAM was inaugurated in 1883 at the new Palazzo delle Esposizioni built in the centre of Rome on a design by the architect Piacentini. The museum was above all the result of efforts by the Minister of Education Baccelli, and it was intended to serve two purposes: to endow Italy with a place dedicated to modern art, and to enhance Rome with a museum which promoted a form of art of little interest in the country (Bucarelli 1951). In 1881 these two aims had led to the organization in Rome of a highly successful international exhibition of modern art. Other exhibitions of the same kind had been mounted in the past in other Italian cities, but the success achieved in 1881 induced the state to purchase the works shown at the exhibition, and to create a gallery in which to collect works by living or recently deceased artists.

The initial enthusiasm for the project dwindled with time, however, owing to the state's financial difficulties and to the scant interest of Italians in modern art. But at the *Congresso Artistico Internazionale* organized in Rome on the occasion of the 1911 Exposition, the GNAM's development became an issue of central importance. The need to expand the gallery was asserted by intellectuals and politicians, who proclaimed it necessary "to restore to Italy one of its intellectual provinces, modern art, and to render it fertile, prosperous, and worthy of a future" (*Atti del congresso* 1911, 47). This project to establish continuities between art of the past and the present was framed in a discourse on national regeneration which conjugated tradition and modernity, and which envisaged a new role for Italy, with its 'redemption' through history and art.

In 1915 the GNAM was transferred from the centre of Rome to Valle Giulia, situated in a green-belt district that had been urbanized on the occasion of the 1911 Exposition. Although the

transfer was widely contested as a downgrading of the gallery, the monumental building designed by the architect Bazzani provided space in which it could develop (Marini Clarelli 2009). With the transfer, the works acquired over time were sorted and sifted by the director Ugo Fleres. The arrangement chosen by Fleres followed a geographical criterion whereby works were divided into regional schools and exhibited so as to represent the diversity of Italian modern art (Pinto 2005). But because of the institutional and managerial weakness of the country's museums, Flores had very limited powers in the purchase of new works, a task which was undertaken by a committee appointed by the ministry. The growing number of exhibits, however, prompted a decision to extend the GNAM's premises, but the work begun in 1915 was completed only in subsequent decades.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the layout of the GNAM was reorganized by its new director, Roberto Papini, who focused above all on contemporaneity, eliminating the distinction by regional schools and resuming a historical criterion that divided the exhibits between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Pinto 2005). Topicality came to dominate in the gallery, conceived as a "chapter of history pulsating with life in the consciousness of the old and young", as a place in which to affirm "a continuity of history and creative energy" through art (Papini, in Pinto 2005). The themes of fascist creativeness, of twentieth-century modernity, of experimentation with new art forms, were forcefully asserted in the furnishings of the rooms, in which living Italian artists were celebrated above all. Foreign works of art, in fact, were transferred to Galleria Internazionale di Arte Moderna of Venice, while in 1934 an entire area of the GNAM was reserved for a *Mostra permanente della Rivoluzione Fascista* (Permanent Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution). The actuality of the artistic present became the actuality of the fascist project, while the gallery came to embody the values of a "regenerated" nation. Thus, from an external point of view, the GNAM presented the image of a break with the country's artistic tradition centred on a "burdensome" past that "crushed" contemporaneity. As the poet and art critic Mauclair wrote in 1932, it was this weight that bore down on Italian artists: "just as Italy, which in sixty years has become a great and dynamic power, no longer accepts the judgement which dismisses it as a nation of hoteliers and guides living on unearned income from its landscape and marvellous artistic heritage, so artists suffer the fate unfortunately reserved for the children of the great" (Pinto 2005, 14). The GNAM was a new space that offered artists opportunities to express their talents and to enrich the country's artistic history.

With the end of the Second World War and the appointment of Palma Bucarelli as director, the GNAM began to take shape as a museum with a specific mission driven by three main factors: the growth of a new public awareness of contemporary art; the promotion of Italian and especially international contemporary art; and transformation of the museum into a space democratically accessible to all. The innovatory project was already apparent in an exhibition organized in 1945 by Bucarelli on contemporary Italian art; a exhibition strongly desired at a time when American armed forces were still in Rome, and when Italian art was being used as a means to redeem the country from its recent fascist political and cultural past. As Bucarelli wrote to the ministry, the exhibition should stand "as testimony to the state's interest in matters of art, to the cultural function of the Italian institutes of art even in these difficult times; and above all to the value of the most recent art, so that foreign guests do not believe (...) that Italian art ended with Caravaggio" (Margozzi 2009, 22). 1945 marked the launching of an entirely new cultural policy

for the GNAM that rejected museological and cultural models from the past to the benefit of “living” art and international culture.

From the 1950s onwards, exchanges and donations enriched the GNAM with a notable number of works executed by young Italian and foreign artists (Marini Clarelli 2009). But the gallery was the constant target of criticism, especially by left-wing politicians, who attacked the choices of the director, her management of the museum’s spaces, and her purchasing policy centred on abstract art (Ferrario 2010). In a strongly misogynous context, Bucarelli adopted a strategy of self-identification with the gallery that had great media and cultural impact. The GNAM organized exhibitions of Italian contemporary art in foreign countries, while the leading international artists of the time exhibited their works at the gallery. At the same time, the GNAM pursued – for the first time – a vibrant educational programme (Camerlingo 2009). Lectures, evening opening hours, thematic exhibitions, prizes for young artists, musical and theatrical performances attracted an increasingly large public to the museum, which shortly became a lively and dynamic institution. In 1968 a sculpture garden based on the American model was created in the GNAM’s grounds.

After 1975, the year of Bucarelli’s retirement, the GNAM encountered numerous difficulties caused by cuts in funding for purchases, the ambiguities produced by regulations issued by the newly-created Ministry of Cultural Heritage, and the progressive curtailment of its exhibition spaces (Marini Clarelli 2009). Its revival began at the end of 1990s thanks to a new cultural policy aimed at the promotion of contemporary art. It was decided to construct a new centre as the enlargement/continuation of the GNAM and devote it to twenty-first century art (Mattiolo 2009). The creation of the MAXXI (National Museum of 21st-Century Art), designed by Zaha Hadid, was favoured by enactment of a law instituting a *Piano dell’Arte Contemporanea* and a *Direzione Generale per l’Architettura e l’Arte Contemporanea* at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities (2001). After years of work, the MAXXI was inaugurated in 2010 with the purpose of enhancing coordination among similar museums at national level and interchange between research and museum practice.

The new-born MAXXI has been conceived to be a forum for the production of art in opposition to the conception of the Italian museum as a “museum unto itself”. It has accordingly developed spaces for experimental art, an archive, a book and media library, and an institute of advanced studies, while it acquires exhibits by commissioning them directly. In the words of its current director, the MAXXI interprets the idea of a national museum in the sense of an institution which “presents and promotes practitioners who conduct significant research in the world of art: whether they are emerging artists or ones not yet established, whether they are internationally recognized as representative of Italy or whether they are great artists whose work and memory should be conserved” (Mattiolo 2009, 35). At the same time the MAXXI encourages the interweaving among the arts, promoting experimental work in music, theatre and dance. Therefore, despite the controversy provoked by the architectural choices made in its construction, the new museum reflects a widespread need for “contemporaneity” which hitherto has found scant space to express itself and develop.

Conclusion

As schematically described and as the case studies have shown, the impact of state developments on the cultural sector was complex and diversified, because it reflected the difficulties, ambiguities and contradictions of a composite process of growth. Whilst in the first fifty years of the nation-state it was mainly the country's nationalization which concerned cultural policies sometimes inconsistent but nevertheless intended to conciliate the demands raised by the Kingdom's heterogeneous periphery, under Fascism it was the regime's endeavour to impose its totalitarian ideology which generated nationalist and imperialist policies. Conversely, the policies of the republican period were characterized by marked democratization and by their capacity increasingly to reflect, albeit very slowly, the changes taking place in society. But these policies lacked a coherent vision of the role and function of museums often marginal in a sector where the country's open-air heritage absorbed most of the resources available. In this sense, the museums did not succeed in playing a driving role in the processes of state-making, even if they performed an important linkage between the centre and the periphery. They in fact guaranteed that the demands from the periphery were transmitted to the centre, in a perspective of respect of the identity of the place and the local community. Accordingly, perhaps the distinctive features of the Italian national museums was, and in part still is, their appeal to a nation expressed mainly through the history and culture of the territory, of which they were and continue to be important symbolic and cultural references.

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Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Uffizi	1860/61	1860/61	State	State	Art	Universal values	1581-2000	Existing building/central cluster
Museo archeologico, Napoli	1860	1860	State	State	Archaeology	Territorial representations	1734-2000	Existing building/central cluster
Museo Industriale Italiano, Torino	1862	1862	State	State	Technology	Technological and scientific values		No more extant
Museo del Bargello	1865	1865	State	State	Art	Universal values		Existing Medieval building/central cluster
Museo archeologico nazionale, Firenze	1870	1870	State	State	Archaeology	Territorial representations		Existing building/central cluster
Regio Museo Artistico Industriale, Roma	1873	1873	State	State	Technology	Technological and Scientific values		No more extant
Pigorini	1875	1876	State	State	Prehistory/ Ethnography	Territorial representations	1875-2000	Rationalist Fascist style/Architectural power cluster

Museo del Risogimento	1908	1878	State	State	Culture	National values		Existing building/central cluster
GNAM + MAXXI	1883 + 2010	1881+ 1997	State	State	Art	Universal values	1881-2000 1998-2010	Neoclassical style/central cluster + Postmodern style/solitary location
Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia	1889	1889	State	Sate	Archaeology	Territorial values		Existing building/central cluster
Museo Nazionale Romano	1890	1889	State	State	Archaeology	Territorial vaues		4 different existing buildings/central cluster
Museo della civiltà romana	1955	1911	State	State	Archaeology	Territorial values		Rationalist Fascist style/Architectural power cluster



National Museums in Latvia

Toms Ķencis & Kristin Kuutma

Summary

This article concerns the formation, institutionalisation and development of national museums in Latvia. The major foundational and restructuring events of three museums of national importance are described in relation to nation-building and state-making processes, including an overview of transformations in organisation and representational policies during the times of historical change related to both world wars and occupation regimes. In each of the case studies, the relative powers of individual, civic, academic, professional and state initiatives are examined. This article also includes an overview of the organisation of the structural interface between cultural policy and particular museums in particular periods of time, indicating the most important institutions and referencing the recognition or denial of different groups in this process. Selection and changes in the content of museums' collections and displays are also taken into account.

Since interest in popular antiquities or wonders of nature and artefacts of fine art were formed into collections available to the general public, national museums in the territory of (contemporary) Latvia have undergone several stages of development. To begin with, they represented the interests of the Baltic German upper class; then, being owned by one of the richest municipalities of the Russian Empire, Riga, they became the city's pride; in their next stage, they transformed into cultural treasuries of the emerging nation-state, and after that followed a period in which they served as local archives representing the pre-Soviet past under the conditions of the communist regime. Today, Latvian national museums have acquired the status of national representatives in the contesting arena of independent European countries. The following three museums are best suited to Eunamus research interests due to their historical role and contemporary status:

- The Latvian National Museum of Art
- The National History Museum of Latvia
- The Ethnographic Open-Air Museum

All three museums have played a significant role in the nation-building process; they continue to be influential in contemporary society and their very different histories provide a complex insight into the various paths taken to establish various forms of national museums. They all qualify as major national museums, covering complementary fields (history, art and ethnography).

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National History Museum of Latvia	1894	1876	Civil society	Civil society (original) Independent state agency (present)	Archaeology, Ethnography, History	Historical territory of Latvia only	9000 BC to 1940	Existing premises at Riga Castle, a historical site of medieval origin in the Old Town of Riga.
Latvian National Museum of Art	1905	1816	Municipality	Municipality (original) Independent state agency (present)	Visual Art	Historical Latvia and the Baltic, Western Europe	18 th c. to the present.	Purpose-built neo-classicist building in the centre of Riga.
Ethnographic Open-Air Museum of Latvia	1932	1924	State	Independent state agency	Rural Architecture, Ethnography	Latvia only	17 th c. to the first half of the 20 th c.	A complex of re-located rural buildings, specially designated location on the outskirts of Riga.

Introduction

Administratively, the Baltic provinces of the Russian Empire were divided into the *guberniyas* of Estonia, Livonia and Courland (from north to south, covering roughly present-day Estonia and Latvia), while Riga stood as the capital of Livonia and a major port and trading city on the eastern littoral of the Baltic Sea. The Baltic provinces consisted mainly of a German-speaking upper class and clergy, and a peasantry of Latvian and Estonian origin; the second half of the nineteenth century brought the rise of an urban proletariat due to industrialisation. The first museum initiatives in the region denoted the institutionalisation of the private collections of elite members of society around the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, representing regional or universal rather than national values. In the nineteenth century, Riga became one of the main seaports of the Russian Empire and an important railway transport junction and, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the city had grown by a factor of ten, being the second largest city in the western part of Russia after St. Petersburg. Although always a multinational city, it was largely predominated by the Baltic Germans in the nineteenth century. The municipality of Riga was an active player in the emerging scene of public representations – founded on a private collection, the city established its first museum in 1773, and developed an art collection through the nineteenth century, which later formed the basis for the National Museum of Art. The first initiatives were characterised by a regional outreach, focusing on the German culture area, rather than national or local representations. However, in the second half of the 1800s, in this biggest city of the *Deutsche Ostseeprovinzen Russlands*, the interests of various Russian Empire groups and classes met – the elite members of society with their collecting activities, the Baltic German learned societies, Latvian scholars (who under the circumstances were actually living and working in Moscow or St. Petersburg) and the early efforts to construct and articulate the new national consciousness of the emerging Latvian-origin intelligentsia and middle class. Although the scale of events was local, many activities were inspired by international experience and cooperation and were sometimes directly based on examples from abroad. Of the three main regions inhabited by the Latvian-speaking population, the most dynamic were Courland and Vidzeme (the southern part of Livonia); lagging behind in modernisation, and sometimes not fully recognised as Latvian, was Latgale (the *gubernyia* of Vitebsk, referred to also as Inflanty) in the east. This divergence could be explained by the abolition of serfdom there in 1861, whilst in Courland and Vidzeme this happened in 1819–20.¹ The differences in their pace of adjusting to socio-economic change was also later reflected in the initiatives of museal representation and in the content of the collections.

At the time, the language of administration was Russian, whereas the language of the local elite was German. In this period, the majority of academic and cultural practices were carried out by local learned societies and organised around the Polytechnic School of Riga or the University of Dorpat (located in contemporary Tartu in Estonia, in the northern part of Livonia) mainly by the Baltic Germans or other German-speaking members of society (including the upwardly mobile Latvians). Several Baltic German pastors, active in the Latvian Literary Society (*Lettisch-literarische Gesellschaft*) or the Society of Latvian Friends (*Latviešu draugu biedrība*) were carrying out research into Latvian linguistics, folklore and ethnography (Indāns 1996: 25; Stradiņš 1996: 20; Vīksne & Stradiņš 1997: 103). The year 1868 gave the opportunity for the foundation of the first Latvian

society organised on the ethnic principle of the Riga Latvian Society (*Rīgas Latviešu biedrība*; hitherto referred to as the RLS), which became the main Latvian socio-political and cultural centre (see Vīksne & Stradiņš 1997; Leimane 1996). The RLS was a typical product of the national awakening; national awakening here meaning the efforts of the intelligentsia and emerging middle class to articulate national ideas and raise the consciousness of the masses in Central and Eastern European countries where the dominating political power was not in the hands of the major ethnic group. The RLS was politically rather conservative; most of its activities concerned culture, arts, science, and education, and was dedicated to the representation of ethnic Latvians. In 1876, the Society first articulated an initiative to establish a Latvian museum with a nationalist agenda of representation of the ethnic majority; their collection later formed the basis of the Latvian National History Museum. The RLS was also closely linked to the establishment of the Latvian Art Promotion Society, which started its collection of ethnic Latvian art during the 1920s, contributing thus to the development of the Latvian National Museum of Art. From the mid-1880s, the RLS national commitment was paralleled by another more politically inclined movement - 'The New Current' (*Jaunā Strāva*). Politically to the left, it mobilised broad masses of workers in Latvia's industrially developed region using both nationalist and socialist agendas, and played a leading role in the 1905 revolution. The RLS lost its influence after the final goal of the national movement, the establishment of a nation-state, was reached.

The Independent Republic of Latvia was proclaimed after the First World War in 1918, although followed by two long years of the War of Liberation, when three different governments (Latvian national, Bolshevik, and Baltic German) were simultaneously claiming the right to rule the country. In 1920, a freely elected Constituent Assembly was convened and a liberal constitution was adopted; Latvian became the official language but, in the relatively multi-ethnic environment², the minorities were granted cultural autonomy and equal political rights. Parliamentary democracy ceased after a *coup d'état* established a nationalistic dictatorship in 1934 and the subsequent regime, that of Kārlis Ulmanis, lasted until 1940. Still, the interwar period saw substantial accomplishments in culture and education; concurring with the institutionalisation and recognition of museums and representative collections that were previously governed by civil societies and now were officially national, state-governed museums. First of all, an institutional and legal basis was created for national museums; subsequently national museums of history, art and rural life were reorganised or established according to the representational requirements of the nation-state. This period also brought the organisation (in some cases, establishment) of other museums, like the Museum of War, later incorporated into the State Museum of History, or the Riga City Museum of Nature that later became the Latvian SSR Museum of Nature (at present Natural History Museum of Latvia).

Prior to the Second World War, Latvia was occupied under the pretence of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between Nazi Germany and the Stalinist regime and annexed (together with Estonia and Lithuania) by the Soviet Union in 1940. Moscow arranged political changes favourable to the Soviet regime with the help of the Red Army and various agents, and thus the sovietisation of Latvia began rapidly, including the nationalisation (confiscation from owners) of land, buildings, and various types of commercial or industrial enterprises. State and municipality institutions, including museums, were reorganised according to the new conditions. The fifteen

biggest museums were declared 'state museums', and a special committee was established with the purpose of taking over art, historical, and antiquarian items from private collections and public societies. The whole museum system was centralised, with the centre administering staff units (director and technical personnel) and distributing funds (Skoļa 1979: 5). These changes were interrupted by the outbreak of the Second World War, and, because of the rapid invasion of Nazi German armed forces in 1941, Latvia became a part of Germany's *Reichskommissariat Ostland*, the Province General of Latvia. Once again, the sphere of culture was rearranged according to the current ideological regime, which for museums meant the foregrounding of the historical presence and supremacy of German culture in the region. The territory of Latvia was reconquered by Soviet forces at the end of 1944, at which time about 150,000 Latvians fled to the West. As a result of the war, the exiles and the Soviet repression that followed, the population of Latvia decreased by approximately 25 per cent; likewise the war inflicted heavy losses on the economy - many historic cities were destroyed, along with industry and infrastructure (cf. Cerūzis 2001). During the post-war occupation period, the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic was one of fifteen Soviet republics where total power belonged to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. By the end of 1950, almost all of Latvia's agriculture had been collectivised, i.e. organised into collective farms. The reorganisation of museums initiated in the 1940s was completed under the supervision of the newly established Commission of Cultural-Educational Institutions of the Council of Ministers of LSSR (*Latvijas PSR Ministru Padomes Kultūrizglītības iestāžu komiteja*). Museums were nationalised, staff changed and collections rearranged. Themes and narratives concerning class struggle, revolution and war, as well as positive influences of Russian and/or Soviet culture dominated the display policy, being the only legitimate practice of historical representation while some museums were closed or subordinated to others. In 1953, a new institution – the Authority of Museums, Fine Arts, and Protection of Monuments of the LSSR Ministry of Culture (*Latvijas PSR Kultūras ministrijas Muzeju, tēlotājas mākslas un pieminekļu aizsardzības pārvalde*) – was established to administer the sphere of tangible heritage. When the short period of the 'ideological thaw' in Moscow reverberated in Latvia in the second half of the 1950s, the so-called national communists moved to the top of Latvia's political elite and attempted to rejuvenate the role of the Latvian language and culture in society. Their defeat in 1959 marked the beginning of a new period that was characterised by total ideological and political control that was reflected in the museum system when similar museums were subordinated to a single central 'scientific-methodological' and administrative unit. The 60s gradually turned into a 'stagnation period' that continued until the 1980s, when the inability of the Soviet-planned economy to compete with the free market Western economy became progressively apparent, and the process of *perestroika* (restructuring) and *glasnost* (openness) began mid-decade in the Soviet Union, led by Mikhail Gorbachev. The dissident movement that had been subdued in the first half of the 1980s became reactivated in 1986. The following years saw the emergence of various civic movements, among them the Latvian People's Front and the Latvian National Independence Movement as the most influential. These organisations and their subsequent rallies had a common goal: to reinstate democracy and political independence.³ The late 1980s brought about a loosening of censorship in the cultural sphere, allowing museums to create new displays challenging the Soviet version of Latvian history and representing national

values and narratives. In addition, pre-war national symbols like the anthem and the flag were re-established.

Following a failed military coup in Moscow, Latvia gained full independence in 1991, was admitted to the United Nations and switched to a free market economy. In 1995, Latvia became a member of the European Council and in 2004, fully joined NATO and the European Union. (Cf. Cerūzis 2001) Socio-political changes likewise influenced the existence of museums. On the one hand, the state ownership of national-level museums continued, while on the other hand, narratives and display policies changed significantly according to the ideology of the re-established independent state. The system of management and its legal basis were also changed; several new museums were founded (e.g. the Museum of Occupation representing the post-war period and regime). Some museums incorporated into others during the Soviet period regained their independent status (e.g. the Museum of War). This brought significant changes to the collections of national museums, while shifts in property ownership and a decrease of financial funds made an overall impact on the museum system.

National museums and cultural policy in Latvia

According to data from 2009, there are 83 accredited⁴ museums operating in contemporary Latvia, 36 of which are state-owned; in addition there are other, municipal and private museums. The collections of the museums considered national belong entirely to the state, their budget is composed as an integration of national financing, earned income, private, social and international donations. The Law of Museums, the main document regulating activities in the field, was adopted in December 2005 and several minor changes were introduced by legislative activities in 2007, 2008, and 2009. A previous version of the Law of Museums had been issued in 1997. The two main differences in these laws concern the administration of the museum system. The Law of 1997 stated the Cabinet of Ministers to be the higher institution that decides the establishment, reorganisation or liquidation of particular museums, issues legal acts concerning administrative structures and accreditation, and hires directors of state owned-museums. These competences are missing from the new version of the law. Secondly, the Law of 1997 established a separate institution, the State Authority on Museums (*Muzeju valsts pārvalde*), subordinated to the Ministry of Culture, to supervise museums and the National Holdings. This institution terminated its work in 2010 and currently, state-owned museums are subordinated to particular ministries, most of them to the Ministry of Culture. The Latvian Council of Museums is a consultative body established in order to promote the co-operation of institutions and decision-making on issues related to national strategy in the field of museums, their operation and the preservation of the National Holdings. The Latvian Council of Museums consists of representatives from particular museums as well as one representative delegated by the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments, one representative delegated by the Latvian Association of Museums and the Minister for Culture (cf. Law of Museums 2005). While the 1997 Law operated with, and provided the definition of, National Holdings, i.e. virtual collection of items of national importance⁵, the 2005 Law has explained its take on national museums rather explicitly:

- 1) the collections of which territorially, chronologically and thematically comprise the whole State and are the most important and complete in the profile thereof; 2) the research work of which ensures a comprehensive research of the museum collections and research in scientific

disciplines; 3) the permanent and temporary exhibitions of which and other types of communication related to the operation of the museum ensure availability of the museum collections and comprehensive usage thereof for education and development of the society; and 4) which performs activities confirming that the museum is the leading institution in the field of museums. (Law on Museums 2005)

This particular definition derives from the Soviet modification of the interwar national museums and the consequently transformed heritage – they have been identified *post factum* when already possessing voluminous collections, infrastructure and research departments.

In Latvia, there is no single universal national museum, and therefore the three case studies presented in this report all play, or have played, an important role in the relationship between the state and the nation. National museums of art and history are also among the oldest institutions of their kind in Latvia, while the open-air museum is the most popular and historically representative. All three museums operate as state agencies, i.e. semi-independent units under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture. The oldest is the Latvian National Art Museum. The formation process of this museum could be considered to have been collection-driven. This case represents the development of a Baltic-oriented municipal art gallery into a national museum. It has undergone multiple reorganisations of the museum collections to concur with ideological changes in the cultural policy of Latvia in the twentieth century. The complications of history are also reflected in the interplay between the Museum's status and its prestigious building in the very centre of the capital. The establishment of the Latvian National Museum of History was comparatively more ideology-driven in that it derived from the call for national/ethnic representation. In this case, the complex network of relationships connecting the ideas of the emerging nation and its representation is studied in closer detail, mapping the roles of learned societies, particular personalities, and the agencies of the city and the Russian Empire in the early stages of the Museum's development. In comparison, the Ethnographic Open-air Museum represents museum-building practices within an established independent nation-state. Following examples from abroad, this initiative became localised to create a national representation.

Case studies in chronological order

The Latvian National Museum of Art

The initial foundation of several museums, a few of them with a contemporary national status, was based on the private collection of physician Nikolaus von Himsel (1729–1764). In accordance with his last will, his mother presented a collection of objects of nature, history and fine arts gathered by three generations to the city of Riga after his death. Consequently, the first public museum in the region was established on February 22, 1773 and named after its founder. However, the Himsel Museum (*Himselschen Museum*) lasted only until the early decades of the 1800s and its collections were redistributed between the newly established, more specialised museums.

An art collection had already begun to take shape in the Himsel Museum, and in 1816 it was deposited in a separate room, the so called City Art Cabinet (*Kunst-Kabinet*) on the initiative of another famous collector, Liborius Bergmann (1754–1823), a clergyman and board member of the Himsel Museum (Johansons 1974: 26). The Cabinet exhibited works of art from the Himsel

Museum, but also collected modern works on local themes and obtained portraits of prominent Riga citizens. The existence of a board qualified the Art Cabinet into a semi-independent institution (Šmite 2005: 329). In 1866, Riga City Council acquired 47 paintings from collector Domenico de Robiani, which formed the basis for the Riga City Art Gallery (*Städtische Gemälde-Galerie zu Riga*), institutionally established in 1868. The gallery opened to the public in 1869 in the local *Realgymnasium*. The Baltic German Riga Art Society (*Kunstverein zu Riga*) was founded in 1872, with the aim of popularising the visual arts, holding exhibitions and promoting the development of art in the Baltic provinces, as well as to form their own collections. The same year, the City Gallery and *Kunstverein*, which were led by the same city elder, August Heinrich von Hollander, moved together to new premises and then, from 1879 until 1905, leased their accommodation in a building owned by the Mayor of Riga. Being central agencies in the artistic life of Riga, both the Gallery and *Kunstverein* collections grew, while the question of a new construction that would meet the needs of the museum had been raised several times since the 1870s. There were several project competitions but the foundations of the building were only laid in 1903 and the museum was opened in September 1905, becoming consequently the foundational year of the City Art Museum (*Städtisches Kunst-Museum*). The name of the museum appeared in official circulation for the first time in 1904. Like the Gallery's premises, the Riga City Art Museum and *Kunstverein* also shared the new building. The collections consisted mainly of works by Baltic German and Western European artists.

The most important person in the first decades of the museum activities was Wilhelm Neumann (1849–1919), the architect and art historian. Neumann was the designer of the Museum building and had supervised its construction while also being its first director (1905–1919) (Šmite 2005: 331). Despite being named the City Art Museum, the underlying aim of this institution was to cater for the visual arts of all of the Baltic provinces, i.e. *Kurland*, *Livland* and *Estland* as they were known at the time. While the Riga City Art Gallery had exhibited all 347 works (its own and the *Kunstverein* collections together), Neumann evaluated the artistic quality of them before the opening of the new museum, and included only 234 in the core exhibition. The collection was methodically increased under Neumann's leadership, focusing on artists from the Baltic provinces, but also maintaining international contacts with museums and related organisations in Germany and Russia (Šmite 2005: 333). The Museum held about 60 exhibitions before 1918, only four of which were solo shows by ethnic Latvian artists. Requests for premises for joint exhibitions by Latvian artists were denied, sometimes leading to an open conflict and complaints filed by the Latvian Art Promotion Society (*Latviešu mākslas veicināšanas biedrība*, introduced in more detail below) to the Riga City Council (Šmite 2005: 332). Despite this, the Museum's catalogues were published in three languages: German, Russian and Latvian. As the main aim of the Museum was to 'educate the nation', free entrance was granted to groups of schoolchildren from its opening, and from 1914 museum regulations also permitted free entrance for group visits organised for factory workers (Šmite 2005: 333). During the First World War, the museum remained open, even though a number of artworks were evacuated to Moscow. However, the general organisation of exhibitions and other activities decreased, as did the flow of visitors.

The following changes in the museum's status correspond to the political upheaval and turmoil of the early twentieth century in the region.

The declaration of independence of the Republic of Latvia was followed, only two months later, by the invasion of Soviet Russia's Red Army and the establishment of the Latvian Soviet Socialistic Republic. The Latvian Soviet Government lasted less than half a year, although, despite this, the Museum was nationalised and given a new name appropriate to the regime: the Art Museum of Soviet Latvia (*Padomju Latvijas Mākslas muzejs*). The new institution operated under the supervision of the People's Commissariat of Education (*Tautas Izglītības komisariāts*). The head of the Commissariat's Art Section, writer Andrejs Upītis, invited a famous painter Vilhelms Purvītis to take on the responsibilities of museum director. This reorganisation of administration outlasted the *Bolshevik* regime when the Museum belonged again to the independent Republic of Latvia in the summer of 1919. With the establishment of independence, ownership was returned to the city and it was renamed accordingly as the Riga City Art Museum (*Rīgas mākslas muzejs*); the aims and tasks of the museum changed considerably, and attention was turned to the national art of ethnic Latvian origin (in contrast to the preceding Baltic German dominance) and its contemporary developments. The authority of Purvītis appeared to be so prominent that the question of his dismissal was never even raised, while the rest of the museum staff also retained their positions. Another initiative by the communists that was left unchanged was free entrance.

Vilhelms Purvītis (1872–1945) was the rector of the Latvian Academy of Art, head of its landscape master class, a lecturer at the University of Latvia and an active artist (Lāce 2005: 336). He made several journeys abroad familiarising himself with the organisation of museum activities in post-war Western Europe. Under Purvītis' leadership, the purposeful formation of a collection of Latvian art began. The Museum was interested in this genre in all its diversity, including works by both the deceased and currently active artists. From 1919 until 1940, the Museum's collection grew by 651 works, most of which had been purchased by city funds, and the re-arranged permanent display showcased ethnic Latvian art as well as historical Western European and Baltic German collections. The Museum hosted multiple temporal exhibitions and the modernised education system had increased the number of artists, while gradual improvement in the economic sector raised the number of visitors. The desire of the newly formed Latvian state for national self-affirmation gave impetus to a large number of exhibitions, and also encouraged creativity, while the 1920s and 1930s were likewise marked by a tendency to heighten the role of the artist in society - a certain fetishism for the artistic personality (cf. Lāce 2005: 337). The latter also applies to the personality of the director, who was successful in proposing to the city board and to other decision-making bureaucratic institutions various exhibition projects considered quite avant-garde at the time, or initiated by groups of totally unknown artists. Although exhibitions by ethnic Latvian artists formed the majority, alongside were prominent displays introducing the art of neighbouring countries⁶, the museum space was also open to the initiatives of other local nationalities, for example, Russian or Baltic German artists. The Riga City Art Museum was financed by the municipality and was located in a magnificent, purpose-built notable architectural monument in the centre of Riga.

In this period, there was another initiative of national importance relating to the depository of art. The Ministry of Education founded the State Museum of Art (*Latvijas Valsts mākslas muzejs*) in 1920. The collection on which this new museum was based consisted of about 300 items that

had initially been accumulated by the Latvian Art Promotion Society (*Latviešu mākslas veicināšanas biedrība*), founded in 1910 by the leading members of the Riga Latvian Society with the purpose of promoting and collecting ethnic Latvian art. One of its aims was also to establish its own library and museum (Cielava 1986: 79). Structurally, the Latvian Art Promotion Society was a section of the Riga Latvian Society but with its own statutes. The foundation of this organisation had probably been an indirect response to the city executives' refusal to organise the First Exhibition of Works by Latvian Artists in the City Art Museum (Lāce 2005: 336) as well as limited opportunities of membership for ethnic Latvian artists in the Baltic Artists Union (*Baltischer Künstler-Verband*).⁷ That particular exhibition eventually took place in the classrooms of *Realgymnasium*, as did the three subsequent general exhibitions of ethnic Latvian art, while the collection probably remained on the premises of the Riga Latvian Society. Consequently, the new state-owned Museum of Art, likewise founded in the capital, possessed a collection of national Latvian art, and in parallel a collection of foreign art evolved gradually. The State Museum of Art was located in the Riga Castle, and its director was a less well-known sculptor, Burkhard Dzenis (1879–1966). Whereas the City Art Museum continued to house the major exhibitions in their prominent museum building, The State Museum of Art still represented and promoted national art in both local and international arenas. Thus, in comparison, the position of the State Museum of Art appeared to be considerably inferior (and eventually short-lived), regardless of the relative supremacy of state ownership. According to the number of visitors (an average of 50,000 vs. an average of 15,000), the new museum was less popular than its rival.

Soviet occupation in 1940 initiated a profound reorganisation of museums in Latvia; this in turn affected the City Art Museum, which was transferred to state ownership a year later. Vilhelms Purvītis was dismissed from his duties as director, and the Board of Art Affairs of the People's Soviet of Commissars of the Latvian SSR (*Latvijas PSR Tautas Komisāru padomes Mākslas lietu pārvalde*) decided to join the two art museums. This envisaged the formation of one museum that would concentrate on the collections of Latvian art, while another would focus on foreign art. The reorganisation began in 1941, but was interrupted by the Second World War, being completed immediately after the war was over – when the collections of both museums were divided and systematised according to the new principles. Based on this division, professional Latvian art had to be transferred to the State Museum of Latvian and Russian Art (*Valsts latviešu un krievu mākslas muzejs*; for six months in 1941 also named the Museum of Soviet Art of the Latvian SSR – *Latvijas PSR Padomju mākslas muzejs*), while the foreign collections went to the State Museum of Western European Art (*Vakarēiropas mākslas muzejs*; now the Museum of Foreign Art). In the autumn of 1941, German forces occupied Riga and the Riga City Art Museum was returned to municipal ownership, the exhibits were transferred back and previously dismissed staff reinstated. Purvītis was reappointed to the post of director and held this position until 1944. The ideological significance of the museum is characterised by the attention that was again paid by the new ruling administration. The Culture Section of the Propaganda Department appointed chief director of Lübeck museum Hans Schröder to conduct additional supervision. Initially, there was a plan to create a German State Museum (*Deutsches Landesmuseum*) from the collections of the Riga City Art Museum and the State Historical Museum aimed at showing the significance of German culture in the Baltics (Lāce 2005: 340). The newly formed display was soon opened

for public viewing. However, Schröder was not pleased and the Museum reverted to its previous name, and the exhibits from the Historical Museum were returned. Obviously, warfare disrupted the functioning of the Museum to a certain extent. First, several halls were taken into use for the purposes of storing or displaying military maps. During the last days of the German occupation, more than 200 works of art were sent to Germany. Although most of them were returned, there were losses in particular collections. Nevertheless, the Museum generally kept rather busy with exhibitions and was relatively well visited. Huge joint exhibitions by local artists were held both in 1942 and 1943, there was also a retrospective of paintings by director Purvītis himself, and a multitude of more or less propaganda-related smaller exhibitions.

When German occupation was again substituted by the Soviet, the previously started reorganisation of the Museum continued. The new museum was named, according to the plans of 1941, the State Museum of Latvian and Russian Art. However, in some documents, this new institution was referred to as the State Museum of Latvian and Russian Art and the Art of Other Peoples of the USSR (*Valsts latviešu un krievu mākslas un citu PSRS tautu mākslas muzejs*), which may indicate a somewhat different orientation for the planned collection. The former establishment of the State Museum of Art, located in Riga Castle, was changed to the Museum of Western European and World Art (*Rietumeiropas un pasaules mākslas muzejs*). Although the collection of Russian art should have gone to this museum according to its historical composition, it remained in the prestigious former City Museum building alongside national Latvian art, as Russian art was ideologically considered a greater cultural phenomenon than Western European art according to these new regulations. The authorities actively encouraged the expansion of the Russian collection, initially even requiring its domination in the permanent display (Lāce 2005: 341). The rules and regulations of the organisation of a display in the Soviet era can be characterised by tough control and censorship – with a few insignificant exceptions in later years. Every exhibition had first to be coordinated with the Ministry of Culture and then, before opening to public, it was examined and approved by a representative of the ideological work section of the Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party (*Latvijas Komunistiskās partijas Centrālā komiteja*). In the first decade after the war, any display of artworks belonging to the Classical Modernism of the interwar period, or in another ‘decadent style’ or created by authors who went into exile was out of the question. Later, especially after the so-called Khrushchev Thaw in the late 1950s and early 60s, more liberty was allowed. Still, countless shows were specially organised to honour the Great October Socialistic Revolution, Lenin’s birthdays, Communist Party congresses and other similar occasions. 1963 saw the establishment of the Combined Directorate of Latvian SSR Art Museums and Exhibitions (*Latvijas PSR Mākslas muzeju un izstāžu apvienotā direkcija*) and the State Museum of Latvian and Russian Art was incorporated as one of its structural units. This led to a higher level of centralisation in the field, which also led to the use of parts of the Museum’s collections for the purposes of the Directorate’s activities, including travelling displays – with the agenda of bringing art closer to people – and, eventually, to the renaming of the institution as the Latvian SSR State Museum of Art. The Museum’s collections increased particularly due to the reorganisations, and one third of the museum’s public space was transformed into temporary repositories. At the same time, the Museum acquired two affiliate facilities: the newly established memorial museums dedicated to two outstanding Latvian sculptors⁸. The 1980s, with the winds of change in the air, brought the next reorganisations. First, the Directorate acquired a huge

building in the Old Town of Riga where the temporary storage of artworks was arranged and the Museum's entire collection from the second half of the twentieth century was transferred. Thus the *Arsenāls* Museum of Art (*mākslas muzejs 'Arsenāls'*) was established, and the Latvian SSR State Museum of Art regained its exhibition halls. When the Directorate was renamed the Association of Latvian Art Museums in 1989, the latter was given a new name – the State Museum of Art, dropping Latvian SSR. At the same time, the Museum of Decorative and Applied Art (*Dekoratīvi lietiskās mākslas muzejs*, known as the Museum of Decorative Art and Design since 2006) was established and the whole collection of professional Latvian applied art was concentrated there (Lāce 2005: 342). In the late 1980s, the practice of approving and censoring exhibitions also disappeared and the Museum was again free to formulate its own display policy, which first led to the initiative of exhibiting works previously forbidden. The highest peak of these years was a huge exhibition of interwar Latvian art, held in 1989.

The restoration of independence in 1990–91 brought major changes in the Museum's life. Together with freedom of organisation, it saw a significant decrease in attendance, mainly due to the absence of the previous frequent excursions organised by schools or by institutions from other cities, as well as tourist visits from all over the Soviet Union. The Museum restored its cooperation with Western European museums and galleries, and the permanent display was changed to have a greater emphasis on the interwar period heritage. Later, a new section of Baltic German art was also included. In 1999, in accordance with the Law on Museums, museums in the association underwent a process of accreditation, which led to the reorganisation of the Association of Latvian Art Museums and the whole structure of the State Museum of Art, as well as the *Arsenāls* Museum. A unified museum of national status was established on the basis of these two museums, though retaining the name of the State Museum of Art. In 2000, the Museum was accredited by the State Board of Museums, which also provided confirmation that the Museum could operate as a state-acknowledged museum. That same year, a decision came to give independent legal status to individual museums. In September 2005, with the eventual merger of the *Arsenāls* Museum of Art and the State Museum of Art, a united museum of national importance was again created, taking the name the Latvian National Museum of Art (*Latvijas Nacionālais mākslas muzejs*). In 2008, a new branch, named the Museum of Roman Suta and Aleksandra Belycova (*Romāna Sutas un Aleksandras Beļcovas muzejs*), was opened. The most current development is the consolidation of all art museums: the Museum of Foreign Art and the Museum of Decorative Art and Design were joined with the Latvian National Museum of Art. All three museums now have a united administration and budget. As collection of the Museum of Foreign Art consists of artefacts from 5000 BC to the beginning of the twentieth century, this move may suggest a shift towards a new conception of a national museum in Latvia, a change of emphasis from the nation as an ethnic principle to the nation as owner of a collection.

The National History Museum of Latvia

While the establishment of the National Museum of Art was largely collection-based, the other two museums analysed in this report were originally initiated by the idea of national/ethnic representation. A detailed exploration of the beginning of the National History Museum reveals a complex landscape of conflicting and mutually complementary agendas beyond the representational efforts and practices in the second half of the nineteenth century in the *gubernija*

of Livonia. Members of Riga Latvian Society initiated the idea of a Latvian museum. Under the auspices of RLS, a number of cultural committees functioned, including a Scientific Committee. The establishment of this committee in 1869 was partially a response to the call for the gathering of Latvian ethnographic materials by the Imperial Society of Friends of Natural Sciences, Anthropology and Ethnography (*Императорское Общество Любителей Естествознания, Антропологии и Етнографьи*) of the University of Moscow:

The Department of Ethnography (...) has decided to start gathering ethnographic data about Latvians who inhabit a large part of the Baltic coastal region, as well as various data regarding Latvian families, homes and households; this task is part of an undertaking already partially accomplished: to perform ethnographic research among each nationality residing in Russia. (Leimane 1996: 56).⁹

The RLS Committee began gathering material and artefacts according to this agenda and the call for the collection of folklore and ethnographic material was translated from Russian into Latvian and German, and disseminated via periodicals. The Rumyantsev Museum (*Румянцевский музей*) in Moscow and the 1860s World Fairs in London and Paris inspired the idea for an ethnographic museum display, while the above-mentioned Imperial Society in Moscow also funded a collecting expedition. The first expedition in 1869 was a success that consequently popularised the Riga Latvian Society's activities and attracted supporters to their Museum later on (Leimane 1996: 58). The Riga Latvian Society's collection was first displayed to the public in 1872 within the Polytechnic Exhibition in Moscow. In 1876, the decision was taken to found a Latvian museum (*Latviešu muzejs*) that would stand in opposition to existing museums, with their Baltic German orientation: private collections/museums in Baltic German manor houses and homes in the city, or public institutions like the Himsel Museum, the Museum of the Province of Courland (*Museum der Provinz Kurland*, established in 1818) or the collections of the Society of Nature Researchers of Riga (*Der Naturforscher-Verein zu Riga*, founded in 1846, predecessor to the National Museum of Nature) (cf. Balode 1996: 48). During its first initial decades, the new museum accepted donations (money, inventory, etc.) and all items offered to it. Although the Museum¹⁰ was denied permanent facilities for either exhibition or storage, these collections slowly continued to grow, gathering objects of archaeological and ethnographic significance as well as exotic rarities, geological samples and herbaria. The first three curators of the new museum had received their education in Dorpat (Tartu), Estonia, either at the Teachers Seminar or the University of Dorpat (Leimane 1996: 61).

In 1888, a special Riga Latvian Society Museum Committee was established to maintain, systematise and catalogue the collection, and also to organise ethnographic expeditions for the Museum. The first short-lived ethnographic exhibition in Riga was opened in the Riga Latvian Society quarters in 1890. The RLS requested premises for their museum from the Riga City Municipality with no response, as a result of which the collected items were kept in boxes and lockers until 1892, when the RLS provided two rooms for the Museum in its quarters (Balode 1996: 49). After some reconstruction work, the Museum was made accessible to the public in the autumn of 1894, although for only an hour a day and two hours on Sundays (Leimane 1996: 64). From that date onwards, it was referred to as the Latvian Ethnographic Museum (*Latviešu Etnogrāfiskais muzejs*), although the Scientific Committee decided that the Museum should also

collect items related to the ethnography and history of one of the other two Baltic nations, Lithuania (Balode 1996: 49; Leimane 1996: 63). The Scientific Committee also adopted a plan to organise an exhibition of Latvian ethnography¹¹ to coincide with the Tenth Pan-Russian Archaeological Congress¹² in Riga in 1896 (Vīksna & Stradiņš 1997: 107). Members of Riga Latvian Society and Scientific Committee together with Baltic German researchers participated in the meetings to prepare the congress in Moscow in 1894 (Vanaga 1996: 38). The concept of the exhibition changed over the years: it was first intended to be a permanent display, i.e. a museum in closed venues, but the plan transformed into a fair with temporary buildings and entertaining shows. In order to prepare for this important event, the Riga Latvian Society reclaimed the artefacts that had been sent to Moscow in the 1860s and organised, as well, eleven scientific expeditions to collect items from several localities¹³ in Latvia in 1894 and 1895 (resulting in some 6000 ethnographic items). A special sub-committee was even established for the Latvian Ethnographic Exhibition under the honorary presidency of the Mayor of Riga, who prepared and distributed methodological guidelines and calls to all rural municipalities, priests and teachers, as well as published them in newspapers (Leimane 1996: 65). Eventually, more support and donations were received from the locations previously visited by the RLS Scientific Committee expeditions. During the preparatory period, teacher Sīmanis Novickis, the Museum curator from 1891 to 1902, explored related museums in Moscow and St. Petersburg, while another active committee member visited and established contacts with the Czech open-air ethnographic exhibition in Prague that opened in 1895 (Leimane 1996: 66; Vanaga 1996: 43; Ģinters 1974: 3). The Latvian Ethnographic Exhibition was displayed to the public from August 1st to September 15th, 1896. The exhibition, involving four buildings with materials displayed thematically in 18 sections, was a huge success attended by more than 45,000 visitors.

The Riga City Municipality turned down several of the Riga Latvian Society requests for premises to house a museum. Finally, the municipality provided land for construction in 1900. Plans for a combined museum and Latvian school of crafts were drawn up (Leimane 1996: 67). For the next nine years, Latvian Ethnographic Exhibition museum collections remained inaccessible to the general public. In 1902, the RLS purchased a new building and provided rooms therein for their museum. The Museum's new building was opened to the public in 1905, although for only two days a week (Balode 1996: 50). Its collection continued to grow, mainly through donations and a few smaller-scale expeditions. The Museum also took part in exhibitions in various European capitals and other towns in Latvia (Leimane 1996: 70). In 1913, the RLS commissioned another project for a specially designed museum and craft school building. Public donations enabled construction work to begin in 1914, but the First World War interrupted the work and the building was never completed. During the war, this Museum remained closed.

Following the declaration of independence and fall of the short-lived Bolshevik regime in 1919, the Riga Latvian Society transferred the Latvian Museum collection to the Latvian government (cf. Švābe et al. 1929–1930: 7835). All RLS collections were officially declared property of the state, to be supervised by the Department of Art of the Ministry of Education (Balode 1996: 50; Leimane 1996: 71). In 1920, the Museum was provided with rooms within Riga Castle and renamed the Latvian Ethnographic Museum. In 1924, the Museum was granted national status and was renamed the State History Museum. Regulations issued by the 1932 government defined a place for, and the importance of, the Museum in national cultural policy:

The State History Museum is the central repository for the nation's ancient artefacts, whose role is to collect, preserve, exhibit and popularise those Latvian cultural items and monuments that possess archaeological, ethnographic, historical or artistic significance, and that are in the Latvian national interests to be preserved and studied. (Leimane 1996: 71)

The curator and director of the Museum from 1902 to 1934 was a teacher, ethnographer, historian and cartographer Matīss Siliņš (1861–1942). He was also a board member of the Authority of Monuments (established in 1923), the supervising organisation of all the collections of Latvian museums during this period. Under the centralised administrative structure, three branches of the State History Museum were opened in 1937 in different towns in Latvia, and unique items from the Museum's collection were displayed (Cf. Skolis 1979: 5). In 1939, one more branch was opened (outside the capital, in Rundāle Castle) where items of religious (church) art were displayed. The collection of the State History Museum was expanded during the interwar period by materials from expeditions organised by the Museum and the Authority of Monuments. A public display was organised in four sections: archaeology, ethnography, numismatics, and religious art.

Following the Second World War, the collection, documentation, storage and exhibition work were transformed to comply with the policies of the Soviet Union. The Museum obtained state museum status according to the new legislation. The main structural changes brought about by the centralisation of the museum system were those caused by the various museums of the public societies, towns and schools being turned into departments of the State History Museum. This policy was also applied to the Ethnographic Open-Air Museum, subordinating it to the single centre of historical museums. Museum staff were trained in dialectic and historical materialism, introduced to the purposes of Soviet museums and to the new practices of the arrangement of exhibitions (Cf. Skoļa 1979: 6). During the German occupation, the Riga City History Museum was subordinated to the State History Museum. Many of the branches of the Museum were damaged during the war and closed. The most valuable collections were evacuated to Germany in 1944, although the majority of items were returned after the war. After 1945, the Museum was subordinated to the newly established Commission of Cultural-Educational Institutions of the Council of Ministers of the LSSR (*Latvijas PSR Ministru Padomes Kultūrizglītības iestāžu komiteja*) and its branches were organised as independent museums of local history (Skolis 1979: 6). The name of the museum was changed several times: the Latvian SSR Central State History Museum (1944), the Latvian SSR History Museum (1956), and the History Museum of Latvia (1989). Irrespective of the fact that some collections were given to other museums as a result of repeated reorganisation, the Museum's collection continued to grow from expeditions and archaeological excavations according to research plans. The Museum functioned as an active research institution by organising excavations and publishing the results of scholarly activities. The Museum's core exhibition covered territorial history from 9000 BC to 1940 AD. In the late 1980s, the Museum was actively involved in the events of the Third Latvian Awakening. For example, the exhibition 'Latvia between Two World Wars' (1988) enjoyed huge popularity and was attended by 300,000 visitors. Since the re-establishment of independence in 1991, the Museum as a whole has seen a

successful transition to the new working conditions. It was accredited in 2000 and again in 2004 as compliant with the state-level museum standards. Since September 2005, the Museum has been operating as a state agency and is officially titled the National History Museum of Latvia. The Museum is funded by the state budget, obtaining additional resources from its economic activities, donations, and state or European Union funds. Today, the Museum's collection includes about one million items, and its display is organised into five sections: archaeological, ethnographic, numismatic, historic, and the models section (reconstructions and copies). Every year, several exhibitions are held; the four sections of the permanent display mentioned above are: ancient history, the medieval period, the modern age (up to the end of the nineteenth century, representing both peasant culture and upper class culture), and contemporary history (up to 1940). The Museum has expanded by merging into its structure, the lake castle of Āraiši (*Āraišu ezerpils*, reconstruction of the Stone/Bronze Age settlement in northern Latvia) as well as the Dauderi Museum of Latvian Culture, the previous summer house of president Kārlis Ulmanis (1937–1940). At the moment a new depository is under construction in Riga.

The Ethnographic Open-Air Museum

In 1910, the idea of an open-air museum was discussed for the first time in the Baltic German-oriented Riga Society of Architects (*Arhitektenverein zu Riga*). This initiative was probably initiated by a visit that members of the Society undertook in the previous year to Stockholm and to the famous Skansen open-air museum. The envisioned museum was intended to represent rural buildings of the Baltic provinces (Indāns 1996:36; 1994: 82). However, these plans did not materialise at the time and other actors established the museum. In 1923, the government of Latvia passed a law on the protection of monuments of material culture, and for the implementation of this law, a Monuments Board was established by the Ministry of Education with the purpose of selecting, inventorying and cataloguing such monuments. In 1924, following a proposal by architect Pauls Kundziņš (1888–1983), the Monuments Board founded the Open-Air Museum (*Brīvības muzejs*). In that year, the Monuments Board had sent Kundziņš to the Nordic countries to explore Scandinavian open-air museums. He visited museums in Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark, and later published an extensive report as well as a plan for a similar museum in Latvia (Kundziņš 1925). The role and significance of Kundziņš in the inception of the Open-Air Museum cannot be overestimated. The grandson of a wealthy peasant and son of a pastor, he graduated from the classical gymnasium in Dorpat (Tartu, Estonia) and the Polytechnic Institute of Riga (he also studied in Munich and Rome) and eventually became a professor of architecture at the University of Latvia in Riga. He specialised in traditional architecture, published about 30 articles and educated generations of architects, some of whom continued his work at the Open-Air Museum (Indāns 1994: 78).

In a published proposal, Kundziņš grounded his ideas both in the national sentiment and the envisaged research potential of this kind of museum, pointing out how they would essentially appear closer to the natural historical environment represented. For example, when writing about Norway, he stated that, for him, the *Norske Folkemuseum* (the Norwegian Folk Museum) indicated particularly strongly that

a small nation embracing its past with a burning heart should also be able to create an exemplary storage that proves useful both for scientific research and for presenting

exuberant impressions from real life as well as fruitful inspirations from the remains of culture of the bygone times. (Kundziņš 1925)

In his project, he proposed the transportation of homesteads and social buildings, characteristic to the four main regions of Latvia, from their original locations to the museum grounds, where they could be re-constructed with additional displays of household items, traditional dress, etc. In 1928, after a request addressed to the Minister of Education by the Monuments Board landed property was provided for the Museum. In the same year, the first building was set up, and in 1932 the Museum, presenting six buildings, was opened to the public, although construction works lasted until 1934. Many public bodies also participated in the development of this Museum – different enterprises, student, youth and paramilitary organisations (Ģintars 1974: 7). By 1939, the already 40 objects represented all regions of Latvia.

During the Soviet occupation in 1940, the reorganisation of the Museum started with the renaming of the Museum to the Open-Air Museum of the State History Museum of the Latvian SSR Peoples Commissariat of Education (*Latvijas PSR Izglītības tautas komisariāta Valsts Vēstures muzeja Brīvdabas muzejs*) and its affiliation to the State History Museum. Thanks to personal contacts and lucky coincidences, the first year of the Soviet regime was spent in relative peace, perhaps due to the fact that a previous employee of the ethnographic department of the State History Museum worked in the Commissariat (cf. Ģintars 1974: 9). The Open-Air Museum continued to function during the German occupation; whereas a German army major was commanded to supervise its activities. Nevertheless, the occupation administration was not too interested in a museum that only represented Latvian (inferior in comparison to German) culture. However, descriptions and other materials were translated into German and the site was even visited several times by the General Commissioner of Latvia (cf. Indāns 2004). On the whole, the Museum was well attended (with 25,000 visitors in the summer of 1942, for example). Ethnographic fieldwork expeditions were also conducted and the publishing activities continued. The Museum was partially damaged in the last months of the war. Some buildings had been utilised by the army, and despite the objections of the local government, part of the Museum collection was evacuated by German administration to Germany at the beginning of 1945 (Ģintars 1974: 13). Several staff members also went into exile in the West, fleeing from the advancing Soviet troops (Priedīte 1994: 3). Thus ‘after the retreat of the German army and the arrival of the Soviet army, the Museum was desolate: many exhibits were damaged or lost, the inventory book was missing, although the buildings stood as before’ (Apsītis 2004).

The structural reorganisation (hiring of new staff members, affiliation with the State History Museum) and restoration of buildings damaged during the war started quickly after the war and the first new building was erected in the Museum in 1945. The first Soviet ten-year development plan was drawn up in 1952 by the Department of Conservation of Monuments of the Ministry of Culture of Soviet Latvia (*Padomju Latvijas Kultūras ministrijas Pieminekļu aizsardzības nodaļa*), simultaneously with the inclusion of the Museum on the list of Architectural Heritage of All-Union Significance, which meant state protection at the highest level. The new plan also included a novelty – the inclusion in the Museum of an exhibition and models that would portray rural life during the Soviet period (this also appeared in the next plan but was never implemented). In 1964, this institution was officially designated the Ethnographic Open-Air Museum of Latvia

(*Latvijas etnogrāfiskais brīvdabas muzejs*) (Ģinters 1974: 14). Previously, it had been referred to by several different names, among them the State Museum of Latvian Rural Life (*Latvijas Lauku dzīves valsts muzejs*). The Museum had its own administration and nine separate departments (ethnography, collection, chemical restoration, mass activities, construction, etc.). Due to the popularity of this museum, open-air departments were organised at museums of local history in different towns in 1952. In 1964, the Museum's next general plan of development and expansion was drawn up. However, following division into ethnographic regions during the Soviet period, the original structure of the exhibition remained unchanged. During this period, the representation of ethnic minorities, lower classes and hybrid elements increased as compared to the mono-ethnic exhibition of the 1930s (cf. Cimermanis 1978: 6). The latter was criticised for its bias, highlighting only architectural rarities and cultivating the propaganda of the lifestyle of wealthy peasants (cf. Ģinters 1974, Cimermanis 1978). Representation of all nationalities and social classes dwelling in rural regions, envisaged in the new plan, was successfully executed by installing multiple new buildings. By the 1970s, almost twenty percent of the buildings represented groups other than the ethnic Latvian population. Since its foundation, and especially during the Soviet period, the Museum hosted various ethnographic exhibitions and events, operating thus between the contesting agendas of national identity and official ideology so successfully that the Museum was even promoted to member of the Soviet committee for the International Museum Board by the USSR Ministry of Culture in 1976. The Museum also conducted research activities by organising numerous fieldwork expeditions and increasing its collection with items of tangible culture and textual material, films, photographs, and drawings. The main principle for collecting various items was the principle of being 'typical' to a particular district. Since 1970, the collection of items of contemporary folk art, especially ceramics and textile, increased significantly. The Museum gained international recognition, with open-air museums in Estonia, Ukraine, Georgia and Lithuania established according to the Latvian example (Jērāns 1988: 280). The Museum has been recognised with awards several times and has enjoyed great popularity with the general public, while its employees have included several renowned scholars who have actively participated in ethnographic fieldwork and research. The Museum has also gathered extensive archives of ethnographic material, including audio-visual material.

Following the re-establishment of independence in 1991, the Museum changed its policy according to the new working conditions. While structural changes were rather insignificant, display-wise adjustments concerned the removal of exhibitions dedicated to the cultures of 'the Soviet sister republics', although the representation of local diversity remained intact. The Museum was accredited in 2000 and again in 2004 as complying with state-level museum standards. Since 2005, the Museum has been operating as a state agency. Recently, two farmsteads damaged by fire have been renovated and one new farmstead constructed – a homesteader farm from the 1920s, representing the outcome of the agrarian reform that took place after the First World War and which expropriated landed property from the Baltic Germans. Currently the Museum occupies a territory of 87.66 hectares with 118 furnished buildings representing rural architecture and daily life from the end of the seventeenth century to the twentieth century. The Museum has two affiliated branches in northern and western Latvia.

Notes

- ¹ Closer unity with Latgale was established only after 1917. In addition to the gap in socio-economic development, political issues were also at stake. By having administratively formed a separate province within the Russian Empire, its relationship to other parts of Latvia remained a sensitive issue. The attitude of the Riga Latvian Society, the main body articulating the national aspirations, towards Latgale could be characterised as rather reserved.
- ² According to census of 1935, ethnic Latvians formed 77 percent of the population.
- ³ The largest rally was the Baltic Way (or Chain) on August 23, 1989, when about 2 million people gathered to stand with joined hands as a human chain that passed through the three Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania). This event commemorated the treacherous Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact of 1939.
- ⁴ According to the Law of Museums, a museum may be accredited if it conforms to these conditions: it has statutes or a similar document; an inventory of the museum collections has been performed; its premises, equipment and security systems guarantee the preservation of the museum collections; the collections are available to the public; and the museum has a strategy.
- ⁵ ‘As such the National Holdings are a national treasure; they shall be under national protection. The National Holdings are formed by the core of the collections of accredited museums of all levels as well as the museum-related objects of private collections or individual museum-related objects. Objects and collections of the National Holdings shall be included in a joint catalogue. Institutions and private persons, who possess or own objects of the National Holdings, shall ensure preservation and possibilities of usage thereof. The State shall grant budget resources for the maintenance, preservation and restoration of objects and collections of the National Holdings’ (cf. the Law of Museums, 2005).
- ⁶ Being the most prestigious exhibition space, the museum hosted various state-level exhibitions representing the art of, for example, Poland, Estonia, Belgium, Lithuania, Sweden, Norway, Italy, France, etc. In return exhibitions of Latvian art were organised abroad, thus the artistic exchange at some level symbolised the equality of independent nation-states.
- ⁷ The Baltic Artists Union, established in 1910 to promote the development of Baltic art by uniting artists living in the Baltic region and to popularise their work, was founded mainly by members of *Kunstverein*. Consequently, of about 40 active Latvian artists only nine were invited to the establishment of this organisation (see Cielava 1986: 77; Jaunsudrabiņš 1910: 3).
- ⁸ Both museums functioned quite successfully until they were closed in the mid 1990s and 2002 because of changes in real estate ownership: properties confiscated during the Soviet regime were handed back to the heirs of original (interwar period) owners. Collections of both memorial museums were included into the collection of the main museum.
- ⁹ Original quote from *Baltijas Vestnesis* 1869, 26.04 (33). Latvian material had also been sent to the large ethnographic exhibition organised in Moscow in 1867.
- ¹⁰ The museum’s purpose was ‘to tell the next generations about the culture, daily life and customs of our ancestors, thus also in a way serving for the research of our history, especially – cultural history’ (Balode 1996: 48).
- ¹¹ According to some sources, this exhibition also served as a model for the Ethnographic Open-Air Museum.
- ¹² The Congress took place between August 1st and 15th, gathering 627 accredited participants. It was the first scientific event on such a scale in Riga and also the first international congress with the participation of Latvian and Estonian delegates. The main organiser of the congress was the *Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Alterthumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands*.
- ¹³ Mainly Courland and Vidzeme; Latgale was considered less Latvian and therefore less representative.

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Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Latvian National Museum of Art								
Art Cabinet	1816		Municipality of Riga	Riga City	Paintings	Baltic (German), Western Europe	18 th -19 th c.	Premises of the city library
Riga City Art Gallery	1869	1868	Municipality of Riga, Riga Art Promotion Society	Riga City	Paintings	Baltic (German), Western Europe	18 th -19 th c.	Premises of gymnasium
Riga City Art Museum	1905	1903	Municipality of Riga, Riga Art Promotion Society	Riga City	Fine Arts	Baltic, Western Europe, Latvia	18 th -20 th c.	Purpose-built representative neo-classicist style building
State Museum of Art	1920		Municipality of Riga	Riga City	Fine Arts	Latvia, Baltic	18 th -20 th c.	Part of the Riga Castle
State Museum of Latvian and Russian Art	1945	1941	People's Soviet of Commissars of the Latvian SSR <i>et al.</i>	State	Fine Arts	Latvia, Russia	18 th -20 th c.	Purpose-built representative neo-classicist style building in the city centre
Latvian SSR State Museum of Art	1964	1964	Ministry of Culture <i>et al.</i>	State	Fine Arts	Latvia, Russia	18 th -20 th c.	
State Museum of Art / Latvian National Museum of Art (since 2004)	1989	1989	Ministry of Culture	Independent state agency	Visual Art	Latvia, historical Baltic, Western Europe	18 th -21 st c.	

National History Museum of Latvia								
Latvian Museum	1894	1876	Riga Latvian Society Science Committee	Riga Latvian Society	Archaeology, Ethnography, Miscellaneous	Latvia (mostly Courland and Livland)	13 th -19 th c.	Rented premises, two rooms
State Historical Museum (since 1924)	1920	1918	Ministry of Education	State	Archaeology, Ethnography, History	Historical territory of Latvia	9000BC-1920	Premises in the Riga Castle, historical site in the centre of the city (Old Town)
Latvian SSR Central State History Museum, Latvian SSR History Museum (since 1956)	1944	1941	People's Soviet of Commissars of the Latvian SSR <i>et al.</i>	State	Archaeology, Ethnography, History	Historical territory of Latvia	9000BC-1940	
History Museum of Latvia, National History Museum of Latvia (since 2004)	1989	1989	Ministry of Culture	Independent state agency	Archaeology, Ethnography, History	Historical territory of Latvia	9000BC-1940	
Ethnographic Open-Air Museum of Latvia								
Open-Air Museum	1932	(1910) 1924	Ministry of Education	Monuments Board	Rural Architecture, Ethnography	Latvia	17 th -20 th c.	Specially designated territory in the outskirts of Riga, complex of re-located rural buildings
State Museum of Rural Life of Latvia etc., Ethnographic Open-Air Museum of Latvia (since 1964)	1945	1940	People's Soviet of Commissars of the Latvian SSR <i>et al.</i>	State	Rural Architecture, Ethnography	Latvia	17 th -20 th c.	
Ethnographic Open-Air Museum of Latvia	1991	1989	Ministry of Culture	Independent state agency	Rural Architecture, Ethnography	Latvia	17 th -20 th c.	



National Museums in Lithuania: A Story of State Building (1855-2010)

Eglė Rindzevičiūtė

Summary

The construction of national museums in Lithuania can be analysed in relation to traditional conceptualizations of European nationalism which emphasize state building through the identification of an ethnic and cultural nation situated in a particular territory (Hroch 2000). Although state building is not entirely explained by theories of nationalism, this report will broadly rely on this theoretical framework. The history of Lithuanian national museums can be divided into the following stages, based on forms of national statehood, key museums and key political oppositions:

I. The first public museums: Baublys local history museum (1812) and Vilnius Museum of Antiquities (1855-1863), were established by Lithuanian-Polish aristocrats who were interested in the political and archaeological history of Lithuania. Opposition to the Russian Empire.

II. The first state museums (1918-1940): Vytautas the Great Military Museum and Čiurlionis Art Gallery were organized by groups of Lithuanian intellectuals and established as part of a 'national pantheon' in Kaunas. Opposition to Poland, which occupied Vilnius.

III. The establishment of a centralized museums system (1940/1944-1990): state initiated museums were dedicated to Soviet propaganda in line with Marxism-Leninism, but groups of Lithuanian intellectuals built museums relying on the nineteenth-century template of an ethnic nation. Silent opposition to the communist regime, forgetting of the Holocaust.

IV. The consolidation of national state museums system (1990-2010): Soviet centralized administrative system was both subverted and modified to emphasize the ethnic Lithuanian dimension of nation-building through history, archaeology and culture. Opposition to Western popular culture and other perceived negative aspects of globalization, but beginning to deal with the Holocaust and communist crimes.

Stage I saw emphasis on the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (PLC), but also on the pre-history of Lithuania. In stage II, the Polish element of Lithuania's history was represented as negative; hence there was little interest in aristocratic culture. History museums focused on the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL); a cult of grand dukes emerged alongside interest in Lithuanian folk culture. Jewish, Karaite and Belarusian learned societies organized ethnic museums too. During stage III, the political dimensions of ethnic nation-building were eliminated by the communist regime. However, the Lithuanian state was further constructed in museums through a history of the Middle Ages and folk culture. Aristocratic culture and the cultural heritage of the Lithuanian Jewish community did not get much space in Soviet museums, but were not completely eliminated either. The territorial focus was on the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic (LSSR); references to the GDL were carefully censored. In stage IV the

political dimension of ethnicity was brought back into the museums. Jews and Karaites were represented in existing museums or acquired their own museums. The Polish dimension of Lithuania's history remained contested. However, there emerged new museums, dedicated to the difficult parts of twentieth century history, such as the Holocaust and communist crimes.

Note: A Full list of the abbreviations used can be found in an annexe of this report.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National M.K. Čiurlionis Art Museum	1925	1921	Artists, intellectuals, nation-builders of the 1920s-30s. Thereafter the state (1940s -)	State	Lithuanian and international Fine and Applied Arts, Folk Art, Numismatics, History of Culture and Memorial museums.	Lithuanian territorial and universal (European and classical cultures) values.	1400s-1900s	Several buildings, the main gallery specially built in art deco style, located in a significant square in Kaunas (provisional capital).
Vytautas the Great Military Museum	1936	1919	Ministry of Defence	State	Archaeology, Fine Arts, weapons and documents.	Political history of Lithuania, emphasis on the struggle for sovereignty, ethnic nation and state-building.	1200s-1900s	One main building, specially constructed in the art deco style, located in an important square in Kaunas (provisional capital).
Lithuanian National Museum	1952/ 1992	1855	Polish-Lithuanian aristocrats, LSSR and LR governments	State (1952)	Archaeology, Fine and Applied Arts, Ethnography, Numismatics, History and memorial museums.	National values: Lithuanian folk culture, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Mainly cultural and political history of Lithuanian nation building and sovereignty.	10 th BC to the 1900s	Many buildings of various types. The main exhibitions located in baroque arsenal buildings in the centre of Vilnius Old Town.
The Open Air Museum of Lithuania	1974	1965	The Ministry of Culture	State	Buildings and objects from farms and towns. Landscapes, agriculture & animals.	Ethnographic regions of Lithuania within post-1944 borders.	1700s-1900s	The site is situated ca. 25 km from Kaunas, close to the Vilnius-Kaunas motorway. Traditional architecture and landscape.

Introduction

Since the nineteenth century, Lithuanian national identity has been conceptualized by nation-builders as rooted in language and folk culture (Balkelis 2009; Rindzeviciute 2003). During those long periods when Lithuania did not exercise sovereignty, some museums performed as outlays for expressions of national identity through cultural means. I will start with a brief overview of the key moments in the history of Lithuanian statehood. Then I will analyse relations between changes in statehood and the development of national museums.

Since the Middle Ages, the political history of Lithuanian statehood has been marked by both greatness and muddling through. First mentioned in written sources in 1009, Lithuania was organized as a medieval state, a duchy, during the 1200s-1300s. The last European country to be Christianized (1387), Lithuania was also home to one of the oldest East European universities (est.1579). For more than two centuries, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (hereafter GDL) was in union with the Kingdom of Poland (1569 to 1795) and formed the Commonwealth (hereafter PLC). The GDL incorporated lands which stretched from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea and which were populated by a variety of ethnic groups, such as Belarusians, Poles, Ukrainians, Jews and Tatars. The Lithuanian language was used only as the vernacular while the written language was the old Belarusian. At a later stage, Polish replaced the Lithuanian language as the spoken and written language of the elites.

The multilingual nobles of the GDL, who constituted the political nation and lived in the territory that today forms Lithuania, Belarus and Eastern Poland, defined themselves as 'gente Lituani'. The nobles were, as a rule, owners of land estates and settled in the countryside. Although in principle all nobles were of equal status, there were large differences between small landowners, landless nobles and powerful magnates who owned entire cities and often contested with the king. During the period of the 1600s-1700s, the cultural and social development of cities, especially Vilnius and Kaunas (or Vilna and Kovno), was jeopardized by multiple wars, fires and diseases. The governing elites were based in rural areas and therefore cultural development was associated with manor estates. Vilnius and Kaunas, in turn, were home to large, and often rather impoverished, Jewish communities. Not until the middle of the twentieth century did Lithuanians come to form the majority of the urban population. However, all national museums existing in 2011 are based in the major cities, with some branches elsewhere. The PLC ceased to exist in 1795 as it was partitioned between the Russian and Habsburg Empires and Prussia. During the nineteenth century, which was marked by both the development of ethnic nationalisms and the construction of national or public museums across Europe, Lithuanian society was subjected to various means of control. The Russian administration actively suppressed organizations that hinted at local patriotism (Vilnius University was closed down in the 1830s; Lithuanian script was prohibited in the 1860s) and tightly regulated public associations. However, aristocratic amateur scholars and writers, and intellectuals from the middle-classes (Balkelis 2009), managed to create various societies that fostered ideas about national museums. During the nineteenth century, Lithuania developed antagonistic relations with Russia, which were supplemented with antagonism to Poland in the first half of the twentieth century (Staliūnas 2004). The independent nation state of Lithuania was established in 1918, but in 1920 Poland occupied a large part of Lithuania, most importantly the capital city Vilnius. After a *coup d'état* in

1926 Lithuania was subjected to the semi-authoritarian regime of Antanas Smetona. This regime espoused values of folk culture and language-based ethnic-nationalism and promoted anti-Polish sentiments. It is important to note that during 1918-1940 the influence of the old landed noble elites decreased: many of the nobles had already fled the country during the nineteenth century, especially after the unsuccessful uprising against the Russian Empire in 1863. The new democracy also introduced a land reform that imposed caps on private land ownership and redistributed land to previously landless peasants. The old elites were also regarded as being excessively 'Polonized' and therefore not entirely loyal Lithuanians.

Museums and Polish-Lithuanian Political Identity

The formation of the first public museums in Lithuania could be understood as expressions of both local patriotism, featured in 'the nation of nobles', and of democratic aspirations to produce and disseminate scholarly knowledge and cultural education. Bearing in mind the rather harsh measures of the Russian Imperial administration it is difficult to estimate the political intentions of the museum builders. However, there may have been some intentional political agenda in the process: the establishment of the Vilnius Antiquities Museum was soon involved in political turbulence.

The first public museum in Lithuania, founded in 1812 by the Lithuanian lawyer Dionizas Poška, was playfully called *Baublys*. Situated in the gardens of Poška's estate, Baublys was a large oak tree trunk, which was hollowed out and used as a room to display various objects. These objects related to local history (archaeological findings) and general West European history (medieval manuscripts, antiquities). In 2011, Baublys remains open to the public and is part of the museum *Ausėja*, dedicated to local history and Lithuanian nation-building movements, in Šiauliai. Although frequented by the nineteenth century nation-builders, Baublys was more of a *Kunstkammer*. It was its body, the trunk of an ancient oak, which was perceived to be of value, and not the displayed collection.

The first public museum with a mission to accumulate, study and display a collection, with the aim of preservation and popular education, was organized almost half a century later. The establishment of Vilnius Museum of Antiquities (VMA) in 1855 was the result of strong individual actors, organized in a civic society. It has to be remembered that the Tsar, who was afraid of any devolution of power, actively discouraged creating museums outside of Saint Petersburg (Nikishin and Fladmark 2000). Conditions were not conducive to the opening of new museums in Russia proper, but the situation was much more complicated in the newly annexed lands of Poland-Lithuania. Since 1795, the former lands of the GDL, together with the Duchy of Poland, came into the possession of the Russian Empire. Unsuccessful attempts at revolts against Russian rule in 1831 and 1863 were followed by tightening control of cultural and civic life in Lithuanian lands, which were proclaimed as part of the North-Western Region.¹

Members of the Vilnius-based Polish-Lithuanian aristocrats initiated the creation of VMA. The most active was Eustach Tyszkiewicz (1814-1873) of the powerful Tyszkiewicz family, known for its rich collections of West European art and antiquities and keen interest in archaeology. In the context of Tsarist domination over the local elites, the construction of VMA could be understood as containing a hidden political agenda. First, the establishment of VMA was an enlightenment project, because the museum was intended to compensate for the closure

of Vilnius University in 1832. Second, surviving descriptions of VMA displays indicate that VMA dedicated some space to the history of the PLC: VMA's displays publicly exhibited objects connected with the political identity of the Polish-Lithuanian nation.

The published rationales described the purpose of VMA as the study and display of the universal history of mankind, natural history and local history. Adam Kirkor (1818-1886), one of the founders of VMA, was particularly interested in reviving the Lithuanian nation, despite the fact that he did not speak Lithuanian (Staliūnas 2001). This political orientation of the museum was confirmed by the reaction of the Imperial administration: after the Polish-Lithuanian uprising in 1863-1864, VMA's collections were purged and looted and VMA was transferred to the administration of the city governor. However, in reality the museum ceased to function: the museum was hardly ever open and its displays were censored. Objects that referred to the PLC could not be displayed.

The next important step in the history of Lithuanian national museums was taken in the 1880s. Since 1863, printing in Lithuanian letters had been banned. This prohibition stirred a widespread cultural movement outside Lithuanian lands, particularly in the area of East Prussia, where literature was published in the Lithuanian language and illegally smuggled into Lithuania and distributed throughout the country. A group of intellectuals, such as a medical doctor and keen archaeologist Jonas Basanavičius, saw their mission as 'awakening' the Lithuanian nation. They propagated interest in the history and language of Lithuania, particularly archaeological research (Balkelis 2009). It was in these circles of émigré intellectuals that the explicit idea of a 'national museum' (in Lithuanian, *tautos muziejus*) was first formulated. The cultural project of nation building was eventually translated into a political quest for independent statehood. It is significant that those Lithuanian nation builders, who spoke Lithuanian at home or learned Lithuanian at an adult age, did not seek to capitalize on VMA. In contrast, they actively downplayed VMA's significance, mainly because VMA's founders did not speak Lithuanian and therefore were seen as Polonized elites and traitors, because they collaborated with the Imperial authorities.

Museums and the Nationalising State: The Cult of Grand Dukes and the Search for Lithuanian Art

The words 'national museum' were first used in the debates following the Lithuanian ethnographic exhibition at the Paris World Fair (1900) (*Varpas* 1900). In 1899, Lithuanian activists abroad were actively engaged in organising an exhibition at the Paris World Fair. The display, containing samples of Lithuanian newspapers and books, was arranged independently from the Russian Empire and displayed in the ethnographic section of the Fair ("Parodos reikalai," 1899: 81-82). Following the Fair, an article about the education of the Lithuanian nation was published in February 1900. For the first time, the idea of a national museum was formulated and, significantly, its purpose was conceived as first and foremost educational: "The establishment of the National Library and the National Museum are of big importance in the education of the nation" (S.Z. 1900: 14).² In 1907, the idea of 'The House of the Nation', which would include, among other things, a library and a museum, was voiced by Basanavičius, the leader of a newly founded Lithuanian Science Society (LSS) (Tyla 1984: 38). The LSS was not a rich organization: it did not seem to be able to attract rich patrons. The idea of 'the House of the Nation'

systematically recurred in discussions in the press after the establishment of an independent nation-state of Lithuania in 1918. The project never materialized, although many of the LSS's members were signatories of the Independence Act and consequently significant actors in subsequent governments. However, it seems that the interwar governments of the Republic of Lithuania did not prioritize museums as an instrument in the ongoing nation-building. Museums are expensive and probably it was thought that the establishment of museums was a matter for private individuals or civil society.³

At present it is difficult to establish precisely the moment at which the idea of creating *a particular national museum* emerged in Lithuania. In 1918, in line with Woodrow Wilson's right of self-determination, Lithuania was established as an independent republic with its capital in Vilnius. At that time, Vilnius was home to many learned societies, several of which actively assembled collections and made them available to the public. However, in 1920 Vilnius region was annexed by Poland and the Lithuanian government moved the capital to Kaunas. It was, therefore, in Kaunas that the first museums that held the explicitly acknowledged status of 'national significance' were organized and established in a specially constructed building. These museums were Vytautas the Great Military Museum (1921/1930/1936) and Mikalojus K. Čiurlionis Art Gallery (1921/1936). (These museums are discussed in greater detail in Part 3).

During the brief period of independence (1918-1940) the Lithuanian government did not seek to create an integrated system of museums. This was not surprising because the state cultural policy system was not systematically developed at that time. The period featured short-lived and under-funded Commissions for Arts Affairs, most often under the Department for Education (Mačiulis 2005). This should not be regarded as a feature unique to Lithuania: in the interwar period only authoritarian states, such as the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, had developed administrations for the arts and culture. In Lithuania, the creation of new cultural organizations came from below, usually from formally organized learned societies. Although the 1938 Constitution endowed the President of Lithuania with almost absolute power, both the intellectual community and wider society provided increasingly less support to the authoritarian nationalist regime (Senn 2007). Lithuanian authoritarianism, however, was 'soft': to my knowledge, there were no attempts at direct regulation of museum exhibitions. It is important to note that cultural autonomy also applied to other ethnic groups, for example the Jewish museum was moved from Vilnius to Kaunas.

The Centralized State Museum System and Nationalism: Subverting Socialism

An integrated system of state museums, just like the idea of a state-run cultural sector, was formulated by the Russian communist government in the 1920s. The central administration for culture and education called Narkompros, the People's Commissariat for Enlightenment, headed by Anatolii Lunacharsky was established in 1917 (Fitzpatrick 1970). The Soviet system of cultural policy was revised in the 1930s, when Iosif Stalin further centralized the cultural sector by imposing the obligatory creative unions.

In June 1940, the Red Army entered the territory of the Lithuanian Republic and with the help of rigged elections elected a communist government, which declared that Lithuania joined the Soviet Union and became the Soviet Socialist Republic of Lithuania (LSSR). Sovietization of the Lithuanian economy, public life and cultural sector was promptly started and this was a brutal

process. Between 1940-1952 Lithuania lost 780,922 inhabitants or about 30% of its population, as people were killed, deported, or fled the country. Sovietization was followed by the Second World War, during which about 95% of Lithuania's Jewish population were killed both by Nazis and Lithuanians. After the war, the economy drastically declined and growth first took place only in the late 1950s. These horrifying and traumatic beginnings of the LSSR paved way for further decades of governance through fear and survival through adjusting to the authoritarian regime. Post-1940 development of Lithuanian national museums took place in a drastically different political, cultural and material context. The communist ideology of creating a new Soviet man replaced, but did not entirely do away with ethnic nation-building. The Soviet system appeared to prefer the local ethnic majority, i.e. Lithuanian culture. The Soviet regime was strongly anti-Semitic and the Holocaust was largely omitted in official histories of the Second World War. Despite rapid urbanization, Lithuania remained a predominantly agricultural country, even after fifty years of communist rule. The majority of Lithuanian urban elites, who emerged during the interwar republic, fled to the West; many of the new Soviet cultural and political elites came from rural areas. In this way there were multiple social, political and economic factors at work, which sustained and further developed interest in folk culture. It has been widely argued that folk culture was regarded as mildly anti- or a-Soviet, and as a legitimate way to promote Lithuanian ethnic identity and reconnect with the interwar republic. Museums could and did describe folk culture in line with Marxism-Leninism as a component of working class life. Finally, participation in folk culture was part of the everyday experience of many cultural operators, who often came from the countryside.

The Communist Party (CP) was arguably the strongest actor in the Soviet system of museums: all museums, like all organizations in the Soviet Union, were subject to CP ideological and financial control. But which state organs were of the highest significance? The work of Soviet museums was regulated by decrees from Central Committees (hereafter CC) of both the LSSR CP and the CPSU. In 1965, for example, the LSSR CC demanded that the museums be better used for education purposes. This could not be achieved without 'proper care that exhibitions would strictly adhere to historical reality and that historical events would be presented from a Marxist-Leninist position'. The CC stipulated that 'more attention should be paid to the propaganda of the friendship of nations and that the role of masses should be emphasized'. The CC also warned that activities of individual persons 'should not be overestimated'. On the other hand, in the same decision, CC called for improvement of the protection, scientific research and propaganda of cultural monuments, because 'historical, archaeological, architectural, folk art monuments and, especially, the monuments of the revolutionary past and the Great Fatherland War, should be widely used in the communist education of working people'.⁴

Already in 1940, some museums were centralized under a newly established organization, the Central State Museum of Culture, which was under Narkompros (Samavičius 1991: 77). Other museums were transferred to the LSSR Academy of Sciences (LAS). The LAS narrated its origin as being rooted in the Lithuanian Science Society (1907-1940), which had its own museum. After 1953, most museums were transferred to the newly established Ministry of Culture, a branch of the all-union Ministry of Culture. The LSSR Minister of Culture was not particularly influential in policy making on the republic level: for example, the Minister of Culture was not typically a member of the Politburo, the highest decision-making body in the communist government.⁵ In

1967, the LCP Supreme Council passed the Law on the Protection of Cultural Monuments (besides Lithuania, this law was adopted only in the Russian Federal Republic and the all-union law was adopted only nine years later).⁶

The Soviet museum system entailed several networks: republic, local (city council or collective farm) and trade union museums. The republic and all-union Ministries of Culture were in charge of the most important museums. State cultural policy was organized according to annual and five-year plans.⁷ In 1963, a joint Agency for Museums and Cultural Monuments (AMCM) was established under the LSSR Ministry of Culture.⁸ At the moment, it is unclear just how much the work of the AMCM was coordinated with the Agency for Cultural Enlightenment Organizations, which was in charge of culture houses and clubs. It may well be the case that the museums sector, in practice, was little used in education, because education was the responsibility of a separate ministry. The Soviet system of governance, it has to be remembered, was very vertical and compartmentalized; there was little horizontal cooperation. In turn, partially in order to avoid ideological errors of interpretation, Soviet museums narrowed down their activities to collecting to such an extent that later on the museums were criticized as 'dead warehouses'. However, as I will detail in a case study, the cultural intelligentsia perceived the very presence of some museums as a strong symbolic statement.

The Soviet administration established clear hierarchies within the museum sector. Such hierarchies were reflected in funding: the staff from such museums as the Kaunas State Museum of Culture (formerly the State Čiurlionis Art Museum), the Military-Historical Museum (formerly VDMM) and the Vilnius Art Museum (VAM) received the highest salaries (category 1) (Samavičius 1991: 78). The determination of museum status and corresponding economic categorization was based on geographical location and the numbers of visitors and stored objects (Jokubaitis & Klimavičius 1991: 154). In other words, big museums located in central cities were financially rewarded by the Soviet economic system. In the case studies, I will show that the Soviet regime conferred the highest administrative status on the interwar 'national museums'. In this way, although perhaps unintentionally, the Soviet regime sustained the pre-war organizations in the system of national cultural values.

The centralization of the administration and financing of cultural life under the state agencies should not give the impression that the Soviet system completely abolished the role of individual persons. True, civic associations could not really be organized under Soviet regime. On the other hand, some non-governmental associations, such as student clubs or amateur clubs, could be formed. Although closely watched by state intelligence agencies (KGB), many of these associations contributed a lot to researching and collecting objects related to local history and folk culture.

A good example here is *The Society for the Monuments Protection and Local History*, established in the LSSR in 1965.⁹ This was part of the all-union movement: in the same year the All-Russian Society for Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments (VOOPIK) was founded under the RSFSR Ministry of Culture. Mainly in the provinces, local history enthusiasts gathered objects and oral history and donated them to local museums. An article indicated that in many places such ad hoc growing collections of 'cultural monuments' (this term was used to describe any object which had a heritage value) stimulated the establishment of new museums ('Maži eksponatai...' 1966: 65). The work of the Society was regulated: its members were strongly

encouraged to collect materials which related to the Soviet part of Lithuanian history, for example objects related to Soviet partisans. Museums organized from these collecting practices were criticized for insufficient scientific quality, poor infrastructure and lack of public displays. The high number of these museums, pointed out the deputy head of the MCMFA, was inflated by a wish to improve statistical reports ('Muziejai ir...' 1968: 3).

Another important non-state actor was *The Soviet Fund for Culture* (SFC), a self-regulating public body initiated by Raisa Gorbacheva and George Soros, with had branches in all Soviet republics. The founding conference for SFC took place in Moscow, November 1986. Among the principal tasks of the Lithuanian branch of the Fund was to raise and distribute material support to cultural organizations, including museums, in the countryside. The chairman of the Fund particularly highlighted the importance of supporting memorial museums of Lithuanian artists (Kudaba 1987: 8). The Fund's policy reversed previously negative official attitudes to private collecting: the Fund's statute stipulated collaboration and assistance for private collectors. Another important direction was engaging the society in building, restoring and preserving public monuments ('Tarybinio...' 1987).

The role of individual actors was actually quite important in the centralized formal system of Soviet administration. Only creative individuals could solve the many bureaucratic bottlenecks: hence the role of directors became extremely important in the Soviet regime. Resources, distributed centrally through the Ministry of Culture, were very scarce. The Soviet Union was a great military power, but also an impoverished state which channelled most of its funding to military purposes. Culture belonged to the low priority sector of services (Rindzevičiūtė 2008). It was vital for particular individuals, usually museum directors, to mobilize their own informal personal networks in order to obtain additional resources for their museums. Similarly, personal networks were crucial for the creation of new museums. The successful Soviet museum directors were those who actively and personally engaged with the top government officials, especially the economic planners from the State Planning Committee (Gosplan) and various ministries (Rindzevičiūtė 2010). State initiative in making new museums was largely confined to narrow propaganda: museums of atheism, which pursued a narrative of secularization by displaying objects from the history of science alongside religious objects; or museums of the communist party, often dedicated to various party activists.

How many museums were there in Soviet Lithuania? The LSSR Ministry of Culture was in charge of about 500 cultural organizations in 1980.¹⁰ Thirty of these organizations were museums, the same number as in 1953. The overall number of museums did not increase much, because many new museums were established as branches of already existing museums, for example, the popular Museum of Amber was established as a branch of the Lithuanian Art Museum. In 1989, there were 726 researchers working at LSSR museums, 561 of which had university education (Jokubaitis and Klimavičius 1991: 151). In 1984, the Ministry of Culture was in charge of twenty-nine museums (thirteen local history museums, five historical-ethnographic museums, three memorial museums, two literature museums, and the museum of Revolution, the Atheism museum, the Everyday Life museum and the Sea Aquarium museum).¹¹ Soviet museums were classified into many types. The most important ones were state republic museums, or those that were directly administered by the Ministry of Culture. The significance of these museums was 'republic-wide'. Less important museums were those that were administered under local

organs, mainly municipalities. Other types of museum included those under certain agencies, such as industrial enterprises, trade unions or associations. This latter type of the museum was sometimes called 'public'. As mentioned earlier, the biggest and most important museums from the interwar period were classified as being of 'republic-wide significance'. In this way, the Soviet status of 'a republic museum' is similar to the status of 'a national museum'. On the other hand, there were some museums that administratively were of lesser status, but in their symbolic meaning were regarded as very important to the history of the Lithuanian nation. Such was the case of Trakai castle, which was part of Trakai Local History Museum, subordinated to Trakai city council.

Quite a few new museums were built in the 1960s and later. It was the short-lived economic growth that the Soviet Union experienced in the late 1950s until the mid 1960s that stimulated the building of new museums. According to the official statistics, in 1970, Soviet Lithuanian museums attracted about 3 million visitors, which was commented on by the ministry officials as being 'a lot in relation to the past and too little in relation to the future'.¹² However, it is important to note that Soviet statistical data is unreliable: it was common practice to inflate visitor numbers. Many visits were obligatory group visits organized by schools and trade unions and therefore the numbers do not tell us much about the intentional engagement of the audiences.

Although museums were seen as important sites for propaganda and education, it can be suggested that Soviet cultural policy perceived other cultural organizations as more efficient in constructing the Soviet population. A study of documents from the archive of the LSSR Ministry of Culture created the impression that the museums sector was seen as ideologically less important than the cinema network (highly prioritized in the 1950s), or club enterprises (houses of culture, highly prioritized in the 1970-80s). This suggests that those cultural organizations that were traditionally dedicated to entertainment were held to be more important for propaganda purposes than the museums, the organizations dedicated to scholarly research and education. Cinema provided the CP ideologues with access to particularly large numbers of viewers (Roth-Ey 2011). Houses of culture organized club activities, which, in the eyes of Soviet cultural policy makers, stimulated participation in collectives. The collective was traditionally regarded as superior to the individual in Soviet Russian culture (Kharkhordin 1999). In terms of providing instantaneous access to large numbers of people, museums struggled to match cinema. Unlike culture houses, Soviet museums had little to offer for collective participation. However, just like in the West, museums in the Soviet Union performed an important role as significant institutions, which conferred value on objects, events and historical periods.

The foremost task of Soviet museums was somewhat ironic: to display the achievements of the communist regime. This was achieved by exhibiting the past in a negative light in relation to the present. However, in the 1940s-1950s, Lithuanian museums were slow to pick up on the glorification of the communist reality. In 1953, the main daily *Tiesa* published an article which outlined the purpose of cultural enterprises, formulated in a meeting of cultural workers, and criticized the museums for a lack of exhibitions about the 'achievements of the Soviet regime' ('Kelti...' 1953:2). Indeed, the Soviet state failed to adequately provide for the vast museum network that it had constructed. The Soviet Union never fulfilled its ideological declarations to develop a thriving cultural sector that would satisfy the needs of working men and women. As

basic living standards were very low, the material standards of LSSR museums were not high either. According to Antanaitis (1998: 45), salaries in the cultural sector were 20-30% below the average salary in the LSSR. This economic inferiority contributed to the low social status of ordinary cultural workers (who should not be confused with Soviet intellectual and artistic elites, who enjoyed exceptionally high social status). For example, in 1988 the LSSR Minister of Culture admitted that salaries for cultural workers were lowest and that:

(...) uncertainty about the future, bad provision with accommodation and often total indifference of the heads of [collective] farms forces young specialists to leave (...) Schools which train cultural experts do not take into consideration our [the Ministry of Culture] needs, it is probable that the schools treat cultural workers as lower-rank people, to say it colloquially, as a third brother John. Cultural workers have seen much in their lives and this attitude does not shock them (...).¹³

Museums did not have sufficient means either to provide adequate storage conditions for their collections or maintenance of their buildings, not to speak about development of new and sophisticated forms of display and dissemination. For instance, even the highly popular and nationally significant Museum of People's Everyday Life found it close to impossible to hire a specialist for wood conservation, although there was no lack of chemists in the LSSR ('Kultūros forumo...' 1969: 4). The Museum just could not offer a decent salary for a specialist. This dire situation was a 'public secret' that sat at odds with ideological declarations of the communist government's dedication to culture.

It is difficult to evaluate the impact that Soviet museums had on popular awareness of political and cultural notions of the state and the nation. Soviet museums probably found it safest to construct themselves as organizations that were first and foremost dedicated to the collection and storage of objects. It is not surprising that in 1987 the LSSR Historical and Ethnographical Museum, which derived itself from the Vilnius Museum of Antiquities, boasted the following achievements when celebrating its 130-years anniversary: 'at present the museum stores more than 340,000 exhibits, there are almost 24,000 cards filled in at a scientific cards database, 14 scientific catalogues were published' (Jankevičienė 1987: 19).¹⁴ It was thought that museums, as Jokubaitis and Klimavičius had put it, could form their collections rather independently from governmental control: 'collect whatever you like, but, for god's sake, people should not see it'. On the other hand, documentation of audience response was actually controlled, as the museums' books for comments used a special binding which made it easy to remove pages, because pages were not numbered (Jokubaitis and Klimavičius 1991:151).

The national 'cult of heroes' was described by Soviet ideologues as a bourgeois ideology that tried to make 'the masses more patriotic for the exploitative system'. Glorification of Lithuanian history was criticized for masking that elites retrieved their strength and wealth not from the past, but from the present: 'having forgotten speeches and hymns about the glorious national past, nationalist leaders and petty chiefs acquired their wealth and goods from the present, bought manors, built houses, and when doing that forgot to take care of the monuments of the past of our nation and land' (*Gimtasīs kraštas* 1940:3-4, cf Pšibilskis 1987: 37).

Although additional research is required to understand dissemination of narratives developed in the LSSR museums among the Lithuanian population, it can be suggested that the LSSR

museums contributed to the ethnicization of the history of Lithuania. This process was particularly important in the areas where ethnic Lithuanians traditionally constituted a minority, such as Vilnius city and region. Elsewhere I have argued that the State Historical and Ethnographic Museum (HEM) structured its display of the history of LSSR around the sole narrative of the nation of ethnic Lithuanians (Lithuanian speakers who lived, broadly, in the territory of the LSSR) (Rindzevičiūtė 2010a). The conservation and partial restoration of Gediminas and Trakai castles reaffirmed the interwar narrative of the history of Lithuania, which was rooted in the heroic past of the GDL.

The years of 1988-1990 saw intensification of the national revival movement. Calls to revive 'national culture' were voiced widely in all public media. The cultural press published articles about Soviet historical taboos, such as the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact, deportations and killings by the communist regime and texts about the government of the interwar Lithuanian Republic. The Soviet period was described as the 'genocide of our cultural traditions' (Jackūnas 1989: 5). Even before the declaration of independence on 11 March 1990, many museums removed exhibitions that glorified the Soviet system.

National Museums and the Regaining of Sovereignty, 1990-2011

What was the role of the idea of a national museum in the debates about cultural policy in (once again sovereign) Lithuania? A study of the main cultural monthly, *Domains of Culture* (*Kultūros barai*), revealed that museums were surprisingly absent from the heated discussions, which otherwise concerned most diverse forms of cultural practices. During the upheaval of the national revival in 1989, *Domains of Culture* published many articles and discussion round tables, which deliberated on how national culture was to be revived and how the Lithuanian cultural sector was to be revitalized. Nevertheless, museums were not mentioned either as individual organizations or a whole organizational network in these debates. Instead, there was a strongly voiced concern about 'cultural monuments', particularly their preservation and restoration.¹⁵ For example, Zikaras's monument *Freedom* was returned to the square of the Vytautas the Great Military Museum in Kaunas in 1988, followed by restoration of an alley of busts of nation-builders and a monument to an unknown soldier. Re-erection of monuments destroyed by the Soviet regime appeared to be the main cultural strategy, undertaken both by the civil society and strongly supported by the government.

Calls to revive 'traditional ethnic culture' constituted another important component of public discourses during the first decade of post-Soviet transformation. It is important to note that revival of the forgotten culture of other ethnic groups, such as Jews, was also part of this movement (Rindzevičiūtė, forthcoming). Some artefacts, for example decorative crosses made by amateur folk artists, were seen as important parts of traditional ethnic culture. However, Lithuanian ethnic culture was first and foremost identified with practices, such as the Lithuanian language, literature and songs, a way of life, especially festive rituals and, curiously, both Catholic and pre-Christian religion, and less so with objects, which were stored in the museums.¹⁶ Drawing on the Russian philosopher Lev Gumilev, Lithuanian intellectuals described the Lithuanian ethnic culture as a material and spiritual system, which included both the man-made and natural environment.¹⁷ Here complex environments, such as the built environment (Vilnius Old Town, rural villages) and landscapes, prevailed over discreet objects that could be stored in

museums. In turn, some museums, such as open-air museums, could accommodate performance of the practices of ethnic identity and became increasingly popular.

The museums somehow retreated back in this new public quest for the national identity. But did the museums become less important for the political agenda of the state? There is no easy answer to this question. Relative absence of the museums from public discourses about Lithuanian national identity may be understood not as a sign of their weakness, but as a sign of strength or fulfilled institutionalization of the museums. For example, by the mid-1990s the museums analyzed below were firmly anchored in the most central and prestigious sites of the two largest cities, the castle area and the Old Town in Vilnius and in the imposing purpose-built central buildings in Kaunas. Perhaps the state of the museums was simply not seen as being that urgent. It has to be remembered that the late 1980s saw increasing economic hardship and in the early 1990s the Lithuanian economy declined much more than, for example, the US economy did during the Great Depression. There were more urgent problems than reorganization of already well-established museums: architectural heritage was especially endangered due to decades-long neglect. In the early 1990s a Swedish visitor, for example, saw Vilnius Old Town as a surreal landscape of decrepit ruins (Kreuger 2010). A Finnish colleague of mine described Vilnius at that time as the ‘Havana of Eastern Europe’, where old-fashioned Soviet vehicles were parked in dilapidated baroque courtyards. The above described hegemony of architectural heritage and public sculptures was to a large extent motivated by an obvious need to preserve or re-establish things which either were on the genuine verge of extinction (such as ruined churches, badly damaged old buildings) or were demolished by the communist regime (such as public sculptures).

Although the museums did not occupy the central place in public debates about national culture, discussions about how to contribute to the ongoing political and cultural changes took place within the museum sector. On 18 April 1989 a founding meeting of the Lithuanian museum workers’ association took place. The idea to create such an association was formed spontaneously during a meeting in Kaunas, 15 November 1988. Its goal was to reform Soviet museums and, as one paper outlined quite poignantly, to fix the damage that the Soviet occupation inflicted on the Lithuanian nation: ‘The fatal year 1940 disturbed not only the material, but also the spiritual life of Lithuania. The “new spiritual values” which were brought with the occupying tanks were declared to be the only real and true ones. The notion of national culture disappeared. Instead an understanding of a class culture appeared, ‘nation’ was replaced with cosmopolitan ‘people’. Fatherland (*tėvynė*) was turned into motherland (*tėviškė*) and its place was occupied by an acronym that has no nationality – the USSR. Because the notions of national history and culture had vanished, Lithuanian museums lost ‘their guiding idea’ (Jokubaitis and Klimavičius 1991: 151).

The Soviet legacy was, in this way, paradoxical. It was thought that the Soviet government succeeded in turning museums into a tool of propaganda. On the other hand, it was complained that Soviet museums developed into huge warehouses, which were only interested in gathering and classifying their objects and did little to introduce their collections into broader social life. Critics were harsh: they declared that in 1989 even those LSSR museums that were to become national museums were not worth the status of a scientific organization. Such a status could be granted, it was suggested, only to the great Moscow and Leningrad museums. Another point of criticism concerned the return of exhibitions to ‘material things’, because Soviet museum

exhibitions 'were filled with endless "ideologically important" photocopies, documents and little papers, other materials which are not valuable from museological point of view'. All Soviet Lithuanian museums, it was argued, looked the same and were boring. Finally, the fact that most LSSR museums were heavily underfinanced and their collections were as a rule kept in bad condition, and the fact that the salary of a museum worker (on average 111-113 roubles per month in 1989) was hardly higher than a state pension, were indicated as the key problems. The meeting was rounded up with the suggestion to include a definition of the 'national treasure of Lithuanian culture' in the LR Constitution (this suggestion was not implemented) (Jokubaitis and Klimavičius 1991: 151).

However, reforms were soon to come to the Lithuanian museums sector. Besides freedom of speech, the reforms principally entailed administrative decentralization, which granted the museums with more autonomy in decision-making, at the same time guaranteeing state financing through the Ministry of Culture. In April 1990 the Republic Commission for Monuments and Decorative Sculpture was abolished and replaced with the Republic Commission for Monuments, which used independent experts.¹⁸ In 2003, a special Museum Council was organized as an advisory experts' body at the Ministry of Culture. The plan for the last year (1990) of the LSSR Ministry of Culture did not list museums as a priority sphere: it focused instead on legislation, the congress of culture and several song, theatre, and film festivals.¹⁹ The state principally provided the museums with salary and maintenance costs. Hardly any funds were allocated for creating new exhibitions. Although in 1993 the Lithuanian government spent a respectable 3.3% of the national budget on culture, in real terms it was pittance: the average salary of a museum worker was 103 litas per month (ca 25 USD).²⁰

The post-Soviet national museums continued to capitalize on being depositories of 'nationally significant' objects. Most displays were revised to reflect new historical narratives. However, there was a surprising lack of debate about how a new democratic national museum should be constructed in Lithuania. For instance, an overview of the quarterly magazine *Museums' Chronicles* demonstrates a quite surprising absence of explicit, published rationales for post-Soviet museums as sites for the education of the citizens in new democratic ethics.

It was in 1996 that a new law for national museums was passed. This law made the three national museums (the Lithuanian National Museum (LNM), the Lithuanian Art Museum and the M.K. Čiurlionis Art Gallery) more independent from the Ministry of Culture, because the budgets of these museums were now voted on by the parliament and administered by the Ministry of Finance. It is rather curious to see that only three of the top or 'republic' status Soviet museums managed to 'translate' themselves into the new formal status of a national museum. Two of these museums, the Historical-Ethnographic Museum (HEM) and the Lithuanian Art Museum (LAM), were based in Vilnius. It can be hypothesized that the directors' role was particularly important here. The current director of LAM, an art historian, Romualdas Budrys, had decades-long experience as an insider of top decision makers in LSSR. The director of HEM/LNM, Birutė Kulnytė, worked at the museum since 1973 and it was thanks to her initiative that HEM was turned into the most venerable LNM.²¹ The third director, Osvaldas Daugelis, had worked at the Čiurlionis State Art Museum since 1979. Being a deputy head in 1988-92, he was appointed as the director in 1992.

It was after the collapse of the Soviet Union that an official definition of ‘the national museum’ was eventually formed. In 1992, 1994 and 1996 the LR government revised *The Regulations of the State Museum*. The 1996 revision stipulated five types of museums: national, republic, county (*apskritis*), local and agency museums. These types were formulated on the basis of a museum’s collection and anchored in territorial-administrative structures. According to the regulations, the national museums have administrative duties as coordinating centres, which provide guidance and assistance to other public museums in Lithuania.

Types of collection played the most important role in the attribution of the official status of a given museum. According to the official definition (1996) the national museums were ‘those museums which store the most important collections of the state historical, art, technology, nature and other kinds of values’.²² *The Regulations* also stipulated that the national museum was principally a category only applicable to state-owned museums: only the Ministry of Culture could establish the national museums. However, not in all cases was there a clear-cut relation between the museum collection and its status.

In 1990, the word ‘national’ was included in the title of the former Lithuanian State Historical-Ethnographic Museum as it was renamed the National Lithuanian Museum of the State and Culture. In July 1996 the official status of a ‘national museum’ was legislated and granted to three museums: *the National Lithuanian Museum of the State and Culture History* (now: The Lithuanian National Museum, Vilnius), *the Lithuanian Art Museum* (Vilnius) and *the State M. K. Čiurlionis Museum* (Kaunas).²³ It is notable that all these three museums have a surprising amount of so called ‘exhibition branches’. These branches are actually pretty self-sufficient and different museums in their own right.

There were several exceptions. One of them was the controversial case of the rebuilding of the Royal Palace in Vilnius. The building was not yet finished in 2011 and the Royal Palace does not have a particularly old and significant national collection; however, the Royal Palace was granted national museum status. Because I have analysed this case in detail (Rindzeviciute 2010), I will not expand on it here. It suffices to note that the key rationale of the Royal Palace focuses on establishing continuity between the contemporary Lithuanian state and the GDL. In doing so, the Royal Palace somewhat revised the 19th-20th century narrative that portrayed Lithuania’s relations with Poland in negative terms. Additionally, it should be noted that an important patron of the Royal Palace was Romualdas Budrys, the director of the Lithuanian Art Museum, one of the three post-Soviet national museums. Backed by the powerful political figures of the President and then Prime Minister and Budrys, this new museum was therefore attributed with this especially high administrative status.

The creation of the famous Grūtas Park Museum of Soviet Life (established in 2001) could be described as another exceptional case when a museum stimulated significant public debate about the political past. During the 1990s, the Ministry of Culture searched for a solution to monuments of Soviet figures, because the Ministry was official owner of these monuments. Initially stored in several warehouses and even in the courtyard of a former KGB prison in Vilnius, the monuments were given to a private entrepreneur Viliūmas Malinauskas, who signed an agreement with the Ministry to use these statues to create a museum park. Since then, the Grūtas Park Museum of Soviet Life has proved to be a popular destination, an economically viable undertaking and a fascinating case, which attracted quite conflicting evaluations by many

international scholars.²⁴ The author's observations at several local conferences revealed that Grūtas Park Museum was not, however, treated as a 'proper museum' by the workers of the national museums.

Elsewhere, I have analyzed the creation of new museums that engaged with subjects that were silenced under Soviet regime: the crimes of communism and the Holocaust (Rindzeviciute, forthcoming). The professional community of museologists took up the post-Soviet reorganization of existing museums: it was perceived and implemented as an internal matter for cultural sector professionals. The organizing of new museums, particularly the Vilna Gaon Jewish Museum and the Museum of the Victims of Genocide (both in Vilnius) was undertaken by groups of enthusiasts or civil society. The Jewish Museum was established largely by the efforts of a newly established Society for Jewish Culture (1989). The Genocide Museum was established through the efforts of a public association and political party the Union of Political Prisoners and Deportees (1992). The heritage department of the Ministry of Culture and Education assisted the organization of both museums. It is interesting that the already existing museums regarded the development of these new museums with some scepticism, just like in the Grūtas case. Perhaps one of the reasons was the perceived competition for scarce economic resources in the public sector.

Case studies

The Lithuanian National Museum

The first case deals with the Lithuanian National Museum (LNM), which, as its name suggests, has the formal status of a national museum. Formally established in 1992, the LNM defines itself as an heir to Vilnius Museum of Antiquities (1855-1865). By the early nineteenth century, ideas about public museums as instruments to disseminate enlightenment ideals and republican ideas circulated in Lithuania. For example, in the 1820s, the organiser of a 'philarethic and philomatic association', a student of Vilnius University, wrote in exile that 'people's museums' were instruments for education of the people and helped the government to establish communication with the population and to mobilise it for progressive goals (Keršytė 2003: 22).²⁵

The idea to establish a public museum in Vilnius belonged to Count Eustach Tyszkiewicz, a wealthy landowner from Minsk county (*gubernija*). As Vilnius University was closed down in 1832, in 1835 Tyszkiewicz attempted (unsuccessfully) to establish a scientific historical society (Aleksandravičius 1989: 36). In 1848, the count submitted a proposal to establish a Provincial Museum, which, according to the Lithuanian historian Mulevičiūtė, very closely resembled the structure of the *Musaeum Polonicum* (1775). Tyszkiewicz proposed to organize four sections of natural history, antiquities (archaeological findings, works of art, weapons, coins), library and economy.²⁶ The envisioned museum was to stimulate both local patriotism and economic progress; the museum's collection would 'encourage the inhabitants to love the artefacts of their homeland, but also competition [...] by expanding and improving local industries just as exploring historically our past; it also will serve by persuading the young generation that the artefacts of our land are no worse than those from abroad'. Interestingly, just before engaging in his museum project, Tyszkiewicz had travelled extensively in Sweden, Denmark and Norway in 1843. In his detailed description of this journey, the count described his deep impressions about

libraries, art and historical collections, burial mounds, castles and churches. However, Mulevičiūtė pointed out that in his notes Tyszkiewicz never mentioned Scandinavian museums which makes it difficult to prove a direct Nordic influence (Mulevičiūtė, 2003: 47-48).

Tyszkiewicz's museum proposal (1848) was rejected. In 1851 the Count produced another proposal in which he promised to donate his collection of antiquities, numismatics and library on the condition that the government provided the premises and appointed him as the head of the museum. The museum would be financed by private donations. Somewhat later, he also suggested establishing a learned society that would specialise in archaeological studies (Aleksandravičius 1989: 36-7). This was accompanied with a somewhat less ambitious plan for the museum in which the industrial part was abandoned. The proposal was accepted. However, it took several years for the organisation of the museum and, according to Aleksandravičius (1989:37), the Imperial administration was concerned about the possible political implications of the collections and demanded that the displays would be accompanied by the 'correct' version of history.

On 29 April 1855, the Tsar passed a decree on the Museum of Antiquities and the Temporary Archaeological Commission in Vilnius.²⁷ This decree described the museum as a Russian institution, dedicated 'to preserve the monuments of antiquity, to create an opportunity to use them for the study of the region [*krai*] not only in relation to its history, but also in relation to its trade, industry, natural history, agriculture and statistics'.²⁸ The museum was envisioned as a library, a fine arts depository and a natural history laboratory, as it included 'ancient books, documents, manuscripts, coins, medals, weapons, inscriptions and photographs [of incomprehensible], pictures, sculptures and other objects, which are relevant to the Western region of Russia' ('Polozhenie o Muzeumi'...' 1855: 2). The news about the first large public museum in Lithuania, and the Archaeological Commission, were announced in the main bilingual newspaper, *Vilnius Courier* (in Polish *Kuryer Wileński*, in Russian *Vilenski vestnik*).

The head of the museum was responsible to the Governor-general of Vilnius, Grodno, Minsk and Kaunas military counties (*okrug*) and the Head of Vilnius Scientific County. The appointing of another head was the responsibility of the Governor-general, who was also responsible for Vilnius Scientific County, with the agreement of the minister for National Education. The appointed staff of the museum included a scientific secretary-librarian and two administrative staff. Financing came from the Museum and the Commission that was to be approved by the Governor-general. The Ministry of National Education or the Governor-general's office was suggested as possible premises for the museum. The chairmen, vice-chairmen and members of the Museum and Commission were also to be formally approved by the Governor-general. The decree listed that it was 'local landowners and people in general' who were eligible to become members. The members had to support the museum scientifically, financially and materially, at not less than 30 silver roubles per year. The Museum and the Commission were given the right to publish their proceedings, with approval of the Censor ('Polozhenie o Muzeumi'...' 1855: 2-3). In September 1858 the importance of the museum was officially signalled by the visit of Tsar Alexander II.²⁹ In relation to this visit the Museum published a small collection of historical documents and sources; another volume was planned for 1863.

It seems that the primary function of the museum, formally outlined in the decree, dealt with the production of politically and economically useful knowledge about the administratively

defined area. In the decree, the word 'Lithuania' did not feature at all. The only geographical reference is the one indicated on the Imperial map, the Western part of Russia.

The VMA collection was supplemented with cabinets of Mineralogy, Zoology and Numismatics, which originally belonged to Vilnius University, but after its closure were held in Vilnius High School (*Vilniaus gimnazija*). VMA had the following nine sections: archaeological collection, archaeographical, numismatic, portrait, prints and sculptures, stamp collection, a library, zoological, mineralogical cabinets and botanic collection. In 1862 VMA organised a new ethnographic section on the basis of donations of the Count Mikhail Tyszkiewicz and doctors of the Baltic navy. The ethnographic collection included about 406 objects from China, Japan, Egypt and Siberia (*Kuryer Wilenski* 1863: 1). The first ethnographic collection in the Vilnius Museum of Antiquity could be seen as part of an imperial colonisation project.

In 1862, the Commission had 206 members, of whom 20 members were from outside the Empire (it was added that most of them were from Slavic lands) (*Kuryer Wilenski* 22 January 1863: 1). The Commission collaborated with learned societies in the Russian Empire and abroad (the collaboration mainly involved exchange of publications) (*Vilenskii v'stnik* 1864: 4). Ironically, already in 1862 the Vilnius Governor-general has decided to establish an Archaeographical Commission in Vilnius, which according to Aleksandravičius (1989: 44), presumed dissolution of the Archaeological Commission.³⁰

Polish-Lithuanian uprisings against Russia in 1863-1864 triggered harsh cultural policy measures. On 27 February 1865 the Governor Murav'ev created a commission for the reorganisation of VMA. The commission criticised VMA for featuring many objects that referred to PLC national heroes, such as the poets Adam Mickewicz and Tadeusz Kosciuszka, and the GDL (armour, flags, stamps). According to Mulevičiūtė, those objects that could be related to rebellious Grand Duchy nobles were removed from VMA's collection (including a portrait of Thomas Jefferson) in March 1865. Interestingly, according to the records, the ethnographic section did not experience almost any damage. The official records listed 256 objects that were confiscated and sent to other museums in Russia. In reality, about 1,000 objects went missing and members of the Archaeological Commission perceived this as a collapse of VMA. The Museum was transferred to a newly established Public Library. In 1866 the new head of the museum found its collections in disarray and rather badly damaged. In 1868 the Museum was again opened to the public, but the number of visitors decreased. The collections were expanded to include objects with Slavic connotations and attributes of the Imperial administration. Starting in 1871, when the head of museum Aleksii Vladimirov was replaced, an increasingly important role was played by objects connected with the Orthodox church (Mulevičiūtė 2003: 52-6).

During the 1905 revolution, the ban on public associations was lifted. In Lithuania new societies were formed and organised new museums. VMA was partially revived as the Vilnius Science and Art Museum between 1907 and 1914 (again under the initiative of Tyshkiewicz family members). This time the museum explicitly oriented its collections to represent the territory of the Grand Duchy of 'Lithuania and Belarus'. However, there was competition with other museums established by two recently founded societies: the Lithuanian Science Society (1907-1940) and the Vilnius Society of Friends of Science (1907-1941) (Petrauskienė 1985: 42-49). When Poland occupied Vilnius in 1920, the history of VMA as a Lithuanian museum was paused, ironically, until Vilnius was returned to Lithuania by communist Russia.

In 1941, the newly established LSSR Academy of Sciences (LAS) organized a historical museum under its history department, which was to house jointly collections from VMA and Vilnius's societies of Lithuanian Science and the Friends of Science.³¹ At the same time the LAS ethnography department organized an ethnographic museum. In 1952 the Museum of Ethnography was merged with the Museum of History and renamed the LSSR Museum of History and Ethnography (henceforth HEM). A cultural historian, Vincas Žilėnas, was appointed as director and, typically of Soviet leadership, remained in this position for more than two decades, retiring only in 1973. Organized in archaeological, ethnographic, history, iconography and numismatic sections, in 1963 HEM was transferred from LAS to the LSSR Ministry of Culture.

Both HEM's physical location and self-identification in narratives of its origin aptly spoke about the national significance of this institution. Situated at a complex of buildings called the New and the Old Gunpowder Houses (these buildings dated back to the 1500s-1700s and were also known as the Arsenal), HEM found itself at the foot of Gediminas Hill, near the castle and the Cathedral at the heart of Vilnius Old Town. Although first established in the early 1940s, HEM celebrated its 125th anniversary in 1980 and in this way affirmed its genealogy from the Vilnius Museum of Antiquities (1855). Indeed, the word 'national' (in Lithuanian *tautinis, nacionalinis*) had already been carefully introduced into the notion of HEM in 1970:

The Lithuanian SSR Historical and Ethnographic Museum (HEM) is a '*national museum*' because it is first and foremost concerned with collecting, storing and displaying those cultural monuments which are directly and indirectly related to the past and present of our nation. (Bernotienė, Mažeikienė and Tautavičienė 1970: 7, original emphasis – E.R.)

HEM opened its first permanent exhibition on the threshold of the end of the Thaw, November 1968. This exhibition was cautiously limited to a period between the settlement of Lithuania's territory, 10 000 BC, and the October revolution in 1917. This display was located in seven halls; the eighth hall was reserved for temporary exhibitions. In 1972 HEM reorganized the display of Lithuania's history to reflect changes in the historical interpretation of socialism introduced by Leonid Brezhnev's doctrine of 'mature socialism'. A new display 'The History of the Soviet Society, 1940 to the present' was opened later in 1976 and included several themes: 'The Victory of the Revolution and the Beginning of the Creation of Socialism in the LSSR (1940-1941)', 'Lithuania during the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945)', 'Creation of the Basis of Socialism and Completion of Socialism (1945-1961)' and 'LSSR National Economy and Culture under Mature Socialism (1961-1975)' (Žilėnas 1980). The reformed HEM systematically Lithuanianized the history of the LSSR as it exclusively focused on Soviet Lithuanians and minimized the visibility of non-Lithuanian ethnic groups, such as Poles and Jews (Weeks 2008).

In 1992, HEM was renamed the Lithuanian National Museum and further expanded during the 1990s. A new statute for the Lithuanian National Museum was passed in August 2004. According to this statute, the LNM was defined as a 'national budget enterprise which collects, stores, researches, conserves, restores and popularizes the values of Lithuanian archaeology, history and ethnic culture'. The charter also re-affirmed the genealogy of LNM from the Vilnius Museum of Antiquities (1855) and the collections of the Lithuanian Science Society (1907-1941). The key directions of LNM collections were listed: archaeology, the history of Lithuania,

Lithuania's ethnic culture, iconography, and numismatic. In 2011 the LNM contained the following branch museums:

1. Exhibitions about Lithuania's archaeology, history and ethnic culture (The Old and New Arsenals, Vilnius)
2. Exhibitions about fights with crusaders, weapons and iconography of the Vilnius Upper Castle (the Vilnius Upper Castle, Vilnius)
3. Exhibitions about the national revival (1904-1918), the re-creation of the Lithuanian state (1918) and the National Revival Movement (*Sąjūdis*) (1987-1990) (the Signatories House, Vilnius)³²
4. Exhibitions about the prohibition of the Lithuanian press, the era of *Varpas* and Vincas Kudirka (V. Kudirkos Naumiestis)
5. Exhibitions about the prohibition of the Lithuanian press, the era of *Ausra*, and Jonas Šliūpas (Palanga)
6. The memorial museum of Kazys Varnelis, which contains modernist works of art by Varnelis (est. 1993, part of LNM in 2004, Vilnius).

There is some consistency in the selection of the branches that constitute LNM: branches 1 and 2 are based on some of oldest museum collections in Lithuania and are situated in the historic centre of Vilnius (the castle hill and surrounding arsenal buildings). On the other hand, branches 3 to 6 were linked to the LNM at various points in time. The uniting rationale of 3-5 and 6 is not entirely obvious. These branches focus on the political history of the modern Lithuanian nation state: resistance to the Russian Tsarist regime in the 1800s and national revival movement (3, 4, and 5), the declaration of independence (1918) and the political history of interwar Lithuania (3). Branch 6, however, sits oddly with this general direction of national politics represented in LNM, because it displays an exhibition of modernist art created by Varnelis, as well as Varnelis's personal collection of fine and applied art (East and West Europe, East Asia) and of books, including old Lithuanian books.

National M.K. Čiurlionis Art Museum & Vytautas the Great Military Museum

The second case concerns the development of two important museums, both of which were founded in 1921 during the first period of Lithuania's statehood as a nation-state. At the moment of writing only the Čiurlionis Art Museum has the formal status of a national museum. However, these two museums were established at almost the same time and their buildings form one architectural complex. It can be argued that both the Čiurlionis Art Museum and Vytautas the Great Military Museum performed the function of a national museum during the interwar period. Indeed, in 1923 the term of 'national museum' (*tautos muziejus*) was used in the discussions about the location of planned museums among the Kaunas city council and intellectuals (Jankevičiūtė 2001: 31).

Vytautas the Great Military Museum (VGMM) was established through collaboration between the government, intellectual community and cultural operators. On its website the museum traces

its genealogy to the Lithuanian Military Museum which was created by the Lithuanian Ministry of Defence in 1921. After the decree was passed on the 15th of December 1921, the first exhibition was opened to the public on the premises of a garrison. A decade later, in 1930, construction of a special building was started in Kaunas. The Lithuanian Military Museum was renamed the Vytautas the Great Military Museum, which first opened to the public in 1936.

VGMM was specially designed to house an exhibition that narrated the heroic story of the Lithuanian nation, especially its fight to establish an independent state. The period of joint statehood with Poland, the PLC, was presented as a negative moment in the history of the Lithuanian nation. The culmination of the exhibition was a 'chapel' dedicated to Vytautas the Great (which was actually ridiculed as a hilarious example of national kitsch by some contemporaries) and a crypt that commemorated those who died for the freedom of Lithuania.³³

Mikalojus K. Čiurlionis Art Gallery was also established in Kaunas in 1921. A symbolist painter and a romantic composer, Čiurlionis (1875-1911) was canonized as a national genius in the interwar period. In 1985 a Soviet Lithuanian magazine *Museums and Monuments* wrote that this Čiurlionis Art Gallery (later a museum) 'became the most important keeper, depositor and representative of the national art and riches of art which exist in Lithuania' (Rimkus 1985: 5). Initially housed in the temporary building of an art school, Čiurlionis Art Gallery was moved to a purpose-built building situated right behind the Vytautas the Great Military Museum. The gallery was renamed as the Vytautas the Great Museum of Culture (VGMC) and expanded to include collections gathered by the City Museum and Lithuanian Art Society. Alongside works by Čiurlionis the VGMC displayed a collection of Lithuanian folk art and works of Lithuanian professional fine and applied arts.³⁴

It has to be noted that first exhibitions of Lithuanian art in the twentieth century were hardly structured by any historical narrative at all. The principal goal of these exhibitions, as the organizers recalled, was 'to display as many works of art' as possible (Galaunė 1985: 3). It therefore seems that the foremost function of these exhibitions was to show that there existed such a thing as 'art produced by Lithuanians', and that these arts were also abundant and richly diverse. These public displays of 'Lithuanian art' therefore should be regarded as an important cultural means of nation-building. On the other hand, the strong presence of Lithuanian folk art in the display of VGMC should not be overinterpreted as a fanatic dedication to the folkloristic notion of the nation. Paulius Galaunė (1890-1988), the director of VGMC recalled that he had only a miserable wooden shelter, originally built for keeping construction materials, to store the museum's folk art collection. It was to avoid the risk of damaging this collection that all the more valuable pieces of folk art were put on permanent display. As a result the VGMC's shelves were tightly crammed with folk art artefacts (Galaunė 1985: 3-4).

VGMM and VGMC formed an architectural site that came to be perceived as a pantheon of the Lithuanian nation. VGMM faced a square, decorated with a classicist monument to freedom (1938) by Juozas Zikaras and embellished with an alley of prominent Lithuanian nation builders, intellectuals and politicians, and a monument to an unknown soldier (1921). The formation of this national pantheon, and particularly the museums, was not a top-down steered project of the government. Lithuania's economy being rather weak, the government was not keen to part with money to fund museums. The formal system of education through schools and universities was

prioritized and indirect education through museums and arts was less important. The building of the Vytautas the Great Museum and Čiurlionis Gallery was rather the result of systematic pressure from intellectual communities and not of a consistent governmental programme. It was members of the intellectual and artists communities who systematically sought to persuade and co-opt the government to fund and support these organizations (Jankevičiūtė 2003; Keršytė 2003; Mačiulis 2005).³⁵ It can therefore be suggested that it was civil society, expressed in the networks of the cultural intelligentsia, which was the driving force behind the establishment of 'national' museums in interwar Lithuania.

This 'national pantheon' was revised by the communist regime in 1940. The name of Vytautas the Great, the symbol of the powerful medieval GDL, was removed from the titles of both VGMM and VGMC. In 1944 VGMC was renamed as the State Čiurlionis Art Museum. In 1940 VGMM was renamed as the State Military-Historical Museum and in 1956 it was further renamed as the State Historical Museum. During his directorship between 1946 and 1963 Jonas Apuokas Maksimavičius gave away or destroyed many objects which related to the pre-Soviet statehood of Lithuania (such as flags, photographs, or a model of the Apuolė castle mound). The new communist director made sure that the 'national pantheon' surrounding the former VGMM and VGMC was eventually disassembled (Gečas 1993: 50). In 1940 the crypt was bricked in and an exhibition about the Lithuanian army regiment was removed. Eventually the alley with nation builders was taken down (Samavičius 1991:77). In 1950, the Freedom monument was demolished and replaced with a sculpture of Vincas Mickevičius-Kapsukas, the first leader of the Lithuanian communist party. The monument to the unknown soldier was replaced with a sculpture of Feliks Dzerzhinski, the founder of the communist secret police, Cheka/NKVD/KGB.

The Čiurlionis Art Museum continued to display works by Čiurlionis, folk art and Lithuanian fine arts created between 1907 and 1940. A quirky side of the Čiurlionis museum is its branch Museum of Devils, which displays a collection of thousands of devils, collected by popular interwar painter Antanas Žmuidzinavičius. During the Soviet period it was noticed that the Museum of Devils was at odds with the highbrow Museum of Art. These devils proved to be able to attract a good flow of visitors, which was sufficient to justify the Museum of Devils being part of the top category republic-museum (Rimkus 1985: 5, 8).

It is curious, in turn, that the Vytautas the Great Military Museum, highly celebrated in the 1930s, appeared to be demoted after the reestablishment of independence. Although in the Soviet times it was classified as a 'republic museum,' the VGMM became an 'agency museum' when it was subsumed under the Ministry of Defence in 2006. It can be suggested that as a result the national significance of VGMM was administratively decreased.

The Open Air Museum of Lithuania³⁶

The third case outlines the history of a skansen-type open-air museum in Lithuania. Although this museum did not have the formal status of a 'national museum' at the moment of writing, it can be considered as one of the most significant museums in relation to the development of Lithuanian ethnic-nationalist discourses. Informally called 'the museum of the motherland' (*tėviškės muziejus*), the Open Air Museum of Lithuania stages the spatial and material

identification of Lithuanian national identity as rooted in the countryside, landscapes, farmsteads, villages and small market towns.

It was under the Soviet regime that The Lithuanian SSR Ethnographic Museum of Everyday Life (*LTSR Liaudies buities muziejus*, henceforth EMEL) or a 'Lithuanian skansen' was founded after the example of the Swedish Skansen museum in Stockholm. However, this was not the first attempt at the recreation of peasants' lifestyle in a museum. The first ever museum of a Lithuanian farmstead was created in Tilsit, East Prussia, 1905. The Lithuanian house was assembled on the basis of donations by private individuals and attracted 25,000 visitors. In the 1920s several farm buildings were brought to Kaunas fair grounds, however, the advancing Red Army burnt down the buildings in 1940. In 1938 the eminent museum builder Petras Bugailiškis attempted at founding an open-air museum near Šiauliai. There were also attempts at establishing a Lithuanian skansen in Vilnius, but with no success (Morkūnas 2008).

In 1958, the site of an old village, Rumšiškės, was flooded as a result of dam construction for Kaunas hydroelectric plant. The village itself was re-created as a new settlement several kilometres away from its original location. In the same year, the idea to establish a Lithuanian *skansen* was discussed at the LSSR Supreme Council. EMEL was discussed alongside projects for rebuilding medieval castles, such as Trakai and Biržai. These initiatives were underpinned by economic recovery in the LSSR and partially enabled by Nikita Khrushchev's decentralization reform (*sovmarkhoz* 1957-1964), which granted more decision-making power to republican authorities.

Building new museums was also part of the post-war recovery. Although it was suggested to build the Open Air Museum near Vilnius, the decision was taken to situate such a museum near Kaunas and close to the recently moved village of Rumšiškės. This location meant close proximity to a lake, created by the dam construction, and a newly built modern motorway that connected Vilnius with Kaunas and Klaipėda. The interest in ethnic national culture in this way was embedded in a system of industrial achievements of the communist leaders of Lithuanian industry. Researchers described such progress-oriented activities of republic communist parties as 'economic nationalism'. LSSR leaders were, of course, loyal communists, but they treated the Lithuanian republic as their own kingdom and were keen to demonstrate that it was them, local leaders, and not Moscow, who had decision-making power (Rindzevičiūtė 2010). Museum builders tapped into this political resource.

EMEL presents an eloquent tale of the complex development of Lithuanian society in the 1960s. Located not far from a large industrial project, the Nemunas dam, the museum was composed of about 150 buildings dating mainly from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The museum occupied about 180 hectares and the visitor route stretched six kilometres. The museum was established by the decision of the LSSR Council of Ministers on the 30th of April 1965. The first director was Vytautas Stanikūnas, who studied museology at Vilnius University in the 1940s.³⁷ Work started in 1966 and in about a decade the first buildings were finished. EMEL was officially opened in 1974, but further construction, such as an entire town of the second half of the 1800s, were planned and built later. As Jakelaitis noted, the reconstructed market town curiously lacked Jews, who at that time made up the majority of Lithuania's urban population.

However, the original plan included a synagogue as part of the reconstructed market town (Jakelaitis 1998: 97).

The administrative building was located in Rumšiškės, which also saw construction of homes specially built for many of the museum workers. This building scheme, which included new public utility buildings such as a supermarket and a restaurant, was possible through support of the constructions ministry, which during the period of economic decentralization had relative liberty in allocation of resources. In his memoir the former vice-minister of culture particularly mentioned the support given to the museum by the LSSR State Planning Committee official Algirdas Brazauskas and the LSSR minister of finance Romualdas Sikorskis (Jakelaitis 1998: 102). The guidelines of the museum pointed out that the museum was to 'reflect the everyday life and architecture of Lithuanian people', 'to distinguish four ethnographic regions', to have a 'farmstead as the main exhibition unit', to 'recreate the households which represent various periods and different social classes' including serfs, small holdings, medium-size and large farms, manor houses and city dwellings. The guidelines carefully framed a rationale to preserve religion buildings as it stressed that it was important to contain 'unique examples of folk wooden architecture' (Stanikūnas 1970:32). The introduction to the guide of EMEL sets the stage for the museum by describing people without history:

The names of ancient rulers are inscribed in manuscripts, dukes and gentry erected marble or granite monuments for themselves, but the graves of simple people, of humble ploughmen withered away in sand hills. Wooden crosses lingered over these graves, but eventually, weathered by storms and winds, they rotted away. Entire generations of common folk left life without a trace. (Vėlyvis et al. 1977: 3)

The official goal of the Soviet Lithuanian Skansen was to do justice to these people without history: 'In fact those grey people were the creators of history'. In this way, EMEL skilfully balanced the obvious focus on rural folk culture with a Marxist class narrative; a take that was quite successfully used in Lithuanian historiography by Jurginis. As it was put in the guide: 'visitors, including a large share of young people, witness the difference between the old and the new, they can compare the past with the present and are convinced about the obviously great advantages of Soviet order and socialism' (Vėlyvis et al. 1977: 42). To illustrate the 'disadvantaged' past, the museum could use an eighteenth-century old wooden church (the director Stanikūnas, however, recalled that one party ideologue criticized the cross on the church tower). Indeed, in 1968 the first secretary of the LCP, Antanas Sniečkus, gave explicit instructions to the museum builders to construct the museum in such a way that it would juxtapose the past poverty with the current well-being of collective farms (Stanikūnas 2009: 37). On the other hand, the attitudes of LCP party leaders were mixed. For example, other influential state officials, such as LSSR Gosplan official Algirdas Brazauskas, LCP ideological secretary Antanas Barkauskas and the LSSR Minister of Culture Lionginas Šepetys, even explicitly asked the museum workers not to depict historical Lithuania as a poor and deprived country, because this would give another reason for the visitors from Moscow to boast about the civilizing power of the Soviet Union (Stanikūnas 2009: 38; Jakelaitis 1998: 102). However, this encouragement was not translated into adequate economic support. For example, in 1966 the newly established museum was given only an old minibus and several bicycles: such were the means of transport to

be used to collect exhibits (Stanikūnas 2009: 38). This suggests that the building of ethnically oriented Soviet museums was a truly collaborative effort between the LCP party leaders (who gave personal assurance of support) and museum workers (who were motivated highly enough to work in spite of gravely insufficient resources).

EMEL's guide, published in 1977, sought to evoke an emotional response in the reader by romanticising the simplicity of rural life. The Soviet Lithuanian Skansen could be understood as an inward-centred technique of ethnic nationalization. It aimed at the collection, concentration and classification of the architecture and material heritage of rural Lithuanian communities. The audience of this museum was not only the population of the cities, but also the countryside population, which lived in industrialized collective farms. In this way the idyllic rural life was equally detached from both town and country people in the 1960s LSSR.

During the post-Soviet period, the museum was renamed into the Open Air Museum of Lithuania. In the construction of a quaint and romantic image of the past, the Museum appeared to disregard the groups that were considered alien to ethnic Lithuanianness, such as Jews or Polonized elites. The museum exhibition lacks households of upper-class Lithuanians, although in the 1990s there were plans made to install a manor house. Since the 1960s, the Museum presented the Lithuanian village as a unique phenomenon and did not articulate any regional ties, either Baltic or Nordic. However, in the 2000s, the museum has been developing a new section dedicated to Lithuania Minor, an area which roughly occupied the current coastline (Klaipėda/Memel) and parts of former East Prussia (now Kaliningrad).

Several new buildings were added that narrated the past that was banished by the Soviet regime. A new section called 'Deportations and Resistance' was organised in 1992. Several objects were installed to represent suffering, repressions and resistance to Soviet power: a yurt, similar to the ones that were used by deportees near the Laptev Sea, a train cattle car that was used to transport prisoners and deportees, and an anti-Soviet partisan bunker. The market town is still under construction; however, the museum's information does not give any indication about the possibility of including a Jewish quarter or a synagogue. It only mentions that shopkeepers were 'mainly Jews'. Therefore, it may seem that communist crimes were more readily incorporated in the Open Air Museum than the Holocaust. On the other hand, elsewhere I have argued that the museum site dedicated to deportations was established mainly by the effort of an active society of Laptev Sea deportees. This society was not always strongly supported by the museum leadership, which, reportedly, adhered to rather state socialist views even in the 1990s (Rindzevičiūtė forthcoming a).

This example brings us back to the key argument, which suggests that it was great many actors who engaged in the construction of the nation and state-building through the medium of museums in Lithuania. It would be difficult and unfair to try and reduce this variety and heterogeneity into '-isms'. I hope that this study has demonstrated that there have been so many potential openings for revising the past, the present and the future of the state and the people in the national museums.

Notes

- ¹ However, in the second half of the nineteenth century smaller museums were established under the city municipalities and regional governors' auspices. This wave of museums of industry, trade and design was an adoption of the process started by the creation of Victoria and Albert Museum in London.
- ² In addition, the term 'the Museum of Lithuania' was used by Teodoras Narbutas in correspondence with Simonas Daukantas in 1846. Narbutas referred to the planned Vilnius Museum of Antiquities (Aleksandravičius 1989: 59).
- ³ It is interesting that after 1990 the idea of 'the House of the Nation' has been revived again and periodically discussed in the Lithuanian press.
- ⁴ This decision expressed a general call to represent the role of revolutionary figures, intellectuals and cultural operators of Russian and other national origins in Vilnius. On the other hand, this decision also stipulated the establishment of eight memorial exhibitions dedicated to Lithuanian writers, artists and scientists, some of whom, such as Žemaitė, Juozas Zikaras, Būga and Lazdynų Pelėda, were active in the 1800s and before 1940. Moreover, the LSSR CC announced its support for the open-air Lithuanian Museum of People's Everyday Life. ('Nutarimas apie muziejus' 1965: 16).
- ⁵ There was the exception of Lionginas Šepetys, who, as an influential politician, was invited to participate at the LSSR Politburo. On the all-union level Minister of Culture was also regarded as a politically insignificant post, if compared with Politburo membership.
- ⁶ ('Paminkloaugos raida Lietuvoje'; http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/w5_show?p_r=6817&p_k=1).
- ⁷ LLM, 342, a. 1, b. 3323, l. 18.
- ⁸ The head of this Agency was Jonas Glemža (1963-1979) and E. Misiulis (1979-1990). On 15 July 1988 the Ministry was reorganized and the Museums and Cultural Monuments Agency was merged with the Agencies for Cultural Enlightenment Organizations and the Library Affairs to form a new department, the Agency for Cultural Enterprises. Museums were represented by a Museum Group ('Nauja Lietuvos TSR kultūros...').
- ⁹ The Society was established on the basis of the earlier LSSR Society for Local History (1961) and in 1989 was reorganized into the Lithuanian Local History Society.
- ¹⁰ LLM, 342, a. 1, b. 3323, l. 18.
- ¹¹ LLM, f. 342, a. 1, b. 3574, l. 32-33.
- ¹² LLM, 342, a. 1, b. 3323, l. 68.
- ¹³ A speech 'Saviveiklinė meno kūryba – svarbus dvasinės kultūros baras' by the Minister of Culture Jonas Bielinis (April 1988), LLM, f. 342, a. 1, b. 3826, l. 28, 29.
- ¹⁴ On the other hand, every larger museum had a department for 'work with masses' (in Lithuanian, *masinio darbo skyrius*). Although the task of such departments was to engage audiences in the museums, one gets the impression that the functions of these departments were quite diverse. On the one hand they would collect and process statistical data about visitors and provide exhibition guide services; it was these departments which also provided exhibition tours to foreigners in larger museums, such as the State Historical and Ethnographical Museum (HEM), in English and German languages. These departments also collaborated by 'providing methodological assistance' to guides from the Bureau of Excursions, Sputnik and Inturist companies. On the other hand, the department for work with masses also arranged travelling exhibitions, lectures, and meetings dedicated to such occasions as the 110th anniversary of Lenin's birthday, victories of the Soviet people in World War II, or congresses of the CPs of the USSR and LSSR. A more interesting event was the open days organized to celebrate the International Museums Day. During these days such professional historians as R. Rimantienė, M. Jučas, V. Merkys, E. Gudavičius, and A. Tautavičius, were invited to the Museum halls to consult visitors about the exhibitions ((Jankevičienė 1987: 25).
- ¹⁵ See, for example, statements by Napalys Kitkauskas ('Visuomenės atgimimas...' 1989: 8-12).
- ¹⁶ See, for instance a debate about national culture and cultural workers ('Tautinė kultūra ir...' 1989: 8) and volume 6 by *Kultūros barai* (1989).
- ¹⁷ For example, 'The unity of man and nature, which was based on love, ensured the special state of ethnos, a feeling of Freedom. All this is encoded in the Lithuanian ethnos energetic field and exists in the unconscious of each of us. This is the giant energy of the National Revival [*Atgimimas*] and Creation, which should be released. It is necessary for the power of the national spirit to express itself (...)' (Tauginas 1989: 6).
- ¹⁸ The Lithuanian Ministry of Culture and Education, Decree no. 144 (19 April 1990), LLM, f. 342, a. 1, b. 3914, l. 242-243.
- ¹⁹ Collegium of LSSR Ministry of Culture, decision no. 3 (4 January 1990), LLM, f. 342, a. 1, b. 3915, l. 12-19.
- ²⁰ Verbatim no. 39 of the debates at the Lithuanian Parliament, 30 November, 1993.
- ²¹ Educated as a historian at Vilnius University, Kulnytė was the head of the Folk Art section in 1973-1989, the head of the Ethnographic section in 1989-1992 and since 1992 has been the director of the museum.
- ²² Republic museums were 'specialized museums, which stored collections, which matched their specialization'. County museums stored collections which 'reflected the cultural history of the county'. Local museums stored

- collections which ‘reflected the cultural history of certain territories’. Agency museums stored collections which ‘related to the area and history of the founding organization’. *Valstybinio muziejaus nuostatai*, LR Government decision no. 975 (15 August 1996).
- 23 LR Government Decision no. 867 (19 July 1996).
- 24 For divergent views about Grūtas Park see Aronsson (2003), Lankauskas (2006) and Mark (2010).
- 25 In 1822 Alexander I banned all civic associations, including masons. However, according to the 1803 university statute, the university was entitled to organize groups and circles for studies. Within this framework a philomatic association was established in 1821 by Adam Mickiewicz and J. Lelevel. The philomatic association aimed at recreating the PLC and abolishing serfdom. In 1820 a philaretic association was established by Tomas Zanas. In 1823 the imperial authorities started active prosecution of members of philomathic-philaretic organizations: many of them were imprisoned and sentenced to deportation.
- 26 The Musaeum Polonicum, proposed by Michal Mniszech, a member of the Educational Commission, included sections on natural history, a gallery of sculptures of famous people, cabinets of numismatics and prints and an exhibition of agricultural machines (Mulevičiūtė, 2003: 46-47).
- 27 *Upravlenie Vilenskago Voennago grodnenskago minskago I kovenskago General” Gubernatora po Vilenskomu Uchebnomu Okrugu*, Vilnius, 1855. VU RS, f. 46-3, no.1135, l. 76.
- 28 (‘Polozhenie o Muzeumi’...’ 1855: 2). The Imperial Archaeological Commission oversaw all archaeological investigations in the Russian Empire.
- 29 During this visit crown prince Nicholas was appointed as patron of the museum and the Archaeological Commission. In relation to this Tyszkiewicz attempted to reformulate the Commission into Vilnius Science Society, but without success (Aleksandravičius 1989: 42).
- 30 The Archaeographical Commission was established on 17 April 1864.
- 31 The following part draws on my earlier publication (Rindzeviciute 2010a).
- 32 In November 2002 the House of the Signatories of Lithuanian Independence (est. 1999) was included in the Lithuanian National Museum. LR Ministry of Culture, Decree no. 401 (4 November 2002).
- 33 The sections included: Vytautas the Great chapel; Lithuania after 1795; Napoleonic times; 1831 and 1863 uprisings against the Russian Empire; the period of prohibition of Lithuanian print; Lithuanian military regiments in Russia in 1917; a section on independence; a section on the Lithuanian army; a section on Šaulių sąjunga and partisans; Darius’ and Girėnas’ flight with *Lituanica*; a collection of armour and weapons; a section about Lithuanian castle mounds and the Iron age; a crypt for those who died for Lithuanian freedom. For more about the cult of Vytautas the Great in interwar Lithuania see Jankevičiūtė (2010).
- 34 The statute of Čiurlionis Art Gallery stipulated it should display folk art. The Gallery both gathered its own collection of folk art artefacts and included collections from the State Museum (which used to belong to the State Archaeological Commission) (Galaunė 1985:3).
- 35 Among those lobbyists for museums was Paulius Galaunė (1890-1988). Educated in Saint Petersburg (1910-1913) and Paris (at the Louvre, 1923-1924). Galaunė was one of first professional museum workers in Lithuania and the director of the Čiurlionis Gallery (1924-1936) and Vytautas the Great Museum of Culture (1936-1944).
- 36 This is the official translation of the museum’s title. However, a literal translation of the Lithuanian title into English is ‘The Museum of Everyday Life of Lithuania’s People’.
- 37 In 1958 a smaller open air ethnographic museum was organized as part of Rokiškis local history museum (Daunys 1966).

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Annexe

Abbreviations

AMCM	Agency for Museums and Cultural Monuments
CC	Central Committee
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
GDL	Grand Duchy of Lithuania
HEM	LSSR State Historical-Ethnographic Museum
LAM	Lithuanian Art Museum
LCP	Lithuanian Communist Party
LSSR	Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic
LNМ	Lithuanian National Museum
PLC	Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth
RSFSR	Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic
SFC	Soviet Fund for Culture
VAM	Vilnius Art Museum
VGMM	Vytautas the Great Military Museum
VGMC	Vytautas the Great Museum of Culture
VMA	Vilnius Museum of Antiquities

Archives

Archives of Lithuanian Literature and Art (LLM)

Online archives of the Parliament documents (www.seimas.lt)



National Museums in Luxembourg

Felicity Bodenstein

Summary

In 1913, English travel writer Georges Renwick, described Luxembourg as “a curious experiment in nation-making”, (quoted by Pit, 2010: 1). Indeed, politically and geographically it is an exceptional nation-state: the only remaining sovereign Grand Duchy in Europe, it is also one of its smallest members, with a population of half a million inhabitants making the country, as a whole, less populous than most European capital cities. This small country is host to three languages, French, German and Luxembourgish (officially recognized as a distinct language, not just a German dialect, from 1919 onwards), making it an area of great linguistic cultural diversity. In terms of nation-building it has been influenced both by the French and by the German nation-building process and nationalist thinking. The comparably small size of Luxembourg allows for a relatively easy and precise study of the processes that established this ‘imagined community’, to employ the famous term used by Benedict Anderson. Its desire to identify and yet differentiate itself from the larger countries that surround it has lead Luxembourg to develop a strong sense of European identity as a means of establishing itself as an international player and partner; a strategy that can be observed in the creation of some its most recent national museums.

An excellent recent study, entitled *Inventing Luxembourg: Representations of the Past, Space and Language from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century*, published in 2010 describes and analyses the historical master narrative of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg by looking successively at the discourses relating to its history, territory and language. However, we might add that it pays little attention to projects related to its national museums. It does however, very usefully describe the major traits of national historiography – an analysis that we have relied upon and which has proved extremely fruitful and concordant in our consideration of the country’s museums. The authors state in the introduction that: “this book sets out to examine whether the more recent supranational narrative meshes with the classical national master narrative or whether it represents a paradigm shift. Has an exclusive narrative been replaced by an inclusive one? Has the ethnocentric viewpoint given way to a Eurocentric outlook? What elements of (dis)continuity are there between the traditional and the new strands of the master narratives? Both seem to rely on two concepts: particularism and *Mischkultur* (mixed culture)” (Pit, 2010: 9). This report will consider to what extent we can ask ourselves these same questions in relation to the development of Luxembourg’s national museums and their narratives.

Luxembourg, as an independent sovereign state, free of any foreign occupation since 1867, began establishing national collections at a relatively late stage in comparison to other countries. It did however, immediately appear as a priority to the Grand Duchy, with a decree that established the administrative basis for such an institution in 1968 to create the Grand-Ducal Institute. The two main collections of History and Art and of Natural History, though occupying a modest display area in the *Athénée* from the 1850s onwards, only became independent

institutions in the 1920s and opened their doors to the public shortly before the Second World War.

In 1988, the state museums and archives were officially given the title ‘national’, reflecting along with the 1984 Language Law and the construction of the *National Monument of Remembrance* in 1985, an “upsurge of interest in representations of the past (both memory and history)”, (Pit, 2010: 8). In terms of cultural policy for national museums, a major turning point was Luxembourg’s role as European Capital of Culture in 1995, an event that crystallised national interest and implication in cultural affairs, allowing the state to measure its “tardiness in matters of cultural infrastructure” (Consulate general of Luxembourg in Shanghai, 2011, online). The city has since invested in major cultural projects including a Philharmonic Hall, National Audiovisual Centre, a National Centre for Literature, but also a new home for its already existing national museums, a new municipal museum dedicated to the city’s history and two new national museums: the Grand Duke Jean Museum of Modern Art and the Museum of the Fortress – all of which we will consider as case studies further on. The last two examples will show how the notions of *Particularism* and *Mischkultur* (mixed culture) have found an expression in this new master narrative reflecting an old image of the city symbolized and envisioned as a fortress, “seen as both oppressive and protective” (Pit, 2010: 4). The fortress represents Luxembourg but also the influence of all the foreign powers who ruled the country as successive occupants, from “Vauban to Wenceslas” (Consulate general of Luxembourg in Shanghai, 2011, online). In the last decade, this image of the country has been materialised through the installation of two museums, one resolutely modern and international, the other clearly national and local.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Museum of Natural History <i>Musée national de l'histoire naturelle</i>	1854	1850	Scholarly societies	Ministry of Culture, Higher Education and Research	Palaeontology, Geology, Ecology	Development of humanity.	Geological time to present day	Historical monument, Saint-Jean Hospice, Luxembourg.
National Museum of History and Art <i>Musée national d'histoire et d'art Luxembourg</i>	1922	End of 18th c.	Scholarly societies	Ministry of Culture, Higher Education and Research	Pre-history Proto-history, Archaeology, Fine Arts, Decorative Arts, Ethnography and Arms	Gallo-Roman collections, paintings, Northern European and Flemish schools, European modern art. Period rooms of Luxembourg everyday life.	10 000 BC to 19 th c.	Traditional townhouse, modernist extension, Luxembourg.
National Mining Museum of Luxembourg	1973	Missing	Associative	Central government	Mining History, Economy	Visit of underground mine. Technology of mining.	19-20 th c.	Rumelange, d'anciennes mines, Luxembourg.
National Museum of Military History	1984	1982	Diekirch Historical Society, Army	Central government	Military History	Battle of the Bulge, WWII and everyday life of the soldiers.	20 th c.	Diekirch, Northeastern Luxembourg.

Luxembourg City History Museum	1996	Missing	Local, scholarly societies	Municipality of Luxembourg	Urban and Architectural History	History of the town and capital of Luxembourg.	11 th to 19 th c.	Classical town house. Luxembourg.
Grand duc Jean Museum of Modern Art	2006	1997	Ministry of Culture	Ministry of Culture, Higher Education and Research	Contemporary Art	Contemporary art – international and national. Mainly temporary exhibits.	20 th and 21 st c.	Contemporary purposely built, on the former fortress walls, Luxembourg.
Museum of the Fortress <i>Musée Trois Eechelen</i>	Under construction	2004	Ministry of Culture	Ministry of Culture Higher Education and Research	Architectural History	National history of the fortress and city of Luxembourg.	10 th to 19 th c.	Former city fortress, Luxembourg.

Introduction

Traditionally, the origins of Luxembourg's recorded history go back to 963 when Siegfried or *Sigefroid*, the count of Ardennes acquired the domain of *Lucilinburhuc*, constructing a fortified castle that would give its name to the city and then to the country as a whole. The country, the nation, is named after the city itself, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and is a small and highly centralized state. The creation of the Museum of the Fortress also known as the *Musée Trois Eechelen*, soon to be opened to the public, in a sense embodies this foundational moment by reinforcing the place of the fortress in the history of Luxembourg. The reference to medieval times gains prestige from the fact that four of Luxembourg's counts, and later dukes (from 1354 onwards) held the title of Holy Roman Emperor. 1443 marked the beginning of a period, referred to in the national historiography as that of the 'foreign dominations'. For centuries, the heritage of the title of the Grand Duchy became a subject of dispute between Burgundian, Spanish, French and Austrian claimants. In 1795, the Revolutionary Wars made the Duchy part of the French Republic and then the Napoleonic Empire. It regained territorial independence politically as a province of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1815. Control over the Duchy became an issue of contention when the United Kingdom of the Netherlands was dissolved in 1830, to form Belgium and the Netherlands. The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg became an independent state in 1839 when an agreement was struck with Belgium gaining part of its predominantly francophone western territory with the east remaining under control of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. This was considered to be the third of three important territorial amputations: the first was a southern area conceded to Louis XIV in 1659, the second, in 1815, was a concession of an eastern portion to Prussia. Though not yet a sovereign state, the duchy reached its current size in 1839, a size that was a quarter of its 'original' territory. It was henceforth independent politically but a personal union tied it to the King of the Netherlands who was, until 1890, also the Grand Duke of Luxembourg. When the centenary of the independence of Luxembourg was celebrated in 1939, this last amputation was given a positive appreciation by one of the country's historians for whom the event "gave Luxembourg an ethnic unity which it had previously lacked" (Pit, 2010: 6). Yet, Luxembourg remained a country at the crossroads of different cultures, a factor that it used to characterize itself, and to explain elements of disunity such as its linguistic diversity. Pit points to the historiographical concept of *Mischkultur*, based on the linguistic history of the country. The duchy indeed had been originally made up of French and German speaking territories. In 1684 however, Louis XIV established French as the official language, and it remained the dominant language even with the return of Habsburg rule only fourteen years later. After 1839, an effort was made to recreate linguistic unity by imposing German as the official language in accordance with country's new borders. The attempt failed but the period was marked by the emergence, around 1840, of a "national" Luxembourgish literature (Pit, 2010: 12).

As a small territorial unity, the country's history has also laid great emphasis on the ties that related it to larger political entities. As already mentioned, the most important of these historically was of course the Holy Roman Empire. After 1839, it joined the German Confederation, an economic union of German speaking countries as well as the *Zollverein*. Economic ties were forged with Belgium after WWI, preparing the foundation of Benelux in 1958.

Luxembourg was of course also a founding member of the European Economic Community in 1957, and some of the first and most important negotiations concerning the creation of Europe took place on its territory. Its capital is home to some of Europe's most important institutions such as the European Court of Justice etc. and the small town of Schengen has come to symbolize the opening of Europe's borders by giving its name to the famous agreement. Its national memorial sites are thus often very much related to the direct expression of a European past, and figures of European history such as Robert Schuman have come to be considered as nationally significant for the people of Luxembourg (Margue, 2009: 17). Since 2000, Luxembourg is also at the heart of the so-called Greater Region: a term used to describe a vast area that includes all the lands historically part of the Duchy and beyond, including the area of Saarland, Lorraine, Rhineland-Palatinate, Wallonia and the French and German speaking community of Belgium. It covers a surface of 65 401 km² and includes a population of 11,2 million inhabitants. It is considered as the space of confluence of Germanic and Roman culture. Luxembourg's place at the centre of this region was reinforced by its role as European Capital of Culture for the second time in 2007, a role that it shared with the Greater Region. This grouping is considered a zone of experimentation for cross-boarder and inter-regional co-operation, which may in the future serve as a model for the rest of Europe. Let us now consider the impact of the relatively late development of a coherent national cultural policy on the evolution of national museums.

National museums and cultural policy in Luxembourg

The case study, detailed below, of the National Museum of History and Art and the National Museum of Natural History shows that Luxembourg developed two typologically traditional national museums. One might however, underline the importance of personal initiative related to both of these undertakings, which seem to have thrived despite the state rather than because of it. One of the difficulties related to providing an appreciation of the history of cultural policy in relation to museums is the significant absence of sources, which actually betrays a relative absence of any considerable approach to cultural affairs before 1995. Such standard sources for cultural policy in Europe as *Compendium* (<http://www.culturalpolicies.net>) do not provide a report on Luxembourg, nor does NEMO (Network of European Museum Organization, <http://www.ne-mo.org/>). In the very short report provided by EGMUS (European Group of Museum Statistics, <http://www.egmus.eu/>), the authors underline the fact that, before 1995, "cultural statistics were not taken seriously and generally considered as a non-relevant field to explore." The report notes that there is no nationally recognized definition for a museum and very little specific legislation. Indeed, no basic requirements were defined for the title of national museum – given to the main museums of Luxembourg but also to such small associative entities as the National Museum of Mining in Rumelange.

The considerable effort made in the 1990s to develop national museums may be traced back to the renewal of interest for themes related to national identity in the 1980s and the elaboration of a certain number of projects. As already stated the title of 'national' was officially bestowed on two museums for the first time in 1988. This general evolution to reconsider the notion of nation and national in Luxembourg has been described as a reaction "to the social and economic crisis which had been affecting the country since the mid-1970's but also an attempt to renew social bonds that seemed threatened by the changes in moral standards, ways of life and political

models” (Pit, 2010: 8). The crisis of the mining industry and the important role that it had played in the establishment of the country's prosperity from 1842 onwards, when its presence was discovered, led a private association to create a specific museum to its exploitation, that was named as national in 1988.

The celebration of the 150th anniversary of independence in 1989 marked another milestone in terms of cultural policy. In historiographical terms, the nation state was clearly depicted as the product of the development of a coherent national identity consecutive to the declaration of independence. It was, at the same time, characterized by the notion of its singularity as a space of cultural confluence, between France and Germany, thus placing the origins of the country at once inside and beyond the strict limits of its territorial borders.

“The festivities related to the celebration of Luxembourg, European capital of culture further consecrated the idea. The initial slogan of ‘a year of culture for everyone’, was significantly replaced by ‘the year of all cultures’, underlining the appropriation of a multicultural discourse that was designed to accentuate the cultural richness of Luxembourg and to accentuate the notion of national performance in a European context” (Bergami, 2009: 215)¹. The development of a wide range of cultural projects in the town of Luxembourg, notably on the Kirchberg, with the conservation and development of the historic site of the fortress of Luxembourg was mirrored by a series of academic studies, addressing for the first times the question of national memory and historiography. A major project undertaken by the University of Luxembourg entitled *History, Memory and Identities* was funded by a National Research Council Grant as part of the *Living in Luxembourg tomorrow* (Pit, 2010: 15) program and the already mentioned book, *Inventing Luxembourg*, was one of the fruits of this project. As the following case studies will show, there is a relationship between the political development of cultural policy in terms of national museums and the development of a clearer awareness of a specific image of national history and its characteristics in terms of the past and in terms of how the country seeks to position itself in an international context. The first national museums in Luxembourg appear as relatively traditional and ideologically unspecific museum creations – reproducing a typology common to most other countries without seeking to underline any national originality or particularity. The more recent projects for the *Grand Duke Jean Museum of Contemporary Art* and the *Musée 3 Eechelen* however, clearly appear as self-conscious expressions of a particular message as conveyed through the nature of the institution, its architecture and its displays.

Case studies in chronological order

National Museum of History and Art and the National Museum of Natural History

These two museums, today considered as separate, are the oldest of Luxembourg's national museums. They provide Luxembourg with a classical national museum typology covering the principal traditional fields of material culture. The first project for the museum goes back to the end of the eighteenth century, when, as part of French territory (1795-1815), a plan was made for a ‘provincial’ museum – such as were opening elsewhere across France, in such major cities as Toulouse, Lyon, Grenoble but also in other conquered territories, such as Brussels. It was projected as the “*Musée du Département des Forêts*” to contain the works of art confiscated from the churches and abbeys of the region. A certain number of objects, some of which may be seen

today in the national history collections, were set aside at this time by the municipality, however the project for a museum in the town of Luxembourg did not immediately come to fruition. The current historical museum is mainly the product of the efforts of the *Society for the research on and conservation of the historical monuments of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg* founded in 1845 (only 6 years after Luxembourg was declared an independent state) and renamed quite simply the *Archaeological Society*, gradually constituting a representative collection of national antiquities, at first conserved with the collections of natural history in the *Athénée*. However, the founding moment of the museum is sometimes symbolically considered to be the donation of a collection of roman coins made to the *Athénée* in 1839, the year of its independence. The *Athénée* was the former Jesuit College, transformed into a secular college in 1773 when Joseph II of Austria suppressed the order; it became the *Athénée royale* in 1817, acting as a kind of high school and university and today it is home to the National Library.

The natural history collections were founded in 1850 by the *Society of Natural Sciences*, the state also provided rooms for its pieces to be exhibited in the *Athénée*. The collections of natural history opened their doors to the public in 1854 as a kind of small cabinet of natural history. Administratively, it was related to the collections of History and Art from 1868 onwards, when a royal decree founded the Grand-Ducal Institut that was to promote the construction of an independent museum for Luxembourg, an undertaking that took fifty years to be completed. The purpose-designed and established national museum opened its doors shortly before the Second World War in the Collart-de-Scherff house in the heart of the city centre beside the fish market place, historically an important space of popular sociability.

However, in the face of growing collections, a law was passed in 1988 creating two administratively separate museums. The collections remained geographically juxtaposed up until 1996, when the natural history section moved into a new building, where it now also houses a large research institute and educative centre. It was only at this time the ‘national’ epithet was added to the official title for both institutions.

The collections of the National History and Art Museum are principally archaeological and historical, divided up into the following categories: prehistory, proto-history, Gallo-Roman, Middle Ages, coin cabinet, decorative arts, folk and traditional arts as well as a section dedicated to arms and the theme of the fortress. The museum’s perspective was, from the beginning, mainly historical and some of its directors greatly contributed through their written work to the historiography of Luxembourg, most notably Joseph Meyers (1900-1964) who produced a fundamental study on the history of the city and who began his work at the national museum alongside his teaching career as a historian at the University of Leiden. He organised the first section on history, archaeology and art in the museum when it moved to the Collart-de-Scherff house. In 1939, he produced a kind of reference manual of the history of Luxembourg which was introduced into schools and remained part of the curriculum until 1972 – it structured the ‘master-narrative’ of the history of Luxembourg that we briefly outlined in the introduction. In this narrative, the Middle Ages appeared as a period of autonomy and wellbeing destroyed by the advent of ‘foreign’ domination in the fifteenth century that was to henceforth involve Luxembourg in most major European conflicts (Pit, 2010: 74). Unfortunately, there does not appear to be any study relating the displays set up in the museum to the national history being

told in this manual, but we may assume them to be strongly concordant as they were ‘authored’ by the same person.

The Fine arts section remains relatively secondary and its pieces are partly used as illustrations for the mainly historical narrative, rather than as part of a purely art historical organisation (<http://www.mnha.public.lu/collections/beaux-arts/index.html>, accessed on February 3, 2011). The museum’s website does however, underline the importance of Luxembourgish artists in the collection, carefully specifying how these are defined by the museum: included are, artists of Luxembourgish nationality, or born or married to members of a Luxembourgish family, or who resided in the country for the greater part of their lifetime. The new extension of the museum’s buildings, inaugurated in 2002, allowed it to deploy an evocative thematic organisation behind a monolithic modernist façade. The visitor begins in the underground galleries with prehistory, working his way up chronologically to the Fine arts, a section situated in the uppermost galleries, establishing a sense of historical ascension.

National Museum of Military History, Diekirch

Situated in the old brewery of the town of Diekirch in northeastern Luxembourg, the National Military Museum of Diekirch, founded in 1983, is the only case study of a national museum retained here that is not situated in the capital. Founded by a group of local military enthusiasts and collectors of material from the war, it rapidly garnered direct support from the national army. Its self-proclaimed intention is to present a balanced and impartial view of the ordinary soldier’s experience of the Battle of the Bulge, whether they were German, American or French and also to provide the point of view of the civilian victims. The main showpiece of the exhibit is a diorama style presentation of the crossing of the Sauer River by a unit of the United States Infantry Division in January 1945.

The desire to create a neutral approach here is all the more remarkable as the German neighbour as a potential invader has had very bad press, “The ‘Prussian (Preiss) – both the soldier stationed in the federal fortress of Luxembourg (until its dismantlement in 1867) and the customs officer stationed at the Moselle checkpoint to the Kingdom of Prussia until 1918 – was constructed as ‘the other’ a figure of hatred and ridicule. (...) During World War II, when Luxembourg was occupied by Nazi Germany, the stereotype of the ‘Prussian’ had its heyday and acquired a multi-layered character that still has resonance today, having become a common figure of speech for many people” (Pit, 2010: 11). Relationship with the German neighbour “National victimisation and the image of Germans as ‘the other’ grew stronger after the Second World War.

The intention of the museums has appeared as the desire to combat this sense of the enemy neighbour as it seeks to fulfil a commemorative aim by organising memorial events so that “almost 60 years after those tragic events, the museum often becomes a platform and gathering place for returning veterans from two former opposing sides, as well as their descendants, to “re-digest” history and to meet as friends. Along that same line, the museum fulfills an important mission in fostering mutual bonds of friendship between Germany, the United States, and Luxembourg by jointly-remembering!” (<http://www.mnhm.lu/pageshtml/curatorsmessage.php>, accessed online, 9 February, 2011).

The lifelike large-scale nature of these exhibits makes it particularly impressive: “carefully rebuilt on the base of numerous personal oral history reports from American and German

veterans and Luxembourg eyewitnesses, provides a detailed and balanced view of the tragic events of December 44 - January 45. Moreover these dioramas enable the visitor to reflect on a given situation and identify himself with it. The message that is encompassed in our impartial and objective dioramas is that there was equal human suffering on the American, German and civilian side of that decisive major military conflict in the 'Ardennes'."

(<http://www.mnhm.lu/pageshtml/curatorsmessage.php>, accessed online, 9 February, 2011).

In parallel to this, the museum also provides a section showing the evolution of the army of Luxembourg itself. This organisation is in itself unusual, as here the representation of the national army appears as secondary to the representation of a battle fought mainly by soldiers from foreign armies. This situation is echoed in the current project of the fortress museum – as it will also show Luxembourg as the plane of action for conflicts led by foreign powers.

Grand Duke Jean, Museum of Modern Art (MUDAM)

After the great success of the cultural events organized for the 1995 "Year of the Capital of culture in Luxembourg", the government decided to invest massively in new projects. One of the most important of these was the creation of a new museum for contemporary artistic creation. The architect Ieoh Ming Pei was immediately the obvious choice for the Luxembourgish government, he was at the height of his renown in the field of museum construction having just finished two of the most important museum projects undertaken by Luxembourg's neighbours, France and Germany, with the Louvre and the Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin. As the architect of two museums, both equally symbolic of French and German national culture, both transformations, based on already existing buildings, he was an obvious choice for the site of Fort Thüngen. As was already the case with the Louvre, Pei could "not resist these 17th century fortifications which survived the dismantling of the fortress in 1867". Pei described his project: "The most important aspect that seduced me was the changing play between past and present, past and future. At the Fort Thüngen, with the *Trois Glands*, the past is there and I admire the work of Vauban, who built the foundations. What interests me is how to harmonize the past and the present so that they mutually reinforce each other." He wanted to "make the old stones speak, to bring them to life. The only way to bring stones to life is by taking human beings to them". (<http://www.mudam.lu/en/le-musee/le-batiment/lhistorique/>, accessed February 13th, 2011). By inviting Pei as the architect of a new national museum, Luxembourg wanted to capture something of the same effect that he had in France and Germany, asking him similarly to work with the walls of the fortification (as had been the case with the Louvre). Pei actually dismantled the walls and rebuilt them in a reinforced way so that they would appear identical to the old walls. A highly symbolic undertaking as the former stones thus became the foundation "for the new building which follows the triangular design of Fort Thüngen from which it rises" (Consulate general of Luxembourg in Shanghai, 2011, online).

According to the museum's official website, Pei not only used the stones of the fortress to reconstruct the foundation of the museum, but its structure was very much the architectural inspiration and metaphor behind the building – which is punctuated throughout with formalist references to the fortress type architecture and its strong and imposing geometrical forms are in continuity with the fortress. A feasible solution, as the galleries receive overhead lighting, invisible from the outside, allowing for high closed exterior walls. The entrance to the museum is reached

by one of two bridges that cross the now dried out moat: one façade is turned to the new town and the European quarter, the other towards the quarters of Pfaffenthal and Clausen. Reflecting in a sense Pit's observation of "The image of Luxembourg as a bridge between Germany and France (that) remains in usage and has been fully integrated into the discourse of Luxembourg's role in the EU" (Pit, 2010: 13).

The Grand hall, "space of light", is the heart of the museum and is strongly reminiscent of Pei's work in the Louvre for the Pyramide entrance, indeed the reference to the Louvre is inevitable, as Pei's work there has become eminently characteristic of the museum's architecture. Both the architect and the architecture position Luxembourg's bid for a cosmopolitan museum of contemporary art on very solid and traditional foundations. The building's function is resolutely dedicated to contemporary art in an international perspective. In 2010, international artists made the collection of 400 artworks for three quarters (<http://www.mudam.lu/en/le-musee/la-collection/>, accessed 14 February 2011). Yet again, the museum was named after S.A.R. the Grand Duke Jean who reigned from 1964 to 2000, a choice that again ties the site back to tradition and to aristocratic origins of the state.

The museum as a whole, through its site, its conception, its references and its functions appears as an effort to combine a traditional notion of the nation with a newer master-narrative of a cosmopolitan international culture that is resolutely turned to the future of Luxembourg and of Europe.

Musée 3 Eechelen, 'fortress, history and identity'²

Administratively, the new *Musée 3 Eechelen* is an extension of the National History and Art Museum, but its importance and specificity for a new discourse related to national identity makes it necessary to present this project separately.

Up until 1867, Luxembourg had held the title of the 'Gibraltar of the North' and Fort Thüngen, represents this heritage and is currently being transformed into Luxembourg's newest national museum. Situated on the Northeast side of the town of Luxembourg, along the so-called Vauban circuit of fortifications, it is at a crossroads between the old and the new town (Kirchberg). The Grand Duke Jean Museum of Modern Art, designed by Pei is already situated on the same site and visible from the three fortified towers of the new museum, also known as the Three Acorns (there are also three golden acorns that hang over the entrance to the building). The fortress was constructed in 1732 by Baron Von Thüngen, the Austrian commander of the fort, but it was based on plans laid out previously by Vauban, who had constructed the exterior part of the fortress. In this sense, its architecture is a reference again to Germanic and French occupation.

The fortress was closed in 1867, thanks to the treaty of London signed in 1867, which finally consolidated Luxembourg's independence from Prussia, after a period of conflict between French and Prussian forces. As expressed in Pit's description of the master narrative "Having once more gained its independence, Luxembourg stood fast despite attempts by various nations to annex its territory." (Pit, 2010: 7). Finally, Luxembourg was at peace, "the fortress of the capital was dismantled and the last of the Prussian garrison left the country."

The desire to rehabilitate the area would appear to be the direct expression of a return to the traditional origins of the country's history as observed by historians in recent years, in opposition

and as a way of balancing Europeanising and globalizing tendencies (Margue, 2009: 17)³. “The Fortress is the symbol of centuries of history of the City, the country and indeed of Europe. Located on the site of the *Dräi Eechelen* (Three Acorns) in the city of Luxembourg, the Museum of the Fortress will be a symbolic link between the new quarter of the Kirchberg and the old part of the city of Luxembourg” (Consulate general of Luxembourg in Shanghai, 2011, online). This return to historical origins is marketed as a national reference brought into relation with a more cosmopolitan perspective, related to the notion of *Mischkultur*. Although, the museum is not yet open to the public, it has published a lavish volume on the fort’s history. Interestingly it is bilingual, but not in the ordinary sense. The chapters dedicated to the fort’s occupation by the French are written in French, whilst those considering Austrian and Prussian occupation are written in German. This reflects, with the architectural history of the fortress itself, the desire to underline the notion of Luxembourg as a *Mischkultur*, a cultural notion that very much founds its national identity (Pit, 2010: 12).

However, historiographically the fortress project relates mainly to “*Particularism* as the teleological belief that Luxembourg followed a *Sonderweg* or a specific path in the early modern period which rendered it distinct from the other parts of the Netherlands and explaining why it became a nation-state in its own right. It is conceded that every province of the Spanish – later Austrian – Netherlands was particular, but it is nevertheless held that Luxembourg was more particular than others. This uniqueness comes from the fact that it survived four centuries of ‘foreign dominations’ forming the basis of a proto-national consciousness.” (Pit, 2010: 11). The fortress expresses the notion of defence against foreign powers and occupation – as a recurrent national experience. Luxembourg’s ability to remain free, to have come out independent is key to the notion of particularism. For Pit, particularism is related to the idea of the organic nature of the long enduring ‘monarchical loyalty’ that makes Luxembourg the last remaining sovereign Duchy, a loyalty that is expressed by the notion of roots (Pit, 2010: 11). This notion of roots is translated in the metaphor of the oak and the acorn. The Fort Thüngen is set in a park of oak trees; the three remaining towers of the fortress have come to be known as the three *eechelen* or acorns. The oak and the acorn are related to a strong aristocratic symbol in Luxembourg; the *Order of the Oak Crown*, a chivalric order created in 1841 by the Grand Duke William II, just after Luxembourg became independent.

The project undertaken in 2004, as the museum of contemporary art discussed above was nearing completion, was intended for opening in 2007 (Luxembourg’s second term as European Capital of Culture). Interestingly, the work was delayed for reasons given as follows by Secretary of State for Culture, Octavie Modert: “The concept elaborated by the first group of experts is oriented in a manner that does not correspond with what was initially agreed upon. Indeed, the experts elaborated their conception around the idea of military history, ballistics and fortifications, completely neglecting the social aspect and the concept of identity. After several failed attempts on behalf of the ministry to change this, it has been decided that we need to begin again with a new group of experts” (Modert, 2007, online)⁴.

The website of the museum that is still not yet completely open to the public, presents the current concept of the museum: “The vocation of Fort Thüngen is to go beyond the strict context of a “museum”. The aim is not simply to present a clearly defined group of collected objects but to provide the visitor with the most complete ensemble of information about the

Fortress of Luxembourg, in the context of a general explanation of military architecture. This will allow it to demonstrate the specificity and the determining role of the fortress of Luxembourg for the history of the city as well as in the territorial formation of the country and the identity of its inhabitants” (<http://www.in-visible.lu/fort/> Museum website, accessed online, 5 February, 2011)⁵.

As currently conceived, the museum seeks first of all to explain the presence of the fortress, of Fort Thungen. It is occupied with the narrative related to the site itself. Secondly, it wants to provide a reflexion on the impact of the site on Luxembourg’s social and economic history, how it shaped the lives of its inhabitants and, thirdly, it goes beyond the site itself to consider the development of the Luxembourgish society from the nineteenth century to the present day. It also intends to provide a reflexive perspective on representations of the past of Luxembourg (Modert, 2007, online).

Notes

- ¹ « Les festivités pour Luxembourg Capitale européenne de la culture en 1995 consacrent cette greffe. Le remplacement du slogan prévu initialement d’une année de la culture pour tous » par celui d’une ‘année de toutes les cultures’ souligne la réappropriation d’un discours multiculturel dans le sens d’une accentuation de la richesse culturelle luxembourgeoise et prend alors une dimension qui vise à accentuer une performance nationale dans le cadre européen. »
- ² Modert, 2007, online: « retraçant le lien entre la forteresse, l’histoire nationale et l’identité nationale. »
- ³ “Par ailleurs, l’eupéanisation ou la globalisation ne provoquent pas seulement des glissements de mémoire, mais aussi des raidissements: d’où, pour l’anecdote, la curieuse proposition récente d’un retour aux symboles anciens et dynastiques du duché de Luxembourg, initiative politique”
- ⁴ « Le concept élaboré par un premier groupe d’experts s’est orienté dans une direction qui ne correspondait pas à ce que nous avons convenu. En effet, ces experts avaient bâti leur concept essentiellement autour de l’histoire militaire, la balistique et les fortifications, en ignorant totalement le volet social et les aspects de l’identité. Après plusieurs tentatives de la part du ministère pour réorienter le travail de ce groupe, nous avons dû nous séparer de ces experts »
- ⁵ “La vocation du Fort Thüngen dépasse largement celle du cadre strict d’un Musée. Il ne s’agit en effet pas de présenter un ensemble d’objets d’une collection bien définie mais de livrer au visiteur un éventail d’informations aussi complet que possible sur la forteresse de Luxembourg tout en expliquant l’architecture militaire en générale. Ceci permettra de montrer la singularité, la spécificité et le rôle déterminant de la forteresse de Luxembourg tant dans l’histoire de la ville que dans la formation territoriale du pays et de l’identité de ses habitants.”

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National Museums in Malta

Romina Delia

Summary

In 1903, the British Governor of Malta appointed a committee with the purpose of establishing a National Museum in the capital. The first National Museum, called the Valletta Museum, was inaugurated on the 24th of May 1905. Malta gained independence from the British in 1964 and became a Republic in 1974. The urge to display the island's history, identity and its wealth of material cultural heritage was strongly felt and from the 1970s onwards several other Museums opened their doors to the public.

This paper goes through the history of National Museums in Malta, from the earliest known collections open to the public in the seventeenth century, up until today. Various personalities over the years contributed to the setting up of National Museums and these will be highlighted later on in this paper. Their enlightened curatorship contributed significantly towards the island's search for its identity. Different landmarks in Malta's historical timeline, especially the turbulent and confrontational political history that has marked Malta's colonial experience, have also been highlighted.

The suppression of all forms of civil government after 1811 had led to a gradual growth of two opposing political factions, involving a Nationalist and an Imperialist party. In the absence of a formal constitution, the political battle between the two factions was necessarily engaged on a largely cultural basis. The Maltese language, its religion, literature and its history were all hotly disputed in a partisan attempt to define the Islands culture according to a pro- Italian or to a pro-British political creed. Archaeology was no exception, finding itself caught up in the frustratingly irrelevant arguments that raged between Imperialists and Nationalists as to the real identity of the 'Maltese race'. (Cutajar, 1995: 70-71)

National Museums in Malta are a reflection of the island's long history, politics, culture, values and identity. For centuries Malta depended on the sea and trade and it has had many influences arriving from the surrounding continents, as one can see at Malta's Maritime Museum in Birgu. The National Museum of Archaeology in Valletta displays a wealth of artefacts originally located in the prehistoric temple sites of Malta that range from up to 7000 years ago. The successive epoch, being Malta's Medieval period, when Byzantine, Arab and Norman communities occupied the islands, however, is barely represented. The few artefacts on display from that period do not give a clear narrative and educational representation, reflecting the fact that the Catholic faith was and still is highly dominant in the lives of many Maltese. It can be argued that the most represented artefacts on display in Malta's National Museums date to the Baroque period, when Malta was under the Catholic Order of the Knights of St. John, from the sixteenth till the eighteenth centuries. Catholicism, as it is still visible on the streets and in every village and cultural calendar of the Maltese islands, is still highly valued.

The history of national museums in Malta goes on up to today, and so do the attempts at improving the current displays and narratives. The need for the setting up of new national

museums, showing off the more recent and contemporary identity of the islands, is also strongly felt, especially the setting up of a National Modern and Contemporary Art Museum. The capital city of Malta, Valletta, – a UNESCO World Heritage Site – will be the European Capital of Culture in 2018.

Today, three of Malta's national museums are located within the city of Valletta. These are the National Museum of Fine Arts, the National Museum of Archaeology and the National War Museum. The Palace Armoury, housing the National Collections of Arms, is located in the Grand Masters Palace, also in Valletta. The other national museums that will also be briefly discussed are the National Museum of Natural History, located in Mdina, and Malta's Maritime Museum in Birgu. It is hoped that, by 2018, further improvements will be done, reflecting a more contemporary approach in displaying Malta's unique identity.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actor	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Palace Armoury	1860 1974 *	ca. 1604	19 th c. British Governors (original). Ministry for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Heritage Malta (present).	State	Armoury	Armoury of the Knights and the British in Malta.	16 th c. to 19 th c.	Grand Masters Palace (16 th c.) Baroque style, Valletta.
National Museum of Archaeology	1905 1925 1958 1974 *	18 th c.	19 th c. British Governors (original). Ministry for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Heritage Malta (present).	State	Archaeology	Archaeology in Malta	5200BC - 2500BC	Auberge de Provence, Mannerist and Baroque, Valletta.
National Museum of Fine Arts	1905 1925 1958 1974 *	18 th c.	19 th c. British Governors (original). Ministry for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Heritage Malta (present).	State	Art	History of Art in Malta	14 th c. to 20 th c.	Palace built by Knights of the Order of St John, rebuilt in Baroque style, Valletta.

⚡ Dates represent different years of inauguration

Introduction

The Maltese archipelago has an area of approximately 316 km², thus making it one of Europe's smallest countries. It is located in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, 96 km from the southernmost tip of Sicily and 290 km from Tunisia. Its natural, deep harbours and position on major shipping routes made it an attractive acquisition from the earliest of times. It has a highly dense amount of cultural heritage spanning some 7,000 years, which is rather disproportionate to the size of the islands, with a number of archaeological sites and temples that are unique in the world and classified as UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Through the study of several wills, inventories and traveller journals, art and archaeological collections are known to have existed on the Maltese islands, from as far back as the seventeenth century. During the rule of the Catholic, crusading, military Knights pertaining to the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, the Grand Master's Palace in Valletta is known to have had an art collection, a fine tapestry collection, as well as a collection of military weapons. It is also known from documentary sources that visitors were often allowed inside to admire them. The nobility and wealthy merchants are also known to have owned art collections in their palaces in Valletta and in Mdina.

In 1798, the French Napoleonic troops invaded Malta on their way to their Egyptian campaign, they expelled the Knights and after two years the British took over. In 1860 the Palace Armoury, inside the Grand Master's Palace in Valletta, was officially opened as Malta's first public Museum. It was only between 1903 and 1905 that the first official 'National Museum' was set up. Before that, the 'public museums' in Malta were the *Cabinet of Antiquities* at the Public Library in Valletta and the Palace Armoury.

As the years passed, the collections inside the National Museum grew, and there was need for a larger building and a re-organization of the Museum's administrative set-up. The collection was transferred to a bigger location; however, the bombing of Valletta during World War II heavily affected the museum. The curators of the time ended up playing a vital role in its preservation and safekeeping. After Malta gained independence in 1964 and especially around the year when it became a Republic in 1974, there were various initiatives to show off the island's identity. Up until the early 1970s, there was only one official National Museum in Malta that housed the Archaeology section on the ground floor and the Fine Arts section on the first floor. After Malta became a Republic, other National Museums were officially set up. One of the reasons for this could be that after Malta gained independence, economically it started depending heavily on tourism.

A chronological, historic context of the State's commitment and the commitment of important personalities to the setting up and management of Malta's national museums

Collecting during the Baroque period

From 1530 until 1798, a theocracy ruled over Malta. The Knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, ruling the islands at the time, hailed from noble families from all over Europe (Bosio, 1602). They contributed highly to the development of Malta's political stability through reliable

defence networks, a flourishing and prosperous economy and European contacts. All of this led to the creation of new urban lifestyles (Buhagiar, 2009). Their presence brought prosperity, the population increased and the island increased its communication with the rest of Europe. Trade with foreign countries accelerated and so did the economic prosperity of the Maltese islands (Mallia Milanes, 1994). However, it is only after the victorious battle of the Knights against the Muslim Ottomans in 1565, known as the Great Siege, and after the new capital city of Valletta was built, that one can get a hint of the first traces of collecting in Malta, some of which were also open to the public.

For their palaces, chapels and churches the Grand Masters and Knights commissioned works by artists such as Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1573-1510), who produced some of his masterpieces during his sojourn here in Malta, from July 1607 to October 1608 (Sciberras, 2009). The Grand Master's Palace in Valletta in time built up a collection of mainly religious paintings and portraits by different European artists which can still be seen inside the Grand Master's Palace today and inside the National Museum of Fine Arts in Valletta.

A collection of weapons and armoury was also set up in 1604 when Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt transferred the Sovereign Military Order of St John's arsenal to the Palace. It is important to note here that this collection of weapons and armoury, not just intended for use in battle but also highly important status symbols, demonstrated the Knights reputation of ferocity in battle. This collection was a showpiece conspicuously and grandly displayed to travellers and potential future Knights. Caravaggio painted Grand Master Wignacourt wearing a prestigious antique suit of armour from this collection. The Armoury is still housed in the Grand Master's Palace in Valletta and it is open to the public like it has been for many years, as will be discussed further on.

The Knights sailed around the world and took part in many expeditions of exploration and discovery, given impetus not only by their naval and military prowess, but also by the wish to spread their Catholic faith (Centeio ed., 1998). The Grand Masters were characterized by their stringent recognition of the spiritual authority of the Pope, a phenomenon that could also be felt in their administration of the island. They achieved the status of 'Most Eminent Highness' and they held the title of "Princes of the Holy Roman Empire." Their power reached its greatest level during the Baroque period and they highly promoted the Catholic faith. Their influence can somehow still be felt today and this is also reflected in some of Malta's national museums. Some of the buildings today housing national museums, such as the National Museum of Fine Arts, the National Museum of Archaeology and the National Museum of Natural History are in fact Palaces built by the Knights mainly in a Baroque style.

Giovanni Francesco Abela (1582 - 1655): his collection transferred to the National Library in Valletta and officially opened to the public.

The nobility and wealthy merchants are also known to have had collections inside their palaces mainly located in the new capital city of Valletta. They owned large quantities of artworks known from their inventories affixed to their wills. Some of these collections ended up being donated or bequeathed and are today also found in some of Malta's national museums.

One of the known important collections dating from the first half of the seventeenth century belonged to the Maltese antiquarian collector Fra Giovanni Francesco Abela (1582- 1655). He

was the Vice Chancellor of the Knights and he is often described as the 'first Maltese Historian' and the 'Father of Museology in Malta' (Cutajar, 1995). In 1647, Abela published his book entitled "Della descrizione di Malta isola nel Mare Siciliano," one of the first History books of the Maltese islands, which conceived the idea of forming a national museum of local antiquities. Due to Malta's size and particular context this person's vision, ideas and collections had a major effect on the history of national museums in Malta.

He kept his collection in his house, Villa Abela, on the promontory of Kortin, also known as "il Hotba tal Gisuiti", overlooking the inner part of the Grand Harbour in Marsa, a site which was also marked by another collector, Marquis Gio Antonio Barbaro, on a map accompanying a monograph (Caruana, 1898). He called his little museum *Museo di San Giacomo*.

Apparently Abela's little museum followed the pattern of the cabinets of curiosities, which were common in Italy and elsewhere and visitors were often admitted. His collection included memorabilia regarding Maltese history and archaeology. According to Thomas Bartolin, a traveller from Copenhagen who visited Abela's Museum in 1664, the artefacts were attractively exhibited in various parts of the building (Gambin, 2003: 9). In the garden around the house, one could see statues, inscribed tablets and marble fragments of ancient monuments. The museum itself, housed on the first floor, was reached through an arched doorway, which led into a central yard dominated by an obelisk. In it were displayed glass phials, decorated earthenware, sepulchral pottery, bones, medals and bronze statuettes, Etruscan and Greek pottery and Egyptian amulets, a marble statue of Hercules and a collection of Greek and Roman coins, among other artefacts (Bonnici Cali, 1961: 70-81).

According to Cutajar (1995), Abela's collection was trying to convey the message that 'the Maltese islands could boast of a past that was ancient, Christian and noble- witnessed by its archaeological remains. The political undertones of this intellectual agenda would not have passed unnoticed by Abela's seventeenth century audiences. In fact, under the conditions of 'benign absolutism' that characterized the Order's rule, it was critical for the Maltese notables to ensure the Grand Master's political support since he was their principal source of economic patronage and of social advancement. Given the chivalric and crusading foundations of the Order's constitution, it was therefore necessary for the Maltese nobility to downplay their blatant historical associations with the Semitic Maghreb and to emphasize their allegiance with Latin Europe. This explains Abela's prevalent interest in Malta's classical antiquities and its long-standing association with Christianity (Cutajar, 1995: 68). It can be argued that his attitude can maybe still be witnessed in some of Malta's national museums today. Malta, situated as it is between Europe and Africa, 96 km from the southernmost tip of Sicily and 290 km from Tunisia, offers an interesting case study in this regard, especially since the Maltese speak a Semitic language and the Knights of St. John were highly Catholic Europeans whose main aim was to fight off the Muslims. The Roman Inquisition in Malta from 1561 till 1798 also ensured that those residing on the islands remained faithful to the Catholic Faith. Many of those who went against the Catholic faith were interrogated and tortured.

Years after the death of Giovanni Francesco Abela, several personalities were also recorded 'downplaying Malta's associations with the Semitic Maghreb.' For example in 1921, after Malta was granted self-government, Sir Gerald Strickland (fourth Prime Minister of Malta between 1927 and 1930, and the owner and director of Progress Printing Company and 'The Times of

Malta' newspaper) began a paper which he read in the presence of His Excellency Governor Lord Plumer at the University of Malta, intent on showing that the Maltese, 'men of a kindred race', shared with the British a Phoenician origin:

The object of this paper is to prove that the Maltese are not the descendants of any Semitic or African race. Jules Verne is not alone in spreading the report that the Maltese are Arabs, it has done grave injury, and should be contradicted in the interest of emigrants from Malta to America and Australia, as well as those who remain at home. (Strickland, 1925: 3 and 16, cited in Vella and Gilkes, 2001: 353).

In the seventeenth century, Giovanni Francesco Abela had already wanted to make sure that the identity of the Maltese was 'secured' as being European and Catholic. Before his death in 1637, he bequeathed his collection to the Jesuit College, then the main supplier of higher education in Malta, attempting to provide a lasting curatorial foundation for his collection. One of the conditions of the deed made by Abela was that the collection was to be rendered accessible to all interested scholars. After the expulsion of the Jesuits under Grand Master Emmanuel Pinto de Fonseca, the collection passed into the hands of the State. Other important artefacts were added to the collection, however, some were permanently lost to the island such as the inscribed stone candelabrum, now in the Louvre Museum in Paris, that was to prove instrumental in deciphering the Punic script (Cutajar, 1995).

Around a hundred years after the death of Abela, what survived from his collection was transferred to a cabinet for the preservation of local antiquities in the newly built Public Library in Valletta, constructed during the magistracy of Grand Master De Rohan (1775-97). Other collectors also donated artefacts and, over time the little collection grew and that section in the library was referred to as the 'Cabinet of Antiquities'. When the Grand Tour of Europe became fashionable for the nobility to complete their education, Malta became an increasingly attractive place to visit and many travellers kept detailed diaries of what they experienced and saw. For example in 1797, Norwegian traveller Peder Pavels (1769- 1855) and the Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770-1844) were shown around the National Library and its little museum in Valletta during their visit to Malta. They were impressed by 'the considerable collection of Greek and Roman coins from various periods, mostly well preserved, a fine collection of recent medals in gold and silver, several specimens of lava, a Hercules statue in marble, some curious pieces of pottery from Antiquity and the like' (Sorenson and Schiro eds., 1996: 59).

The brief French interlude in the late eighteenth century (1798-1800)

By the late eighteenth century, Malta had established itself as an important mercantile centre, and a strong commercial class lived around the Grand Harbour and sailed around the Mediterranean trading goods of all kinds. This wealthy class aspired for a share in the government and they welcomed the French Revolution that championed the rights of the middle class and harboured Rousseau's ideas of a contract between the ruler and the ruled. They hoped that the rights of man would establish equality while destroying the Order, the Grand Master and its council (Ciappara in Gambin ed., 2004).

In 1798, Napoleon Bonaparte (1769- 1821), on his way to the Egyptian campaign, stopped in Malta and the Knights of St. John capitulated without offering any resistance. However, the French soon became unpopular for looting and sacking the State's property and for looting many

of the local Catholic churches of their gold and silver artefacts. A ‘national’ rebellion occurred and in September 1798, the Maltese rioted against their new occupiers. Interestingly, it was in favour of the interests of the local Catholic Church that the Maltese rebelled; and clerics played a key role in organizing the uprising. During the command of General Vaubois (1748- 1839), appointed by Napoleon as *Commandant en chef des Isles de Malte et du Goze*, the French barricaded themselves in Valletta and kept a tight hold till they surrendered to the British in late summer 1800.

The Arrival of the British in the early nineteenth century, the interest in prehistoric remains and the little museum inside the National Library in Valletta

After assisting the Maltese to expel the French in 1800, the British found themselves sovereigns of the Islands. From 1814 onwards, Malta became an important part of the British Empire, a strategic stronghold in the region, a stepping stone for Britain's expansion to the East and a base for the British navy. Although the Maltese had willingly placed themselves under British rule, a portion of the Maltese resented the fact that the Maltese had not much say in the administration of their island home.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, there was also a big interest in Maltese prehistoric remains, and the foundations of Maltese archaeology were being laid at that time. T.G. Vance of the Royal Engineers first explored, at public expense, the UNESCO World Heritage prehistoric temple of *Ħaġar Qim* in 1839, during the Governorship of Sir Henry Bouveris. Within two short months, that officer had made a plan of the buildings and sent a stone altar, a decorated slab and seven stone statuettes to the little museum inside the National Library in Valletta, (Gilkes and Vella, 2001). The majority of the findings from these prehistoric sites were deposited inside the Museum in the National Library in Valletta alongside the collection of Giovanni Francesco Abela. Today they are housed at the National Museum of Archaeology in Valletta.

Sir William Reid (1791–1858) and the palace armoury, opened for the public in 1860

During the early British colonisation there was an interest in presenting Malta’s cultural heritage to the public, however, there were also many treasures which were being despoiled. Many artifacts of national importance also left the islands and travelled across the Mediterranean to enrich many Museums abroad.

The Board of Ordinance, for example, was anxious to have the whole of the Palace Armoury of the Knights in Malta transferred to the Armoury in the Tower of London. Apart from being lavishly adorned with impressive arms and trophies, the Palace Armoury held enough arms to equip thousands of soldiers and it was originally housed in the magnificent hall at the rear of the Grand Masters Palace in Valletta. At the time, it resembled an antiquarian collection, given that it had also served as a depository for suits of armour of deceased Knights. Most of these suits were finely crafted and adorned with intricate decorative detail.

The Governor of Malta of the time, Sir Thomas Maithland (1813-1824) realised the political consequences of what would happen if the whole armoury was sent, so he set about dissuading the Colonial Office from such an undertaking as ‘it could not fail to wound in the highest degree the feelings and prejudices of the Maltese’ (National Archives, Rabat, Despatch from Buthurst to

Maitland, 1822). In spite of all the protests, several important pieces were sent to London. Their removal appears to have raised considerable 'feelings of regret' among the Maltese and in 1835 some were sent back but not all of them (Spiteri, 2003: 202). In his introduction to Arthur Richard Dufty's 'European Armour in the Tower of London', Sir William Reid (1791-1858), wrote how 'quantities of Italian munitions and armour of the late 16th and early 17th century brought from Malta in 1826 and 1846 made the then Tower Armouries an important centre for the study of this type of armour' (Spiteri, 2003: 201).

Sir William Reid was appointed British Governor of Malta between 1851- 1858 and he had various initiatives to improve the situation of cultural heritage of the islands. A year before his arrival on Malta, he was chairman of the executive committee of the famous international exhibition celebrating technological and artistic accomplishments known as the 'Great Exhibition', housed in the Crystal Palace in London, which became a symbol of the Victorian age and was perhaps Prince Albert's greatest achievement.

After his arrival on Malta, Sir William Reid organised the collection in the inner two rooms of the National Library, thus drawing a line between the library and the museum. He also initiated the construction of a new monumental entrance to the Armoury, removed the British weapons and started thinking along the lines of establishing the Armoury as a sort of public museum. The Hall became a venue for cultural and social events. For example, in 1857 it housed Malta's first ever collective art exhibition then promoted by the Malta Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (Espinosa Rodriguez, 2008: 131). Succeeding Reid was Sir Gaspar Le Marchant (Governor of Malta from 1858- 1864), who was also interested in redecorating the palace and the armoury and, by 1860 the restoration was completed and the gallery was opened to the public on regular basis. With its opening to the public, the Palace Armoury became one of the first official public museums in Malta, along with the little museum inside the National Library in Valletta. By 1895, the itinerary came to include also the Tapestry Room in the Palace, except when this was closed due to the sittings of the Council of Government.

The late nineteenth century and Dr. Cesare Vassallo (1800- 1882)

In 1865, a 'Society of Archaeology, History and Natural Sciences of Malta was set up to preserve monuments and to encourage a taste for local Archaeology and the Natural Sciences' (National Library of Malta, MS 588). In 1871, the curator of the little museum inside the library, who was also the Chief librarian, Dr. Cesare Vassallo (1800- 1882), published a book to help visitors better appreciate the exhibits (Vassallo, 1871). The collection at the time consisted of clay and glass vases of different shapes and dimensions, of sarcophagi, statues, and inscriptions. There was also on exhibit, a numismatic collection of about 5,500 coins, gathered in the islands of Malta, and belonging to the Phoenician, the Greek, the Byzantine, the Gothic, the Norman, the Arabic, the Angevins and the Aragonese periods, and to the Roman Consular and Imperial as well as that of the Order of St. John.

Dr. Antonio Annetto Caruana (1830- 1905)

Succeeding Dr. Vassallo was Dr. Antonio Annetto Caruana, best known for his activities as an archaeologist. He was the librarian and curator of the little museum at the National Library in Valletta from 1880 till 1896, and from 1887- 1896 he was appointed Director of Education. He published numerous books and articles including his '*Report on the Phoenician and Roman Antiquities in the Maltese Islands*' (Caruana, 1882).

He was in charge of 'Archaeological Explorations and Preservation of Local Antiquities' between 1880 and 1896 (Caruana Galizia, 1997). Together with a number of surveyors from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Works, Caruana kept record of the antiquities that were constantly being uncovered on the islands. At the request of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in 1881 he was asked to report upon the state of the Phoenician and Roman antiquities of the islands and to put forward suggestions for their better preservation.

Caruana was not pleased by the derelict state of many of the island's ancient remains and he complained about the sale or transfer of antiques to foreigners, the damage caused by visitors as well as weather damage. He also criticized the greed of collectors who kept for themselves valuable artefacts found on their property, rather than presenting them to the museum inside the Public Library. He also laid down some principles in the form of a guide for the formation of a National Museum, and felt that 'the default of a law protecting local Antiquities as a common historical inheritance is still deeply felt' (Caruana, 1882: 4). Although many of his ideas have since been challenged, Caruana is considered to be a pioneer in the field of Heritage Management in the Maltese islands.

Despite these developments, the construction of a Maltese national identity, throughout the nineteenth century was minimal, contrasting with the case of other European countries (Diaz-Andreu and Champion, 1996). According to Gilkes and Vella (2001), 'the plea brought in front of the members of the Council of Government by a radical Italophile, Zaccarìa Roncali, in 1884, to 'behold our historic temples not to be found anywhere else in Europe' in order to buttress political claims, is as exceptional as it is exciting' (Gilkes and Vella, 2001:355). The 'working' or 'poorer' classes, who constituted about three-quarters of the population in 1877 remained unaware of the significance of Malta's unique monuments and cultural heritage. Sant Cassia (1993) argued that Malta's megalithic remains 'never became a symbol of nationhood' because in the 19th century Christianity 'acted as a barrier to a fuller identification with, and understanding of the pre-Christian period' (Sant Cassia, 1993: 358).

John Henry Cooke, the editor of 'Mediterranean Naturalist' (1891-93), published a letter in the *Malta Times and United Service Gazette* of 24 July 1891, entitled 'Wanted - A Museum for Malta.' Mr. Cooke wrote that

It is a significant fact that while most of the principal museums of Europe possess some relic or other bearing on the former history of these islands... in Malta such treasures are not only regarded with indifference, but when found, they are absolutely neglected and are allowed to be either dispersed into the collections of private individuals, and foreign museums, or else they are relegated to some unsavory room... It is a standing reproach against the people of Malta that they should possess so little national pride as to allow such a state of things to exist. Malta requires a Museum. Why has she not one?.. Such an institution is not a luxury; it is a necessity.. the idea that a Museum is simply a store house of curiosities has long been discarded.

The early twentieth century: the insistence on self-government and the birth year of the first official national museum in 1903

In the first half of the twentieth century, Maltese nationalism took on a double form: there was a political nationalism, in the sense of the fight for political rights against the foreign ruler, with an insistence on self-government, and a cultural nationalism inspired by the native intelligentsia's

traditional openness towards Italian cultural traditions or *Italianità*, with its intractable resistance to British cultural assimilation (Wettinger, 1988).

The 'pressure' for some kind of cultural institution was increasing. In 1901, the Duke and Duchess of York inaugurated an exhibition of Maltese antiquities in the *Xara* Palace in Valletta, premises of the Malta Society of Arts Manufactures and Commerce. The exhibition was a great success and the Governor of Malta, Sir Charles Mansfield Clarke, appointed a committee with the purpose of establishing a Museum in Valletta, entrusted with the care of the antiquities of the Maltese Islands (Gambin, 2003). Sir E. Merewether, the Lt. Governor, chaired the committee while the secretary was Dr. Themistocles Zammit (1864-1935) who was also nominated Curator of the proposed museum (Government Notice No. 113' in The Malta Government Gazette No. 4599, 12/6/1903). The appointment of this committee constituted the birth of the Museums Department, who were mainly archaeologically oriented. A Museums Annual Report, which included the main achievements and donations received by the museum and national developments in the heritage sector, also started being published.

1903 was the birth year of the Valletta Museum - the first official National Museum in Malta. Until that time, the only spaces resembling public museums in Malta was the little museum consisting of two rooms inside the National Library in Valletta referred to as the 'Cabinet of Antiquity' and the Palace Armoury. Objects from the little Museum inside the National Library along with other items were transferred to Palazzo Xara to become the basis of the new National Museum as Dr. Antonio Annetto Caruana had always wished (Museum Annual Report 1903-1904 in Supplement to the Malta Government Gazette No. 4747, 25/8/1904).

Dr. Themistocles Zammit (1864-1935), a medical doctor by profession, was the first curator of the National Museum. In November 1903 the Museum Committee of Management had also asked Fr. Manuel P. Magri (1851- 1906), a foremost scholar of Malta's antiquities, to form part of the management (Pace, 2004). He was also asked to excavate and report on the underground remains of Hal Saflieni Hypogeum. The Museum Annual Report of 1906 indicates that Fr Magri's work was completed and the site of Hal Saflieni Hypogeum was surveyed up to the areas that had by then been acquired by the Government. Fr. Magri passed away in 1907 after he was called away to Sfax in Tunisia on missionary duties and his work was continued by Dr. Themistocles Zammit. In January 1908, the cleared chambers were opened to the public. The prehistoric site of the Hypogeum also had big potential as a tourist attraction. It was an important scientific discovery that was bound to attract international attention.

Artifacts found during these excavations were also sent to enrich the new Museum. The predominance of Punic and Roman artifacts in the Valletta Museum were superseded by an inflow of prehistoric remains derived from such excavations. There were many donations entering the collection of the Valletta Museum and new acquisitions consisted also of pharmacy jars, prints, drawings, maps, coins and books. (A.N.M. Minutes of meetings for the Management of the Museum 1903- 1910). The Museum was officially opened to the public in 1905, attracting in its first year 3,805 visitors. Its collections were mainly of Archaeological and historical interest but they also contained the embryo of a small art gallery, and visitors were increasing every year.

In 1910 legislation was finally enacted by an Ordinance of 1910, officially referred to as 'The Protection of Antiquities Ordinance', signed by Governor Sir Leslie Rundle (1909- 15). This law made 'provision for the protection and preservation of monuments and other objects of local

antiquarian or archaeological importance'. It included movable as well as immovable objects and it provided the right of pre-emption and expropriation by the Government, and regulated all exportation and excavations, which were made subject to permission (Ordinance No. IV, Supplement to the Malta Government Gazette, 17 June 1910, 1-5).

The First World War and the aftermath, including the 'Sette Giugno' riots of 1919, sparked by the unsatisfactory nature of economic and political life in Malta

Between 1914-18, during World War I, Malta was not directly involved in the fighting but became known as the "Nurse of the Mediterranean." After World War I, however, the cost of living increased dramatically, imports were limited, and as food became scarce prices rose. Wages in Malta were not keeping up. There was a mood of discontent prevailing on the island due to various factors, including the political situation and unemployment. Many of the Maltese were not happy, they were becoming highly patriotic and they wanted self government. Groups and unions were forming and riots started occurring.

In February 25, 1919 the first meeting of a National Assembly was convened in Valletta under the presidency of Dr. Filippo Scerberras to obtain better constitutional concessions. It approved a resolution which reserved for Malta all the rights given to other nations by the Versailles Peace Conference, which would have meant independence from the British Empire.

On Saturday 7th June 1919, the National Assembly was to meet again. The first spark of unrest started when a crowd in Valletta saw the Maltese flag defaced with the Union Jack flying above the shop called '*A la Ville de Londres*'. The crowd forced itself inside and removed the flag. This incident sparked an uprising. The crowd then proceeded in front of the National Library, shouting for the Union Jack to be taken away. Individuals removed the Union Jack flags from buildings, threw them into the street, and burned them.

Following this, British troops fired into the crowd killing four Maltese, which angered the Maltese even more. The riots reflected the unsatisfactory nature of economic and political life in Malta. The new Governor, Lord Plumer, recommended liberal concessions to the Maltese. The House of Commons of the United Kingdom stated that Malta was to have "control of purely local affairs", with the Colonial Secretary sending a detailed description of the proposed constitution to the National Assembly. All this paved the way to the first self governing constitution in 1921.

Around this time there was also the rise of Fascism in Italy, symbolically consolidated with Benito Mussolini's '*Marcia su Roma*' in November 1922. Italy considered Malta as a '*Terra Irredenta*', a land that historically and culturally belonged to her. The Maltese pro-Italians looked at Italy's culture and religion, with the Pope based in Rome, as a source of Maltese identity.

The Museums Department and the transfer of the museum to the Auberge D'Italie in 1922

In 1922, around the time when all of the above was happening, reforms were carried out to transfer the museum from Palazzo Xara to the grander and more spacious Auberge d'Italie in Merchants Street, Valletta. The Museum's collections had gradually grown over the years and they became more heterogeneous, thus the need for a larger building and a reorganization of the Museum's administrative department was a matter of urgency. The Museums Department was thus created.

From 1922 till 1935, Dr. Themistocles Zammit was elected as the Director of the Museums Department (Museum Annual Report, 1922-23). Dr. Zammit retained the direct responsibility for the Archaeological and Historical sections but was flanked by three other curators: Vincenzo Bonello (1891-1969) in charge of the Arts section, Giuseppe Despott (1878- 1936) in charge of the Natural History section and Dr. Lewis Mizzi (1847- 1935) in charge of the Mineralogical section.

The 1920's and 1930's: Malta participating in the Grand British Empire exhibition, the Antiquities Protection Act and the Maltese language becoming one of the official languages

In 1924, Malta participated in the Grand British Empire Exhibition held at Wembley. A preliminary exhibition was organized at the Auberge D'Italie in Valletta, the location of the new museum. The Malta Pavillion, had the appearance of a walled fortress and inside it had three halls - one for the island's prehistory, another for the knights period and one for contemporary industry, trade and art. According to the 'Times of London' 'Malta was able to convey a lasting impression...' (Bonello G, 2001: 215-219).

A year later in 1925, Malta saw the Antiquities Protection Act, and the museum was re-opened to the public during that year. The Act further enabled the curator of the museum to enhance the national collection through the right of pre-emption and the possibility for private individuals to present works of art in part payment of export duty (Malta Government Gazette Supplement XXX, 27/7/1925). In 1933, Maltese and English become dual official languages and in 1934, the first official grammar for the Maltese Language was published. The legitimation of Maltese as an official language was due to the struggle for cultural and political supremacy between Italian and English, the latter being the upcoming language of the middle mercantile and administrative classes during British rule. Published.

The Second World War

During World War II, the fight for the control of the strategically important island of Malta pitted the air forces and navies of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany against the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy. Italy was looking for expansion in the Mediterranean and Africa; regions dominated by the British and the French. On 10 June 1940, fascist Italian leader Benito Mussolini declared war on the United Kingdom and France, and Malta became a strategic and logistically vital base, which could influence the outcome of the North African Campaign. Italy and Germany resolved to bomb and starve Malta into submission by attacking its ports, towns and cities. Valletta was badly destroyed by bombardment. Museums, monuments and sites were badly damaged, but the city managed to withstand the war with many of its treasures.

All sites which had been open to the public had to be closed, with the exception of a few sites, which were being used as air raid shelters and for storage. In 1939, many works of art were transferred to the Royal Malta Library and eventually to a rock shelter in Mellieha. After this measure proved unsatisfactory, due to unsuitable climatic conditions, everything was again transferred to Verdala Palace in Rabat and then later to the Inquisitors Palace at Għirgenti. On Italy's declaration of war in the 1940's, the remaining collections were then transferred to the basement of the museum where some were eventually damaged by blasts. Restoration was carried out at a temporary atelier in the Upper Halls of the Roman House in Rabat (Museum Annual

Report, 1949/49). During the course of the blitz, the Auberge D'Italie which housed Malta's National Museum received two direct hits. Works of art undergoing restoration or awaiting their transfer to a safer place were damaged. The war left the Museums Department in shambles, its organization broken and its collection dispersed or damaged.

Post War years

After the Second World War, the most urgent priority was to restore what had been damaged. In 1944 a committee chaired by Charles Zammit, the son of Dr. Themistocles Zammit, was appointed to survey and report on the condition of over 2,000 historic monuments. In 1948, the Palace Armoury was officially handed over from the Public Works Department to the Museums Department. From 1951 to 1971, the Curator of the Fine Arts section was Dr. John Cauchi who resuscitated his section from the cinders of war and made sure that the restoration laboratory continued its good work with the works of art damaged during the war.

When the Museums Department started finding its feet again, the premises of the Valletta Museum - the Auberge D'Italie was taken by the Superior Courts of Justice in 1954. The Valletta Museum was then moved for a short period outside of the capital to Casa Leone in St. Venera and soon after was moved again to the capital, to the Auberge de Provence in Republic Street, in Valletta. Originally, the palace was built for the Provencal Knights of the Order of St. John in 1571, within an area including other fine historical palaces dating from the times of the knights. The ground floor was occupied, as it still is, by the Archaeological section, while the Fine Arts section occupied the decorated halls of the 'piano nobile' on the second floor. On 11th January 1958, it was officially re- inaugurated by Ms Agatha Barbara, then Minister of Education.

Capt. Charles G. Zammit, the son of Dr. Themistocles Zammit, was the director of the museum at the time. The curator of the Archaeology section from 1958 till 1963 was the British archaeologist, Cambridge University Professor and author Dr. David Trump, who said that 'in the face of many difficulties the museum has regained what it had lost and more.'

Malta's Independence gained in 1964

In 1964, Malta was finally granted independence. Many of the Maltese however, were scared and were not sure how they could cope on their own. In an article entitled 'Malta: The Most Reluctant Nation,' published on Friday October 02, 1964 in TIME Magazine, the author wrote:

...last week, when Malta finally became a sovereign state, much of the islands' 330,000 populace viewed the prospect of independence with anxiety and even anger. When Britain's Prince Philip arrived for the ceremonies, his motorcade was stoned, and at the Independence day parade, mounted police moved in to break up a riot. When the Union Jack was hauled down from the Valletta parade-ground flagpole, vehement boos were mixed with the crowd's cheers...

Most Maltese feared independence since the British military bases supplied one-third of all income, and employed one-sixth of the labour force. They feared that independence could only hasten the process of decay. Nationalist Prime Minister George Borg Olivier, however, was "taking the path of Malta's history: loudly promoting the glories of its wide beaches, its ornate cathedrals, mosques and fortresses, and its 4,000-year-old ruins, ... looking forward to yet another invasion. This one by tourists."

The Maltese economy was becoming increasingly geared to the tourist industry, and National Museums were an added option to the sun and sea-seeking tourists. In 1964, the Museums Department also hosted two experts from UNESCO, 'to investigate the part which Museums and monuments could play to the tourist industry in Malta' (Museum Annual Report, 1964).

The 1970s onwards: Malta becomes a Republic and several national museums officially opened for the public

On 13th December 1974, the Constitution was amended and Malta became a Republic having Sir Anthony Mamo as its first President. In the same year, 1974, the National Museum housed at the Auberge de Provence in Valletta was also split in two. The Archaeology section remained there and was officially then named 'The National Museum of Archaeology', while the Fine Arts section was transferred to another location in Valletta. From the 1970s onwards, several other national museums were also officially opened, including the National Museum of Natural History at Palazzo Vilhena in Mdina and the National War Museum in Fort St. Elmo in Valletta.

Twenty-first century: National policy for the management of cultural heritage

In April 2000, a violent act of vandalism on the megalithic temple site of Mnajdra on Malta left the island and the wider community shocked and angered. This was not the first attack, but was the latest and most extreme of a series of incidents of extreme vandalism during the 1990s. The vandalism was condemned by local and international communities and widely publicised but the perpetrators have not been identified. This incident served to highlight some potentially serious shortcomings in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention (WHC) on a local level, with particular reference to its intention to protect sites and landscapes of 'outstanding universal value' (UNESCO 1972).

The shock of this attack triggered an overwhelming local response. Marches through Valletta and much public outcry culminated in the establishment of the Cultural Heritage Act (Malta) in 2002, which came into force on the 1st of January of 2003. It reorganised the management of the heritage on Malta through the creation of two distinct bodies with responsibility for different heritage issues (Renwick, 2005).

This intended to move Maltese heritage management on with a new vision, including:

- Legislative reforms moving away from antiquated Acts and conventional institutions
- Creation of new institutions to respond to the challenges of Malta's heritage sector
- Reform of outdated, inefficient and complex operational procedures
- Investment in heritage and the exploration of alternative sources to be able to create a sustainable framework of initiatives that address the market directly and yield economic power
- Recognizing heritage as one of the main factors of social and economic development
- Encouraging private sector involvement in the new framework

(Caruana, 2004)

In 2003, the Museums Department, which was at the time responsible for the National Museums in Malta, was divided into the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, Heritage Malta and the Malta Centre for Restoration.

The superintendence of cultural heritage

The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage – is the Government heritage regulator established by the Cultural Heritage Act. The national functions of the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage are set out throughout the Cultural Heritage Act. This regulator is responsible for exercising surveillance and implementing special powers of the state in the regulation of cultural heritage in the Maltese islands. These special powers comprise the establishment of a national inventory, the protection of movable objects of cultural heritage value, the regulation of movement of cultural objects, as well as the regulation of the protection of building heritage.

The Superintendence is obliged to consider all major and minor projects that involve cultural assets and their environs. In such deliberations, the Superintendence may sanction or refuse development proposals, or it can recommend changes to proposed project design. The decisions of the Superintendence are transmitted to the Malta Environment and Planning Authority that is the agency that issues building and development permits.

In addition, the Superintendence also asserts the special powers conferred upon it by the Cultural Heritage Act. The Superintendence carries out surveillance of on-going works by imposing special monitors that report directly to the Superintendent of Cultural Heritage. These monitors ensure that development proceeds according to permits and, independently of permits; they immediately report any discoveries or infringements to the Superintendent of Cultural Heritage.

HERITAGE MALTA as the national agency of the Government of Malta responsible for the national museums in Malta

Today, Heritage Malta is the national agency entrusted with the management of national museums and heritage sites in Malta and Gozo. From March 2005, the mission of Heritage Malta was augmented with the incorporation of Malta's conservation centre, thus also becoming the National Agency for Conservation. It manages over 30 sites in Malta and Gozo, and it manages events such as lectures and exhibitions and also encourages the collaboration of projects with other different entities. It is also currently participating in a number of EU-funded national and cooperation projects. One of Heritage Malta's main initial goals is to enhance the visitor's experience through improved accessibility and interpretation. It is committed to provide physical and intellectual access to a wider audience in all its sites and museums. It also has a specific educational section with special educational programmes targeting children of different age groups as part of organised school visits. These educational programmes are based on the educational curriculum and address specific areas of study in an edutainment way. <http://www.heritagemalta.org>.

Case studies in chronological order

The Armoury Collection

The Armoury inside the Grand Masters Palace in Valletta was officially opened to the public on a regular basis in 1860. It was one of the first official public museums, along with the little museum inside the National Library in Valletta. In the nineteenth century, the British focused on the Order of St. John's military role to emphasize Malta as a military base. In 1894, a government

notice was published laying down rules for licensed guides, who were not to exceed fifty in number. They were to be furnished with a ribbon band, to be worn on the cap bearing the words “Guide No...”, the licences being issued only to men of good character, who could speak and read English or Italian. The entrance charge was fixed depending on the length of the visit (Spiteri, 2003: 210).

In 1975, the Armoury was moved to the ground floor of the Grand Masters Palace, originally the stables and where its present location still is, so as to make way for the House of Representatives. Although only a fraction of its original splendour, the Armoury still contains abundant material of Italian, German, French and Spanish origin from principal arms production centres. Also on display are the personal armours of the nobility and examples of Turkish armour in the Islamic and Ottoman section.

The National Museum of Archaeology

The National Archaeology collection was first officially exhibited in a museum in Palazzo Xara in Valletta in 1905, around the collection of Giovanni Francesco Abela (1582 – 1655) which was transferred from the National Library. The 'Valletta Museum' as it was called, was the first national museum in Malta and Dr. Themistocles Zammit was one of the personalities that directed its creation.

Dr. Themistocles Zammit

The aim of Dr Themistocles Zammit was to create an educational institution that would illustrate a factual and scientifically correct history of the Maltese islands (Cutajar, 1995). He was a medical doctor by profession, however, for over thirty years he was involved in the history of Malta's national museums and in the excavation of various archaeological sites. From 1903 till 1921, he was the first curator of the first official national museum and from 1922 until 1935; he was the director of the Museums Department.

His scientific approach was evident in the way he organized the museum's display. He organized the collection systematically, dividing it according to their site of provenance. Through his methods of research and archaeological excavations, there was recognition for the first time of the existence of a Neolithic and a Bronze Age culture in Malta. Up till then, Gian Francesco Abela had ascribed, in the seventeenth century, the island's megalithic remains to giants and to the Phoenicians by A.A Caruana in the nineteenth century. This development was given great prominence in the new museum, which came to possess a growing collection of prehistoric artefacts, which included ceramic pots, limestone and terracotta figurative artefacts and a range of tools in obsidian, flint and bone (Cutajar, 1995).

Zammit was one of the key persons to promote Maltese archaeology in the early twentieth century. He was responsible for the excavations of several UNESCO World Heritage sites in Malta; the Hypogeum, the Temples of Hal Tarxien, of Hagar Qim and Mnajdra as well as other sites such as St. Paul's Catacombs in Rabat. By 1920, the prehistoric display came to occupy the centre-piece of the entire set up of the museum. The predominance of the Punic and Roman artefacts, with its emphasis on statues, inscriptions and coinage was being replaced by the large amount of pre-historic artefacts from Zammit's excavations.

The discovery of these prehistoric complexes did much to further Malta's national identity, and also marked a transition in the way Malta looked at its own history and cultural heritage,

solidly confirming the existence of a thriving ancient culture on the island. Also, the general interest aroused by the finds engendered a public concern for the protection of Malta's historical treasures, including a need for management of the sites, the promulgation of laws and other measures to protect and preserve monuments. At the same time, Sir Themistocles' thorough method of excavating the site paved the way for a new scientific approach to archaeology in Malta.

In 1922, the archaeological collection was transferred to the Auberge d'Italie in Merchants Street, Valletta. During the bombing of the Second World War, the Auberge was heavily bombed thus the collection was eventually transferred to the ground floor of the Auberge De Provence in Republic Street in Valletta. Ms Agatha Barbara, then Minister of Education, officially launched it in January 1958, while its first director was Captain Charles G Zammit, the son of Sir Themistocles Zammit.

The collection at that time still included the Fine Arts collection, however, as the collections continued to grow it was necessary to separate the collections and house them into different locations. The Fine Arts collection was transferred to the Admiralty House in South Street, Valletta and it was inaugurated as the National Museum of Fine Arts in 1974. The National Museum at the Auberge de Provence was then renamed as the National Museum of Archaeology.

The National Museum of Archaeology today

The Museum's display was closed for refurbishment in 1996, and reopened in 1998. The present display exhibits a range of prehistoric artefacts dating back to Malta's Neolithic period, from around 5200 BC up to around 2500 BC, excavated from the various UNESCO World Heritage Temples and sites in Malta and Gozo. There are various decorative items, stone and bone artefacts with representations of animals and human figures, numerous ceramic vessels and the earliest tools of flint and obsidian used by prehistoric people on the islands. Highlights include the 'Sleeping Lady' from the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum, the 'Venus of Malta' from Haġar Qim temple and the large altars from the Tarxien Temples. Work is currently underway in the Upper Floor Halls which will exhibit the Bronze Age, Phoenician, Punic, Roman and Byzantine period's permanent displays.

The National Museum of Fine Arts

From 1905 until 1974, the National Fine Arts Collection was exhibited under the same roof as the National Archaeological Collection. It was initially exhibited in the 'Valletta Museum' located at the Xara Palace in Valletta. The collection was not as big as the Archaeological collection, but in time it grew.

A few of the artworks were purchased but the greater part was bequeathed. For example in 1915, Mrs. Zammit Clapp bequeathed several works of art including around 64 oil paintings, 48 framed engravings and 13 watercolours (Museum Annual Report, 1917). She also left a sum of money for the provision of the necessary space for the permanent display of her collection. In the Scheme for the Development of the Museum Department, addressed to the Lieutenant Governor and dated 19th October 1918, Dr Temi Zammit proposed that a third floor in the museum be built in order to house this collection. He wrote in 1918 "The space thus provided

would be large enough to accommodate other gifts and acquisitions and will, in time develop into an Art Museum which is a great desideratum in the island' (Vella, 1997).

Vincenzo Bonello (1891-1969): the First Curator of the Fine Arts Section

During the inter war period, between 1923 and 1937, Vincenzo Bonello served as curator of the Arts Section at the Valletta Museum with the Museums Department, and he made important contributions towards a greater awareness of the Fine Arts. The National Museum up until that time had a majority of archaeological works on display. However, after the transfer of the museum to its new location at the Auberge D'Italie in Valletta in 1922, works of art held in public buildings and ministries such as Auberges of the Knights, chapels and hospitals were eventually brought together. For example, many of the paintings by Italian Baroque artist Mattia Preti (1613-1699), hanging in the National Museum of Fine Arts today were brought together from various public buildings. The collection was also enlarged by acquisitions from local collectors, and the local and international market. For example, two original drawings by Mattia Preti representing a 'Study for a figure of a hero of the Order' and 'St. John the Baptist Beheaded' were purchased from Italy in 1933 (Register of Acquisitions of the National Museum (1927- 1934). Bonello was entrusted with the responsibility of building up a national collection of works of art which would represent the history of the country and support a national identity. In the history of the National Museum of Fine Arts, Vincenzo Bonello was responsible for the greatest proportion of paintings purchased.

He made various important acquisitions. He acquired approximately 200 paintings, 'bozzetti', gouaches and watercolours for the museum, most of which were Baroque artworks, dating to the time of the Order of St. John. In 1929, he acquired artworks such as the Baroque paintings 'Judith and Holofernes' by French painter Valentin de Boulogne (1591-1632) and four paintings by Dutch painter Matthias Stom (1600-after 1650), currently on display at the National Museum of Fine Arts in Valletta (Bonello V. "New Accessions to the Fine Arts Section" in Bulletin of the Museum, 1929).

The majority of the Baroque works he acquired were portraits of members of the Order from local collections. Many works were attributed to seventeenth or eighteenth century Italian artists, and only a few works were by British artists (Vella, 1997). Dating to the nineteenth century, what he purchased were views of Malta, by Maltese and foreign artists. He also purchased paintings by Maltese artists such as Vincenzo Hyzler, Pietro Paolo Caruana, Raffaele Caruana and Giuseppe Cali.

However, it was with the Italian seventeenth century artworks that he was in love with most. In the 'Bulletin of the Museum' dating to 1929, he wrote 'what has impressed every artistic achievement in Malta is undoubtedly seventeenth century Italian Art. It is a well-known fact that, if the vast exuberant field of the imposing '*seicento*' were to be explored, Malta would emerge as an important milestone. The presence and long protracted stay of Mattia Preti on the island, the central figure of the Italian *seicento* painting, fully accounts for this decided character of art in Malta. In forming the new picture gallery, this fact was purposely kept in mind and pictures of this period, that are now no longer doomed to the prejudiced contempt of connoisseurs, were eagerly sought after' (Bonello, 1929). Bonello's effort in building a seventeenth century art collection can still be seen today at the National Museum of Fine Arts, also reflecting the fact

that the Knights of St. John, along with the nobility and merchants during the seventeenth century in Malta had built up collections of art. Seventeenth century Italian painter Mattia Preti is still today the most represented artist in the National Museum of Fine Arts.

Bonello established relationships with Italian scholars such as Roberto Longhi, who helped the museum in terms of attributions and acquisitions. In 1928, Roberto Longhi, for example, also presented to the museum a small painting attributed to Alessandro Magnasco representing a 'Penitent Friar', as a sign of his good relationship with Malta.

Bonello made several visits to Italy in order to help him with setting up the Fine Arts section within the museum, and in order to gain more knowledge on the attribution of works and restoration. His pro-Italian attitude, reflecting the political environment of the time, can be seen in his acquisitions and also in his writings. Because of his Italian sympathies and his close association with the Partito Nazionale before the War, Vincenzo Bonello was dismissed from service by the British authorities in February 1937. He was one of the internees who was arrested in 1940 and deported to an internment camp in Uganda in 1942 during World War II. (Vella, 1997).

The curator of the Fine Arts section Antonio Sciortino (1879-1947)

Before Italy's entry in World War II, Maltese sculptor Antonio Sciortino, was a director in the British Academy in Rome (Italy). In 1936, the Italian government closed down the British Academy and Sciortino left Italy and returned to Malta. He became Curator of the Fine Arts collection in Malta's National Museum in 1937, succeeding Vincenzo Bonello and it is said that he managed to save much of the museum's treasures (Vella, 2000).

Shortly before his death in 1947, Antonio Sciortino bequeathed a considerable number of his art works, including several masterpieces, to the people of Malta, many of which are today housed at the National Museum of Fine Arts.

The transfer of the Fine Arts collection to De Sousa Palace in 1974

The year that Malta became a Republic in 1974, it was decided that the Fine Arts section was to be transferred to a larger location and it was thus opened officially as the National Museum of Fine Arts. The present location is a Baroque palace planned around a central courtyard and dominated by its monumental Rococo staircase. The Palace was originally designed by the Maltese architect Andrea Belli in 1761 for the wealthy dignitary Raimondo del Sousa. It was later occupied by Napoleonic forces in 1798, and between 1821 and 1961 it served as the official residence of the Commander in Chief of the British Fleet in the Mediterranean. Most of the collection on display in the 1970s is still on display today and it presents paintings from the late medieval period to the contemporary, as well as silverware, furniture and statuary in marble, bronze and wood.

The National Museum of Fine Arts today

The Fine Arts Collection is currently housed on two floors. On the first floor, in the 'piano nobile', there are artworks from the late Medieval to the High Baroque with a focus on seventeenth century Baroque paintings by artists such as Italian painter Guido Reni and by the Caravaggisti, such as works by Dutch painter Mattias Stom and by French painter Jean Valentin de Boulogne. A corpus of works by Italian Baroque painter Mattia Preti and a number of

artworks originally belonging to the Order of the Knights of St John, some of which were originally hanging in the Grand Masters Palace in Valletta, are also on display. On the ground floor, the artworks on display range from a collection of eighteenth century portraits by French painter Antoine de Favray (1706–1792) as well as various landscapes and seascapes of Malta mainly dating to the nineteenth century. Works by renowned Maltese sculptor Antonio Sciortino; the ex-curator of the museum, mentioned above, are also on display in the Modern section. The Museum also has a contemporary hall that hosts temporary exhibitions.

The National Museum of Natural History

The National Museum of Natural History was opened on 22nd June 1973 at Palazzo Vilhena, within the old capital city of Mdina. In Medieval times, the original building served as the seat of the Università, or local Government and later during the eighteenth century, it hosted the Magisterial Palace of Justice. Today it is the National repository of biological specimens, and it has a collection of minerals, insects, birds and habitats and marine ecosystems. Both life and earth sciences are represented in the museum, and it has a particular focus on the Maltese Islands. Prior to the present museum, it is known that the Museums Department had a Natural History Section in the 1930s. Various collections were destroyed during the Second World War, and the Natural History Section was not considered until 1963, when it was decided to set up the current museum. The stored collections started being brought out after many years, and the curator at the time, Harry Micallef who was curator between 1966-1970, had, as his main responsibility, the setting up of the new museum in Vilhena Palace in Mdina.

The National War Museum

The National War Museum in Fort St. Elmo in Valletta was opened in 1975, located in the building known as the old Drill Hall of Lower Fort St Elmo in Valletta. Its location was originally built in the mid 16th century, by the military engineer Pietro Pardo, during the rule of the Knights of the Order of St. John. Further modifications and developments in its structure took place in the 17th and 18th centuries and also later in the 19th century by the British, who improved the fort for modern military needs, and used it during the Second World War.

The original idea, before the opening of the museum, was to hold an exhibition called *The Gladiator Faith' and War Relics Exhibition* by a group of dedicated enthusiasts. Following its success, it was developed into a permanent display. The National War Museum was inaugurated in 1975 and it was completely refurbished in 2009. The collection on display focuses on the two World Wars from 1914-18 and from 1939-45. It recounts the story of the events that led to the two wars, their development and major actions, and also their consequences, locally and abroad. Special reference is made to the role of Malta in the wars and the contribution of the Maltese population to the war effort, especially during the difficult conditions of 1942.

Malta Maritime Museum

In 1992, the Malta Maritime Museum opened in Birgu, displaying the Maritime history of Malta. In 1998, after the extensive refurbishing, the National Museum of Archaeology's presentation was upgraded. The display showcases were climate controlled and in line with current conservation standards. The museum is still undergoing work and structural upgrading, and intensive conservation and curatorial activity are currently preparing the way for the opening of

new permanent exhibition halls on the Upper Floor to include the Bronze Age as well as the Phoenician, Punic and Roman periods. There are also a number of temporary exhibitions at times displayed in the Grand Salon on the Upper Floor.

Conclusion

“Every person in Malta as well as every person present in Malta shall have the duty of protecting the cultural heritage as well as the right to benefit from this cultural heritage through learning and enjoyment” (Article 4, section (2), Cultural Heritage Act, 3rd May 2002).

The draft of the new National Cultural Policy was launched in 2010. Its vision is to ‘affirm through concrete action, government’s political responsibility as the principal national contributor and investor in culture, and to transform and consolidate cultural and creative activity as the most dynamic facet of Malta’s socio-economic life in the 21st century.’ The policy focuses on developing cultural needs through improved cultural governance structures and international cultural cooperation. ‘Culture is a living phenomenon and it must be addressed with the mindset of a transitory journey, adhering to the changing needs felt both in the national arena and in the international field.’ According to the draft of the new cultural policy the government is committed to cultivating a cultural policy framed within the context of an evolving, diverse, tangible and intangible heritage and a developing national identity. Culture must be supported, fostered and nurtured, not for the privileged few, but for the ‘dynamic heritage of the whole people’.(<http://maltaculturalpolicy.wordpress.com/>)

According to the draft, ‘National Museums are not just symbols of identity but living biographical diaries of who we are, reflecting and supporting the development of every individual’s creative potential.’ Most national museums in the world seem to select and highlight what their nation values most in their displays, while leaving out other aspects. For example, there are only a few artefacts on display dating from 870 to the arrival of the Knights in Malta, in 1530. The Arab period (870 - 1127), the Norman rule (1127 - 1194), the period under the kingdom of Sicily (1194 - 1427) and the period under the kingdom of Aragon (1427 - 1530) are still not sufficiently represented in Malta’s National Museums. The Roman Villa in Rabat has some Muslim tombs and the Archaeology Museum in Rabat, Gozo currently has around three Muslim artefacts exhibited, such as the 12th century A.D. tombstone of the Muslim girl named Majmuna. Her tomb was embellished with a marble slab carrying an inscription neatly engraved in Kufic Arabic script and apart from giving a few biographical details about the girl, the inscription also quotes the Quran.

Malta still lacks a National Museum of Medieval Art and a National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art. The fact that Malta’s Catholic religion has had so much power and has been highly influential in the lives of many Maltese throughout the years seems to have effected what displays were, and still are, given importance to in Malta’s national museums. Most Maltese still identify commitment to religious values as their top priority in life. For example most of the population attends weekly mass regularly. Many Maltese students attend church schools and after school they have to attend ‘doctrine’ to qualify for the sacrament of confirmation. There is one church or chapel for every square kilometre, most of which are still in use. The Catholic Church and its ethos and ceremonies remain today the closest to a national symbol. However, Malta’s

Medieval past as well as the Modern and Contemporary form part of Malta's national identity too.

The National Museum of Fine Arts in Valletta, for example, displays a majority of Italian artworks, most of which are religious. The Modern section consists of only one small room with artworks on display. The choice of display in the National Museum of Fine Arts could maybe be related to the nineteenth and early twentieth century pro-Italian attitude, at a time when politically, some people opposed the protestant British Government. The Fine Arts section was officially set up at that time and its curator, active between the two world wars, was pro- Italian thus this might explain the majority of religious Italian artworks still hanging on the walls of the museum. In 2007, the National Museum of Fine Arts underwent a refurbishment project. Four halls on the upper level displaying Baroque works were completed on the occasion of the Caravaggio's 400th anniversary in order to host the *Caravaggisti* exhibition. Recently, the Renaissance section of the museum was also refurbished. Work included the installation of a new picture-hanging system and a new electrical and illumination system, plastering and paintworks. The Museum is still currently undergoing a refurbishment programme and it is focusing on the conservation of the actual building.

In the past few years National Museums have been participating in various innovative projects. Since 2008 the National Museum of Fine Arts, for example, was also a project partner in an EU funded FP7 innovative IT services project entitled SMARTMUSEUM, under the Cultural Knowledge Exchange Platform. The overall objective was to develop innovative services enhancing on-site access to digital cultural heritage to improve the educational experiences people receive from Museums (www.smartmuseum.eu). Heritage Malta in the past few years also organized several events to attract wider audiences in a fun and educational manner, such as 'Art and Wine' events, book launches, storytelling, games and treasure hunts for children, exhibitions, and various public lectures. Among the other various events organized by Heritage Malta in the past few years were the: Silent Warriors Guided Tours, Caravaggio Guided Tours, Caravaggio Creative Writing Workshops, Young Knights learning programme, Young Knights Creative Writing Workshops, Ghar Dalam Learning Programme, Tarxien Temples Learning Programme, Inquisitor's Palace Learning Programme and the Natural History Detective Treasure Hunts.

According to the draft of the new Cultural Policy, the Ministry of Culture, in collaboration with the MCCA, Heritage Malta and the University of Malta, shall also identify a site and shall implement the necessary work to open a Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art. The possibility of developing this space will hopefully maximise on the benefits for the formation of new artists. It is hoped that this will happen soon. Dar L'Emigrant is also currently gathering information for the setting up of a Migration Museum and it enjoys the full support of the two Conventions for 'Maltese Living Abroad' held in 2000 and in 2010. It set up a commission composed of individuals interested in the history of Maltese migration to one or more Mediterranean or European countries, namely Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Gibraltar, Greece, Libya, Sicily, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey. The task of these individuals will be to help gather information and material of a visual nature, for instance literary or cultural items, photos, newspapers, passports, integration documents and reports concerning Maltese people who migrated to the countries concerned, while also keeping in touch with Council representatives based in the same

countries. It would be interesting if they also include a section dedicated to people who migrated to Malta along the years.

To conclude, what would be the way forward for National Museums in Malta? Maybe further accessibility and the involvement of the public, by introducing, for example, interactive and fun displays? It is maybe important to ask questions like:

- Are Museums providing a complete picture of the island's past in an educational and inviting way?
- What does the public want to see and experience
- How can all the artworks in the National Collection become more accessible?
- If they are not, due to for example lack of physical space, are they accessible online?
- What does the public have to say about works of art and about their own identity?

Development is synonymous with participation. This leads in turn to the empowerment of people. When individuals are consulted and actively involved on matters affecting society, both the sense of responsibility and that of ownership are increased. Malta will be celebrating the European Capital of Culture in 2018. The Draft National Cultural Policy 2010 recognizes that 'the function of museums goes beyond that of a tourist attraction; they are essentially a gateway to past ways of life of Malta's people, which should be physically and intellectually accessible to today's public. Museums should diminish the borders of time and space and offer opportunities to individuals to explore each exhibit in a fascinating manner. It is therefore understood that the word 'museums' should not be solely synonymous with depositories of the past. This policy aims at encouraging the exploration of different, stimulating forms of how museums can become more appealing to the public, and is committed to invest further to have contemporary forms of exhibiting which encourage an active involvement of individuals through technology, innovation and imagination.'

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Public Curators Act, Chapter 299 of the Laws of Malta



National museums in the Netherlands

Felicity Bodenstern

Summary

Geographically speaking, national museums in the Netherlands constitute of a group that is, comparative to other countries, more evenly distributed between the country's major cities than is generally the case - reflecting, to a certain extent, the nation's origins in a union of individual provinces. Although an important branch of national museums developed in the Hague in the nineteenth century as the direct initiative of the monarchy founded in 1815, this has not been, as in Belgium, the unique driving force of nationally representative museums – and there has been no concentration of national museums in the capital – as Amsterdam was not the main seat of the royal house. So it is that some of the oldest museums, related to the monarchy, are situated in The Hague, but that Amsterdam and Leiden both constitute important centres for national museums. The creation of the museums in each of these cities is related to different forms of initiative and origins. One can, in a sense, historically relate more civic and private initiatives to certain museums in Amsterdam, in the case of The Hague, the most important museums relate directly to the projects of the monarchy and in Leiden, to the development of the University. This is something we will show in our twinned case studies, by considering in parallel the evolution of the national beaux-arts museums in Amsterdam and in The Hague and museums related to ethnography and the colonial enterprise in Amsterdam and in Leiden.

The Dutch central government developed a generous though somewhat uncoordinated system of museum subsidisation in the twentieth century and the network of national museums was very much expanded during this time thanks to the initiative and generosity of private collectors (Rovers, 2009). Indeed, a strong tradition of private patronage has helped the national museums develop since the beginning of the nineteenth century and one might mention Teylers Museum or *Tropenmuseum* but it is also the case of certain art collections (Krul, 2009).

The number of museums currently under the administration of a central government agency is about 50 in total (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2006: 75). Of these, 30 are related to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 11 to the Ministry of Defence and others, such as the Ministry of Finance, run the Dutch coin museum in Utrecht or the Tax Museum in Rotterdam for example, whilst the Ministry for Foreign Affairs finances the *Tropenmuseum* in Amsterdam (cf. table).

A plan for the modernisation of collection management of Dutch museums called the *Deltaplan* (1992) has been implemented since 1988 to achieve greater efficiency in terms of museum and collection management, initiating major renovation and inventory schemes. In parallel, a plan was implemented to completely reorganise state museum financing in a way that has led to increasing financial autonomy and also independence of management generally. Since 2005 however, the state has gone back to a more general system of subsidisation that allows for any museum (be they attached to a central government ministry or not) to apply for state funding.

Out of the thirty nationally-owned state museums, our choice of the most important museums in the Netherlands was made to reflect the geographical spread of these institutions and the principal values that they tend to project. Indeed, as shown by our short study of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and the Mauritshuis in The Hague (two of the most frequently visited Dutch museums), Dutch national culture seems to be predominantly represented by the paintings of the Golden Age. The rising sense of nationalism related to the First World War is considered with the case of the Open Air Museum of Arnhem, all the more interesting as it has tried to modernise its foundational concept, moving from a nostalgic vision of country life, to a museology that also uses recent developments in habitat as a means to address social and political issues more pertinent and relevant to contemporary Dutch society. Generally speaking, one finds few museums dealing with issues of religious conflicts – although this might be expected given Dutch history. Dutch relations to its very important colonial past, which formed the basis for the country's wealth and economic growth up until the decolonization that followed the Second World War, will be considered in a parallel study of the two principal ethnology museums in the Netherlands. The most recent creation in terms of national museums, the Zuiderzee Museum deals with more politically neutral but important environmental issues. Not all museums of importance for national identity can be dealt with in the context of this report, such as the Vincent Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, one of the most frequented museums in Holland. In the category of small museums, which however do seem to relate to essential aspects of Dutch history, one should mention: Anne Frank House and the Dutch Resistance Museum (see Annex table).

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
<p>The State Museum in Amsterdam</p> <p><i>Rijksmuseum</i></p>	<p>1800-1808 (Amsterdam)</p> <p>1815 (Rijksmuseum)</p> <p>1885 (current building)</p>	1798	Monarchy, City of Amsterdam	State-owned building, collections, administered by private foundation since 1996.	Fine Arts, Decorative Arts, National History	Dutch 17 th c. painting, Asian Art, Applied Arts.	1100 - 1900	<p>Current building from 1885 (Pierre Cuypers) combines Gothic and Renaissance Architecture, decorated with references to Dutch art history.</p> <p>Originally in The Hague (1800), now Amsterdam, moved by royal order (1808).</p>
<p>The Royal Picture Gallery (Maurice House)</p> <p><i>Mauritsbuis</i></p>	1822	1820	Monarchy	State museum, privatised in 1995.	Fine Arts	Flemish and Dutch painting, Johannes Vermeer, Rembrandt van Rijn, Jan Steen, Paulus Potter and Frans Hals and works by German painter Hans Holbein the Younger.	14 th to 18 th c.	Classical Architecture, The Hague.

The National Museum of Ethnography <i>Museum Volkenkunde</i>	1832 (As branch of Cabinet). 1883 (Institutions united)	1816 (Royal Cabinet of Rarities in the Hague)	Monarchy	State-owned building and collections, administered by private foundation since 1995. Ministry of Education and Science, privatised in 1995.	Ethnography, Zoology	Asia, China Indonesia, South Pacific, Africa, Americas, Greenland.	1500-1900	18 th c. classical town house. Leiden.
The Tropical Museum Amsterdam <i>Tropenmuseum</i>	1926 (Amsterdam)	1871 (colonial museum in Haarlem)	Private 'Netherlands Society for Industry'	Non-profit organization, autonomous national museum.	Ethnography	Created to collect colonial productions and Applied Arts in the colonies.	19 th and 20 th c.	Purpose built colonial style building. Amsterdam.
The Dutch Open-Air Museum	1942 (National Folk Museum), 1991 (Netherlands Open Air Museum Foundation)	1912	Private initiative	State-owned, administered by the 'Netherlands Open-Air Museum Foundation'.	Country Life, Architecture	Reconstructions of typical farm architecture from all over the country, local craft traditions and costumes.	18 to 20 th c.	Reconstruction of farm architecture, Arnhem.
The Zuiderzee Museum <i>Zuiderzeemuseum</i>	1983	1948	Local initiative	Run as a private foundation, funded by state.	Cultural History, Modern and Contemporary Art	History of the Zuiderzee area, art, culture and heritage at the interface of land and water.	20 th c.	Reconstitution of a fishing village, Enkuizen.

Introduction:

History and geography of national museums in the Netherlands

The first national museum in the Netherlands was conceived of in 1798 as a reaction to the loss of collections of the former *Stadholders* residing mainly in The Hague and as a result of a patriotic movement already underway in the Netherlands since 1780. When the Republic of United Provinces was, so to speak, 'liberated' from the despotism of its ruler by the French revolutionary army in 1795, one of their first acts was to transport the cabinet of paintings of the *Stadholder* William V, who had fled to England, back to Paris. The French armies did not take collections from any other social group or institution, as they had done in other countries such as Belgium or Italy, where church properties had also been confiscated. The French having declared war on the *Stadholder* but not on the Dutch Republic itself, refrained from confiscating the municipal collections, which in many cities could be visited in the town halls.

In the new Republic with its unitary state, Finance Minister Gogel created the very first '*Nationale Konst-Gallerij*' in the *Huis ten Bosch* near The Hague, as a means of saving the last elements of the *Stadholders* collections that the state had begun auctioning away, mainly to foreign bidders. As the ancestor of the future *Rijksmuseum*, its objective was to create a place where the history and identity of the Netherlands might find expression and where its glorious old Republic would be celebrated as a means of underlining the common culture of the United Provinces (Bley, 2004: 12). The paintings presented there were mainly portraits of members of the house of Orange on the one hand and also important figures in the Batavian Republic. These portraits were accompanied by the display of objects having belonged to these important personalities. Interestingly, this collection of paintings was considered to be as much a representation of Dutch art as of its history. Dutch painters from the Golden Age were highly regarded for their ability to document their own present time, a past that came to be considered as exemplary, making these paintings important as artworks but also as documents.

Named king of the Netherlands, Louis Napoleon, Napoleon's brother, chose Amsterdam (moving from Utrecht) as his residence and decided to promote its existence as a cultural centre, in opposition to the *Stadholders'* city, The Hague; a movement that would be reinforced after the formation of the Low Countries as a constitutional monarchy with Amsterdam as its capital (although The Hague became the seat of parliament). The 'Royal Museum of paintings, drawings, various statuary and chiselled work, cut stones, antiquities, art objects and rarities of all sorts' was created by the French ruler in 1808 out of the collections of the '*Nationale Konst-Gallerij*' of 1800 that he had transported to Amsterdam. Interestingly, some other pieces were also taken from public buildings and already existing municipal collections of paintings whose tradition goes back to the beginning of the seventeenth century (i.e. 5 paintings were taken from the town hall of Haarlem). Louis Napoleon's museum opened in what was the former town hall of Amsterdam. Its collections, including the famous *Nightwatch* by Rembrandt, though originally municipal, were thus presented as those of what was henceforth to be considered of as a national royal museum (Meijers, 2009: 46). Generally speaking, such collections originating in a local tradition, were attributed a national (even nationalist) meaning in the course of the nineteenth century, often through the reallocation of a certain number of paintings. Meijers (2009: 43) develops the idea of 'the domestic appropriation of municipal artefacts, by the new central government'. The tradition

of patronage for municipal collections was already very strong before the Revolution and the French confiscations, with Dutch Republican powers being concentrated in the most important towns of the provinces. Even after a 'National' museum had been founded in 1800; 'one gets the impression that the far more generously filled municipal collections continued to play an important role in representing the Netherlands, especially after their transformation into municipal museums in the nineteenth century.' A good example of this phenomenon is the municipally-owned Franz Hals museum in Harlem. The presentation of the artist's paintings there gradually led him to be considered a 'national' painter. The glorification of certain important artistic figures lets us take into consideration a limited number of municipal collections as having national resonance and relating to national identity.

When the Netherlands was annexed to France in 1810, Louis Napoleon's museum, which had already been national, was renamed as royal although it was taken over by the municipality of Amsterdam. It became a national museum again in 1815, when the collections moved to the 'Trippenbuis' and opened as the *Rijksmuseum*, that is to say, a state museum not under the direct tutelage of the king, but of the government.

Indeed, when in 1814 the new kingdom was formed, the appointment of Amsterdam, the most prominent city in the kingdom, as capital city was very much a conciliatory gesture of the new king, Willem I, towards the town that had been home to the most important republican political faction. However, the king, son of a former *Stadholder* was quite naturally inclined to create his own 'national' museum *ensemble* in The Hague. The Royal Cabinets created from 1816 onwards 'symbolized the power of the royal family, the unity of the kingdom and underscored its place in a larger context' (Effert, 2008 : 2).

The different museums or *Royal Cabinets* were formed on the basis of the curiosity cabinets (including all forms of *Artificialia* and *Naturalia*) united by the two successive *Stadholders*, Willem IV (1711-1751) who had collected mainly paintings, prints, manuscripts, books, coins, medals, cut stones and antiquities; whilst Willem V (1748-1806) had expanded the collection to include natural history. They had been confiscated by the French, but returned after 1815. The creation of the *Royal Cabinets* in The Hague around 1816 meant negotiations and exchanges with Amsterdam, settling a kind of distribution of heritage between the two towns. The king's objective was to create an encyclopaedic museum in The Hague that would also make room for a section dedicated to the history of the Fatherland, displaying objects of patriotic value, such as objects of Dutch naval lieutenant Jan van Speyk, a hero of the effort to suppress the Belgian independence movement (Effert, 2008: 2).

The king was actively invested in the expansion of these collections, which flourished until 1830. He financed certain acquisitions himself, and directly approved of all the acquisitions financed by the government but he transferred the control of the whole collection to the Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences. 'With this, the king gave a powerful impulse to the development of collections in the Netherlands.' (Effert, 2008: 22) The royal cabinets of paintings and of rarities moved into the *Mauritsbuis* in 1820; the painting collection alone has remained there since 1883, whilst the rest of the collections went to Leiden where they were united with other national museums which had been developing there around the University's own collections. As can be seen below in the case study concerning the *Rijksmuseum* in Amsterdam, the period between 1830 and 1870 was a time of relative stagnation in terms of initiatives related to museums and,

more generally, heritage. After the Belgian revolt in 1830, acquisitions both in the *Rijksmuseum* and the *Mauritsbuis* came to a halt, as did donations, with collectors favouring municipal collections over national ones (Bergvelt, 2010, 189). Rapid economic growth coupled with a new national awareness for heritage lead to changes in government policy from the 1870s as illustrated by the building of a new *Rijksmuseum*.

In terms of national scientific museums, Leiden became the main pole for the Netherlands. In 1818, King William I had established the *Rijksmuseum van Oudheden* or National museum of Antiquities in Leiden, which was subsequently greatly developed because of, and in relation to, the creation of a professorship for archaeology at the University. And throughout the century, certain elements from the royal cabinet, notably ethnographic objects started to leave The Hague for Leiden, until the main transfer in the 1870s. The situation of these scientific museums will allow us to consider the question of professionalization of the museum and its staff in relation to university research.

The first public science museum in the Netherlands was a private undertaking; Teylers Museum in Haarlem opened its doors in 1784 with departments for physics, history, drawing, minting and a library established by private initiative. It is, today, a nationally funded public institution that tells a kind of history of the museum's collections since the Enlightenment. Today, it is run as a foundation but its main source of financing is governmental.

Dutch museum geography has been very much conditioned by the nation's origins as a union of provinces. In marked contrast to its neighbour, Belgium, also a nation whose historical origins are based on a group of provinces, national museums did not develop in the nineteenth century according to a unique principle of centralised cultural heritage in the capital city. Debora Meijers writes that from the period of French rule and the creation of the first national museum in 1800 and onwards: 'further vicissitudes of the Dutch national art museum seem also to be marked by the specific relationship between the municipal/provincial power and the central government' (Meijers, 2009: 53). Indeed, the early history of these different institutions shows a form of mobility in the distribution and redistribution of cultural heritage that is relatively uncommon in the realm of national museums. Certain national museums/collections have moved from city to city up to four times (i.e. the national coin museum has been in The Hague, Amsterdam, Leiden and is today in Utrecht). Even though Amsterdam has come to house the most famous collections of fine arts, with the *Rijksmuseum* and *The Vincent Van Gogh Museum*, it is in The Hague that we can find the *Mauritsbuis*, *Royal Cabinet of Paintings* and the *Meermano-Westreenianum*. In terms of archaeological and scientific collections however, Leiden is home to *Naturalis* or *National Museum of Natural History*, to the *Museum Volkenkunde*, *The National Museum of Ethnography* and to the *Rijksmuseum van Oudheden* or National Museum of Antiquities.

There are two divergent and often competing principles at work in the realm of cultural promotion in the Netherlands (D'Angelo, 2000: 174) as has been clearly demonstrated by the recent discussions and debates surrounding the central government's project for a central National Historical Museum in the Netherlands, to become the newest national museum in the country. A state-organised competition recently pitted town councils of The Hague, Amsterdam and Arnhem against each other in order to decide on the location for this new institution. Yet a great number of other existing municipal historical museums (Prinsenhof in Delft, The Hague Historical Museum, Valkhof in Nijmegen, and others) expressed themselves against such a

project claiming that ‘each one of them could be considered as part of such a museum and therefore collectively they were already catering for such a need.’ (Meijers, 2009: 41) In 2009, a parliamentary majority decided to locate it in the city of Arnhem next to the current Open-Air Museum. We might add that, in October 2010, the decision was taken to discontinue the 50 million euros project for the museum in light of the governmental decision to cut the arts budget by a total of 200 million (DutchNews.nl, 2010).

National museums and cultural policy in the Netherlands

For a relatively small country, the Netherlands boasts a high number of museums, a fact that is regularly recited and underlined in all general documents concerning Dutch museums (873 according to the report *Cultural Policy in the Netherlands*, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2006). Especially since the beginning of the 1970s, the country has experienced a rapid growth of small historical and thematic museums, with new collections based very much on objects of everyday life, and exhibits that deal with societal and anthropological perspectives. So much so that in 1989, Peter van Mensch wrote an article warning against the dangers of an ‘embarrassment of riches’ in museum terms (Mensch, 1989b).

It would appear that a high percentage of Dutch museums receive government funding. Many of these (about 100) were created in the first half of the twentieth century and were the direct result of a donation by private individuals to the state or the community (Ministry of Culture, Education and Science, 2006: 74). During the same period, the Dutch government established administrative bodies to organise a system of state subsidies for museums that appears to have been more evenly distributed than in other countries we have looked at, such as Belgium.

This being said, the number of museums financed by the state has been drastically reduced since 1985. Before the new *Museum policy document* in 1985, all museums, even those that were not state-owned, were subsidised to cover their operating losses. The 1985 document established a set of criteria to define the choice of museums to be kept under the responsibility of the central government. They were based on an appreciation of the extent and range of their collections and the degree to which they represent their speciality. The museums that did not correspond to these criteria were transferred to the provinces and municipalities.

Additionally, the organisation of Dutch national museums underwent a profound mutation during the period 1988-1994. A complete reformation of their administrative status was implemented to transform state museums into self-governing foundations. In 1992, the concept of the Netherlands Cultural Heritage *Collectie Nederland* was introduced, stipulating that objects, collections and buildings considered to be of national importance are to remain in state ownership, but that administratively, the national museums as institutions, are to be given a new legal status under private law.

Up until then, museum directors had only been responsible for the ‘institution’s programme and activities budget; larger questions of policy were decided with the ministry of culture, questions of finance with the treasury, questions of personnel with the home office, and questions about premises with the ministry of the built environment’ (Schuster, 1998: 58). The new ‘privatisation’ scheme or autonomy system, in a sense, maintains the idea of the national museum as ownership and financing is maintained by the state (Engelsman, 1996) but it transfers decisional elements to the museum. However, museums are free to either use their title as

national museums (*rijksmuseum*) or decide to drop it – they must also manage their own budget and make autonomous business decisions (Ministry of Culture, 1994: 9). This project was accompanied by the ‘*Deltaplan*’ which included a comprehensive program of renovation and reorganisation of the collections and was one of the most comprehensive manifestations of state policy concerning national museums ever to have been seen in the Netherlands, a country which, in the past, had sometimes been accused of having an incoherent cultural policy on a national level (Poulot and Ballé, 2004: 73).

In 2005, a policy paper on museums was presented to Parliament entitled ‘the Future of the Past’ (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2006: 75), this mainly seems to revise the decentralised and liberal financing strategy developed in the 1980s: museums can apply for a long term financing budget and all museums (not only the 30 museums directly subsidised by the Ministry) may apply directly for grants from this budget, meaning that they no longer appear as the sole responsibility of municipal and provincial administrations. The museums that have been allocated these budgets will undergo regular assessments.

The thought process that has accompanied this reform, especially concerning the role of the public in the museum developed during the 1980s and the debates that it has provoked both in the Netherlands but also abroad, concerning the legal status of national institutions, means that there is a relatively abundant and recent literature on the subject of state museum policy, professionalization, democratisation and optimisation of the national museum’s relation to the public (Mensch, P. van (ed.), 1989 ; Ganzeboom and Haanstra, 1989 ; Boorsma, 1998).

The new autonomy that this reform has given to the largest institutions seems also to have sparked off an important historiographical effort to document their pasts, as Dutch museums seek to redefine and perhaps even to justify their existence in the new context of independent funding. This movement has provided us with a good series of precious historical studies concentrating on the origins of Dutch museums. In the last ten years, an important series of monographic works has been published (Bergvelt, 1998; Van der Ham, 2000; Halbertsma, 2003; Jong, 2001; Effert, 2008; Ploeg, 2006).

Case studies in chronological order

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam/ Mauritshuis, The Hague

As already mentioned above, due to the initiative of King Louis Napoleon (1806-1810), Amsterdam came to house the most famous of the national museums in the Netherlands: the *Rijksmuseum*. Housed at first in the *Trippenbuis*, the collections flourished until 1830 but after this, a period of stagnation ensued until a new awareness for the need of an improvement in terms of the management of artistic heritage in the 1870s fuelled renewed government input and financing with a clear acquisition policy and a project for a new national museum. This revival of interest for national art and heritage was related to a movement for the protection and care of collections brought into motion by an article published in 1873 ‘*Holland op zijn smals!*’, in *De Gids*. ‘It was an attack on the disgraceful carelessness with which the Dutch treated their artistic treasures, from historic buildings to art collections in museums. The article brought about a revolution. It gave rise to a policy that resulted in the concern for and preservation of the national heritage that

exists in the Netherlands today. It also impelled the energetic management of the national art collections.’ (Bank and Buuren, 2004: 164).

The most important result of this new policy was the opening of the *Rijksmuseum* in 1885 in a neo-gothic building by Pierre Cuypers, constructed on a piece of land offered by the city of Amsterdam to the state. The style of this building might be read as an expression of the tensions that religious adherence produced in the make-up of Dutch national identity. Although, in many countries, such as Germany, Protestantism was often closely connected to growing nationalism in the second half of the nineteenth century, the rise of the liberal party in Holland from 1848 onwards resulted in the ‘deemphasizing of the state’s confessional character’ (Steinhoff, 2006: 256) and thus in increasing secularisation. Ironically, in the building of the national museum, we find an architectural reference to the reinforced position of the Catholic Church in the Netherlands since its reorganisation in 1853. This is mainly due to the fact that its architect was himself a Catholic, influenced by the Gothic revival movement. He had participated in the building of new-Romanesque churches across the Netherlands. This reference to Romanesque religious architecture, visible in the architecture of the *Rijksmuseum* led King William III to refuse attending the opening ceremony, nevertheless held in his name. The museum’s ground plan however, is a reference to the town hall of Amsterdam, built by Jacob van Campen and, according to Jenny Reynaerts, its elevation refers to the Dutch Golden Age of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. She has shown that the museum’s decorative program was developed to demonstrate the glory of the Dutch nation as expressed by the art of that periodⁱ. The museum was constituted by the reunion of several already national collections whose common denominator was that they were considered to relate to the history of the Netherlands. It included paintings and a collection of drawings and engravings from the Dutch Museum for History and Art, formerly established at The Hague; the public collection of works of art by modern masters, formerly established in the Pavilion ‘Welgelegen’ in Harlem; the Museum Van der Hoop belonging to the city of Amsterdam, lodged before in the former Hospital for Old Men at Amsterdam; the objects of art and antiquities received as a loan from the city and finally, a collection of plaster casts of sculpture in the library of the museum.

This brings us to one of the most salient characteristics of national museums in the Netherlands: the proportionately huge representation and importance of the National school of painting. In a report issued by the Dutch Ministry of Cultural Affairs one reads: ‘One striking fact, however, is that the national character of our museums, and in particular that of the *Rijksmuseum*, is strongly emphasized. This contrasts with the way most of the big foreign museums have developed, with their collections specializing in international schools (Ministry of Cultural Affairs 1968: 3)’. It is particularly interesting to see that the *Rijksmuseum* so famous for its masterpieces of Dutch painting was, from the beginning, considered to be a history museum more than a museum of fine arts. When R. van Luttervelt of the *Rijksmuseum* titled his 1969 book, *Dutch Museums*, it seemed to go without saying that it was to be a book uniquely dedicated to the evolution of painting collections in the Netherlands. In order to understand how the national museum, that might at first glance be considered first and foremost as a museum of fine arts, was considered to be a national ‘history’ museum one might consider the following statement by Carel Blotkamp: ‘Painting was prototypical of Dutch culture as such: it was seen as a faithful reflection of a self-confident bourgeois society, founded on the pillars of realism, industry,

domesticity, neatness, and liberal attitudes in religious and political matters. (...) Painting is in the blood of the Dutch; painting is their principal contribution to European culture. The clichéd view, formed in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, is stubbornly persistent' (2004: 295). This conception appears to have greatly conditioned Dutch museum culture and it seems to have found continuity through such new museums as the *Rijksmuseum Vincent Van Gogh* in Amsterdam. This museum opened in 1973 thanks to the donation of the collection of the Van Gogh family and the management of the Van Gogh foundation and it has developed into an important museum and research centre for nineteenth century painting. It is, after the Rijksmuseum itself, the most frequented of Amsterdam's museums.

The Rijksmuseum has distinguished itself in its use of new technology and the Internet to make its collections more accessible. The museum's website boasts one of the most developed virtual tours of any European museum (McTavish, 2006: 230). The museum has shown its interest in new online initiatives through its cooperation with the so-called CHIP project (Cultural Heritage Information Presentation) to develop an internet interface that allows users personalised access, giving them the opportunity to discover the collections in terms of their own tastes and interests via an interactive questionnaire (Wang, Y.; Aroyo, L.; Stash, N. and Rutledge, L., 2007).

It is interesting to discuss the history of the *Mauritsbuis* as a counterpoint to the *Rijksmuseum* as they neatly illustrate the geographic distribution of Dutch national museums, but one might also dare say that the *Mauritsbuis* illustrates a more conservative approach to the museum. The *Mauritsbuis* is part of the classic genealogy of state museums that developed out of the initiatives of king Willem I (1772-1843). As already mentioned, he revived the tradition of the *Stadholder* collections in The Hague as an opposition to those developed in Amsterdam by Louis Napoleon. The *Mauritsbuis* had already housed the National Library from 1807 onwards, again created by Louis Napoleon. In 1820, it was bought by the state and a royal decree in July 1820 designated the house as the premises for the Royal Cabinet of Paintings and Curiosities (now The Royal Picture Gallery), which had been constituted in 1816 (Hoetnik, 1977: 2). The collections were opened to the public in 1822 and displayed over a hundred works which had previously formed part of the collections of the *Stadholders*: Rembrandts, Holbeins, Rubens, Van Dyck, Jan Steen etc. Many of these paintings had left the country in 1795, confiscated by the French as the 'artistic conquest' to be returned in autumn 1815 (Hoetink, 1977: 12). The building itself had been constructed in the seventeenth century to be the home of a member of the *Stadholder's* family, Count Johan Maurits of Nassau-Siegen, the governor of the Dutch colony in Brazil from 1636 to 1644, and could thus fully represent the heritage of the *Stadholders* of the Netherlands, ancestors of the new monarchy. The collections developed considerably due to the implication of the king and, not without a certain degree of rivalry, with the *Rijksmuseum* in Amsterdam concerning some particularly important paintings such as Vermeer's *View of Delft*. Although the director of the museum in Amsterdam had instigated its acquisition, at Willem I's bequest it was hung in the *Mauritsbuis*, and a similar situation arose around Rembrandt's *Anatomy Lesson* (Hoetink, 1977: 14). With the Belgian revolution of 1830 and the increasingly difficult financial situation, the museum hardly made any acquisitions over the next forty years (not even when the important personal collection of Willem II was sold in 1850). Just like the *Rijksmuseum* in Amsterdam, it experienced

a period of stagnation that ended in the 1880s with the professionalization of its staff and the publication of its first real catalogue.

The other collection of ethnographic curiosities and antiquities that Willem I had also installed in the *Mauritsbuis* was transported to Leiden in 1875 and the building was devoted to paintings from then on: 'Thus by the end of the nineteenth century the interior had reached the state in which it is to be found today.' (Hoetnik, 1977: 3). It has indeed maintained a slightly old-fashioned charm and its attraction resides in the intimacy of a museum that has the dimensions of a large manor house and in the unmistakable masterpieces on display there. Hoetink points out however, the danger of the museum becoming a kind of 'monument', 'contrived as it is in accordance with refined aesthetic criteria' (Hoetnik, 1977: 23). However, in recent years, the museum seems to have literally styled itself on this princely heritage and, in September 2010, opened the 'Prince William V Gallery', reinstated as the reflection of the first public gallery of the Netherlands where visitors are to 'encounter an eighteenth-century royal collection of paintings: the elegant and impressive collection of the Stadholder William V (1748-1806)' (<http://www.mauritshuis.nl/index.aspx?SiteID=106>, accessed online November 10, 2010). This reflects the museum's general policy which, according to the website: 'has never had the intention to form a collection that represents an art-historical overview. The museum strives chiefly to round out its strong suits by enlarging the collection with important paintings by leading artists, concentrating on the areas of the stadholder's collection that were already the best represented: Dutch and Flemish painting.'

(<http://www.mauritshuis.nl/index.aspx?ChapterID=2429&ContentID=19484>, accessed online November 10, 2010).

So it has come to offer a very different cultural programme to that of the *Rijksmuseum*, which is far more comprehensive in its representation of Dutch art and history, however neither has striven to give encyclopaedic overviews of other schools. It might be added though, that in the 1950s the *Mauritsbuis* restricted its scope very clearly to 'Netherlandish and German art of the 15th and 16th centuries and Flemish and Dutch art of the 17th and 18th centuries' (Hoetink, 1977: 21). This was a policy that was marked by a series of exchanges with the *Rijksmuseum* in Amsterdam, to which it sent its Spanish and Italian collections. Although the *Rijksmuseum* has maintained a clear priority in the field of Dutch art, its mission statement today, does add that it aims to show 'key aspects of European and Asian art' (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 1997, 43).

Both museums valorise what transpires as the most important Dutch national master narrative, the genius of artistic expression related to the rendering of liberal, bourgeois, industrious and civically democratic values considered as inherent to the most famous themes of Dutch golden age painting.

Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden/National Ethnology Museum and the *Tropenmuseum*, Amsterdam

Just as is in the case of the *Mauritsbuis*, the history of the collection of the *Museum Volkenkunde* is closely related to that of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and developed in parallel to the painting collections, first housed in the same building: the Royal Cabinet of Chinese Rarities was founded in 1816, and in 1822, the Royal Cabinet of Rarities opened at the same time as the painting collection. Despite control of the Netherlands by the French, the former aristocratic

elite of the *Stadholders* had maintained control throughout this period over foreign Dutch territories, a fact that, according to Legêne (2000: 90), allowed them to easily recuperate their position of power after 1815. Contact with the overseas colonies was extremely important for Dutch politics and economics. So as the Netherlands quite aggressively developed its colonial empire in the Dutch East Indies, Surinam and the Antilles, transforming commercial expansion into territorial expansion, often in conflict with the British - Willem I, who had constitutionally unique power over the colonies, sent scholars to collect materials and information for Dutch museums that he founded. According to Legêne again, the Royal Cabinet of curiosities that was founded by Willem I in 1816 was a showcase for Dutch maritime politics of expansion – and so may not be interpreted as an ethnographic collection whose mission was solely scientific. Legêne (2000: 95) points to a fact that she considers to be characteristic of the Dutch case in terms of the interpretation of ethnographic museums. She claims that, despite this obvious relationship between Dutch overseas expansion and the development of Dutch ethnographic collections, neither the collections in the *Mauritsbuis* nor later in Leiden were ever interpreted as expressions of Dutch colonialism, whilst the *Tropenmuseum* clearly was - we will come back to this point.

One may add that, whilst the Royal Cabinet and the museum in Leiden (1832) both gained much from colonial collecting, they also pursued interests outside of the field of Dutch colonial territories *stricto sensu*, notably in relation to Japanese art and culture (one should add that in its ties with Japan, Holland did profit from a kind of commercial monopoly from a European perspective). The ethnographic collection that developed at the University of Leiden from 1832 onwards may claim to be one of the first in Europe to have been developed in a relatively systematic, scientific fashion. Effert (2008) has looked at how ethnology evolved as a discipline in what may have been considered as two related collections, those of the Royal Cabinet in the Hague and those at the University of Leiden until they were united in 1883. The museum was very much influenced in these years by the displays being organised for the International Colonial Exhibition in Amsterdam (1883) from which it acquired an important number of exhibits. In 1885, the *Kampong* was established on grounds juxtaposing the university: ‘perhaps the first open-air museum in the world. It consisted of a number of houses from different parts of Indonesia which were transported from the Colonial Exhibition. The collections were greatly expanded during the second half of the nineteenth century, and rebuilt (the exhibits suffered greatly from conservation problems and were closed in 1903 (Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences, 1962: 3). In general though, the collection pertaining to Indonesia increased notably during the first decade of the twentieth century. The museum also managed to acquire a more universal scope by acquiring pieces from the South Pacific to Africa (including Benin bronzes), America (Peruvian pottery) to Tibet, Siberia, New Guinea, and Greenland etc. The museum also received a series of collections from the National Museum of Antiquities (Leiden) whose objects fell outside the domain of the classical cultures, such as a Hindu-Javanese collection and a collection of American antiquities.

The remarks by Legêne (2000) and Effert (2008: 7) show that the ethnology museums of the Netherlands may not be classified simply as scientific in terms of the typology established by H. H. Frese dividing ethnology museums into colonial, scientific and missionary institutions. However, the presentation of the ethnology collections developed in The Hague and Leiden

neutralized the colonial and commercial activities that veritably founded them by excluding all forms of discourse that could refer back to the origins of the collection.

In parallel to the National Ethnography Museum based on the royal collection discussed above, it is interesting to discuss the case of what might, from its origins, be clearly defined as a colonial museum, founded on the initiative of an association of traders and bankers; today called the *Tropenmuseum* in Amsterdam (Legêne, 2000). The *Tropenmuseum* goes back to the Colonial Museum of Haarlem founded in 1864 by a botanist, F. W. van Eeden, secretary of a private *Society for the Promotion of Trade and Industry* made up of bankers and businessmen who all had interests or responsibilities in the Dutch colonies. According to Legêne, the Dutch were more consciously recognizing and aware of their activities in the colonies by this time. The violence of certain colonial practices, such as slavery, had made their way into the sphere of public debate, notably through such novels as *Max Havelaar: Or the Coffee Auctions of the Dutch Trading Company* published in 1860. Generally speaking, colonialism and the colonized populations became a much more real dimension in Dutch society than they had been in the first half of the century. The development of the museum was certainly intended to place the colonial enterprise in a favourable light and it was clearly defined, from the beginning, as a museum of colonial products and the direct expression of the economic and social interests of the Dutch elite. Accordingly, this differentiates it from the Museum of the Congo at Tervuren in Belgium for example, that was directly related to the interests of the Belgian monarchy (Legêne, 2000: 98).

By 1910, the government and the colonial administrations were supporting this initially private initiative that was to be pursued in Amsterdam in the form of a more comprehensive institute. Its objectives were to fund applied research in the field of agriculture and tropical diseases. The institute was set up in a very monumental and specially decorated building with a richly inspired colonial iconography (Woudsma, 2004). Queen Wilhelmina ceremoniously opened its doors to the public in Amsterdam in 1926 at a time when the ideology of Holland as an enlightened colonial power was running thin (Legêne, 2000: 88). A Dutch weekly paper *Eigen Haard*, brought out a special edition dedicated to the opening, where one could read: 'This is an important event not only as is it concerns the Institute's official inauguration, although this is memorable and joyful, but also because this building will be a reminder every day, every hour, to the Dutch people of the Dutch possession of 'Insulinde', the magnificent group of islands that places this small nation, situated between the Dollard and Schelde rivers, among the ranks of the great nations of the world' (Woudsma, 2004: 7). With the dissolution of the colonies and the recognition of Indonesian independence in 1949, the Colonial Institute came to be known as the Royal Institute of the Tropics and the museum as the *Tropenmuseum* (The Tropical museum), a name that it has kept to this day. Since 1992, it is run as an autonomous national museum.

Legêne has tried to examine the history of the museum in the context of its role in constructing national identity since the end of the nineteenth century but also considers its universalizing discourse on the 'other' as an element of the formation of a European identity (2000: 90). She sees it as a complement to the national ethnology museum in Leiden: whilst the later concentrated on art and history of ancient foreign civilizations, the former was oriented to the applied arts that used techniques and materials from the colonies. Both had in common the fact that they did not question Dutch colonialism, but in different ways sought to promote it,

thus reinforcing the Dutch identity of an international player and economic force that could largely be considered as positive.

Today, the *Tropenmuseum* defines its mission as that of 'a meeting-place between western and non-western cultures' (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 1997: 59). The museum's website claims, in relation to one of the newest permanent galleries,

The Tropenmuseum has taken a new, post-colonial perspective in 'Eastward Bound'! The displays tell their own story. Who collected them, and why? What does that tell us about our relationship with the East Indies then and Indonesia now? Ideas about culture and cultural differences are also dealt with. Out East, the Dutch became aware of their own national identity. Yet there were also people who felt at home in different cultures and learned to adapt to life between two cultures. Today this is more relevant than ever. (<http://tropenmuseum.nl/smartsite.shtml?ch=TMU&id=5870>)

The museum is obviously promoting an analysis of the colonial past as key to understanding the issues raised by multiculturalism in contemporary Netherlands. In a sense, its policy reads very much like that of Leiden's Ethnology museum which intends 'to give present and future generations an insight into the history and development of non-Western cultures and in particular to draw attention to the interplay between these cultures and their contact with the Netherlands' (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 1997: 47). Both museums have distanced themselves from a typology defined in the 1960s by Frese and which is no longer truly applicable, the historical studies by Effert and Legêne, show that they may never have been.

Arnhem: Open-Air Museum (1912)

Created in 1912, from its beginnings the museum has grown to cover a large park of 44 hectares including over 130 buildings representative of the architectural styles of all the provinces since 1600. Founded by the Society of the 'Netherlands Open-Air Museum' it was taken over by the state in 1941.

The Open-Air museum of Arnhem was one of the first open air museums to be established in continental Europe (just after the Lyngby Danish open-air museum that opened in 1897 near Copenhagen). Both were based on the model established in the 1891 by Artur Hazelius at Skansen near Stockholm. The model of open-air museums quickly spread across northern Europe. Developed out of displays organised for the Universal Exhibitions, it was established in the context of a nostalgic movement to preserve pre-industrial cultural objects and document lifestyles that seemed to be rapidly disappearing at the end of the nineteenth century. The founder of the Dutch open air museum, F. A. Hoefler, wrote: 'But who can dam the flood of modernity and of monotony. In certain regions one may still use some characteristic furniture and utensils but, little by little the uniform productions of industry are taking over' (quoted Jong and Skougaard, 1992: 154). The objective of these museums was often to preserve a cultural identity, in many cases equated with the idea of a true 'national' identity (although it must be underlined that it also very often served regional identities as well). Jong remarks that, even in the case of countries like the Netherlands, where nationalist feeling was never a strong force, 'the museum sometimes took on the function of being a national symbol' (Jong, 1996: 96). This was especially true in the period following the First World War, when the museum became the backdrop for events such as the National Historical Folk Festival in 1919, organised by Dirk Jan

van der Van. 'The whole festival was dominated by national sentiments with the aim of focussing attention on the Netherlands Open-Air Museum 'as central monument for true love of our country and genuine national esteem' and 'a demonstration of the unbreakable solidarity of our eleven provinces' (Jong, 1996: 97).

This more nationalist perspective, Jong claims, influenced the museum in the inter-war period and in the 1920s it also concentrated very exclusively on rural culture or what he terms as the 'archaic countryside' (Jong, 2001: 623). This narrow perspective combined with the sympathies of its principal promoter, Van der Van, for the fascist Nazi regime formed a conservative vision that was held against the museum later – the Dutch citizen as more inclined to identify with modern values than 'the clog wearing Volendam fisherman', (Jong, 2001: 624).

However, the museum of folklore has been changing perspective since the 1960s, shaking off the tendencies that developed during the 1920s and 1930s. The museum quickly expanded in the years following the Second World War with 'farms, windmills, and industries from all parts of the country' (Guide, 1990: 11). The museum's collections have thus widened their field of interest to urban lifestyles, industries and technology. Accordingly, the 'Netherlands Open-Air Museum for instance can pre-eminently show through its collections how our identity is a product of interaction with other cultures through the ages' (Jong, 1996: 100). This, he claims, may be done by showing the regional and international influences and inspirations that have influenced cultural and material productions of the Netherlands and also by showing how Dutch culture has been an influence elsewhere. His text advocates a different approach to the study of folklore that 'may very well start with one's own culture but not end with it. For at the end there should be the wider perspective, which I would like to qualify as the cosmopolitan perspective.' (Jong, 1996: 100). One particular initiative can be mentioned as illustrative of the tendency to deal with more clearly contemporary aspects: the complex story of the Molukken (the Molukka islands or Spice islands, today are part of Indonesia) community residing in the Netherlands since the 1950s is represented at Arnhem since 2003 with the rebuilding of a camp home inhabited by the so-called Molukken in Lake Mierde. The soldiers and family members of this special contingent of the Dutch army was historically made up of men of both European and native descent, 12,000 of them were repatriated to the Netherlands after the unsuccessful war of independence of the Islands against Indonesia. The Royal Netherlands Indies Army, usually referred to as KNIL had, since the nineteenth century, kept order on the islands and had fought in the Dutch resistance during the World War. Arriving in the Netherlands, where they were immediately stripped of their military status, they became very unsatisfied with the life that they found there and which they had believed would be temporary. During the 1970s, young Molukkens expressed their dissatisfaction in a series of severe terrorist acts – making the subject of Molukken identity in Holland a particularly sensitive one.

The Zuiderzee Museum/the most recent of Dutch national museumsⁱⁱ

The Zuiderzee Museum is one of the latest national museums to have opened in the Netherlands. After years of building and collecting, the Museum Park finally opened in 1983, today it is run as an autonomous national museum but the idea and impetus for its creation go back to 1932. Its impetus came from an important environmental change around the Zuiderzee, an important salt-water fishing lake whose eco-system was radically modified by the decision to build a long barrier

dam between Noord-Holland and Friesland: the *Afsluitdijk* (1918-32). The saltwater lake became fresh water and fishing diminished considerably and the land reclamation that followed completely changed the countryside: the Zuiderzee thus changed into the IJsselmeer and the Waddenzee.

For the local community, an entire culture had been eliminated and it was experienced as a highly regrettable loss. The idea was born that this lost culture had to be preserved in a real museum. In 1934, the Zuiderzee Museum Foundation was established and there ensued long years of meetings and negotiations concerning the location of the museum: Harderwijk or Enkhuizen. During the 1940s, a project evolved towards a museum that would consist of two sections: a more classical indoor presentation and an open-air museum realized beyond the dike. Throughout this period, the foundation had been collecting objects with the slogan *Give what you can do without, even if it seems worthless*.

During the official opening that took place in 1950, before the outdoor Museum Park had been built, former Cabinet Minister Van der Leeuw remarked: ‘Museums are always rather strange things in a certain sense – they signify something that has been concluded, or at least largely concluded, and people have done their best to keep alive what can be kept alive. They have compiled this at places where it doesn’t really belong. You will soon be able to see all kinds of marvellous things here in the museum. They actually belong on a ship, on the high seas, or in a kitchen – splendid copper pans and suchlike – but they were never intended to be lined up in one another’s vicinity to be viewed. On the contrary, no one has ever thought of viewing them.’

The museum park grew over the next few decades, named ‘*Kooizand*’ after the sandbank off Enkhuizen. Its designer conceived of it as a fictitious village around a fishing harbour and an inner harbour, with houses, small-scale companies and a church. In his own words: ‘A grouping around a harbour basin, whether artificial or not, is seen as the basic form of the Zuiderzee Museum. Here the various buildings and sheds, which formed the picturesque constituent elements of our coastal villages on the Zuiderzee, can be set up in an unforced rhythm. It will be self-evident that the harbour basin ought to be populated with a large collection of boats.’

In 1968, the architect Heyligenberg elaborated a plan that organized the village into neighbourhoods or districts. The government approved this plan (the museum was classed as a national institution), although it specifically reproduces a local environment that is nevertheless representative of a national problem; the difficult but essential relationship between land and water that structures the national territory.

Notes

ⁱ The author would like to thank Jenny Reynaerts, curator of paintings at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam for this information provided during a talk, not currently published: ‘Back in the Future: The Georg Sturm Murals in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.’, given at the CAA conference in New York City, 11 February, 2011.

ⁱⁱ I would like to thank the employees of the Zuiderzee Museum for the information kindly supplied in English on the history and background of the institution.

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Zuiderzeemuseum:

<http://www.zuiderzeemuseum.nl/en/4/the-museum/>

Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Style Location
<i>Nationally funded museums, privatised under the 1995 museum reform</i>							
Teyler's museum	1798	1784		Established by the Pieter Teyler van der Hulst legacy to the city of Haarlem, it was for a time national, but was privatised under the 1995 museum autonomy act.	Geology, Numismatics, History, History of Science, Arts	Curiosity cabinet type of collections: coin cabinet, fossils gallery, instrument gallery, painting gallery, prints and drawings, library of natural history	Haarlem
Rijksmuseum	1800 (first opening) 1808 move to Amsterdam, 1815, the Rijksmuseum, 1885 (current building)	1798		State owned building and collections but administered and run as a private foundation since 1996.	Fine Arts, Decorative Arts, National History	Large collection of dutch 17th century painting, good collection of Asian art. In 1885 the Netherlands Museum for History and Art, formerly in The Hague, was added, forming the basis for the collections of Dutch History and Sculpture and Applied Art departments.	Amsterdam, originally in the Hague in 1800 moved by royal orders in 1808. The current building from 1885 (Pierre Cuypers) combines gothic and renaissance architecture and is decorated with references to Dutch art history.

The National Antiquities Museum	1821	1818		Ministry of education and science, also privatised in 1995.	Archaeology	Eastern, Egyptian, Greco-Roman antiquities, but also national antiquities, medieval history (At the end of the nineteenth c., professional excavations were more commonly organised on Dutch soil, mainly by the museum itself. The museum's collection was further expanded with the most important inland finds.	Leiden
Museum Volkenkunde. (The National Museum of Ethnography)	1832 creation of a branch of the Cabinet in Leiden. Both institutions united in Leiden in 1883.	1816, creation of the Royal Cabinet of Rarities in the Hague.		State owned building and collections but administered and run as a private foundation since 1995. Ministry of education and science, privatised in 1995.	Ethnography, Zoology	Collections relating to Asia, mainly China and Indonesia, South Pacific, Africa, maericas, Greenland.	Leiden
Naturalis (The National Museum of Geology and Minerology)	1820	18c	Founded by royal decree	Ministry of education, culture and science. State owned building and collections but administered and run as a private foundation since 1995.	Geology, Mineralogy, Biology,		Leiden

Mauritshuis (Royal Cabinet of Paintings)	1822	1820		The Mauritshuis was a state museum until it was privatised in 1995. The foundation set up at that time took charge of both the building and the collection, which it was given on long-term loan. This building, which is the property of the state, is rented by the museum.	Fine Arts	Mainly Flemish and Dutch painting: Johannes Vermeer, Rembrandt van Rijn, Jan Steen, Paulus Potter and Frans Hals and works of the German painter Hans Holbein the Younger.	The Hague
Meermano-Westreenianum	1848			Former national museum, now run as a private foundation.		Manuscripts, printing books	The Hague
Bronbeek	1863	1859		Ministry of Defense	Colonial History	Collections related to the colonial presence in the Indies, from a military point of view.	Former royal palace in Arnhem
Tropenmuseum Amsterdam (Royal Tropical Institute)	1926 (opening in Amsterdam)	1871 opened its doors as the colonial museum in Haarlem.	Initiative of the private 'Netherlands Society for Industry', 1910 creation of a colonial institut, supported by the government and the town of Amsterdam.	Institute is a not-for-profit organization that works for both the public and the private sector. The museum is defined as an autonomous national museum.	Ethnography	Created to collect and display colonial productions. Applied arts in the colonies.	Amsterdam

H. W. Mesdag	1903 Mesdag donated house and collection to state			Joined to the administration of the Vincent Van Gogh Museum in 1990, today it is state owned but administered and run as a private foundation since 1995.		Based around the art collection of the Hague marine painter Hendrik Willem Mesdag: 800.	The Hague
The Boerhaave Museum of Physical and Natural sciences	1907	1907	Academy Building of Leiden University	Ministry of education and science, but independent foundations since 1994	History of Science, Medecine	One of the most comprehensive collections for the history of science and medicine in the world with objects since the 16c.	Leiden
The Dutch Open Air Museum	1942 'national folk museum', 1991 'Netherlands Open Air Museum Foundation'	1912	Private initiative at the beginning.	State owned and financed but administered autonomously by the 'Netherlands Open Air Museum Foundation'	Country Life, Architecture	Reconstructions of typical farm architecture from all over the country, local craft traditions and costumes.	Arnhem
Rijksmuseum Twenthe	1927	1927	Private donation to the state by the industry baron Jan Bernard Van Heek	State owned building and collections but administered and run as a private foundation since 1996.	Fine Arts	18 th c., 17 th c. and 19 th c. religious medieval art, modern art	Enschede

Jewish Historical Museum		1930	Private foundation initially. National funding	Former national museum, now run as a private foundation with national funding.	History, Religious, Cultural History	Religion, culture and history of the Jews in the Netherlands	Amsterdam
Tax Museum (Belasting en Douanemuseum)	1937			Ministry of Finance			Rotterdam
National Museum Kröller-Müller	1938		Based on the collections Helene Kröller Müller	State owned building and collections but administered and run as a private foundation since 1995.	Fine arts	Collection of mainly 19 th and 20 th c. visual art, large collection of Vincent Van Gogh paintings	Otterlo
Afrika Museum	1956	1954	Private initiative of the missionary Pater P. Bukkems	Former national museum, now run as a private foundation.	Art, Ethnology	Contemporary African art, and building and housing in Africa and African societies, outdoor museum, African village reconstructions	Berg en Dal
Anne Frank Huis	1960	1960		Autonomous national museum	Biography	Museum mission: to maintain the house on Prinsengracht 263 and open it to the public, and to propagate the ideals of Anne Frank as expressed in her diary. It is also committed to combating racism and anti-semitism and to promoting a democratic pluralist society.	Amsterdam

Hollandsche Schouwburg (Dutch Theatre)	1962			Former national museum, now run as a private foundation with national funding.	History, Memorial	The Dutch Theatre, built in 1892 was a former deportation centre for Jews, became a war memorial in 1962	Amsterdam, Jewish Quarter
Netherlands Maritime Museum (Ned. Scheepv. Museum)	1968	1922	Began as private initiative, from	Ministry of Defense	Military History	The Dutch Navy Museum is dedicated mainly to the history of the Royal Netherlands Navy, who gained their 'Royal' status after the Netherlands became a kingdom in 1815. The history prior to 1815 is shown in brief. It is further illustrated by countless ship models, paintings, weapons and uniforms sporting epaulettes and decorations.	Amsterdam, national naval depot , former arsenal of the Dutch Navy
Military Aviation Museum	1968			Ministry of Defense		Presentation of military aviation machines from 1950 to the present day.	Soesterberg
Dutch Naval museum		1973		Ministry of Defense	Maritime History	One of the largest collection of ships and maritime memorabilia.	Amsterdam
The Vincent Van Gogh Museum	1973		Collection of the Van Gogh family: In 1962, on the initiative of the Dutch state, the heir transferred the works to the Vincent van Gogh Foundation	State owned building and collections but administered and run as a private foundation since 1995.		Houses the world's largest collection of works by Vincent van Gogh: some 200 paintings, 500 drawings and 700 letters, as well as the artist's own collection of Japanese prints.	Amsterdam

Saint Catherine's convent	1979			Former national museum, now run as a private foundation. (autonomous national museum)	Art, History	History and art of christianity in the Netherlands	Utrecht
Zuiderzeemuseum	1983	1948		Former national museum, now run as a private foundation, but main funding is state.	Cultural History, Modern and Contemporary Art	Related to the history of the Zuiderzee area. "Today the Museum presents art, culture and heritage at the interface of land and water."	Enkhuizen
Paleis Het Loo	1984	(1684: first constructions by Stadhouder William III)		State owned building and collections but administered and run as a private foundation since 1996.	History, Art	Former royal palace, illustrates 3000 years of royal lifestyle	Former royal palace in Apeldoorn
The Dutch Resistance museum/Verzets museum	1999				Military History	Photographs, old posters, objects, films and sounds tell the story of the occupation of Holland by the Nazis during WWII.	Amsterdam
Geldmuseum/Moneymuseum	2004		Nederlandsche Bank (Dutch Central Bank) in Amsterdam; Rijks Munt (Royal Dutch Mint) in Utrecht.	Department of Education, Culture and Science and its numismatic repository the Rijksmuseum Het Koninklijk Penningkabinet ; Ministry of finance	Numismatics	Museum of the Dutch Mint located in the building where the coins are minted. social history of monetary culture.	Utrecht

National Museum from Musical clock to Street Organ				Ministry	Cultural History	The museum collection consists of automatically playing musical instruments from the 15th century to the present day, together with their music programmes and documentation.	Utrecht
Liberty Park: National war and resistance museum/Marshall Museum					Military History	History of WWII and particularly the battle of Overloon.	Overloon
<i>Museums of national significance but which have never been state owned or are municipal</i>							
Amsterdam Stedelijk Museum	1895 (opening for the Universal Exhibition)	1874	Association for Forming a Public Collection of Contemporary Art, built by the financing of a private collector.	Municipal Museum	Modern and Contemporary Art and Design	Formed as a collection for contemporary dutch artists.	Amsterdam, situated beside the musée Van Gogh.
Museum Frans Hals	1913	1862		Municipal museum	Art	Dutch painting of the 17c.	Haarlem, in a 17 th c. building.

H. W. Mesdag panorama		1881		Privately owned by the descendants of the Mesdag family.	Art of the panorama	"Steps into Hollands largest painting": panoramic painting that represents Dutch marine landscape, a fixed exhibition of Mesdag's work and an alternating exhibition of fine art related to Mesdag, panoramic images or The Hague and local artists.	The Hague, it is situated within the seaside resort of Scheveningen, on the northern side of the Noordeinde.
Museum Het Valkhof-Kam				Financed by the the commune of Nimègue and the province of Gelderland.	Archaeology, Art	Archaeological objects from all ages discovered in the area.	Nimègue, located at the edge of the historic Valkhof Park, which was once the site of a Roman encampment and, many centuries later, the residence of Charlemagne.



National Museums in Northern Ireland

Andrew Sawyer

Summary

As with Irish history as a whole, the history of Northern Ireland is contested. It is also marked with tragedy and suffering, especially during the ‘Troubles’ from the mid-1960s to 1998 (and is still, for some, a challenging place to live). In brief, the entire island of Ireland had been more or less dominated by the British state since the Norman period (twelfth century AD), but it had its own parliament from very early in this history until 1800. From the seventeenth century a ruling elite, often descended from English or Scottish families, governed the country. This elite saw themselves as part of the wider British leadership but despite loyalty to Britain, and their Anglican faith (Anglicanism is the established form of Protestantism in the UK), they were nonetheless willing to stand up for their rights as Irish magnates, and regarded Dublin (now in the Republic of Ireland) as their capital. Known as the ‘Protestant Ascendancy’, their power declined in the nineteenth century. Most of the Irish population were Catholics, and British rule disadvantaged them. In the north-east, the growth of industry around Belfast and the predominance of Dissenters (Protestants who rejected the Anglican Church) gave rise to a society keen to preserve its British character whilst suspicious of British rule. With the collapse of British power in the south from 1916 onwards, Protestants in the north armed and prepared to fight to retain their identity. The First World War intervened, but the island was partitioned in the 1920s between the Republic in the south and Northern Ireland in the north-east.

At the establishment of Northern Ireland then, a sizable part of its heritage (in Dublin museums) was lost, removing access to key cultural objects. Divisions in Northern Irish society between Catholics (generally in favour of an end to British rule) and Protestants (generally in favour of retaining a link with Britain), has in many ways rendered the past problematic and contested. Perhaps as a result of this difficult past, there has also been an absence of policy guidance for museums in Northern Ireland, and for various reasons, expenditure on museums was relatively low. Northern Ireland gained a national museum relatively late, and on the basis of impoverished collections, but did create the Ulster Folk Museum and Transport Collection, and the Ulster Museum (both in 1961/2).

Sectarian violence flared between the two communities during a period known as the Troubles (c. 1967 to 1998) with riots, bombings and assassinations. The Northern Ireland parliament was abolished and direct rule from London was imposed, with the British Army deployed to aid police.

With the ‘Good Friday Agreement’ of 1998, the UK government, working with Northern Irish groups and with help from the government of the Republic of Ireland), brought the Troubles to an end and devolved many aspects of government to the Northern Ireland Assembly. Although isolated atrocities and occasional civil unrest still occur, and the Assembly has been temporarily suspended on several occasions, the situation is improved and further development of national museums has taken place, with the Ulster Museum winning a major

award in 2010 (BBC News 2010), despite limited progress towards a coherent government strategy for national museums.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Ulster Museum Belfast, National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI)	1962	1962	Parliament of Northern Ireland, Belfast Corporation	Dept. Culture, Art and Leisure, Northern Ireland Assembly	Fine Art, Applied Art, History, Archaeology, Ethnography, Numismatics, Botany, Zoology and Geology	Universal knowledge with national (prehistoric and historical) artifacts. Northern Ireland positioned within the UK.	Cosmic time (geology); pre-historic to modern (history)	Neo-classical building, winning design of competition (1913) completed 1929. Modernist/cubist extension (1964). Solitary location in Botanic Garden, Belfast.
Ulster Folk and Transport Museum (NMNI)	1964	1958	Parliament of Northern Ireland, Queen's University Belfast	As above	Folk museum and transport museum	Predominantly national	Mainly late 18 th to 20 th c.	Original buildings (for exhibitions) with modern functional buildings (transport collections), Located in countryside outside Belfast.
Armagh County Museum (NMNI)	1973	1973	National status the result of local government reorganisation initiated by London	As above	Art, Archaeology, Crafts, Social and Military History, Natural History, Transport, Costume, Folk Life, Fine Arts	County and town of Armagh	Pre-history to present	Distinctive building, with a neo-classical portico, built in 1834 as a school. Centrally located on the Mall. The museum of a British regiment (Royal Irish Fusiliers) is also sited on the Mall, Armagh.
Ulster American Folk Park (NMNI)	1976	1976	Unionist politicians and north American industrial magnates	As above	Folk museum (emigration)	Unionist (Protestant) Diaspora in N. America.	Mainly 18 th and 19 th c.	Open air museum, buildings form the exhibits. Situated near the town of Omagh.

Introduction

The historiography Northern Ireland is problematic and contested (Coohill 2008: 4; see also Dixon, 2008: 18-20). It is problematic, since as Bardon (2005) notes, ‘it has often been said the Irish history, even from the earliest times, is current affairs’ (Bardon 2005: xi; see also Derby 1983: 13). To quote Foster (1993):

”Ulster” was the original nine-county Gaelic province. “Northern Ireland” is the truncated six-county statelet. “The North” is the lost land of the Republic's platonic 32 united counties, aspired to in perpetuity and dreaded in reality. The name you use betrays whether you think it should exist at all.

Several recent initiatives have attempted to address this difficult history. For example, the Consultative Group on the Past was established in 2007 ‘to find a way forward out of the shadows of the past’ (Duffy 2010). Its recommendations were presented in 2009. Another initiative, ‘Healing through Remembering’, a cross community project, collaborated with the Institute of Irish Studies at Queen’s University Belfast to survey collections of conflict related artefacts, including those in the care of National Museums Northern Ireland.

National museums in Northern Ireland have, therefore, a challenging context in which to present history.

Geography and administrative regions

Traditionally, Ireland as a whole has been divided into four provinces (Ulster, Connacht, Leinster and Munster). Ulster, in the north east, is made up of nine counties and is closest to northern England and Scotland, which has had some implications for settlement, since the sea journey is shortest here. Northern Ireland is made up of six counties from Ulster: Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry and Tyrone. Three other counties in Ulster (Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan) are part of the Republic of Ireland.

The current population of Northern Ireland is around 1.8 million, which is nearly one third of the population of the island of Ireland. Belfast is the largest city, with a range of industries.

The entire island of Ireland became part of the kingdom of the English monarchs after Norman feudal lords intervened in local disputes in the 1100s. It had a parliament until this was abolished in 1800, after which Irish MPs sat at in the British parliament at Westminster. Northern Ireland was founded through British legislation in 1920, during the Anglo-Irish War (1919-1921, sometimes known as the Irish War of Independence). It had its own Parliament of Northern Ireland, until this was abolished in 1973, after which it was ruled directly from Westminster until 1998. Then, as a result of the ‘Good Friday Agreement’ (or Belfast Agreement), the current Northern Ireland Assembly, a devolved legislature, was established. The Good Friday Agreement forms the basis of the current government and legislation of Northern Ireland.

Some key terms:

The complex views and standpoints on national identity held by the Irish in the past, and the citizens of the Republic of Ireland and of Northern Ireland today, are politically sensitive and best used with precision. ‘Northern Ireland’ (occasionally abbreviated to ‘N.I.’) is the formal name of this part of Ireland. The Northern Ireland Assembly and the Northern Ireland

Executive are both based at Stormont, near Belfast, as was the Parliament of Northern Ireland in the past. Hence the government of Northern Ireland is sometimes referred to as ‘Stormont’.

‘The North’, ‘the North of Ireland’ or ‘the six counties’ are terms often used by people in the Republic of Ireland, and are favoured by ‘nationalists’ (those who want British rule removed from the island). Unionists (in favour of being part of the UK) dislike these terms. More extreme ‘republicans’ (those who would might use violence to end British rule) sometimes refer to Northern Ireland as ‘the occupied territories’.

Northern Ireland is sometimes referred to as the ‘province’, but the term can be confusing because the Gaelic province of Ulster includes counties now in the Republic. ‘Ulster’ is sometimes used in the media, by organisations such as the BBC (Radio Ulster), political parties (the Ulster Unionists) and by National Museums Northern Ireland (the Ulster Museum; the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum; and the Ulster American Folk Park). Some nationalists dislike the term, because the Gaelic province of Ulster includes counties in the Republic. The naming of the city and county of Derry or Londonderry is a matter of dispute. In this report, the city is referred to as Derry/Londonderry, and the county as Londonderry.

Partition

The division of the island into two countries is referred to as partition. In the (all Ireland) election of November 1918, Sinn Féin (a nationalist party) won an overwhelming majority, and sought independence. However, a large proportion of the population in the north east of Ireland preferred to remain part of Britain. With the outbreak of the Anglo-Irish War, violence broke out in the north and sectarian battles took place in Belfast and elsewhere. The Anglo-Irish Treaty of 6 December 1921 brought hostilities to a close and partitioned the island, but attacks in Northern Ireland continued and led the British to respond by sending troops and arming the police. The years 1920-22 saw hundreds killed in the region in protracted disorders.

The Government of Ireland Act 1920 provided for parliaments in Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland. It was never implemented in the south, and MPs from that part of the island withdrew from the British parliament at Westminster. The south eventually became the Republic of Ireland. Northern Ireland continued to send MPs to the Westminster parliament as well as to the new Northern Irish parliament, which opened in June 1921. This had large Unionist majority and Sir James Craig (1871-1940) was the first Prime Minister of Northern Ireland. A series of measures passed in the decade after partition, such as removing proportional representation and awarding an extra vote to the owners of businesses (who were mostly Protestants), helped secure the Unionists a permanent grip on the administration. A grand neo-classical parliament building was opened at Stormont in 1932. Protestant control could be seen in many aspects of life in Northern Ireland: for example as the education system developed, Catholics schools received less funding than Protestant schools (Bardon 2005: 501-505).

Two communities?

Northern Ireland is often seen as being made up of two communities – Catholic and Protestant – which were polarised before the foundation of the state. An understanding of the identities of these communities is useful in assessing national museum provision. Bardon (400) argues that the two communities had emerged by the mid-nineteenth century. Contemporaries argued that

Protestants were descendants of the seventeenth century settlers and 'Anglo-Saxon in race'. Catholics were 'Celtic' or 'Gaelic'. This division, he argues, is still believed by many, although it is most likely that the separate peoples of the seventeenth century have become very intermingled. Furthermore, whilst the Irish nationalist movement has long drawn on a Celtic past for inspiration, Unionists have recently been claiming some elements of that past as their own, referencing post-Roman groups such as the Kingdom of Dal Riada. There has also been a growing interest in Ulster-Scots, a dialect or language (its status is disputed), shared by parts of north-east Ireland and south-west Scotland (Nic Craith 2003: 70 ff).

The division into two separate and complete communities appears to have increased since the establishment of a separate Northern Ireland in 1920. The Catholics felt as if they were a beleaguered minority in Ulster, whilst the Protestants saw themselves as a beleaguered minority in Ireland. The two communities are divided by religion, and 'fear was, and continues to be, and underlying feature of tensions in the north' (Bardon, 2005: 406). They tend to live in different neighbourhoods, attend different schools, shops, clubs and associations, and different churches, often working in different places and professions (Coohill 2008: 157-158). Each community has a separate history, religion, and system of education and is also residentially segregated (Nic Craith 2003: 26).

To generalise about the two communities: the Catholic Northern Irish tend to look to the Republic for their examples; they see themselves as 'Irish'; they have strong links with their neighbourhood, 'the thirty-two counties' and the (Catholic) north American 'diaspora'; and they value their European identity. For Protestants, being 'British'; being committed to Unionism; having links with England, Wales and Scotland; and links with Scottish and Northern Irish communities in Canada, are all significant (Nic Craith 2003; 8).

Sectarian organisations exist, based in the two communities. Besides paramilitary groups, organisations such as the Orange Order and the Apprentice Boys have large memberships from among the Protestant community.

Formal relations between the governments of Northern Ireland and the Republic in the south have generally been good, with some collaboration on transport and energy projects. However, Northern Irish governments have always had to be aware of Unionist sensibilities, so that when Prime Minister O'Neill allowed the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the Easter Rising (an Irish uprising in 1916) to go ahead, he was subject to bitter criticism from Unionists (Bardon 2005: 634).

It is important to note that the Catholic community claims that Northern Irish governments have discriminated against them at every level. Unionists have tended to argue that this discrimination did not exist, or was at least greatly exaggerated, and moreover that in some cases has been confused with reasonable attempts to maintain order and a stable society. Bew, Gibbon and Patterson, in *The State in Northern Ireland* (1979) argued (from a Marxist standpoint), that whilst discrimination was calculated and deliberate, it has been exaggerated by some nationalists, and furthermore some government officials at least endeavoured to be even-handed.

Given the impact of the Troubles, policymakers have sought to alleviate conflict by improving community relations in Northern Ireland. Crooke (2007: 96-7) quotes evidence to suggest that, from the 1990s, there was a shift in focus from the two main communities to a wider view that

included other minority groups. However, state-led community relations efforts have been accused of attempting to ‘manage conflicts with blandness’, ignoring power structures.

Finally, it is worth noting that the two main communities have ‘leveraged’ their history to very different degrees, perhaps summed up by this comment by a Unionist:

Let’s face it – the Republicans have really got their act together, especially their “Irish heritage”. It has given them a sense of purpose and sustained them through times of adversity.’ [...] ‘But us? Oh no – we stumble from crisis to crisis, even though we possess an equally legitimate heritage, it seems no bloody use to us. It’s high time we got our act together. (Hall 1994, cited Nic Craith 2003: 165-166)

This has, perhaps, had implications for overseas perceptions and tourist visitor numbers, as one observer recently commented:

... the Loyalists never controlled the narrative. And they still don’t. Ireland was seen to be staging a romantic and just struggle for freedom. The Protestants, with their northern majority, refused to join the Irish Free State, not out of love for the English, but through mistrust and fear. Their case was very human, but short on nobility. And, in the current context, extremely low on tourist potential. (Engel 2010: 35)

So, whilst the nationalists, including Republicans in Northern Ireland, have a long tradition of utilising their past, it could be argued that the history of the Protestant community has not been useful to them. Perhaps also it has been ‘corralled’ by the Orange Order and other groups such as the Apprentice Boys to the point where it can no longer be deployed and celebrated more widely. In any case, Nic Craith (2002) explored two recent attempts by the Protestant community to connect with the past: first, claims that the Cruthin, the people living in the north-east of the island, were driven out to lowland Scotland in the seventh century, and this group were the source of Scots immigration back to the area from the 1700s. Secondly, she notes the promotion of Ulster-Scots as the language of the community. These activities are ‘essentially generating a new tradition or a new fund of cultural symbols in Northern Ireland’ (Nic Craith 2002: 94).

Though there is some debate as to the definition of Ulster-Scots, it has received official recognition by the UK government as ‘a regional or minority language’ for the purposes of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. An Ulster-Scots Agency, founded in 1998 as a result of the Good Friday Agreement, it aims to ‘promote the study, conservation, development and use of Ulster-Scots as a living language [...] and to promote an understanding of the history of the Ulster-Scots. (Ulster-Scots Agency 2010). The DCAL in Northern Ireland and the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in the Republic of Ireland jointly fund it.

The Troubles and the Good Friday Agreement

In the 1960s, the Catholic community was protesting about a range of discriminatory activities, and small demonstrations were being broken up by strong police action. The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association was founded in 1967 and campaigned for equal rights for all, and although it was largely a vehicle for Catholic grievances, it did not dispute the existence of a separate Northern Ireland (Coohill 2008: 172-73). In the 1950s and 60s, Rev. Ian Paisley rallied Unionists and he eventually emerged as their spokesman. These disturbances escalated into a

period of conflict (c.1967-1998) marked by shootings, bombings and other violence in Northern Ireland, sometimes spilling over into the rest of the UK, and known as the Troubles. The British government, ruling Northern Ireland from Westminster, made many attempts to restore order and regional government, but these failed until 1998 when the Good Friday Agreement between the British and Irish governments and most Northern Irish political parties, and later endorsed by referenda in both Northern Ireland and the Republic, came into force.

This resulted in the current arrangements for government in Northern Ireland, and to a large measure ended the Troubles, though there are still occasional violent incidents.

National museums and cultural policy in Northern Ireland

The early origins of the collections and institutions that now make up the national museums of Northern Ireland can be found in the activities of the learned societies, originally part of a wider, all-Ireland context. These organisations were very closely associated with the 'Protestant Ascendancy', the largely Anglican, land-holding grandees of Ireland, themselves part of the elite of British society. Dublin was regarded as the centre of political and intellectual life of the Ascendancy (Bardon 2005: 213), which also dominated Ireland's parliament. This met in Dublin, until it was abolished in 1800, after which Irish MPs sat at Westminster.

The Protestant Ascendancy

Members of the aristocracy and the wealthy middle classes in Ireland met to discuss and categorize types of knowledge and to promote these for the benefit of their individual standing in society and for society as a whole. Crooke (2000: 70-73) suggests that such societies, by the end of the 1780s, also reflected Anglo-Irish insecurity, and served as an attempt to insert themselves into Irish history. Bennet (1995: 19) cites a 1795 publication, Patrick Colquhoun's *Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis*, as evidence that culture was being enlisted to serve the government of what were termed the 'subordinate classes'.

The formation of the Armagh Museum tends to support this approach (it was to be part of the national museum from 1973, and is likely to revert to local authority control in 2011). The museum owed its genesis to four members of a Juvenile Reading Association, who founded the Armagh Natural History and Philosophical Society in 1839. The Society had its own museum and Lord John George de la Poer Beresford (1773–1862), Anglican Archbishop of Ireland, as a patron. Although it had difficulties in the later 1840s, by 1850, it had a library and a museum in two rooms in the home of a private individual, Mr. John Gibbs. This limited the space for the Society's work. A building in Armagh, previously used as a school, became available, but was found to have an order against it for non-payment of rent. Beresford paid for the rent and costs of obtaining the building, with the help of James Caulfeild, third Earl of Charlemont. The Rev. Dr. T. R. Robinson opened the building on 29 January 1857 with a lecture. The museum was installed in a balcony that ran around the lecture room. A caretaker's house was built against the rear wall of the building (Weatherup 1982: 51-2).

Public lectures were offered, the varied subjects including: 'Armagh Marble'; 'The Feudal System'; 'The Italian Republics'; 'Slang'; 'The Circulation of Blood'; 'The Gas Meter'; and 'Spenser and the Faerie Queene'. Clergy delivered many of the lectures, and classes were organised, so that in 1889 for example classes on art, botany and the study of the microscope

were running (Weatherup 1982; 52). The society flourished until the First World War, after which membership dropped from nearly three hundred (1892) to about one hundred in 1920, and the museum suffered accordingly. In 1931 the Armagh County Council acquired the building, enabling the Society to run the reading room whilst it rejuvenated the museum. The most important part of the collection were archaeological specimens ('Celtic antiquities') collected by a Mr. T.J. Tenison, a noted local antiquarian who was vice-president of the society in 1859. The collection had been valued by a curator from the Royal Irish Academy (Weatherup 1982: 53-55).

Thus, whilst not initiated formally by the government, and having some popular support, it was the Protestant Ascendancy that enabled the museum. Beresford, Anglican Archbishop of Ireland, was a key patron. He was born in Dublin, the younger son of the second earl of Tyrone (George de la Poer, 1735-1780) and Elizabeth, née Monck (c.1741–1816), an established Anglo-Irish family. Beresford was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, and enjoyed a successful career in the Church of Ireland, becoming archbishop of Dublin in 1820, and primate of all Ireland in 1822. He also had a political role, and was appointed a privy councillor in Ireland in 1820. In 1829 he became vice-chancellor of the University of Dublin, and was elected to the chancellorship in 1851; he supported the Church Education Society, which effectively promoted Anglican control of education, as a riposte to the national schools organised by the government, and he opposed the 1829 Catholic Relief Act. This Act repealed the Penal Laws and enabled Catholics to take their seats in the Westminster parliament (Grant 2004). James Caulfield, third earl of Charlemont, another significant patron, was similarly the son of the Anglo-Irish elite, educated at Trinity College Cambridge in England, MP for County Armagh 1847-57, and Lord Lieutenant of County Armagh 1849-64. The Caulfield family likewise had long records of involvement in Irish politics: James' ancestor, the soldier Sir Toby Caulfield (d. 1627) had received estates in Ireland under Elizabeth I in the sixteenth century (Hunter 2004). In addition, we should note that many of the lectures, in the early days of the society at least, were delivered by Anglican clergy (Weatherup 1982: 52), who were themselves often dependent on the Ascendancy for preferment.

However, the power of the Ascendancy was waning in the nineteenth century: rising nationalist agitation and the increasing power of the commercial classes undermined it, and a series of land and rent reforms initiated by the British government from the end of the nineteenth century, aimed at pacifying Ireland, virtually destroyed the power of the landholders.

As noted above, the collection forming the basis of the Armagh County Museum was initially looked after by a caretaker in the mid-nineteenth century. But by the 1920s, the founding society of this museum was 'moribund' and its collections were in a dilapidated condition (Miers 1928: 203), a sign that the Ascendancy was a thing of the past.

The situation improved in 1931 when Mr. T.G.F. Paterson was appointed by the County Council as curator, who began a catalogue of the collection and went on to publish on the collections before his retirement in the 1960s. From this time occasional, strategic purchases were made with a view to complementing the existing collection (Weatherup 1982: 55).

Victorian Britain and museums

Meanwhile, in the later nineteenth century, Belfast had begun to industrialise rapidly, and this change in the economy marked the region out from the rest of Ireland, which remained largely

agricultural. This tended to align Belfast with urbanisation and industrialisation elsewhere in Britain, where a rising commercial and middle classes had the leisure and resources to pursue new interests, often forming societies to further their aims.

In Belfast, societies such as the Belfast Naturalist's Field Club (BNFC), played a key role in the establishment of collections and museums (their own museum was founded in 1830 and would become a major element in the Ulster Museum). Here, the role of Protestant, often Presbyterian middle classes, rather than the landed aristocrats of the Ascendancy, was critical (Presbyterians made up the majority of dissenting Protestants). Foster (1990: 61-62) notes that the societies

... were preponderantly middle-class affairs. Medical men, academic men, and Protestant clergymen were to the fore in the BNFC, but these professionals took their place, in numbers and influence, behind Belfast businessmen, especially members of ship owning families and more especially linen manufacturing families. [...] There were fifteen founding office-bearers in the BNFC in 1863: eight were businessmen or sons of manufacturers. At the top, the BNFC reflected the make-up of class and economic power in Belfast.

Whilst the BNFC and many other Belfast societies did not formally discriminate on the basis of religion, the economic and political realities meant that a higher proportion of the Catholic population was poor, and moreover Catholic energies were often and necessarily diverted into political causes. These factors limited Catholic participation. By contrast the Protestants had funding to support their collections, the leisure to meet, to study, and to publish their findings, and Foster sees this as 'species of power' (1990: 62) accruing to this urban elite.

These examples (the Armagh Museum and the BNFC) demonstrate the close involvement of the elites in founding, or in enabling the learned societies to flourish, and can be interpreted as a means to power and control as museologists and others have indicated (Hooper-Greenhill, 1992; Bennet, 1995). The Ascendancy had seen itself as Irish, and looked to Dublin as the centre of intellectual and political life. It also saw itself as British, and loyal to the monarchy and empire. This was reflected in the Armagh Museum, which was clearly able to look to Dublin for assistance, for example in the form of the RIA's help in valuing finds, and in publishing its proceedings in Irish journals such as *The Irish Naturalist*. This collaboration faced increasing challenges as the nineteenth century progressed, recognised by the President of the Dublin Naturalists' Field Club, who said in his address of 1896 (Carpenter 1896: 57):

The one feature which helps to make the last two years memorable, is the realisation of fellowship among our workers in different parts of the country which has culminated in the establishment of the Irish Field Club Union. It is a hopeful sign that the differences, which in Ireland array province against province and race against race have no power to hinder the mingling of the naturalists of the north with their brethren of the south.

Impact of partition

When nationalism finally overwhelmed British control of the south, there were therefore serious implications for Northern Irish collections, the museums that held them, and the policies that provided for those museums. Since the intellectual life and leadership, and physical collections themselves, were largely based in Dublin, they were no longer easily accessible, or subject to influence, from Northern Ireland following partition. Later, with the suspension and then the

abolition of the Northern Ireland parliament in 1972, control of the area passed London (the Westminster parliament). There was still representation from Northern Ireland there via Northern Irish MPs. However, all issues affecting Northern Ireland had to compete in a legislative programme with British affairs, this in an assembly where many of the other MPs had limited knowledge of and interest in Ireland. This may have affected legislation including that relating to museums.

Finally, the Catholic/nationalist minority remaining in Northern Ireland identified closely with the island of Ireland and the emerging Republic in the south, rather than the United Kingdom, and some members of the community regarded the existence of Northern Ireland as a continuation of British occupation of part of Ireland. Therefore, even if it was able to voice its views in a democratic forum, the concept of a national museum for Northern Ireland has been of limited interest to this part of the community.

Policy from the establishment of Northern Ireland to the start of direct rule (1973)

Partition in 1921 saw the National Gallery of Ireland, situated in Dublin, become part of the Irish Free State. These collections in Dublin then formed part of the Republic's heritage, and Northern Ireland had no share of it, even when the objects originated in the north east. For example, the Brighter hoard, found in the county of Londonderry in 1896, was (after legal disputes between the British Museum and the RIA), kept by the RIA in Dublin, and became part of the National Museum of Ireland. A copy exists in the Ulster Museum. Similarly, at partition, Northern Irish museums such as the Belfast Municipal Museum and Art Gallery (which, we now know, was on a trajectory to become a national museum) did not receive any of the paintings in Dublin.

The need for a national collection was noted in the Stormont parliament as early as 1927 according to the Hansard for Northern Ireland (1927: 1468-1469), when Northern Irish MPs discussed as an example, a fifth century gold cup, held in the safe of a local church: it should be kept in 'the National Museum of Ireland or in the Ulster National Museum'. The comment is interesting in that the National Museum at that time was in Dublin, in the Irish Free State, whilst there was, at that time, no formal recognition of the Ulster museum as a national museum.

The losses consequent on partition were remembered for many years among those with an interest in museums in Northern Ireland. It was argued by some that the functions of the national museums had devolved upon the Belfast Municipal Museum and Art Gallery after partition, and it is clear that some Northern Irish MPs were of that opinion: they argued that since museums in Edinburgh and Swansea received grants from central UK government, so should that in Belfast (Hansard N.I. 1929: 348-349).

After partition the Northern Ireland Special Arbitration Committee was set up to make awards to compensate for the loss of cultural amenities, and this reportedly included £400,000 to be made available for museums, according to Harford Hyde (1907-89), MP for Belfast North (1950-59), who claimed that the funds did not reach the museum, but were spent on security (barracks, prisons etc.) instead (Hansard HC 1954: 1351). In fact, at Stormont, Northern Ireland MPs had demanded that the money be made available for museums in the late 1920s. Belfast MPs in particular, perhaps seeking national funding for the city's museum, were vocal - T.G. Henderson (1877 – 1970), accused the government in 1930:

I understand you have allowed the Imperial authorities to take about a quarter of a million of money away from you. You asked for £900,000 in respect of the construction of schools, for teaching young men who are going in for agriculture, and also to build libraries and museums, and you were responsible for allowing them to take £450,000 or £500,000 from you. Had you got that £500,000 we would have been able to secure £100,000 to finish our museum. But you were too soft - and that is putting it very mildly. The Free State was not as soft as you were. (Hansard N.I. 1930: 46)

In 1947, a Northern Ireland MP raised the matter again for Queen's University (which for various reasons might be considered to have an interest in a national museum). She argued that Stormont should vote funds for a national museum and art gallery based in the Belfast Museum (Hansard N.I. 1947: 788). See also debates in Vol.15, col 2074 (1932); Vol.16, cols 857-858 (1933); and Vol. 27, cols 2876-2 (1944).

A survey of the Hansard for Northern Ireland for these years suggests that in the years following partition, 'museum' was as likely to be a pejorative word in the Northern Ireland Parliament. An example was when an MP suggested that money could be saved by 'confining. the ceremonial aspects of parliament to a museum or some place of antiquity like that' (Hansard N.I. 1928: 942). However, by the 1950s and '60s, there are clear signs of a growing interest in museums.

Responsibility for the Armagh Museum was transferred to the Ulster Museum following a reorganisation of local government in 1973, apparently because the cost of the museum bore too heavily on the new Armagh District Council (Hansard HC 1973: 369-94). Its national status was not therefore a strategic decision, but a pragmatic response to changes resulting from administrative change.

Until direct rule, the British government appears to have taken little interest in museums in Northern Ireland, a symptom of a more general neglect. In one view, successive administrations:

left the Province in very large measure to its own devices, utterly failed to react to evidence of mounting tensions, did very little to keep themselves informed about developments virtually next door, seldom used their ultimate power to initiate Westminster legislation, or to use the power of the purse and other means of influence. (Bloomefield 2007: 16)

Ulster Folk Museum

The first formal national museum in Northern Ireland was the Ulster Folk Museum, created by the Ulster Folk Museum Act (Northern Ireland), of 1958. Academics at Queen's University, particularly Estyn Evans (1905–89) were key in this development. Evans, appointed to a post in geography at Queen's University in 1928, developed a strong reputation for geographical studies and particularly the distinctive folk cultures of Ireland.

The 1958 Act was introduced to the Northern Ireland parliament by the then Minister of Finance, T.M. O'Neill:

This is a small and, perhaps, to some hon. Members an unexciting Measure. I trust, however, that as a result it will not be the occasion for the generation of any heat or passion. Folk museums are essentially the children of Northern Europe. This type of institution first manifested itself in Scandinavia, since when both Holland and Great Britain have followed suit. I personally would like to think that Her Majesty the Queen, who was so impressed by

the museum in Oslo, should before too long have the opportunity of visiting a museum here which would show in similar manner our interest in the lives of our forbears. (Hansard N.I. 1958a: 487)

By linking his opening words to a visit by the British monarch, it could be argued that he was anchoring the concept of the museum in a Unionist context. Only one MP (a Mr. C. Stewart), representing Queens University, raised the issue of the theme of the exhibits, arguing that should be ‘entirely Ulster, entirely Irish in every conceivable aspect, that is, Ulster and Irish in its conception, in its execution and in its administration’ (Hansard N.I. 1958b: 492). Since in debates at this time ‘Ulster’ was used for Northern Ireland, and ‘Ireland’ for the Republic, Stewart may have been seeking to broaden the scope of the museum beyond the Protestant community. In any case his request was met with a jest and other members did not comment on this issue. The local authorities and the Ministry of Finance would select the new museum’s trustees, with one representative from Queen’s University. Given Protestant domination of the political apparatus in Northern Ireland, the trustees would presumably have reflected those views.

Belfast Corporation clearly had an interest in the success of the venture and the Stormont debate on the bill acknowledged a debt to the council’s efforts and those of the county of Antrim. The open-air museum at Stockholm (Skansen), was quoted as an example (several members had visited the site and others were aware of it); several speeches referred to fears of losing ‘our traditions in a ‘supersonic age’, which threatened individual communities. There was also some wrangling over costs to local authorities and the siting of the museum.

Ulster National Museum

The tone of one Westminster debate in 1954, touching on the status of the Belfast museum, suggests that the British government regarded the status and future of the Northern Irish museums as a matter purely for Northern Ireland (Hansard HC., 1954: 1355/6), and it was Stormont that promoted the city’s museum to national status as the Ulster Museum in 1962, by the Museum Act (Northern Ireland) 1961. O’Neill (whose policy was generally to reconcile the divisions in Northern Ireland), took credit for the Act:

There were a lot of letters backwards and forwards over the past 35 years between the Government and the Corporation, the Corporation wanting money for the museum and the Government explaining that as it was a municipal institution there was very little they could do to help.

I decided that perhaps yet another attempt might be made. I went down to the City Hall and visited the Lord Mayor. He agreed with me that we really ought to make yet another effort to see if we could not do something about it ... (Hansard N.I. 1961: 3155)

In late 1965, the UK’s Standing Committee for Museums and Galleries presented a report on Northern Ireland’s national museums, addressing the level of purchase grants; the question of co-operation between themselves and those in Great Britain; the stimulation of public support; and the status of the directors.

Policy following the abolition of the Parliament of Northern Ireland

With the abolition of the Northern Ireland parliament in 1973, responsibility for policy lay with the British government in London. A debate in the House of Commons on 6 February 1973 raised several issues (Hansard HC 1973: 369-94): first, charging for admission (as was usual in museums elsewhere in the UK during the Conservative administration of 1979-1997), was also opposed, because there was more poverty in Northern Ireland, and life was in any case difficult during the 'distressing circumstances' of the Troubles; there were objections from Rev. Ian Paisley, a prominent Unionist leader, that proposed changes to the make-up of the Trustees of national museums would limit representation by Belfast Council; and finally, some MPs wanted regimental museums to be centrally funded, since if a local authority came under nationalist control, its museum would be governed by people hostile to the British army.

Ulster American Folk Park

This period also saw the development of the Ulster American Folk Park in Omagh. Although Irish emigration to north America is well known, it is usually the experiences of Catholics from the southern parts of Ireland, emigrating during the famines of the nineteenth century, that are remembered. An earlier emigration, by the Scots-Irish of the north and east of Ireland, still represented prominently in areas like the Appalachians, also took place. The emigrants were often Protestants, specifically Presbyterians. It is this aspect of Northern Ireland's history that was celebrated with the opening of the Ulster American Folk Park.

The Scotch-Irish Trust of Ulster founded it in 1976 as part of the American Bicentenary celebrations, with funding from the Mellon banking family. The Mellons came from Ulster and Thomas Mellon (1813 – 1908) was born in Ulster, in County Tyrone, and emigrated with his parents to Pennsylvania. His boyhood home is a major exhibit at the museum. Further support was provided by Enterprise Ulster, a non-departmental public body founded at a time of rising unemployment in Ireland, in 1973 (and abolished in 2007). This organisation was tasked purely with creating employment through any activity that it thought was of environmental, amenity, cultural, community or social value.

The formation of the park appears to owe little to formal government, either in Westminster or Stormont. Rather, it can be described as the result of one group in the Northern Irish community leveraging Ulster-American connections, together with some loosely targeted regional aid. A key person in the establishment of the Park was Eric Montgomery. Montgomery was an information officer in the Northern Ireland administration (a senior position). He had played a role in setting up Enterprise Ulster, and also helped obtain government funding for the Ulster Scot Historical Society (now the Ulster Historical Foundation). He was also pivotal in developing close links with the Mellon family (Montgomery 1965: 2). It can be assumed, given his key role in the administration in Northern Ireland, that Montgomery was a Unionist. Certainly more than one Unionist web site refers to a 1959 memorandum by Montgomery, arguing for 'Ulster' as the formal name for Northern Ireland (Anon n.d.). As noted above, the name of the state is a politically charged issue.

The park was, originally, focussed on the Scotch-Irish tradition in Ulster. The visitor is encouraged to follow an emigrant trail, a route that includes the thatched cottages of Ulster, parts of a full scale emigrant sailing ship, and the log cabins of the American Frontier. It is a 'living

history' museum with costumed characters demonstrating traditional crafts. It also has a programme of Scotch-Irish themed activities. It has been criticized, for example by Brett (1996: 23), who argued that it was not 'Ulster American' but 'Ulster-Presbyterian American'. The experience it presents is 'pre-eminently that of the voluntaristic migrations, inspired in large measure by religio-political idealism; there is no sense of the beastly poverty that made the later, largely nineteenth century, population movements more or less a necessity of survival; and which were extensively Catholic'.

In defence of the museum, it should be pointed out that, given that it is sited in Northern Ireland, and to some extent the story of the Mellon family, it is correct to focus on the Scots Irish experience. Furthermore, it does include some aspects of the Catholic experience. As Brown and Patterson observed in 2000 (158), 'the curators are acutely aware of the gaps in their representations' and use accompanying literature to present a more complete picture.

The museum also houses the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS), established in its present form in 1998. This developed from the previous Centre for Emigration Studies at the Park, bringing together and building on three main elements: the Library, established in the early 1980s; the Irish Emigration Database Project, begun in 1988; and the Masters degree in Irish Migration Studies, taught since 1996. The CMS is managed by the Scotch-Irish Trust of Ulster via a committee of Trustees including representatives of DCAL, Queen's University and the University of Ulster.

Reviews by the Westminster government

By the 1970s and 1980s, the British government was taking an interest in museum provision in Northern Ireland, perhaps part of wider discussions addressing education, which was problematic due to the split community. Several reports were commissioned during this period.

Regional Museums Northern Ireland (Department of Education 1978), known as the 'Malcolm Report', and the *Museums and Galleries Commission Review of Museums and Galleries in Northern Ireland* (1983) provided both a 'snapshot' of museum provision, and some recommendations for the future. The Malcolm Report was largely concerned with regional, rather than national museums, but noted (28) the absence of any positive government policy for a regional service, and went on to recommend a three tier approach: national museums, regional museums and 'display centres'. It also recommended that the Ulster Museum and the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum be merged to create the National Museum of Ulster, together with the return of the Armagh County Museum to the local authority (31).

The 1983 *Review* cited the Malcolm Report's concern for under-provision, and argued that there were fewer museums in Northern Ireland, given its size, than in other parts of the UK:

there are no more than six museums in the full ICOM sense, in the whole of Northern Ireland. Two are medium sized by U.K. standards, and there are four others, which are small, two with a staff of less than four.' [...] 'only two of these (the Ulster Museum and the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum) are multi-disciplinary institutions staffed by professional scholars trained in museum work, and capable of initiating research on their collections. (Museums and Galleries Commission 1983: 19)

The report concluded that Northern Ireland spent £3.5m on national museums, as opposed to £6.5m for the National Museum in Wales and £9m in Edinburgh (20). The Review was in favour of national museums, and recommended merging the Ulster Museum and the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum into one national museum: ‘Their enhanced status should bring with it the same national and international recognition as the national institutions in London, Edinburgh and Cardiff’ (Museums and Galleries Commission, 1983: 2). The disparity in funding can be explained in part by differences in population, but it may also be that Scotland and Wales were able to promote a nationalism that appeared to be much more unified than Northern Ireland’s; they could also define Scottishness and Welshness in contrast to, or in opposition to Britain, which would be problematic for Northern Ireland.

The Malcolm Report (27-28) also noted that museums in Northern Ireland had difficulty in recruiting and keeping trained staff; sometimes posts remained vacant, or the museum had to provide its own training. The Museum and Galleries Commission’s Review (2) noted that in general standards in museums were lower than in the rest of the UK.

Against a very difficult background, a third report, *A time for change. A review of major museums in Northern Ireland* (Wilson 1995) was prepared for Michael Ancram MP, then Minister of State responsible for Education in Northern Ireland, recommended amalgamating the Ulster Museum, Ulster Folk and Transport Museum and Ulster-American Folk Park, which was carried out in 1998.

The Good Friday Agreement and after

Following the Good Friday Agreement, legislation (the Museums and Galleries Northern Ireland Order, 1998) set out how National Museums of Northern Ireland would operate, but this was mainly concerned with governance at a high level, specifying a Board of Trustees of between 12 and 15 people. It did require the Trustees to ‘have particular regard to the heritage of Northern Ireland’ in carrying out their duties. The Troubles, which had only recently subsided, were part of that heritage and difficult for museums to address. As Crooke (2007) noted, any work around recent history could be challenged, given its contested nature, whilst engaging with formal community relations exercises means that the museum can be seen as legitimising the government. Initially, museums avoided contention and aimed to be oases of calm in a troubled society, but from the 1990s, museums engaged with community relations and began to address the Troubles in their exhibits (Crooke 2007: 98).

W5 (‘Who, What, Where, When, Why’), Science centre

W5 is a Science Centre built as part of Belfast’s Odyssey leisure complex. The complex was a ‘Millennium Project’, one of hundreds funded by the Millennium Commission. The Odyssey Trust Company, a company with charitable status, was established in 1997 to bid for the fifty per cent funding offered to such projects by the Commission. In total, eighty-three per cent of the complex was publicly funded, and the Science Centre, funded from this public money, was opened in 2001. W5, funded by the Odyssey Trust and DCAL, leases and runs the Science Centre. W5 itself is a limited liability company registered in Northern Ireland and is accepted as a charity. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of NMNI and the Directors of the Company are made

up of Trustees of the National Museums Northern Ireland and the Chief Executive, who is the Accounting Officer.

Besides being a leading visitor attraction, educational centre and corporate facility, W5 claims to 'support the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure's aims to create a confident, creative, informed and vibrant community'. As a government subsidized centre without permanent collections, and managed by the NMNI, it is something of an anomaly.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and museum policy

The establishment of Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) in 1999 gave Stormont control of Northern Ireland's museums. DCAL is responsible for National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI), which aims to 'promote the awareness, appreciation and understanding of art, history and science; the culture and way of life of people; and the migration and settlement of people' (DCAL 2010). It is responsible for the Ulster Museum, the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, the Ulster-American Folk Park, and Armagh County Museum (likely to return to local authority control in 2011). It is also responsible for some non-national collections: W5, a science centre in Belfast; Northern Ireland Museums Council, the main channel of government support to local (non-centrally funded) museums; the Armagh Observatory, an astronomical research institution founded in 1790 by the Archbishop of Armagh and the Armagh Planetarium, opened in 1968 with the intention of (widening public understanding of astronomy and earth sciences through shows and displays' (DCAL 2010).

In 2006 the Northern Ireland government published *A Shared Future* (Office of the First Minister & Deputy First Minister, 2006), providing a high level policy statement, confronting the issue of separate communities, and including the following policy objective: to 'encourage understanding of the complexity of our history, through museums and a common school curriculum'. Crooke (2007: 106-107) noted that there was little guidance on how this could be achieved, or indication of how it would be resourced, resulting in a certain weariness and cynicism among museum staff generally. There may well be fewer opportunities for staff development in Northern Ireland compared to England. The Northern Ireland Museums Council provides some training (especially for non-national collections), but there is a possibility that this body will be abolished. In any case, Northern Ireland's Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure has argued that the training needs of staff will form part of the national policy when it is finalised (2010).

As this section indicates, during direct rule Westminster initiated some reviews, but these could be seen almost as 'holding actions' rather than far-reaching strategic documents, and Northern Ireland has lacked an overall, strategic approach to museums. DCAL instituted an inquiry into the development of a museum enquiry in 2008, and a consultation exercise was concluded in September 2010.

The challenges of a contested past

It might be assumed that the difficult and complex history of Northern Ireland has led to 'silences' within its national museum. There are two examples involving art works. First, a painting of the arrival of the protestant King William III (William of Orange) in Ireland by Pieter van de Meulen (the king's court painter) was purchased by the museum in 1933. However, it

appears to show his arrival being blessed by Pope Innocent XI. This apparently represents papal support for William as an ally against Louis XIV of France. Shortly after going on display, it was vandalised by Scottish Protestants and was then kept out of sight (Devenport 2006). Devenport's report on the events, broadcast in 2006, drew some criticism on extremist websites.

A more recent difficulty occurred in 1978. Conrad Atkinson, an English artist, had created a painting known as *Silver Liberties: A Souvenir of a Wonderful Anniversary Year*. The painting referred to the events of 'Bloody Sunday', 30 January 1972 when British paratroopers shot demonstrators in Derry, leading to fourteen deaths. In 1978, workers at the museum refused to allow the painting to be displayed (it is now in Wolverhampton Art Gallery in England). A British journalist on the *Guardian* newspaper raised the issue again in 2010. Referring to the major renovation of the Ulster Museum, he noted criticisms of the museum for its display on the 'Troubles, which was 'muted and evasive', and for missing the opportunity to display the *Silver Liberties* (Jones 2010). This coincided with the 2010 apology of Prime Minister Cameron to the people of Northern Ireland; initial enquiries into 'Bloody Sunday' now widely regarded as 'rigged', had largely exonerated the British, leaving a legacy of bitterness in Derry/Londonderry.

However, these media stories may be misleading. In fact the Ulster Museum does address difficult subjects that it might, in the past, have been reticent about, but in doing so it inevitably draws criticism. Its 'Modern Ireland' galleries explain difficult topics such as, for example, the role of Ulster Special Constabulary, or 'B – Specials' as they were known, an armed and almost exclusively Protestant reserve police force. Similarly, it has a gallery on the Troubles. The difficulty is that the presentation of any of these subjects is likely to be challenged. On 10 October 2009 the *Irish Times* description of the gallery was headed 'Minimal Troubles at the Ulster Museum'. Whilst it features distressing images and video (of Bloody Sunday for example), it is restrained in its use of objects that might be associated with the horrors of the Troubles.

In 1998 both the Ulster Museum in Belfast and the National Museum of Ireland in Dublin mounted exhibitions about the 1798 rebellion. Cauvin's analysis (2009) suggests that events were interpreted differently in the North and the South, and whilst these differences might appear subtle to an outsider, in Ireland they are heavily freighted with meaning.

Conclusions on national museums and cultural policy

The history of the National Museums of Northern Ireland can only be understood if they are studied in conjunction with the museums in the Irish Republic before 1922. Northern Ireland was not created in response to demands for independence by the inhabitants, but by an embattled British government seeking to impose order and retain control of Ireland as a whole. Thus, unlike museums in Wales and Scotland, Unionists do not stress difference from what they see as 'the mainland' (Britain), but similarity to it, and their difference from the Republic of Ireland. There was an understandable reluctance on the part of museums to engage with recent history, at least until the 2007 'Irish at War' temporary exhibition in the Ulster Museum. This is changing with the Ulster Museum's displays covering contested periods, including the Troubles, since re-opening in 2009.

In more detail, we can note the following constraints typify national museums in Northern Ireland:

- At the establishment of Northern Ireland in 1920, a sizable part of its heritage was lost, removing access to key cultural objects.
- The divisions in Northern Irish society have rendered the past problematic and contested, rather than something to be celebrated.
- There has been an absence of policy guidance on culture in Northern Ireland.
- For various reasons, museums in Northern Ireland were underfunded.
- Lacking a national museum at its foundation, Northern Ireland has had to create its own and this has taken time.
- The options for exhibition and display are constrained by the existence of the ‘two communities’ and the contested history of the province.
- The Troubles probably had a detrimental effect on both democracy and the development of a national museum.

The future of Northern Ireland’s museums remains challenging, particularly for the Protestant, Unionist communities. However, the recent achievements of NMNI, including the 22 per cent increase in visitor numbers in the five years to 2009, the recent reopening of the Ulster Museum, and winning a major Arts Fund award, are positive signs of a renewed dynamism.

Case studies in chronological order

National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI) is made up of:

Ulster Museum, in Belfast

Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, at Cultra, a few miles north-east of Belfast

Ulster American Folk Park, near Omagh in County Tyrone

Armagh County Museum, at Armagh. (The Armagh County Museum has been part of the national museum since 1973, though likely to return to county control in 2011).

National Museums Northern Ireland was established under the Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order on 1 April 1998. A Board of Trustees oversees the work of NMNI. A Director & Chief Executive, reporting to the Board, leads an Executive Team of senior staff, and at this level the museums are largely run as a single organisation.

In this section, two of the national museums of Northern Ireland are explored in more detail. First, the current national museum in Northern Ireland was built around the Ulster Museum, itself owing much to the Belfast Natural History Society (founded 1801) whose collection formed a basis for its museum. Second, the Ulster Folk Park and Transport Museum has been chosen, as it was the first national museum where the format (a folk park) appears to have offered a chance to avoid sectarianism.

Belfast and the National Museum of Northern Ireland

Learned societies in Belfast were connected with the commercial classes. The Belfast Society for Promoting Knowledge had been founded in 1788 (it is now known as the ‘Linen Hall Library’). It had been housing items on behalf of the Belfast Literary Society (founded in 1801) and thus played an early part in the formation of museums in Belfast. However, there was a major Irish rising against the British in 1798. This was non-sectarian, and in the north east many liberal

dissenting protestants were involved, so its suppression had a negative effect on the learned societies of Belfast.

Later, the Belfast Natural History Society was founded in 1821 by a group of ‘respectable young gentlemen of that town’, in the home of Dr. J.L. Drummond (1783-1853), a Professor at Belfast Academical Institution (BAI). Its foundation might be seen as a wider movement in Victorian Britain, where the middle classes increasingly had leisure to devote to such pastimes. This society developed its own collection, apparently held at Drummond’s house until 1822 when it was housed at the BAI until 1822, and thence to rooms in the Commercial Buildings in Waring Street. The collection quickly grew too large, and the Society sought to plan and obtain estimates for a museum. The foundation stone was laid on 4 May 1830, the cost being met by public subscription (i.e. an issue of shares), and the museum opened to the public on 11 January 1833 (Nesbitt 1979: 7-9). The building had a lecture hall and two rooms above, each forty-seven feet by twenty-seven feet for the collection (‘P’ 1833: 237). Other learned societies in the town contributed modest collections: the Belfast Society for Promoting Knowledge contributed its natural history collection in 1830 (its collection of antiquities going to the BAI, according to Nesbitt 1979: 7).

William Darragh, Curator of the Belfast Natural History Museum, retired aged 67 to a caretaker role, and was replaced by S.A. Stewart, ALS, FBSE, in 1881 (Nesbitt 1979: 19). Stewart was appointed as ‘Scientific Curator’. By 1912 (before partition) Robert Scharff’s comments suggest that a professional approach was being taken in museums when he told the members of the Belfast Natural History Society that:

The old popular conception of a Museum as a repository for curiosities has passed away and a new order of things has been established. Whereas not long ago Museums still existed, containing nothing more than an ill-assorted mass of rubbish [...] such ancient institutions are now looked upon as interesting and curious relics of the past. But almost every Museum started its early career in that manner. (Scharff 1912: 2)

Scharff served as Keeper of Natural History at the National Museum of Ireland (Dublin), before going on to be its Acting Director. He quoted United States practice, in particular G.B. Goode’s *The Museums of the Future* of 1891. Goode had been Director of the Smithsonian, and advocated a shift from the museum as ‘a cemetery of bric-a-brac into a nursery of living thoughts’ (Langley 1897: 167). Whilst the Belfast museum was still a civic museum, it was clearly regarded such topics as within its interest.

The Natural History Society’s collection was not limited to natural history: its first major exhibit was an Egyptian mummy, unrolled, displayed, and re-rolled in 1835 (Nesbitt: 1979: 12). Perhaps partly in response to the increasing breadth of its interest, a Belfast Naturalists Field Club was founded in 1863 (with many members in common with the Museum). In 1881, with the appointment of S.A. Stewart ALS, FBSE, the staffing of the museum was set on a professional footing (Nesbitt 1979: 19).

By the end of the nineteenth century, the museum was again short of space, and in addition visitor numbers had fallen. The society looked to the city of Belfast for a solution, and the Corporation adopted ‘that part of the Museums and Gymnasiums Act (1891) relating to

museums and struck a museum rate of 1/2d. in the £, providing funding to help it to take over the museum in 1909 (Nesbitt 1979: 22).

This brought the collections into the ownership of the Corporation's municipal museum. This had its basis in the Belfast Free Public Library, opened in 1888, and its gallery, opened as Belfast Free Public Library Art Gallery and Museum in 1890 (Nesbitt 1979: 21ff). The municipal museum had some help from the Science and Art Department of the South Kensington Museum in the form of financial aid and the loan of objects and cases. However, local and regional interests still had considerable influence: Nesbitt (23) suggests that Belfast's Government School of Art increased demand for increased art collections, for example, whilst the donation of 60,000 items by Canon John Grainger (1830-91) to the museum required the construction of an annexe.

By 1914, space was again an issue, and a site for new premises was sought. The city wanted the new buildings to be near the centre, but the nearest possible site was at the Botanic Gardens. Plans were laid for the new museum, but the outbreak of the First World War and then the Anglo-Irish War prevented real progress. However, in 1922, with the help of a loan from the Ministry of Home Affairs, and with wages paid by Ministry of Labour under its unemployment relief scheme, work was started in earnest and the new building. The museum opened in 1929 (Nesbitt 1979: 29).

By the 1950s, the museum was short of space and still required some work, but as noted above, it was finally possible for the museum to become formally a national museum and receive additional funding. Initially, the Board of Trustees consisted of four appointments by the Ministry of Finance, three by Belfast Corporation. In 1972 it was transferred to the Department of Education, despite some opposition, and shortly afterwards took over responsibility for Armagh County Museum.

Religion remains an important aspect of life in Northern Ireland, and in 2010 a protestant pressure group, the Caleb Foundation, wrote to the Ulster Museum's Director, and the Culture Minister of Northern Ireland, criticising the Museum's 'Nature Zone' over its explanation of evolution. The Culture Minister has also written to the Trustees asking for 'balance' in the museum's portrayal of evolution (MacDonald 2010; Anon 2010).

As noted above, history also plays a significant part in how communities in Northern Ireland define themselves. Some unionists point to prehistoric peoples, claiming that groups such as the Cruthin, who, (they say), pre-date the Gaels and were distinct from them (Adamson 1986). Thus even prehistoric history can be the source of sectarian disagreement, and museums such as the Ulster museum has to treat interpretation of such areas with some care. Similarly, a site such as Tara (now in the Republic of Ireland) has, for historical reasons, great significance for nationalists, which would mean its presence in an exhibition in the north might be difficult.

The Ulster Museum re-opened in the autumn 2009 after a £17m refurbishment, and has recently won the UK Art Fund Prize of £100,000 in 2010. In the press release associated with the award, the Chair of Judges said:

We were impressed [...] by how the museum's commitment to reaching all parts of its community is reflected in the number and diversity of its visitors. The transformed Ulster Museum is an emblem of the confidence and cultural rejuvenation of Northern Ireland. (Young, quoted BBC News 2010)

Ulster Folk and Transport Museum

Interest in folk life in the north east (and elsewhere in Ireland) went back to the Gaelic Revival, but the founding and early success of the Ulster Folk Museum (now the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum) was the result of activities led by Estyn Evans of Queen's University and his students, in particular George Thompson and Alan Gailey who would each go on to serve as Director of the museum (Nic Craith et al 2008: 167). Evans himself was born in England and educated in Wales, before obtaining the first post in geography at Belfast, in 1928. He had a 'humanistic vision of the total inheritance of Irish heritage, irrespective of formal creeds ... Irishness was a complex fusion of processes operating at a variety of scales from the intimacy of locality to the wider embrace of the Atlantic world' (Graham 2004).

Following a visit to Skansen in Sweden, Evans promoted a similar concept for Northern Ireland. Sydney Stendall, then Director of the Belfast Museum and Art Gallery, enthusiastically supported him and in 1946 the city granted agreed to lease five acres of land for a folk museum. However, it became clear that the project could not succeed as a local authority initiative, and William Scaby (Stendall's successor) urged the government to consider supporting the project. This resulted in the appointment of a commission to 'examine and make recommendations on the proposal to establish an Ulster Folk Museum in Belfast, illustrative of Ulster life, culture, arts and crafts of the past, and to enquire into the desirability of the establishment and maintenance of such a museum on a national basis' (cited McAuley 1990: 16). That the Parliament of Northern Ireland should sanction and fund the establishment of a new museum is notable. McAuley argues that it represented an effort to provide a venue where 'it was hoped that by highlighting our shared culture the museum could bring into perspective the conflict within the community, thus creating a forum for integration' (McAuley 1990: 17).

In debates about the legislation for the new museum on 13th May 1958 (Hansard N.I. 1958c: 648-650), we can detect the tension between nationalist and unionist views. Mr. Healey, Northern Ireland MP for South Fermanagh (1955-65) stressed that:

The collection should be considered from a national standpoint. After all, we are all Irish people and we are interested in the whole country. Tourists, particularly, are not interested in three, six or nine counties. They come here because they are interested in Ireland, and therefore, it is a good thing that the collection should be on a national basis. (Hansard N.I. 1958c: 648)

The MP, Cahir Healey (1877-1970) was a notable nationalist who had opposed partition, and in his long career had taken part in the Gaelic Revival, opposed conscription in 1918, was interned (jailed without trial) for working with the republican Michael Collins, and jailed again during World War Two (Phoenix 2004). His comment may represent the views of one of the leading nationalist figures of Northern Ireland. The Member for East Tyrone, Mr. J. Stewart (1889-1964), another nationalist, wanted the museum 'to include the history of this part of Ireland from 1782 until 1803 ... something of the glorious deeds of the Presbyterians in Northern Ireland' (Hansard N.I. 1958c: 649). He was referring to the role of radical Presbyterians in the rising of 1798, and linking that cause to the nationalism of the twentieth century. The debate included further references to the Siege of Derry (1689), the Battle of the Boyne (1690), and the role of William of Orange (1650-1702), by J. Hunter, MP for Carrick (a Unionist). Nonetheless, despite these

tensions, Evans claimed that the Act had the enthusiastic support of both Unionist and Nationalist parties (Evans 1965: 355).

The Act establishing the Ulster Folk Museum required it to be concerned with the way of life, past and present, and the traditions, of the people of Northern Ireland. However, Alan Gailey, based at the museum and from 1986-1996 and its second Director, was reluctant to see 'two traditions' in Northern Ireland in the context of the Folk Museum and the material culture of previous ages (Gailey 1989: 145-147). 'A pot dug from an archaeological site ... is not a message. It bears direct testimony to the age when it was made and used. It is an objective record of the cultural performance that created it' (Gailey 1989: 149).

The reconstructed buildings at the park represent life around 1900 (i.e. before partition) and represent, perhaps, the nine county province of Ulster, rather than the six counties of Northern Ireland. A brief review of Evan's classic *Irish Folkways* of 1957 makes it clear that Evans at least regarded the old province of Ulster as having a unique character, not least because of its connections with south-west Scotland.

The Belfast Transport Museum was founded by the city of Belfast in 1954 when it gathered a small collection of vehicles and other artefacts, opening as a museum in 1962. However, the accommodation was regarded as inadequate and it was merged with the Ulster Folk Museum by further legislation in 1967.

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The author, Dr. Andrew Sawyer, is a Research Associate at the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, England.

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Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach
Ulster Museum Belfast, National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI)	1962	1962	Parliament of Northern Ireland, Belfast Corporation	Dept. Culture, Art and Leisure, Northern Ireland Assembly	Fine Art and Applied Art, History, Archaeology, Ethnography, Numismatics, Botany, Zoology and Geology	Universal knowledge museum, but national (Northern Irish positioned within the UK) prehistoric and historical artefacts	Cosmic time (geology); pre- historic to modern (history)
Ulster Folk and Transport Museum (NMNI)	1964	1958	Parliament of Northern Ireland, Queen's University Belfast	As above	Folk Museum and Transport Museum	Predominantly national	Mainly late 18 th to 20 th c.
Armagh County Museum (NMNI)	1973	1973	National status the result of local government reorganisation initiated by London	As above	Art, Archaeology, Crafts, Social and Military History, Natural History, Transport, Costume, Folk Life, Fine Arts, Transport	County and town of Armagh	Pre-history to present
Ulster American Folk Park (NMNI)	1976	1976	Unionist politicians and north American industrial magnates	As above	Folk Museum (Emigration)	Unionist (Protestant) diaspora in N. America	Mainly 18 th and 19 th c.
W5 Who, what, where, when, why	1997	1997	Private sector and government grants	Trustees	No collections	Science interactive centre	Science centre



National Museums in Norway

Arne Bugge Amundsen

Summary

Norway has no formal national museum(s), i.e. recognised as such by the Norwegian State, the Norwegian Parliament or the Norwegian Government. Nevertheless, since the early nineteenth century there have been collections and museums with the obvious and explicit aim of displaying national culture and national history and with the Government and Parliament as important sources for funding and contributors to museum policy making. On the other hand, not all Norwegian museums or collections with 'Norwegian' as part of its official name should be considered national museums not even with respect to the functional definition chosen in the EuNaMus project – e.g. the Norwegian Road Museum, Oil Museum, Canning Museum etc. The Norwegian museums chosen for this report have an explicit and permanent national cultural narrative ambition; have their origins in the nineteenth century and have played an important role in the development of the museum field in Norway. The National Collection of Antiquities responsible for the Viking ship findings was the leading institution in regard to Norwegian nation-building during the nineteenth century.

As shown by the table below, the most important national museums in Norway were established in periods when Norway was eager to demonstrate national identity and independence. Norwegian state institutions were few and weak in 1814, the first year of the new state of Norway. Accordingly, many of the first museum initiatives (1-4) were taken by Professors at the University in Oslo, which was established in 1811. The links between the University and these museums have all been intact until the present. The main perspective in these nineteenth century museum initiatives was to combine the need to establish academic competence, the necessary safeguarding of National antiquities and culture, and the search for comparative research material. The Norwegian Parliament engaged directly in the establishment of a National Gallery (5, 7), while the Museum of Decorative Arts and Design (6) was a private initiative aiming at encouraging the understanding of aesthetic values in public and private spheres by comparing decorative styles from Norway and other parts of Europe. The aim of the privately-founded Norwegian Folk Museum (8) was to display Norwegian culture, both urban and rural, from the sixteenth century onwards, a period not covered systematically by the University Museums. This museum is still privately owned, but with substantial public funding.

National museums in Norway, and the Antiquity Collection in particular, played a major role in developing and sustaining important national symbols like the Viking ships, the Viking and Medieval heritage of a nation proud of its ancient past and material representations of urban and especially of rural origin from the more recent cultural history of the nation. In the last decades, however, official Norwegian policy on migration issues and multiculturalist ideology has challenged the traditional museum narratives, but only moderately changed them.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
1. Commission of Antiquities <i>Antiquitets-commissionen</i> Continued as:	1811	1811	Private organisation	Private	Archaeology	Norwegian Pre-History and History	Antiquity to Medieval times.	Christiania Cathedral School, located in Christiania (former capital).
2. The University's Collection of National Antiquities <i>Universitetets Oldsaksamling</i>	1829	1823	University professors	State	Archaeology	Norwegian Pre-History and History	Stone Age to Medieval times.	Old university building (1828). <i>Domus Academica</i> (1852) in Neoclassical style, Oslo.
3. The University's Coin and Medal Collection <i>Universitetets Mynt-kabinett</i>	1835	1817	University professors	State	Cultural History	Norwegian and International Foreign Coins and Medals.	650 BC to today.	Old university building (1835), <i>Domus Academica</i> (1852) in Neoclassical style, Oslo.
4. The University's Ethnographic Museum <i>Universitetets Etnografiske Museum</i>	1857	1854	University professors	State	Cultural History	Norwegian Folk Culture, Sami Culture, Non-European cultures	No specific time span.	<i>Domus media</i> (attic) in Neoclassical style, Oslo.

1-4. United as Historical Museum <i>Historisk Museum</i> (1904), Museum of Cultural History <i>Kulturbistorisk Museum</i> (2004)	1904	1902	University professors	State	Archaeology, Cultural History	Norwegian Pre-History and History, Non-European cultures		Art Nouveau and 'Norwegian' style, located in the central cluster of Museums, Oslo. Viking ship museum, as part of the above in modern, 'sacral' style, located close to the Norwegian Folk Museum.
ART AND DESIGN: A SECOND LINE OF MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT								
5. The National Gallery. <i>Nasjonalgalleriet</i>	1842	1836	Parliament, Bank of Oslo	State	Art	Norwegian and European Art	Antiquity to 1950(emph asize: 1800s-1900s).	The Royal Castle (1842-) in Neo-classical style. The National Gallery (1880)in Neo-Renaissance style, in central cluster, Oslo.
6. The Museum of Decorative Art and Design. <i>Kunstindustrimuseet</i>	1877	1876	Professors, architects, artists.	Private	Art	Norwegian and European Design	Antiquity – present time.	Neo-Baroque and Art Nouveau, in central cluster.
7. Museum of Contemporary Art <i>Museet for Samtidskunst</i>	1990	1990	Parliament, museum curators.	State	Art	Norwegian and International (1945)	1945 to today.	Old Norwegian bank building (1907) in Jugend style. Located in historical city centre and Art museum quarter, Oslo.

5-7. United as National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design <i>Nasjonalmuseet for kunst, arkitektur og design</i>	2003	2003	Parliament, museum curators	State Foundation	Art	Norwegian and International Foreign art		Still kept in original exhibition buildings, Oslo.
POST-REFORMATION MATERIAL: A THIRD LINE OF MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT								
8. Norwegian Folk Museum. <i>Norsk Folkemuseum</i>	1896	1894	Professors Private initiatives	Private foundation	Cultural History	Norwegian and Sami culture	1500 to today.	Visitors centre (1995) in postmodern style, exhibition complex (1934 - 38) in modern style and 158 historical buildings, located in Museum cluster. outside Oslo.

Introduction: Historical development in Norway

Reviewing the museum history of Norway makes it necessary to present some major issues in the political and cultural history of the country. As a consequence of the political processes of the late medieval and early modern history, Norway became part of the Danish Empire. Under Danish rule, Norway to a certain extent developed a separate legislation and economy. In 1814, European Post-Napoleonic politics resulted in the forced dissolution of the dynastic union between Denmark and Norway. Despite the Swedish demands on Norway based on the Kiel Treaty in 1813, Norwegian politicians managed to establish a parliamentary assembly, to sign a new Constitution and to elect a new King, the Danish Prince *Christian Fredrik* (1786 -1848, king of Denmark 1839-1848). The new King abdicated after a few months, but the permanent result of the political actions in 1814 was that Norway was established as an independent country with its own Constitution but in personal union with the Kingdom of Sweden.

As a result of the separation from Denmark and the personal union with Sweden, Norway was a perfect case for nineteenth century national development. After 1814, Norway had its own Parliament and independent administrative, economical, religious and legal structures. The union with Sweden was dynastic and political, but the cultural development of the two countries was individual and distinctly different.

Norway's political and cultural elite strongly defended independence from Sweden and distance to Denmark. In Norway after 1814, both the intellectual and cultural elite were seeking distinct expressions of national identity following traditional nineteenth century standards: language, material culture, historical remains, narratives and ethnical origin. Despite the fact that members of the Norwegian cultural and political elite in the nineteenth century were of Danish ancestry, wrote Danish and continued their close contacts with Denmark, scholars, literates and politicians vividly took part in different cultural and institutional projects aiming at developing Norwegian language, literacy and symbols (Hodne 2002).

Especially with regard to Denmark, Norwegian scholars and writers redefined and restructured dominant historical narratives. The “grand narrative” was about the independent, expanding and powerful Viking age and Medieval kingdom of Norway (Haavardsholm 2004). The Scandinavian Kalmar Union from 1397, the Lutheran Reformation in 1537 and the introduction of Absolutism in 1660 were regarded as continuous steps towards Denmark colonising and deteriorating Norway.

The Norwegian History was continuously written by new generations of national scholars as something distinctively separate from the history of Denmark, and Norwegian museums were established in order to publicly show the material remains of such a separate Norwegian past (Kjus 2003). Also, *The Norwegian Art* was described as something specific and national, art museums were established to display this national art – a development further strengthened by the establishment of art history as a separate academic discipline at the University of Oslo.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century was the definite heyday of Norwegian nationalistic sentiment. Central persons like author *Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson* (1832-1910) and arctic explorer and scientist *Frihthjof Nansen* (1861-1930) were important exponents of Norwegian pride in the nation, the language and the potential of the young state. On a political level, this nationalistic sentiment resulted in a peaceful dissolution of the personal union with Sweden in

1905. Cultural and scholarly interaction between Sweden and Norway during the nineteenth century had not been as close as the interaction with Denmark, so the dissolution of the political union between the two countries had little impact on museums and other cultural institutions in Norway. For instance, the returning of 'Norwegian' objects from Danish to Norwegian museums has not been a central issue. On the basis of what was still kept in the country, Norway was able to establish its own national, regional and local museum collections in the nineteenth century.

National museums and Cultural policy in Norway

In Norway, political and cultural authorities started to develop museum policies immediately after 1814. However, these actions were based on historical and private initiatives. Already in 1767, a group of Enlightenment scholars had established a Museum of Natural Science and Archaeology Knowledge in Trondheim, in the 1820s Bergen was the location of a similar museum establishment, and in the Norwegian capital of Christiania (Oslo) collectors and scholars established different public collections (Shetelig 1944:23.26ff. Andersen 2009).

Norway, in fact, never established a formal National museum during the nineteenth century. What happened was that different central museum initiatives in the Norwegian capital successively developed and interacted. Some of these museums were ideologically national in perspective and practice, but they were never officially recognised by the Norwegian State as such. In 1863, the archaeologist *Nicolay Nicolaysen* (1817-1911) suggested the establishment of a Norwegian *Riksmuseum*, and university professors discussed the question for several years but with no final result. Another archaeologist *Ingvald Undset* (1853-1893), tried to revitalise these plans in 1885 without success. The reasons why these attempts gave no results are complicated and will be explained after a general presentation of the institutions involved.

The University of Oslo was established in 1811 and at a very early stage, collections and museums were established within its institutional framework. Collections of natural history, cultural history ('antiquities') and coins were parts of the University of Oslo from its very beginning. The initial phase of these collections was actually the result of a private initiative. In 1811, the *Royal Norwegian Society for Development* (this is the official English name of this Society, established in 1809; a more historically correct translation might be the Royal Society for the Benefit of Norway, Det Kongelige Selskab for Norges Vel) established a so-called Commission of Antiquities (*Antikvitetscommissionen*). This Commission started the collection of 'antiquities' related to Norwegian history. The objects were on public display in the Norwegian capital. This collection was handed over to the University in 1823 as the basis for the University's Collection of National Antiquities (*Universitetets Oldsaksamling*). From 1829, a new exhibition, designed by the later Professor *Rudolf Keyser* (1803-1864) and after a few years based on the new periodic system advocated by the Danish archaeologist *Christian Jürgensen Thomsen* (1788-1865), was opened to the public – 'The collection of Nordic antiquities'.

These early collections were not formally labelled museums, even if they acted as such in the respect that they were open to the general public. They were, on the other hand, closely connected with academic activities - both research and teaching - of University professors. The collections were formally owned by the University, which, in its turn, was owned by the Norwegian state. In 1852, the collections were moved to the newly built University buildings close to the Royal Palace.

After more than 20 years of discussion and planning, the Norwegian Parliament in 1897 decided to fund a new building to house the historical and ethnographical collections of the University. This building in yellow brick and granite located in a cluster of important national institutions close to the city centre and the Royal Castle was called *Historisk Museum* (The Historical Museum) and designed by Architect *Henrik Bull* (1864-1953). It was completed in 1902 and opened to the public in 1904, offering a modern yet patriotic architectural framework for the exhibitions. A Vienna Secession inspired art nouveau style is mixed with ornamental references to the Viking age, 'Norwegian style' being the architectural trend of the time. Bull was familiar with animal ornamentation from church restoration projects, and it is likely that he found inspiration from the collection material when planning ornamentation for facades and interior (Shetelig 1944. Bergstøl & al. 2004). The Norwegian Government acknowledges the building's historical and architectural importance in a conservation plan for central parts of Oslo (www.regjeringen.no).

There are several reasons why a Riksmuseum was never established during the nineteenth century. To mobilize a strong public opinion was difficult as a University Board treated requests from the separate collection managers individually before passing them on to the Government or Parliament. Moreover, museological and disciplinary specialization led to fragmentation rather than gathering of the different departments, and prominent scientists might have found their positions threatened by the idea of a national museum institution. Strong regional forces additionally challenged the plans by wishing to counteract scientific dominance from the Capitol city as fast-growing museums in every major town competed for material (Bergstøl & al. 2004. Hestmark 1999).

Case studies in chronological order

The Collection of National Antiquities (*Universitetets Oldsaksamling*) is Norway's largest and most comprehensive collection of objects from its earliest history until the Lutheran Reformation (1537). The collection of the 1811 Commission of Antiquities was the basis for this part of the University collection. Among other things, the collection comprises a representative number of objects from the Viking period and the Middle Ages.

In 1867, the first of the famous and nationally important Viking ships (The Tune Ship) was excavated and included in the Collection of National Antiquities. The two next important excavations were made in Vestfold in 1880 (The Gokstad Ship) and in 1904 (The Oseberg Ship). All ships were temporarily placed in the University Garden in the centre of the capital together with Runic stones and, for a period, even a reconstruction of a Sámi settlement. In 1913, Professor *Gabriel Gustafsson* (1853-1915) suggested a separate museum building for the Viking ships. The Norwegian Parliament granted the necessary funding, and between 1926 and 1932 all three ships were transferred to the Viking Ship Museum in Bygdøy, close to the premises of the Norwegian Folk Museum. The winner of the architect competition for the new Viking Ship Museum was *Arnstein Arneberg* (1882-1961), one of the most famous and nationally-acknowledged Norwegian architects of his time, known to find inspiration for his modern expression in regional building traditions. With its white facade and symmetrical-structured nave and aisles, the Museum resembles a church. Its sacral expression is highly intentional as it is created to frame important national treasures. The museum environment on Bygdøy places the Viking ships in a milieu of

explorers, while both the fleet on which Thor Heyerdahl crossed the Pacific Ocean in 1947, and the vessels of Nansen and Amundsen are exhibited nearby.

In 1905, the first Norwegian legislation on antiquities and listing of cultural heritage was drawn up and the University's Collection of National Antiquities was given the responsibility for antiquities and medieval objects in Southeastern Norway on behalf of the Norwegian State. Still, and according to the Cultural Heritage Act of 1978, objects from periods older than 1537 are automatically defined as owned by the Norwegian State. The Collection of National Antiquities accordingly carries out the authority of administrating this legislation.

The University's Coin and Medal Collection (*Universitetets Myntkabinett*) was established in 1817 as a result of the purchase of 6,000 ancient coins from the Royal Collection in Copenhagen. The founder of this collection was Professor of Greek language, *Georg Sverdrup* (1770-1850), who wanted a collection for his teaching and research in Classical history. The collection was not open to the public until 1835. In 1876, the Coin and Medal Collection consisted of 43,000 objects, including important hoards from the Viking and Early Medieval period and the medals and orders of *Fridtjof Nansen* (1861-1930) and *Roald Amundsen* (1872-1928). At present, the number of objects surmounts 250,000.

In 1854, an ethnographic collection (*Universitetets etnografiske samling*) was also established with direct funding from the Norwegian Parliament and located in the new University buildings. The collection was mainly based on donations from Norwegian explorers, adventurers, missionaries, anthropologists and seamen. The first exhibition was opened to the public in 1857 and was designed by Professor of History, *Peter Andreas Munch* (1810-1863). Many nationally well-known persons have been among the donators, e.g. Roald Amundsen and *Carl Lumbholtz* (1851-1922).

In the late 1800s, The Runic Archives were established as a result of prolific academic work on Norwegian runic texts. The archives had its first formal director in 1948, and at present they document about 1,600 Norwegian runic inscriptions.

Not until 1999 were the four collections formally united as one museum organisation within the University organisation. In 2004, the name of this united museum was changed to The Museum of Cultural History (*Kulturbistorisk Museum*). The natural history collection has continued as a separate organisation, and it is today named *The Natural History Museum*.

Art and design museums

A second line of museum development in Norway was within the field of art and design. In 1836, the Norwegian Parliament formally established a national gallery of art. It was opened to the general public in 1842 and housed in the newly built Royal Castle in Oslo. The first aim of the National Gallery (*Nationalgalleriet/Nasjonalgalleriet*) was to put international works of art on display to a Norwegian public. From ca. 1850, the board of the Gallery changed the aim towards collecting pieces of high quality by Norwegian contemporary artists.

In 1882, the National Gallery was moved to a separate building which was paid for by the Private Savings Bank of Oslo and designed by architects *Heinrich Ernst Schirmer* (1814-1887) and *Adolf Schirmer* (1850-1930). The institution demonstrates how important it was for Norway during this period to establish a monumental building for supreme art and sculpture collections. A public hearing from the Directorate of National Heritage on Conservation of the building dated 09.06.2011 argues that the National Gallery constitutes central elements in the development of

Christiania (Oslo) as a cultural centre in an independent State together with the Historical Museum and the National Theater (Riksantikvaren 2011).

The central part of the collection of the National Gallery was contemporary Norwegian art, and works by nineteenth century national romantic artists were included, e.g. *August Cappelen* (1827-1852), *Johan Christian Dahl* (1788-1857), *Thomas Fearnley* (1802-1842), *Adolph Tidemand* (1814-1876) and *Hans Gude* (1825-1903). The Gallery also built up collections of works by *Edvard Munch* (1863-1944) and French artists of nineteenth century.

As a separate initiative in 1869, the Private Savings Bank of Oslo had funded the construction of a substantial collection of plaster casts of antique pieces of art. This Sculpture Collection was meant to be displayed in the new building funded by the Savings Bank designed by the Schirmers. However, the National Gallery was also allowed to use the new premises and in 1903, both the museum building and the Sculpture Collection were donated to the Norwegian State and united with the National Gallery – together with a large collection of prints and drawings established in 1877.

Between 1903 and 1920, the official name of this united museum was the State Museum of Art. The museum building was enlarged in 1904-1907, 1918-1924 and finally in 1937 with a separate gallery for the art of Edvard Munch (Willoch 1937 & 1981. Lange 1998).

In 1990, the National Gallery's collection of post-1945 art was established as a separate museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art (*Museet for samtidskunst*). On display in the old building of National Bank of Norway located in the historical city centre are works by Norwegian and international artists from 1945 onwards. The collection consists of about 5,000 works of art but in addition, the Museum, on a regular basis, also displays loaned items.

An initiative by Professor of Art History in Oslo, *Lorentz Dietrichson* (1834-1917) resulted in The Museum of Decorative Arts and Design (*Kunstindustrimuseet*) being established in 1876. The museum's first leader was *Henrik August Grosch* (1848-1929). Grosch collected Norwegian popular arts and crafts in order to stimulate national aesthetic values. In 1904, the museum was installed in a new, costly building of monumental proportions (granite and redbrick in a style mixture of neo-baroque and Art Nouveau) designed by the architects *Adolf Bredo Greve* (1871-1931) and *Ingvar Hjorth* (1862-1927). Its interior was decorated by one of the most prominent nationalist painters, *Gerhard Munthe* (1849 - 1929), famous for his Saga illustrations and motifs. The building was also designed to house the Norwegian National Academy of Craft and Art Industry established in 1876. The museum collection was built up using classical Greek and Roman objects, national and international artefacts within arts and crafts. The museum's national perspective is obvious, but not the only one. The initial purpose of the museum was to expose Norwegian artists and designers to aesthetically valuable models from both past and present. However, among these models, the nationally important are very visible and highlighted – ranking from the Medieval Baldishol tapestry (twelfth century), glass and faience from Nøstetangen in Hokksund and Herrebøe in Halden (both 18th century) and the Royal dress collection of Norway's first Queen (after the union dissolution of 1905) *Maud* (1869 - 1938) as well as contemporary members of the Royal family. Dominant parts of the museum's Norwegian folk art objects were transferred to the Norwegian Folk Museum in the 1950s (Glambek 2010).

In 2003, the Norwegian State established its National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design (*Nasjonalmuseet for kunst, arkitektur og design*) which included the National Gallery, the

Museum of Contemporary Art, the Norwegian Museum of Architecture (established as a separate unit in 2008) and the Museum of Decorative Arts and Design.

The official aim of the new museum was to "raise the level of knowledge about and commitment to the visual arts, architecture, the decorative arts and design, develop critical faculties, stimulate new perceptions, increased historical consciousness and tolerance of diversity" (www.nasjonalmuseet.no)¹. However, the Norwegian public vividly and quite critically discussed the collecting and exhibition policy of the new national museum. A main criticism was that the museum's new policy did not refer to a specific National canon of artists or artistic works or to Norway as a nation at all. The new, Swedish (!) director of the museum, *Sune Nordgren* (1948-) however, argued that Norwegian artists should be contextualised and displayed in an international perspective. A central concept was the propagation of 'new perceptions' of art, architecture and design. The harsh public contributed to Nordgren resigning from his position in 2006. A few years later, the Norwegian Government decided to build a new National Museum in Oslo, a decision that also provoked very stormy reactions and protests (Burch 2011).

Norwegian Folk Museum

A third line of museum development with national ambitions was the Norwegian Folk Museum (*Norsk Folkemuseum*), which was founded in 1894 by the curator, *Hans Aall* (1867-1946). It was – and still is – a private foundation, and also included, since 1907, the former Union King Oscar II's collections of old Norwegian buildings and furniture (founded 1881). These collections had been situated in rural environments at Bygdøy close to the capital.

According to its first program, the Norwegian Folk Museum wanted to "collect and exhibit everything that elucidates the cultural life of the Norwegian people". This program managed to unite a substantial number of supporters across quite severe political conflicts and social differences in Norway at the time. Conservative and liberal university professors, artists and politicians supported Hans Aall's plans for a museum of Norwegian culture, among them were artists like *Erik Werenskiold* (1855-1938) and *Gerhard Munthe* (1849-1929), as well as professors like *Moltke Moe* (1859-1913), *Yngvar Nielsen* (1843-1916) and *Bredo Morgenstjerne* (1851-1930), and *Eva Nansen* (1858-1907), Fridtjof Nansen's spouse.

In fact, there had been several earlier plans for establishing a museum for Norwegian cultural history. Around 1880, Professor Yngvar Nielsen had started to collect private funding for such a museum, but the Norwegian Parliament refused to contribute, and Nielsen had to put an end to his ambitious plans. In 1892, an association was established in Bergen with the aim of creating a 'national ethnographic collection'. Funds were raised and a collection created, but in 1897 the collection was handed over to Bergen Museum (established in 1825). In 1894, dentist *Anders Sandvig* (1862-1950) also started collecting old houses and other material objects from the inner parts of Southern Norway in order to establish a regional folk museum in Lillehammer. From that time on, Sandvig's museum was developed parallel with the Norwegian Folk Museum in Oslo, but it stayed a regional collection (Sandvig 2001). Its Olympic Room, however, displays an extensive collection of Olympic memorabilia along with awards presented to members of the Norwegian Royal Family and the Lillehammer Olympic Committee (LOOC) and must be considered an exhibition of national proportions. A Norwegian Sports Honorary Gallery displays 250 photographs of Norway's best athletes over the past 150 years (www.maihaugen.no). An

even stronger national narrative constitutes the permanent exhibition from 1994 "We won the land" which starts with a small crowd of people settling in the land of today's Norway when the ice melted, soon to grow in numbers and increasingly exploit nature. Despite the explicit aim to present everyday life in a small nation with hardly any influence on European development, the political history of Norway is thoroughly presented, especially in the digital version from 1998 meant for educational use in Norwegian schools (www.maihaugen.museum.no/lblve/hmeny/hmeny.html).

The ideological and political background for all these museum initiatives obviously was the renewed Norwegian national self-esteem. With Fridthof Nansen's arctic expeditions and a prolific interest in national art and national identity based on the vernacular peasant culture, Norwegian nationalism was at its peak – a development ending in a unilateral revolt against the union with Sweden in 1905. Still, the plans for a museum designated to Norwegian cultural history were not undisputed. The founder of the Museum of Decorative Arts and Design, Professor Lorentz Dietrichson, was not in favour of a new museum without explicit aesthetic norms: according to him collecting museum objects of little artistic value was not worthwhile.

The Norwegian Folk Museum opened in 1896 in an apartment in Oslo, and during the growing organising of the collections, the exhibitions were distributed regionally – the museum's objects were displayed according to their regional origin. Accordingly, the visitors were offered a journey through the most important Norwegian valleys. Closely connected with the Norwegian Folk Museum was the ambitious Cultural History Exhibition at Bygdøy in Oslo in 1901, covering all the regions in South Eastern Norway and divided between urban and rural cultural history and with separate exhibitions on Norwegian church art, military history and the Norwegian coronation regalia. The exhibition was a major national event and cultural demonstration in Norway a few years before the Personal Union with Sweden broke down.

In 1902, the Norwegian Folk Museum was permanently moved to Bygdøy, where the first old house in the open-air museum was rebuilt a few years earlier. The Norwegian Folk Museum has never had formal status as a national museum, but intentionally its collections cover the whole country with special emphasis on popular and peasant culture, urban culture and Post-Reformation church art. Since 1897, the Norwegian Parliament contributed to the funding of the museum. Since 1902, the Norwegian Ministry of Church and Education appointed one of six members of the museum board. In 1906, the Ethnographic Museum at the University of Oslo handed over its collection of ca. 1,600 objects representing popular Norwegian culture and the Collection of National Antiquities (*Oldsaksamlingen*), its Post-Reformation collection of ca. 3,000 objects, to the Norwegian Folk Museum. The Ethnographic Museum's Sámi collection was additionally transferred in 1951, resulting in a total collection of 4,300 objects. The Folk Museum also includes national historical relics like the Gol stave church (originally a part of King Oscar II's collection) from around 1200 and several other buildings from the Middle Ages, and even the first assembly hall of the Norwegian Parliament, moved to the museum in 1913 (By og bygd 1978. Rentzog 2007. Tschudi-Madsen 1993).

At present, the Norwegian Folk Museum is the largest museum of cultural history in Norway with approximately 150 antiquarian buildings placed within the museum area and 230,000 artefacts in its collections.

In the last decade, the Norwegian Folk Museum has redefined its aims by including the official museum policy of the Norwegian Government (Framtidas museum 2008); thus on an intentional level reducing its historical references to nineteenth century national narratives. The museum will – according to its present bylaws – “promote knowledge, understanding and tolerance through (the display of) historical and cultural plurality (...and) constitute a central arena for cultural experiences” (www.norskfolkemuseum.no)². A Pakistani apartment interior is, from 2002, exhibited in Wessels Gate 15 – an old three-storey brick building in downtown Oslo, and temporal exhibitions like ”a Pakistani wedding in Norway” (2008) and ”Africans in Norway” (2008) are examples of how the new museum policy influences the material on display.

Old photographs of fishermen are published on the museum websites, and the oil industry is briefly mentioned in an exhibition related to the 1970s, but regional tensions on behalf of previously omitted coastal perspectives are not re-negotiated in the museum to the same degree as other non-rural perspectives (like the life and work of industrial workers). These parts of the national narrative are renegotiated elsewhere. As previously mentioned – regional forces stand strong in Norway, and have done so almost from the very start of the national movement. A good example is the western region – where a famous Saga Viking, *Fritjof the Bold*, allegedly was born and raised (i. e. Sognefjord) – developing an early consciousness of their role in the national narrative. Establishing the Bergen museum with a fine ethnographic collection already in 1825 (open to the public in 1853), the President of the Norwegian Parliament, *Wilhelm Frimann Koren Christie* (1778 - 1849) anticipated the nationally-motivated process of mapping and collecting cultural historical material. Western Norwegians wishing to counteract scientific dominance from the Capital city established a Scientific Society in Bergen during the 1880s (Hestmark 1999. Eriksen 2009). Tromsø museum, established in 1872, demonstrates some of the same regional cultural integrity, and from 1978 was given administrative authority over pre-reformation material north of Rana (Tromsø Museum 2008).

Notes

- ¹ In Norwegian: ”å heve kunnskapen om og engasjementet for billedkunst, arkitektur, kunsthåndverk og design, utvikle den kritiske sansen, stimulere til ny erkjennning, skape økt historisk bevissthet og toleranse for mangfold”.
- ² In Norwegian: ”Norsk Folkemuseum skal fremme kunnskap, forståelse og toleranse gjennom historisk og kulturelt mangfold. Norsk Folkemuseum skal være en sentral arena for kulturoplevelser.”

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National Museums in Poland

Kazimierz Mazan

Summary

The patterns that museums in Poland, and other European countries, developed bear many similarities, however, in Poland's case, the main determining factor appears to be the political situation in Eastern Europe. The author shall present the history of museum evolution, in relation to nation-state-generative processes, using a four-stage periodic division: the Partitions (1795-1918), restored independence (1918-1939), *real-socializmus* (1945-1989), and the new democracy (1989-2010).

The first initiatives in favour of creating museums appeared in the first period, following the annexation of Polish territories by Russia, Prussia, and Austria, and were predominantly of grassroots character. The driving force behind them consisted mainly of private collectors or associations thereof. The first museum conceived as 'national' in the sense of public, and full accessibility (not in the sense of state ownership), was instituted in Krakow by the local municipal authorities, as the National Museum in Krakow. It was the first case in a mass of private collections and museums that had hitherto dominated the landscape.

The second period – of regained national independence – spanning the time between the two world wars, was marked mostly by the influence exerted by newly-founded, central state agencies, aiming at steering museums towards a more nationalistic path: propagating petrifying the 'Polish spirit' in Polish territories which continued to be inhabited by a multitude of diverse nationalities. A means to this aim was, among others, the promotion of the marginal University Museum in the capital, to the status of National Museum, a testimony to the continuity of Polish national consciousness and culture within what was an otherwise multicultural society.

Increased authority of the state over cultural institutions marked the third period of *Realsozialismus*; e.g. museums, which were subjected to near-complete nationalization. Polish national history underwent a thorough retelling, accents were redistributed, and the past was subjected to reinterpretation in light of the present. In accordance with the Marxist historic-philosophical doctrine, socialism was presented as the final stage in the development of mankind, and the idea of the nation-state – otherwise rejected by mainstream ideologists – was adapted to further the policy of complete assimilation of post-German lands into the People's Republic of Poland, following their post-war annexation. The main role in this process was assigned to museums that demonstrated the continued presence of Poles in the above-mentioned territories. Those were often small German museums, renamed as national museums not owing to the quality of their collections, but to the political role they were to play henceforth – not only to prove that the region they represented was by nature Polish, but also to declare that polonization was a *fait accompli*, and *de facto* irreversible.

In recent years, which belong to the latest period of the new democracy in Poland, the state has gradually released museums from this strict ideological control, and the institutions, while

returning to private ownership or handed over to local authorities, were allowed to redefine their purpose, and pursue a line of work more adjusted to regional interests. The vision of central policy and national dogmatism has since all but faded away.

In 2005, the Polish government, inspired by the general policy of the European Union in the first years of the twenty-first century, decided to establish the state-owned Museum of Polish History, with neither seat nor collection of its own.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Museum of Fine Arts (1862-1916) then National Museum in Warsaw	1862	1862	Tsar of Russia, local government	State (- 1921), municipal (1921-1945), then state.	Art (international and Polish painting) and Sculpture	Up to 1916 territorial representation, then national values dominate.	Antiquity to Contemporary period.	Without fixed location (- 1921) in existing building (1921 - 1938), then in purposely deigned modernist 'neo-classical' building. Solitary position in Warsaw.
National Museum in Krakow	1879	1875	Mayor and the Municipal Council.	Municipal up to 1945, then state owned.	Historical and Art	Territorial representation dominates (1879-1918), national claims included since 1918	Mainly since 19 th to 21 th century, ex. collections of decorative arts since Middle-Ages,	In existing building (1879-1970), then in purposely designed 'neo-classical' modernist building. Solitary position in Krakow.
Museum of the Region of Wielkopolska (1919-1950); then National Museum in Poznan	1919	1910	Municipal Council	Regional up to 1951, then state	Art (international and Polish painting)	Territorial representation dominates, national values included since 1951.	Universal Museum – collections of art from Antiquity to Contemporary	Up to 1955 in existing museum purpose building (of Prussian origin), then in 'neo-classical' neo-renaissance building. Solitary position in Poznan.

Introduction

In fact, from the ideological beginnings of museums, their main function in Polish territory was to demonstrate the national identity of the community that called them to existence. Through a synthetic narrative, woven of a series of art and craft objects, historical memorabilia, as well as collections of archaeological and ethnographic finds, museums have always mirrored the origin and identity of the collective, exhibited selected traits which, in the collectivity's members' opinion, make them stand out from among neighbouring groups (Madajczyk, Berlińska 2008: 31).

The continuity of the Polish state was broken in 1795, with the final partitioning of the territories of the Polish *Rzeczpospolita* by Austria, Prussia and Russia after years of coordinated policy of weakening the Polish monarchy. For 123 years, until 1918, the territories of pre-partition Poland were deprived of any continuous organizational structure, which could have been recognized internationally as a carrier of Polish statehood. In 1918, this state came to an abrupt halt, with the re-emergence of the state of Poland on the international map. In the period of the Partitions, the first museums appeared – both on Polish lands under Russian, Prussian and Austrian rule, as well as abroad. Members of the Polish populace of the partitioning powers usually founded the former and the latter – by Polish émigrés. These museums were founded both publicly and privately, and their main goal was to gather and collect memorabilia from the times of Polish independent statehood (Przeworska 1936: 4). Most commonly, museal initiatives were undertaken by members of the aristocracy or landed gentry. These well-educated elite cultivated and enlarged their familial inheritance. Another group behind the drive to found museums was the intelligentsia, organized in societies devoted to social issues and learning (Mansfeld, 2000: 6). They were usually male inhabitants of such major cities as Lvov, Krakow (Austrian partition), Vilnius, Warsaw (Russian partition) or Poznań (Prussian partition).

In modern Poland, the term 'national museum' is a recognised name, applied in its direct sense to specific, not-related institutions, functioning in several cities of Poland: the capital Warsaw (The National Museum in Warsaw), Krakow (The National Museum in Krakow), Poznań (The National Museum in Poznań), as well as in Szczecin, Wrocław, Gdańsk and Kielce. National museums in Poland are not akin to national museums in many other European countries and the United States of America, where the name 'national museum' is applied to institutions whose subject of exhibition is the history of the local national group. Polish national museums, which currently number nine would thus, in many foreign terminological systems, qualify as galleries – both as a result of the nature of the exhibition (mostly works of arts and crafts), as well as the type of narration applied, which concentrates mainly on the history of art. Before being named national, museums have built collections of different type: objects of art, history or objects of technology.

Indirectly, the term 'national museum' implies 'state museum'. The category of 'state museums' evolved in socialist Poland after 1945. When this period began, the majority of museums underwent a process of nationalization and was under state control. In following epoch of new democracy after 1989, museums went back under the control of local communities in a process of so-called reprivatisation. As of today, only a few of Poland's national museums still belong to the pool of institutions financed and centrally supervised by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. Other national museums lost importance after the socialist system had

collapsed. In 1998, the then-Ministry of Culture selected, from the nine national museums, those that, because of the nationwide scope of their curriculum, should remain under the direct central supervision of the state. This new list included: (1) the National Museum in Krakow - founded 1879, (2) the National Museum in Warsaw - from 1916 (beforehand the Museum of the Fine Arts - founded 1862), (3) the National Museum in Poznań - from 1950 (beforehand the Museum of Wielkopolska from 1919, the Kaiser Friedrich Museum from 1904 and the Poznań Provincial Museum founded 1893).

The following national museums, in light of the decision of the Minister of Culture in 1998, lost their status and nationwide role, which were thus transferred to be forthwith administered and funded by regional governments: (1) the National Museum in Szczecin - from 1970 (beforehand the Szczecin Municipal Museum - from 1945, the Museum of the City of Stettin - founded 1878), (2) the National Museum in Wrocław - from 1970 (beforehand: the Silesian Museum - from 1950, the State Museum in Wrocław - from 1948, the Silesian Museum of the Visual Arts - founded 1880), (3) the National Museum in Gdańsk - from 1972 (beforehand: the Pomeranian Museum - from 1945, the Danzig Municipal Museum - founded 1870), (4) the National Museum in Kielce - from 1975 (beforehand the Świętokrzyskie Museum - from 1975, the Museum of the PTTK (Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society) - founded 1908), (5) the National Museum of Agriculture and Agricultural-Food Industry in Szreniawa - from 1975 (previously: Museum of Agriculture and Industry - founded 1964), (6) the National Museum of the District of Przemyśl - from 1984 (previously the Museum of the District of Przemyśl - from 1963, the National Museum of the District of Przemyśl – 1921 and finally, the Museum of the Society of Friends of Learning - founded 1909).

What is the source of these shifts on the lists of national museums – realizing the state's policies, and representatives of the nation? In this article, I shall frame and map some of these institutions to answer this question. I shall also try to present the processes through which the national museums in Poland acquired their current shape, and to describe the strategy with which the governments utilized these museums to shape or transform the national identity of Poland's society. To illustrate those changes, I shall present, in detail, the history of three museums – in today's foremost Polish national museums in Krakow, Warsaw and Poznań, but previously operating under other titles. These three were chosen for the governmental tools used in different epochs to support policies of building and strengthening national identity. In order to complete the picture, I shall also comment briefly on museums that nowadays are publicly-owned but also exhibit the afore-mentioned attempt to influence the Poles' national consciousness.

National museums and cultural policy in Poland

The process of the establishment of museums in Poland was running slightly behind similar processes going on in Europe. The first reason for this lag was the lack of centralized public structures that could have supported such initiatives. While governments abroad adopted a top-down approach to the development of publicly available art collections, in the territories of the former State of Poland, museums were created and developed from the bottom up. The initiative belonged to and was sustained by various communal societies – most of all, by societies devoted to learning. The lack of state patronage resulted in an inferior quality of collections: if private assemblages were often of world class, the ones belonging to societies of learning gathered not

only objects of established quality, but also things whose value was purely sentimental. Furthermore, they often included objects discovered by amateur researchers, as well as memorabilia gifted by various members of the general community – of equally variable value.

Moreover, differences in the evolution of museums, in comparison to other parts of Europe were partly due to constraints, to which the Polish society was subject on the part of the partition powers. In 1935, almost 20 years after Poland regained independence, at the inaugural session of the State Council of Museums, Jadwiga Przeworska, relating her speech to the past, addressed these differences in the following words:

The three partitions of Poland, each ruled by a substantially different partitioner, offered different possibilities of, and different obstacles to establishing museums. For instance, the Austrians, by the end of the 19th century, tolerated communal initiatives for founding museums under the patronage of town and city authorities, or even, succumbing to political pressure and haggling, were supportive of such actions. The Germans, on the other hand, desiring ever to propagate their so-called Germanic culture, founded multiple provincial branches of Prussian museums, and endeavoured to stem all Polish initiative at its source. Nevertheless, here and there, communities remained active. The situation in the former Russian partition was also distinct: there, the entirety of cultural and artistic developments rested squarely and the shoulders of the Polish population which, grouped in associations of ideological and intellectual interest, bore the burden of maintaining museums until the regaining of Independence. Strong was also the ideological drive behind such initiatives among the émigrés, where such large collections as the ones in Rapperswil, Batignolles, and in the Polish Library in Paris, as well as private ones, came to be [...]. (Przeworska, 1936: 4)

The difference in the development of the Museum of Fine Arts (later: the National Museum in Warsaw), and the National Museum in Krakow, established, respectively, in 1862 and 1879, can best be illustrated by the differing stances the partition authorities took towards the very driving forces behind them. The idea of the museum in Krakow, the capital of the Austrian Partition where the Polish populace had enjoyed relative freedom in self-administration, met with no resistance from the Austrians. The project, first presented in 1871 by the President of Krakow, Józef Dietl, came to unobstructed fruition several years later. The National Museum was opened in the heart of the city, in a building located on the Old Market Square, and, in line with the President's reasoning, was geared to testifying to Krakow's glorious past, based on a comprehensive collection of artistic, historical and ethnographic objects.

Is it very difficult to know today exactly what meaning is attached to the word 'national' in the title National Museum? On the one hand, it seems improbable that the Austrians were unaware that the establishment of a Polish National Museum would kindle separatist tendencies among the local population. On the other, the term 'national' may not have implied a nation as a commonwealth of all Poles (Mansfeld, 2000: 24). It might be that, in 1879, the term was more or less equivalent to 'public'. In nineteenth century sociology, the noun 'nation' was a neutral term, and was often used to describe an intermediate stage between family and humanity (Kurczewska, 2000: 7). 'National' meant public, accessible to all, which in Krakow acquires additional relevance as a term distinguishing the newly-founded museum from the private museum of the aristocratic Czartoryski family, which was organized and opened to the public in 1868. One can also assume that economical factors played a significant role in the Municipal Council's decision to name the

new institution a 'national museum'. Thanks to the 'national' argument, the Council maintained the legal right to apply for subsidies to the Galician Provincial Parliament as the controlling body of the part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire inhabited, among others, by Poles.

Another extreme example of an institution's functioning under foreign administration can be seen in the Museum of Fine Arts in Warsaw. It had been established in 1862, at the suggestion of Polish officials in the municipal administration, and had received the approval of both the Tsar himself, as well as of other representatives of the Russian administrative apparatus. Formally, the museum was associated with the first Varsovian university-level school, the Main School, being concurrently established, on the basis of the same legislation. The collection consisted predominantly of art works representative of European schools of art, and the museum's main objective was to provide students of art departments with examples of how to develop their own workshop.

In contrast to the museum's fate after the restoration of Poland's national independence in 1918, which was to elevate this small metropolitan museum to the rank of a central monument to the nation's history and pride, the Museum of Fine Arts experienced enormous problems regarding housing and consequent exhibit activity. This was due to the policy of local Russian authorities, reluctant to have a permanent salon in Warsaw that could be used by members of the Polish elite to further national, *i.e.* anti-Russian policies and propaganda. Regardless of how one defines the adjective "national", the modern interpretation of the original name of the National Museum in Krakow, was that it strove to represent the nation as a whole, in spite of a lack of a unified national statehood. It is often called to mind, that the museum's first employees regarded their institution as responsible for the representation of Polish art and culture, fulfilling this role also in the place of the other partitions, where such activity was subject to harsher restrictions.

By contrast, in modern memory, the history of the Museum of Fine Arts does not carry the same national tone. Rather, it testifies to the administrative obstacles a cultural institution must overcome in order to fulfil its undeniably ample potential to influence social awareness and to propagate separatist ideas.

This collective memory of both the National Museum in Krakow, and the Museum of Fine Arts in Warsaw, was subsequently distorted after the restitution of the independent Polish state, who's policy it was to present the period of partitions as a time when the nation persisted despite the absence of a state. This point of view has, however, been disproved by analysis of available data on both institutions' early years. In the case of the museum in Krakow, it has been demonstrated that throughout the partitions no donations were made from persons outside the Austrian Partition. Also, the Museum had no defined policy regarding the acquisition of objects representing the entirety of Poland's former territory. In light of these facts, there seems to be no base to claim that this museum was a truly national institution. As for the Museum of Fine Arts, its activity came to an end in its fifth year of existence when it was closed down and remained so until 1921. It seems appropriate to state that its role was marginal, and, therefore, its national character – dubious.

When, therefore, and in what circumstances did the conviction of the national character of the National Museum in Krakow, and the Warsaw Museum of Fine Arts come to be? As the author has stated previously, the obvious culprit seems to be that the new Polish state decided, as a

matter of policy, to reintegrate the collective memory of the three disparate partitions of the old Commonwealth, and reinterpret the history of Polish nationhood during the partitions in the light of recent unification. From the perspective of national liberation in 1918, the 123 years of partitioning were, henceforth, to be seen as a period belonging to a nation without a state. Threads concerning the differentiation of particular regions under different occupation (*i.e.* pertaining to the possibility of establishing museums), disappeared from the mainstream focus. After regaining independence, the common denominator for the interpretation of the Partitions in the Interwar Period was that it was a consistent march of the tripartite Polish nation towards independence from the three enemy powers.

After Poland regained independence in 1918, the first structural concepts of museums in the country drafted by the newly established Ministry of Culture and Art acknowledged the special significance of the name: National Museum. It was meant to be associated with Polish Nationhood – the owner and landlord of Polish territory, an idea experienced and shared between the nation's members. Following European philosophical trends that explored and developed theories of the nation-state; the nation, the owner of the territory, was the recipient of the power of judgement over the fate of alien ethnic groups on its territory (Madajczyk, Berlińska, 2002: 31). The National Museum was to be a monument to the Nation – a monument to the proprietor in a multi-ethnic country.

Even though the newly created state did not, initially, nationalize museums – not even the biggest ones – and would not nationalize museums until the end of World War II, in the following years the concept was repeatedly put forward, of one, largest, central national museum in the capital city – as a symbol and calling card of the Polish nation's culture (Siciński, Dąbrowski, Gmurek, 1998: 20). After the Russians evacuated Warsaw, the title of national museum in Warsaw was awarded to the Museum of the Fine Arts. Although the aforementioned legal projects did not come to full fruition (in practice, no effort was made to deprive the National Museum in Krakow of the title 'National'), this new central museum, in line with the projected Museums Act, was accorded the following goal: *to illustrate the development of Polish nature and culture above all, and, as means allow – the rest of the Universe.*

The choice of the former Museum of Fine Arts (est. 1862) for a central national museum can be considered precocious. In terms of potential, it was even less capable of comprehensively representing Polish culture and history than its sister institution in Krakow. It seems not an overstatement to write that its newly defined rank as Poland's leading museum was not granted, but forced upon the institution by the purely political will and demand, as expressed by the President of the City of Warsaw in 1938, at the inauguration of the new museum building (the first building actually belonging to the institution):

The National Museum must develop further [...] as a treasure trove of the past, as a research institute and educational establishment. Within a cadre of the art and culture of all nations, which the Museum must create, Polish art and culture is and must be in the future the main accent. [...] The National Museum in the Capital City should testify (both home and abroad) to a continuum in the development of Polish culture of the ten centuries of its existence, and illustrate the cultural history of the entire Polish nation [...]. (Masłowska, 2002: 36)

The formation of a common national identity and national memory of the four former partitions' societies, was brutally interrupted after twenty years in 1939, one year after the new Warsaw National Museum's building was opened. The unexpected outbreak of World War II and the prompt rout in the defensive campaign in 1939, led to the reoccupation of Polish territory by the Germans, former partitioners. The subsequent entry of Soviet armies into the easternmost provinces of Poland has inspired many historians to think of this period in Poland's history as a Second Partitioning.

The museums' situation became very difficult. In barely two months the country had come under German and Russian occupation. The employees' best efforts at evacuation of collections proved ultimately futile, albeit individual pieces of art, especially valuable from a patriotic perspective (such as Jan Matejko's canvasses, picturing the most important events in the history of Poland (Jagodzińska, 2010: 57)), were successfully hidden, and the majority of them survived the war. Nevertheless, the balance remains negative, with the vast majority of objects carried off by the invading armies as spoils of war (Jarocki, 1981).

In the wake of the post-war peace conferences, the territory of Poland was largely diminished, and moved westwards. The former eastern lands were awarded to the Socialist Republics of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, and Lithuania. Poland's new western boundaries now encompassed provinces inhabited by Germans before the war. The conflict had caused Poland to lose nearly half of its territory, and the geographical shifts meant that many museums, including some of supra-regional importance (such as the ones in Lvov and Vilnius), were irreparably lost. They suffered various fates: some were destroyed, and their collections dispersed, on the other hand, the ones that survived were often taken over and renamed by the new host nations. After the war, there was an ongoing dispute between Polish and Ukrainian and Lithuanian authorities (and Stalin, as the superior of all Soviet Republics), as to how these collections were to be divided. Some especially valuable parts of the former Polish museums' property in Lvov and Vilnius were recovered, and transferred to former German museums on former German lands, as cornerstones of their future collections. For instance, the collection of the Museum in Wrocław (Jarocki, 1981: 327) 'was based solidly on surviving objects of the local pre-war collection, and part of the Lvovian collections. The latter were supplemented by objects from private assemblages'. In all, in the years 1945-1953 Poland received 98 railway wagons and over 120 truckloads of museum objects mainly (but not always) listed on Polish museums' registries recovered from stashes in Austria, Russia, Czechoslovakia, Germany and from Silesia.

In the entire history of Poland there was no other such massive intervention into national identity as the polonization of the so-called Recovered Territories. There, the reorganization of museums proceeded concurrently to, if not preceded the general polonization of lands taken from Germany. It was an equally brutal intrusion into the life of both the native, and the 'repatriated' population from Eastern Poland. The National Museums in Gdańsk, Szczecin and Wrocław, all of which were mentioned in the introduction were originally German museums of different types, which under post-World-War-II Polish rule, were transformed into Polish institutions. A prime example of this symbolic takeover of the neighbouring community's heritage, and of the construction thereupon of a collection narrative along the lines of the new landlords' ideas, is the history of the Museum of Wielkopolska. Two years after the regaining of independence, that is in 1921, the central museum of Poznań, the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, was

polonized and renamed the Museum of Wielkopolska. The case study below presents detailed description of the museum.

In 1950, the communist authorities decided to once again replace the name of the Museum of Wielkopolska, which had been readopted after the war, with “the National Museum in Poznań”, thus including it on the list of central museums in Poland. By such a move, the cohesion of the former Prussian, Austrian and Russian partitions received further emphasis, and a group of superior museums that performed a supervisory function at the regional level, was finally established – the structure and hierarchy of museums was adapted to the state executive apparatus. In compliance with divisions introduced in the early 1950s, apart from the network of national museums, central museums in the fields of history, archaeology and ethnography, as well as the central army museum were designated. Appropriately, specialized museums at the provincial, regional and district levels were either under their direct (as branches) or indirect tutelage; in the latter case, employees of the central institutions acted as supervisors. Such a lucid structure allowed the government apparatus to effortlessly control museums of all levels.

In the years of socialism, the vast majority of Polish museums underwent nationalization – they were taken away from communities, foundations and private persons, and were placed under the supervision of the Central Administration of Museums. The National Museum in Warsaw had been already nationalized in 1945 and had received the title of a Central Museum Institution. The next step was to establish the structure of direct state control over museums’ actions. This initiative was born at the central level, in the offices of the government and in the Ministry of Culture and Art. Thence, it was delegated to ‘the local level’, i.e. to central museums to implement. Departments of culture and art of provincial Party Committees commissioned subsequent variations on this original idea for an exhibition while from district museums, the work of regional museums was ordered by regional authorities. At the same time central museums coordinated the content and technical aspect of these exhibitions. Nevertheless, the actual degree to which these socialist ideological campaigns were efficient is very difficult to estimate. A report from the Ministry of Culture and Art from 1953, presenting the implementation of campaigns in cultural institutions in the Recovered Territories, whose aim was to emphasize the Polish-ness of those lands, states as follows: *In the CZM [Central Administration of Museums – K.M.] instructions*

[...] the task of emphasizing and conserving in the public consciousness of the Polish character of the Recovered Territories, found its best expression in actions carried out by museums in nearly all centres of regions, where an autochthonic problem remains. These tactical instructions were verbal in form for the first half year, and were given to museums alongside close scrutiny of their local activities.

13 museums in the formerly German territories took part in this campaign: at the Museum in Koszalin an exhibition was opened, historical in nature, and imbued with reality – promoting the notion of the Polish character of Szczecin; in the Museum of Upper Silesia in Bytom, another exhibition, entitled ‘Polish Word in Silesia in Past Times’ was made accessible to the public. Also, lectures were organized, accentuating Polish strands in the history of former German towns and regions. Examples of these lecture include: ‘A Tour of the Relics of Piast Dynasty Wrocław’, ‘The Relics and Past of Piast Dynasty Brzeg’, ‘The History and Relics of Piast Dynasty Nysa’, or ‘The

Life of Slavs of Old Silesia'. In order to amplify the feeling of Polish identity of,, until recently, German territories, historical elements, such as the Piast dynasty from the Middle-Ages, were routinely invoked, and a negative image of the average German was emphasized, above all by accentuating local Nazi activity. In areas where no evidence of Polish character, whether in literature or otherwise, could be found, exhibitions such as 'Silesia in Polish print' were instrumental. This so-called polonization of the Recovered Lands was carried out by contrasting Polish national culture against German culture, with the latter as point of reference.

Thanks to this functional system of centralized, planned organization, as well as discipline proper to those first years of communism in Poland, the authorities had the full power to decide on the scope and context in which historical knowledge would be presented. History in museums was completely subjugated to the present. In a central institution, dedicated to the history of the city of Warsaw and of Poland generally, classical periodical divisions were rejected in favour of the stages of class struggle. In effect, the post-war government could be legitimized as an element of a self-fulfilling prophecy, in line with the Marxist-Leninist theory of social evolution. Exhibitions were developed along the pellucid divisions of yesterday vs. today, old vs. new/modern (Centkowski 1980: 16-24), and bad vs. good. Entirely new museums of the revolutionary movement were created for the instruction of the working class, and to document the latter's position in society.

A major practical obstacle on the road to full implementation of the new authority's guidelines was the personnel of museums, largely recruited from people educated before the war, and predominantly loath to sympathize with the enforced reinterpretation of the collections they had long taken care of. In the early 1950s, the number of educational departments at museums increased significantly. This was the effect of a radical change in the approach to museums' functions. These new departments were established in order to familiarize society with the collections: they organized special lessons for schools, compulsory courses for various kinds of workers or army personnel. One of the merits of this approach was a steady rise in the number of museum visitors, of which children and youth comprised over 70 per cent (Centkowski, 1980: 17). The overarching goal was to introduce undervalued layers of society to mainstream socialist culture.

From 1945, the chief supervisory body for museums and other cultural institutions was the Main Office of Control of Press, Publications and Shows (pl: *Główny Urząd Kontroli Prasy, Publikacji i Widowisk*, referred to also by the name of Censorship Office), and even if one takes into account deteriorating discipline in the formation and implementation of ideological guidelines at all levels of government, one should concede that this central censorial institution exercised its prerogatives efficiently until the very end, identifying and monitoring subjects and themes liable to censorship. Subjects excluded from museum exhibitions throughout the period of socialism in Poland included: the Kresy (lands lost to Ukraine, Byelorussia and Lithuania) (Legutko, 2008: 12), Polish-Russian and Polish-Soviet Wars (especially the 1920 Battle of Warsaw), the actions of the Red Army in Poland in the years 1939 and 1944/45, and the Warsaw Uprising of 1944. Among Polish national heroes, the most 'persecuted' was no doubt Józef Piłsudski, as well as military and paramilitary formations of freedom fighters during the World Wars, including both the Polish Legions of World War I, as well as the Home Army of World War II. Every exhibition had to have the acceptance of a certified censor. Before it was opened

to the public, an employee of the Censorship Office would tour the gallery and decide which objects were to be removed and what inscriptions were to be changed. In effect, for instance, in portraying the history of Nazi concentration camps, the fact was routinely omitted that they remained fully functional and, often, functioned, even after liberation by the Red Army: this time, however, as Soviet camps for Polish and German detainees.

On the one hand, there was incessant propaganda, striving to demonstrate the ‘eternally’ Polish character of lands taken from the Germans, to testify to Polish-Soviet friendship and weaving a vision of dreams’ fulfilment by starting on the road to socialism. On the other, there was censorial silence on Poland in the Interwar Period, the Kresy and in Stalinist crimes committed both during (the Katyn massacre) and after the War. This sort of historical memory engineering has caused some historians and sociologists to refer to the Polish society as a ‘community of oblivion’. The Polish governing elite of the time of socialism is often accused of resisting the resurgence and formation of locality-based historical memory, especially of national minorities. Under communism, historical memory was to be one and only – that of the State, and those who did not feel well with it did not deserve the name of Poles, and could even be prosecuted for plotting to topple the regime.

The awarding of the national museum title to the Museum of Wielkopolska in Poznań was also a symbolic gesture. It was to emphasize that Western Poland now definitely belonged to the unified Polish nation. Further strong gestures of the same gist were performed in the 1970s: in order to bolster the national feeling among Polish inhabitants of previously German territories, the network of national museums was enlarged, to include the Municipal Museum in Szczecin (1970), the Silesian Museum (1970), as well as the Pomeranian Museum (1972). Preceding the war, these museums had been active along pretty much the same lines as the current National Museum in Poznań, with the core of their collections gathered during German ownership and, being the fruit of extensive collaboration between German societies of learning with the Prussian government, the vast majority of narrative being oriented towards enhancing German national cohesion. Certainly, the reason for including these institutions on the list of national museums, was not the quality of their collections, which was substantially inferior if, for example, compared with the National Museum in Warsaw, which had been particularly ‘enriched’ in 1945-1956, that is during the so-called action of reclaim. Neither were these museums’ traditions, which were unimpressive by, for instance, the standards of the National Museum in Krakow. Indeed, these formerly German museums were now to become symbols to the indigenous and the repatriated populations, as well as to tourists, that the Pomeranian Museum in Gdańsk, the capital of Pomerania, is now a Polish national museum, that the Silesian Museum in Wrocław, the capital of Silesia, is now a Polish national museum. Can there be a stronger declaration of a region’s cultural identity than the establishment of a national museum in its capital city? The heritage of communism, exposed elsewhere after 1989, remained present in museums despite attempts at their de-communization. It was present, for instance, in decisions to close down those of them which were the most closely bound to communist ideology, and in personal changes on managerial positions. Since 1989, nineteen museums have either been closed or had their name and goals changed out of ideological reasons. Among them were, above all, museums of Lenin, of Revolutionary Movement History, as well as some museums affiliated to certain centres of industry. Propagandist museums in Warsaw – both buildings and collections – were merged into

the Museum of Independence, as a yet another example in the history of Polish museums, of how loose a connection there was between the collection, on the one side, and the name and profile on the other. Also national museums on formerly German lands were 'demoted' to regional museum status; this applies to national museums in Szczecin, Gdańsk and Wrocław. Political transformation at this gave out ripples, riding which museums' employees rapidly started to complement their institutions' collections along unto now missing themes. Temporary exhibitions sprouted abundantly, which had had not a chance of appearing previously. The new times' enthusiasm had transformed museums into places of historical demystification. An ample stream of new artefacts flowed in from home as well as from abroad. It was comparable in largesse to the donation action of 1918 onwards, and it testified, among others, to active national identification by émigrés – museums had again become places of their remembrance.

On October 25th 1991, the Act on The Organizing and Conducting of Cultural Activities was passed by parliament. Finally, after many years, the act of 1962 had been amended. In the sphere of museums, this new law curbed the centralist competences of the Minister of Culture and Art. The entry was erased, regarding the superior role of the Ministry in delineating the activities and development of museums along government museum policy lines. Museums received legal existence, which rendered them independent of central agency officials.

In the years of the 3rd Republic of Poland, museums have once again become a domain of regions. The Ministry of Culture and Art, one of whose goals has been to prepare institutions under its supervision for function under new administrative circumstances, has strived to preserve the largest number of museums under its direct patronage, in order to protect them, and itself from the general shift to free market economy. Proposals were made to keep several dozen museums under central administration, while the rest would be transferred to local authorities.

The main difficulty in drawing up a list of museums to be financed by the state lay in the basic impossibility of arranging museums' collections according to their material and cultural value. After a period of clear vision and symbolic and factual instrumentality in the system of socialism, national museums after this system collapsed, in the face of a lack of guidelines, and ceased to perform their previous role. Even though the Ministry of Culture acknowledged the state's responsibility as patron of museums concerned with nationwide topics, its projects were successfully blocked by Parliament. Only fifteen, instead of the proposed twenty-seven museums were allowed to remain under central administration (fourteen of these remained under care of the Ministry of Culture, one – under the patronage of the Ministry of Defence). Apart from that, it was justly observed that transferring museums of nationwide research interest to provinces and regions could engender the new patrons' decisions, favouring an abandonment of research not pertaining to the region of location. A major counterargument to this was the approach adopted by the authors of the administrative reform, expressed most clearly in the declaration, that in order to facilitate a profound integration of local communities and increase their active engagement in cultural life, the largest number of cultural institutions possible, among them museums, should be transferred to the local levels (Rottermund, 2001: 136).

The national museums, in spite of a higher degree of public funding, as compared to locally run institutions, had considerable difficulty in determining their target group. Lacking such an important element in the vision of their own activity, they often turned to a solution that always gives instant effects: to imitating western models. Aspirations of the national museums'

managements ran in the direction of equalling the popularity of the biggest museums of Western Europe – the Louvre in France, the Prado in Spain, the Vatican Museums in Italy, or the British Museum in England. Ever more exhibitions were organized with the thought of following the footsteps of great Western European and American art events by displaying masterpieces signed by artists of world renown.

Some critics claim that, after the downfall of communism, national museums had no capacity for changing themselves, being crushed by the weight of their own past, in the form of object ownership disputes and the issue of having been a tool of socialist propaganda. Indeed, since 1918, national museums were truly instrumental in the implementation of state identity policies. Nevertheless, for the 20 years since communism's downfall, no discussion – neither in museum nor in political circles – on new, modern goals for the national museums in Warsaw, Krakow and Poznań has been initiated. Why? - First of all, the so-called state cultural policy planning strategy evokes too strong an association with the long-lasting, manipulative intervention into museums' workings in the post-war period, hence resentment and lack of approval on the part of museum employees and politicians alike.

In recent years the need for constructing a clear history of Polish community has been expressed anew. A major stimulus to reconsider Polish national identity was Poland's entry into the European Union. Starting in 2004, various projects for state policy touching in depth on this matter have appeared for the first time since the process of the country's democratization was completed. Strongly promoted by the then-ruling right-wing party, slogans about the necessity of relating the history of the Polish people made there into public debate and soon found embodiment in the establishment of the Polish History Museum. This museum, due to be erected in the centre of Warsaw, is the first Polish public museum dedicated to national history. It has also, from the start, been the subject of controversy concerning its impartiality and the possibility of reaching a consensus on how the history of Poland should be viewed. The museum is operating, but it is hard to assess its influence on public life, as it is operating without objects and without a museum-devoted building.

In the case of Poland, the traditions of country museums have continued for two centuries. During the partitions, non-governmental societies, and consecutive governments after independence have strived to shape, cement and change the Poles' national identity by the means of museums - especially of those named national for political reasons over the time and described in this paper. Shall we ask about the results of these efforts? From Eva Lipnicka's 'The Xenophobe's guide to the Poles' we can learn that "the Poles has the misfortune to be sandwiched between Germans and Russians and for once are turning it to their advantage, by becoming the middleman between them" (Lipnicka, 1997: 7). This sentence stresses, in a humoristic way, continuing efforts of the state to shape and strengthen Polish national identity. In effect, Poles became 'middlemen' again.

Case studies in chronological order

The National Museum in Warsaw

Arguably, the choice of the Museum of the Fine Arts, founded 1862, for the central establishment, was made somewhat prematurely. It was even less representational of the nation

as a whole, than the Krakow National Museum. The Warsaw University had founded it in 1862 as the Museum of the Fine Arts. In the wider context of its foundation, one chief factor had come into play: a comprehensive reform of the education system, carried out by the tsarist-backed Government Commission for Religious Affairs and Public Enlightenment. This reform encompassed, among others, the creation of the Main School in Warsaw (later, the University of Warsaw), and the reorganization of the Library and School of the Fine Arts. The reformers assumed that the museum would educate students in aesthetics, and nourish their love of beauty (Masłowska, 2002: 10). The first objects were acquired at the bidding of the Government Commission, which commissioned the museum's director to purchase canvasses from foreign painting schools, at an antique auction in Cologne. At the museum, Polish art was absent, and one should presume that this was precisely the aim of the Russian authorities, seeking to prevent any risk of furthering separatist tendencies in the Polish community.

Furthermore, the Commission sent the director visiting important museums elsewhere, "to observe diverse systems and layouts, and all this in order to design such ones [...] that could be applied at the Museum, in line with the Education Act" (Masłowska, 2002: 11). The exhibition was opened to the public in 1865. Admittance was free of charge. In this first public gallery in Warsaw, exhibitions were developed along didactic lines: chronological order was followed, with strict divisions into art schools and communities; solely foreign art was on display. The didactic rationale also found its expression in the presence of copies of famous works of art that the museum did not possess.

The Museum of the Fine Arts lost its temporary residence after just five years of activity, and for the next thirty years, until the end of the nineteenth century, it would have no permanent gallery, and its collection was stored in warehouses. In 1898, the tsarist authorities decided to transfer the ownership of the collection to the municipal government, on the condition that the latter would build a permanent residence for the museum. Starting in 1900, parts of this collection were exhibited periodically in temporary exposition halls.

As we see, in comparison with the National Museum in Krakow, the totality of the Museum of the Fine Arts looks even more modest. Nevertheless, in 1916 the name of the museum was changed to 'National Museum in Warsaw'. This renaming was done on a wave of anticipative joy at the perspective of regaining independence, even though the collection was inaccessible to the public at the time. The first exposition under the museum's new name took place in an entirely revamped ambiance in 1919. Notably, this time works of art representing foreign schools were completely absent. The halls were filled with historical objects of Polish art, donated by the community or loaned by private collectors, expressly to the National Museum in Warsaw. This push of Polish art to the fore was initiated and emphasized by the employees themselves. Numerous Poles visited the exhibition from border regions where plebiscites on state adhesion were soon to be held (Mansfeld, 2000: 16). The display was arranged carefully so that it would reflect Polish art and Polish culture in the most glorious light, and through this – fulfil its task of convincing the public of the admirable tradition of the Polish State, reflecting, in turn, its past might. Implicit was the idea of building up claims to territories whose fate was soon to be decided by plebiscite. The newly founded Ministry of Art and Culture explicitly supported this in the following words:

Without chauvinism, albeit with appropriate understanding that this is our sole weapon against germanization, russification, and generally – de-polonization, we must, with full consciousness strive not only to use the Polish tongue in speech, but also think Polish, think in our distinct categories, have Polish taste, possess industrial production with a Polish look and feel, our own architecture, our own and distinct art. [...] We must, from the centuries-long cultural work, draw conclusions on what the essence of our taste is, wherein the essence and feeling of style. (Siciński, Dąbrowski, Gmurek, 2002: 48)

The newly named National Museum (formerly the Museum of the Fine Arts, whose role was mainly one of storage) began to organize temporary exhibitions, aimed at integrating the society along the lines of national history. The usual pretexts for an exhibition of this sort were all sorts of national anniversaries, especially those of military events from the partitions' period. Thus, the overall character of exhibitions in the 1920s and 1930s was predominantly patriotic. In the 1920s, for instance, subjects of temporary exhibitions included, among others: the fate of Poles in the Napoleonic Wars (on the 100th anniversary of the death of Napoleon Bonaparte), heroes of the January Uprising, the 100th Anniversary of the November Uprising, king Jan III Sobieski – on the anniversary of the 1683 Battle of Vienna, and king Stefan Batory. The authors of these consecutive exhibitions sought to remind the Polish society of the role of the great battles fought by the First Republic of Poland and subsequent national uprisings in the nineteenth century, and thereby, to convince the people that it had regained independence by taking on itself an active role on the scene of history, by military action and armed uprising of the masses.

The programmes of both the National Museum in Warsaw, as well as the Polish Army Museum, seem to fulfil the requirement, stipulated by the newly-funded Ministry of Art and Culture in its first year of existence (Siciński, Dąbrowski, Gmurek, 1998: 21):

The Polish State has grown, and it must integrate Poles from all sides. It has occupied provinces of Belarus', Rus', is to expand into Masuria, Silesia, and Spiš. To hold these provinces at the tip of the bayonet or the butt of a gun is impracticable in the 20th century. Our Fatherland cannot be united by force – one has to look to other ways, and that way lies only in our culture. If we ingrain it without violence, we can unite and cement the State, and, through our culture, prevail upon others to give us our due respect. (Siciński, Dąbrowski, Gmurek, 1998: 48)

The permanent exposition was opened in 1921. Twenty years had passed since the collection had past under the tutelage of the municipal government, but still there was no specific residence that the Municipal Council had undertaken to construct for the museum. In 1924, the Council passed a resolution on the erection of a new building, and in 1927 the architectonic plans were approved and construction started (Jarocki, 1981: 138). In 1936 Dr Stanisław Lorentz, an art historian and conservator, was appointed the Museum's director. He replaced Bronisław Gembarzewski, who was a painter. In the days following the opening of the Museum's new building, the President of Warsaw declared:

The National Museum must develop further [...] as a treasure trove of the past, as a research institute and educational establishment. Within a cadre of the art and culture of all nations, which the Museum must create, Polish art and culture is and must be in the future the main accent. [...] The National Museum in the Capital City should testify (both home and abroad)

to a continuum in the development of Polish culture of the ten centuries of its existence, and illustrate the cultural history of the entire Polish nation [...]. (Masłowska, 2002: 36)

After the Second World War, the National Museum in Warsaw was truly instrumental in the implementation of communist identity policies, taking upon it a role that should be followed by other museums. With a mission as the central museum institution in Poland, the National Museum in Warsaw has acquired collections and objects from all over the country. The way objects found their place in the museum was often not appropriate. The objects were on loan to the museum and they were never returned. The official reason for building collections through breaking the law was that the National Museum in Warsaw was the main host institution, and for many years, the only one where state ceremonies and visits took place.

In the time of the new democracy, for the twenty years since communism's downfall, no discussion – neither in museum nor in political circles – on new, modern goals for the National Museum in Warsaw have been initiated. A new clear view was expressed recently by prof. Piotr Piotrowski, director of the National Museum in Warsaw (2010-2011), in an attempt at re-evaluation of the adjective 'national' in his 'Outline for a Programme of the National Museum in Warsaw'

20 years after the downfall of communism and in the age of globalization, the word "national" itself changes its meaning. The "commonwealth of imagination" is nowadays something else than 150, 100, or 70 years ago; it has also changed since 20 years ago: the Old Continent, as part of the World as a whole, as well as our own part of it, is heading in the direction of a "cosmopolitan Europe". This country and city follows suit. Our Museum must prove itself up to this challenge and set out on the realization of a new mission, in a changing reality.

A special kind of paradox may lie in the fact that at the time when a new, open society is being built in Poland at the threshold of the 21st century, the Museum must return to its European roots – to supporting processes of democracy. Since democracy itself is comprehended in a completely different way than 200 years ago, the programme of the Museum must take these changes into account as well. There is, of course, no time or place to touch on these changes further here, however, I must emphasize their most important threads, which include the recognition of a substantial diversity in societal structures, the recognition of minority rights in social policy, as well as negotiation of positions not on the basis of tolerance (hierarchy), but in observance of the equivalence (equality) of opinions both of majority and minority, and the recognition of the international or, more specifically, cosmopolitan dimension of culture.

We perceive the Museum's mission in the perspective sketched above. Its role should be active, and imply the awakening to an understanding of the new world's complexity, and the recognition of the importance of memory and of the past in the process of building a new society – a society transnational (cosmopolitan) and internally complex.[...]
(Piotrowski 2010:2)

The director resigned after the Board of Trustees did not accept Piotrowski's strategic plan.

The National Museum in Krakow

The first National Museum on Polish land was created in the Austrian partition, in the form of a municipal museum. The National Museum in Krakow was founded in 1879, by a resolution of the municipal council of the City of Krakow. Reportedly, the artist painter Henryk Siemiradzki, who publicly presented the mayor with one of his canvasses, gave the incentive. It seems, however, that the groundwork had been laid by a document, dated to 1871, published by the mayor of Krakow, Józef Dietl, under the title 'A project for Ordering the City'

As guardians of precious treasures of the past, it is not enough for us to preserve what our ancestors have bequeathed to us, but we must incessantly replenish and enrich those treasures, so that, in later generations the memory does not perish of what Krakow once was, and should ever be: a hearth of love for the Fatherland, of noble memories of the past, and of unshakeable faith in a better future for the nation. [...] It befits the restored interior of the Sukiennice to open therein a gallery of Polish kings, heroes, scholars and artists. It is there that historical canvasses, immortalizing great national events, there – ethnographic collections, there – the shape of past Polish armies, all should adorn a hall of a veritable National Museum stature.

The museum was founded 8 years later, and in its goal, as stated in the charter, was to *represent, in the collected exhibits, the state of art and culture in Poland in its historical and current developments*. Thus, in its first years of activity, the museum slowly enlarged its collection, owing mainly to donations and, to a lesser degree, to acquisitions from antiquaries abroad, of objects originating from Polish lands. The number of objects in the National Museum was: in 1879 (the year of foundation) – 56 objects, in 1883 (the year of the first public thematic exposition, entitled "On the 200th Anniversary of the Battle of Vienna" - 76 objects, in 1900 (the year of the ascension of an academic and specialist to the post of director) – 10364 objects, in 1909 – 250,000 objects. In order to fulfil the statutory goal of representation, by way of objects from the collection, the state of art and culture in Poland, casts and replicas regularly supplemented the gallery.

However, in spite of a favourable location on the Town Square in the centre of the city, the museum did not, initially, spike interest in the townspeople. According to optimistic accounts, 5415 persons visited the museum in 1889, 10,661 visited in 1898 and 49,102 persons visited in 1908. As the foremost reason for this state of affairs, one should mention the institution's financial situation that, in the first years, was calamitous enough not to permit any prospect for further development. In 1900, an academic and lecturer in art history replaced an artist as director of the museum. The new director promptly proceeded to compile the institution's new charter, which was then presented to the Municipal Council for approval. For the first time in history, the museum defined in detail the scope of its collection:

all relics of any form or purpose, pertaining to life and cultural developments in the past, and giving thereof direct or indirect evidence, are included in the scope of the Museum's interest. To the collection belong also excavations, prehistoric or other, relics of folk lore, and all objects testifying to the cultural evolution of the people (Mansfeld 2000: 26). Personal memorabilia of persons of merit, or linked to important historical events, should belong to a separate department.

In a short period of time, the National Museum in Krakow acquired rich collections. After 1918, with more than 300,000 objects, the museum asked the citizens of Kraków for financial support in its plan for building a new museum site. In 1934, construction work began, but a few years later, was interrupted by the World War. The new building was finished after the war in the late seventies. In the period of socialism, the main duty for the National Museum in Kraków was as the central museum for the region of Małopolska. After 1989, during the time of the new democracy, the museum was still overlooking the local museums in the region, but in a more informal way.

The National Museum in Poznan

In the entire history of Poland, there has never been such a massive intervention into national identity as the polonization of the so-called Recovered Territories. There, the reorganization of museums proceeded concurrently to, if not preceded the general polonization of lands taken from Germany. It was an equally brutal intrusion into the life of both the native, and the 'repatriated' population from Eastern Poland. The National Museums in Gdańsk, Szczecin and Wrocław, all of which were mentioned in the introduction, and to which we shall soon return, were originally German museums, which under post-World-War-II Polish rule, were transformed into Polish institutions. A prime example of this symbolic takeover of the neighbouring community's heritage, and of the construction thereupon of a collection narrative along the lines of the new landlords' ideas, is the history of the Museum of Wielkopolska. Two years after the regaining of independence in 1921, the central museum of Poznań, the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, was polonized and renamed the Museum of Wielkopolska.

The history of the two collections, which were ultimately merged in the Museum of Wielkopolska (from 1950 – the National Museum in Poznań), dates to the period of partitions and was part of the tense rivalry between Polish and German intelligentsia. Representatives of the former established, in the 1850s, the Society of Friends of Learning, the goals of which encompassed the creation of a library and collection of relics from the region's history. Also, the collection of Polish painting systematically grew, thanks only to the generosity of particular members of the Society. The aim of the first exposition in 1871 was to 'present the historical evolution of Polish painting from the times of Stanisław August, to today's flowering of our art' (Detloff, 1928: 3). The first permanent public exhibition was opened in 1910. At the same time, German societies of learning and archaeology also sought to organize exhibitions of their own objects. In 1888 collections of several societies were gathered in one joint exhibition for the first time. This event triggered calls for the establishment of a museum in Poznań. The German authorities listened these voices and, in 1884, the Provincial Museum in Poznań was opened to the public. In the following years, in line with the central guidelines of the Prussian government, which saw the promotion of German art as a means to neutralize ethnic tensions and conflicts in the eastern provinces, efforts were undertaken to construct a wholly new museum in Poznań. This establishment, inaugurated in 1904, received the name of Kaiser Friedrich Museum, after the reigning monarch of Prussia, the emperor Friedrich III. Its collection consisted solely of artefacts of German origin (Detloff, 1924: 4), and, as the sole of the above-mentioned museums, it received, along with its name, a clear ideological background, albeit of German provenance. Mosaics with likenesses of German painters adorned the building, and the allegorical

representations of Art and Industry wore German folk dress. Inside, prominent were statues of Prussian emperors who had annexed Wielkopolska and South Prussia. Apart from this, the Kaiser Friedrich Museum was the only one to receive permanent dependable financing, which permitted not only exhibitive and research activity, but also allowed for ample new acquisitions to the collection. In 1919, following a successful Polish insurrection and the city's abandonment by the Prussian administration, the German personnel of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum was replaced by Poles, who instantly proceeded to polonize the institution. Firstly, the legend and inscriptions were translated from German and objects considered potentially hurtful to the Polish public were removed. Also the name was changed to 'the Museum of Wielkopolska' which, in any case, did not prove durable, since, at reoccupation by Germans in 1939, the previous one was duly reinstated. Further polonization consisted of developing exhibitions of Polish objects. However, because the museum did not possess Polish artworks, and the German staff concentrated on collecting above all (if not solely) German objects, the museum sought to obtain Polish exhibits through contacting indigenous societies, including the Society of Friends of Learning. Regrettably, due to opposition on the part of 'traditionalists' within the Society (Detloff, 1928: 7), the offer of the two collections' merger was rejected.

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National Museums in Portugal

Felicity Bodenstein

Summary

Portugal began to develop a group of national museums in the second half of the nineteenth century. Its first collections were formed by the monarchy, and very much conditioned by the often difficult and complex relationship between the state and the Catholic Church. The first public museum in Portuguese territory was founded in Porto in 1833 to house artworks from monasteries, shut down as a result of the liberal's victory in the civil war (1828-1834). Its creation was strongly related to the separation of Church and State with the suppression of the ecclesiastical orders in 1834 in a process that was completed in 1910 with the declaration of a secular republic. An extensive series of museums owe their existence to this transfer of church property to the state.

The evolution of Portuguese museums was heavily marked by the Military dictatorship (1926-1933) and by the *Estado Novo* (1933-1974) under the rule of Antonio de Oliveira Salazar (1933-1968). Though museums were managed by a council related to the Ministry of Education, during this period, the SPN, National Secretary of Propaganda, renamed the National Secretariat for Information, Popular Culture, and Tourism in 1945 (SNI), directed an authoritarian state policy that was mainly concerned with establishing a strong image of what should be considered as traditional or authentic Portuguese culture – a policy which also influenced the development of specific museums such as the Museum of Popular Art (*Museu de Arte Popular*) and a collection that would later become the National Tile Museum (*Museu Nacional do Azulejo*).

Portuguese museums experienced a rapid and intense period of modernisation in the 1980s and 1990s during which time they attempted to make up for a long period of social and economic lag in relation to the rest of Europe, developing an active cultural policy. The Ministry for Culture, created in the 1990s, is today directly responsible for 29 national museums, but other important institutions such as the well-known Maritime museum in Lisbon are run by the Ministry for Defence. Private financing and patronage is relatively marginal; the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Porto is the only example of a joint private and public administration. However, one should remember that Portugal's most famous museum in the art world, the *Museu Calouste Gulbenkian*, is part of a private foundation (the museum itself is only one of the foundation's activities).

Geographically speaking, there is a clear concentration of national museums in Lisbon, but there is a second important centre in Porto, including Portugal's oldest national museum, the *Museu Nacional de Soares dos Reis*, and its youngest avatar, the Serralves Foundation, with its museum of contemporary art (the Serralves is a part public, part private foundation). The *Museu Nacional de Machado de Castro* is the main museum of central Portugal, and the *Museu de Évora* is the principal state museum in the south of the country. Recent policy aims to develop a more balanced network from a geographical perspective, and some major municipal museums have been integrated into the network created by the *Instituto Português de Museus* (IMC) in order to give

them greater national visibility. The Ministry for Culture also finances the *Fundação Berardo*, a foundation for modern and contemporary international art based on the a private collection of Joe Berardo and the foundation of the *Museu do Douro*, a network of regional museums dedicated to cultural and economic themes related to the Douro River Valley.

Portuguese national museums tend to be oriented in terms of national material culture. There are few important collections of European or extra-European art, and ethnographical museums tend to be more focused on domestic collections rather than on foreign ones, despite Portugal's status as a former colonial empire. The decorative arts and folk arts play an important role, as illustrated by the already mentioned Museum of Popular Art and the National Tile Museum, the later dedicated entirely to the very nationally typical tradition of painted ceramics. Interestingly, the most popular of national Portuguese museums in terms of visitor numbers is the National Coach museum (*Museu Nacional dos Coches*).

The selection of case studies for this report has sought to reflect the different origins and initiatives behind some of the most important of Portugal's national museums but also to illustrate a range of distinctive national narratives and their popularity today. It includes two of the three museums that officially held the title of 'national' from 1911 onwards: the *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga* and the *Museu Nacional dos Coches* (the third was the *Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea*). In terms of visitor numbers, renown and popularity, there can be no doubt as to the essential position occupied by the *Museu de Marinha*, The Maritime museum (one of the most famous in Europe, and the most visited); the National Museum of Archaeology (*Museu Nacional de Arqueologia*) is housed in the same emblematic building, the Jerónimos Monastery. Originally created by personal initiatives, their history contrasts with the case of the National Museum of Ancient Art (*Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga*) in Lisbon. This last museum will be considered alongside the *Museu Nacional de Soares dos Reis* (Porto) as the earliest national museums created in Portugal and as an example of the relationship between museum building, the monarchy and nationalisation of Church assets.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
The National Museum of Ancient Art <i>Museu nacional de Arte Antiga</i>	1884 (<i>Museu Real de Belas Arte e Arqueologia</i>)	1884	Monarchy	Ministry for culture, Institute of Portuguese museums (IMC)	Art History	Portuguese and European painting, metal work, ceramics, furniture and jewellery	1200-1850	Classical townhouse, new extension (1940s), Lisbon.
The National Museum of Archaeology <i>Museu nacional de Arqueologia</i>	1903	1893	Personal initiative of Dr. José Leite de Vasconcelos	IMC	Archaeology, Ethnography, Art History, Epigraphy	Portugal (origins) Egyptian Antiquity	Paleolithic period to 1200	Share buildings with Museu de Marinha - monastery of Jeronimo, Lisbon.
The National Coach Museum <i>Museu Nacional dos Coches</i>	1905	1889	Monarchy, Queen Amélie d'Orléans (1889)	IMC	History of Transport, Decorative Arts	Coaches used in royal processions from the 17 th to the 19 th c.	1700-1900	Former royal riding stables, Lisbon.
National Maritime Museum <i>Museu de Marinha</i>	1962	1863	Royal collection originally (King Louis I)	Ministry of Defence	History of Maritime Life, Exploration and Warfare	From 15 th c. onwards, historical paintings, archaeological objects and model ships	1500-2000	Jeronimos Monastery, late Gothic and Portuguese style built by Henry the Navigator. (1450s), with neo-gothic addition (19 th c.), Lisbon.

Introduction

The Portuguese nation generally claims two historical dates as representative of its political origin: 1139 and 1297. In 1139, Afonso Henriques, the ‘conqueror’ chased the Muslims from Lisbon, declaring himself the first king of Portugal. This is the foundational moment of the Portuguese monarchy, which remained in power until the beginning of the twentieth century, with small intervals during which Portugal came under the rule of the Spanish Crown (1580-1640). Indeed, the relationship with its Iberian neighbour has shaped Portuguese history and self-perception; most general histories of Portugal underline that the frontiers of independent kingdom of Portugal were defined in close accord with its current borders as early as 1297, a fact which has led Portuguese historians to lay claim to the title of being the oldest European nation-state. The country developed its identity as a nation through its strong maritime culture, due to its 848 km of coastline and, in a sense, also to its geographic position on the edge of the continent. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it evolved to the status of a world power, that it shared with Spain through the Treaty of Tordesilhas, 1494, signed by Kings Fernando and Isabel of Spain and King John II of Portugal. Major maritime exploration missions, such as Vasco de Gama’s expedition to the Indies– which set out from the Jerónimos Monastery (today home to the Maritime museum), brought great wealth to the country. The Portuguese developed commercial relations towards Asia and Oriental Africa in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At the turn of the eighteenth century, its main colony was Brazil, providing great quantities of gold, diamonds and rare woods.

However, Portugal experienced a period of economic difficulty in the eighteenth century due, in part, to the massive destruction of Lisbon in the 1755 earthquake. The most dramatic loss from a cultural point of view was the destruction of the Ribeira Palace (*Paço da Ribeira*) situated on the banks of the Tagus River, it was particularly affected by the tsunami that followed the earthquake. The rich collections of the royal library and archive, containing records from the Era of the Discoveries, as well as artworks by Titian, Rubens, and Correggio, that were housed in the palatial complex were all lost. King John I gave great impetus to the reconstruction of Lisbon in neo-Classical style. With the help of his Minister of State, the Marquis of Pombal, they also set out to reconstruct the royal library and collections in the Palace of Ajuda, in the outskirts of Lisbon. It was there too that the King created a Royal Botanical Garden, where specimens from the whole empire were cultivated, and a museum of natural history was established in 1777. A fire destroyed the original construction of the Palace but work on the new palace was already underway by 1795 (Almaça 1996).

The occupation of the Napoleonic Wars (1808-1814) had decisive consequences both in terms of political history and cultural development. In 1808, the Royal Family moved with the Court to Rio de Janeiro, taking with them the royal library and artworks from the Royal Palace of Ajuda. For this reason, Rio was home to the first royal Portuguese museums and scientific institutions, such as the Royal Library (*Biblioteca Real*, 1810), Botanical Garden (*Jardim Botânico*, 1811) and the Royal Museum (*Museu Real*, 1818). The move of the court to the Americas also shifted the balance of power between metropolis and colonies; in 1815, when the Peninsular War and the Napoleonic occupation was already over, King John VI decided to stay in Brazil and to proclaim the *Reino Unido de Portugal, Brasil e Algarves*. Meanwhile, mainland Portugal was devastated by the

war and controlled by a military junta that was presided over by a British general, a situation that provoked a movement of rejection amongst Portuguese patriots.

A liberal revolution began in Porto in spring 1820 requesting the return of the court to Europe, and as a consequence, John VI moved the court back to Lisbon in 1821. Nevertheless, the Portuguese liberals tried to restrict the political representation and the privileges granted to Brazil by the monarchy; they sought particularly to restrict free trade and to restore the monopoly of the metropolis. This provoked the indignation of the Brazilian liberal elites, who were supported by the King's son, Prince Peter (Dom Pedro), who had stayed in Rio. On 7 September 1822, the independence of Brazil was proclaimed and Dom Pedro was declared 'Emperor of Brazil'. This weakened the country economically and politically and was the source of future instability related to rights of dynastic succession.

These circumstances, the destruction caused by the 1755 earthquake and the transfer of the royal collections to Brazil in 1808, explain why, in relation to other European countries, the creation of public royal/national museums in Portugal began quite late in the nineteenth century. Indeed, the first royal museum in mainland Portugal was established in Porto in 1833 and its creation is related to the rise of liberal politics in the context of a dynastic dispute among the members of the Portuguese royal family.

In 1826, King John VI died in Lisbon, and his son, the Emperor Peter I of Brazil, laid formal claim to the title of Peter IV, king of Portugal with the support of a branch of the liberals. Since the Brazilian Constitution of 1824 did not allow the reunion of both kingdoms, he abdicated in favour of his daughter, Maria da Glória. As the Princess travelled from Río, the absolutist sectors organised themselves in support of Dom Pedro's brother, Dom Miguel, provoking a civil war. Although the war began in 1828, it was in 1831, when Dom Pedro abdicated and travelled to Portugal to support his daughter's right to the throne, that the conflict became a clear dispute between two political models: liberal constitutionalists –*pedristas*– and absolutists –*miguelistas*. Finally, international politics brought about the end of the war; in 1833 King Ferdinand VII of Spain, the main supporter of Dom Miguel, died, and in April 1834 the liberal regimes of UK, France and Spain decided to provide military support to the *pedristas*. Following a military intervention, Dom Pedro ratified the Liberal Constitution and his daughter was crowned as Maria II (1834-1854).

It is symbolical that the first national museum in Portugal was created in Porto, the city that had become the stronghold of the liberals as early as the 1820s. The city had fallen under the control of the *miguelistas* at the beginning of the war, who had carried out massive repression. After a long siege, the *pedristas* entered Porto in 1833 and one of Dom Pedro's first acts was to confiscate the property of those who had collaborated with Dom Miguel, and of the most important monasteries that had also supported the absolutist cause. With those artworks (mainly paintings but also prints), the King established the *Museu Portuense*, initially housed in the convent of Saint-Anthony in the centre of Porto; it was a symbolical monument to the victory of the liberals in the war. Though it may claim to be one of Portugal's oldest museums, this institution, today known as the *Museu Soares dos Reis*, is not among the largest of Portugal's national museums.

The liberal victory marked a decisive turn for the economic and intellectual development in the country. In 1834, the suppression of religious orders was decreed as well as the

nationalisation of all properties owned by the Catholic Church, which were subsequently auctioned. This process was to last nearly seventy years, as the monasteries were emptied immediately whilst the convents were seized only after the death of the last nuns, meaning that these were often transferred to the state only at the end of the nineteenth century. These transfers brought large amounts of cultural assets, including historic buildings, artworks and bibliographical and archival records under state control. In addition to the creation of the *Museu Portuense*, many of these artistic objects were collected in the *Academia de Belas Artes*, Lisbon (Academy of Fine Arts), which housed the *Galeria Nacional de Pintura* (National Gallery of Painting), these collections became part of the *Museu Real de Belas Artes e Arqueologia*, (future *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga*) founded in Lisbon in 1884. Nevertheless, this did not result in the development of any kind of “consistent cultural policy, perhaps because there seemed to be no real or urgent need to emphasise the importance of preserving the vast and diversified heritage legacy, both from an economical and a cultural point of view” (Martins, 2008: 288).

However, the first museum created with the aim of protecting historical heritage was the *Museu Arqueológico do Carmo* founded in 1864 by the *Associação dos Arqueólogos Portugueses*. Its promoter and first president was the royal architect, Joaquim Possidónio da Silva (1806-1896). The Museum gathered *spolia* from Medieval and Renaissance religious buildings that had been affected by the disentailment process, but also promoted archaeological activities in earlier periods. The museum was housed in the ruins of the Carmo Convent, in the centre of Lisbon, destroyed by the 1755 earthquake, and left as a reminder of the destruction of the city (Martins 2003 & 2008).

The combination of private initiative and royal support did however, directly lead to the creation of two other national museums before the 1910 revolution deposed the monarchy: the National Museum of Ancient Art (1884) and the National Coach Museum (1905), both located in Lisbon.

The 1910 revolution overthrew the monarchy, established Portugal’s first Republic and abolished the privileges of the Catholic Church. Properties of the Crown were nationalised, including the museum referred to above (*Museu Nacional dos Coches*), and the royal palaces. The buildings, abbeys and convents of 31 suppressed religious orders and 164 institutions were confiscated with all the artworks that they contained, providing the basis for new provincial museums. As a result, most major municipal museums in Portugal were founded during the next following two decades in former ecclesiastical buildings, often in Episcopal palaces. The most important of these have recently been integrated into the national network of museums directly related to the Ministry for Culture through the IMC (Portuguese Institute of Museums) in an effort to redistribute central government support to museums across its territory.

A military *coup d’état* in May 1926, led to the instauration of a military dictatorship, that lasted until 1933, when the regime evolved into the *Estado Novo*, as defined by António de Oliveira Salazar (1889-1970). The *Estado Novo*, a dictatorial regime that developed its legitimacy with the support of the country’s economic elite, the Church and the military, developing a very traditionalist approach to museum creation and development. For Sapega, “it was not in the regime’s interest to proclaim a radical break with commonly held notions regarding the Portuguese national character, and for this reason many of the SPN’s (National Secretariat for

Information) original ideological presuppositions were borrowed from cultural practices and discourses that had their roots in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.” (2008: 12).

As secretary of the SPN, it was the role of António Ferro (1895-1956) to construct a new image of Portugal and its unified state for the Portuguese and, more especially, for the international community. He was himself close to artists and major figures of the modern art movement, especially in Italy. He believed Salazar to be creating a nation that was to be innovative and modern. Yet, under the direction of Ferro, the SPN also applied its *política do espírito* (politics of the spirit) to a definition of popular folk art, rural culture and aesthetics as a major axe of national identity and it was in this context that *Museu de Arte Popular* was founded in Lisbon in 1948. The museum began with a collection compiled in 1935 for the exhibition ‘Portuguese Folk Art’; first shown in Geneva, the collection was exhibited again in 1940, in Lisbon, during the exhibition of the *Mundo Português*, (1940). The exhibition commemorated the centenaries of two essential events in the history of Portugal, the foundation of the monarchy (1139), and the renewal of independence from Spain (1640). It was planned as a glorious narrative of the History of Portugal, illustrating the nationalist ideology of the *Estado Novo*. In terms of the architecture and the displays of contemporary art, it clearly celebrated modernism. But with the presentation of the popular art collection, the director of the SPN had sought to provide an “image of the nation as essentially humble and agricultural but at the same time historically destined for imperial greatness” (Sapega, 2008: 14). A permanent exhibit of these collections opened in 1948, they have since grown considerably and are “composed of ceramics, popular gold and silver objects, musical instruments, basketwork, textiles, costumes and embroidery, miniature boats and horse-drawn vehicles, agricultural tools and reproductions of rural dwellings. The displays were organised according to provinces, reflecting the territorial administration of the country in 1936” (IMC, 2004: 17). The Salazar regime whose power very much depended on “ultraconservative ruralist ideology” promoted a regional or rural identity as the ‘imagined community’ that could serve as a “metaphor for the nation as a whole” (Sapega, 2008: 4).

The museum could be considered as the expression of a state ideology that claimed to promote material progress on the one hand, but that based the moral and spiritual force of the nation on the restoration of past values. In recent years, the polemical decision was made to close the museum in order to create a museum of the Portuguese language. Many deplored the loss of the museum as the loss of an important document of the discourse of the *Estado Novo*’s regime, and its vision of the idea of the Portuguese *povo* (people). The definite closure was recently revoked, however the old museography was dismantled and the museum is currently closed for renovation.

Ironically, whilst popular and rural culture was used in the construction of nationalist ideology, there does not appear to have been a policy of making culture more accessible to those populations most isolated from urban centres of power (Sapega, 2008: 16). Instead, attentions and initiatives concentrated on reinforcing the role of the major national museums.

More generally speaking, despite being a colonial power and former Empire, anthropology and ethnology in Portuguese museums has been more related to strategies of ‘nation-building’ rather than ‘empire building’ - to employ the categories developed by Georges W. Stocking in 1982 - (Viatte, 2000: 21). Although Portugal’s role as a colonial power was fully expressed in the

exhibits developed for the 1934 Porto Colonial Exhibition and the 1940 'Portuguese World' Exhibition in Lisbon, this ideology did not find an immediate echo in a permanent Colonial museum. Collections of Brazilian, African and Pacific ethnology did exist at the University of Coimbra and at the Portuguese Society of Geography in Lisbon. The *Museu Etnológico Dr. Leite de Vasconcelos* e *Museu Nacional de Etnologia* also held some collections. However no political project was developed to display the overseas empire of Portugal until the 1950s when the first plans were made for a *Museu do Ultramar* to be developed in Lisbon. So, generally speaking, the development of anthropology was relatively unrelated to colonial politics. It should be added that the National Museum of Ethnology opened the doors of its current building in 1975, the same year that the new government declared the independence of its colonies – making it, in a sense, a late to post-colonial national ethnographic museum. Whilst a large part of the collections indeed came from the former Portuguese colonies in Africa, Asia and America, it also dedicated a great deal of its attentions to the establishment of a very extensive Portuguese ethnographic collection.

As remarked by Dias (2001, 103) an in-depth study of the history of the museum would provide a useful basis for understanding Portuguese colonial policy, but as she states, Portuguese anthropologists have been reluctant to consider the history of their discipline, including that of the provenance of its ethnological collections. She notes that the commemoration in 2000 of the discovery of Brazil, did not give rise, as might have been expected, to a more critical reading of Portugal's relationship to its former colony, asking "When will it be possible to mount an exhibition on a specific geographical area or an historical event which takes several points of view into account: the colonised, the colonisers and the academics?" (Dias, 2001: 103). Although local and Portuguese ethnology was well founded and developed during the first two decades of the Salazar dictatorship, it also benefitted from a second period of heightened interest, just after the 1974 coup, with the establishment of many new local ethnographic collections but also collections related to national culture and the arts (the Ethnographic and Archaeological museum of Dr. Joaquim Manso, the National Costume Museum, the National Museum of Theatre in Lisbon). So it remains today that "ethnography in Portugal is often equated with popular and peasant culture" (Dias, 2001: 102).

In 1974, a left-wing military coup ended the dictatorship and introduced broad democratic reforms. The following year Portugal granted independence to all of its African colonies, as already indicated above, this did not provoke a critical presentation of Portugal's colonial past in its national museums. Rapid social changes and the democratisation of access to education with the growth of the middle classes followed, and in consequence, the importance of cultural services and activities has drastically increased since the 1980s. The country has also very much benefited in this sector from financing provided by the European Union – of which it has only been a member since 1986 - and which has helped develop or create many museums, both national and local (Anico and Peralta, 2007: 190).

National museums do not appear to deal directly with Portugal's difficult recent political past. 2004 was marked by the opening of a quintessentially national museum: the museum of the President of the Republic in Lisbon, initiated by socialist president Jorge Sampaio and opened near the official residence of the president in Belém. The role of the Portuguese president, elected every five years, is essentially representative. The museum mainly valorises the architectural heritage of the palace itself, and provides visitors with an historical overview of the

presidential institution since 1910. The museum's holdings were initially founded on the presidential gifts donated by General Ramalho Eanes, who served as president between 1976 and 1986. The displays focus on national symbols and the explanation of key elements of the biographies of past presidents, illustrated using personal and important objects owned by the heads of state.

However, the museum's very existence highlights the relative silence in regard to the relationship between the presidency and the recent period of dictatorships, proving the difficulty inherent to establishing a critical history of an institution by the institution itself. Even if, when it opened, the President underlined that 'A democracy does not have an official historiography and the history is made in plurality by historians' (Jorge Sampaio, quoted by Público.pt, 2004). The museum defines its mission in the most neutral terms possible as 'depicting the presidential institution to establish an interactive relationship between the citizen and visitor, promoting the participation of visitors through social, cultural and artistic means.'

(<http://www.museu.presidencia.pt/>, consulted on 25 February, 2011). The chronology of presidential figures creates *de facto* a kind of continuity smoothing over the difficult divides and revolts that have so deeply marked Portuguese political history since 1910.

National museums and cultural policy in Portugal

Though several museums were created by the monarchy, the actual nominal title of national was given to three museums for the first time, in 1911, after the creation of the Republic: *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga*, *Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea* and *Museu Nacional dos Coches*. In 1965, three more museums were titled as national, two outside of Lisbon: *Museu Nacional de Arqueologia e Etnologia* (Museu Etnológico Dr. Leite de Vasconcelos), Lisbon; *Museu Nacional de Soares dos Reis*, Oporto; *Museu Nacional de Machado de Castro*, Coimbra.

From 1910 to 1933, museums owned by the state were managed by the *Conselhos de Arte e Arqueologia* (Councils of Art and Archaeology) of the *Direcção Geral de Instrução, Secundária e Especial* (Direction of Secondary, Superior and Special Instruction) of the Ministry of Public Instruction, renamed the *Conselho Superior de Belas Artes* (Superior Council of Fine Arts) of the *Direcção Geral do Ensino Superior e das Belas Artes* (General Direction of the Superior Education and Fine Arts) as part of the Ministry of National Education, until 1974.

Salazar's anti-liberal and nationalist regime had kept very tight control over the content and form of cultural affairs, by influencing how Portuguese history and culture were to be represented, notably in museums. It was a very centralised system that delegated little authority to regional or municipal instances. With the end of the regime and the emergence of a new ideology of democratic society, a policy was established that accorded a great deal of importance to a freer and more critical appreciation of the country's cultural heritage and cultural regional delegations were created with the 'aim of reducing social and regional imbalances in access to culture' (João Lima, M. and Gomes, R., 2010). This approach was to mark a stark contrast to the absence of effort to widen access to culture beyond major urban centres already observed as characteristic of the Salazar period.

Portuguese cultural institutions were progressively reorganised administratively after the coup of 1974. Museums were managed by the *Secretaria de Estado da Cultura* (Secretary of State of Culture) and in 1980, the *Instituto Português do Património Cultural* (Portuguese Institute for Cultural

Heritage) was created with a *Departamento dos Museus, Palácios e Fundações* (Department of Museums, Palaces and Foundations). The Portuguese Institute of Museums (IMC) was created in 1991 and with the advent of Portugal's first socialist government in 1995, cultural affairs became an ever more central aspect of state policy and for the first time they were placed under the direct tutelage of a dedicated Ministry of Culture. In 2004, the *Lei Quadro dos Museus Portugueses*, (legal frame for Portuguese museums) established the *Rede Portuguesa de Museus* (Portuguese Network for Museums). The RPM functions as part of the Portuguese Institute for Museums and Conservation, and provides a label for Portuguese museums whether private, public, regional or local as long as they meet the standards set by the Institute. It, of course, includes all national museums. It was a significant law for the history of Portuguese museums, designed to 'regulate the creation, activity and management of museums'. As with the creation of the IMC itself, the Law can be considered a response to the context of a museum boom in Portugal since the 1980s, providing a frame that could help new institutions find their place and gain steady financial support. The official texts state that the aim of the new Law was "to create an accreditation of museums to promote the access to culture and the valuation of cultural heritage through the introduction of standards of quality to be followed by Portuguese museums".

It defines the concept of museum; establishes the procedures for the creation of new museums; identifies their museological functions (study and research, inventory and documentation, conservation, security, interpretation, exhibition and education); regulates the duties of a museum; determines the existence of qualified staff as well as financial resources (NEMO, 2010: 1). It established museums (including all national ones) for the first time as a nationwide network, to be administered according to a coherent policy in technical terms.

Indeed, the 2004 Law also introduced a new classification as 'national treasures' for objects of particular importance and created a central digitised archive mission to deal with all the documents related to these objects. It also provides for a centralised editorial service that has since been made responsible for the integral edition of the collections of the museums run by the Ministry for Culture and a series of guidebooks (NEMO, 2010: 3). In addition, it has been important in developing a national tariff grid for museums, with reductions for students and the introduction of free entrance on Sunday mornings.

The 2004 guide issued by the IMC lists 116 out of the 530 institutions that claim the title of museum in Portugal today (Raposo, 2010: 4). They are of varying size and mission and are run by different governing bodies, they all profit from the visibility and support provided by the Portuguese Museum Network label helping to promote and market the museums of Portugal in a tourist driven economy. 'Whilst the quality of the work produced in Portuguese museums is unquestionable, their lack of public visibility is equally evident' (IMC, 2004: 3). The IMC as a label also includes some of the most dynamic and prestigious local government museums, besides some major museums run by private entities and state companies. However, as a department of the Ministry of Culture, the IMC directly administers only 29 museums, giving them all a kind of national status. There are also a series of other important museums run directly by other ministries and the governments of the Autonomous Regions of the Azores and Madeira (all have been included in the annex table).

A diversification of possibilities and attitudes to the financing of cultural affairs is illustrated by the creation of the Serralves foundation in Porto, which though initially a state initiative, has

become an original, and still relatively rare, example of partnership in this area between the state and civil society (Coelho and Santos, 2008: 8). Today it is Portugal's most important museum of contemporary art. Its focus is on Portuguese and international art since 1968, a date which appears as more significant politically than artistically (its chronological scope differentiates it from the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Lisbon, created in 1911 and focusing uniquely on Portuguese art since 1850). Situated in a prestigious building constructed by architect Álvaro Siza Vieira, it was the city's undeniable showpiece during its year as European capital of culture (2001). According to its website, it attracts over 400,000 visitors a year making it one of the most frequented museums in the country, ahead even of the National Coach museum.

The financing of Portugal's national museums by the state is based on the running costs and "the ability to generate their own revenues plays no role in the funding allocated to museums every year" (Coelho, J. and Santos, C. 2008). This incremental budgeting system has come under some scrutiny and the recent museum plan introduces the idea of a more careful evaluation of the efficiency of different institutions and their budget handling.

In terms of the education of curators and the place of museology in Portuguese academic tradition, Dias (2001: 98) remarks on the fact that "museology is considered a minor topic" marginal in relation to the teaching of anthropology and its presentation in museums (but also in relation to other disciplines of material culture). She points to an absence of scientific publications in Portuguese dealing with museological issues and the "non-existence of Colloquia and round-tables on museums in general"; this is certainly something that we have also observed in our research for this report. The situation is currently changing with specific courses being dedicated to museology in many universities. The 2004 law also provided for an editorial project to produce a series of books relating to professional issues faced by the staff of Portuguese museums (NEMO, 2010: 3).

In 2007, a new decree merged the Portuguese Institute of Maintenance and Restoration with the Portuguese Institute of Museums to form the Institute for Museums, and Conservation, assembling "in the same institute, competencies in the areas of the museums and conservation and restoration of the mobile and immaterial cultural heritage" (HEREIN, 2010). The desire to streamline the administration of Portuguese museums and to increase the efficiency of its members as a network led to the development of an overall pedagogical approach: *Strategic Plan for State Museums* issued in 2010 (João Lima, M. and Gomes, R., 2010). The plan hopes to further harmonise state policy, especially in terms of the professional qualifications required to work in state museums and to promote academic and scientific training for the museum sector. In terms of general education, a national competition was founded as part of a more general policy to promote art education in schools: "my school adopts a museum" to encourage closer ties between schools and museums of the national network (João Lima, M. and Gomes, R., 2010: 32).

Case studies in chronological order

Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga (MNAA)

The National Museum of Ancient Art, *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga*, (MNAA) was created in 1884 as the *Museu Real de Belas Artes e Arqueologia*, integrating the already existing collections of the *Academia de Belas Artes* in Lisbon. Its opening fulfilled a longstanding need, arising after the

abolition of religious orders in 1834, to provide a worthy setting for the multitude of works of art that had come into the possession of the state. The idea for the creation of the ancient art museum was set off by the success of a large retrospective exhibition of ornamental Portuguese and Spanish art in Lisbon in 1882 and by the possibility of a place for a permanent presentation provided by the state's acquisition of the Palácio Alvor (palace of a seventeenth century aristocrat). In 1911, the collection was separated into two parts forming the *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga* (Arts from 1200-1850) and the *Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea* (art since 1850). During the *Estado Novo* period, particular attention was given to emblematic elements of Lisbon's architectural heritage, buildings classified as historic were massively restored as emblems of the Portuguese nation. These included some museum buildings such as the MNAA. It also gained a new wing that opened in 1940, with the exhibition of the *Primitivos Portugueses* (the Portuguese school of Painting, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries) which form the central canon of Portuguese art history.

The collections of painted Portuguese tiles was part of the MNAA until 1965, but played a very insignificant role in the permanent exhibit although they were showcased in the 1940 display of objects from the MNAA during the Portuguese World Exhibition. In 1965, the collection was used to found the independent *Museu do Azulejo* that was given the title of 'national' in 1980. The *Museu nacional do Azulejo* is housed in a convent dating back to the sixteenth century and is itself a national monument of great artistic value. Decorative tile work has since come to be recognised as a very strong and representative expression of Portuguese culture.

The MNAA's importance is also due to the normative role that it played in providing other smaller Portuguese museums with a museographical model. Until 1974, it was considered as a place where museum professionals could come to learn their trade in terms of communication, education and conservation services.

Although it is home to some irrefutable masterpieces of European painting, from an international perspective the museum is less well known than the famous museum of art in Lisbon the *Calouste Gulbenkian Museum* (1967) whose 'excellent financing and bright museography casts somewhat of a shadow over the national museum of ancient art' (Manaster, 1986: 73). Although clearly a private foundation with a Board of Trustees, we might mention however that its founder Calouste Gulbenkian (1869-1955) was a British national of Armenian origins, yet he specified in his testament that, whilst he intended to dispose of his property and heritage under the terms of British law, his foundation was to be run under the terms of Portuguese law. Before establishing his own museum as a foundation based on his personal collection, Gulbenkian donated important collections of paintings of foreign schools to the national museum, leading to the established of two rooms especially dedicated to his donations in the *Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga*, respectively opened in 1948 and 1953 (*Museu nacional de Arte Antiga*, 1962: 8). Portugal's National Museum of Ancient Art and its National School of Painting do not seem profit from quite the same privileged status in terms of image and visitors relatively to other European countries such as Belgium or the Netherlands where the major artists of those countries play a very clear role in the creation of national identity.

Museu Nacional de Arqueologia

Dr. José Leite de Vasconcelos (1858-1941) founded The National Museum of Archaeology, *Museu Nacional de Arqueologia* in 1893, some ten years after the National Museum of Ancient Art discussed above. Its first denomination was the Portuguese Ethnology Museum. It was founded thanks to donations to the collections transferred from the already existing Royal archaeological collections in 1910. The ideology behind the museum was to explore the origins of the 'Portuguese man', a very fashionable notion among a certain Portuguese intellectual elite during the second half of the nineteenth century. It sought, by adopting both an anthropological and an archaeological perspective, to uncover the genuine origins of Portuguese popular culture. A very different approach than the paternalist and folkloristic ideologies later behind the establishment of the *Museu de Arte Popular*, that was to give a charming image of the simple life of Portuguese people.

Its mission was to provide a national account of the history of human settlement in the geographic territories of Portugal from its earliest origins to medieval times with an approach that sought to combine the disciplines of physical anthropology, ethnology and archaeology (Raposo, 2010: 1). It also sought to illustrate what its creator, José Leite de Vasconcelos, considered as the strong ties between past cultures and current cultural practices and productions. It was explicitly conceived of as an instrument for the promotion of national identity, as both a popular and scientific undertaking. Vasconcelos to instruct the public, instilling in it the knowledge and love of its homeland. From the 1930s onwards, the museum took a more clearly archaeological direction in terms of collections and publications, but it is only since 1990 that its title excludes the term ethnology.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, it has been located in the Jerónimos Monastery, one of the most emblematic monuments of Portugal (since 1962 it shares the building with the National Maritime Museum). Throughout the century, it also expanded its collecting mission to a more international perspective with finds, through donations, from the entire Mediterranean basin. During the entire period of the Salazar regime, the museum was the unique centre for the practice of professional archaeology in Portugal and played a centralising role in relation to the creation of some local museums – today some hundred Portuguese museums claim to hold archaeological collections (Raposo, 2010: 4). In contrast with the centralising policy of the Salazar regime, the current director of the museum, Luis Raposo, seeks to develop the national museum as a network in direct collaboration and exchange with other museums across the country. This, as he states, is necessary due to the rapid multiplication of archaeology museums since the 1990s in particular. His objective is to make the national character of the museum a reality for the entire territory and not uniquely for its capital and to thus encourage a dialogue between national and regional initiatives.

Between 1989 and 1993, the museum was organised as a permanent exhibit entitled: *Portugal, from its origins to beginning of the Nation*. Since 1995, the museum has been mainly organised as a series of temporary exhibitions developing different themes of national interest: *The Bronze Age: discourses of power; From Ulysses to Viriato; Roman Portugal: using Natural Resources; Islamic Portugal; The Religions of Lusitania*. Their organisation relies on collaboration and materials from museums all over Portugal and equally calls on specialists from all over the country and from abroad in an effort to provide a plurality of historical points of view.

It would appear, on the other hand, that the permanent exhibits are relatively unimportant in the present life of the museum: there is however, a presentation of ‘Treasures of Portuguese Archaeology’ and also a presentation of Egyptian archaeology. For Raposo however, the above-mentioned temporary exhibits have allowed the museum to develop the intellectual material necessary, in the form of catalogues, to consider a new, more up-to-date and conceptually interesting permanent gallery. The museum is one of the most visited national museums in Portugal just behind the National Museum of Carriages.

Museu Nacional dos Coches

Perhaps surprisingly, the National Museum of Carriages, *Museu Nacional dos Coches*, is the most visited of the IMC national museum network, with 225,000 visitors a year (Observatório das Actividades Culturais, 2010: 29). It is, today, the world’s largest collection of ceremonial coaches from the seventeenth and eighteenth century both in terms of quantity and quality.

Created in 1905, the conception of a collection of royal coaches as an independent museum is quite original, and its success, unprecedented (the most obvious evidence is that it is one of the few Portuguese museums for which it is possible to find easily available documentation in several languages) – by stark contrast, the museum of royal coaches at Versailles in France, is nearly completely unknown (dwarfed by the rest of the site) and is not considered of any particular importance.

The idea for the establishment of the collection goes back to the Universal Exhibition of 1851 in London that led to the first presentations of Portuguese decorative arts (Bessone, 1993: 4). The success of these events, especially the presentation in 1881 at the South Kensington museum in London prompted King Luis I himself to decree the establishment of a collection of Portuguese art in Lisbon. It was here that, for the first time, the royal carriages were exhibited to the public as objects of aesthetic value. However, the establishment of a permanent museum was undertaken twenty years later at the direct initiative of the new queen, Amélia de Orléans e Bragança (1889) who took great pains to convince the king to transform the magnificent riding ring and stables of Lisbon into a place for this permanent exhibition, originally known as the *Royal museum of carriages*. It received, from the beginning, quite exceptional support and was already then thought of as a major new tourist attraction that might “make up for the relative modesty of other national museums” (Bessone, 1993: 13). Indeed one of the principal reasons for its success has been the magnificent architectural and decorative baroque frame that splendidly showcases the carriages, making it an exceptionally complete visual experience. This explains that its existence was maintained despite the fall of the monarchy only five years later, the collections were even considerably expanded and an important section was added for costumes (later to become a basis for the National Costume Museum that opened in 1976). In recent times, there has been heated debate over a new project supported by the Ministry of Economy for a modern building with large open spaces to relocate the collection.

Museu de Marinha

The National Maritime Museum, *Museu de Marinha*, is another of Lisbon’s most popular destinations; it is indeed well known as one of the largest maritime museums in Europe. It is one of two Portuguese museums to be run by the Ministry for Defence, (which is the reason for the absence of the ‘national’ epithet in its title, as this can only be attributed by the Ministry for

Culture). It appears however, as far more significant than the second museum managed by the Defence ministry, which is the Military Museum also situated at the centre of the city of Lisbon.

The museum is directly placed under the patronage of Vasco de Gama, whose statue thrones in the entry and whose body is buried in the adjoining Santa Maria church. The Jerónimos monastery is considered to be one of the most important and beautiful monuments in Lisbon. It was built by the so-called Henry the Navigator in the 1450s and it is was there that Vasco de Gama's men spent the night before embarking on their famous voyage to India around the southern tip of Africa in 1497. The voyage of discovery led by de Gama became part of national mythology due to the epic poem, *Os Lusíadas* by Luis de Camões (1525-1580).

The inception of a public museum as a collection related to the maritime history of Portugal dates back to 1863 and the reign of Louis I (1838-1889). It moved several times, first installed in the Naval Academy and then in the Palace of the Count de Farrobo. The collections expanded most radically during the Salazar era and it was the donation of its most important benefactor, Enrique Maufroy de Seixas, in 1948 that inspired this ambitious project and the search for a more suitable setting. It should also be remarked that the Ministry of Defence was powerful enough to be able to promote the museum's installation in such a prestigious setting, in addition, the president at this time was Almirante Américo Thomaz, formerly active in the Navy.

The choice of the monastery however, also corresponded with regime's reading of Portuguese history. The Salazar dictatorship had clearly developed the idea of a Golden age of Portuguese history during the period of maritime expansion, followed by a period of decline that culminated in the 1910 Revolution. The 'Portuguese World' Exhibition of 1940 was organised in the Belem quarter related to the Jeronimos Monastery and to the place of departure of all great maritime exploration missions.

To this end, the Exhibition represented both a celebration of Salazar's efforts to liberate Portugal from its decadence and a platform to present the regime's version of the country's history. Accordingly, the organisers structured the exhibits around the high-points of Portuguese history-the Foundation, the Occupation and Conquest, Independence and the Maritime Empire, which was lauded as one of the great achievements of mankind. (Corkill, Almeida, 2009: 384)

The Exhibition's centrepiece was the *Padrão dos Descobrimentos* (monument to the discoveries) opposite the Jeronimos Monastery. "In national memory, the location represented a golden age when it was the locus of the country's position as a maritime and transcontinental power. What took place represented a systematic "ideologization of history" in which diverse memories are transformed into a single official memory to become part of the national identity" (Corkill, Almeida, 2009: 388). This national discourse found permanent expression with the installation of the Maritime museum in the western wing of the Jerónimos Monastery in 1962.

The museum tells the naval history of Portugal in a series of chronologically organised galleries and boasts everything from modest common fishing boats to the estate cabin of the royal yacht. Its *pièce de resistance* a massive hall with life-size gilded royal barges and a number of early aircraft attached to the navy. According to Manaster (1986: 72) the national maritime museum is "outstanding visually and technically". It is the only national museum that provides a narrative of the Portuguese Golden age in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as a world power,

as an Empire based on its ambitious programme of maritime expeditions, status that it lost to English, French and Dutch initiatives over the next two centuries, its colonial reach losing its main stronghold with the independence of Brazil in 1822.

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Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Style Location
<u>National museums run by the Portugese Institute of Museums (Institute of Museums and conservation)</u>				<u>IMC: Portugese Museum institute founded in 2001.</u>			
Museu Nacional de Soares dos Reis		1833	Museum was set up by the King Pedro IV who desired to see a Museum of Painting and Prints in Porto	Run by the IMC	Art History, Decorative Arts	Portuguese painting and sculpture from the 19th through to the mid-20th century. A main attraction is the collection of work by the sculptor Antonio Soares dos Reis. Ceramics, silverware and jewellery are also important parts of the collection.	Porto
Museu nacional de Arte Antiga. The National Museum of Ancient Art	1884	1884	Monarchy	Run by the IMC	Art History	Portugese and European painting, metal work, cermaics, furniture, fabrics and jewellery.	Lisbon
Museu nacional de Arqueologia. The National Museum of Archaeology	1903	1893	Personal initiative of Dr. José Leite de Vasconcelos	Run by the IMC	Archaeology, Ethnography, Art History, Epigraphy	Portugal (origins) Egyptian Antiquity.	Lisbon

Museu Nacional dos Coches. The National Coach Museum	1905	1889	Monarchy, Queen Amélie d'Orléans (1889)	Run by the IMC	History of Transport, Decorative Arts	Collection given by the monarchy of the royal coaches used in processions from the 17 th to the 19 th c.	Lisbon
Museu do Chiado. Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea. The National Museum of Contemporary Art		1911	Museum created as separate entity, collections from The National Museum of Ancient Art	Run by the IMC	Art History	Portuguese art from 1850 to the present day.	Lisbon
Museu de Arte Popular	1948	1935	Antonio Ferro, secretary of the SPN, National Secretariat, Estado Novo	Run by the IMC	Portuguese Folk Art, Ethnology	Portuguese ceramics, popular gold and silver objects, musical instruments, basketwork, textiles, costumes and embroidery, miniature boats and horse-drawn vehicles, agricultural tools and reproductions of rural dwellings.	Lisbon
Museu Nacional de Machado de Castro	1960	1913		Run by the IMC	Art History	Religious art, especially sculpture, large collection of the royal sculptor Machado de Castro of the 18 th c.	Coimbra (formerly a regional museum) in the former episcopal palace.

Museu Nacional do Azulejo. The National Tile Museum	1980	1960	Museum created as separate entity, collections from The National Museum of Ancient Art	Run by the IMC	Decorative Arts	Portuguese tile collection	Lisbon
Museu nacional de Etnologia: The National Museum of Ethnology	1975	1965		Run by the IMC	Ethnology, Anthropology	Collections of African cultures, Mozambique, but also South American Indians, Indonesia and Macau.	Lisbon
Casa-Museu Dr. Anastacio Gonçalves	1980	1969	Collection and house donated to the state by the Dr Gonçalves	Run by the IMC	Art History, Literature	Decorative arts of Portugal and China. Painting, mainly portugese.	Lisbon
Museu Nacional do Traje. The National Costume Museum.		1975	Part of the collections transferred from the National Coach museum	Run by the IMC	History of Fashion and Costume	Portugese clothing (part of the collection comes directly from the royal house) from the 18th century onwards.	Lisbon
Museu Nacional do Teatro, National museum of Theatre	1982	1979	Collections nearly entirely based on private donations	Run by the IMC	History of Theatre	Costumes, props, modes, figures, designs, posters, photographies documenting the performing arts.	Lisbon
Museu da Musica, The musci museum	1994	1911		Run by the IMC			Lisbon

<u>Regional museums run by the IMC – and as such administratively national</u>							
Museu do Abade de Baçal		1915	Regional authorities	Run by the IMC	Regional History	History of the north-east region of Tras-os-Montes and to the former Episcopal Palace.	Episcopal palace etc.
Museu de Alberto Sampaio		1928		Run by the IMC			Former collegiate church.
Museu dos Biscainhos	1978	1963		Run by the IMC	History, Art	Palace museum: decorative arts: 17 th c.	Braga
Museu de Lamego	1922	1901		Run by the IMC	Sacred Art, Religious History	Pieces originally belonging to the Episcopal palace	<u>Location and building</u>
Museum regional de Arqueologia D. Diogo de Sousa		1980	Diogo de Sousa	Run by the IMC		Museum on the site of the best preserved archaeological remains of the Roman town of Bracara Augusta.	
Museu da Terra de Miranda	1982			Run by the IMC	Regional Archaeology and Ethnology	Local productions of all kinds. founded by Father Antonio Maria Mouinho in a 17 th c. municipal building...	Porto
Museu de Aveiro		1911		Run by the IMC	Art History	Collection of sacred art.	Lisbon
Museu Grao Vasco	1921	1916		Run by the IMC	Art History	Collection of sacred art.	Lisbon
Museu da Guarda	1985	1940		Run by the IMC	Art History, Archaeology		Lisbon

Museu Monografico de Conimbriga	1962	1930		Run by the IMC	Archaeology, Conservation	Museum at the site of the ruins of the Roman city of Conimbriga.	Lisbon
Museum de Ceramica		1983		Run by the IMC	Decorative Arts	Ceramics	Lisbon
Museum Ethnografico e Arqueologico Dr. Joaquim Manso		1976		Run by the IMC	Regional Culture, Ethnography	Located in the former home of the journalist and writer, founder of the Diario de Lisboa (daily newspaper). History of the region and cultural identity of Nazaré... section on maritime ethnography.	Coimbra (formerly a regional museum) in the former episcopal palace.
Museu de José Malhoa	1940	1933		Run by the IMC	Art History	Museum dedicated to the work of José Malhoa.	Lisbon
Museu de Evora	1915	1804	Inaugurated to the public in 1804 as the collection and library of Archbishop Manuel do Cenaculo	Run by the IMC	Art History	Based on the collections of an 18th century curiosity cabinet. Paintings collection, mainly religious art.	Lisbon
<u>Other institutions: universities or ministries...</u>							Lisbon
Museu Militar, National military museum	1926	1851	Artillery museum founded by the General José Baptista da Silva	Ministry of Defence	Military History	Exhibits include an extensive display of guns, pistols and swords (featuring iconic pieces such as Vasco da Gama's sword.	Lisbon

Museu Geologico, the Geological Musuem.	1918	1856		Ministry of Economy, Institute of Geology and Mineralogy			Lisbon
Museu de Marinha, National Maritime Museum.	1962	1863	Former royal collection began by King Louis I (1838-1889). Expanded during the <i>Estado Novo</i> .	Ministry of Defence	History of Maritime Life, Exploration and Warfare	Collections go back to the 15 th c. with historical paintings, archaeological objects and model ships.	Lisbon. The museum is fittingly housed in the monastery or hermitage of Jeronimos, built in late gothic Portuguese style in the 1450s by prince Henry the Navigator.
Museu de Ciência da Lisboa, The University of Lisbon Science Museum	1987	1967		University of Lisbon	History of Science	Basic scientific theory and instruments.	

Serralves foundation and the National Museum of Contemporary Art	1999	1989		State funded but also companies and privated individuals, is administered as a private foundation with a board whose directors are named by the state.	Contemporary Art	Seeks to place contemporary Portugese art at an internation level.	Episcopal palace etc.
Museu Nacional da Imprensa		1997		Non profit association: Association of the Museum of printing.	History of Printing Technology, Publication, Graphic Design, art History	International (Germany, France, America) collection for the technology of printing. Cartoon, graphic arts etc.	Former collegiate church.
Museu do Douro	2009	1998	Created by parliamentary decision	Run by a foundation controlled by the Ministry for Culture	Regional History	A network of museums dedicated to regional economic and cultural themes: tabacco, wine production, silk, bread etc.	Braga
Museu da Presidência da República (Museum of the Presidency of the Republic)	2004			The portugese presidential offices.	National History	History of Portuguese presidents since 1910.	



National Museums in Romania

Simina Bădică

Summary

The idea of a Romanian National Museum is contemporary to the creation of the Romanian national state and the birth of Romanian museology, yet there are several museums that made claims on representing the Romanian nation at different moments in its history, with no single museum being recognized as ‘the’ national museum. Four major museums are included in this report insofar as they make or made strong statements on the national issue throughout the last two centuries: the National History Museum of Romania, the Romanian Peasant National Museum (with its predecessor the *Carol I* National Museum), the disappeared History Museum of the Romanian Communist Party and the recent Sighet Memorial-Museum to the Victims of Communism and to the Resistance.

The report establishes a tentative time frame for the content and meaning of ‘national museum’ in different moments of time over the last two centuries. Each of the chosen museums more or less exemplifies these tendencies in exhibiting the national idea. Starting with the national “cabinet of curiosities“ of the nineteenth century, the report points to the moment of change towards the ethnographical national museum and exhibiting national folk art in the first half of the twentieth century. The Communist takeover is a major fracture in museum history, as the ‘national’ tag is replaced with the ‘central’. The report analyzes the strong centralisation of Romanian museums during Communism, and the surprising return of nationalism in museums of the 1970s and 1980s. Post-Communist museums are characterized by the dilemmas of establishing an anticommunist national identity and the unexpected success of the first Romanian private (civil society) museum.

Special attention is given to the history of one building, designed to be ‘The’ Romanian National Museum, finally hosting several museums whose history is thus intertwined. This report sheds light not only on the stories museums display but also the hidden stories behind exhibiting and collecting, the personalities that shaped their identity, their silences, traumas and unsolved dilemmas.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National History Museum of Romania	1864 1972	1834	Aristocratic initiative (1864), state initiative (1972)	State	Archaeology, History	Universal turned into territorial values	Pre-History to present	Existing building in classical style, central location, Bucharest.
National Museum, <i>Carol I</i> Romanian Peasant National Museumß	1930 (Carol I) 1993 (RPNM)	1906 (Carol I) 1990 (RPNM)	Personal initiative (1906, Al. Tzigara-Samurcas), state initiative (1990)	State	Ethnography	Territorial, peasant art as national art	Medieval to present	Building designed in national style (neo-Romanian) and in central location, Bucharest.
History Museum of the Romanian Communist Party	1953	1948	Romanian Worker's Party	State	History	History of Communism, National History from 1967	Antiquity to present	Existing building in national style, central location, Bucharest.
Sighet Memorial-Museum to the Victims of Communism and to the Resistance	1997	1993	Civil society	Private, Civil Society	History	Territorial values	1945-1989	Reconstructed former political prison, marginal location outside Bucharest.

Introduction: Making of the Romanian nation state

According to official statistics, Romania currently has 25 national museums (CIMEC, 2010) of very diverse themes, from history to geology, from contemporary art to the oil industry and even fire-fighters' history. Most of these museums acquired the national tag only recently, after 1990, as it became financially more profitable to be a national museum: from increased income for the personnel to better funding for museum activities. The idea, however, of a Romanian National Museum is as old as the Romanian state and museology, as there are several museums that made claims on representing the Romanian nation at different moments in its tormented history.

Both the Romanian state and Romanian nation are young entities. Constructed in the nineteenth century, they were based on the European model and translated the urge to transform Eastern "backwardness" into Western "civilization." The road to Europe included a big, strong nation united in a single nation-state, testifying to a single national history, national identity and national culture (see Hitchins 1996).

Two of the Romanian Principalities were united in 1859 and, already in 1864, a German prince, Carol I Sigmaringen, was proclaimed prince of the United Romanian Principalities. This was meant to induce political legitimacy to the new state and bring about the modernization long sought by Romanian Western-minded aristocracy. Indeed, Carol I lived up to his destiny and his input was crucial in laying the foundational stone for many modern institutions, among them the Romanian National Museum.

After gaining independence in 1871 from the dying Ottoman Empire, Romania became a kingdom and Carol I a king in 1881. New territories were added to the new state in 1913 and, most importantly, in 1918, with Transylvania, Bessarabia and Bukowina collectively making up what became known as Great Romania. Although state propaganda claimed the new territories were merely a reunification of 'Romanian lands', the percentage of minorities in Great Romania reached 25%. Accordingly, the national discourse grew in intensity, bringing about more state support for nation-building institutions.

Great Romania was dismantled in 1940, on the eve of the Second World War and was never to become so 'great' again; the Red Army entered Romanian territory in 1944 and in a few years, the Communist regime was fully established in the country. The symbolic moment of this is December 30th 1947 when the monarchy was abolished and the Romanian Popular Republic proclaimed. The Romanian nation was again under scrutiny, this time from the supposedly internationalist, Soviet perspective. For nearly two decades, the word 'national' became a bad word, only to be redeemed in the last two decades of Romanian Communism, during Ceausescu's national Communism.

The fall of Communism in 1989 required redefining, once again, the Romanian nation. The challenges of this process came, on the one hand from Ceausescu's kitsch but successful nationalism and the desire to depart from that variant of national identity and, on the other hand, from the difficult mission of including the Communist past into a coherent story of the nation. These challenges in redefining the nation can be traced in the story of Romanian museums, especially in the two museums created in the 1990s, the Romanian Peasant Museum and the Sighet Memorial-Museum to the Victims of Communism and to the Resistance.

Historiographical remarks on sources

The subject of Romanian national museums has not gathered the interest of either historians or museographers, except for those periods when national museums were actually built: late nineteenth/ early twentieth century and the last two decades of Romanian Socialism (1970s and 1980s). The texts produced with this concern in mind can only be considered primary sources as they polemically deal with the concept in a specific historical context. This is the case with the texts published by Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcas, the first director of the National Art Museum (Tzigara-Samurcas 1936) or manuals and histories of museography published in Socialist Romania (Florescu 1982, Nicolescu 1979).

In the latter, the story of Romanian museums is generally told in a progressive, positivist manner, as if a straight line connects the first random collections of nineteenth century boyars with, for example, the contemporary National History Museum. The general idea conveyed by this kind of history is that the collections grew organically around a central idea, not necessarily national, no matter the political and historical context. The exhibitions are generally disregarded in these historical accounts, the stress being on the collections and sometimes the building (Cleja Stoicescu 1982, Florescu 1982, Opris 1994). The only historical accepted break in the progressive history of museums is the Communist break, the “black hole” of Romanian history (Popovat 1999, Nicolau 2003).

Texts which are usually considered secondary literature, histories and guides of museums, museography manuals and journals, are thus used in this analysis as primary sources, for they tell more about the museum culture and national discourse of the era when they were written.

National museums and cultural policy in Romania: A tentative time frame

Too many people know museums only by their facades and names, both of which can be misleading. Looking at what lies behind museum facades, especially when the name spells National Museum is illuminating and puzzling, for the content of a national museum is spectacular in its diversity throughout the decades and centuries. I have tried to sketch a tentative time frame of what might a visitor expect when (s)he enters a Romanian national museum, if this where possible, in different moments in time.

A. Nineteenth century: a national ‘cabinet of curiosities’. The National Museum is established (1834/1864) but it has no proper building and it exhibits clusters of collections, not necessarily of national production (see case study no.1).

B. Early twentieth century – up to 1945: the historical-ethnographical national museum. The National Museum is to be structured around national art in a national building (see case study no.1).

C. 1945 – 1968: the republican/ central museum – the national becomes a ‘bad’ word. Symbolically, The National Museum established by King Carol I is replaced with the Lenin-Stalin Museum (see case study no.2).

D. 1968 – 1989: comeback of the national in its historical variant. The History Museum of the Republic is established tracing national history and national greatness back to prehistoric times (see case study no. 3).

E. Post-1989: the national dilemma. Museums close their contemporary sections considered tainted by Communist ideology. Yet, the narrative of other sections and historical periods is

considered still valid. The most important new museum of the 1990s, the Romanian Peasant Museum aims to create a link to the interwar National Museum *Carol I*. As the number of national museums grows, the question of what a national museum actually is does not gain momentum. A visitor entering a post-Communist national museum should expect to find either no reference to the recent past of Romanian nation, or an elaborate victimizing discourse on the sufferings of the nation under Communist rule (see case studies no. 1 and 4).

A. The birth moment of the first national museum, and of Romanian museums in general, is slightly debated. There is almost consensus that its origin is in 1834 when local boyar Mihalache Ghica opened up his collections to the public, under the name of Natural History and Antiquities Museum, in the building of the Saint Sava College. Mihalache Ghica had been displaying his antiquities and natural science collections even before, in his own home, but decided that it was high-time to “illuminate” Romanians and invite other collectors to enrich this museum, “a new era in the history of civilization of the Romanian nation” as contemporary press called this new museum (*Curierul Romanesc* quoted in Paunescu 2007). As Mihalache Ghica was the brother of Prince Alexandru Ghica, ruler of Valachia at the moment, the establishment of the museum actually became a state incentive. The first Romanian museum had only one employee and the effort of making a proper place for the collections inside the Saint Sava College apparently deprived the professors of the College of one month’s salary.

Even though the initial name of the museum did not include the national tag, later on, even official documents will refer to it as the National Museum. The principles behind collecting were still blurred between the national principle, collecting objects that pertain to national history and glory, and the curiosity principle, collecting interesting objects indifferent of their national importance. There were incentives around the museum that stressed the national importance of the institution. For example, the professors of Saint Sava College issued a weekly magazine between 1836 and 1838, entitled *Muzeu National* (National Museum) where articles on Romanian history, natural history, archaeology and culture were published and invitations were issued to enrich the collections of the existing museum with national objects. Another initiative of Mihalache Ghica, again endorsed immediately by his brother, the prince, was the mandatory transfer of all antiquities found on Romanian territory to the collections of the museum.

However, despite these national-minded initiatives, the National Museum also aimed at collecting internationally and many of the donations that were made to the museum also included foreign memorabilia, such as Egyptian mummies, Chinese pottery and stuffed animals of different provenience.

In 1864, the National Museum was divided, as two new museums were established: The Antiquities Museum and the Natural History Museum. The Antiquities Museum has slowly been transformed into a history museum, finally becoming the current National History Museum. However, in 1864, when it was established, Romanian history was only one of the four sections of the museum, along with the curiosities section.

The Antiquities Museum did not have a proper building and it was, for a long time, hosted by Bucharest University, also established in 1864. The exhibits though reminded still of a proper 18th century cabinet of curiosities: old Romanian jewels, contemporary objects, paintings and reproductions of famous paintings, weapons and cult objects from South America, Chinese pottery, Romanian folk costumes and rescued Church frescoes, music instruments and Egyptian

mummies; all these in only one room of the museum, as described by Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcas in 1906. This was the same Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcas who argued, at the beginning of the twentieth century, that Romania deserved a proper National Museum which would host Romanian national art, i.e. peasant art.

B. With Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcas and his National Museum established in 1906, a new meaning of the national museum is brought to the front; the historical-ethnographical national museum. In his argument, The National Museum is to be structured around national art in a national building. Slowly, this view prevailed and gained state support so, up to the end of the Second World War, the Romanian National Museum presented to its visitors an ethnographic/peasant art approach to national identity.

The importance of personal incentive and involvement in the creation of Romanian national museums has by now become apparent and it will prove to be a key point in understanding Romanian museum history. Practically every Romanian national museum has started out as the brainchild of a cultural figure with eventually, some political connections, enough to make the figure's idea gain state funding and support. Besides Mihalache Ghica and Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcas, other names will appear further on in this report: Horia Bernea and his award-winning Romanian Peasant Museum and Ana Blandiana and her Sighet Memorial-Museum to the Victims of Communism and to the Resistance.

C. The Communist regime represents, initially at least, a definite break with bourgeois museums, national tradition and thus national museums. The national tag disappears from museum names, as major museums are called, in the 1950s, central or republican museums or museums of republican importance. This is, for example, the Communist definition of the history museum of republican importance: "History museums of republican importance display the country's history or part of the country's history from oldest times to the present, without disregarding the connections with neighbouring countries" ("Scientific norms for the organization and functioning of history and ethnography museums' *Monumente si muzee* 1, 1958). The change in name is however, misleading, as there has never been a more centralized era in the history of Romanian museums as the Communist era. These central museums were national museums in the sense that they became the source of the official version that every other regional, big or small museum should follow. The story presented in the Museum of the Worker's Party, for example, had to be recreated in all regional museums when mentioning the Communist movement, and they all had to mention it. Actually, Communist censorship trained their censors with visits to the aforementioned museum that became the measure according to which all other museums were analyzed for political mistakes and shortcomings.

The complete circuit is one of the terms of the era that is seminal for understanding the over-centralization of museums during Communist rule, especially during the last two decades. The complete circuit was used in the 70s and 80s in the museum profession as an expression of the obligation of every historical museum to present the history of the Romanian nation from prehistory to the present day. It meant that even an archaeological museum had to add special rooms dedicated to the Communist achievements and also that regional museums should abandon regional history and present Romanian history in the national narrative specific to 1980s national Communism (Pavel 1990: 44-48).

D. Museums were considered an important part of Communist propaganda. In 1973, an account on Romanian cultural policy counted 331 museums and 11 million visitors in 1973 (out of a population of 20 million, this is most probably due to the mandatory visits organised by schools and factories). The ‘national’ seems to have disappeared from museum names. They are called, for example, The Museum of History of the Romanian Socialist Republic, the Museum of Art of the RSR, the Village (and Popular Art) Museum or People’s Technological Museum at Dumbrava Sibiului (Balan 1975: 44-45).

However, it is also the Communist regime that organized the comeback of the national discourse in museums, even if not in museum names. As the Communist ideology is presumably an internationalist one, it is not so strange to find these considerations on national museums in one of the few museology manuals printed in the 1980s by one important name of Romanian museology, Radu Florescu. He writes, in 1982, that national museums are

...an instrument of national politics and of constructing national cultures as these entities were defined in the historical development of the 19th century. In a certain measure, for the majority of Western countries, the idea of national museum is nowadays, if not obsolete, as national museums are still important pieces in a network of museums, than outdated as this network of museum is mainly composed of local and specialized museums. However, the national museum – as institution and idea – is still seminal for those people that are currently nation building – for example the peoples of Africa. (Florescu 1982: 11)

Romania was obviously not one of the peoples of Africa, despite Nicolae Ceausescu’s tightening of relations and intensive mutual state visits with African rulers, yet the establishment of a national museum was considered crucial also in Romania’s case. How else could one account for the inauguration of the History Museum of the Romanian Socialist Republic in 1972? What is now called the National History Museum was inaugurated in 1972 by Communist leader Nicolae Ceausescu under the name of History Museum of the Romanian Socialist Republic; the national was not in the name, yet the newly established museum claimed a longer history, going back to the National Museum of the 19th century and it boldly entitled its short-lived scientific review *Muzeul National* (The National Museum) that only published 4 issues (1974-1978), just as the professors of Saint Sava College entitled their review in 1837.

The Romanian state had never had a national history museum before, i.e. a museum that would tell the national story in a chronological, historical manner, and as strange as it may seem it was during Socialist times that this institution, as a nation-building institution was finally established. This fact is congruent with recent historical research proposing that Romanian nation building has its final act during Ceausescu’s rule and the final elements of Romanian identity where those added by the national-Communist ideology of the 1970s and 1980s (Petrescu 2003). Despite its national and one could say even nationalistic discourse to be further on presented, the national was only added to the history museum’s name immediately after 1989.

E. The post-1989 decades are a time of dilemmas regarding the nation and its identity. The impetus gained with the revolutionary end of 1989 was soon transformed in perplexity in regards to what is to be done with official representations, such as the ones in national museums. Was the national-Communist variant of Romanian identity still valid? Was it enough just to erase the references to Communist ideology? How was the Communist regime to be represented and who

would assume responsibility for the crimes as well as the achievements? One of the most commonly embraced solutions to these questions was a temporary complete silence over the Communist past, as if it had never happened, as if it was a black hole in Romanian history (Bădică 2010b).

Irina Nicolau, ethnographer and one of the creators of the Romanian Peasant Museum, of which this report shall have much more to say in subsequent pages, was writing in the early 90s:

There is in Romania a huge emptiness that one has to fill with one's own body, in order to build upon. Or maybe it is better to build a bridge over it, with one pillar in Samurcaș's times and the other in the place where the future starts. But are we wise enough to make that bridge? Are we working fast enough? (Nicolau 2003: 54)

Foreign informed observers of Romanian reality were puzzled by these manoeuvres of organised amnesia. American anthropologist Katherine Verdery wrote, as early as 1994 "How did it happen that Romania is partly resuscitating the past in this way, seeking to lift out whole chunks of the Communist period as if it had never occurred?" (Verdery 1996: 136)

The desire to simulate forgetting the Communist legacy was also shared by museum professionals. In most cases, the contemporary history sections in museums were simply closed down under heavy locks, and it is essential to note that not even 20 years after the 1989 rupture, has anything been conceived of to replace those empty rooms. The most telling example for this museological silence is the National History Museum that has closed the contemporary section immediately after 1989 and then the entire permanent exhibition (for restoration) in 2002. As I am writing, in 2010, there is no permanent exhibition in the National History Museum.

This report will, however, insist that two museums broke this silence, precisely on the subject that triggered it: the Communist past. The Romanian Peasant Museum, established in 1990 and the Sighet Memorial-Museum to the Victims of Communism and to the Resistance, established in 1993 were the two major museums that made a strong claim on national identity; even if not state-supported at the beginning, at least for the Sighet Memorial, their view on Romanian nation and history became mainstream and endorsed by the state as anti-Communism itself became state policy.¹

The dilemma concerning the Communist past was not the only heavy silence in post-1989 Romanian museums. Although Communist ideology was rejected after 1989, the nationalism that characterized its last decades was somehow preserved. The proud narrative of heroic deeds of the Romanian people over the centuries, a narrative strongly supported and propagated by Ceausescu's national Communism, continued to be the master narrative in Romanian museums. Subjects such as the Romanian Holocaust, the disappearance of Romanian Jewry, the atrocities perpetrated by the Romanian army on the Eastern front during World War Two, the discrimination and slavery of Roma people, the Romanisation policies suffered by Hungarian ethnics are among the issues that no museum attempts to exhibit. For a trained ear, the silences in Romanian museums are sometimes louder than the stories that are voiced.

Case studies in chronological order

The Romanian Peasant National Museum/National Museum Carol I

The Romanian Peasant (National) Museum was established in 1990 in the building whose foundational stone had been laid in 1912 for the National Museum. The National Museum of the early twentieth century, as projected by Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcas and supported by the royal family, was meant to be a national art museum, where national art meant prehistoric and roman vestiges, religious art and peasant objects. This exhibition project was never actually installed in the building (except for the ethnographic section) as the building was not entirely finished when the Communist party took control of state politics after the Second World War and consequently evacuated the National Museum and replaced it with the Lenin-Stalin Museum. The establishment in 1990 of the Romanian Peasant Museum in the same building was understood as “the result of a memory effort.” (Andrei Plesu quoted in Nicolau 2003: 39)

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Romania, a new but vivid state on the European map had almost all the institutions a modern state required: Parliament, Academy of Sciences, University and of course, a National Museum. The National Museum, established in 1834 by Boyar Mihalache Ghica, was to be found in the University building, in a few rooms crowded with “old Romanian jewels, contemporary objects, paintings and reproductions of famous paintings, weapons and cult objects from South America, Chinese pottery, Romanian folk costumes and rescued Church frescoes, music instruments and Egyptian mummies.” (Tzigara-Samurcas 1936: 3) The principle behind the collections of this museum was the already out-of-fashion idea that collecting internationally might be a sign of national greatness.

Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcas was one the successful promoters of a new kind of national museum, a museum that exhibits national greatness with national productions. He wrote extensively on the subject at the turn of the century, in publications and memorandums to those in the position to make the change. In 1906, for example, his memorandum to the ministry of Culture argues:

The lack of a national Museum is a shame of which we are all aware. The establishment of such an institution is urgently needed. Our national pride does not allow us to remain in obvious inferiority in this matter also towards our younger neighbours, even more recently entered among civilized states. Sadly we must acknowledge that Bulgarians have surpassed us in this cultural activity. In less than ten years they put together an admirable antiquities museum and a no less precious museum of ethnography and national art. The Serbs are well ahead us also. Not to speak of Hungarian museums with which we can barely hope of ever catching up. (Tzigara-Samurcas quoted in Popovat 1999: 39)

The examples of Romania’s neighbours were meant to put the problem on the state’s priority list. And he was successful, for in the same year, on October 1st 1906; Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcas became director of what would initially be called the Ethnographic Museum of National Art, Decorative Art and Industrial Art (Popovat 1999: 37). The long and heavy title would finally be shortened in 1915 to the National Museum *Carol I* (Popovat 1999: 66). Apparently, state officials gave up on the first national museum, built around the national antiquities and were striving to

construct a new national museum, which would include the antiquities in a larger concept of national art.

The never realised project for the National Museum *Carol I* was to reunite under the same roof as existing but separated museums, making them sections of the National Museum.

1. Section of prehistoric art and migration period
2. Section of Dacian and Greek-roman art
3. Section of voievodal and religious art (medieval)
4. Section of Romanian peasant art
5. Section of modern and contemporary arts
6. Section of minor arts and donations (Popovat 1999: 96).

This vision of the National Museum never became reality, mainly because of the complicated history of the building that was supposed to host the National Museum. Out of all these projected sections, it was only the Romanian peasant art section that started to gather collections and exhibit them, under the close scrutiny of Tzigara-Samurcas himself.

The building of the museum also has a complicated history of glorious plans that hardly ever reached finality. Architect Nicolae Ghika-Budesti designed, in the neo-Romanian style, the building that nowadays hosts the Romanian Peasant Museum. The neo-Romanian style was born at the end of the nineteenth century out of a desire to include old Romanian architectural elements in imposing, urban buildings; this is the only Romanian national architectural style and it was thus natural that the National Museum should be housed in a national style building.

The foundational stone of the building was laid in 1912 by King Carol I himself in a sumptuous ceremony. The foundational act, signed by the king on the occasion, stated that the building would host the National Museum. In fact, in the initial plans of the edifice, the name NATIONAL MUSEUM was to be carved in stone on the frontispiece of the museum, but this was one architectural detail that was finally omitted. Apparently, Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcas was so involved with the museum he created that he engaged in numerous disputes, even with the architect, (Popovat 1999: 67) finally imposing his will on the architectural plans. Started with enthusiasm in 1912, the construction works were stopped in 1914, leaving the museum as an unfinished building with practically no roof. On October 1st 1930, the south wing of the new building was opened for visitors with the ethnographic exhibition carefully curated by Tzigara-Samurcas. The rest of the building was still under construction, which only resumed in 1934 at a very slow pace on an already damaged edifice that again, suffered a lot from earthquakes (1940) and Allied bombings (1944).

The Communist regime found the National Museum *Carol I* with a beautiful, central but still unfinished building and interesting ethnographic collections whose value was not so much appreciated by the new Communist rulers. The building though, seemed much more appealing as the perfect place to establish a new, Communist museum, such as the V.I. Lenin – I.V. Stalin Museum was.

The first step towards the gradual disappearance of the National Museum *Carol I* was changing its name, in 1948, immediately after the monarchy was abolished, into the National Museum of Art and Archaeology. The name was soon to be changed again to the National Museum of Popular Art, then into Popular Art Museum of the Romanian Socialist Republic. In 1952, it was chased away from its building, making room for two Communist propaganda

museums, the V.I. Lenin – I.V. Stalin Museum and the History Museum of the Romanian Workers' Party. In 1978, the Popular Art Museum was united with the Village Museum; practically, it meant the disappearance of the Popular Art Museum, the former National Museum *Carol I*, and the taking over of its collection by the Village Museum. If not for the 'memory effort' performed in 1990 by Minister of Culture Andrei Plesu, the National Museum *Carol I* would have remained just another piece of museum history.

The Romanian Peasant Museum was re-established in 1990, on February 5th, barely one month after the demise of the Romanian Communist regime. The Romanian Peasant Museum was to construct its identity as a continuator of the interwar National Museum and in sharp contrast with its predecessor, the Communist museum. It was not only a question of institutional succession; the distance to be established was between two eras, two worlds and two regimes. The Peasant Museum was to be the bridge Irina Nicolau talked about, the bridge between the interwar period and present day; under the bridge – Communism.

This idea was present from the first moment of the re-establishment of the museum, in February 1990. Andrei Pleșu, the Minister of Culture at that moment, explained his decision:

The idea of re-establishing a museum of ethnography in the building on the boulevard was not the result of an effort of imagination, but of memory. That building was designed by Ghika-Budești especially to be an ethnography museum.... It seemed symbolically useful to exorcise the ghosts of a fake museum such as the Museum of the Romanian Communist Party with a museum belonging to the local tradition. (Nicolau 2003: 39)

The choice for the director of this both new and old museum would prove spectacular. Horia Bernea, was a painter who had never been anything more than an admirer and keen visitor of museums; however, he managed to make the Peasant Museum his last work of art. He was appointed in 1990 and only left the museum upon his death in 2000.

The story of the Peasant Museum is told by the new staff as the story of a struggle: a physical struggle with the transformations that the building underwent as a Communist museum and with all the objects that had lost any purpose or meaning, and a spiritual struggle with the ghosts of Communism. The physical fight did not take too long: only a few months for dismantling, cleaning the exhibition rooms and transferring the objects to other institutions. Ioana Popescu, head of the research department and a visual anthropologist at the museum, who was part of the museum team since 1990, told me, in an interview, the story of the rediscovery of the exhibition rooms: "On the outside, the building has arches in neo-Romanian style. On the inside, we were surprised to discover no cupolas, no arches. There were long rooms, some square-ish, some like wide halls that you walked through, with straight walls on each side. Then we realized that the walls were not real: they were only fake walls hiding the splendid interior architecture."

The Peasant Museum began to organize temporary exhibitions as early as its first year of existence, 1990. The first one was 'Clay Toys' followed by several displays of icons, painted Easter eggs and an exhibition called 'Chairs', all experimental and daring in terms of exhibiting techniques. Their stated aim was to rehabilitate the Romanian peasant, whose image had been severely abused by Communist propaganda; the claim on national identity was more implicit than clearly stated. Romanians had always considered themselves a rural nation, a nation of peasants,

at least before the Second World War, and thus a statement on the Romanian peasant is always a statement on the Romanian nation (Mihailescu 2006).

The museum began to organize small events and exhibitions, to produce unconventional little booklets, most of them hand-made, to establish its reputation as an innovative museum, which took patrimony objects out in the street and hired traditional music bands (*lăutari*) to play on the streets of Bucharest. They began to think of the permanent exhibition, searching for a theme that would give meaning to the new name of the museum. The outcome would have to be both a 'healing museum' as Irina Nicolau wanted it and a 'testifying museum' as Horia Bernea wished. And it did become, in my view, both a healing and disturbing museum, thought provoking, annoying and beautiful, fundamentalist and delicate. In 1996, it was awarded the European Museum of the Year Award.

The 'healing' component of the museum was obviously aimed at the traumatic memory of the Communist regime. Paradoxically, the initial reaction to this past, as reflected in the first permanent exhibition, was a total indifference to it, a deliberate refusal to make any reference to recent history. The first exhibition, entitled *The Cross*, was inaugurated on April 19, 1993; the French anthropologist Gérard Althabe (1997) observed that the exhibition probably spoke more about the Communist past by its total lack of reference to it. Actually, it rather spoke of how the Communist past was viewed in the early 1990s by Romanian intelligentsia: as a black hole that had to be forgotten, put into brackets, in order to reach more easily back to the interwar period where "real" Romanian history and identity was supposed to be found (Badica 2010b).

After cleaning the museum and removing the traces of the Communist past, it seemed necessary to the new staff to reinstall a sense of normality and truthfulness in the previously abused image of the peasant. And this normality could only be reached by keeping silent, for a time, about everything that had been mystified and altered under Communist rule. As Ioana Popescu remembers,

We started with the idea that the discourse on the cross must not be a vindictive discourse. Horia Bernea did not want, by *The Cross*, either to cover the horrors of Communism, or to use it as a weapon. He simply wanted to try to induce certain normality, a normality that he could not imagine in the Romanian world in the absence of the cross. A cross that he saw as an element of balance and order.... So he started by wanting to make peace. A calm and normal speech. We did not think for a moment that in the exhibition *The Cross* there should be the victory of the cross over Communism. (Popescu 2004)

It seemed more urgent for Horia Bernea's team, in the early 1990s, to bring into the museum what was beautiful and harmonious about the Romanian peasant, what was timeless about him. Only after the permanent display was more or less finished, did the need for a discourse on ugliness become urgent. The museum that they had composed was "a serene museum, a museum of peasant balance, in which you didn't notice that you were in fact walking on bones, walking on dead people, dead peasants who had everything taken away from them." (Popescu 2004) From this point of view, it was itself becoming fake and misleading and it needed, Irina Nicolau thought, a counter-balance to all its serenity. This counter-balance was going to be *The Plague*, a room in the basement dedicated to Communist crimes during collectivization. Inaugurated in 1997, it is, to this day, the only permanent exhibition on Communism in any Bucharest museum.

The story of the Romanian Peasant Museum is one of the rare success stories of Romanian transition; a Romanian miracle as some already put it. If the story is indeed seducing, one must not forget that the experience of the Peasant Museum is quite singular and the situation in the vast majority of Romanian museum was immovability, perplexed silence and low-quality uncontroversial exhibitions, if any. Theories concerning museum practice were practically non-existent in 1990s Romania. One of the rare examples of a polemic text that engages with the challenges and difficulties of Romanian museums in post-Communist times also comes from the team of the Peasant Museum in Bucharest. Irina Nicolau's *Me and the Museums of the World* (1996) was written in 1994 when the Romanian Peasant Museum was in the making and she develops the interesting notion of the antidote museum. The antidote museum responded to the double crisis facing Romanian museums in post-Communist period. "The Romanian museum is in a double crisis, provoked by the consequences of Communist ideology and by the danger of badly appropriated occidental museology." (Nicolau 1996:37) She does not give a clear definition but rather composes a Decalogue of the antidote-museum that she thought necessary in "periods of cultural, social and political convalescence":

- [...] 3. One doesn't go to the antidote-museum as one would go to a church, neither to a school, a tribunal, nor a hospital or a cemetery.
- 4. The antidote-museum is the museum of 'Look at that!' Its exhibitions free the object of any stereotyped interpretations.
- 5. One comes to the antidote-museum to see the objects...
- 8. The antidote-museum shows, but also hides. It is for people willing to invest imagination and time. (Nicolau 1996: 38)

Even if the Romanian Peasant Museum added the 'national' tag to its name only in 2007, Horia Bernea was talking about it as a national museum as early as 1993:

Understandably, a country which takes so much pride in the only civilization which can effectively protect it in the eyes of Europe, must have a museum of anthropology in its capital, a national museum about what this traditional man was and is, while also serving as a testimonial for the future. The museum is a basic landmark for anyone who would try to understand this nation. (Bernea quoted in Mihailescu 2006)

The History Museum of the Romanian Communist Party

Changing museum names on political and ideological grounds seems to be a Romanian custom. Yet, none of the already mentioned museums have changed their name so much and so confusingly as the Party Museum, as everyone called it ever since the 50s, despite its frequent renaming and reorganization. The bases of this museum were formed in July 1948 under the peculiar name, Moments from the People's Struggle Museum. In 1951, this museum was reorganized and renamed The Revolutionary Struggle of the People Museum (shortened to the Revolutionary Museum). Re-baptized again in 1954, it became the History Museum of the Romanian Workers' Party. It was then closed in November 1957 only to be reopened in July 1958 in a more sumptuous location, the Neo-Romanian palace on Kiseleff Boulevard that had been expropriated from the Museum of National Art in 1952 (see the first case study). At the time, it shared the building with another museum of Communism: the V. I. Lenin – I. V. Stalin

Museum (which was later renamed the Marx–Engels–Lenin Museum). In 1966, it acquired its last and longest name during its last major reorganization, the History Museum of the Communist Party, of the Revolutionary and Democratic Movement of Romania (Ilie 2010).

Apparently, the claim on national identity was lacking in these museums. On the contrary, the mere fact that these Communist propaganda museums, the Lenin-Stalin Museum and the Party Museum, replaced the National Museum in Romania's capital was statement enough on the projected melting of Romanian national identity into an internationalist, Soviet rhetoric. The abuse was perceived as such in Romanian society and this explains the suspicious joy with which the return of nationalism has been met after 1968, even if in its socialist variant of national identity.

The narrative of these Communist museums, in the 50s and 60s, was of Soviet inspiration, not only in political discourse but also in museum practice, as the Soviet museum became a sort of master-recipe that each satellite state museum had to respect. One of the most obvious examples of such a recipe-museum was the Lenin-Stalin Museum. Before the grand opening in 1955, numerous discussions and meetings were held in order to ensure that the ingredients of the recipe were all gathered in the right amount and in the right order before the Soviet comrades came to give their approval. Comrade Șoimu, deputy director of the museum complained, “there were indications where to put the objects in the show-cases but some were arranged differently” (Grosu 1954: 242). In order to defend himself, the director, Petre Grosu argued, “Changes were made, but not essential, we strictly kept the graph [...]. For example, there was no place on the wall so we put it in a show case in the same place, or it could not be put in some place, we put it next to it.” (Grosu 1954: 246)

The Lenin-Stalin Museum was considered a branch of the Central Lenin Museum in Moscow and thus had to be a sort of replica of the Moscow museum. The recipe repeated itself locally as other smaller museums had to become replicas of the central museum in Bucharest.

In 1966, the two museums inhabiting the former National Museum building merged under the new and even longer name of History Museum of the Communist Party, of the Revolutionary and Democratic Movement of Romania. The long name was supposed to hide the actual disappearance of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Museum, formerly known as the Lenin-Stalin Museum together with the Party's ambitions towards a Moscow-independent policy. This time, it was not only the name but also the exhibition that changed drastically. If the exhibition in the 1950s started with 1848 and the spread of Marxism in Romania, keeping generally to history proper of the Communist movement, the post-1966 exhibition starts with stone age objects, “reconstructing the far away beginnings of our millenary civilization, standing at the foundation of the grandiose edifice of contemporary Romania.” (Lupescu 1974) The new permanent exhibition, very similar to the one in the History Museum at the same time, was actually a reworking of all Romanian historical mythology into a teleological narrative that necessarily leads, through centuries of struggle, to the formation of Socialist Romania and the “multilateral developed society.”

The Party Museum also added its name to the list of Communist consecration places. It was one of the favourite sites for performing the ritual of becoming a pioneer. It was thus not only a museum of the Party but, as holder of communist holy relics (although some have proved to be forgeries), it became itself a sacred place of Romanian Communism. The story of its dismantling,

as the Peasant Museum was settling in only two months after the 1989 revolution, is equally fascinating and an exemplary story of post-Communism (Bădică 2010b).

The National History Museum

Strangely enough, Romania did not have a national history museum up until 1972 and it was the Communist regime, supposedly international, but already in its nationalist period, that established it. A decision with no practical follow-up had been taken in 1955 to build a national history museum, but it was only the 1968 decision, soon after Nicolae Ceausescu's accession to power and at his initiative, by the Communist Party's Central Committee that turned the National History Museum into reality (Ilie 2011). In 1970, the government endorsed the Party's decision and in only two years, 15000m² representing Romanian national history was available for visiting (for comparison, the History Museum of the Communist Party had, at the same time, only 5000m²).

The opening of the History Museum of the Romanian Socialist Republic was a major event, in the presence of the Ceausescus who cut the ribbon and were the first visitors of the new institution. The director of the museum, Florin Georgescu wrote: "Meant to exhibit the most significant testimonies of our country's history, the newly created museum has the important mission of becoming an efficient means of patriotic, internationalist education for the young generations, for all working people in our country" (Georgescu 1974: 1) Yet, the internationalist rhetoric fades at the end of his Foreword to the main publication of the museum, entitled *Muzeul National (The National Museum)* when he calls the institution, "the most representative museal institution in our socialist country: the NATIONAL MUSEUM" (Georgescu 1974: 2).

As the regime was becoming increasingly nationalistic, the importance of the History Museum also increased compared to the previously symbolically representative museum, the History Museum of the Communist Party. It is not that the Communist Party had become less central to Romanian life; on the contrary, the Communist Party was attempting a symbiosis with the Romanian nation. Thus, the history of the Communist Party started together with the history of the Romanian people, tens of thousands of years ago. As difficult to prove historically, both museums, of Romanian History and Party history, started their visiting tour with the Stone Age and the first testimonies of human life on Romania's territory. For the same reasons, important propaganda exhibitions changed location from the Party Museum to the History Museum. How else would an exhibition entitled *Nicolae Ceausescu and World Peace* find its place, in 1981, at the History Museum? (Bădică 2010a: 280).

The 1977 earthquake seriously damaged the nineteenth century building and led to the reorganization of the permanent exhibition, only four years after its opening. It was just another opportunity for enhancing the political overtones of the exhibit. As a contemporary subjective chronicle of the museum recalls on the museum's site: "This second permanent exhibition of the National History Museum was, even more than the first, the expression of the Communist Party's political will, following a much more insistent intrusion into museological creation." An entire section was a homage-exhibition dedicated to Nicolae Ceausescu and exhibited gifts received by the dictator internally and from abroad.

The core of the National History Museum's collections on Communism, the Ceausescu Collection, is based on this peculiar cluster of artefacts, around 10,000 objects coming from the

socialist camp or third world countries in Africa, Asia and Southern America, gathered for 11 years in this homage-exhibition. The exhibition covered around 30% of the museum's exhibiting space, i.e. 10 big halls and as the Ceausescu couple kept receiving gifts, the exhibition was constantly expanding. Together with the 20% allotted to contemporary history, half of the History Museum of RSR was devoted to the post-1945 history, what the museographers of the era named "the construction of socialism" section.

As many other Romanian museums after the 1989 events, the National History Museum, besides becoming national in some sort of memory appeal to the nineteenth century National Museum, closed the contemporary section of the museum, too tainted by communist ideology and entered major restoration in 2002 which gave them the opportunity to close all the other museum halls, except for the Thesaurus and interact with the public only in temporary exhibitions.

Sighet Memorial-Museum to the Victims of Communism and to the Resistance

The Sighet Memorial-Museum to the Victims of Communism and to the Resistance is probably the only major Romanian museum established by civil society, more precisely the Civic Academy Foundation and, even though it has been recognized as a site of national importance and subsidized accordingly ever since, it is still civil society controlled. It is no wonder that the subject matter of the museum, the Communist regime in Romania, is one that most state museums elegantly avoid dealing with. It is the only museum in this report that is not Bucharest-based; on the contrary, it is situated in the far north of the country, closer to the Ukrainian and Hungarian borders.

The reason for including this museum in the report, despite its 'national importance' tag is the fact that it indeed makes a strong claim on Romanian national identity, providing a narrative of victimhood and sacrifice/resistance. Such a narrative might have seemed marginal in the early 1990s, when the museum was established but it has recently risen to the level of state official narrative on the Communist past, with the official condemnation of Communism in 2006 (see footnote 3). The contribution of the Sighet Museum and the Civic Academy Foundation to this official act of the Romanian state was of great importance; it is probably a unique case of a museum imposing its national narrative on the political, and not the other way around as proved to be the case in the above-mentioned museums.

The Sighet prison was built in 1897 on the anniversary of the Hungarian Millennium; it functioned as a Communist political prison and extermination centre for Romania's political and religious elite between 1950 and 1955. Exhibiting Communism in a prison is part of a deliberate choice that grounds the idea that the whole of Romania was a huge prison during the communist regime. The Sighet Memorial has two distinct phases of existence. The museum, inaugurated in 1997, was mainly a museum of the Sighet prison, a memorial to the victims of Communism with a special focus on the victims who lost their freedom and eventually their lives inside the walls of the Sighet prison. The second stage of the museum's development, the current permanent exhibition, proposes a global discourse on Romanian Communism, a proper museum of Communism and not merely a prison-museum. Starting in 2000, Sighet is no more a fragment of the story of Romanian Communism, a tragic account of the lives lost while establishing the

Communist regime in Romania, Sighet has become Romanian Communism as such, the black hole of Romanian history to be looked at through prison bars.

I only visited the Sighet prison-museum once, in 1997, in the first stage of its development; my analysis is thus fragmented between first-hand impressions from my visit, recent virtual visits on the museum's site and secondary literature. In 1997, the museum was still very connected to the actual history of the building: acquired in 1993 by the Civic Academy Foundation it has undergone serious restoration, its inside walls were painted in white and some of the cells were transformed into museum rooms exhibiting 'prison furniture' and the stories of famous interwar political figures, like Iuliu Maniu and Gheorghe I. Brătianu, who were exterminated in the prison in the 1950s. The effect of the improvised museum, at that time, was devastating, precisely because of the lack of public debate on the legacy of the Communist regime and the museum's simple and straightforward manner of telling stories of resistance and repression. 1997 was not only the year of the official opening of the museum, on June 20th, but also the year when the Romanian state finally recognized the Memorial as a site of national importance and started subsidizing its functioning; up until 1997, the Sighet Memorial had been totally privately financed.

Ever since 1997, the museum has been striving to encompass more and more aspects of the history of Romanian and East-European Communism, with exhibitions halls (actually, cells) on subjects as diverse as everyday life during Communism, the Solidarnosc movement, the Hungarian 1956 revolution or demolitions in the 1980s. Although the initial focus on repression, and especially repression in the Sighet prison, has been kept (with exhibition-cells dedicated to the victims of the prison), the prison has actually become a metaphor, a paradigm for telling the story of European Communism. The official poster of the Sighet Memorial is thus very telling: two children are curiously looking through the window of a prison cell, while the text wonders, *Do you want to understand nowadays Romania?* The reading of the image presupposes two commonly shared assumptions: that one cannot understand nowadays Romania without understanding Communist Romania and that the only valid point of view in understanding the Romanian Communist past is the prison cell window.

Sighet was a Jewish town. It was the hometown of Elie Wiesel, the Nobel laureate and Holocaust survivor. Massive deportations, organised by Hungarian authorities during World War Two, targeted the whole Jewish population of the city and surrounding villages. The 12,849 people in Sighetu Marmatiei ghetto were deported to concentration camps in only four days. (International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania 2004: 331-332). The Jewish history of Sighet is almost forgotten, as it is becoming more and more a symbol of resistance to Communism, of Romanian resistance to Communism.

The Sighet Museum is part of a memorial complex that is supposed to function as a "holy place of the Romanian nation" (Cristea and Radu-Bucurenci 2007: 301). The organisers, of which poet and civic activist Ana Blandiana is the most prominent, proudly announce that their memorial is equally a museum, a (summer) school and a research centre. As part of the museum, but 2,5 kilometres away a landscape memorial is slowly growing. On the place where the victims of the prison are supposed to have been buried, planted trees signify a huge contour of Romania. As the trees grow, the contour will become more and more visible, especially from a distance, as a sort of "vegetal amphitheatre inside which the country will lay as a glade. The idea is that, in this way, the homeland keeps its martyrs in its arms as it weeps through repeated generations of

vegetation.” In all this discourse of victimhood and martyrdom there is no single mentioning of the tens of thousands of Jewish victims whose suffering seemed to bear no importance to ‘the homeland.’

Notes

- ¹ On December 18th 2006, president Traian Basescu officially condemned Communism as a criminal regime: “As head of the Romanian State, I condemn explicitly and categorically the Communist system in Romania, from its establishment, on dictated basis in 1944-1947 to its collapse in December 1989. Taking into account the realities presented in the Report, I state with full responsibility: the Communist regime in Romania was illegitimate and criminal.” (Available at http://www.presidency.ro/?_RID=det&tb=date&id=8288&_PRID accessed December 10th, 2010.)

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National Museums in Sápmi

Arne Bugge Amundsen

Summary

A case of high complexity, when discussed in a national museum perspective, is *Sápmi*, the accepted name of the multi-state area of the 'Sámi nation' of Northern Europe. In the Sápmi case, museum history should be told in a retrospective manner. It is quite a recent phenomenon that the Sámi population in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia – after centuries of political suppression and decades of systematic assimilation strategies from the governments – is regarded as a nation and with Sápmi – the transnational area where the Sámi population has its traditional centre – as its geographical location. In this case, 'the nation' is conceived as a cultural and social entity with strong political ambitions both within and across established national borders in the region. Hence, there are no old national museums and no politically acknowledged Sámi state but explicit ideas on 'national identity'. On the one hand, the Sámi population and the Sámi culture to a certain extent were included in the national narratives of Norway, Sweden and Finland in the nineteenth century, then mostly as an exotic element of the nation and exemplifying 'primitive cultures' of the north. On the other hand, the Sámi nation is a cultural construction of recent origin, albeit with some political institutions within and across established states.

The Sámi museums chosen to be presented in this report are museums that, in most cases, have a past as ethnic-local or ethnic-regional museums but in the last decades have been established with some sort of representative status on behalf of the Sámi culture or nation within the National States of the north or as museums with national responsibility for Sámi culture.

In most cases, Sámi organisations or local communities dominated by the Sámi people started to collect objects and immaterial culture. The oldest initiatives were around World War II when many Sámi settlements shared the war tragedies of this region. The most important wave of Sámi museum founding was, however, the 1970s and 1980s, when the Sámi people mobilised a great deal of political, symbolic and cultural strength in order to establish an indigenous identity across old national borders. Especially in Norway, with the largest Sámi population in Northern Scandinavia, many local and regional museums were established. As a consequence of the growing formal and cultural obligations of the Norwegian state towards its Sámi indigenous population, the first Sámi museum with national responsibility for Sámi culture and history was appointed in 1996 (museum 1). Yet there is no single Sámi museum institution designated to the role of leading national museum of Sápmi. Since 2002, the Norwegian Sámi Parliament has declared *all* Sámi museums national Sámi museums and organised them into regional clusters. In *Finland and Sweden*, the initiatives behind Sámi museums (museums 9-10) have also been private, local and/or regional. The State in all three countries acted more actively in the Sámi museum field in the 1980s and 1990s and dominantly for the same reason, i.e. growing obligations towards the Sámi populations as either national minorities (Finland, Sweden) or indigenous people (Norway).

Nation-building aspirations of the Sámi museums were not explicit from the very beginning, but developed from local or regional statuses into some form of national or nationally representative status. Apart from that, the Sámi case is an interesting example of the close relationship between political struggle for cultural recognition, judicial rights and reformation of historical narratives.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actor	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
The Sámi Collection	1972	1930's	Private initiative	Private foundation, State foundation	Cultural history	Regional, national	Sami culture in general, time not specified.	Norwegian folk museum's exhibition complex in modern style, plus outdoor Sámi site on Bygdøy (close to Oslo).
The South Sámi Collections, <i>Saemien Sijte</i>	1979	1964	Private initiative	Private foundation	Cultural history	Regional, national	Sami culture in general, time not specified.	Awaiting new building in 2013 in Sámi style, located in Snåsa, Norway.
Kautokeino Folk Museum	1979	1979	Municipal authorities	Municipality	Cultural history	Regional, national	Sami culture in general, time not specified.	Style of 1987 building: Sámi Open door museum, Kautokeino, Norway. Regional cluster, Finnmark.
Tana Local Museum	1980	1980	Municipal authorities	Municipality	Cultural history	Regional, national	Sami culture in general, time not specified.	Log house from 1790, oldest building in Tana. Regional cluster in Finnmark.
Varanger Sámi Museum	1983	1983	Municipal authorities	Municipality	Cultural history	Regional, national	Sami culture in general, time not specified.	Sámi inspired timber construction (1995), Varangerbotn, Norway. Regional cluster, Finnmark.
Kokelv Coastal Sámi Museum	1991	1983	Private initiative	Private foundation	Cultural history	Regional, national	Sami culture in general, time not specified.	Wooden house (rebuilt WWII), in Kokelv, Norway. Regional cluster, Finnmark.

Porsanger Museum	1998	1969	Private initiative	Municipality	Cultural history	Regional, national	Sami culture in general, time not specified.	Several exhibitions in Porsanger, Norway, Regional cluster, Finnmark.
Árran Lule Sámi Center	1994	1982	Private & public initiative	Public foundation	Cultural history	Regional, national	Sami culture in general, time not specified.	Sámi tent-shaped wooden complex in Tysfjord, Norway. Region of Nordland.
Swedish Mountain and Sámi Museum, <i>Ájtte</i>	1989	1966 1983	Private initiative	Public and private foundation.	Cultural history, Natural history	Regional, national	Sami culture in general, time not specified.	Sámi material and interior and award winning architecture. In Jokkmokk, Sweden.
Inari Sámi Museum	1962	1959	Private initiative	Private foundation	Cultural history, Natural history	National special museum	Sami culture in general, time not specified.	Open air museum, Sámi dwellings, huts and houses in Inari, Finland.

Note. Museums 2-8 have status as National Sámi museums in Norway since 2002 and Museums 3, 5-7 were united as The Sámi Museum of North West Finmark in 2006

Introduction

Sápmi is not a state or a country but a cross-national or multi-state area where the Sámi population has its historical residence. All museums in this area dedicated to Sámi history and culture are of private and local/regional origin. In most cases, Sámi organisations or local communities dominated by the Sámi people started to collect objects and immaterial culture. The oldest initiatives were around World War II when many Sámi settlements shared the war tragedies in this region. The most important wave of Sámi museum foundings was, however, the 1970s and 1980s, when the Sámi people mobilised a great deal of political, symbolic and cultural strength in order to establish an indigenous identity across old national borders. Especially in Norway, with the largest Sámi population in the north of Scandinavia, many local and regional museums were established. The Norwegian Government's post-war norwegianization policy was altered with the new legislation of 1988 that enabled "the Sámi people to preserve and develop their language, culture and way of life" (<http://sapmi.uit.no/>). As a consequence of the growing formal and cultural obligations of the Norwegian state towards its Sámi indigenous population, the first Sámi museum with national responsibility for Sámi culture and history was appointed in 1996 (1). Since 2002, the Norwegian Sámi Parliament has declared all Sámi museums national Sámi museums and organised them in regional clusters. In Finland and Sweden, the initiatives behind Sámi museums (9-10) have also been private, local and/or regional. The State in both countries acted more actively in the Sámi museum field in the 1980s and 1990s, for the same reason as in Norway, i.e. growing obligations towards the Sámi populations.

The Sámi population is divided between Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia and is internationally recognised as indigenous by the United Nations through ILO convention 169 (1989). Historically, the Sámi represent a nomadic culture widely distributed in Northern Scandinavia but about whose origin there are no definite historical or archaeological sources. Their long history in Northern Scandinavia also includes long traditions of communication and interaction with other population groups in the same area. Not until the eighteenth century were state borders finally negotiated in this part of Europe. The new borders also meant new strategies for registration, education and subordination duties of the Sámi, and, in the nineteenth century, it was commonly agreed that the best way of developing the social and cultural status of the Sámi was to "nationalise" them with regard to language, manners and religion. Missionary organisations had them as specific objects of their activities, and Laestadianism – a strict, Pietistic revival movement – gained wide support among the Sámi in all three Scandinavian countries from the middle of the century (Lehtola 2002. Meriot 2002).

In the twentieth century, a diminishing part of the Sámi have continued their nomadic ways of living and, especially after World War II, assimilation and modernisation processes were also dominant in the traditional Sámi areas. However, in the 1970's Sámi activists started to argue that the "nationalisation" of earlier generations had been unrighteous and not according to the historical, cultural and human rights of an indigenous population. These activists also played an important part in developing strategies for establishing a genuine Sámi identity, including the use of the Sámi languages, traditional myths and religion, handicrafts and garments. Many of them being reindeer herders, this livelihood became a symbol for the Sámi people in general (Tromsø museum 2000).

As mentioned, it is a quite recent phenomenon that the Sámi population in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia is regarded as a nation and with Sápmi – the transnational area where the Sámi population has its traditional centre – as its geographical location. In this case “the nation” is conceived as a cultural and social entity with strong political ambitions. It has, through its own transnational organisations and assemblies, established its own National Day (6 February, since 1992), its own National Flag and National Anthem (since 1986).

Sápmi is in regular use as the name of the transnational area where the Sámi population live. The status of the Sámi in the four mentioned countries, however, differs quite substantially. Norway (1988), Finland (1996) and Sweden (2010) have Constitutional amendments to ensure Sámi rights to have their language, culture and society protected and supported. All three countries also have separate Sámi Parliaments (Finland 1973, Norway 1989 and Sweden 1993), but the authorities of these institutions differ widely. In Finland and Sweden, the Sámi Parliaments have their widest authority within the field of culture and language, while the Norwegian Sámi Parliament has wide political and judicial authorities and a substantial administrative organisation. Most important is the fact that, in 1990, Norway ratified the ILO convention on indigenous peoples thus giving its Sámi population specific cultural, political and judicial rights, while Finland and Sweden have been reluctant to do so; with the explicit argument that the Sámi rights to geographical areas and natural resources have to be discussed further. Accordingly, the Sámi in Finland and Sweden have the status of one of several national minorities (www.sweden.gov.se).

We find that the national role of the Sámi people changed with the anti-colonial movements of the 1970s, from constituting an exotic element in Norway’s history, to representatives for a separate people with a cultural identity of their own. This process is very well demonstrated in Tromsø Museum’s exhibition from 2000: *Sápmi: Becoming a nation*. We find that Norwegian representatives of the Sámi people – being the most numerous group of the Sámi population – came forth early as strong political activists, using political icons of the time to express their opinion (e.g. Che Guevara) and drawing attention to their situation in international courts. The hydroelectric project constructed on the Alta-Kautokeino River in 1982 caused several years of prior court-contests and protest camps on the construction site. A *lávvu* – Sámi tent – was even put up in front of Stortinget (the Norwegian parliament) as part of the political demonstrations. Even if the case was lost, improved consciousness of Sámi rights to land and water in their traditional areas was won during the process, causing increased acceptance of and media publicity for Sámi people in general and reindeer herders in particular. Sámi characters entered the scene in popular TV-series and Sámi artists partook in the Eurovision song contest (1980). A parallel situation developed in Sweden during the same period as 15 years of struggle for Sámi rights to Skattefjäll (a mountain area) was lost in 1981, yet the political controversies never reached the same dimensions as in Norway (Tromsø museum 2000. Einarsbøl 2010).

Russian representatives of the Sámi people were totally excluded from these early Sámi movements due to the Soviet Regime, but established its first association in 1989 (Kola Saami Association) and were gradually included in transnational Sámi organizations after the fall of the Soviet Union. Not being the only indigenous people in Russia, representatives of the Sámi have now organized themselves together with other indigenous groups under the Euro-Arctic Council that has its office in Lovozero in Murmansk Oblast and is funded by the Norwegian Barents

Secretariat. The first Kola Sámi conference was held in Olenegorsk, Murmansk Oblast on December 14th, 2008, but a Sámi parliament in the Russian Federation has yet to be established (www.barentsindigenous.org/).

Today, approximately 50,000 Sámi are living in Norway, 20,000 in Sweden, 10,000 in Finland and 2,000 in Russia, but the estimation varies.

National museums in Sápmi

The old national museums of Norway, Sweden and Finland contain rich Sámi collections. For instance, and as already mentioned, the Ethnographic Museum of the University of Oslo had a rich Sámi collection now transferred to The Norwegian Folk Museum. An important Sámi collection has also been an integrated part of Tromsø Museum in Northern Norway, established in 1872. A separate department of Sámi ethnography was established in 1949 (Reymert 1991:18) following the older “Lapp section” organised at the founding of the museum and with its own curator, Dr. *Just Qvigstad* (1853 - 1957), from 1884 (-1934) (Tromsø Museum 1947:78ff. Mathisen 2000). An additional permanent Sámi exhibition opened in 2000, presenting modern Sámi history: Sápmi - becoming a nation.

Likewise, the Nordic Museum (*Nordiska Museet*) in Stockholm, established in 1873, had a permanent thematic Sámi exhibition from 1874 and collected substantially in the Sámi regions in Northern Scandinavia. Today, the museum has approximately 6,300 “entries” of Sámi origin (Silvén 2008:312f). In the new building of the Nordic Museum, finished in 1907, two separate rooms were called “The Lapp Department” and designed for the display of the Sámi collections. These collections had Dr. *Ernst Manker* (1893-1972) as their first curator from 1939. Manker did substantial fieldwork and culture documentation in the Sámi areas and he instigated a separate Lapp Archive at the Nordic Museum as well as designed a new permanent Sámi exhibition in 1947. This exhibition had a quite functionalistic approach, focussing on the relationship between arctic nature, the Sámi people and their way of living. Manker’s exhibition was replaced by another exhibition in 1981, called “The Sámi”. The preparation of this exhibition was accompanied by growing critical debates on representation and representativity originating from Sámi activists and Sámi organisations. The 1981 exhibition was closed in 2004 and a new one opened in 2007, this time called “Sápmi”, which explicitly referred both to the Sámi community and the Sámi area. The exhibition also presented post-colonial perspectives and tested the notion of hybrid cultures (Silvén 2008).

The Norwegian Folk Museum in Oslo also collected Sámi items from the 1890s onwards, but not until 1951 did it have a separate Sámi Department with its own curator, Dr. *Asbjørn Nesheim* (1906-1989). At the same time, the Sámi collection of the Ethnographic Museum of the University of Oslo was transferred to The Norwegian Folk Museum. This collection is still one of the largest single Sámi collections in Norway (RiddoDuottarMuseat is larger but consists of four separate institutions), and its first exhibition was opened in 1958. By 2011, the collection consisted of approximately 4,300 objects (RiddoDuottarMuseat 8,500 objects). A new exhibition was presented in 2000 (Pareli 2000; <http://www.norskfolkemuseum.no/en/Collections/The-Sami-Collections/>).

Important Sámi collections are also part of the *National Museum* in Helsinki, Finland. This museum has a collection of approximately 2,600 objects, most of them the result of collecting

between 1902 and 1939. The National Museum has a permanent exhibition room called “Life in the Land of the Sámi” (Harlin 2008:80f. www.nba.fi/en/nmf).

These facts taken into consideration, the Sámi history and culture was included in the national narratives already in the nineteenth century, yet mostly as exotic elements of the nations and after inspiration from the popular World exhibitions where exhibiting “primitive” cultures was of great interest (Bergstøl et al. 2004).

The national role of the Sámi people changed in accordance with the 1950s ideal of equality as they were included in the Norwegian welfare community and referred to as ‘Sámi-speaking Norwegians’. The transfer of the Ethnographic museum’s Sámi collection to the Norwegian Folk Museum was part of this policy as Sámi culture was to be displayed alongside Norwegian culture. Since the 1970s, earlier museum representations have been the object of strong critique not least from the cultural and political elite within the Sámi population.

Concurrent with the Sámi being given new legal rights within the nation states of Finland, Sweden and Norway, they have also claimed their own museums as separate from the old national museums. The strategy behind these claims has obviously been to use Sámi museums as vehicles for developing a stronger ethnic identity among the Sámi themselves. Yet internal strides emerged gradually as a marginal Sámi group – the reindeer herders (constituting only ten percent of the total population) – became the very symbol of Sámi culture, allowed to define what it meant to be Sámi (<http://sapmi.uit.no/>). Thus Sámi identity is still being renegotiated in new museums focusing on typical Sámi livelihood previously bypassed. Other aspects of Sámi life and history are yet to be included in the national Sámi narrative. The fact that most contemporary Sámi representatives – in both Norway and Sweden – now live in the capital cities (Oslo, Stockholm) is, for instance, not very well communicated in the Sámi museums presented in this report as the national Sámi narrative is closely related to the Sápmi area. Another aspect of Norwegian Sámi history being treated to a varied degree in the Sámi museums is *Laestadianism*, the previously mentioned Christian revivalist movement founded in the 1840s and widespread in the northern parts of Scandinavia from the middle of the 1800s and adopted by many Sámi communities (Lehtola 2002. Meriot 2002).

Sápmi, the Sámi Area is divided into cultural and language-based subdivisions (e.g. East, Central and South Sápmi) in which each respective Sámi group now dwells. Territorializing across state borders is limited to reindeer herders with separate conventions regulating activity across each border. Sámi politics and jurisdiction developed separately in each of the Nordic countries, but different Sámi organizations and associations work as pressure groups presenting general claims and strategies at a transnational level. Norwegian counties rather than transnational Sámi regions encompass the Sámi museum regions in Norway, except the Lule Sámi museum in Drag partly addressing a Swedish Sámi audience. The South Sámi Museum in Snåsa represents only the Norwegian part of the South Sámi region.

Both Norway and Finland have established what are called national museums for Sámi culture, while Sweden has a “principal museum of the Sámi culture”. In addition, a number of more local or regional Sámi museums have been established. No Russian museum institutions promote Sámi culture except for the Kola Sámi museum in Lovozero, and a temporal photo exhibition (2011) in Murmansk regional museum (www.barents.no 2011. www.murmantourism.ru).

An important element in the development of Sámi museums and collections in Norway has been the fact that, since 1975, permanent museums – not only the national, but also the regional and local ones – had their annual budgets paid mainly by the State and the County. In 1975 this financing system covered 175 Norwegian museums. Twenty years later, when the financing structure was reorganised, it covered 315 museums. During this period, there was substantial growth in the number and activities of Norwegian museums. This also had a deep impact on the formation of Sámi museums based on earlier private or organisational initiatives, mainly in the 1960s and 1970s. Between 1980 and 1996, 5 Sámi museums were included in the State and County financing structure. In most cases these museums were parts of local or regional culture centres.

Case studies in chronological order

The earliest example of the development of Sámi museums in Norway seems to be the Saemien Sijte/*The South Sámi Collections*, founded as a private organisation in 1964 with the aim of establishing a separate Sámi museum. The Saemien Sijte was installed in a separate building in 1979-1980 that also served as a Sámi culture centre. Its location is Snåsa in North Trøndelag County, and it is still organised as a private foundation. The collection consists of photographs and objects related to South Sámi daily life and culture. The collection is closely linked with a systematic registration of Sámi cultural heritage in Nord-Trøndelag and the southern parts of Nordland Counties since 1984 (Haga 2004. <http://www.saemiensijte.no/>).

Another example is the Guovdageainnu gilišillju/*Kautokeino Folk Museum*, which started its work in 1979. This is a local open-air museum owned by the municipal authorities. A separate museum building was finished in 1987. The Tana Municipality opened the Deanu Musea/Tana Local Museum in 1980 and the Várjjat Sámi Musea/Varanger Samiske Museum was established in 1983 and owned by Nesseby Municipality.

Sámiid Vuorká-Dávvirat/*The Sámi Collections* opened in 1972 in Karasjok as the first Sámi museum in Norway with a separate building and an administrative staff. The first plans for this museum were formulated in the 1930s. This museum received, in 1996, the status of *a national museum for Sámi culture in Norway*. This status implied that the Norwegian Government funded it directly and totally, but it was organised as a private foundation with a majority of the Board elected by the State and the Sámi Parliament. The museum aims at covering the entire Sámi area in Norway with its collections, and its main purpose is to protect Sámi identity, language and cultural traditions, including the development of the Sámi language as an academic language. The collections, however, have their main base in Finnmark County. The collection consists mainly of Sámi handicraft, artefacts, textiles, trade and transport in addition to a large number of photographs. By 2005, the number of museum objects was ca. 4,500 in addition to 11 antiquarian buildings, 650 pieces of art and 11,300 photographs (Olli 2005).

In recent years (2006-2007), the museum has been reorganised and united with Sámi museums in Kokelv (Kokelv Coastal Sámi Museum in Kvalsund established 1991 and based upon plans developed by Kokelv Sámi Association from 1983), Kautokeino Folk Museum and Porsanger Museum (established in 1998 as a result of systematic collection of objects by Porsanger Historical association from 1969) under the name of RiddoDuottarMuseat/*The Sámi Museum of North West Finnmark*. This new museum is organised as a foundation whose founding members

are both municipalities and private museum organisations. Its administrative centre is in Karasjok (www.riddoduottarmuseat.no/).

Based on plans developed since 1982, Árran Julevsáme Dávvervuorkka/Árran lulesamiske senter/*Árran Lule Sámi Center* was established in 1994 in Drag/Tysfjord in Nordland County. It was defined as a national centre that aims at maintaining and developing Sámi language, culture and society in the Lule Sámi area, including Sweden. Since 1999, a scientific journal (*Bårjås*) has been published in Lule Sámi and Norwegian/Swedish by the institution. Part of the centre is a museum with collections and exhibitions showing the Sámi way of life in the district, including Sámi dress and handicrafts. The centre is organized as a foundation owned by the Norwegian State, Nordland County and Tysfjord Municipality. Both educational institutions – kindergarten, library and workshops – and Sámi administrative functions are located at the Árran Center (Gælok 1992. Berg et al. 1997. Láng 2005. <http://www.arran.no/>).

In the 1990s, the Norwegian Government planned for structural changes in the museum field. Taking the relatively large number of small museums in the country as a starting point, the Government decided to commence processes aiming at enhanced and strengthened cooperation and division of work between them. These processes, in the last decade, have also resulted in larger museums on a local and regional basis.

Parallel with this, the Sámi Parliament (*Sametinget*) in Norway expressed its claim on similar processes among the Sámi museums. In 1999, the President of the Sámi Parliament explicitly addressed this issue stating the necessity of the Sámi Parliament being in charge of the structural changes of the Sámi Museums in order to sustain these institutions as central actors in the continued establishment of Sámi identity and culture. In 2000, the Sámi Parliament openly criticized Norwegian museum policy for lacking clarification of ownership, conservation problems, coordination and political control with the Sámi museums. As a result, the Sámi Parliament in 2002 was given the administrative authority over all Sámi museums in Norway. The Sámi Parliament then decided that no single museum should have the status as the national Sámi museum. Accordingly, all museums currently under the administration of the Sámi Parliament share national responsibility for Sámi culture. This administrative authority consists of different elements: the Sámi Parliament distributes the national economical support to the museums but also decides the administrative, political and museological development of the Sámi museums in Norway. This means that these museums, even if organized as separate foundations and regional clusters of museums, still have important political functions as instruments for Sámi identity and cultural independence in Norway (Schanche 2000; Sametingsrådets melding 2004). As for the museum buildings, Sámi culture inspires choice of colour, form and material for those drawn by architects (Kautokeino Folk museum, Varanger Sámi Museum, Árran Lule Sámi Center, the future Saemien Sijte and Ájtte in Sweden).

The definition of a Sámi museum was developed during the 1980s on both a national and a Nordic level: Sámi culture as the main theme of the museum, autonomous Sámi control, Sámi administrative and academic employees, localization in a Sámi area and an explicit Sámi cultural policy. This definition has been modified and discussed during the later years, but in any case, the national museums of Norway, Sweden and Finland are not defined as Sámi museums. As a consequence, the museums defined as Sámi museums should be regarded as Sámi parallels to national museums – which also seem to be the intended consequence of the different definitions.

The Nordic Museum (Nordiska Museet) in Stockholm was, until 2009, defined as the ‘responsible museum’ for Sámi cultural history in Sweden, while Ájtte – the Swedish Mountain and Sámi Museum – was defined as the ‘main museum’ for displaying Sámi culture. Ájtte is today defined as ‘principal museum of Sámi culture’, special museum for the mountain region and an information centre for mountain tourism. The museum originated in 1966 when the Jokkmokk Museum was established on the basis of a private collection of objects – mainly silver objects – from the area. In 1983, a foundation was established by the Swedish State, the Norrbotten County, Jokkmokk Municipality and two Sámi national associations. In 1989 it was formally inaugurated in Jokkmokk in Lapland under its present name and the museum is situated in a very central and historic Sámi area of Sweden. The museum has an ecological scope placing the region’s natural resources as a dominant factor for the cultural and social history of the Sámi population.

Through its exhibitions, Ájtte presents a combination of natural and economic history of the region and the history of the Swedish Sámi population. The first of the exhibitions was opened in 1992, concentrating on major themes in Sámi culture and migration and the Sámi uses and notions of nature. Other exhibitions focus on Sámi Pre-Christian religion, on the changes of the region following modern industrialisation and the importance of water as a means of transportation and a source of power.

The location of Ájtte is interesting: Jokkmokk is situated in an area where Swedish mining started in the seventeenth century, where the exploitation of water for the production of electricity was dominant ever since the nineteenth century, and where the timber and sawmill industries have had a stronghold. Since 1996, parts of the area in the Jokkmokk Municipality have been included in the UNESCO world heritage site Laponia – a substantial wildlife area with heavy references to Sámi culture. Consequently, Ájtte also comprises an exhibition on this world heritage site thus making the mountain nature and culture part of a common human heritage.

The museum has embedded its focus on the Sámi culture in the region in its threefold function as centre for the nature of the region and as informative entrance to mountain tourism in the area. At the same time, the museum has strong links to Sámi identity building, e.g. through its hosting of the annual “winter market” which features traditional Sámi food and drink, crafts, live performances, and reindeer races (www.ajtte.com/sprak/english/. Vem äger kulturarvet 2000. Larsson 2004. Magnusson 2006).

In Finland, the Inari Sámi Museum – later named the Sámi Museum Siida - was founded in 1959 by the organization Sámi Litto - Saamelainen yhdistys ry/The Union of the Sámi and opened for the general public as an open-air museum in Inari in 1963. A very important background for this initiative was the fact that a large number of Sámi buildings and objects were destroyed as a result of the wars in Finland before 1945. Another motivation for the building of a Sámi collection was the modernisation processes in the Sámi areas of Finland in the post-war period, processes that e.g. lead to reduced interests in traditional Sámi culture and activities.

The museum is an open-air museum that collects Sámi buildings and artefacts and also comprises a photography collection and a reference library. The Sámi Museum Foundation/Sámi Museum - Saamelaismuseosäätiö was established in 1986 as the formal owner of the Museum. The foundation has its own board of which a minimum of half the members must be Finnish

citizens of Sámi origin. In 1998, a new museum building erected with funding from the European Union was inaugurated.

Since 1999, the Sámi Museum Siida has had an officially declared status as the national special museum for preserving the culture of the Finnish Sámi. It has two regional branches in addition to its centre in Inari – at the Skierri Exhibition Centre in Hetta in the municipality of Enontekiö there is an exhibition focusing on the reindeer herding Sámi in Finland, and in in Sevettjärvi in the municipality of Inari there is a Skolt Sámi Heritage House devoted to the cultural heritage of the Skolt Sámi population who settled in this area in the post-war period. The exhibitions at the museum combine presentations of the natural history of Lapland with displays of Sámi culture and history in Lapland and Northern Scandinavia. The exhibition also present what are regarded as the important elements in the development of a Sámi nation: organisations, religion, art and handicraft, politics and symbols.

According to its bylaws, the purpose of the Sámi Museum Siida is to document the spiritual and material culture of the Finnish Sámi and to contribute to the strengthening of the Sámi identity in Finland. By putting the “cultural ecosystem” of the Sámi people on display, the exhibition aims at “showing both traditional Sámi values and the changes due to the development of modern society thus strengthening the national identity of the indigenous population of northern Europe”, as the official museum brochure puts it in 1998. The museum is, for the most part, financed by Finland’s Ministry of Education and Culture. The municipality of Inari also grants the Museum discretionary funds every year (Pennanen 1993; Siida 1998; www.siida.fi/contents/Sámi-museum).

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National Museums in Scotland

Sheila Watson

Summary

In 1707 an Act of Union joined together two former independent nations, England and Scotland. National museums in Scotland have supported the state making and state affirming process and, for a long time, this concept of nationhood was one that fitted comfortably within the notion of the United Kingdom/Great Britain and the union with England. Scottish nation building has been influenced by both civic and ethnic ideas of nationalism, and museums express elements of both of these.

Aristocrats and the middle classes promoted the development of museums as a way of expressing their devotion to their country and their commitment to the Enlightenment. Democratic in nature, Scotland's national museums were open to all, but until the mid twentieth century their displays were, on the whole, for connoisseurs and experts. Fine arts were promoted in the mid nineteenth century as part of a drive to improve design in trade and industry through the Industrial Museum of Scotland, established by Act of Parliament in 1855, opened in 1862, renamed the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art in 1864 and then renamed again the Royal Scottish Museum in 1904. Unlike the Museum of Antiquities, this was a government driven project, inspired in part by the Great Exhibition, the Crystal Palace (which was imitated in the Museum's architecture) and the South Kensington museum complex. It is not surprising that in the past Scotland compared her museums with those in London and sought to emulate them, for many politicians and industrialists moved easily between the two capitals and had influence in both. National museums in Scotland were about supporting Scottish identity and pride within the United Kingdom. Devolution in 1998, (coinciding as it did with the opening of a national Museum of Scotland), has led to greater demands for Scottish independence and the National Museum of Scotland has become a symbol of growing national confidence. The Museum presents the Scots as a great nation whether they are inside the Union as now or, in the distant past, outside it. The 1998 Museum of Scotland is sometimes referred to the National Museum of Scotland. To avoid confusion, as the new amalgamation of the Royal Scottish Museum with the Museum of Scotland has led to both museums being united under a title of National Museum of Scotland, the 1998 Museum of Scotland is not referred to as the National Museum of Scotland in this paper. Occasionally it is described as 'national' without the capital letter that would denote an official title.

Scottish exceptionalism has a long history and can be found in the archaeological collections and displays of the National Museum of Antiquities in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It subscribes to an idea that the Scots are different ethnically and culturally from their southern neighbours. While current museums do not advocate racial Scottishness, relationships with overseas visitors of Scottish origin are fostered. Museums continue to play a role in civic nation building by demonstrating the importance and effectiveness of the Scots in a wider Britain and their contribution to the United Kingdom as a whole, while reminding them that they were

independent in the past and, by implication, could be so again in the future. The case studies include the National Museum of Scotland, the National Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery.

The origins of the first national museum of Scotland can be found in the establishment of the Museum of Antiquities of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1780 by David Steuart Erskine, Earl of Buchan. It was one of several museums founded around this time in the United Kingdom in part as a consequence of the Enlightenment and the desire to order and regulate knowledge. Its collections passed into public ownership in 1858 and it became the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland. Erskine's aim was, within that framework of the Union, to celebrate Scotland's distinctiveness. The foundation took place during a time of Celtic revival, a romantic yearning for ancient cultural practices located in a time beyond history, linked to ideas about an ethnic identity rooted in folk practices. The museum had a key role in promoting the idea of the Scots as a nation, ethnically and culturally separate from the rest of the UK and Europe. By 1879, Dr Joseph Anderson, the Keeper of the National Museum of Antiquities between 1869 and 1913, argued that archaeology demonstrated the unique nature of the Scottish people. It did no such thing but his influence was felt well into the mid twentieth century in the museum and in the public imagination. There is little or no evidence that politicians promoted this sense of Scottish exceptionalism. The National Museum of Antiquities' staff had a similar level of independence to those of their colleagues in London national museums. They decided what to display and what stories to tell.

The Royal Scottish Museum was founded in 1854 by the British government and was the responsibility of the Department of Science and Art. It was first called the Industrial Museum of Scotland (and only renamed in 1904), and was intended to focus on natural history, geology, science and technology as well the decorative arts. It was created in response to the example of the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London, an exhibition that encapsulated the mid nineteenth century's interest in industrial design and inventions and the desire to promote high quality manufacturing.

In 1985, these two national institutions, the Royal Scottish Museum and the National Museum of Antiquities, amalgamated to create the National Museums of Scotland (rebranded as National Museums Scotland in 2006). A new national Museum of Scotland was opened in 1998 to tell the story of Scotland. It had been long in the making and was motivated as much by practical considerations as political ones. However its opening coincided with devolution and it is now funded directly by the devolved Scottish parliament. Its relationship with the rise of Scottish nationalism and demands from some quarters for independence from London is complex. It is difficult to disentangle to what extent its existence helped to drive forward a national agenda and to what extent it responded to it. Nevertheless, it contributes to the idea of the distinctiveness of Scotland over time. There is also some evidence that curatorial staff were encouraged by political interest to develop a more nationalistic story than they originally intended (see essays in ed. Fladmark 2000). The second phase of this scheme, the refurbishment of the Victorian building of the Royal Scottish Museum, opened in July 2011. The two buildings are now interlinked and come under one name, the National Museum of Scotland.

The National Gallery of Scotland opened in 1859 but its origins date back to several institutions established in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to encourage good design and fine art in Scotland by providing students with old masters to copy. It was a government initiative

under the Board of Manufactures. We see in Scotland something similar to that in England. Artists developed their own Academy, supported by aristocratic and wealthy middle class collectors. The Academy's collection of old masters and Scottish artists was very much a teaching collection and art was for training as much as for appreciation. At the same time, towards the middle of the nineteenth century, inspired by developments in London, wealthy, educated and aristocratic Scots began to aspire to a kind of National Gallery, and this was developed from the Institution for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Scotland (founded in 1819, with a Royal Charter in 1857), along with collections from the Society of Antiquaries. All these collections were housed in the same building on the Mound in Edinburgh and the Institution's collections that related to art were curated by part time Academicians until the appointment of the first full time director, J.L. Caw (1864–1950) in 1907.

The National Portrait Gallery was intended right from the start as 'the highest incentive to true patriotism' (Anon cited Clifford 1989: 11). It shared a site with the National Museum of Antiquities. Founded in 1882 the Gallery sought to tell the history of the nation through portraiture and imitated the London National Portrait Gallery.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Museum of Antiquities	1858	1851	Society of Antiquaries, Aristocracy and middle class patrons.	British Parliament, through Board of Trustees	Archaeology	National	Prehistory to early Modern period	Edinburgh
Royal Scottish Museum	1861	1854	Prince Albert, Aristocracy, middle class patrons.	As above	Ethnography, Natural Sciences, Applied Arts, Technology and the natural world	Universal	From beginnings of time to modern times	Traditional building in Venetian Renaissance style. Edinburgh
Museum of Scotland	1998	1930s, 1951, 1985	Curators, Aristocracy, Middle Class, Parliament.	As above	Geology, Archaeology, Social History	National	From the formation of the continents to the present time	Modern building with medieval associations. Edinburgh
National Museum of Scotland	2011	1930s, 1951, 1985	Curators, aristocrats, middle classes, Parliament.	As above	The Royal Scottish Museum refurbished and added to the Museum of Scotland	National	From beginnings of time to modern times	Traditional building in Venetian Renaissance style, with Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh
National Gallery of Scotland	1859	1850	Prince Albert, civic dignitaries in Edinburgh.	As above	Art	Universal	From early Renaissance to 1900	Neo-classical building in the centre of Edinburgh
National Portrait Gallery	1889	1882	Local newspaper proprietor John Ritchie Finlay.	As above	Art as History	National	Early modern to present day	Grand neo-gothic building in red sandstone in the centre of Edinburgh

Introduction

Scotland and Britishness: Nationalism and the Scottish nation – a complex history

Any study of Scotland's national museums in the last two hundred and fifty years needs to take account of Scottish national identity within Great Britain. The Act of Union of 1707 created a complex set of arrangements by which the Scots retained a range of individual powers such as a judiciary, yet also agreed to send representatives to Parliament in Westminster and be governed by statute law therein enacted. Constitutionally complex, and subject to a range of interpretations over the centuries, the Act of Union did not make it clear whether it created a brand new state Great Britain or whether it brought together national entities that retained their separate existences (Kidd 2008: 85).

There is considerable debate about the nature of Scottish nationalism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During the nineteenth century Scotland has been seen as a nation that loses its identity while throughout Europe smaller nations rediscover or invent theirs (Devine 2000). English influence is understood to have increased during this time. Certainly there was a blending of loyalties and cultural identities into a 'Britannic melting pot' (Lynch 1997: 359), but Lynch does not see this as a loss of Scottish political identity. Nevertheless it appears that during this period Scotland and its peoples were largely satisfied with their place in Great Britain. Scots took pride in their role in the Empire and in the industrial revolution. The Union was one in which they liked to see themselves as equal partners, indeed contributing a disproportionate 'share in terms of population' to its armies (Pittock 2008: 9). It was also during this time that the Scots invented or recovered elements of their past in the stories of Walter Scott and in popular histories that celebrated folk lore, kings and queens and the cult of William Wallace, the reinvention of the tartan and the romance of the glen. It is in this context, that we can understand the development of national museums in Edinburgh as both Scottish and British, imitators of London institutions, collecting similar material culture and yet also illustrative of pride in Scottish identity. Such an attitude continued throughout the first half of the twentieth century with the two World Wars helping to bind the nations of the United Kingdom together.

It was only in the second half of the twentieth century that Scottish nationalism gained ground, partly encouraged by the discovery of gas and oil off the Scottish coast and a desire to see the benefits coming mainly to Scotland. However, reasons for the growing dissatisfaction with the Union are complex and are prompted by a range of factors, only a few of which can be dealt with here. The decline and loss of Empire removed one of the greatest benefits of the Union to the Scots, such as access to imperial markets, military and colonial job opportunities for educated and ambitious (mainly) young men. The growth of the post war welfare state and Labour policies of nationalisation of services and industries, while welcomed by many in Scotland, also led to greater centralisation of decisions and control in London. ...'[T]he manifest correlative in social and media behaviour to the use of "Britain" and "England" as almost unconscious synonyms in normal speech' (Pittock 2008: 7), although not a new phenomenon, becomes more noticeable and noted in Scotland. The idea of an unproblematic and homogeneous Britishness appears increasingly old fashioned. We can, perhaps, read the lines

from the Declaration of Arbroath, which greet visitors to the Museum of Scotland, as an assertion that the Scots want, at the very least, a higher profile within whatever Union remains:

As long as only one hundred of us remain alive we will never on any conditions be brought under English rule.

Scotland is often regarded as a ‘stateless’ nation (McCrone 1992, 2002) because of the dislocation between nationhood and statehood and the (perceived and actual) dominance of the English (McLean and Cooke 2000, Pittock 1998). Any history of Scottish national museums will need to take account of this complex and fluid sense of nation and national identity which has been greatly affected by Scottish devolution in 1998 and has also been strengthened by the periodic claims by some Scottish nationalists for independence from the British state. Certainly the national museum of 1998 appears to have stressed Scotland’s links with a wider Europe rather than with England. Indeed England is notable for its absence, something that has been recognised by those working in the museum itself. ‘..[T]he complex relationships of Scotland and the Scots with their immediate neighbours, chiefly in England, need more attention, especially where they should be viewed in a positive light...’ (Caldwell n.d. 7). At the same time the museum has engaged directly with devolution, altering its top floor displays in 2006. The former twentieth century gallery, a temporary solution to the need to complete the museum on time, was composed of a collection of objects significant to individual Scots. Linda Fabiani, the Scottish Nationalist Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture in the Scottish Parliament, opened the new displays ‘A Changing Nation,’ in 2008. Considerable attention was devoted to the rise of Scottish nationalism and the creation of the Scottish Parliament.

The following speech is outlined in a key text panel along with an image of Dewar’s face (Dewar was the First Minister of Scotland the new Scottish Parliament).

Donald Dewar 1997 – 2000

Scotland’s First Minister 1999 – 2000

‘There shall be a Scottish Parliament.’

Through long years those words were first a hope, then a belief, then a promise. Now they are a reality. This is a moment anchored in our history.

Today we reach back through the long haul to win this parliament, through the struggles of those who brought democracy to Scotland, to that other parliament dissolved in controversy nearly three centuries ago.

Today we look forward to a time when this will be seen as a turning point: the day when democracy was renewed in Scotland, when we revitalised our place in this our United Kingdom.

I look forward to the days ahead when this Chamber will sound with debate, argument and passion. When men and women from all over Scotland will meet to work together for a future built from the first principles of social justice.

Speech at the opening of the first Scottish Parliament, 1 July 1999.

While most of the text and objects in this area of the Museum tell a relatively uncritical narrative that supports the apparent inexorable rise of Scottish nationalism, one text panel does show the anti – devolutionist Labour politician Tam Dalyell's point of view. The Scottish parliament is presented as unproblematic and representative of all in Scotland, though not, presumably any Scot who questions its existence or has serious doubts about its role, nor those who see the SNP (Scottish National Party) as authoritarian, run by a close knit elite group and fear devolution is the first step to Scottish independence (Gallagher 2009). Their fears and the aspirations of nationalists came one step further to becoming realised when, in May 2011, the SNP won a majority in the Scottish parliament and promised a referendum on this subject. That the museum has, however, caught the mood of the moment is suggested by Caldwell's observation that this gallery has 'received favourable critical comment' (Caldwell nd 6).

National Museums and cultural policy in Scotland

Cultural policy and National Museums in Scotland before devolution

National museums in Scotland followed a similar pattern of development to those in London. Aristocrats, educated and wealthy individuals founded and endowed them, while at the same time the government in Westminster showed only intermittent interest in their development. Art galleries were set up by artists, aristocrats and other patrons to demonstrate Scotland's rightful place amongst European civilised nations. Other museums had their origins in the Enlightenment and educated, wealthy individuals' enthusiasms for collecting curiosities, antiquities, natural history and geology, and cataloguing and curating them. For example, the National Museum of Antiquities started out in 1780 as a private museum for the Society of Antiquaries, only becoming the National Museum of Antiquities in 1858.

The Great Exhibition of 1851 in London's Crystal Palace and the foundation of a variety of museums in South Kensington on its profits, along with a genuine desire by Prince Albert to encourage similar initiatives elsewhere, led to the opening in 1854 of the Industrial Museum of Scotland. Such initiatives were in part an attempt to improve manufacturing design and also an educational initiative aimed, in particular, at the working classes. The building was originally inspired by London's Crystal Palace and was designed by an engineer Captain Francis Fowke and local architect Robert Matheson. Prince Albert himself opened the east wing and one third of the current main hall in 1866, by which time it had become the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art. In 1904, the museum had become the Royal Scottish Museum.

Although national museums in Scotland, like their counterparts in London, attracted little government attention, occasionally a crisis would occur and a Departmental Committee would be set up to investigate. For example in 1902 an investigation was held into the National Gallery and the use of the buildings it shared on the Mound with other prestigious organisations. As a result of this enquiry the National Gallery's building on the mound was improved, The Royal Society of Artists were granted free tenancy elsewhere to quit the building they shared with the museum whose governance by the Board of Manufacturers was replaced by a Board of Trustees by an Act of Parliament in 1906 (Thompson 1972: 90-1). However, as in London, national government interest in national museums in Scotland was intermittent. Two world wars and an economic recession in the first half of the twentieth century meant funding for the arts was not a priority.

Individual enthusiasms, practical necessity and campaigns by political champions of the arts such as the Marquess of Bute in the second half of the century led to developments such as the new national Museum of Scotland in 1998 rather than any clearly stated national government policy.

Cultural policy and national museums in Scotland after devolution

The devolved Scottish national government has, until recently, paid little attention to museums in Scotland, nor has it formulated a clear policy towards them. The Minister for Culture and External Affairs, Mike Russell, at a 'Museums Summit' on 2 June 2009 attended by delegates from local authority, independent and national museums, was told that:

Some delegates considered that there had been change but there had not been consistency around cultural policy. This had inhibited progress. The question was how best to achieve consistency in policy to allow the sector to fulfil its full potential.

Those present felt they knew what was wanted for museums: the issue was a lack of unity or overarching approach. The sector needed to get its act together to set out priorities that everyone could work towards. The lack of Government policy caused greater frustration than funding concerns. (Scottish Government 2009)

He acknowledged the need for a national policy for all museums and promised that a group would be set up to help develop this. Since then a Think Tank has met regularly to discuss how to move all museums in Scotland forward and in 2010 the following recommendations were accepted

- Designation of a national body to support the sector and to develop a national museums strategy
- Establishment of a forum of experts to advise the development body on the strategy
- Specific Scottish Government funding of three industrial museums
- Establishment of a federation of industrial museums

(Scottish Government 2010 a)

While the Scottish National Executive has been deciding what, if anything, its policy towards museums should be, national museums in Scotland have been bringing to fruition some important capital projects such as the refurbishment of the National Portrait Gallery, reopening late 2011 and the approximately £48 million refurbishment of part of the National Museum of Scotland (formerly the Royal Scottish Museum).

Scottish nationalism

Scottish national identity is closely associated with the idea that Scots are different from other inhabitants of the British Isles by virtue of their shared common ancestry, their long national history, and their distinctive culture. This idea is implicit in a range of accounts of Scotland and in media depictions of the Scots. At the same time the Scots offer a version of national identity that is very much associated with civic nationalism. Both ideas of Scottishness have influenced the histories of the national museums in Scotland.

Another complex issue that plays on notions of national identity is the impact of inward migration upon Scotland. Large numbers of Catholic Irish settled in Glasgow and are present in relatively large numbers in other cities. English people have migrated north just as the Scots have

come south to England. Then there is the more recent immigration from countries outside the Union, notably those of the old Empire and new Commonwealth. Most recently of all are the large numbers of EU citizens who have sought to make Scotland their temporary and permanent home. The Scottish state is inclined to stress civic nationalism in its attempts to unite disparate peoples while at the same time implying a 'natural' Scottishness that arises from ancestral connections with the country, and these contradictory notions of national identity sit side by side in the national museums of Scotland.

Perhaps as a reaction to the inferior position they feel they occupy in the Union the Scots set great store by the role Scotland or the Scots have played in world history. The Scots see themselves as players on the world stage. 'If there is any single characteristic of which Scots can be proud, it is our ability to interact with the wider world. Many of our great heroes of the past, whether intellectuals or entrepreneurs, have sustained their native genius abroad.' (Dewar 2000: x). The Scots led expeditions abroad, traded in the Empire, had roles in the British armed forces and emigrated in large numbers. As a result Scottish identity is not confined to the geographic nation that is currently Scotland. Anyone with Scottish ancestry is claimed as someone who belongs to Scotland, wherever they currently reside and this sense of Scottishness was emphasised by the Royal Museums of Scotland project, which transformed the Royal Museum by July 2011, integrating it with the modern architecture of the adjacent Museum of Scotland.

Scottish national museums – the current picture

Scottish national museums are mainly based in Edinburgh but have branches in various other locations. There are two main divisions – national museums relating to history, archaeology, natural history and similar subjects, and art galleries. For the purpose of this study the main museum selected is the National Museum of Scotland, which has undergone recent upgrading and redisplay.

National Museums Scotland

The National Museums Scotland collection is displayed across five museum sites in Scotland:

- National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh (the Museum of Scotland and the Royal Scottish Museum)
- National War Museum, Edinburgh
- National Museum of Flight, in East Lothian
- National Museum of Costume, in Dumfries
- National Museum of Rural Life in East Kilbride.

National Museums Scotland (NMS) is Scotland's national museums service and according to a press release in 2010:

is currently undertaking a £46 million project to transform the Royal Museum by July 2011, integrating it with the modern architecture of the adjacent Museum of Scotland, to become a world-class museum complex known simply as the National Museum of Scotland. This will enable NMS to present a breadth and depth of collections rivalling most national museums in Europe. (Scottish Government 2010 b)

The project was completed in July 2011 and both the 1998 Museum of Scotland and the Royal Scottish Museum are now called the National Museum of Scotland. The Scottish Government, via the Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate, funds National Museums Scotland. It is a non-departmental public body governed by a board of trustees, all appointed by the Minister for Tourism, Culture & Sport.

National Galleries of Scotland

According to the website accessed in August 2011:

The National Galleries of Scotland comprises three galleries in Edinburgh and two partner galleries in the North and South of Scotland. Our collection of fine art is amongst the best in the world.

The three Edinburgh galleries are:

- Scottish National Gallery
- Scottish National Portrait Gallery
- Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art

In addition, the National Galleries of Scotland owns the Granton Centre for Art, a purpose-built storage facility located at the Granton foreshore in Edinburgh.

The two partner galleries are:

- Paxton House, Berwickshire
- Duff House, Banff

(National Galleries Scotland 2011 a)

The National Galleries of Scotland is funded by the Scottish Government and is managed on its behalf by a Board of Trustees, appointed by the Minister for Europe, External Affairs & Culture.

Case Studies in chronological order

For the purpose of this paper we will focus on the following museums:

- the (relatively new) National Museum of Scotland
- the National Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery.

National Museum of Scotland: origins

The Museum of Antiquities/National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland

The Museum of Antiquities was founded by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1780 as part of their mission to 'investigate ...antiquities and natural and civil history' (Jones M. 2000: 7). The Society was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1783. This project was one of several organised by David Steuart Erskine, Earl of Buchan (1742–1829) to support Scottish national identity (ibid). It was also one of several museums founded around this time in the United Kingdom as a consequence of the Enlightenment. Its collections passed into public ownership in 1858 as the original collections of the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland.

Erskine is an example of an aristocrat whose interest in the arts and pride in his ancestry led him to promote national institutions to encourage the collection, admiration and study of the past and the stories of the nation. The founding of this society and the museum, which was later to give its collections to the National Museum of Scotland, takes place within a period when

Scottish identity was consciously celebrated. This was the period when James Macpherson's 'Ossian', purportedly a collection of ancient Scottish saga tales, was influential in Wales, Ireland and across Europe. This was also the time when the tartan was revived and poets like Burns harked back to folksongs for inspiration.

The London Society of Antiquaries inspired the Society. Like its London equivalent the Scottish Society was very much a forum for likeminded aristocrats and members of the upper middle classes to meet and pursue their interests, albeit for a patriotic purpose (Cheape 2000: 63).

This was an aristocratic endeavour, as the list of the first officers of the Society indicates:

President	The Right Honourable the Earl of Bute Prime Minister in 1762-63
1st Vice-President	The Right Honourable the Earl of Buchan
2nd Vice-President	Sir John Dalrymple-Hamilton McGill, Baronet
3rd Vice-President	John Swinton of Swinton, Esquire
4th Vice-President	Alexander Wight, Esquire
5th Vice-President	William Tytler of Woodhouselee, Esquire
Treasurer	Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo, Baronet

(Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 2010)

Even at the time of its founding there were concerns that the focus on Scottish history and national identity might be politically sensitive and raise issues of Scottish relationships with the other members of the Union (Jones M. 2000: 7). It is important to bear in mind, however, that many leading Scots held positions of power and influence in Parliament (witness the first president Bute's role as Prime Minister under George III). Thus patriotic sentiment at this time was not about stressing separation from the Union but rather individual Scottish identity within it. However, the Society wanted its museum to function as a national museum, although at this stage it was not funded by the state. The members handed over their collections to the nation in 1851 though 'still maintaining charge and custody of the museum' (Callander 1926: 3). The National Museum to house these was founded in 1858. There was still a tendency to regard material culture as unhistorical – material that illustrated fables and myths rather than historical evidence and, as such, to be the preserve of antiquarians, and the National Museum inherited this intellectual attitude to its collections. Until the Museum of Scotland was opened in 1998 the National Museum had several homes.

Displays: Scotland is different

In a paper written in 2000, two years after the opening of the Museum of Scotland Hugh Cheape, curator of the Modern Scottish Collections, argued that the Society of Antiquaries and the National Museum it founded and sustained, was a patriotic endeavour that sought to collect and interpret collections relating to Scotland as evidence of its special and distinctive separate identity in Europe. By 1879 Dr Joseph Anderson, Keeper of the National Museum of Antiquities between 1869 and 1913, publicly espoused the patriotic role of the museum as the memory of the nation that he saw to be unique and precious.

Anderson's ideas about the uniqueness of Scotland in prehistory and its existence in some prehistoric form were continued and promoted by Graham Callendar and Arthur Edwards who succeeded him. This idea, that Scottish archaeology was evidence for a group of people with a culture that was distinct and separate from that of the rest of Europe, including Britain, was adopted by English archaeologists although Childe¹ challenged this in the 1930s and 1940s. He pointed out that all the material evidence suggested that the peoples who inhabited what is now Scotland were in no way distinct from those who lived in what is now England, Wales and Ireland. We thus have the nonsensical idea that peoples and their material culture remained and retained separate identities that were linked to the idea of the Scottish nation, long before the notion of Scotland as a separate nation emerged, with find maps neglecting or ignoring evidence to the contrary. However, despite Childe's ideas, 'those within the museum, controlling the collections, remained both hostile and sceptical' (Clarke 2000: 84) to the idea that this was not the case.

Thus the National Museum of Antiquities, the repository of most of the key prehistoric archaeological material from Scotland, maintained an entrenched view of the separateness and uniqueness of Scotland in prehistory, partly sustained by lack of further research and collecting in the relevant areas). There is evidence that non-Scottish archaeologists were discouraged from undertaking research into Scottish archaeology because they held different views of Scotland's past (Clarke 2000: 86).

The view that Scottish archaeology was something incomprehensible to the Sassenach was oddly enough encouraged by English archaeologists who had been effectively frightened off, and like Cyril Fox, made distribution maps that dissolved into nothingness beyond Hadrian's Wall, and in so doing often made a nonsense of any inferences drawn from the incomplete evidence they presented. (Piggott 1983: 5)

Meanwhile in Scotland advances in archaeology were ignored or unknown and the discipline remained wedded to an old fashioned methodology. Whatever their origins and however little or much they were linked to European cultural movements, there is, throughout this period from the founding of the original museum to the present day, a presumption that the producers of material culture in the prehistoric period had something separate about them (Clarke 2000: 86).

Despite the fact that now museum archaeologists are adamant that Scottish archaeology indicates that Scotland is part of the culture and development of what is now understood to be Europe, and that it did not have a separate prehistoric identity, this notion of Scottish uniqueness in material culture and ethnicity appears to have survived within certain ideas of Scottish national identity. Anderson casts a long shadow.

The use of objects to present a story

Nevertheless in one respect at least the Scots kept pace with other nations in their treatment of collections. Anderson, working in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, moved beyond the ideas of the antiquarian who was prepared to marvel at objects and decontextualise them. He regarded collections as historical evidence. Cheape (2000) argues that this interest in the role of objects in illuminating and explaining the past was unusual in the English speaking world at this time and that the Scots were following the example of continental historians and archaeologists in this respect. However, this attitude was known elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

Throughout the nineteenth century the supporters of the museum argued that it should be a focus for patriotic feeling and interest, though the museum at this time suffered from underfunding. Cheape's paper provides an interesting overview that, written with hindsight of the opening of the Museum of Scotland in 1998, perhaps stresses rather too much the patriotic and nationalistic aspirations of the founders, collectors, and patrons of the National Museum of the Society of Antiquaries. Nevertheless, he does present a convincing case that some of their nineteenth century aspirations were rooted in a patriotic sense that the museum's duty was to tell a particular story of a nation, and to celebrate its distinctiveness in an unashamed and uncomplicated way. However, he himself acknowledges that the National Museum was a custodian rather than architect of national identity. To what extent their patriotic role was driven by national government policy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is difficult to discern. It appears that the curators of the National Museum were, like their colleagues in the British Museum, independent agents. They decided what to collect and how to catalogue it and what its significance was. There is no evidence that the National Museum was following any policy guidelines on these matters from Westminster. It was only later, during the 1990s that the new Museum of Scotland appears to have become a symbol of political national aspirations, and then by accident of birth date rather than by design (it was opened, co-incidentally, in 1998, the same year as the establishment of the new Scottish Parliament, the first such parliament since the Union).

Indeed this lack of political interest in the Museum is suggested by the fact that throughout this period the museum was a research institute – collections were displayed by typology for the specialist. It was not until after the Second World War that the museum began some form of interpretation for the non-specialist but Clarke (2000) argues this did not get very far because Keeper Stevenson's key concern was to get out of the existing site in Queen Street. Thus the Museum for many years regarded the general public as being of less importance than specialist scholars. It was not a Museum to promote any form of national consciousness amongst the general visitor.

By the time the Museum became more interested in public display and instruction, albeit slowly, the archaeologists' views on the separation of Scottish prehistoric cultures from the rest of the United Kingdom had changed. Stevenson and his staff with Childe and Stuart Piggott, (who succeeded Childe to the Chair in Archaeology in Edinburgh in 1946), began to reconfigure their research so that they recognised Scotland's prehistoric links with other European countries. Childe and Piggott changed the tradition of Scottish isolationism in academic circles, and the Museum established productive links with the University of Edinburgh which led to much wider research (Piggott 1983: 6).

The Royal Scottish Museum

Origins

As noted above the Royal Scottish Museum was founded in 1854 by the government and was the responsibility of the Department of Science and Art. Created in response to the example of the Great Exhibition in 1851, it focussed on natural history, geology, science, technology and the decorative art, and was intended to be an educational institution.

The campaign for the formation of an industrial museum in Edinburgh was led by the middle and upper classes such as the Duke of Hamilton, the Duke of Buccleuch and the MP Mr C. Cowan, among others. As a result of this lobbying Parliament voted £7000 for the purchase of the site and for initial costs. More money was given to allow for the purchase of collections and to pay professional curators and keepers. The Board of Trade managed the government's relationships with the museum. Its collections came from various sources, such as Edinburgh's National History Museum.

The museum building was originally inspired by London's Crystal Palace erected for the Great Exhibition. Designed by Captain Francis Fowke and local architect Robert Matheson, it was begun in 1861.

The completed building illustrates several characteristic features of Victorian architecture, particularly revivalism, cast-iron construction and overhead lighting. Its massive sandstone facade is in the Venetian Renaissance style and contrasts strongly with the graceful modernity and airy lightness of the interior, which was clearly influenced by Sir Joseph Paxton's Crystal Palace and earlier cast-iron and glass structures. (Anon n.d.: 1)

It was sited in Chambers Street, close to the University of Edinburgh and was surrounded by other grand buildings so that it did not necessarily stand out in a street which itself 'lacked architectural focus and urban design quality' (McKean 2000a: 4).

Its foundation reflected the impetus of Victorian ideals of education and the desire to civilise the working class. The involvement of the Department of Science and Art in London indicates that a 'utilitarian', educational role was seen as central. Swinney (2006) argues that as well as education, it was to have a civilising role as part of Britain's imperial project. For example, in 1857, there were fears that the USA was sliding into civil war, whilst the Indian Rebellion had shaken the British Empire's grip on the subcontinent. George Wilson, the first Director, referring to the establishment of the museum, wrote that 'it will 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' (Wilson 1857: cited Swinney 2006: 131). It was renamed the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art in 1864, and opened in its first bespoke buildings in Chambers Street in 1866 (National Museums Scotland 2010 a). Thomas Archer, who was appointed Director at Wilson's death, oversaw the construction. His influence (and changes at South Kensington) tilted the museum more towards design and the arts. The ground floor was devoted to practical art – engines and similar, furniture and models, the first floor to glass and ceramics and the second floor to agriculture and food along with medicine. Side wings held the Natural History material and minerals, raw materials, manufactures and applied chemistry.

The twentieth century

Throughout its history the museum expanded its professional staff. In 1901 the museum was transferred to the Board of Education and in 1904 its name was changed to the Royal Scottish Museum. The museum developed a strong educational remit and, during the early part of the twentieth century, it focussed on developing a range of collections such as art.

After the Second World War the museum developed a programme of temporary exhibitions, which illustrate that the museum was as much about bringing the world to Scotland as it was

displaying Scotland to the world. Exhibitions in the first decade after the war included 'Meet Canada' 'Standard Products for Building', 'Germany under control' (in 1947), 'Danish Art' and 'USA today'.

Background to the new Museum of Scotland which opened in 1998

In 1985, an amalgamation of two national institutions took place: the Royal Scottish Museum and the National Museum of Antiquities to create the National Museums of Scotland (rebranded as National Museums Scotland in 2006). According to McKean the new National Museums were the result not of a national agenda but of 'a contingent and expedient response to a political problem' (McKean 2000b: 123). Two museums, the Royal Scottish Museum in Chambers Street and the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland in Queen Street were merged by Act of Parliament to create one institution to secure agreement over the use of a site for the new museum being planned. The National Museums then began a programme of development and expansion that resulted in a new national Museum of Scotland, which opened in 1998 in an iconic new building. In 2008 The Royal Scottish Museum closed for a complete refurbishment and reopened in 2011. Confusingly both the 1998 Museum of Scotland and the Royal Scottish Museum are called the National Museum of Scotland and in the National Museums website (National Museums Scotland 2010 b) it is clear that they are currently conceived of as one institution under two roofs.

National Museums Scotland is run by a Board of Trustees, and has charitable status, but has statutory responsibilities. Until 2000 the Board was responsible to the UK government in Westminster but after devolution it became accountable to the Scottish Minister and the Scottish Parliament. Most of its funding comes directly from a parliamentary grant.

The genesis of the National Museums goes back before the decision to merge the Royal Scottish Museum in Chambers Street and the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland and it underwent several changes along the way. The role of any national museum changes over time and is not always clear, even to those who work in it, what its remit is. The idea of a 'national museum has not always implied a museum of national identity' (McKean 2000b: 124). In 1849 the definition adopted by the civic authorities in Edinburgh was that of an independent museum open to visitors in a capital city (McKean 2000b: 124). The director of the new Museum of Scotland which opened in 1998 argued that it was not so much a new museum but a new building for an old one (Jones, M. 2000: 7). However, this is disingenuous. It is clear from the evidence presented below that the new museum is more than an amalgamation of two older museums, (one of which survived in essence, and reopened in 2011). It is in effect the first nationalistic museum for Scotland in that it sets out to tell Scotland's story over the centuries and thus positions it as an independent nation within the Union, one that has become in some ways more distinct than less so during the years of collaboration and cohesion in the United Kingdom. By 1997, the date of the laying of the foundation stone for the new museum the Secretary of State for Scotland was able to compare the new Scottish parliament and the new museum of Scotland as two symbols of Scotland's renaissance. Both were symbols of Scotland's resurging national confidence.

Changing ideas about the role of the National Museums of Scotland – becoming more Scottish as time went on

The idea of a new museum to house the collections had been mooted in the 1930s and raised again in 1951. According to Clarke the national museum changed considerably in 1985 when the National Museums of Scotland were created with the merging of the National Museum of Antiquities with the Royal Scottish Museum. The new National Museums placed less emphasis on scholarship and research and more on visitors and access. In 1989 the Secretary of State for Scotland announced government support for a new building (Bryden 2000: 30).

In 1986 a Working Group, set up to work on plans for the first stage of the new national museum (which opened in 1998), aspired to a building that would ‘animate’ the objects it contained. Curators were asked to identify iconic objects and the working group was expected to devise ways to persuade the people of Scotland that the national museum was ‘something they absolutely must have’ (McKean 2000b: 127). By 1989, the Feasibility Study stated very firmly that, far from being just an amalgamation of the two museums – a black box for curators to play with – ‘a new national museum will be seen as a symbol of national identity’ (Richards, n.d.: 1 cited McKean 2000b: 126). The words by which the Chairman and Board of Trustees introduced their 1989 campaign for support for a Museum of Scotland are telling:

Scotland stands alone amongst countries of its size in having nowhere to tell the full story of its peoples and to show properly its most treasured possessions. This is a disgrace, long recognised by many. (cited Hooper 1990: 9)

Thus, in a few years, the idea of the new museum (of 1998 foundation) had moved from an institution that would bring together the existing collections of two individual museums in a museum that would be national in the sense that it was in the capital city, into a museum that would tell the story of Scotland and be significant in the sustaining and formation of Scottish cultural identity. Between 1986 and 1992 all non – Scottish components of the proposed museum such as the Chinese lacquer galleries and the ethnographical collections were abandoned, leaving only material relating to Scotland.

The museum relied on public funding as well as government grants and the emphasis at this point was on the need to bring national collections out of store, on the architecture, and on the unique dimension that objects give to the past, ‘one which had never before had a voice’ (Bryden 2000: 30). A particular emphasis was placed on raising money from abroad and this, we may presume, impacted on the way in which Scotland’s story was told, not just as a nation over time but as a people who influenced the world, who remained Scots even though they had never set foot in their ancestral homeland. There was a deliberate attempt to avoid clichés such as bagpipes and tartan.

Over seven years after 1986, the museum’s remit moved considerably, driven by specific politicians such as the sixth Marquess of Bute, a direct descendant of the first president of the Society of Antiquaries, and a member of the House of Lords (Jones P: 2000). The sixth Marquess also served as a trustee of the National Gallery of Scotland and took a particular interest in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, before becoming Chairman of the Trustees of the National Museums of Scotland.

Originally, the curators had expected that the collections would lead the story. However, during its planning stage the curators were told to make the collections fit the narrative – the story of the Scots people over time. When collections did not do this then the story was told anyway. The Scottish Enlightenment, for example, was given prominence although there were few collections to explain or illustrate it. Only in the basement, where archaeology was placed, did the curators resist this attempt to impose the Scottish story. Here the keeper of archaeology argued that:

Our main messages are: (1) that people in prehistoric and early historic times are not to be regarded as squat grunting savages leading squalid brutish lives. (2) That for 90%, in terms of time, of the human occupation of the geographical area of Scotland, the concept of a Scottish nation, as we now understand it, is now meaningless. (3) Our view of Scotland as a relatively impoverished country at the extreme edge of Europe is merely a modern map projection that provides no universal template for understanding pre-history and early history. (Cited McKean 2000b: 128-9)

Museum archaeologists here have completely abandoned former ideas about the separate identity of the Scots as illustrated through prehistoric collections. However, there is still an understandable tendency to read Scotland's prehistory through a comparative lens in which Scotland is promoted as a significant place (albeit non national) in Europe.

The building

The choice of architect for the new museum was contentious. The Scottish media wanted the competition to be open only to Scots and was furious when five out of the six finalists came from London. In the end, the London firm Benson and Forsyth were selected and their building in Scottish sandstone was deliberately chosen to represent the geological age of the nation. The main feature is the rounded entrance tower, which makes reference to medieval towers and there are many other hints of Scottish architectural traditions within the building.

The displays and national history at its opening

From the beginning, its collections were designed to cover every aspect of Scottish archaeology and history and to store collections that would act as a reminder of Scotland's unique past and destiny. As we have noted the opening coincided with devolution and the election of a separate Scottish Parliament. According to Jones, this is coincidental. He points out that the three Unionist Secretaries of State who provided the funding for the museum had not intended the new museum to be linked in any way to this political act. However, the opening of the two institutions – new national Museum and new Parliament, were both products of the political and cultural change in mood in politics over the last thirty years. Jones, the first Director, has argued that the museum cannot only be seen in the context of national aspirations but has also to be understood as the result of a museological problem – too many collections and not enough display or storage space (Jones, M. 2000).

The displays

The Museum of Scotland drew on collections from the National Museum of Antiquities and from other museums in Scotland and these were grouped into the following categories:

- Beginnings: Scotland's geological foundations and early wildlife
- Early People: archaeology and the beginnings of literacy
- The Kingdom of the Scots: from the eighth century to the last Scottish Parliament in 1707
- Scotland Transformed: focuses mainly on the eighteenth century with social history collections
- Industry and Empire: looks at the impact of industrial change on Scotland, Scotland's role in this and the contribution of the Scots to the Empire
- Victorian and Edwardian life in Scotland
- The twentieth century. Here people were encouraged to choose their own objects – most of which were personal and many of which did not relate to the nation as a whole (Watban 2000). This area has now been redisplayed as a narrative of Scotland in the twentieth and twenty first century concluding with the struggle for devolution.

Collections were thus themed not by discipline but by narrative – how they fitted into the story of Scotland, and the disciplines of geology, natural history, art, archaeology, industrial and social history and anthropology were abandoned in favour of the story.

The relationship of the new Museum of Scotland to Scottish nationalism is a complex one. On the one hand it is clearly a nationalist aspiration and offers a national story to the people of Scotland that strengthens Scotland's claims to a separate identity from England, Ireland and Wales, rather than an aspiration to leave the union. Indeed throughout its displays it maintains a complex relationship to British national identity, accepting it as a 'Good Thing' when it results in opportunities for the Scots to display leadership and other qualities, such as during the period of imperial expansion, and also despising it as a 'Bad Thing' when it is understood through the lens of English imperialism. We have already noted the sentence from the Declaration of Arbroath (an assertion of independence issued by Scottish magnates in 1320) that greets all visitors and refers to a determination not to be ruled by England. However, this old enemy (England) is mostly hidden in the shadows. 'The absence of England is striking' (Clarke 2000: 87). Scotland is so keen to prove its independence it appears to have forgotten its formative relationship with its powerful neighbour, or perhaps just ignores it.

The new (1998) Museum of Scotland's team wanted visitors to

feel a sense of national pride, a recognition of Scotland's place in the world, and a sense of amazement at the achievements of the past. Furthermore we hoped to stimulate a sense of fascination at the true, and largely untapped, richness and depth of Scotland's inheritance... (Bryden 2000: 32)

The story was to be chronological 'focusing on a celebration of Scotland's story over 3,300 million years to the present day as told by the national collections' (Bryden 2000: 35).

The Museum of Scotland in 1998 deliberately set out to position the nation as more than its geographical entity and the people currently inhabiting it, drawing on statistics that show that Scotland lost rather more than half the natural increase of the population in the eight decades before the First World War. As such it was part of a European wide phenomenon. From 1815 to

1930s about 52 million Europeans emigrated around the world. Ireland led the way with the most emigrants per head of the total population with Scotland and Norway vying for second place (Forsyth 2000: 115- 6).

This focus on the ambitions, achievements and character of the Scots has led to a lack of understanding as to how the Scots might, through their expansionism and enthusiasm for Empire, have impacted negatively on indigenous peoples. For example, in a section on Empire the Scots are seen to have provided labour, ideas, leadership and governance of the British Empire throughout the world. This text panel on Africa does not once mention the impact of imperialism upon Africans.

The Scottish experience of Africa in the 19th century centred on missionaries and explorers. The best known was David Livingstone but others were just as influential. Service in Africa offered opportunities for women, as missionaries such as Mary Slessor, and in medical work and education.

With the 'Scramble for Africa' by European colonial powers in the 1880s, Scots began to make their mark as soldiers, administrators in the Colonial Service, doctors and engineers.

Scottish emigration to Cape Colony and Natal which began in the 1820s is recalled in the many Scottish place names in these provinces. From the early 1890s gold and diamond discoveries strengthened the attraction of southern Africa.

Scottish missionaries had a profound influence in East Africa, and were often enthusiastic collectors of native objects, such as the combs in this case.

The 'profound influence' in East Africa, we may assume from the tone of the text, and the reference to 'medical work and education', was understood by the Scots to be entirely positive. Ian Jack, writing in the *Independent*, concluded that 'If a museum of England imitated the Edinburgh Museum's treatment of Empire... there would be a lynch mob at the gates' (cited Jones M. 2000: 10). African voices might have presented a different kind of story.

National Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery

National Galleries of Scotland - Origins

The origins of the National Galleries of Scotland date back to the Treaty of the Union of 1707 when the Board of Manufactures, a Scottish Department, was set up to make use of Treasury funding by encouraging manufacturing. To facilitate good design the Board established a drawing academy in Edinburgh in 1760 and built a large Gallery on the Mound in Edinburgh, designed by William Henry Playfair (1790-1857), and opened in 1828. This building not only housed the Academy but also the Royal Society, the Society of Antiquaries, and the Institution for the Encouragement of Fine Arts (founded in 1819 with a Royal Charter in 1857). This Institution was founded in imitation of the British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, established in London in 1805. The idea behind both these organisations was to encourage modern art through the appreciation of old masters. At first individuals loaned these old masters but over time the Institution began to buy collections of old masters and also encouraged contemporary art by holding modern art exhibitions. According to Thompson (1972: 56), the attempt to foster 'the grand manner' of painting in Scotland failed miserably. What

survived were the old masters that the Institution purchased. A distinction was maintained between the gentlemen who managed the Institution and associate artists who exhibited and the artists resented this.

The Royal Scottish Academy (RSA), founded in 1826, and granted a Royal Charter in 1838, used the building on the Mound for its annual exhibitions. Note this remains separate from the National Galleries even today – just geographically close to them. This Academy was similar to the Royal Academy in London in that it was and is an independently funded institution led by artists and architects whose purpose was to promote the visual arts through exhibitions and education. The Academy collected examples of best practice and built up a historic collection of works by Scottish artists. There was intense rivalry between the Royal Academy and the Royal Institution. The former was controlled by artists, the latter by aristocrats.

Another independent body that influenced the development of the National Galleries of Scotland was the Royal Association for the Promotion of Fine Arts in Scotland, which was founded in 1834 as a subscription association (similar to the Art Unions of London in 1837). It encouraged the exhibition of modern Scottish art and it purchased pictures for the National Gallery. It was concerned with the need to encourage an improved taste in the population at large and ‘the mass of the people’ (Thompson 1972: 62) for fine art. In fact, as Thompson points out, this was a fiction as the majority of the subscribers were wealthy businessmen, bankers and merchants or aristocrats. Its members purchased art for themselves as well as raising money to buy works of art for the National Gallery.

What is particularly interesting for the notion of the museum in Scotland as a means of uniting Scots all over the world in a ‘larger’ Scotland is the way in which the Royal Association operated. While at first membership was confined to Scotland it soon attracted members overseas who appear to have been particularly fond of Scottish landscape painting. At the AGM of 1839, a member is recorded as stating ‘Can anything be more endearing to a Scotchman toiling on a distant land – perhaps on the burning sands of Hindostan – than to see ever before his eye the smiling village, and the green vales, and the misty mountains of his native land? (loud cheers)’ (cited in Thompson 1972: 62). The Association was dissolved in 1897, having donated 12 paintings to the Gallery.

By the mid nineteenth century, there was an aspiration to bring these diverse collections together and to found a Scottish National Gallery. In 1847 a Government report identified the fact that both the Royal Academy and the Institution lacked space and, in 1849, it was agreed that the cost of erecting a building in which the two organisations could exist side by side should be met by the Board of Manufactures with the help of a Government Grant. Thus the dual role of the RSA and the Institution as supporters and educators of artists continued to be a key element in the foundation of the National Gallery.

The foundation stone of the new building was laid in 1850 by Prince Albert. When he addressed the crowds he stated that the building and its contents were to have two purposes: ‘to refine and elevate the national tastes’ and to ‘lead to the production of works, which...will give to after generations an adequate idea of our advanced state of civilisation’ (cited Thompson 1972: 51). The new building was opened in 1859, also designed by Playfair. It was intended to house the new National Gallery (founded on the collections of the Royal Institution) and the Royal Scottish Academy. The Mound was in the centre of Edinburgh and Playfair’s classical temples to

the arts 'achieved picturesque harmony with the dramatic backdrop of Edinburgh Castle' (National Galleries Scotland 2011 b).

William Playfair who designed the new building on the Mound was influenced by the arrangements in Trafalgar Square in London where National Gallery Building was divided internally and the Royal Academy occupied one half of it from 1837 to 1868 when the Academy moved to Burlington House. A part time professional curator was appointed from among four Academicians nominated by the Academy and chosen by the Board of Manufactures. The choice of curator also resembled that of the National Gallery where Academicians directed it between 1854 and 1904 (Thompson 1972: 52).

The Gallery was open free of charge on three days a week and on Sunday evenings, the other three days a week were made available to art students making copies. The foundation collection of the Gallery was the collection of the Institution for the Encouragement of Fine Arts. The Gallery collected mainly old masters with a few Scottish paintings. These were augmented by bequests and gifts. Some of the most ardent supporters of the Gallery could be described as 'antiquaries' (Thompson 1972: 66) rather than art collectors. For individuals such as David Laing and James T. Gibson-Craig art was illustrative of past times and was part of the material collected to show these. In turn these men bequeathed paintings to the National Gallery.

Mid – late Victorian art in the National Gallery

During this period, no pictures were bought because there was no money to buy them. The Royal Institution, though never formally dissolved, had spent most of its money with the purchases of some Veronese paintings and Zurbarán's *Immaculate Conception*. It was not until the 1880s that the Board of Manufactures began making purchases for the Gallery. The National Gallery continued to collect Academicals' Diploma work but also acquired, through bequests, significant old masters. Both were hung side by side along with reproductions and copies with no distinction between them. By the end of the nineteenth century, some order had been created with the modern Academy pictures hung in a separate section. However, the walls of the gallery were crowded.

Thus the history of the National Galleries of Scotland during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries appears to be a complex and confused one because the National Gallery of today is the product of several different organisations, one of which, the Royal Scottish Academy, remains a separate institution, and after vacating the Playfair building for a period is now back within it. This confused origin can best be explained by the fact that the Scots aspired to collections of national importance but had not determined (until the beginning of the twentieth century) how best to develop, maintain and exhibit them. What we see in Scotland is something similar to that in England. Artists developed their own Academy, supported by aristocratic and wealthy middle class collectors. The Academy's collection of old masters and Scottish artists was very much a teaching collection. Art was for training as much as for appreciation. At the same time, towards the middle of the nineteenth century, inspired by developments in London and particularly as a result of the Great Exhibition, wealthy, educated and aristocratic Scots began to aspire to a kind of National Gallery and this was developed from the Institution for the Encouragement of Fine Arts (founded in 1819 with a Royal Charter in 1857) along with collections from the Society of Antiquaries. All these collections were housed in the same building on the Mound in Edinburgh

and the Institution's collections that related to art were curated by part time Academicians until the appointment of the first full time director, J.L. Caw in 1907. For the first time, a collecting policy was established with clear guidelines as to what should be purchased.

The National Gallery in the twentieth-century

In 1906 the National Gallery of Scotland Act specified a change of use for the buildings on the Mound. Lack of space to accommodate the collection resulted in the National Gallery being allowed to inhabit the whole of the National Gallery building. The Royal Scottish Academy, in return, was given indefinite tenancy of the building in front (then the Royal Institution which became known as the Royal Scottish Academy). This building then became known as the Royal Scottish Academy. Under this Act, the Board of Manufacturers, which had 28 members, was replaced by the Board of Trustees for the National Galleries of Scotland, which had only seven. The Royal Scottish Academy also accepted a lump sum to pay for the collections in the National Gallery that belonged to them and these were left in the National Gallery. An annual purchase grant of £1,000 was given by the state to the Gallery. For the first time a collecting policy was established with clear guidelines as to what should be purchased. This indicates that the aspirations for the National Gallery were threefold:

1. To continue the ideas of the aesthetic movement and to this end collect mainly modern art (but not that of living painters).
2. The collection of old masters for their aesthetic merits
3. The formation of a representative collection of Scottish painting.

According to Thompson (1972: 92) this last was the result of an antiquarian interest.

During the early part of the twentieth century the National Gallery tended to follow the ideas of Roger Fry (1866–1934), who argued that aesthetics were all important.

It was in effect an authoritarian attitude, and it was far too exclusive. The small-scale, sensitive work of art of the kind that was most in favour was adapted to the life-style of the cultivated private collector. Perhaps unavoidably, the public gallery was apt to be regarded as 'an extension of the collector's house, and the visitors as an extension of the collector's circle of acquaintances. (Thompson, 1972: 129)

Governance and management

Control of the National Gallery is in the hands of the Trustees. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees from 1952 – 72 was David Lindsay, Earl of Crawford and Balcarres (1900-75). Lindsay was an experienced connoisseur and politician, having served as a Trustee of the National Gallery in London, and he guided the Gallery's purchase and acquisitions (helped by the fact that he was chairman of the National Art Collections Fund).

By 1989 the National Galleries had significant paintings, which were organised, into the following schools:

Italian, Spanish, Flemish and Dutch, French, Scottish, English and American, German and Danish, and a group known as 'Twentieth Century' which covered an international collection with collections of German Expressionism, Surrealism and French art generally amongst others. (Anon 1989)

National pride

The demand for British portraits peaked just before the Great War and Sir Henry Raeburn was much sought after. His portraits, all painted in Edinburgh, were much in demand. This made people more aware of the value of 'their heritage' (Thompson 1972: 93) and the National Art Collections Fund was founded to enable the purchase of these types of pictures with a nation association.

Insofar as national pride was a pre-occupation with past glories rather than a present political force, it grew out of antiquarians' interest in regional history. In 1908 a Scottish National Exhibition was held in Edinburgh to illustrate the achievement of the Scottish school as a whole. The Scottish school was understood to be a continuous tradition of art independent of mainstream European art although this was not true. From this time onwards the National Gallery actively collected art by Scottish artists whereas in the nineteenth century very little interest had been shown in this. In 1929 a distinction was made between Scottish and English art in the catalogue whereas previously these art works were seen as British. It also actively collected old masters (paraphrasing Thompson 1972).

The Scottish National Portrait Gallery

When the National Gallery was opened in 1859 it had 34 portraits in its first room that were intended, according to the catalogue, to lay the foundations of a National Portrait collection. In the early eighteenth century private collectors were interested in European portraits but by the 1780s the idea of a collection of illustrious Scots had attracted the attention of the Earl of Buchan who, as we have seen, helped to found the Society of Antiquaries. The National Portrait Gallery was intended right from the start as 'the highest incentive to true patriotism' (Anon cited Clifford 1989: 11). It shared a site with the National Museum of Antiquities. The Gallery sought 'to collect and display images of distinguished, celebrated or even infamous Scots, whether in paintings, sculptures, prints, drawings, commemorative medallions or photographs' (Clifford 1989: 11).

The collection at first comprised of pictures of artists with very few historical characters. However the antiquarian Laing left his own collection of 26 historical portraits to the Society of Antiquaries in the hope that they would act as a foundation collection for a new National Portrait Gallery in Scotland.

The following information is taken from the website of the National Gallery.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the idea of a National Portrait Gallery for Scotland was championed by many, including the historian Thomas Carlyle. A believer in heroes, Carlyle wrote that "Historical Portrait Galleries far transcend in worth all other kinds of National Collections of Pictures whatever". Despite widespread enthusiasm, however, the government of the day was reluctant to commit funds to the project. Instead, it was the philanthropy of a local newspaper owner that allowed the present Gallery to open its doors to the public in 1889.

John Ritchie Findlay, the chief proprietor of *The Scotsman*, not only paid for the construction and an endowment, but he also masterminded the building that was to house the collection. He employed the architect Sir Robert Rowand Anderson, who had previously won the competition for designing the Edinburgh Medical Schools and who later earned a

wide reputation for the restoration of ecclesiastical buildings in Scotland. Rowand Anderson created a modern purpose-designed art gallery to rival the most advanced at the time in Europe and America. At the same time, he wanted his building to be a shrine for Scotland's heroes. The extensive decoration scheme, both external and internal, was designed with this idea in mind and is now an essential part of the visitor's experience.

To this day, the Gallery continues to collect works that are portraits of Scots, though not necessarily made by Scots. It aims to add portraits of those missing in the collection, as well as to bring the collection up to date. Since 1982 there has been a policy of commissioning portraits of living Scots by contemporary artists. (National Galleries Scotland 2010)

The Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art

The Gallery was opened in 1960 in Inverleith House in the Royal Botanic Garden. There were aspirations for this gallery as far back as 1826. The aim was to foster a school of artists, originally British but later Scottish. The aim of the Tate Gallery when it was founded in 1879 was similar for it was then named the National Gallery (British Art) and its collection was limited to modern British painting and sculpture. In 1926 the Tate enlarged its terms of reference and its building to include modern foreign works.

The National Gallery of Modern Art contains the more recent works in the National Gallery. In 1966 it moved to a larger house on Bedford Road. This Gallery has a significant collection of modern Scottish art and also European modern art.

Scotland abroad and the concept of nationalism outside Scotland and national museums

The Scots have maintained strong links with emigrants and have often sought to capitalise on their wealth and connections in order to support institutions at home. For example, as we have seen, the Royal Association for the Promotion of Fine Arts in Scotland was founded in 1834 as a subscription association that encouraged the exhibition of modern Scottish art and its purchase for the National Gallery. It was at first confined to Scotland but it aspired to establish links with Scots abroad, which it did, and in 1861 it had 300 honorary secretaries throughout the empire. This sense of Scotland beyond its borders, of a Scotland 'bigger than it is' has increased over time, driven in part by tourism and partly by national sentiment.

In 2009, the Scottish tourist industry staged a Homecoming event throughout the year. It was described thus:

2009 was a special year for people living in Scotland, for the millions of ancestral Scots overseas and for everyone the world over with an affinity for Scotland. It was a time to come home and to invite people home. Organisations all over the country were involved, extending the invitation worldwide. (EventScotland 2010: 6)

Anyone with Scottish ancestry was invited 'home'. Scotland is understood emotionally (and economically for the benefits to tourism are huge) to be more than the current inhabitants of that nation. Scottish National Museums have contributed and continue to contribute to this idea both in their permanent displays and in events they hold.

The Royal Museum project newsletter of winter 2008/9 commented:

While our programme of events will continue in the United States, there will be many opportunities throughout 2009 for international visitors to participate in Scotland's Year of

Homecoming. A year-long programme of events will draw audiences from across the world in 2009 and we look forward to welcoming many of our friends to Edinburgh to participate in the celebrations. National Museums Scotland will be participating in the Year of Homecoming in a variety of ways including the opening of a new exhibition – Salt of the Earth – in autumn 2009. This exhibition will explore the modern diaspora across the world and highlight Scots' adventurous spirit as they make their own way abroad, taking with them their Scottish values, acumen and creativity. (Royal Museum Project 2008)

In its permanent displays the Museum of Scotland dedicated a section of the Industry and Empire exhibition to 'Scotland and the World'. According to the guidebook of the National Museum describing this section 'Some prospered, some suffered, but they all held on to a sense of their own nationality, proud of their heritage' (Martin 1998: 30).

Conclusion

Scotland led England in the state provision of arts for such sponsorship had begun 'in a modest and roundabout fashion' with the Act of Union of 1707 when part of an annuity granted to Scotland at that time was allocated to the arts and administered by the Board of Trustees for the Encouragement of Manufactures (Hook 2005: 227). However, after this head start, the development of the national museums then followed a similar pattern to England's and, what London had, Edinburgh aspired to have also. The upper and middle classes founded national museums as both Enlightenment projects and as a means of cultivating taste and improving design. However, unlike the patrons and staff of London museums those in Scotland were always aware of a national cultural identity that was separate from a British one and sought to promote 'Scottishness' in all its manifold forms. That did not stop these museums and galleries from foregrounding Scottish achievements in the United Kingdom and they were constructed within the notion of the Union, not outside it.

Like the national museums in England the Scottish museums comprise of some smaller institutions including a National War Museum. The Imperial War Museum in London does not distinguish between the separate nations in its displays and it is interesting to see that Scotland has chosen to separate out its national war story.

At the present time the National Museums Scotland, as all national museums are currently called, are governed by a Board of Trustees who are non political but who are accountable to Scottish Ministers and to the Scottish Parliament. It is inevitable in these circumstances that they are more integrated into national policies than they were before devolution, though as we have seen policies appear to be few and far between. These national museums are also more inclined now than ever before to see their role as a celebratory one – of Scotland's past and its links to the present. The National Museum of Scotland has just undergone a second phase multimillion-pound transformation and opened in July 2011. The Scottish National Portrait Gallery at the time of writing (August 2011) is also undergoing a refurbishment and is planning to reopen in November 2011. The website suggests that the portraits will be redisplayed within a form of historical narrative:

When the Gallery re-opens in November, the way in which the collection is displayed will also be transformed. The portraits will be shown within the context of various historical and thematic exhibitions, bringing to the foreground the fascinating stories behind the sitters and

the artists. Much more photography will be on display, and there will be a strong focus on Scottish art. (National Galleries Scotland 2011 c)

Politicians and the public see the National Museums of Scotland as symbols of national pride (Jones, M. 2000), but it would be too simplistic to describe these institutions as deliberate attempts at nation building, neither can we ascertain to what extent they contribute to it. Curators and politicians often have very different priorities and the public may interpret a museum or gallery very differently from that intended by both. There can be no doubt, however, that National Museums and Galleries in Scotland contribute to the vital cultural confidence of this nation as it explores its future relationship with its other partners in the Union.

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For the history of the National Gallery of Scotland I have drawn heavily on Colin Thompson's invaluable *Pictures for Scotland, the National Gallery of Scotland*, (1972). All opinions expressed here and any mistakes are, of course, my own.

The author, Dr Sheila Watson, is a lecturer in the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, England.

Notes

- ¹ In 1927 Gordon Childe was appointed the First Professor to the Chair of Archaeology in the University of Edinburgh. He became a world renowned authority on prehistory. Ironically the one place his ideas were rejected was the National Museum in Edinburgh, though he briefly held the role of Director there between 1944 and 1945.

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Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach
National Museum of Antiquities	1858	1851	Society of Antiquaries – aristocrats, middle class patrons	British Parliament, at arm's length through a Board of Trustees	Archaeology	National	Prehistory to early Modern.
Scottish Royal Museum	1861	1854	Prince Albert, aristocrats and members of the middle classes	As above	Ethnography, Science, Applied Arts, Technology and the Natural World	Universal	From beginnings of time to modern times.
Museum of Scotland	1998	1930s, 1951, 1985	Curators, aristocrats, middle classes, Parliament	As above	Geology, Archaeology, Social History	National	From the formation of the continents to the present time.
National Museum of Scotland	2011	1930s, 1951, 1985	Curators, aristocrats, middle classes, Parliament	As above	The Scottish Royal Museum refurbished and added to the Museum of Scotland	National	From beginnings of time to modern times.
National Gallery of Scotland	1859	1850	Prince Albert, civic dignitaries in Edinburgh	As above	Art	Universal	From early Renaissance to 1900.
National Portrait Gallery	1889	1882	Local newspaper proprietor John Ritchie Finlay	As above	Art as History	National	Early modern to present day.

The Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art	1960	1959	Living artists	As above	Art	Universal	20 th and 21 st c.
National Museum of Flight	1975	1971	Enthusiasts	As above	Aviation	National	20 th and 21 st c.
National Museum of Costume	1982	1977	Collection of an individual, Charles Stewart	As above	Costume	National	19 th and 20 th and 21 st c.
Dean Gallery	1999	Late 1990s	Sir Eduardo Paolozzi	As above	Art	Universal	Contemporary artists
National War Museum, Edinburgh Castle	1990s	1920s	Ex service men and women and the armed forces.	As above	Military	Universal temporary exhibitions National permanent exhibitions	19 th to 21 st c.
National Museum of Rural Life	2001	1949	HLF, National Trust for Scotland, South Lanarkshire Council.	As above	Rural Life, Social History	National	Mainly 19 th and 20 th c.



National Museums in Serbia: A Story of Intertwined Identities

Olga Manojlović Pintar & Aleksandar Ignjatović

Summary

In our paper, we are analyzing five museums as the comparative objects of research aimed at exploring the processes of identity- and state-building in Serbia over the course of the last two centuries. These museums are: the National Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Museum of Yugoslav History, the Museum of African Art, and the Museum of the Victims of Genocide. We defined these museums in terms of the official interpretational discourses and the roles they perform in society both in synchronic and diachronic terms — the latter in particular often being expressed by a range of meanings and functions. These museums have been chosen for closer examination because they represent rather paradigmatic examples of both the institutions and narrative-producers, within the process of identity and state building in Serbia, which have been developed over the course of last two centuries. We analyzed the periods of nineteenth century nation-state building, as well as the twentieth century formation of Yugoslavia and the construction of socialism. Special attention, however, was put on contemporary Serbian society and the relationships between the museum protagonists and museum narratives. Surely, an integral part of the research includes a number of changes and transitions within museum policies and narratives, along with hidden, ‘deaf’ historical events or cultural phenomena that have not been represented in Serbian museums so far.

The main analytical points and conclusions of the research are: the national museums in Serbia have played important roles within the complexity of representational discourse, which included the nation-building processes. Museum practices constructed national identity as a multifaceted entity, being based on a variety of perspectives: historical, archaeological, ethnological, anthropological, artistic and geographical. However, the museums have produced changeable visions of collective identity, mainly as a result of ideological and political context. Yet museum practices have not merely reflected certain ideological frameworks and political realities, but rather represented constitutive elements of ideological and political context.

Secondly, our analysis is based on a wider understanding of the term ‘national museum’ and the explanation of the museum network in Serbia, as a complex, interdependent system of policies and narratives, which have a crucial role in the process of identity-building in Serbia. The network has been structured according to the simultaneity of several metanarratives: revolution, state-building, modernization/Europeization, national authenticity/indigenoussness, etc.

Finally, our analysis shows that museum policies and narratives have been based on three general paradigms related to nation- and state-construction processes, each of them being heavily dependent upon interpretational discourse and firmly anchored to ideological and political context. The first one is the paradigm of exceptionalism and uniqueness; the second is the one that supports a rather mediatory concept of national identity, and the third paradigm establishes new interpretations of different historical processes.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
The National Museum	1844	1844	Princely collections and State	State	Archaeology, Art, Visual and Material Culture	National (Serbian/Yugoslav) and international	Prehistory to the present day	Neo-Renaissance style in the central square of Belgrade.
The Museum of Contemporary Art	1962	1959	State	State	Art	Yugoslav narratives until 1991 and Yugoslav as well as international after 1991	20 th c.	Modern style located in prominent position in New Belgrade.
The Museum of African Art	1977	1977	Originally private collection, municipality and State	Municipality, State	Art and Material Culture	Traditional and modern African	19 th c. to the present	Modern style in the elite residential district in Belgrade.
The Museum of the Victims of Genocide	1995	1992	State	State	Documentary Center	Serbian	WWII onwards	Former bank, modern style in Belgrade.
The Museum of Yugoslav History	1996	1996	State	State	Visual and Material Culture	Yugoslav	20 th c.	Former May 25 th Museum, modern style, prominent position in elite residential district, Belgrade.

Introduction

The development of the Serbian national consciousness on the territories of the Habsburg Empire was formulated on the tide that swept across Europe in the late eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century. As with all other national ideas grounded in the belief of self exclusivism and uniqueness, the ideology of Serbian nationalism was based on two pillars: building the distance from the negative 'other' and restoring/inventing the memory based on the glorious and martyring past, i.e. on the tripartite narrative on the 'Golden Age' — rise, fall and resurrection (Smith 2003). The basic principles of this process were producing a sense of uniqueness and a feeling of collective endangerment, which strengthened ties among the representatives of the social and intellectual elite of ethnic Serbs, connecting them with the parts of other ethnic groups with whom they shared the same territories (Ćirković 2004). The process of construction of Serbian national identity was based on the concept of nation as the community of common language, culture and history. Its wide reception was encouraged and promoted through numerous cultural projects and institutions, directly influencing and reshaping political realities and processes, not only in parts of the southern Hungary, but in the borderlands of the Ottoman Empire (especially the Belgrade Pashaluk).

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Serbian vernacular culture was presented in the wider European framework through the recognition of cultural and linguistic reformers (in the first place Vuk Stefanović Karadžić). In the complex mosaic of European cultures, Serbian vernacular heritage attracted the interest of the romanticists, influencing gradual affirmation of the Balkan national movements, as well as slow delegitimization of the Turkish rule on the Balkans. These phenomena took part simultaneously with the political and cultural decline of the Ottoman Empire. The entropy of the empire, which was most glaring on its periphery, influenced instabilities in the Belgrade Pashaluk for decades. Such a situation opened space for numerous separatist attempts of local dignitaries and their direct confrontation with the central government in Istanbul. This was the context of the outbreak of the First and the Second Serbian Upheavals, which primarily represented the attempt to stabilize political and social life in this Ottoman province on the periphery of the empire. Such cultural and political complexity marked most of the nineteenth century development of Serbia. Once interpreted through the prism of national ideology, the First and the Second Serbian Upheavals acquired quite new political meanings. The processes of Serbian political autonomy recognition inside the Ottoman Empire and the constitution of the modern statehood went simultaneously with the process of national consciousness strengthening and expansion. The representation of the uniqueness and ancientness of Serbian community was emancipated in the region of southeast Europe as part of the wider phenomena of that period, which promoted ideas of freedom, brotherhood and equality and endorsed secularization. The main aim of the elite of the Serbian principality, which received formal autonomy inside the Ottoman Empire in 1830, was to make Serbia the Piedmont of the South Slavs. This political idea, which was based on the assumptions of the linguistic and cultural similarities of South Slavs, led to the formation of different political ideologies that burst after the collapse of both the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires.

The period of gradual expansion of the Serbian political autonomy within the Ottoman Empire lasted more than six decades (the length of time that passed since the outbreak of the

upheavals until the Berlin Congress of 1878 when Serbia was officially recognized as an independent state). During that period, Serbia had actively directed development of the national idea through the rudimentary network of cultural institutions. The expansion of the Serbian national idea was primarily related to the Habsburg territories of the Military Frontier, which for centuries had represented a restless and fluctuating space of borderlands — the space of constant conflicts between two universal empires. The rather long distance from Turkey, which symbolized the Orient in Europe during the whole of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, influenced a radical breakup with the Ottoman legacy and its fierce suppression. This was the main reason for strong avoidance by the Serbian public to include the centuries of common experience as an integral part of the history of the nation. Namely, it was Turkey that was perceived as the negative ‘Other’ in opposition to whom the new collective identity was created. This was the reason for its selective representation during the last two centuries.

On the other hand, events involving the Serbian national movement inside the Habsburg Empire influenced its direct confrontation with Hungarian nationalism as the main obstacle for the establishment of cultural and political autonomy of Serbs in the Habsburg Monarchy. In 1848, the Serbian Principality of Vojvodina, while created in the territories historically marked as the Lands of the Crown of Saint Stephen, was never erased from the Serbian collective memory as a form of Serbian statehood in the Habsburg Empire, actively communicating with the idea of Serbian political and state independence south of the Sava and Danube rivers. This principality was quickly proclaimed, and soon after abolished (Popović, 1990).

Ever since the recognition of Serbian state independence, and especially after the proclamation of kingdom status in 1882 and the introduction of laws on obligatory military service and compulsory primary education, the period of expansion of the Serbian national idea had started (Hoch's "phase C"). The aspirations of the military and political elite for expansion of the state and the ‘unification of all Serbs’ provoked political tensions between Belgrade and Vienna. In such a situation, the pro-Austrian politics of the Obrenović royal dynasty were replaced by the new politics characterized by the close connections with the Entente powers. Ever since the Austro-Hungarian empire occupied (1878) and annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina (1908) — the Ottoman province that has been claimed by many Serbian nationalists as Serbian national territory — the new objects of interest became the remaining parts of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. The 1903 coup d'état in Serbia and the inauguration of king Petar I Karadjordjević introduced a new political discourse sharply marked by expansion towards the southern parts of the Peninsula.

During the First Balkan War in 1912, in alliance with the other Balkan nations, Serbia had gained territories of Kosovo that were considered in Serbian national mythology as the cradle of the Serbian medieval state and the very place of its tragic defeat in 1389. A year later, the Second Balkan War led to the demarcation with Bulgaria and conquest of the Vardar river valley (present-day Macedonia). Completely exhausted with the huge human losses, Serbia was not prepared for the continuation of the wars with its imperial enemies in order to take over the territories that were claimed as ‘national’. However, Serbia was placed in the middle of the conflict, which occurred after the assassination of the archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo on June 28th, 1914. Members of the Young Bosnia movement (declared Serbian and Yugoslav nationalists) responsible for the assassination provoked Vienna to declare war on Serbia,

considering it responsible for the horrible crime. A chain reaction started and, in just one month's time, the entire world was facing the biggest war in its modern history (Mitrović, 2007).

The end of the four-year long war brought radical changes to the Balkans. The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was created and a decade later it was renamed as the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The ideology of Yugoslavism gave a new framework to the collective consciousness. From one point, Yugoslavism represented an idealistic narrative aimed at legitimization of the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire and the unification of the culturally close national groups — Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. On the other hand, Yugoslav ideology represented a sort of blind curtain, behind which was hidden a pragmatic idea of national exclusivity, whereby Yugoslavism represented an initial but simultaneously decisive phase on the road to national state formation. Although the ideology of Yugoslavism represented a platform for the south Slav's unity, it brought Yugoslav exclusivism into the public space, which created strong opponents shortly after its establishment and expanded a whole range of political and ideological adversaries. Faced with complex internal disagreements, Yugoslavia tried to secure its position in Europe in the aftermaths of the Second World War by the introduction of the politics of neutrality. However, those efforts did not succeed and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia disintegrated briefly under the fascist attack on April 1941.

The Second World War represented the bloodiest historical event ever held in the Yugoslav territories. Nevertheless, the new political regime, established soon after the end of the war, tried to use the heavy burden of war as the precondition for a new unity and the guarantor of a more secure future. Yugoslav socialism, which developed in direct opposition to Stalin and the USSR, brought extensive modernization, induced the idea of the equality of the classes and sexes, and last but not least, brought equality to all nations through the concept of state federalization. However, economic instabilities and complex political manipulations, culminating after the fall of socialism in Europe, induced the final breakup of the socialist Yugoslav state. In the last decade of the twentieth century, during the period of European unification, the ex Yugoslav territories were marked by cruel wars in which millions of people were displaced and hundreds of thousands killed. Although mainly interpreted as an unsuccessful historical experiment, the Yugoslav experience left a rich heritage for the future. Not even the wars, in which the Yugoslav legacy and socialist traditions were suppressed, succeeded in erasing them.

The fall of Slobodan Milosevic's regime in 2000 did not bring an undisputable breakup with the legacy of nationalism. The unsolved problems of Yugoslav and socialist heritage, as well as public avoidance in facing the burden of the 1990s, further complicated the search for a new identity in the post Yugoslav context. Consequently, the question: whether the experience of the 'Serbian dominated twentieth century' would produce a critical consciousness about the (re)construction of other, not exclusively national political and cultural concepts, is still waiting for an answer. Perhaps the prospect of being a full member of the European Union will bring these questions and answers into a more responsible context.

National museums and cultural policy in Serbia

The complex, and often traumatic, development of the Serbian national identity and the state can be traced in various representations of the past in the public space. Constantly changing cultural policies have reflected and, at the same time, constituted political instability in Serbia since the

beginning of the nineteenth century. The integral part of each and every cultural policy has represented the institutions of museums, many of which had important roles in the construction of the idea of national unity and identity. In a certain sense, like in other European states of the time, museums acted as strong instruments in both the creation and dissemination of the sense of belonging to a community, one that shared the same culture and history. Regardless of the type of museum and narrative focus (cultural history, natural history, ethnography, art, archaeology), they promoted the idea of national unity defining both temporal and territorial boundaries of the nation. During the period of the autonomous Serbian principality and kingdom (from 1830 to 1918), museums took active part in the promotion of Pan Slavic and Yugoslav ideas that would eventually led to the creation of Yugoslavia.

Despite different historical periods and ideological backgrounds, the main actors leading the museum institutions and creating their policies were always standing close to the centers of political power. In most of the cases, the museums in Serbia were inaugurated and owned by the state, whilst their main protagonists had always been high-ranked state employees.

Our analysis examines two paths — the one leading to formative and transformative events in each museum's history seen from the perspective of an identity-construction process, including the processes of the fusion of different museums, their official renaming, reconstructions, adaptations, etc. while another path traces the museums' position in contemporary society and the ways in which the so-called museum network creates and supports the social framework of contemporary Serbia. We studied cultural policies of the museums and the formation of the cultural policy of the state by raising several questions: which different groups in the society (in terms of global and local framework) were included in the process? How have museum policies and narratives dealt with the issue of democratization, nationalism and supra-national identity (the question of Yugoslav but also European identity), which in Serbia, has been mainly perceived through the lens of an East/West dichotomy? Also, we intended to relate changes in museum practices and narratives with the major shifts of dominant political and ideological discourses and the 'shared heritage' (of Yugoslavism, socialism, communism, Europeanism, etc.).

Firstly, we included the question of museum narratives and their relation with the Europeanization agenda primarily in the analysis of the National Museum in Belgrade and its shifting narrative paradigm. Another example was the Museum of Contemporary Art that has been constantly producing supra-national and pro-European narratives since simultaneously opening in 1965 with the national museum. At the same time, we were questioning the perception and the meaning of the terms 'Eastern' and 'Western Europe' in Yugoslavia during the period of the Cold War, as well as the term 'Third World', by analyzing the Museum of African Art. We emphasized the position of the Non-Aligned movement in the process of Yugoslav identity making. Apart from this, there is certainly a great potential for the museums that we are taking into the focus to become the 'authors' of new European narratives.

Analyzing the work of the Museum of Yugoslav History, which was created by fusing the Memorial Center "Josip Broz Tito" and the Museum of Revolution, we traced the position and the importance of museums as cultural institutions and their place in the numerous rituals that constituted the process of collective identity construction during the socialist period. By pointing to the museum of Josip Broz Tito as 'the final destination' for all the batons as well as thousands of the individual and collective presents and gifts sent to the Yugoslav president, we focused

attention on the complex relationship between the leader and the community, which we find of a great interest for our research. In contrast to that example, we were studying the marginal position of the art salons and festivals organized in museum institutions and their inability to influence the creation of a collective identity today.

Finally, when coming to the memory wars, our intention was to present the process of slow, but complete petrification of the museum institutions during the last two decades of the twentieth century. As silent observers, and only rarely the active transformers of society, museums have lost their constitutive position in the state. However, even this lack of cultural policy was reflected in the position of the museums as they obtained a specific social catalyst role by becoming part of a broader ideological framework. Our special attention was on contemporary museum practices by the Museum of Genocide and the museums in small local communities in Serbia where such memory wars were most obvious. A significant shift of museum policies and narratives is visible from a victorious to martyr narrative that mainly follows the Yad Vashem model. In other words, there is a shift from multinational and supra-ethnic Yugoslav to different national and ethnic narratives, i.e. appropriation and reinterpretation of museum artifacts (the same that we partly analyzed in regards to the reversal process that characterized the creation of Yugoslav master narratives both in 1918 and 1945 in the National Museum). We marked the transformation of the socialist revolutionary narrative into the new framework insisting on the individualization of the victim.

On March 11, 2006, Slobodan Milošević died in his prison cell in Sheveningen. Four days later, his body was transported to Belgrade and exposed for public mourning. Since almost every official institution in Serbia refused to host the coffin, the government was forced to proclaim a decree ordering where it should be placed. The final decision was: the hall of the Museum of Yugoslav History, regardless of the management's disagreement. Until March 18th, a series of commemorations organized by Milošević 's Socialist Party of Serbia had been performed in Belgrade and Požarevac, a small town in the east of the country - both his birth and burial place. These events symbolized a wide range of ideological concepts and historical narratives that had marked Serbian society since the final decade of the twentieth century. Oddly enough, these concepts and narratives were gathered around the Museum of Yugoslav History.

What were the reasons for such a decision? One can assume that the answers could be recognized as formal, since the place in which the body was displayed had a number of connotations. Firstly, the main museum building is situated in close vicinity to the House of Flowers - Josip Broz Tito's burial site. Secondly, it overlooks the house where Milošević was arrested and then deported to the Central Prison in Belgrade and, subsequently, to The Hague in 2001. Finally, this district of Belgrade - Dedinje and Topčider Hill - represented a residential quarter of the Yugoslav and Serbian elite, including both Tito and Milošević.

Nevertheless, the most intriguing aspect of such an unusual decision was the wide public perception of the museum itself. This institution was conceived as one of the central and monumental narratives of socialist Yugoslav history. During the Communist era, it functioned as a prominent place of pilgrimage for many Yugoslavs. Since 1991, the museum has been gradually fading to oblivion and its original significance has been widely ignored. Thus, the phenomenon of exhibiting Milošević's dead body in a museum could be understood as a certain form of

official break-up with both socialism and Yugoslavia. Having been seen by his political enemies not only as a war criminal, but also as the last symbol of socialism and Yugoslavia (defined by Serbian nationalists as the two biggest threats, illusions and mistakes of the nation), Milošević finally and literally became an artifact exhibited in a museum dedicated to socialist Yugoslavia. Four days later, when his body was transferred to Požarevac and buried behind the walls of his private house, it became a symbolic gesture aimed at making a move towards the Serbian twentieth century. The private character of Milošević's funeral, with music of the Russian *Ryabinuska* that echoed in the courtyard of his family house, seemed to have privatized the ideas of Yugoslavia and socialism, taking them away from the public eyes. How and why was the museum so easily transformed into a funeral chapel? Was it only a mere reflection of the trend of rejecting twentieth century universalistic ideals represented by the Museum of Yugoslav History, along with distancing itself from any mention of Yugoslavism? Namely, parts of the Serbian political and intellectual elite embraced an entirely different set of meanings and values. Public discourse had gradually become exclusively oriented towards ethnocentrism and, not surprisingly, clericalism. The process of gradual transition and transformation of society, however, comprised a new set of universal values as well, symbolized by the ideas of European integrations and liberal globalization. The fact that post-Milošević Serbia had fully embraced the new political culture was evident in the event of the funeral of the Serbian Patriarch in November 2009. It seems that this event introduced a new chapter in the political transition of Serbia.

This example was aimed at presenting the current state of museum practice in Serbia, where the question of the main museums, as the 'places of memory' is highly intriguing. The fact that there is no permanent exhibition in any of the major museums, and that many of them are closed to the public seems very symptomatic. This odd fact might not be founded only in the partial and confusing overlapping conceptions of the key national museums (the National Museum, the Historical Museum of Serbia); in the lack of permanent exhibition policy (the National Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art), or in a rather controversial policies of some of these institutions (the Museum of the Victims of Genocide, the Military Museum). Last but not least, there were, and still are, permanent although not always direct attempts at suppression of some of these museums. In this way, the social and ideological position, as well as the significance of the major museums in Serbia, represent the obvious testimony to the lack of ideological consensus, along with the contemporary complexity of interpretational discourse and the identity construction processes.

Our focus was placed on the analysis of processes in the construction of the museum's narratives. A complex Yugoslav heritage as well as confronting and often conflicting attitudes towards recent wars slowed down these processes, so the new historical paradigm is still lacking a broader social consensus. This seemingly odd situation is quite intriguing. The reluctance of museums in Serbia to deal with tangible and problematic issues of both Yugoslav historical legacy and the wars of the 1990s reflects dominant political discourse. Serbia still lacks social consensus, which affects the political status quo regarding its state borders. The representation of the Yugoslav past is firmly linked with the perception of the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s and their aftermaths. And vice versa, hidden and 'deaf' historical events from the recent past owe their 'invisibility' solely to political amnesia regarding the Serbian role in both the construction and dissolution of socialist Yugoslavia. As a consequence, both Yugoslav history and the Yugoslav

civil war are still a matter of dispute and as such remain inappropriate for public representation in museums.

Over the course of the last two centuries, there has been a parallel existence of historical representations and several modes of identity-construction, all of which could be traced in museum practices and policies in Serbia. During the years of the Yugoslav dissolution, this complexity went even further by producing an anarchy of the museum practices. Unlike numerous examples of the ex-socialist states in Central and Eastern Europe, including some former Yugoslav republics (where the new democracies eagerly rejected the symbols of communism), such symbols in Serbia have been only partially neglected during the last decade of the twentieth century. Indeed, there has been a certain coexistence of numerous concepts of history and historical representation since the dissolution of socialist Yugoslavia.

The complexity of representational discourse, which included the nation-building processes, could be seen in the structure of national narratives in Serbia, amongst which museums hold a prominent place. Museum practices, describing national identity as multifaceted entities, were based on a variety of perspectives. These perspectives of national narratives were characterized by profound simultaneity; yet in certain historical periods some of them had more prominent positions in the public discourse, while others were largely marginalized. It is quite common to comprehend the changeable visions of national identity that were produced by museum practices as being the result of ideological and political contexts in which the museums operated. Yet these national narratives do not merely reflect certain ideological frameworks and political realities. On the contrary, museum practices that constantly produce and sustain national narratives are active, constitutive elements of ideological and political context, which is heavily dependent on the means of its cultural representation. In a certain sense, it becomes clear why the place of museums in the establishing of social value-systems and state- and nation-building processes is extremely important and why the role of these institutions cannot be described as a mere representation of the 'social and historical reality'.

Secondly, different perspectives of national narratives are firmly institutionalized through the diverse cultural practices and scholarly disciplines (political history, art history, archaeology, linguistics, ethnography etc.). Through various museum practices, however, national narratives are always produced by the coordination of these focused views that are institutionalized as a network of different museums — of history, art, ethnography, natural history etc. A museum network, however, does not represent a mere sum of different museums which have a particular place in the public discourse, but rather a complex, interactive system where each museum policy and representational paradigm affects another.

At the same time, a variety of perspectives is subordinated by the simultaneity of several metanarratives which govern their constitution and mechanics. As a rule, some of them are mutually exclusive and it is such exclusion that needs to be examined more closely. In what way, for instance, can the variability of ideological constructs in different political systems (nation-state, multinational state, state of socialism etc.) be explained? In which moment, and why, does a certain museum practice — which is governed and supported by a particular metanarrative — begin to transform itself? Is it possible to trace reversible processes where museum practices redefine metanarratives — as, for example, the exhibiting of the art of social realism during 1930s, great exhibitions of European painting in the National Museum in the late 1930s,

transformation of the National Museum narrative in the 1980s, and finally, the shift in representing the socialist revolution that occurred a decade later to suit the reconstitution of the national identity?

Over the last couple of years, the case of the Museum of Yugoslav History has become an extremely symptomatic example of the reversible process, as this museum was transformed into a place where contemporary artists exhibit their experiments. On the other hand, the simultaneity of different metanarratives in the public discourse appears to be only partial as, in diachronic perspective, some of them are usually more dominant and acceptable.

Another important fact is the issue of interpretation of a museum practice. Namely, a historical distance could affect visibility and recognition of certain metanarratives, as it may become more important and relevant if seen from a historical distance rather than from its original context. In other words, there is a multi-level simultaneity of different narrative perspectives and different metanarratives, both of them being characterized by a great complexity which becomes even greater with the interpretation that regulates their correlations. Thus, how does presupposed historical distance transform historical narrative that is produced by museum policies and furthermore; how does it become a starting point in the process of invention of historical continuity? The answer to these questions is difficult and, at the same time, very complex. In the following case studies we have tried to answer some of these questions and to trace a framework of general interpretation regarding multifaceted museum policies in Serbia from both diachronic and synchronic perspectives.

Case studies

The National Museum in Belgrade: The emancipation of the nation

The National Museum in Belgrade is the oldest and the most important museum in Serbia. The museum has more than 400,000 objects and 34 archeological, numismatic, artistic and historical collections that have been collected since its foundation in 1844 (Popović 1991; Popović and Jevremović, 1991; Kolarić 1991). The official role of the museum as the national institution responsible for collecting, displaying and interpreting the culture of 'Serbia and the region' has not changed since the nineteenth century: "Although the museum and its content have changed considerably since its foundation, its role and purpose have remained constant: the National Museum is dedicated to protection, interpretation and promotion of a multi-layered cultural heritage of Serbia and the region" (the official web-site of the National Museum in Belgrade). With such a policy and mission, marked by the unclear notion of what the 'region' actually is, the National Museum has a number of significant ideological roles and functions that could be analyzed in both diachronic and synchronic terms.

The National Museum is the first institution to start with an institutionalized protection of art treasures in Serbia. The National Museum in Belgrade was founded in 1844 under the auspices of the Serbian Ministry of Education. Initially, the museum was named the Serbian National Museum. The initiator was the minister Jovan Sterija Popović, at the time one of the most outstanding intellectuals and writers, an ardent supporter of the emancipation policy of the Serbian élite that pursued the ideas of enlightenment with a view of turning Serbia into a European state. Having common interests and goals with the National Library of Serbia, the

museum had been integrated within this institution several decades before the division that occurred in 1881. Namely, until then the National Museum and the National Library had been one institution, sharing similar interests and goals. In the years to come, the museum, along with the Naturalist Cabinet of Belgrade University, provided material for the establishment of the Museum of Natural History that was inaugurated in 1895. On the other hand, the separate Ethnographic Department of the museum was founded in 1901, which would, five years later, become the independent Ethnographic Museum of Serbia.

The formative period in the history of the National Museum was marked with enthusiasm: it was the time of the very first archaeological excavations in Serbia (Prehistoric culture of Mount Rudnik, 1865), along with the first major acquisitions of Western European paintings and sculpture (1871).

The first exhibition of the Museum was organized in 1871, when sculptures of Serbian artist Petar Ubavkić were put on public display. Eleven years later, in 1882, the first exhibition of paintings was held and this time on display were the works of the Serbian painter Katarina Ivanović (Timotijević and Mihailović 2004). Until the beginning of the twentieth century, the museum had organized only temporary exhibitions. The first permanent exhibition was ceremonially opened in 1904, displaying works of art that had already been selected for public display and presented in a catalogue published by the museum four years earlier.

Initially, the museum had five collections: 1) Charts; 2) Books (manuscripts and printed books); 3) Old Stamps; 4) Old Serbian Coins; 5) Old Bulgarian Coins. The written evidence reveals the fact that the museum was originally more like a depository than a museum that had a broader social mission. However, the focus of the collection was not only on Serbia but also on the 'Serbian lands' and reveals the underlying nationalistic narrative of the museum, which acted as an important instrument in the cultural legitimization process of the Kingdom of Serbia's expansionistic policy (Sundhaussen 2007; Pavlowitch 2002).

Constantly faced with a lack of funds and suitable space for the permanent exhibition, the museum was initially situated in the headquarters of the Ministry of Education of Serbia. It was only in 1863 that the museum moved to its first building, obtaining all the features of a museum of the time (Popović 1991). In 1868, the art collection of the museum was split into two parts: the first being dedicated to the "artworks of foreign artists", and the second to "exclusively Serbian artworks" which was further organized into four compartments (Mano-Zisi 1964-1965; Popović 1991: 11). In 1881, the National Museum and the National Library became two independent institutions, according to a special law issued by the state that would, a year later, become an independent kingdom. Due to the increase of the collection, which had been particularly enlarged with the acquisition of the Serbian Scientific Society, the museum had to move to a larger edifice in 1893, where it had remained until the First World War. However, the extensive reconstruction process of the acquired building had lasted until 1904, even though the museum had been opened to the general public in 1900 (Valtrović 1905). The new, second ceremonial opening of the museum coincided with the celebration of the centenary of the First Serbian Uprising that was considered a key event in modern Serbian history. That was the time when the policy of the museum significantly changed, at least in terms of representational narrative of the collection, and it was closely connected to the complex and ramified ideology of Serbian nationalism and expansionism. Instead of solely representing the treasures of Serbia and

the 'Serbian lands', the museum proclaimed its ambitious role to become a museum of South Slavs and to pursue the policy of Yugoslavism that could be seen as a mimicking strategy of the Serbian expansionist policy of the time (Djokić 2003; Banac 1988; Lampe 2000; Allcock 2004; Bakić 2004). At the same time, however, Yugoslavism might represent another, more inclusive concept of national identity that was based on the idea of South Slavs as a single nation. Somewhat dissimilar to concept of Serbian ethnocentrism, Yugoslavism sought to forge a new Yugoslav idea and to disseminate it throughout the public arena, deliberately trying to put aside competing national ideologies — foremost, Serbian and Croatian. Consequently, the new ideology that the Serbian elite pursued simultaneously represented a possibility of exclusion and inclusion of the 'others'. It is such complexity that has been perennially concerned with the twentieth-century process of identity-construction in Serbia.

In the years to follow, museum activities were extended and the permanent exhibition of the museum, accompanied by the new catalogue, became one of the most outstanding national narratives representing Serbian culture along with that of South Slavs (Valtrović 1905; Vasić 1908; 1909; 1910; 1911). The new acquisitions from Croatian artists marked the new policy of the museum, as well as an attempt at the creation of a unique "Yugoslav Art Gallery" which had never materialized because of the outbreak of the Balkan Wars and World War I. In the pre-war period (1844-1912), the museum was "marked by 'fatal temporariness', defined by general cultural policy, and scarred by especially turbulent history of the Balkans" (Veličković 1985).

After the First World War and formation of the new state (the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, since 1929; the Kingdom of Yugoslavia), the National Museum continued to pursue the same policy of Yugoslavism that became the official ideological agenda of the new state. However, in the new context of Yugoslavia, the museum kept representing the Serbian master narrative of national emancipation along with the cryptic but obvious idea of Serbs as the principal nation of the state, in spite of the officially proclaimed equality between the three South Slavic nations. The place of the museum in the public discourse was consequently kept and the institution continued to support the idea of a rather distinct, historically authentic Serbian identity. The museum simultaneously narrated the history, culture and art of Serbia and Yugoslavia. However, the permanent exhibition and publications were almost exclusively dedicated to Serbian mediaeval culture. The museum played an ambivalent role in society that, actually, was only a reflection of the much broader phenomenon of dual legitimization that permeated Serbian society and politics during the interwar period. At the same time, the museum - with its pro-Serbian narrative - started to become marginalized; which could be explained by the different political context. Faced with a lack of sufficient funds and a suitable exhibiting space, the museum languished in the shadow of negligence during most of the 1920s. The new political élite was trying to invent a proper Yugoslav tradition and the lack of general consensus was vividly reflected in the policy directed towards the National Museum. In 1919, the museum had only two small rooms in a Belgrade gymnasium; in 1922 it was moved into a former private house, provisionally adapted to suit its new purpose and a year later the museum opened to the public (Popović 1991: 20). The Museum continued to primarily support the narrative of the Serbian statehood and historical traditions, and to extensively publish works dedicated to the art of mediaeval Serbia (Petković 1920; 1921; 1924).

In 1930, the name of the museum was changed to the Museum of History and Arts although it was unofficially renamed in 1924 (Petković 1926; 1927; 1931; 1932; 1935). In 1929, a new museum was founded as a branch of the National Museum and yet as an independent institution, named the Museum of Contemporary Art. This meant that the National Museum split its function between two independent but interrelated institutions each dedicated to different representational discourses. While the Museum of History and Arts was mainly focused on the archaeological and art works of the primarily Serbian past, the Museum of Contemporary Art, dedicated to the modern culture of both South Slavs and Europe, was significantly different since it promoted two distinct ideological agendas. The first was to promote the idea of Serbs and all South Slavs as a modern, civilized European nation; another was to promote the aristocratization of the Yugoslav society. Both agendas were driven by the ideology of Europeanization that would become the driving force of the museum's policy in the 1930s. The Museum of Contemporary Art was founded by an act of the Yugoslav Ministry of Education in 1929 in order to "keep paintings, sculptures and other objects of a similar kind, both foreign and national, that belong to contemporary art" (Popović 1991: 21). Behind the decision to support the new museum stood its royal protagonists - King Aleksandar Karadjordjević and, more importantly, his cousin Prince Paul Karadjordjević, an art pundit educated in England (Subotić 2009a; 2009b; 2011). Apart from modern Yugoslav art (of the XIX-XX century), the museum treasured modern European paintings, most of which came from royal gifts and acquisitions.

In 1935, the Museum of History and Arts merged with the Museum of Contemporary Art to become a single institution. Its name was the Prince Paul Museum, named after the king's cousin who was a Yugoslav regent between 1934 and 1941. The museum acquired a new building, the so-called New Court Palace, which had previously been the residence of King Aleksandar Karadjordjević. Between 1934 and 1936, the building was thoroughly reconstructed to rival the best European museums (Ignjatović 2009). The permanent exhibition, encompassing three capacious floors of the building, consisted of the most prominent artworks of both the Museum of History and Arts and the Museum of Contemporary Art, including the gifts from Prince Paul himself and many foreign aristocrats and donors. The exhibited collection of the museum was divided into several sections: the Historical Section (Čubrić 2009), Archaeological Section (Ninković 2009), Mediaeval Section (Preradović 200) and Art Gallery (Ham-Milovanović 2009; Subotić 2011).

The Museum became one of the most fundamental ideological instruments of the Yugoslav régime that monumentalized the desired narrative of the nation. Among several ideological perspectives that the museum fostered, that of Europeanization was the most significant. To represent Yugoslav and Serbian identity as an integral part of European civilization was an ambitious aim supported by the museum's permanent exhibition and various international exhibitions alike: "We finally have a European-style museum, in which monuments and testimonies of our history and culture have been collected with love, refined taste and unprecedented abundance, a museum representative of our history, a museum representative of our country, which, with a respectable, rich and varied series of artworks and historical antiquities, offers a lively and imposing image, evocative of our nation's centurial cultural and artistic achievement, as well as its various antecedents from ancient times, all the way to

prehistoric age or ages whose gloomy remains demonstrate, or at least suggest, the ancient foundations on which our people later resumed building further" (Manojlović 1936: 181-182). The museum's narrative became an integral part of the identity construction process, as it blurred the discrepancies between various ethnic and historical traditions of the constitutive Yugoslav nationalities. Reinforcing the sense of belonging to a common European civilization acted as a suitable framework for the common identity of all South Slavs. The context in which the Prince Paul Museum reached its peak was marked by growing anti-democratic tendencies and a strong propensity for authoritarianism that was quite common among the European states of the time. The Yugoslav regime tacitly disowned integral Yugoslavism, adopting a more pragmatic, *Realpolitik* ideology. The idea of South Slav unity was no longer emphasized and this shift gave credibility to a quasi-federalization of the country (Ignjatović 2010). It was such policy that the museum narrative fostered.

The collections of the museum were constructed to suit the new needs. Local history was reinterpreted and although the Serbian cultural tradition kept its primary role, the museum had in its permanent exhibition archaeological and art treasures originating from all parts of Yugoslavia (Kašanin 1936; 1937; Bošković 1936). These objects, organized in sections and accompanied by the lavishly illustrated catalogue written by the museum's ambitious director Milan Kašanin (Kašanin 1938), represented a persuasive instrument in creating a sense of belonging to European civilization in both synchronic and diachronic perspectives. The museum's narrative suggested that Yugoslavs share common heritage with old European nations - from Prehistory to Modern Era - which legitimized the political profile of the state's élite. The permanent exhibition was organized into several sections that showed Serbs and Yugoslavs as a part of the civilized world. These sections were: the Prehistoric Section, the Numismatic Section, the Classical Lapidarium as a part of the Graeco-Roman Section and finally, the Mediaeval and Historical Sections. On the other hand, the understanding of a nation followed the predominant nationalistic canon of the time: European national schools were arranged and displayed as "national schools" of art. The museum displayed the work of art done by German, French, English, Russian, Dutch, Belgian, Bulgarian and Romanian artists in order to "provide clear, comparative evidence of the art tradition of the European nations" (Kašanin 1938: XI).

During the late 1930s, the Prince Paul Museum arranged numerous international exhibitions that further promoted the same ideology of Europeanization, along with the legitimization of both Prince Regent's political aspirations and the shifting and adaptable political course of the Yugoslav régime. These exhibitions were: Exposition de la peinture moderne française (1936), Modern Danish Art (1937), Turkish Paintings and Publications (1937), Romanian Art (1937), Polish Art (1937), Italian Portrait Through the Centuries (1938), The Exhibition of the German Books – "Art and Science" (1938), La Peinture française au XIXe siècle (1939). In terms of the identity construction process, these exhibitions helped to foster the pro-European identity of the nation. At the same time, the museum was important for the construction of an aristocratic identity of the Serbian and Yugoslav royal dynasty Karadjordjević, not only because of its policy, exhibitions and the fact that a significant part of the display was the royal collection, but also due to the fact that the museum building had been the royal residence until 1935. The Royal Collection was initially transferred to the Museum of Contemporary Art in 1926 and thus fused with the Museum of History and Arts into the Prince Paul Museum in 1934. Following the

common pattern of transformation from royal premises into a museum was part of the process in the construction of a common Yugoslav identity and a way for the cultural emancipation of the whole society (Duncan 1995). Namely, the emancipatory role of the ruling royal dynasty of Serbia, which was connected with different royal houses and the aristocracy of Europe through marriages and private relationships, was one of the crucial segments of political and cultural life in Yugoslavia. In this respect, Prince Paul's personal endeavors in supporting culture was a particularly important issue and the inauguration of the Prince Paul Museum was only a part of a much wider cultural policy. On the other hand, cultural representations of the royal dynasty were aimed at the creation of a common image of Yugoslavia, which included the permanent exhibition of the museum with the clear idea that the very institution was created by King Alexander I and Prince Paul. Its three nations - the Serbs, the Croats and the Slovenes – were symbolically united by culture and art and represented as truly European. The museum was established in the former royal palace in Belgrade which King Alexander I had dedicated as a royal museum before his assassination in Marseilles in 1934. Apart from that, the museum played an important role in the process of the "aristocratization" of the whole Yugoslav society. "Surrounded by a park", as Irina Subotić put it, "the Prince Paul Museum was similar to other royal collections or princely residences, it evoked the spirit of luxury, an assemblage of values and wealth. It was deliberately engaged in bringing closer to the public the idea of elitism through particular accents and educational presentations of the highest achievements in art and carefully selected segments of history [...] to present the Kingdom of Yugoslavia as a European state of precious old cultures and significant contemporary artistic possibilities" (Subotić 2011: 16). The permanent exhibition of the museum testified that such emancipatory understanding of the role of the Karadjordjević royal dynasty was one of the central aspects of the museum narrative. The museum policy and its permanent exhibition, which displayed the works of European art along with Yugoslav art heritage, accomplished what the Prince Regent had endeavored to realize in the discourse of international politics — to underscore the European character of the Yugoslav state and bring the Yugoslav nation into the family of European peoples. The architectural image of the museum, which was housed in the former royal palace, was yet another segment of the same ideological narrative. The Neo-Classical style of the building represented an ideal cohesive framework that reinforced not only the alleged 'Europeanness' of Yugoslavia and its culture, but also the then dominant variant of the ideology of Yugoslavism that strove to minimize the impact of ethnocentric ideologies. (Ignjatović 2011).

On the other hand, one of the crucial parts of the museum's permanent exhibition was the gallery of aristocratic portraits from two Serbian royal dynasties - Obrenovićs and Karadjordjevićs - crucial not only as national benefactors but also as the epitome of a domestic, indigenous concept of national identity since both royal families had been rooted in Serbia. That means that the dynastical part of national representation was twofold: on the one hand it reinforced the European, civilizational dimension of the identity of Serbs and Yugoslavs; and on the other hand, the dynastical narrative further supported the concept of the indigenous nation, rooted solely in the authentic vision of identity.

After the Second World War, the Prince Paul Museum shared the destiny of the country which was transformed into the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia. In 1944 the name of the museum changed into the Museum of Art that was to be renamed yet again as the National

Museum in 1952. Deprived of its former building that was now used by the political establishment of the new state, the museum moved to a new, temporary location but in 1951 the problem of the museum's location was definitely solved and the institution obtained the representative building which had been thoroughly reconstructed to suit the needs of a modern museum. A year later, the renamed museum - now under its original name, the National Museum - was opened to the public (Mano-Zisi 1954). Yet the building was inadequate for the needs of a modern museum and it was only in 1966, after long and thorough reconstruction of a new edifice, that the museum was ceremonially opened with the spectacular exhibition 'Vincent van Gogh'.

The prominent role of the museum was further reinforced by its new main building which, in fact, was the old edifice built in 1903 as the seat of the former Mortgage Bank in the very center of Belgrade. Having been thoroughly reconstructed in 1952 in order to meet the standards of a museum, with exhibition rooms, archives and libraries, the edifice remained one of the most representative examples of academic, Neo-Renaissance architecture in Belgrade. Apart from the museum's narrative, its newly refreshed exterior became yet another symbolic representation of the European identity of the country and its peoples. In 1964-1966, the interior was further remodeled to suit the growing needs of the museum, with colossal caryatides by Ivan Meštrović stationed in the main hall.

The permanent exhibition of the museum was divided into several sections: the Department of Archaeology Collections, the Department of Mediaeval Art, the Department of the Post-Mediaeval and Modern Art, and the Department of the Numismatics (Popović 1991; Mano-Zisi 1964-1965). Since then, the National Museum has grown, owing to its subsidiary museums: in 1973, the Gallery of Frescoes, a museum which displays copies of religious paintings and decorative plastic of medieval, mainly Serbian monasteries; in 1975, the Museum of Vuk Karadžić and Dositej Obradović, dedicated to two great Serbian educators and reformists of language, and the Memorial Museum of Nadežda and Rastko Petrović, dedicated to two exceptional artists; in 1978, the Museum Lepenski Vir in Donji Milanovac, built at one of the most significant Mesolithic sites in Europe; and in 1996, the Archeological Museum of Djerdap in Kladovo, which displays archeological remains from the Danube region.

The position and role of the museum in the new context significantly changed as socialist Yugoslavia was based on a rather different ideological system: instead of ethnic unitarism, the driving force became the concept of national particularism and socialist patriotism named 'brotherhood and unity'. The promotion of ethnic and national diversity was the most valuable idea within the identity construction process, providing the principal basis for the new, federal structure of the state, utterly sanctioned by the Constitution of 1974. The museum narrative was but one source of legitimization of the new ideological system and the political order of the state. Thus, the museum was entitled to legitimize the state and the nation's new course: diversity instead of unity. At the same time, the complex ideological agenda of socialist Yugoslavia was distinguished by its split with the USSR and the communist block of countries in 1948 and with the construction of a rather unique social and political system that was based on two principal paradigms: the Non-Aligned Movement and Socialist Democracy. The state was trying to keep its 'in-between' position between the East and West and, at the same time, to represent Yugoslav identity as simultaneously authentic and mediatory in its essence. The museum reinforced such

complex ideological agendas through different means: from permanent display of collections and many international temporary exhibitions (both the displays of the National Museum collections abroad and innumerable foreign exhibitions at home), to extensive publication activities. These events and activities undoubtedly testified to the ambitious aim of the Yugoslav élite to construct the identity of the nation as a cultural crossroads, simultaneously insisting on the country's cultural authenticity and the notion of being a progressive member of the European society with which it shares both historical traditions and value systems. Some of the most important exhibitions were: Serbian Painting of the XVIII and XIX Centuries (1945); Yugoslav Painting and Sculpture of the XIX and XX Century (1946); French Painting (1950); Fifty Years of Yugoslav Painting, 1900-1950 (1953), English Watercolors and Drawings (1953); Greeks and Illyrians (1959-1960); From Titian to Tiepolo (1955); Flemish XVII-Century Art (1957); Paul Signac and his Friends (1959); Dutch Drawings of the XVII Century (1960); Icons from Yugoslavia (1964); Vincent van Gogh (1966); Old German Prints (1967); The Face of Mexico (1967); The Neolithic of the Central Balkans (1968); The Treasures of Cyprus (1968); The Old Western European Masters from the Hermitage (1968); Art of Medieval Serbia (1969); The *Russian Peredvizhniki* (1970); Coptic Art (1970); Illyrians and Dacians (1971); German Prints, 1910-1930 (1971); From Délaacroix to Picasso: French Painting of the XIX and XX Century (1971); Czech Baroque (1972); Roman Mosaics and Art Treasury od Tunisia (1973); Flemish, Dutch and French Printings of the XVII and XVIII Century (1973); André Lothe and his Yugoslav Disciples (1974); Archaeological Exhavations in the People's Republic of China (1974); Archaic Culture in the Middle Balkans (1975); Czech Painting of the XIX and the beginning of the XX Century (1975); Ivan Meštrović (1977); the Neolithic Serbia (1977); The Pre-Columbian Art of Peru (1977); Scythian Gold from the Russian Collections (1977); Thracian Treasuries from Bulgaria (1977); Prehistoric Macedonia (1977); Joseph William Turner: Watercolors and Drawings (1978); The Celts in Gallia: Art and Civilization (1978); Czech Gothic Art, XIV-XVI Century (1979); Traditional Chinese Painting, 1644-1978 (1979); Lepenski Vir (1978); The Art of Angola (1979); Great Mexican Cultures (1979); Mesopotamia (1980); and finally, Old Russian Icons from the *Tretyakov* Gallery (1980), among others. All these exhibitions were key instruments in shaping the state's ideological course during the Cold War that was marked by the oscillations between the East and West.

The ambiguous mission of the National Museum - to narrate both Serbian and Yugoslav culture - was further complicated by the then problematic question of Serbian and Yugoslav identity, interdependencies of two shifting ideological contexts in Yugoslavia that had been increasingly inclined towards ethno-nationalisms until the 1990s. Since the late 1970s and the early 1980s, in the wake of the emerging processes of the federalization of Yugoslavia and the rise of ethno-nationalisms, the museum had significantly expanded its educational and narrational role, supporting the then current ideological process of identity (re)construction. Although the permanent exhibition remained unaltered, numerous temporary exhibitions on Serbian culture, art and history paved the way for a new nationalistic paradigm that dominated museum policy during the 1990s. Among many exhibitions organized in that period, the following are of a special importance: Art Treasury of the Piva Monastery in Montenegro (1980); Art in Serbia from XII to XVII Century (1980); Serbian Pottery (1982); Jewelry on the Territory of Serbia from IX to XV Century (1982); Archaeological Treasures of Serbia (1983); Byzantium and Barbarians on

the Territory of Serbia (1983); The Art of Lepenski Vir (1983); Art Treasury of the Hungarian Serbs (1989); Serbian Art of the World (1990); The Icons of the Kninska Krajina (1997); The Great School from the Karadjordje's Era (1998); Nadežda Petrović: the path of Honor and Glory (1998) and Rings of the Mediaeval Serbian Nobility (1998), to name but a few.

Since 2000, the National Museum has faced many problems concerning not only out-of-date and dilapidated facilities, including the main building (causing the permanent exhibition to be closed for the public), but also suffering from negligence of both the officials and the state's élite. The vision of the role of the museum in Serbian society seems clouded and uncertain today as it is the permanent exhibition. The museum has been completely closed to the public since 2005, as the building needed thorough reconstruction and the whole process of the reconstruction is related to many affairs yet it is not clear whether it is going to be finished.

The Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade: Between the two worlds

The complexity of the multiple identities and especially the relationships between 'Serbian' and 'Yugoslav' identity within the social, cultural and political framework of Socialist Yugoslavia could be examined if one focused on the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade. Having been initiated, built, and financed solely by the Republic of Serbia - then constitutive republic of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia - the museum had an ambitious aim to "show and follow the development of modern Yugoslav art since its origin at the beginning of this century up to now, with the emphasis on its present aspect" (Protić 1965: 214). The idea of founding the Museum of Contemporary Yugoslav Art originated in the beginning of the twentieth century, when Serbian intellectual elite, accompanied with that of the Habsburg Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, had decided to establish the Yugoslav Art Gallery. In the wake of the success of the First Yugoslav Art Exhibition in Belgrade (1904) and the Yugoslav Art Colony (1905), the idea achieved wide support but lacked sufficient funds. After the First World War, the original initiative had been finally realized in the newly established Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade (1929) (Subotić 2009) that was fused with the Museum of History and Arts in 1934 to form the Prince Paul Museum.

After the Second World War, the need for a museum of modern art was steadily increasing. In 1951, the Museum of Contemporary Art was founded by the initiative of the Council for Art and Education of Serbia (Protić 1965b). The members of the Councils were, intriguingly, solely citizens of Serbia, among which many were artists. After several years of work on the program of the museum, the Museum Council proposed the final concept in 1959, which was accepted by the Council for Culture of Serbia and the Council for Culture of the City of Belgrade. This led first to the decision to officially found the museum and erect its building between 1960 and 1965. In 1965, the Museum of Contemporary art was ceremonially opened to the public, displaying the best pieces from its collection that had originally numbered 3,500 works of art.

In its formative phase, which lasted around twenty years (i.e. until the mid 1980s), the museum had displayed several collections of Yugoslav art: the First Period (1900-1918); the Second Period (1918-1941) and finally, the Third Period (after 1945). The names of the collections, as quite neutral marks, were intended to embody the evolutionary concept of constant development and to outline the vision of Yugoslav art as historically-evolving phenomena. The structure of the museum's collection was based on a set of mutually

interdependent principles, as "the exhibited works should display modern Yugoslav art from its origins up to the present day"; besides, the policy of the museum declared that the display should be presented according to the principle of an "organic whole" and evolutionary development of art. The whole display represented "a dialectical concept of history", whilst the collections were distinguished by the idea of "authenticity", seen as a sum of individual poetics (Protić 1965a: 214-215). It was such interpretation that reflected an ideological formula that legitimized the federalist concept of the state and a vision of a pan-national Yugoslav identity.

The concept that lay beneath the museum narrative, however, was more complex and ramified. Firstly, it was based on progressivism as a principle that permeated and governed the society of socialist Yugoslavia, a constantly reforming country. The position of art as a discourse in such context was inevitably important as it represented, according to the words of the museum's first director, "a symbol of the epoch and society, eager to ascend into the future" (Protić 1965b: 4). Secondly, the museum narrated a vision of the nation in accordance with the ideology of socialist patriotism and 'brotherhood and unity'. Serbian art and culture were constructed as part of a broader Yugoslav identity, and as such, was a complex idea that legitimized the political processes in the country that continually pursued the policy of federalization - of politics, society and culture. Representing the best that Yugoslav art had, the museum's collection was based primarily on 'Serbian modern art' without any clear, unambiguous and publicly declared (or negotiated) notion of what exactly Serbian art was, and what separated it from the art of other Yugoslavs. The official programmatic statement of the museum declared that: "Serbian art is going to be displayed in a wider specter than that of the other Yugoslav nationalities," in spite of the fact that "the museum tends to be Yugoslav in terms of the values shared by non-Serbs alike" (Protić 1965b: 8). If the values that Serbian art reflected were those shared by others, then such a narrative could be established and even elevated to a position of dominance of one national group in Yugoslavia. Here one can find testimony of a clandestine ideology of Serbian nationalism that has been constantly rising since the opening of the museum in 1965.

Even more important, however, was yet another register of the museum narrative, which was also a part of a wider ideological structure. Museum policy was based on the idea of becoming a leading international centre for art. Such an ideal was as ambitious as the Yugoslav régime's propensity for being an avant-garde in the world politics. Its new building, erected in 1965, further emphasized the role of the museum. Having been one of the cutting-edge architectural designs of the time (Protić 1992), it was "an aestheticized place for elegant gatherings [of the communist politicians], a place for new social rituals" (Perović 2003: 191-192). Even to the Western eye, the museum was "the most beautiful building in the whole communist world" — to cite Wolf von Eckardt, the architectural critic of *Washington Post* (Perović 2003: 193).

The building of the museum itself is undoubtedly one of the most influential examples of Yugoslav modernist architecture of a period that also had very similar ideological roles and functions. With its unorthodox and undogmatic visual and spatial concept, which amazingly straddles architecture and sculpture, the building further reinforced the emancipatory narrative of the museum. Seen as the most important work of architecture built in Belgrade and Yugoslavia after the Second World War, both aesthetically superb and far beyond the scope of either Social Realism or standard modernism, it was aimed at representing the country's unorthodox and

liberal variant of socialism and its unquestionable cultural and political inclinations towards the West. In a certain sense, even the urban position of the museum, at the confluence of the Sava and the Danube rivers - one of the most prominent locations in New Belgrade which faces the old fortress in downtown Belgrade, close to the seat of the Federal Government and the Central Committee of the Union of the Communists of Yugoslavia - underlines these ideological messages. Placed in a large, landscaped park close to the rivers, the museum might have been read as a superb work of art, not so dissimilar to many sculptures scattered around it. As with the country and the peoples it represented, the museum thus became a symbolic representation of a distinctive but emancipated European identity that shared universal values and ideas. On the other hand, the park in which the museum was built was an important narrative itself. Named the 'Park of Friendship', it exuded a specific ideological aura which testified both to the concept of Yugoslav 'brotherhood and unity' and, more importantly, to the non-aligned policy of Yugoslavia. Indeed, the place was a kind of ideological and political arboretum where an extensive variety of woody plants and saplings were planted by a dazzling number of international political celebrities — from Haile Selassie to Jimmy Carter and Mikhail Gorbachev. In this way, Yugoslavia might have been seen as an integral part of global political and cultural power, a perspective strikingly similar to that of the museum narrative.

Thus, the museum played an important role in the construction of the collective identity of Yugoslavs as a prosperous, modern and competitive nation, at least in their own eyes. The collection of Serbian and Yugoslav art, which dominated the permanent exhibition of the museum, was interpreted as an integral part of global culture, and both the collection and the building itself were designed following the example of the New York Museum of Modern Art (Protić 1992: 527).

The Museum of Contemporary Art ought to have become an "instrument of socialization and homogenization" (Protić 1965b: 6). This objective represented the key role of the museum and its complex narrative. The museum was not conceived as "a temple or a cathedral aimed at contemplative individuals" but as "a unity of art, nature and life" (Protić 1965b: 7). The aestheticization of society, as an important ideological issue of socialist Yugoslavia, is clearly evidenced in this concept: aesthetic value was a historical phenomenon that transcended ethnic and cultural differences and, accordingly, reinforced the sense of belonging to the communion of Yugoslavs as free citizens. The ideological agenda was clear: art acted as a cohesive force of a rather complex social and ethnic structure of the country. Furthermore, by supporting the thesis of the autonomy of art, the museum narrative constructed the ideology of the 'socialist democracy' and supported the idea of transition towards a stateless and classless society in the future where all men are free.

At the same time, the Museum of Contemporary Art played an important role in the process of Europeanization of Serbian and Yugoslav identity. Not only did the numerous temporary exhibitions of many artists coming from the West reinforce this process, but also the permanent collection was intended to represent the Yugoslav art scene as an integral part of the European art scene. During the 1960s and 1970s - a time of great pluralization of Yugoslav society and its opening to the West - the museum produced not contradictory, but rather complementary narratives spanning from Yugoslav and Serbian, to European. In the wake of the gradual transformation of political, ideological and social life in both Serbia and Yugoslavia, such a policy

represented an important issue in the concept of multi-identity. Having been simultaneously national, supranational, regional and European, it was such a complex identity of the nation that it might have survived as a model for the ongoing restructuring of Serbian society.

In the wake of turbulent events in the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s, the marginalized museum was languishing in suspense between life and death (K.R. 1998; Ćirić 1999). After 2000, the museum collection (which had grown to 7,600 works of art by 2006) was, according to the official web-site of the museum, reorganized in order to represent "the most relevant collection of art from the Yugoslav art space [sic!], which existed from 1900 to 1991" and, more notably, the "contemporary art in Serbia, the Balkan region, and, as much as it is possible, Europe and worldwide". The new collections of the museum are: Paintings from 1900 to 1945, Paintings after 1945, Sculptures, Prints and Drawings and finally, New Art Media (photography, film, video etc.). Since 2006, the museum has been closed to the public due to the thorough on-going reconstruction of its heavily dilapidated building.

The Museum of African Art: From margin to center

Ever since its opening in 1977, the Museum of African Art has been the only institution in the region of South East Europe dedicated to the promotion of the arts and cultures of the African continent. Unlike most of the prominent museum institutions exhibiting African art in world centers such as Paris, New York, Washington or London, which bear the legacy/burden of colonial experience, the Belgrade museum was defined as unique in the way it collected the artifacts and in the way it represented them. The fact that all the museum objects have been imported from Africa with written permission from the respective governments was crucial in representation of the new international position of the African societies, as well as the representation of the new Yugoslav position. Museum creators promoted the ideas of liberty and equality among the nations politically induced through the Non-Aligned Movement. The Non-Aligned Movement was established in 1961, with the organization of the First Non-Aligned Movement Conference in Belgrade. In the divided and constantly fragile world of the Cold War, both super powers and political blocs accepted the idea that the newly liberated African and Asian states should be organized as a separate bloc. Yugoslavia, as a country that refused Soviet domination, but at the same time, never abandoned socialism was an almost natural member of such a Third bloc. (Bogetić 1990). The new museum institution represented the pinnacle of the two-decade-long cultural politics of socialist Yugoslavia balancing between the Eastern and Western blocks, which influenced the process of the specific collective identity making.

The Museum of African Art was created in order to present and save exceptional African art collections, assembled by connoisseurs and art collectors - Veda Zagorac Pečar and Dr Zdravko Pečar. Living in numerous African states during the climax of the anti-colonial movement, Pečars gave strong support to the local political elite transforming ex-colonies into independent states. For more than twenty years, Zdravko Pečar and his wife Veda, traveled across the African continent. He was a reporter whose enormous knowledge and connections moved him to diplomacy. Comparative knowledge of African history, culture, and art, from North to South of the continent, from East to the West, and his close relationship with the African peoples, their customs and everyday life and their rituals resulted in creation of the one of the most valuable art collections from the West of the African continent. Pečars made a huge personal and material

effort collecting pieces of immense value, which constituted an extraordinary collection of African art (Pečar and Pečar 1989). As the representatives of the socialist intellectual elite, museum establishers introduced the new practice of social interaction. Promoting the idea of multiculturalism, they created the original framework for innovative cultural practice in the multinational Yugoslav society.

Owners decided to donate to the City of Belgrade artifacts that they had collected over many decades. At first, ideas to represent numerous African artifacts in the city of Belgrade assigned as part of the collection's ethnographical value, but finally the decision was made to transfer methods of representation from anthropological discourse to artistic discourse. This decision had a strong influence on directing the process of Yugoslav cultural and political identity articulation. The strong position of Yugoslavia on the international scene during the Cold War was expressed through a reevaluation of its foreign and cultural policies. In accordance with the radical political shift, which Yugoslav communists made in 1948, breaking with Stalin and other socialist countries, a new social empathy was created that lasted throughout the decades that followed. Specific forms of cultural politics generated an autochthonous version of socialist practice.

The insistence of state and city officials to establish an independent museum of African art was not only the intention but also a constitutive element of Yugoslav self-perception (Sretenović 2004). With the opening of the museum, citizens were given further arguments upholding the ideals of brotherhood among Yugoslav nations and, at the same time, supporting the image of Yugoslavia as 'primus inter pares' in the Non-Aligned Movement. Strongly promoting anti-imperialism and the process of decolonization, Yugoslav officials established close cultural, economical and political ties with the newly liberated countries of Africa and Asia. Endorsement of their independence was particularly visible in the openness of Yugoslav universities for students from Non-Aligned states. Constantly comparing the Yugoslav anti-fascist movement and the socialist revolution during the Second World War with their decolonization experience, state and party officials intended to create an atmosphere of tolerance and unity among these nations.

Both the creators of the collections and other key persons at the Museum defined the mission statement of the museum after which the established museum institution was created in order to promote confident political relationships between Yugoslavia and newly liberated African states. Elaborated upon in such a way, the museum narrative influenced not only Yugoslav identity but, at the same time, the identities of the African societies. The image of 'strong freedom fighters' and the central position of Marshal Josip Broz Tito became important elements of the new empathy between states and nations. The Non-Aligned Movement was organized on the principles of equality and promotion of mutual respect.

In Yugoslav public space, processes of modernization and dynamic industrial development during 1960s and 1970s - and especially the personal role of Josip Broz Tito - were perceived as the strongest pillars guaranteeing the country's central position within the Non-Aligned Movement's complex network. One of the first photographs of the Non-Aligned Movement founders - presidents Tito, Nehru and Nasser taken in July at the Brioni summit of 1956, showing Tito standing in a white suit between Nehru and Nasser and watching them shake hands - was perceived as the symbol of the Yugoslav central position. As one of the Non-Aligned Movement's leaders, Tito, became a statesman of international reputation, while the citizens of

Yugoslavia - for centuries border guards of the most underdeveloped European empires and peasants from a tiny, marginal Balkan state - were (self) perceived as the champions of global peace politics (Manojlović Pintar 2009).

The opening of the museum was one of the events organized during the month of May in 1977, when socialist Yugoslavia was celebrating the 85th birthday of Josip Broz Tito and forty years of his leadership in the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (later re-named in the Union of the Communists of Yugoslavia). On that occasion, as the official website of the museum mentions, the Major of Belgrade Živorad Kovačević stated:

The Museum of African Art will develop and revolutionize the cultural awareness of our people, bringing them closer to a more global understanding of history and culture, man and society. In the wider range of institutions dedicated to different fields of work and periods, from archaeological or medieval, to contemporary art collections - this Museum, as a collection and a sum of activities - frees us from our inherited Eurocentric and ethnocentric beliefs, cultural prejudice and narrow-mindedness, inspiring a deeper and wider outlook on culture, history and man.

Not only the collection, but also the architecture of the museum, designed to imitate a vernacular cottage from West Africa, represented homage to African culture. Interestingly, the museum was actually designed as a reconstruction and extension of the previously built edifice that hosted the ateliers of some of the leading Yugoslav pro-regime artists. The new building, designed as a museum in 1973-1976 and erected in 1977, was intentionally evocative of indigenous African vernacular architecture. Although the building was a superb example of the 'modern vernacular', the flat roof of the central part was poorly constructed, causing leaks and interior damage. Thus the roof was replaced by the present day cupola, which interestingly, adds further strength to the notion of folkloristic imagery. Despite the fact that the edifice was constructed in the tradition of the Western colonial discourse and the 'authentic' representation of indigenous architecture based on the idea of authenticity, the context of the representation of African culture was rather different. The image of 'authenticity' was finely transferred to a modern architectural language, akin to contemporary brutalism, signifying the Yugoslav symbolical attempts to 'recolonize' Africa by socialism and by a distinct, "Yugoslav model of 'national unity in reconstruction and development' which had to [...] confirm the universalism of the Titoist social politics (Tito: 'the experiences of Yugoslavia are highly esteemed and wanted')". Thus the museum epitomized the Titoist political figure of Africa which "did not represent a figure of an absolute other, the one that is excluded and detached, but a figure of a partner, of a 'younger brother' in marching to socialism" (Sretenović 2004: 26).

Furthermore, its location in a residential city area was aimed at showing Yugoslav support for the young communities and states in a complex network of international relations. In the following years, the founding collection of the museum was enriched through purchases and donations. However, it stayed as a dominant representation of the art and culture of the West African nations and ethnic groups Bamana, Dogon, Kissi, Baga, Marka, Malinka, Bobo, Dan, Gere, Gouro, Senufo, Ashanti, Eve, Baule, Fon, Yoruba, and Bamileke from Mali, Senegal, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Togo, Cameroon and Congo. The Museum continued to collect artifacts and to disseminate the knowledge of the African cultures and civilizations. The everyday objects, together with the numerous music instruments, masks

and jewelry created specific insight into the life of the geographically distant, but politically close Yugoslav allies.

According to the official website of the museum, the official documents today are stressing that, for thirty years, this institution has made significant contributions to the expansion and nurturing of cultural ties with related relevant institutions abroad, it has worked on the promotion of the principals of multiculturalism and cultural diversity and also in shifting the focus towards the importance of the African and non-European cultural and artistic heritage, recognized by UNESCO on an international level, as an important constituent of world heritage. However, during the 1990s, a decade of wars and international economic and political sanctions, ideals of tolerance and nonviolence were marginalized in Serbian society as well as the museum institution, which was established as the strongest promoter of those ideals. The museum that was creating "awareness of the cultural diversity, and opportunities for a multicultural dialogue" was forgotten during the tragic years of Yugoslav dissolution. Establishing the ideal of tolerance, the Museum of African Art became an utterly neglected institution during the years of fear and violence.

From the present perspective, one can search for a hidden agenda of the Yugoslav communists and political elite upon forming the museum and ask the questions: did the presenter — the one sorting and editing materials, appropriate the dominant position through the role of the evaluator? Did the unintentionally-established dichotomy open public space for the new political concepts that can be defined as a specific and new imperial agenda? The possible answers to those questions always has to start with the statement that the political reality of socialist Yugoslavia and its international engagement and status remained loyal to the founding principles of the Non-Aligned Movement that strongly opposed every political and economic supremacy over its allies.

Today, aside from the permanent display, which mainly features the traditional arts of West Africa, the Museum organizes numerous exhibitions, festivals and lectures as a way of presenting the most important segments of traditional and contemporary African life and art. The purpose of the exhibitions, as well as a diverse range of programs (exhibitions, lectures, film and video screenings, art and music workshops), is to cover not only West Africa, but also the other regions that are underrepresented by material from the museum collection. Publishing exhibition catalogues, program brochures, as well as an annual journal, *Afrika* - Journal of the Museum of African Art, represents an important part of the museum's work. The Museum is also a valuable documentation center containing print archives as well as photo, audio, video and film records.

Masks and sculptures are the most important part of the museum's collection. Other exhibited objects illustrate everyday living in the various African regions and include specific musical instruments, textiles, pottery and ritual ceramics, woodcarvings, bronze sculptures and soapstone figurines. Sorted by the materials from which the objects were made, these collections mixed objects of everyday life and artistic artifacts thus erasing the artificially established line between life and art. Thus, from the organization of the museum's collections, materialized the idea of erasing the boundaries between the margin and the center, between the civilized and the primitive. Furthermore, by using direct contact with the exhibited objects, the museum promotes the 'hands on' approach to visitors, where direct contact with the African cultures is also realized.

The Museum of Genocide Victims: changing the paradigm

During the last decade of the twentieth century; also last decade of the existence of Yugoslavia, national tensions in the public space were manifested through numerous debates concerning the new interpretations of the Second World War and the number of its victims. Perceived and labeled as 'the victims of fascism' during the socialist period, with the introduction of the new (national) paradigm, these victims were identified exclusively on the basis of their national background. With the pluralization and democratization of political life, rather than raising questions concerning historical 'blind spots' both in academic and public discourse, a new wave of political radicalism and exclusivism emerged. This was done using war victims as the basis for ideological confrontations and national accusations in the Yugoslav multinational state. The search for dead ancestors became the main element for the re-evaluations and revisions of the past. In the public sphere, it was used as a mask for political confrontations with the Yugoslav elite during the processes of privatization and economic transformation.

In Serbia, attempts to centralize a martyr narrative resulted in a specific form of social autism. The genocide of Serbs during the Second World War (1941 - 1945) became the central argument legitimizing political actions at the end of the twentieth century. Focus on the victims of the Ustasha regime in the Independent State of Croatia, which radicalized the political arena in Serbia, resulted in the institutionalization of the martyr narrative. Thus, in July of 1992, the Parliament of the Republic of Serbia established The Museum of Genocide Victims, simultaneously with the outbreak of war in Bosnia. It was organized according to a new Law, which defined the museum's role in "keeping constant memory on the victims of the genocide over Serbian people, by collecting, processing and using data and fulfilling commitments from the International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide." In the following sentence, it was added that the "Museum may be engaged in collecting, processing and using information about the genocide over Jews, Roma and members of other peoples and ethnic minorities" (Zakon o osnivanju muzeja žrtava genocida, 2005). The Law, however, did not define, nor specify to whom the formulation "other people and ethnic minorities" should or could refer to. Furthermore, the 22nd of April was proclaimed as a Memorial Day commemorating the victims of genocide, as, on that very day in 1945, a group of prisoners in the Jasenovac concentration camp managed to break out of camp. As the main element in the mission statement of the museum highlighted, any search for the exact number of Serbian victims and their naming was done according to the existing Yad Vashem museum practice (Bulajić 2003).

The initial idea was to establish the museum as an institution based in both Belgrade and Kragujevac, a small Serbian town where the mass murder of the civilian population in October 1941 occurred. After the war, Kragujevac became the symbol of Serbian anti-fascism and upheaval and the place where the tragedy took place was transformed into a memorial park. The same form of memorial park became the central symbol of Yugoslav socialist patriotism and the founding element of the state ideology of 'brotherhood and unity'. Numerous monuments, erected at the locations of mass graves represented mise-en-scene for war commemorations throughout the country. In 1967, the memorial museum was erected at the entrance of the memorial park. Several tall pillar-like rectangular shapes of various heights built in brick emphasized the dignity of the monumental building. The museum's interior, which lets in natural

light only from roof lanterns, was imagined as a way of connecting the visitor of the museum with the victims.

Mass killings of the civilian population in Kragujevac and surrounding villages were used as a symbol of war suffering and the same concept was retold in other museums presenting local history after the year 2000 and the fall of Slobodan Milošević. Based on social history, museum institutions were creating a specific historical synthesis of the regional history, constituting the continuity of the local communities. However, the presentation of the Second World War became the object of major changes in interpretation. Nationalization of the anti-fascist movement, which resulted in an equalization of the Partisan and Chetnik movements and that of the mass killings in Serbia during the autumn of 1941, were retold through the national paradigm. Collaboration was contextualized and reevaluated; as was the anti-fascist struggle. The civilian victim, like in most other post-socialist states, became the principal argument for accusation of the communists and equalization of socialism and fascism.

During the last few years, the dialogue and the process of mapping the problems concerning representation of the Second World War, genocide and the Holocaust has been re-opened. The project "What is hidden in the books", brought out by the National Museum of Kraljevo, was the continuation of the Kragujevac museum concept and the initial point in questioning the contemporary image of the war and its participants. In accordance with the Yad Vashem concept, rather than using faceless numbers, personalization of the victim was introduced. Once again, public debate was opened and questioned the political consequences of the misuse and misinterpretations of such an approach.

The Museum of the Victims of Genocide is based in Belgrade, in a building which was, and still is, the seat of various cultural institutions. Today, it is the documentation center, collecting documents and other relevant materials on the suffering of the Serbian people. Although an independent institution, it lacks adequate exhibition space. The solution for this issue is by establishing a direct connection between the ways of representing the Holocaust in Serbia and thus the possible use of the former concentration camp Old Fair (Staro Sajmiste) as the space for both exhibitions and the documentation center. Over the past two decades, the museum established cooperation with numerous similar institutions in the world (Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Vienna, Dokumentationsarchiv des Österreichischen Widerstandes in Vienna etc.). As well, it is searching for the specific concept that will best present the events of the genocide in Serbia and Yugoslavia while, at the same time, respecting and representing the uniqueness of the Holocaust experience. A part of that search lies in the answer to the questions: should Staro Sajmiste, at present a city slum, be organized as a memorial place to victims of the Holocaust among the Jewish population of Serbia; will it be dedicated to the Museum of the Victims of Genocide and, most importantly; will it raise the question of genocide in Srebrenica and mass killings in Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo done by Serbs? We strongly support the view that, in the answer to these questions, can be found the future development of Serbian society.

The Museum of Yugoslav History: Establishing the distance

The Museum of Yugoslav History was founded by the decision of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1996. Namely, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was created

after the dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and consisted of two federal republics – Serbia and Montenegro. It existed for ten years, from April of 1992 until February of 2003, when it was renamed to the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. Three years later, Serbia and Montenegro became independent states (in June of 2006). It was formed by the fusion of two museum institutions (The Museum of the Revolution of Yugoslav Nations and Nationalities and the Memorial Center "Josip Broz Tito") in an attempt to produce a desirable image of socialism and Yugoslavia — two crucial political concepts of the twentieth century. The Museum of the Revolution was established by the decision of the Central Committee of the Union of the Communists of Yugoslavia on April 19th, 1959. A year later, it was opened. Celebrating four decades of Yugoslav communist party existence, state and party officials institutionalized the official historical narrative in the public space. The intention was to present/create the continuity of the revolutionary traditions and the evolution of the Yugoslav proletariat through the 19th and 20th centuries. Collecting archival documents, photographs and historical objects, the museum was conceived as an important element strengthening Party reputation and legitimizing its central position in the state and in society. That was the main reason why the erection of the museum building represented one of the main goals of the Yugoslav communists during the next two decades. It was supposed to realize the central ideological slogan 'Ongoing Revolution'. Although several competitions were announced, and even the museum foundations placed in close vicinity to the representative building widely known as the Central Committee building, all the works were stopped with the death of Josip Broz Tito on May 4th, 1980.

Instead of the Museum of the Revolution, the central museum institution after his death became the Memorial Center 'Josip Broz Tito', created two years later. For fourteen years it collected and preserved numerous artifacts and documents connected with the life and work of Josip Broz Tito. It encompassed the "May 25th Museum", established in 1962, 'House of Flowers' as well as Tito's burial place and two residential palaces in close vicinity to the museum.

The central exhibiting space of the Memorial center was the building of the 'May 25th Museum' which was the present of the Belgrade municipality to President Tito for his seventieth birthday in May of 1962. Erected in order to preserve gifts received from international politicians, eminent public figures, Yugoslav citizens, political organizations, diverse companies and unions, the May 25th Museum represented one of the pillars of Yugoslav socialist society. Preserving gifts to president Tito, but, also his personal documents and the archive of the Presidential cabinet, the museum became one of the most important institutions constructing the Yugoslav identity and differing it from other East-European states. This was done through the representation of the ideology of 'Brotherhood and Unity' or Samoupravljanje (a specific Yugoslav form of economic practice and management known as Self-Management) and the non-aligned foreign policy.

Not only the museum, but also its building might be seen as one of the central venues of the spatialization of Socialist Yugoslavism. Styled as a standard example of modernist architecture of the 1960s, the museum edifice was interpreted as the epitome of contemporary Yugoslav culture and its complex ideological background. Erected on a vast plateau bordered by a park, its architectural transparency and the minimalism of its details, along with the entrance portico which was imagined to represent the end of the long, stepped promenade flanked by greenery,

could be read as symbolic representations of Yugoslav politics and culture. The openness and lightness of the design corresponded directly to the very nature of Yugoslavia as seen as a liberal society. Its mediatory role in East-West cultural issues was totally opposed to orthodox, Soviet-style communism. Furthermore, the urban setting of the museum simultaneously acted as an additional narrative that was at the front line of the same ideological agenda. Placed on the threshold of Tito's own residence — on the very border between a private realm of the state's leader and green space accessible to the whole community — the edifice stressed not only the idea of the mutual penetration of the museum exhibition and the surrounding open green spaces, but also of the realms of political authority and freedom of society.

The established practice of presenting gifts to Tito, which lasted throughout the whole year, reached its climax during the May Day celebrations. During this month, which bore the archetypal symbolism of spring and youth - the symbolism "of renewal, growth, hope and joy" (Hobsbawm 1997: 248), the holiday was introduced to celebrate the birthday of Josip Broz Tito. More than any other state holiday, celebration of May 25th gave an illusion of the president's direct contact with the people and the existence of a special emotional bondage between the leader and citizens (during the socialist period named 'working class'). Celebrations of Tito's birthday, in addition to festivities on May 1st and May 9th, "combined public and private merry-making and good cheer with the assertion of loyalty to the movement" (Hobsbawm 1997: 286). With regular repetition of performances in which virtually the whole society was involved, the imagined unification was achieved in the public space (The Tito Effect 2009).

The celebration timetable, which for weeks ahead defined the schedule and the kind of reception given to hundreds of gift-givers, testified that the presentation of gifts was a politically and socially desirable form of behavior. State and party officials believed they were creating a specific form of social empathy among Yugoslav citizens through process of gift-giving to the President. Thus, the most numerous presenters of gifts were institutions: schools, hospitals, work organizations, sports associations, factories, mines and village cooperatives. In that way, the authenticity of Self-Management practice based on a network of workers' councils as active subjects of society was affirmed.

Among the thousands of gifts, batons represented the most recognizable symbol of the practice of giving presents. Consequently, 22.000 batons became an important part of the museum fund. Every spring, from the end of the Second World War until 1987, mass baton relays were held in Yugoslavia, drafting a unique mental map in which multiple Yugoslav identities were charted. Millions of bodies in motion were presented as a metaphor for a dynamic society running towards a long-lasting and promised future. Even though all the batons were dedicated to Josip Broz Tito, after the death of Stalin, Yugoslav communists as the loudest critics of the cult of personality, introduced changes to the way Tito's birthday was celebrated. Renaming of the May 25th holiday (Tito's birthday) into a Youth Day represented an attempt to affirm new political realities. Since 1957 and until his death in 1980, Tito had received a unique Youth baton at a major Youth rally, held at the Yugoslav People's Army stadium in Belgrade.

The established practice of presenting gifts did not cease immediately with the death of Josip Broz Tito. It continued for some time in the form of pilgrimages and votive giving of flowers and wreaths at his grave in the House of Flowers. Not surprisingly, the May 25th Museum transformed into the Memorial Center 'Josip Broz Tito' and became the main institution

strengthening the 'founding father' symbol of the socialist Yugoslavia. Its position was further reinforced, with the introduction of the Law protecting the life and work of Josip Broz Tito. The Law, requiring obligatory representation of Tito's photographs in all public spaces, together with the infamous article 133 of the Criminal Law sanctioning the verbal delict, became the most important petrifying elements of Yugoslav society during the 1980s. This legislation provoked strong criticism and distance toward both Yugoslavia and socialism by the intellectual and parts of the political elite searching for the democratization of society. They were perceived as legal acts that enabled the introduction of the personality cult and the dismissal of any potential democratic principles.

The Memorial Center 'Josip Broz Tito' and the Museum of the Revolution of the Yugoslav Nations and Ethnic Minorities, as central symbolic institutions of socialist Yugoslavia, were marginalized during the years of the wars and dissolution. However, the new museum was formed in Belgrade only a few months after the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, also known as the Dayton Agreement was signed by Serbian President Slobodan Milošević, Croatian President Franjo Tuđman, and Bosnian President Alija Izetbegović, and the Paris Protocol was signed by French President Jacques Chirac, U.S. President Bill Clinton, UK Prime Minister John Major, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin on December 14, 1995. It was named the Museum of the Yugoslav History. It represented one of the first attempts to articulate the official position of both Yugoslavia and socialism in the Serbian public space after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of Yugoslavia.

However, since its constitution, the Museum of Yugoslav History became the object of neglect and manipulations. It became an unofficial private property of Slobodan Milošević, Yugoslav President at that time, and his family. More precisely, two residential villas, with numerous artworks and artifacts and unique sculptures in the surrounding park, which represented constitutive parts of the museum, were excluded from its content. Although an important part of the memorial complex and a space for storage of museum artifacts and belongings, the villas were subjected to extensive renovation under the instructions of the Milošević family. The former Memorial center was divided by a tall wall, which separated the new museum space from Slobodan Milošević's residential area. During the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia, the Old Residence was completely destroyed and Slobodan Milošević and his family moved to the Villa 'Peace' where they had lived until March 2001, when he was arrested. Since then, the museum has existed on the very margin of public interest.

The museum fund included over 200,000 objects divided into 23 collections, which illustrated 20th century Yugoslav history with a special emphasis on the life and work of Josip Broz Tito. The reorganization of this museum institution in 2007 reduced its exhibition place, (the gallery in the center of the city, once belonging to the Museum of the Revolution was excluded from the Museum of Yugoslav History and dedicated to the Historical Museum of Serbia yet the museum artifacts remained the property of The Museum of Yugoslav History) and opened questions regarding the new conception of the museum. During the time of transition and transformation of Serbian society, Yugoslavia and socialism and their numerous ideological and political concepts were subjected to new readings and understandings. The museum presentation of the past was imposed as an important element in the process of establishing distance toward those

historical phenomena.

In view of that fact, the museum's management initiated public discussions searching for a new understanding of the existing museum artifacts and the time that produced them. As the majority of the objects were gifts which Josip Broz Tito received over the past four decades, the new museum concept and exhibition practice reversed the perspective and raised questions not only about the one who was receiving the presents, but also about those who were giving them and finally about the politics that encouraged the practice of giving presents to the leader and a rethinking of the historical role of the state he represented. This new light was put on the people and society, which for three and a half decades preserved the practice of gift-giving to the president.

Today, the Museum of Yugoslav History, as the successor of the previous museum institutions containing the same objects and artifacts, has introduced new perspectives in exhibiting practices by opening its space for the numerous international and domestic artistic performances and exhibitions. Over the past few years, the museum had organized several highly visited exhibitions, presenting Tito's less known photographs that were mainly connected with his private life (Tito' New Years; Tito Photo; Deadly Treasures; Yoko, Lennon, Tito). At the same time, it hosted numerous international exhibitions and artists (October salon, Behind the Wall, Parallel Stories, Chinese Graphics) contextualizing the existing objects and promoting the new ones, thus lightening hidden spots of Yugoslav and Serbian history until the present day.

Conclusion

Focusing on the most important museums in Serbia, we recognized the processes of collective identity construction, which comprise the above-mentioned issues of parallel coexistence, transformation and exclusion of national narratives and meta-narratives. There are at least three paradigms, which we recognized as:

- *Exceptionalism and Uniqueness*

This framework establishes the idea of a collective uniqueness among other states and nations in a comparative perspective. Having been organized to represent the specificities of Serbian and Yugoslav history and identity, these museums (the National Museum, the Museum of Yugoslav History) established the idea of the continuity and eternity of the nation. While exhibiting the cultural heritage, these institutions were taking a prominent role in the ongoing process of spatialization of political power.

- *Bridging Identity* (the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Museum of African Art)

During the Cold War, Yugoslavia was one of the founders of the Non-Aligned Movement, perceived by its political allies and its citizens as a cultural and political link between the East and the West. The exhibiting concepts of the Museum of Contemporary Art and the Museum of African Art reinforced the idea of Yugoslavia as a *bridge* between the two worlds. In that sense, this paradigm aimed to transfer Yugoslavia's international status from the political margin to the center.

- *Re-Telling History* (the Museum of the Victims of Genocide, the Museum of Yugoslav History)

Official politics legitimizes itself through the new interpretations of different historical processes. By establishing the specific perspective, history receives a new meaning. The Museum of Yugoslav History and the Museum of the Victims of Genocide created a new vision of the past as a permanent social and political revolution, which was supported by the concept of martyrization. Interpreting historical processes as a kind of constant martyrdom, those institutions established and further strengthened the ideas of sacrifice and resurrection of the nation.

The structure of our project, which included the analysis of five museums in the context of historical representation and identity construction processes, takes into account the means, techniques, procedures and institutions which we consider crucial to the process of interpretation of the past in order to suit the wishful image of the nation. We were analyzing museum policies over the last two centuries along with the museums' positions in contemporary Serbian society. Our general conclusion is that Serbia is experiencing a transition period, developing new attitudes towards history and interpretation of its past and identity. Serbia is also deeply marked by reluctance to interpret both events from the recent past (namely, the wars of 1991-1999) and her rich and profound Yugoslav heritage that have sharply marked the Serbian identity since the mid-nineteenth century - since the time when the first Serbian museums were established.

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Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Museum, Belgrade	1844	1844	Princely collections and the state	State	Archaeology, Art, Visual and Material Culture	National (Serbian /Yugoslav) and International	Prehistory to the present day	Neo-Renaissance style in the central square of Belgrade.
Museum of Vojvodina, Novi Sad	1847	1825	Matica Srpska, the first literary, cultural and scientific society of the Serbs in the Habsburg Empire	Province of Vojvodina	Material and Visual Culture, Art	Dedicated to the territory of the province of Vojvodina; multinational	Prehistory to the present day	Former court building, Neo-Renaissance style, central position in Novi Sad.
Gallery of Matica Srpska, Novi Sad	1864	1847	Matica Srpska, the first literary, cultural and scientific society of the Serbs in the Habsburg Empire	Province of Vojvodina	Art	Serbian	16-19 th c.	Former stock exchange, Neo-classical style, central position in Novi Sad.
Natural History Museum, Belgrade	1895	1895	The Naturalist Cabinet of the Great School (University) ; state	State	Natural History Collections	Serbian	-	Former building of the Ottoman garrison in the Belgrade fortress, Ottoman neo-classical style, Belgrade.
National Museum of Požarevac	1896	1895	Citizens — amateurs enthusiasts	The Municipality of Požarevac	Archeology, Material and Visual Culture	Regional and Local	Prehistory to the mid-20 th c.	Former private residence, Romanticism, central position in Požarevac.

Ethnographic Museum, Belgrade	1901	1872	Stojan Novaković, historian and diplomat; state	State	Material Culture	Serbian	From the Middle Ages to the present day	Former stock exchange, modern style, central position in Belgrade.
Military Museum, Belgrade	1904	1878	Prince Milan Obrenović IV	State	Material Culture, Archeology and Armory	Serbian and Yugoslav	Prehistory to the present day	Former Military Institute, Romanticism, prominent position in Belgrade.
National Museum of Zrenjanin	1911	1906	Cultural association of the Torontal county	Municipality	Archeology, Material and Visual Culture	Regional and Local	Prehistory to the present day	Former Palace of Finances, Neo-Renaissance, central position in Zrenjanin.
National Museum of the City of Niš	1913	1887	Citizens — enthusiasts, then the Municipality of Niš	Municipality	Archaeology, Art, Visual and Material Culture	National and Local	Prehistory to the present day	Former bank, Neo-classical style, prominent position in Niš.
Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade	1962	1959	State	State	Art	Yugoslav narratives until 1991 and Yugoslav as well as international after 1991	20 th c.	Modern style located in prominent position in New Belgrade.
Historical Museum of Serbia, Belgrade	1963	1950	The Republic of Serbia	State	Material and Visual Culture	National and Civic	From the Middle Ages to the present day	Former bank, modern style located in the centre of Belgrade.

Museum of Contemporary Art of Vojvodina, Novi Sad	1966	1966	The Province of Vojvodina	The Province of Vojvodina	Art	Regional (Multinational), International	20-21 st c.	Former Museum of the Socialist Revolution, modern style, prominent position in Novi Sad.
Museum of African Art, Belgrade	1977	1977	Originally private collection, municipality and state	Municipality , State	Art and Material Culture	Traditional and modern African	19 th c. to the present	Modern style in the elite residential district in Belgrade.
Museum of the Victims of Genocide, Belgrade	1995	1992	State	State	Documentary center	National Serbian	WW II onwards	Former bank, modern style in Belgrade.
Museum of Yugoslav History, Belgrade	1996	1996	State	State	Visual and Material Culture	Yugoslav	20 th c.	Former May 25 th Museum, modern style, prominent position in elite residential district, Belgrade.



National Museums in Slovakia: Nation Building Strategies in a Frequently Changing Environment

Adam Hudek

Summary

The concept of Slovak nation building in the 19th and 20th centuries was influenced by various loyalties, pragmatic political decisions and changing ideologies. The crucial stages in the development of Slovak museums are closely connected with frequent changes affecting the Slovak territory and its inhabitants. Four such key periods can be defined:

1. The Hungarian chapter (till 1918) - In 1895, resulting the activities of Slovak political leaders, the Museum of the Slovak Museum Society was established. It had a clear political and nation-building pattern opposing the official idea of state and national unity of the Hungarian Kingdom.
2. First Czechoslovak republic (1918 - 1938) - Rivalry between two nation-building strategies. One promoted the existence of a Slovak nation; the other one was based on the idea of a Czechoslovak nation.
3. Communist Czechoslovakia (1948-1989) - Museums were state controlled ideological institutions used for propaganda and indoctrination of the population. Historical exhibitions about national history had to legitimize the communist rule.
4. Post-communist Slovak republic since 1993 - After the fall of communism, museums ceased to be strictly ideological or political institutions. They were adapting to the new conditions and searching for the new themes.

It is usual for multi-ethnic and multi-religious regions like Central Europe to provide competing identities. The Slovak case of nation making is characterized by ambiguity and ambivalence of national identity concepts. In the 19th and 20th centuries, Slovaks defined themselves in the process of confrontation with two national groups: Hungarian and Czech. This confrontation fundamentally influenced the development of Slovak museums aspiring for national status. Until 1938, two states Slovakia was a part of (the Kingdom of Hungary and the first Czechoslovak republic) did not officially acknowledge the existence of a separate Slovak nation. This caused lasting antagonism between nation-building strategies of Slovak museums and the official state ideas enforced by the ruling political elites.

Since 1948, the ideologists of the ruling Communist party considered the national questions only a tool for strengthening the official Marxist-Leninist ideology. Communists considered themselves the heirs of progressive national historical traditions, which should justify their rule. Slovak museums had to document the struggle for national independence but at the same time they had to promote the official state policy of Czechoslovak socialist patriotism. On the other

side, this era brought massive growth, systematization and professionalization of the museum network and their exhibitions.

The fall of communism brought fundamental changes for the Slovak museums. Democratization brought considerable de-ideologization and de-politization of museums. New economic and political realities offered more flexibility, but also new (mainly financial) challenges. After the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, the Slovak National Museum became the central museum of the newly created state in need of a state-building narrative. However, Slovak museums demonstrated skepticism regarding the appeals for a more patriotic and primordial presentation of Slovak history. The Slovak National Museum laid aside the controversies accompanying the nationalization of Slovak narrative. At the same time, its representatives focused on uncomfortable themes of modern Slovak history. These topics, together with the reinterpretation of the past regarding the common Central European history and European project were reserved for the central museums. These were, in the first place, the Slovak National Museum and the Museum of Slovak National Uprising.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Slovak National Museum +	1928	1895	Civil society till 1948, Parliament till today	Private association till 1948, State till today	Ethnology, Archeology, History, Culture, Natural Sciences	Slovak history and culture in European tradition	Slovak territory from prehistory till today	Functionalist style Central Martin
Slovak Homeland Museum	1930 (one institution 1961)	1924						Neoclassicist style Central Bratislava (central building of the SNM)
Museum of the Slovak National Uprising	1955	1953	Parliament	State	History	Anti-Fascist struggle in Slovak territory	Slovak territory, WWII, anti-fascist struggle (1938-1945) in the European context	Brutalist architecture Central Banská Bystrica

Introduction

The institutional and ideological development of Slovak museums aspiring for national status is closely connected with the nation-making process. The current Slovak National Museum is a relatively young institution created in 1961 by merging two competing institutions. One of them was established at the end of 19th century during the existence of the Hungarian Kingdom. The second one was opened in 1924, shortly after creation of the Czechoslovak republic.

The region of Central Europe is characterized by a complex, fragile and constantly changing intersection of state, ethnic, national, linguistic, religious cultural borders and contexts, producing various competing collective identities. In the 19th and 20th centuries, the concept of a Slovak national identity was defined primarily in confrontation with Czech and Hungarian visions. Its development was influenced by various loyalties, pragmatic political decisions and ideologies. Museums reflected the changing nation-building strategies or official state policies and transmitted them to the population.

The crucial periods in the development of Slovak museums were overlapping with the changes of boundaries and ideologies affecting Slovak territory and its inhabitants. The very concept of a Slovak national museum was largely influenced by the fact that two states Slovakia was part of until 1938 (the Hungarian Kingdom and the first Czechoslovak republic) did not officially acknowledge the existence of a separate Slovak nation. As a result, the nation-building purpose of the institution evolving into the Slovak National Museum was, for a long period, in opposition to the actual official state idea. This had, of course, significantly affected the interactions with the state administration of both the Hungarian Kingdom and the first Czechoslovak republic. However, until 1948, Slovaks museums were private societies and the political elites did little to regulate and/or support their activities. This initial development can be divided into two periods:

1. Slovakia as part of the Hungarian Kingdom (till 1918) - In 1895, as a result of the activities of Slovak political leaders, the Museum of the Slovak Museum Society was opened with a political and nation-building plan opposing the official idea of state and national unity of the Hungarian Kingdom.
2. First Czechoslovak republic (1918 - 1938) - Museum of the Slovak Museum Society adopted the name Slovak National Museum. Because of its opposition towards the official state idea of the Czechoslovak nation, the ruling political elite indirectly supported the creation of a rival institution. This caused a long time tension between two museums, aspiring for the position of the central Slovak museum.

The war-related changes between the years 1939-1945 regarding the state's form, its borders and the regime had only minor impact on the framework of Slovak museums. On the contrary, the communist takeover in 1948 is probably the most significant turning point for the functioning and management of the museums. The era of socialist dictatorship was the third, main period in their development.

3. Communist Czechoslovakia (1948-1989) - During the communist regime, museums became state owned and controlled institutions used for propaganda and indoctrination. Historical exhibitions about national history, legitimizing the communist rule became

essential. The post-war republic was officially a state of two nations, Czechs and Slovaks. However, during the first 20 years of its rule, the Communist party strongly objected all forms of Slovak nationalism. Despite the political and ideological limitations, in this era a massive growth, systematization and professionalization of the museum network occurred. In 1961, a single Slovak National Museum was established by merging two competing institutions. The Slovak National Gallery was created in 1948. In 1954, the Museum of Slovak National Uprising (SNU) was opened in order to provide the official interpretation of a historical event marking the beginning of the socialist era of the Slovak nation. The last relevant period is marked by the fall of the communist regime in 1989 and dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1993.

The Slovak National Museum became not only the central national, but the central state museum as well.

4. Post-communist Slovak republic (since 1993) - After the fall of communism, museums ceased to be strictly ideological and political institutions. However, the relatively strong supervising state control over the central museums persisted. They had avoided deeper engagement in the controversies regarding state and nation-making process. Representatives of the national museum stayed skeptical towards appeals for a more patriotic and primordial presentation of Slovak history. Most of the museums concentrated on preparing new exhibitions, which would attract most visitors. Uncomfortable themes of the Slovak past were reserved for the central museums. These were, in the first place, the Slovak National Museum and the Museum of Slovak National Uprising. The Museum of SNU remained a political institution, a guardian of the correct interpretation of the key component of the national narrative. After 1989, the museum started to also pay close attention to the Holocaust of Slovak Jews.

National museums and cultural policy in Slovakia

Kingdom of Hungary

In the 19th century, the dominant state of Central Europe was the Habsburg Empire. It was a heterogeneous formation of territories, with considerable ethnic, religious, economic and social differences. The main unifying force was the loyalty to the ruling dynasty. At the beginning of the 19th century, the Monarchy consisted of two main parts: the Kingdom of Hungary and Austrian hereditary lands together with the Bohemian Kingdom. In the process of national revival, political, territorial and cultural demands of particular linguistic and/or ethnic communities started to appear. This inevitably led to nationalist tensions. In 1867, with the signing of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, the state was changed to a loose confederacy of the Austrian empire and the Kingdom of Hungary. The Habsburg Empire existed for the next 51 years until the results of World War I caused its dissolution into smaller, supposedly more stable and homogenous, national states.

In the 19th century, the territory of Slovakia was an inseparable part of the Kingdom of Hungary, and it had been so for 900 years. Until the 18th century, the Kingdom was considered a multi-ethnic state. However, at the beginning of the 19th century, the political elite of the state planned to transform the feudal segmented society into a homogenous, mono-linguistic

Hungarian/Magyar political nation. (I'm using the term Magyar as a synonym for ethnic Hungarian nation.) However, this idea was opposed by the elite representing the other language communities in the Kingdom. (Notably Rumanian, Slovak, Serb, Ruthenian, Croatian and to certain extent German as well.) According to the Hungarian national liberals, the Hungarian political nation consisted of individual citizens and not nationalities. This seemingly civic concept gradually acquired a clear Magyar nationalist dimension. In the official perception of the Hungarian political nation since the late 1870s, loyalty to the non-Magyar nationality became incompatible with the loyalty to the Hungarian state idea (Vörös 2009: 84).

The opening of the first public museums in the territory of Slovakia during the second half of the 19th century was connected with the nation-building strategy of the Kingdom of Hungary. According to historian Ľubomír Lipták, in the 1860s there was a positive political and ideological constellation for such endeavors:

Historiography in Kingdom of Hungary experienced a period of enormous expansion. During the second half of the 19th century, it went through the fastest development among all the social sciences, because it had closest ties with politics and had the strongest capacity for mobilization of the population. (Lipták 1987a: 274)

New museums should have been a vital part of this mobilization:

National museums made a substantial contribution towards the process of gaining awareness of cultural differences between neighboring nations and ethnic groups. This understanding of the unique nature of particular ethnic groups played a decisive role in the formation of modern nations. (Vlachovič 1979: 194)

Museums in general, and especially the national ones, should have contributed to the official state nation-building politics. In behalf of this plan, the Hungarian Ministry of Education and Culture asked the state organizations and institutions for help in establishing museums promoting the Hungarian state idea (Mruškovič, Darulová, Kollár 2005: 44). This concept openly advocated the existence of only one Hungarian political nation, which started to be associated with the Magyar nation.

The official historiography had a prominent role in this process. Historical arguments had to justify and explain the dominance and superiority of the Magyar culture and civilization over the culture of other ethnic groups in the Kingdom of Hungary. The Hungarian master narrative became nationalized: “Only that which was authentically Magyar was important, interesting and valuable.” (Lipták 1987a: 274). The rest should have been marginalized or adapted in order to maintain the Hungarian state idea. This was a task for museums located in the non-Magyar territories. Appeal of the ministry caused a growing interest in the regional museums. This resulted in these institutions becoming included in the political and national struggles in the Kingdom of Hungary.

The new situation after 1867 can be demonstrated in the cases of two museums. The first one was the museum of the organization Matica Slovenská (Slovak Mother) established in 1863. At that time, it was the central Slovak national, cultural, scientific and educational institution.¹ Part of this institution served as a Slovak national museum. Slovak representatives were aware how a systematic collecting and evaluating of cultural and historical sources could determine the national consciousness of the population (Vlachovič 1979: 195). That is why they actively

supported the opening of a Slovak museum. However in 1875 when the Hungarian authorities directed their attention towards the organizations undermining the official state idea, Matica Slovenská was closed. The official reason was the accusation of Panslav propaganda endangering the state integrity. The real motive for its closing was the fact referring to the existence of a nation other than Magyar was in direct contrast with the Hungarian state idea.

On the other hand, in 1872, the Museum Association of Upper Hungary established the Upper Hungarian² Museum in Košice (today's eastern Slovakia). Besides its obvious educational and scientific value, the exhibition of the museum accentuated the Magyar national ideology. Because of this, the museum gained financial support from the state and, in 1909, it became the first state-owned museum on the Slovak territory (Mruškovič, Darulová, Kollár 2005: 48).

In order to be successful, the political elite supporting the official politics of Hungarian/Magyar nationalism had to suppress the rival nationalist movements. This was done in two steps: by destroying the institutional bases capable of producing the alternative national narratives and through control of the education system. In the Slovak case, together with closing of Matica Slovenská, the Slovak gymnasia (high schools) were suppressed. By the beginning of the 20th century, the same also happened to elementary schools with Slovak as a language of education (Kováč 2011: 131).

However, the two aforementioned museums represent the most extreme examples. In the activities of the majority of small local museums, the national ideology usually only played a marginal role. Their founders were usually enthusiasts and amateurs interested in their local history, art or flora and fauna. Promotion of the state and national unity of the Kingdom of Hungary was not the first concern of people struggling to maintain their museums. Active promotion of the state idea was often the result of rational calculation. People providing care for museums expected subventions from the state authorities. Museums had to prove their usefulness and loyalty to earn support. In general, there were two main tendencies influencing the activities of regional museums:

1. Ideological aspect embodied in the promoting the state and national unity of Hungarian Kingdom.
2. Scientific effort aimed at the preservation of natural, historical and cultural relics, documenting the development of the region and contributing to the education of the local population.

(Mruškovič, Darulová, Kollár 2005: 50)

In the last decade of the 19th century, the first inclination was getting stronger as state interest in the functioning of the museum was growing. It was because in this decade the Kingdom of Hungary officially celebrated the 1000 years of Magyar arrival to Pannonia and the political elites wanted to demonstrate the Magyar character of the state. In order to classify which institutions should get support, the Ministry of Culture and Education created a specialized agency in 1897, The Central Country Inspectorate of Museums and Libraries. Shortly before the beginning of World War I, this organization was supervising 19 regional museums in the Slovak territory. Inspectors working for this agency were professionals experienced with museum work. Their task was to deliver the newest information and practices from the central National Museum in Budapest to the regional museums. These people made periodical visitations and helped with the

expositions and catalogues. Museum employees also attended specific training, usually in the National museum. The activities of the Central Country Inspectorate of Museums and Libraries significantly contributed to the development and professionalization of museums.

Although cooperation with the Inspectorate was not compulsory, it was particularly beneficial for the survival of local and regional museums and not only because of the (rather humble) financial subventions. It was perceived as a demonstration of agreement with the official state ideology and acceptance of state control. State authorities evaluated museums according to this aspect and the refusal to cooperate with museum inspectors caused distrust of the central and local elites. This often resulted in various administrative obstructions. On the other hand, museum inspectors were renowned scientists, able to recognize the qualities of museums, irrespective of their ideological background. In this aspect, the Central Country Inspectorate of Museums and Libraries and the Ministry of Culture and Education acted with more pragmatism than the local administration.

In the Slovak case, the central political authorities enabled the establishing of the Slovak Museum Society in 1895. It was the only “Slovak national” scientific and education organization till 1918. The museum operated by this association had better relations with the central ministry than with the local administration. Although the inspectors expressed dissatisfaction with the Slovak national revival purpose of the museum, they also appreciated its ethnographical collections and educational activities (Lipták 1987a: 275). In 1901, the Ministry of Education and Culture approved donation of the collections and library of the former Museum of Matica Slovenská to the Slovak Museum Society. However, the Inspectorate informed the Ministry that the local authorities did not agree with this plan, so it would be better to abandon it. Central institutions had to respect the wishes of local authorities. If the Inspectorate wanted to be successful in its work, it had to act more accordingly to the demands of the local authorities than those of the central Ministry. This was the main reason why the Slovak Museum Society decided to end cooperation with the Inspectorate. The greatest problem was not the Ministry, but the hostility of the local administration, which strongly influenced the activities of the Inspectors towards the museum.

At the time of the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy in 1918, there was a network of regional museums, with different status and ownership, in the Slovak territory. Only one of them was state-owned, but the majority recognized the leading role of the National Museum in Budapest and cooperated with the Central Country Inspectorate of Museums and Libraries. Apart from this scheme, there was the Museum of the Slovak Museum Society, aspiring for the role of the Slovak national museum. Although officially there could not be words Slovak and national in its name it was perceived as such among the members of Slovak society. This was demonstrated by individual donations coming from the whole Slovak territory and Slovak enclaves in Austria-Hungary or abroad (mainly USA and Russia).

In fact, only the few most respected central museums in the Kingdom of Hungary could rely on substantial support from the state authorities. The fate of local museums was almost entirely in the hands of the local administration, whose members were in their majority supporters of the most radical interpretation of the Hungarian state idea. The small regional museums, even when they actively promoted the Hungarian state ideology, had to struggle with chronic financial problems. Of all the museum employees in Slovakia, only the director of the Upper Hungarian

Museum in Košice was paid by the state while the rest of the museums were maintained by members of local intelligentsia, priests, teachers, office clerks or archivists (many local museums were established as parts of the archives). This, of course, influenced the preparation and maintenance of exhibitions and collections.

Slovak museums between the years 1918–1948

The situation regarding Slovak museums during the Hungarian era strongly influenced the overall development in the next period. The creation of the Czechoslovak republic in 1918 enabled general development and modernization of the Slovak society in virtually all aspects. However, in the case of Slovak museums, these changes were not particularly noticeable (different development in the Czech case is explained in the next chapter). In comparison with state policy regarding other Czech and Slovak cultural institutions and organizations of education, the disinterest in the museums was even more apparent. In general, museum politics of the Czechoslovak state was not favorable towards their further development. The Republic was not able (or did not want) to make full use of their potential. Museums lacked the definition of their place in the framework of cultural, educational and scientific institutions and the state did almost nothing to achieve any significant impact in their functioning.

Immediately after 1918, the main problem was the legislative vacuum due to complications with enforcing the authority of the new Czechoslovak government over the Slovak territory. Nearly all the regional museums still considered themselves to be a part of the Hungarian museum network, with the National museum in Budapest as the central institution. When it was clear that Slovakia would become a part of the Czechoslovak state, the directors of many museums considered it their duty to send the most valuable collections to Hungary. The newly-emerged Czechoslovak government had no means to stop them. The situation could only be stabilized in 1920.

In the Czechoslovak republic, all the museums were assigned under the control of the Museum Department of the central Ministry of Education and National Culture. However, there was no juridical base defining the rights and competencies of this department. The Museum Department had no executive powers over the museums operated by private associations, cities, districts or individuals. The museum collections were considered personal property and acceptance of the Ministry decisions depended on the goodwill of the museum owners (Palárik 2008: 296). Enforcing a general concept of the museum network development was more or less impossible. The majority of experts regarded as the main problem the missing Museum law defining competencies, duties and overall status of the museums.

The Ministry of Education and National Culture could only establish the Union of Czechoslovak Museums with voluntary membership. The objective of this organization was to solve the problem of everyday maintenance of the museums. It had similar limitations as the Central Country Inspectorate of Museums and Libraries in the Kingdom of Hungary. The union was organizing learning courses for museum staff, helped with the exhibitions and distributed humble state subventions. However, these advantages were not enough to make membership in the Union appealing for Slovak museums. Until 1938, less than half of them asked for it (Lalkovič 2003: 111).

Important limiting factors were also profound differences regarding the development of the Czech and Slovak network of museums. The Czech museums were, in their majority, functioning organizations, some of them with a long tradition. The most notable ones were influential scientific institutions with an established position in society. In addition, the Czech museum network was more stable with the National Museum in Prague as the leading institution. The Slovakia case lacked most of these characteristics.

The effort of the political elites to promote the official state idea of a Czechoslovak nation only complicated the situation. Slovak development between the years 1918-1938 was influenced by the ambiguity in the nation-making process. The fact that the Slovaks were part of a state-forming nation and Czechoslovakia was a liberal democracy enabled a rapid development of the Slovak society (in terms of culture, education, science, political views and the way of life). The Czechoslovak republic enabled the emancipation, national agitation and the formation of the Slovak ethnic community into a modern European nation. On the other hand, the political elite of the state neither expected nor encouraged this process as it went directly against the official state ideology of Czechoslovakism.

The Museum of the Slovak Museum Society strictly opposed the official state idea. It was advocating the existence of an independent Slovak nation. This was clearly demonstrated by adopting the name Slovak National Museum in 1928. Supporters of the Czechoslovak idea reacted by creating a new museum. The Slovak Homeland Museum was approved and indirectly supported by the state authorities. It was formally established in 1924 by the Society for Slovak Homeland Museum in Bratislava. However, its real development occurred only after 1928. This activity resulted in tensions between two museums aspiring for the leading role in Slovakia. The first one was promoting the idea of an independent Slovak nation while those supporting the idea of a Czechoslovak nation directed the second. (This problem is more profoundly analyzed in the chapter about Slovak National Museum.)

The stagnation, or at best slow progress, of the Slovak museums was in strong contrast to the fast changes of the whole of society. In fact, only a few problems from the Hungarian period were solved. According to historian Jozef Vlachovič:

The content and character of museums was negatively influenced by the state politics of public education. In Czechoslovakia, this process was planned without the museums or, in fact, directly against them. (Vlachovič 1979: 204)

According to Vlachovič, there was no pressure to cooperate with the public sphere since Slovak museums were mostly interested in their internal problems and were constantly losing contacts and impact on the outside world (Vlachovič 1979: 204).

The argument concerning the disinterest of the Czechoslovak elite has, however, one notable exception, the Agrarian Museum. The first Czechoslovak Agrarian Museum, the Institute for Research and Development of the Countryside in Prague was established already in 1918. This museum was formally under the supervision of the Association of the Czechoslovak Agrarian Museum. In fact, it was a political project of the Agrarian Party, the strongest political subject of interwar Czechoslovakia. Agrarians planned to open similar museums in the most important cities of the Republic. In 1924, the Minister of Education, Milan Hodža (Slovak politician from the Agrarian Party), donated a considerable amount of money from the state budget for a Slovak

branch of the Agrarian Museum. The museum building in the center of Bratislava was finished in 1928, and the museum was opened to the public in 1930. This institution served primarily as a center for propagation of the Agrarian party and the Czechoslovak state idea (Rychlík 2010: 208). On the other side, it also contributed to the research activities regarding the development of the Slovak country-side and popularized modern farming methods (Junek 2004: 297). Since 1934, the Agrarian Museum shared its building with the Slovak Homeland Museum. Supporters of both museums represented very similar ideological positions. Both institutions were, in fact, political projects of the elite supporting the Czechoslovak state idea.

However, in the 1930s it was clear that the idea of a Czechoslovak nation was not going to prevail in Slovak society. The majority of Slovaks considered themselves members of an independent Slovak nation. Critics of Czechoslovakism associated it with Czech supremacy and strict state centralism. In the mid 1930s, the majority of Slovak political elites admitted that the concept of a Czechoslovak nation was not functioning, and that Czech-Slovak relations have to be based on different concepts. However, at this time the fate of Czechoslovakia was already shaped by the global events culminating in the Second World War. In the year 1939, Hitler's Germany utilized the internal problems of Czechoslovakia in order to force a disintegration of the Republic.

The newly emerged Slovak state and its authoritarian regime tried to use the museums for its own ideological goals and the "strengthening of the Slovak national spirit and patriotism" (Palárik 2008: 298). According to the initial plans, the museums should have focused primarily on the indoctrination of schoolchildren according to patterns used in Nazi Germany. However, during the war, the Slovak state had no time and no means to follow this plan systematically. State propaganda preferred other cultural institutions or ad-hoc exhibitions moving from town to town (Palárik 2008: 301).

The most urgent problems of the museums remained largely unsolved. The most significant change was the merging of the Slovak Homeland Museum and the Agrarian Museum. The new institution, freed from its 'Czechoslovakian' heritage, acquired the name Slovak Museum. However, the Law on museums was still missing, and the duality of national museums remained unsolved. The newly created Union of the Slovak Museums, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and National Culture, was only able to standardize the working process in museums and stabilize the museum network. Lack of experienced and skilled employees became an acute problem. In 1945, there were only 45 people employed in all 25 Slovak museums and only 18 of them were qualified specialists. The Slovak National Museum had only 11 permanent employees (Mruškovič, Darulová, Kollár 2005: 81).

Czech National Museum and the development of Czech museum organization

The framework of Czech museums was developing according to different schemes than the Slovak one. The Czech case in the 19th century was, in fact, more similar to the Hungarian one. The origins of the national museums in many European countries were typically connected with the activities of respected, 'progressive' nobles. Two such people were essential for the birth of the future Czech National Museum. Count Kaspar Maria von Sternberg (1761–1838), a famous botanist, was the Father of the museum idea. An important spokesman of this project was Count Franz Anton von Kolowrat-Liebsteinsky (1778–1861), a steward of Bohemian Lands and future

member of the Austrian State Council. Kolowrat-Liebsteinsky was a prominent admirer and supporter of Czech culture. Despite his sympathies to the Czech national movement, he thought that a national museum could direct its attention towards culture and science instead of politics. In 1818, a document declaring the establishment of a new museum was signed and, in 1820, the Austrian Emperor and government authorized this institution. The newly created Society of the Patriotic Museum (1822) acted as the owner and operator of museum collections.

Since opening, the Patriotic Museum in Bohemia always emphasized its scientific status. Despite the declaration that the museum was interested both in humanities and natural sciences, the latter was clearly preferred during the first two decades of its existence. This was partly because the first museum director Kaspar Maria von Sternberg was a botanist. More significant was that research in the field of natural sciences was considered useful for the state while state authorities saw national history or archaeology as a possible source of political or even worse, nationalist, conflicts. On the other side, the museum was steadily strengthening its position as the heart of Czech nationalist movement. The idea of Bohemian, territorial and Czech-German scope of the museum was never a relevant option.

This process was a direct result of museum development. Museum activities were performed by Czech nationalist intelligentsia with a clear nation-building program although the collections were donated by, nationally, more or less indifferent nobles. The most visible symbol of this process was historian František Palacký (1798–1876). In 1825, he became the first editor of the *Journal of the Patriotic Museum in Bohemia*. He had been a member of the Society of the Patriotic Museum since 1830. Ten years later he became the leading person of this institution. Palacký's program included consistent nationalization of the museum and marginalization of its aristocratic character in favour of its opening to the wider public. An inseparable part of this development was the focus on historical and archaeological collections. Palacký enthusiastically supported the further professionalization and scientific aspect of museum activities. The era between the 1830s and 1840s was, in fact, crucial for the museum's development - it became a Czech national institution. This was symbolized with a new name; the Czech Museum was officially adopted in 1848. The museum was regarded as a Czech institution not only by Czech society but also by the Austrian administration and other ethnic groups of the Bohemian Kingdom. German inhabitants of Bohemian Kingdom established their own museums. The German version of the *Journal of the Patriotic Museum in Bohemia* had ceased to exist after 5 years, due to lack of interest among German speaking population.

The defeat of nationalist revolutions in 1848–1849 could only obstruct but not stop this development. In the 1850s, the most influential personalities had to leave the museum, and it changed its name to *Museum of the Bohemian Kingdom* in 1854. This was a clear attempt to denationalize the institution through accentuation of its territorial status. The museum was under constant surveillance by Austrian authorities and it was struggling with financial problems. Therefore, it could not openly continue in its nation-building politics, but was able to promote it as a part of its scientific activities. Especially in 1860s, the museum formally supervised and supported the establishment of regional museums, which also had their nation-building programs. Although the central museum suffered from a serious crisis in the second half of the 19th century, it was still regarded as the central institution by the (Czech) regional museums. This

position was unshaken, even after a discussion about the degree of centralization in museum organization, regarding the competencies of the Museum of the Bohemian Kingdom.

After 1918, there was already a relatively stable and well-developed museum framework in the Czech part of the new republic, especially in comparison with the Slovakia. The main problem for the National Museum (new name after 1918) was to find its place in the new political reality and define the scope of its activities. Since the last third of the 19th century, it had lost its position in the center of Czech scientific life (in favor of Charles University in Prague).

It was already mentioned that the political elite of the Czechoslovak republic showed only minimal interest in the problems of the museums. However, the National Museum was an exception. This institution was regarded as central and pivotal among the Czechoslovak museums. The state administration was actively participating in its management through the representatives of the Ministry of Education and National Culture in the directorial board of the Society of the National Museum.

In 1928, the territory of Czechoslovakia was divided into four lands (Bohemia, Moravia-Silesia, Slovakia and Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia). In 1934, the Bohemian Land Council undertook full financing of the National Museum. This solved the museum's financial problems and enabled further professionalization of its activities. The National Museum could return to its position of respected scientific institution and strengthen its status as the central museum in Czechoslovakia. A clear trend towards centralization and homogenization during the communist regime only strengthened its position. The National Museum remained the dominant museum in Czechoslovakia until the break-up of the state in 1993.

Slovak museums during the Communist era

In 1948, after the Communist takeover, Czechoslovakia became a communist totalitarian state, part of the Eastern bloc, consisting of vassal states of the Soviet empire. For the next 40 years, Czechoslovakia was a socialist dictatorship, ruled by the Communist party according to the all-encompassing ideology of Marxism-Leninism. The communist regime was able to utilize the capacity of museums for its own legitimization. Museums became ideological institutions defined as "dynamic, fighting organizations presenting the socialist culture and forming the socialist citizen." (Vlachovič 1979: 215) In order to use the museums for its own ideological goals, the communist ruling party took the museums under direct state control. The two most prestigious museums in Slovakia, the Slovak National Museum and Slovak Museum, became state-owned in 1948; the rest in 1950. At the same time, the new laws put an end to the Slovak Museum Society and to the Union of the Slovak Museums.

The total state control enabled a structural reform in the whole system of Czechoslovak museums. They were divided into three groups - central, regional and district. Formally they were under the supervision of the Governmental Museum Commission. However, in the first years of the communist regime the crucial decisions (in a form of direct orders) came directly from the framework of the Communist party. In the early 1950s, the opinion of even a local Party representative was usually more important than the Governmental commission. This has changed at the end of the decade with the new trend based on socialist legality, stressing the importance of legal and procedural norms in administrating the state.

In 1948, one of the communist deputies in the Slovak National Council³ stated: “Socialist states are regarding the museums as an important factor in the process of forming a member of the new [socialist and communist] society.” (Czech and Slovak digital parliament repository 2010) The museums should have been reformed according to Soviet models. According to the contemporary communist newspeak: “The museums had to become political” (Lipták 1990: 248). Activities of the museums were an integral part of the ideological objectives of the ruling communist power. Under the supervision of the Party apparatus, the exhibitions were reinterpreted accordingly. Museums spent the 1950s creating ideologically suitable exhibitions under strict control of the Opinion Commission comprising of Communist ideologists and Marxist scientists.⁴ However, these new exhibitions, in fact, represented discontinuance with the modern European trends of museum management (Prelovská 2005: 220). Instead of education they had to focus on indoctrination and propaganda.

It is a paradox that the intention of the totalitarian regime to use museums for its own needs led to their overall development and improvement. In this regard, the fact that museums became state owned institutions proved to be a beneficial decision. The Communist regime showed a serious interest in creating suitable conditions for the museums, so they could effectively carry out their role in the ideological education of the population. To fulfill this mission, the regime established various ideological museums, devoted to the history of the Communist party and the struggles of the working classes. There was also a museum of scientific atheism as a part of the struggle against the influence of religion on the population.

In 1954, the leaders of the Communist Party of Slovakia approved the opening of the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising. The antifascist Uprising of 1944 was (and still is) regarded as one of the most pivotal events in modern Slovak history, securing the Slovak position among the winners of the Second World War. However, the Communists regarded the Uprising as the legitimating event for their rule in Czechoslovakia. The main task of the museum was to mediate this image of the past to the population.

The most dogmatic and radical phase of communist rule (1948–1953) ended with the death of Stalin. In the new era of the communist regime, trends towards stabilization of the state institutions and definition of their competencies prevailed. In 1956, both the Slovak National Museum in Martin and the Slovak Museum in Bratislava officially received the status of research facilities. This meant a new qualitative position for both institutions, as they started to be more attractive as work places for university graduates.

These tendencies culminated in the Law on Museums and Galleries from 1961. This law finally clearly defined the role and status of museums in society as well as their hierarchy among Slovak museums. Museums were characterized as institutions of scientific research with clearly defined ideological goals:

Education of the population towards the Marxism-Leninism, Czechoslovak socialist patriotism and creating material and intellectual values for the developed socialist society and its transition towards communism. (Law of Museum and Galleries, 1961)

By merging museums in Martin and Bratislava, the new Slovak National Museum was established. Together with the Slovak National Gallery (established in 1948), Technical Museum and Museum of the Slovak National Uprising, they became central museums under the

supervision of the Slovak National Council. Regional museums were subordinated to particular districts or towns. It is necessary to mention, that already in 1959 the National Assembly of the Czechoslovak Republic passed a similar law, which was valid only in the Czech and Moravian part of the republic. The most fundamental difference between these two laws concerns the definition of central institution. While the National Museum and the National Gallery in Prague were central state institutions, the Slovak National Museum and the Slovak National Gallery were defined as central national institutions. The National Museum in Prague was, at the same time, Czech national museum as well as a central museum of Czechoslovakia, supervising the activities of Slovak National Museum.

Although the Slovak Council for Museums and Galleries coordinated the activities of the Slovak museums, the new law caused a growing gap between central museums and remaining institutions entirely dependent on the local administration. This resulted in a feeling of discontent among the employees of the regional museums. Despite all the criticism and unavoidable ideological attributes of the 1961 law, the museum network in Slovakia was functioning according to that law until 1998. The development of museums in the years 1961 until the fall of communism in 1989 can be characterized by growing quality and quantity, despite the ideological limitations. The most favorable conditions were granted to the central museums, supervised by the Central Administration of Museums and Galleries and the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Socialist Republic (since 1968 Czechoslovakia was a federation consisting of Czech and Slovak Socialist Republics). Especially the Slovak National Museum evolved into a complex, national institution comparable with national museums in neighboring countries. It was becoming national also in the sense that it had its branches and departments over the whole Slovak territory. In 1988, there were 115 museums and galleries in Slovakia with about 2500 employees, one third of them with a university degree, most of them historians and art historians.

Fall of communism and independent Slovak republic

Many communist regimes in Central European countries fell in 1989. Together with its post-communist neighbors, Czechoslovakia became a democratic state. However, the fall of totalitarianism also enabled the rise of nationalism. National identity and inter-national relations were once again at the center of political discourse, and the majority of society perceived national sentiment as a positive value (Podoba 2004: 262). The radicalization of the discussion about Czech-Slovak relations resulted in the final split of the state in 1993. The nationalist-populist political coalition ruled the country until 1998. European political institutions massively criticized its political activities. After changes caused by elections in 1998, the political situation in Slovakia had stabilized. The country became a full member of the European Union in 2004.

The process of democratization after 1989 created an entirely new situation, and the museums had to adapt rather quickly. For 40 years, they had their duties strictly defined by the ruling power, represented by the Communist party. Their mission was clear, and the central apparatus and ideological commissions gave the method of its fulfillment. Individual or independent activities were, at best, tolerated but not supported. Museums did not have to compete for attendants, and their budget did not depend on the number of tickets sold. The most important exhibitions were visited on a compulsory basis and presented to the organized masses of visitors, from schoolchildren to factory workers.

After the fall of communism, museums got significantly more freedom for their activities. In comparison with the totalitarian past, the direct ideological or political influence of the actual ruling power was significantly lower. However, the same applies also for the state interest in the problems and demands of the museums. The greater autonomy was accompanied by reduced state funding. Despite all the plans about connecting on the Western development the essential task was the adaptation to the new reality. The priority was to attract as many paying visitors as possible. "The time-span between the years 1990-2002 can be characterized as an effort to accommodate the rather complicated, traditionalist and fairly conservative field of museums to the changes of political and economic system in Slovakia." (Kollár 2009: 396) The clearly ideologically-focused museums were closed, and the number of employees in the rest was decreased. In 1998, a new Museum Law was passed, but the state still maintained supervising authority over the central museums. On the other hand, the state administration paid only minimal attention to their activities. Even the openly nationalist political elite governing the Slovak republic between the years 1993-1998 showed only little interest in the promoting of its ideas through museums. In the last decade, the museum system seems to have settled down again. Museums have found their place in the new political and economic conditions. This also means that the majority of them are focusing rather on attractive and politically safe exhibitions. This is especially true in the case of regional museums with strong dependency on regional political elites. Uncomfortable themes of Slovak history, together with the reinterpretation of the common Central European history and European project were reserved for the central museums. These were, in the first place, the Slovak National Museum and the Museum of Slovak National Uprising.

Hereditary wars

The problem of hereditary wars concerning the Slovak museums is related to the issue of cultural heritage ownership of artifacts made or found during the existence of the Hungarian Kingdom (until 1918). The fact is that a great number of various historical artifacts from the territory of today's Slovakia are in the various Hungarian museums. This situation is closely connected with the historical development of both Hungary and Slovakia. At the time when the Hungarian National Museum emerged, the territory of Slovakia was an inseparable part of the Kingdom of Hungary. The Hungarian museums were established in order to collect and preserve the most valuable historical artifacts. In the 19th century, it was considered natural, that the most valuable artifacts, essential for the Hungarian state idea, should be sent to the National Museum in Budapest. The same process was under way also in the church sphere. The precious pieces of church art were sent to the seat of the Archbishop in Esztergom, the location of the Christian museum.

During the preparation of the so called millennium anniversary of the Hungarian Kingdom, the process of gathering the most valuable historical artifacts and pieces of art 'connected with the Magyar nation development' from the whole country gained its peak. Formally these objects were only borrowed for the celebration. In fact, they were only rarely given back and were often donated to various museums in the ethnically Magyar territory (iŽurnál 3. 10. 2007). This process continued also later. For example, the most valuable artifacts from the museum of one the most northern counties of the Hungarian Kingdoms were sent to Budapest in 1914 with the argument

that they represent “evidence of the Magyar culture in northern Hungary” (Mruškovič, Darulová, Kollár 2005: 64). However, even the official statistics showed traditionally a negligible number of ethnically Magyar people living in this territory.

However, it has to be stressed that almost all regional museums considered themselves to be a part of the official museum network of the Hungarian Kingdom with the National Museum in Budapest as the central institution. That is why in 1918 many valuable collections were sent to Budapest, with the argument that they are being saved for the Magyar nation. In 1919, the new Czechoslovak government requested the return of all acquired collections and artifacts. The “restitution of Slovak cultural heritage” was also mentioned in the Trianon peace treaty that defined the borders of the new states in the Central Europe (Vároš 2007: 156). Long and numerous negotiations between Czechoslovakia and Hungary did not solve the problem of restitutions. In fact, the Hungarian government never had the intention to return any of the acquired collections, and for the Czechoslovak government this problem was not a real priority. The same situation occurred after the end of World War II. In 1948, Slovak historians prepared a list of 503 artifacts that should have been returned from Hungary to Slovakia. However, when the representatives of the communist governments of Czechoslovakia and Hungary met in 1949, it was clear that their main concern was to avoid all conflicts. The prime minister of the Czechoslovak government, Viliam Široký, labeled the Slovak artifacts in Hungary as church garbage, which can very well stay in Hungary (Vároš 2007: 162). Additional negotiations sporadically took place also in the 1960s, however, without significant results. The Slovak side took offence when the Hungarian Ministry of Culture, instead of claimed artifacts, presented a copy of St. Stephen’s crown of Hungarian Kings to the Slovak National Museum in 1967 (Vároš 2007: 207).

Interesting is the passive approach of the representatives of the Slovak museums towards this problem. Contrary to other research institutions (Slovak Academy of Sciences or universities) the museums did not participate in the struggles over Slovak cultural heritage. After the fall of communism in 1989 and especially after the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1993, the Slovak Ministry of Culture reopened this topic. However, it soon became more a part of the populist policy of the Slovak ruling coalition of that era, than a theme for serious discussion by the professionals. A clear example of such practice was the process of the returning of the gothic altar from Prague to the Castle of Bojnice (part of the Slovak National Museum) in 1995. This operation became a political agenda of Slovak government. The altar was exchanged for ten valuable gothic paintings, and the state authorities totally ignored the protests of professionals.

In 1995, an absurd barter was thought out. The representative of the Slovak Ministry of Culture seriously proposed an exchange to his Hungarian colleague: The Slavic sword from the 9th century in the possession of the Hungarian National Museum would be exchanged for the remains of Hungarian national heroes Ferenc Rákóczi and Imre Thököly from 17th century buried in Slovakia (Vároš 2006: 129). This was, however, never realized, partly because the towns where Rákóczi and Thököly were buried rejected such an idea. According to the Slovak nationalist it was because of numerous representatives of Hungarian origin in the city councils of the respective cities. Nowadays the radical requests for the returning of Slovak cultural heritage from Hungary but also from the Czech Republic are typically an agenda for nationalists and their

election programs. Slovak and Hungarian museums rely on cooperation in solving at least some of the long-term conflicts.

The problem of definition in regard to national cultural heritage, as it is currently understood, seems to be unsolvable on the national and state levels. It leads to territorial overlapping. Slovak representatives claim that everything created in the Slovak territory is the property of Slovakia. For Hungarians everything created in the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary (inclusive of Slovakia) is their national heritage. In Hungary, there is also a significant national level present - everything created and found during the existence of the Hungarian Kingdom is regarded as being of ethnic Magyar heritage. The problem of place and the interpretation of objects claimed by both Hungarians and Slovaks is an inseparable part of the still problematic interpretation of common history of both nations in the Hungarian kingdom.

Case studies in chronological order

Slovak National Museum

The chronological case study of the establishment and development of the Slovak National Museum can explain the role of the Slovak museums in the process of building national identity and historical narratives. The story of the most prominent Slovak museum demonstrates the role of museums in a newly emerging nation-state with a great need to produce a legitimizing national narrative. On the other hand, according to one of the most respected Slovak historians, Roman Holec:

The situation we live [in Slovakia] is in a sharp contrast with the approach to national history in the neighboring states. In the Czech Republic and Hungary, the countries we wish to compare with, the historic consciousness had significantly higher level (...) and the national past enjoys a significantly higher respect. (Holec 2009: 2)

Roman Holec demonstrates his assumption on the example of historical exhibitions of the national museums in the Czech Republic or Hungary. According to him, the popularity and number of attendants of these institutions is unthinkable in the Slovak circumstances. In comparison with the national museums in neighboring countries, the intellectual and institutional authority or influence of their Slovak counterpart seems to be lower. The reason for this situation is in the process of institutionalizing Slovak scientific research and the evolution of a national identity concept as well as in the historical development of a Slovak national museum idea.

For most of the time of its existence, the Slovak historiography produced a national narrative with rather a defensive character, trying to justify the actual existence of the nation. However, the national narrative provided by Slovak scholars was hard to use as a political argument. After several failed attempts in the first half of 19th century, the Slovak political elites ceased to use historical arguments in their constructions of Slovak political conceptions. In the Habsburg Monarchy, the Slovaks were not considered a historical nation with a real historical tradition of state independence. This was the reason why the Slovak elite could not use historical arguments in political programs regarding the Slovak autonomy. Here is the difference from the Hungarian and Czech situation, where the political instrumentalisation of the national past played a much more influential role. After the Austro-Hungarian Compromise (1867), the Slovak political elite based their arguments on the 'natural rights of nations'. According to this philosophy, the rights

of a Slovak nation were defined by its mere existence: Slovaks needed only to refer to their national existence and their right for national equality was proven (Daxner 1912: 37). However, even this type of argumentation has its historical element. It was needed in order to emphasize the long-time presence of the Slovak nation on the given territory. This argument constituted the right on the national territory, irrespective of the tradition of former independence or autonomy (Hollý 2011: 105). The main objective of the first Slovak museum with national status was to present evidence for the existence of the Slovak national community and Slovak national territory. The Slovak national museum in its current form is a relatively young institution. It was established in 1961 by merging two institutions competing for the leading role in Slovak territory. Both of them are worth a closer analysis since they represent two basic phases and philosophies of Slovak museum-related activities.

The first one emerged in 1895 as a private museum of the Slovak Museum Society in Martin, one of the main centers of Slovak political life at that time. Creation of the Slovak National Museum predecessor in the 19th century was not a ceremonial act. It was more or less a result of a compromise, marked by disagreements in the ranks of the Slovak intellectual and political elite. Many saw the museum only as an inadequate alternative to the real research institution similar to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Hollý 2008a: 6). Also, Hungarian authorities preferred a strictly scientific association focused on the natural sciences since there was a bigger guarantee that such an institution would be less interested in national and political activities (Mruškovič, Darulová, Kollár 2005: 57).

However, these were unrealistic expectations, because the idea of the national museum adopted by Slovak political leaders had a clear political and nation-building pattern. The programs and activities of the museum were significantly influenced by the ideas of Slovak conservative political leader Svätozár Hurban Vajanský (1847–1916). Vajanský's philosophy was an extreme example of a non-historical construction of national identity, based on the impersonal mass of the nation as the bearer of the national spirit. As this mass is untouched by history it does not have to carry the burden of the past. Therefore, there was no need to study Slovak history because it had nothing to do with the present development of the Slovak nation (Hollý 2009a: 262).

According to Vajanský, the work of the museum should have concentrated primarily on collecting ethnographic material about Slovak folk, which was considered the only carrier of the Slovak national spirit. The museum and its collections should have served the nation building purpose as evidence of the existence of the Slovak nation in Hungary. The institution should have been based on pure ethnography - a science interested even in the smallest and most lonely nation as the representatives of society called it. According to Vajanský, there was even no need to classify or study the material. That could be done in better times (Hollý 2008a: 6). The national scope of the museum was extremely rigid - it was interested only in the activities of the Slovak folk, almost entirely ignoring supposedly non-Slovak and alien high culture, arts and political history. Even the natural sciences were considered contrary to the Slovak aspect of the museum. The argument was that non-Slovaks could also study Slovak flora and fauna. Nature is going to be here forever, while the Slovak nation is decimated by magyarisation (Hollý 2008b: 451).

These ideas have proven out to be long lasting and had determined the overall image of this institution for the next decades. Despite the activities of scholars, which did not agree with the

solely ethnographic and anti-research scope of the museum, it had not evolved into a prominent national scientific center. This trend was supported by the fact that the museum was located on the periphery. The small city Martin was far away from the centers of intellectual life. As it was promoting ideas contradictory to the official Hungarian state idea, it was kept out of the state network of museums in the Kingdom of Hungary and the scientific milieu of the country. On the other hand, the museum developed a tradition of independence; it relied strongly on contributions from its supporters. In this aspect, the museum was remarkably successful and won a fairly large group of supporters from all levels of society. From their donations, two museum buildings were built. The philosophy of independence allowed the museum to act in opposition to the state authorities and the state enforced state ideas. This was the case of both concepts of Hungarian nation in the Hungarian Kingdom and the Czechoslovak nation in interwar Czechoslovakia.

Although prior to 1918, the Museum of Slovak Museum Society was the only Slovak organization of science and education, it failed to become an intellectual center during the existence of the Czechoslovak state. Other, younger institutions soon overshadowed it. The museum still focused mainly on ethnography, with an emphasis on nation-preservation activities. The declared focus of the museum was: "To show Slovakia as a geographically and culturally homogenous unit that always was and will be Slovak." (Vlachovič 1979: 208).

Paradoxically, the end of national oppression caused a decade of stagnation in the museum. The idea that the 'better times' will automatically enable more profound scientific work proved to be false, because the museum had not trained anybody for such work. Without skilled leadership, the institution was unable to adapt to the modern trends in the museology (Mruškovič, Darulová, Kollár 2005: 69). On the other hand, the museum had significant freedom for its activities because it was financially independent. In 1928, the Museum of the Slovak Museum Society adopted the name Slovak National Museum. This act should have stressed and confirmed its position among Slovak museums. This new name also clearly declared a disagreement with the official idea of a Czechoslovak nation.

However, the stagnation of the museum in Martin during the 1920s and opposition to the Czechoslovak idea were serious reasons why the Czechoslovak government was reluctant to accept the Slovak Nation Museum as the official museum representing the Slovak part of Czechoslovakia. On the contrary, state authorities quietly supported the formation of an influential group of Slovak and Czech political and cultural elite, which decided to open a new institution, better suited to the new era in Slovak development. In 1924, the Society for Slovak Homeland Museum in Bratislava was established. It was an activity of the newly emerged liberal intellectual elite of the Republic led by Slovak architect Dušan Jurkovič and Czech historian Václav Chaloupecký.

Establishing a new, modern Slovak museum was part of a plan to create a new 'set' of scientific and cultural institutions in Bratislava, loyal to the ideas of the Republic. The proposed museum had its own nation-building plan. One of its main purposes was the promotion of the state idea of the Czechoslovak nation - thus the name Slovak homeland instead of Slovak national museum. This name implied the territorial scope of the institution. The Slovak Homeland Museum should have been a modern institution comparable to the national museums in neighboring states. Primarily Czech professors from the newly established Comenius

University maintained it. Beside its didactical function, it stressed the importance of a scientific program focusing on archeology, history, ethnology, fine art and natural sciences. Interest in history was one of the most notable features of the new museum. The Czechoslovak idea was based predominantly on historical arguments of the common history of Czech and Slovaks that made the language differences marginal. It was, therefore, no coincidence that it was Czech historians who prepared the first historical exhibition in the Slovak Homeland Museum.

Since the second half of the 1920s, there were two museums in Slovakia, aspiring for the leading position in the territory that could barely support one of them. The museum in Martin referred to its tradition, number of supporters and the promotion of Slovak national interests. It deliberately focused its activities on the rural environment and relied on the help of national intelligentsia from villages and small towns. (Mruškovič, Darulová, Kollár 2005: 70) The fixation on ethnography grew even stronger, because the museum in Bratislava has taken over all the other fields of research.

The Slovak Homeland Museum in Bratislava had a more favorable position in the eyes of ruling political elites. Other advantages were scientific background; position in the center of Slovak cultural and intellectual life, broader orientation of its activities and more finances. It was rooted in the urban, liberal milieu and prepared support to the actual state idea.

Both museums had their nation building strategies. One promoted the existence of a Slovak nation (in opposition to the state idea); the other one was based on the idea of a Czechoslovak nation. One represented the Slovak nation and its national territory; the second one described the territory of the Slovak branch of the Czechoslovak nation. The state authorities demonstrated their preferred museum only indirectly. The transfer of the Homeland Museum's collection into the (state funded) building of the Agrarian Museum in 1934 was a clear sign of support from the highly ranked political elite. The new building of the Slovak National Museum in Martin was paid for with money gathered from individual supporters; the state support of this project was negligible.

According to Jozef Vlachovič, the rivalry of the two museums had positive effects on their work (Vlachovič 1979: 210). It is true that the opening of the Slovak Homeland Museum started the era of renewed activity of the Slovak National Museum. On the other hand, this situation only further complicated the stabilization of the network of museums. None of the two Slovak museums had, by far, reached the status, influence and importance of national museums in neighboring countries. The impact of the Slovak museums on the formation of the historical narrative and the national identity building was only marginal. The Czechoslovak state, otherwise highly active in propagation of its state idea in schools and cultural activities, did not utilize the potential of the museums as possible nation building tools. They were still considered private enterprises and the state did not try to get control over their activities.

The aforementioned duality lasted until 1961, but already during the existence of the Slovak state (1939–1945) a compromise was negotiated. The Slovak National Museum focused primarily on ethnography and the Slovak Museum on nature, archeology and history. After the dissolution of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1939, when the idea of a Czechoslovak nation was abandoned, the ideological differences between the two Slovak museums ceased to exist. However, the problem of distribution of spheres of influence remained, as well as the question of which of the museums was the central Slovak institution.

Since 1948, when the Communists took power in Czechoslovakia, all the museums had to adapt to the new reality of the state owned institutions, with extremely clear and strictly controlled tasks regarding the ideological indoctrination of the population. The first task of the museums was to reconstruct and reinterpret the collections and exhibitions according to the actual Marxist-Leninist doctrine. This process occurred to be very time consuming and complicated. In the two biggest Slovak museums, it took nearly 10 years. During this time, it became clear that the museums lacked qualified personnel, capable to fulfill the given tasks. The chronic shortage of Marxists with university diplomas was typical for the first half of the 1950s. In addition, the museums suffered from the fact that they were not regarded as research institutions. However, in order to reconstruct the exhibitions, museums needed professional historians, art historians, nature scientists and technicians with experience in museum work. The problem was that formal relations between the museums and the other institutions of science and research were nearly nonexistent. A whole framework of cooperation had to be created. In 1956, the central museums became institutes of scientific research, which made it easier for them to employ university graduates. At the same time, the faculties of Arts started to open chairs of museology, producing much-needed experts on museum work.

The communist regime considered history one of the most powerful tools for legitimization of its own power. The Communists introduced themselves as the heirs of the most progressive national historical traditions. That is why the historical science and historical exhibitions in museums were under strict supervision by the party ideologists. In 1955, the Slovak museum in Bratislava opened its historical exhibition that presented the newly created Marxist Slovak master narrative. It depicted the history of the Slovak territory “from Neanderthal man to the present” (Lipták 1990: 251). According to Marxist ideas, the exhibition focused on the common folk, the makers of history. The second objective of the exhibition was to document the continuity of Slovak history – the existence of a coherent Slovak master narrative. This was a delicate task, especially considering the presentation of Czech-Slovak relations. The exhibition should have documented the struggle for national sovereignty but at the same time it had to promote the official state policy of Czechoslovak socialist patriotism and the historical bond of two brotherly nations, negating any signs of Slovak separatism.

This exposition was also a classic example of museum work in the communist countries. The museum should have functioned as a school of history for the masses (Kollár 2009: 370) and the exhibitions as textbooks, giving the visitors sum of basic knowledge. According to historian Ľubomír Lipták, this resulted in a transformation of the exhibition into the (boring) textbook, where the accompanying text was more valuable than the actual exhibit (Lipták 1990: 251).

It took one more decade until the museums were able to prepare exhibitions respecting the possibilities and limitations of their institutions. In the 1960s, when supervision of the Party ideologist receded, the new generation of professionals with enough experience started to influence the functioning of the Slovak National Museum. Since the 1970s, the museum had its own experts and was not dependent on the help of other scientific institutions. However, being an employee of the museum (even the national one) was still a job with little prestige for scholars. Scientists, which had to leave the Slovak Academy of Sciences or university for ideological reasons, were often sent to the national museum as a form of punishment. The reason for this benevolence was the fact that the museum was seen only as a space for presentation of state ideas

and ideologies and not as an institution where exhibitions were planned. In 1987, there were 156 historians working in Slovak museums, but it took 27 years until the Slovak Historical Society (official association of Slovak historians) mentioned their work for the first time (Lipták 1990: 251).

The fall of communism in 1989 and the split of Czechoslovakia in 1993 brought profound changes to the status of the Slovak National Museum. With the dissolution of Czechoslovakia and creation of the Slovak republic in 1993, the Slovak National Museum became not only the central national, but also the central state museum. The step from narrow ethnical focus towards the representation of the whole state was manifested by exhibitions dedicated to ethnic (and religious) minorities in Slovakia (Hungarian, German, Czech, Roma, Jewish, Croatian, Ruthenian and Ukrainian). Nowadays the museum encompasses 18 museums located in different places throughout Slovakia, which are devoted to history, culture, arts, religion, ethnography and natural sciences. Despite rather strong dependence on the actual ruling coalition (the minister of culture can remove the museum director from his position without giving a reason), the museum avoided deeper engagement in the controversies regarding the state and nation making process. Contrary to universities and the Slovak Academy of Sciences, it did not actively and visibly participate in the discussions concerning the tendencies towards radical nationalization of the Slovak master narrative as requested by the ruling political coalition during the years 1993–1998.

It is possible that the long-time experience with the totalitarian regime was the cause for the cautious politics of avoiding the conflicts. It can be a sign that the other research institutions and state authorities did not consider the Slovak National Museum powerful enough to be a part of their debates. However, this position grants the museum a certain degree of freedom. The representatives of the national museum stayed skeptical towards appeals for a more patriotic and primordial presentation of Slovak history. Instead of supporting the state proclaimed politic of history, based on proving the existence of old Slovaks in the 8th century, the Slovak national museum introduced an entirely different approach. The former director of the museum, Peter Maráky, explained in the following terms:

It does not matter if you like it or not, the Slovaks have formed a nation predominantly in the 20th century, especially during the time of the so called real socialism. Therefore, looking for old and even older Slovaks has no sense. (Maráky 2008)

This focus on modern history proved to be successful. The recent exhibition “How we lived? Slovakia in 20th century” with an emphasis on every day life was the most visited exhibition at the Slovak National Museum until recently. A second exhibition of particular importance was called “Centre of Europe around the Year 1000”. It was created as a German-Hungarian-Polish-Czech-Slovak project. Its declared aim was to demonstrate that the main ideas of the European Union are based on a 1000-year-old common historical tradition. The main importance of this exhibition, which was presented in the museums of all involved countries, was in the mentioned cooperation. Experts from different countries had to overcome the ethnocentric conception of national narratives in order to create an acceptable interpretation of the Central European past.

The Slovak National Museum stood aside from the nationalistic controversies, clearly visible already during the last 10 years of the communist era. This marked its moderate stance in the discussions following the creating the post-Marxist Slovak national narrative in which most

respected institutions of social sciences were involved. However, this neutrality was also a result of stagnation and inner reforms of the first 10 years after the fall of communism. The situation had changed at the beginning of the 21st century, when the museum adopted an active and attractive approach towards the preparing of the new exhibitions. There are more activities and projects for children and young people. Right now it seems that the Slovak National Museum is on the cusp of its own renaissance (Slovakia, Cultural profile 2010). In general, the Slovak National Museum is an accepted and respected institution, gaining popularity after the decline in the 1990s. However, its historical background and institutional development caused its authority and influence to be less evident than in neighboring countries.

Museum of the Slovak national uprising

The Museum of the Slovak national uprising (SNU) is an example of a national museum that is, at the same time, highly specialized. This institution is a combination of museum and war memorial, built to protect and provide the official interpretation of a historical event, which is considered particularly significant for the national narrative and the legitimization of the ruling ideology. The antifascist uprising of 1944 has a prominent role in the Slovak collective historical memory as a heroic-chapter of the Slovak past. Since the end of World War II, the interpretation of uprising was a key element in the state politics of history, especially in the legitimization of the restoration of Czechoslovakia in 1945. The Communist party ideologists considered it the crucial phase in the history of the Slovak nation, the beginning of the socialist era. This construction was based on the statement that the “leading force of the Slovak national uprising was the working class under the leadership of the Communist party” (Holotík 1953: 72).

In order to canonize this interpretation, the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising was established. The first exhibition devoted to the SNU was opened to the public already in 1945 in the Slovak Museum, in Bratislava. In 1954, the Central Committee of the Communist party of Slovakia decided to move the exhibition to the Banská Bystrica (centre of the Uprising) in the form of a permanent museum (Babušíková, Mičev 2007: 389). In 1957, the museum became a key research institution in the field of documenting the traditions of “the nation-liberation fight of the Slovak folk during the World War II and the liberation of our mother country by the Soviet army” (Babušíková, Mičev 2007: 389). From its beginning, the museum had to be, voluntarily or involuntarily, a political institution. The interpretation of SNU was a serious political question done by the high ranked communist ideologists. Especially in the 1950s, the incorrect interpretation could easily lead to the accusation of bourgeois nationalism and imprisonment. At the beginning of the 1950s all most important Slovak communist leaders of the SNU have been imprisoned as „bourgeois nationalists“.

It was no coincidence that the Communist apparatus had to approve all documents and original sources about the Uprising, before they could be given to the museum archives.

During the decades of the Communist rule, the interpretation of the SNU went through various changes. Many of them were ideologically or politically motivated, and the Museum had to reconstruct its exhibitions and interpretations accordingly. In order to fulfill its function, it was crucial that the museum was attended by masses of visitors. Very typical were the excursions of the organized groups of visitors - during the era of communism nearly every Slovak schoolchild went to the museum at least once.

In 1969, the museum became a new monumental building, which even more stressed its significance as a memorial, legitimizing and glorifying the communist rule. The building metaphorically depicts the history of Slovak nation in two asymmetric concrete monuments. They are connected by a bridge representing the idea of the SNU as a radical change in the life of Slovak society - a metaphor of Communist perception of this event as a step from capitalism into socialism.

The space between the two monuments represents a war memorial. There is the symbolic grave of an Unknown Soldier with the everlasting flame as well as a panel with the names of the most famous battlefields of the uprising and places of Nazi repression. Nowadays, the memorial tablets dedicated to victims of the Holocaust from Slovakia and foreign fighters in the Slovak National Uprising are placed here as well.

The construction of the new building strengthened the position of the museum as a multifunctional place of memory. Here the nation-liberating, antifascist struggle was merged with the communist struggle for the oppressed working classes. The building of the museum became one of the most prominent places for commemorative practices in Slovakia, where the communists could present themselves as heirs and guardians of the most positive national tradition - the antifascist struggle. The anniversary of the SNU was (and still is) a National holiday. During the celebration, the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising was the center of commemorative events. It was attended by high ranking Communist party officials and other representatives of the political and intellectual elite of the country.

Close ties with the Communist ideology made this museum highly sensitive to all political changes. This became particularly apparent after the armies of the Warsaw pact crushed the liberalizing tendencies of the “Prague Spring” (1968). The interpretation of the SNU, as the key part of the Marxist master narrative, went through radical changes during the liberalization of the historical science in the 1960s. One of the most significant changes was the official acknowledgement that the demand for an equal status of the Slovak and Czech nation in the renewed republic was a crucial part of the Uprising's political program. These changes were visible also in the museum exhibition. However, in the 1970s the so-called normalization commission supervised the new reinterpretation of the exhibition (Babušíková, Mičev 2007: 390). The commission also dismissed all the members of personnel accused of actively participating in the former liberalization movement.

On the other hand, the Museum of the SNU had apparently easily adapted to the new post-communist reality of 1989. During the time when the ideological museums were closed, the museum in Banská Bystrica retained its position as the central, national institution. It was because also the new, democratic regime considered the Uprising one of the most decisive turning points in the modern Slovak history. The New Slovak republic derived its democratic character from the antifascist struggle in the years 1944–1945. In addition, the museum was able to expand its focus on the previously marginalized themes of the Holocaust. Its employees are dealing with the sensible theme of a wartime Slovak state and involvement of its political leaders and citizens in the tragedy of Slovak Jews.

The employees of the museum successfully and rather quickly prepared new exhibitions freed from Communist misinterpretations. The museum also preserved its status as an important place of memory. The tradition of the annual commemorative events continues today, and has the

same political significance as it had during communist period. In fact, it is one of the few traditions rooted in the communist regime that was not abandoned after 1989. The Museum of the SNU is, to a certain extent, still a political institution, especially as a memory keeper and guardian of correct interpretation of this key component of the Slovak national narrative. The official interpretation of the SNU has strong political connotations. In 2007, Slovak Prime Minister Róbert Fico explained the importance of the SNU in the following terms, the “Slovak National Uprising is the backbone of the modern Slovak history and the government under his lead will not accept any questioning of its importance.” (SME 29. 8. 2007). The Museum of the Slovak National Uprising always had (and still has) closer ties with the state policy of history than the Slovak National Museum - a position which has considerable influence on its functioning.

Notes

- ¹ It was authorized directly by the Emperor Franz Joseph, who also gave this organization a financial donation.
- ² Upper Hungary was the name of northern part of Hungarian Kingdom, more or less the territory of today's Slovakia.
- ³ Assembly of the Slovak part of Czechoslovakia.
- ⁴ This process was especially visible in the field of history, which had to include propagandist exhibitions dedicated to the revolutionary traditions of Slovak folk or Slovakia in socialist Czechoslovakia.

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Annex table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Czech National Museum	1820	1818	Aristocrat till 1840, Civil society till 1934, Parliament till today	Private association till 1934, State till today	Ethnology, Archeology, History, Culture, Natural Sciences	Czech history in European tradition	Czech territory and from prehistory till today, history of the Czechoslovak state	Neorenaissance style, Central Praha
Museum of Slovak Mother	1863 (closed in 1875)	1863	Civil society (Slovak national intelligentsia)	Private association	History, Ethnography, Natural Sciences	National and territorial representation	Slovak nation in history	Classicist style, Central Martin
Slovak National Museum + Slovak Homeland Museum	1928 1930 (one institution 1961)	1895 1924	Civil society till 1948, Parliament till today	Private association till 1948, State till today	Ethnology, Archeology, History, Culture, Natural Sciences	Slovak history and culture in European tradition	Slovak territory from prehistory till today	Functionalist style, Central Martin Neoclassicist style, Central Bratislava (central building of the SNM)

Slovak National Gallery	1950	1948	Parliament	State	Fine Arts	Slovak art	Fine arts on Slovak territory from middle ages till today, works of artists considered Slovak	Baroque style, (former seat of city police), Central Bratislava
Museum of the Slovak National Uprising	1955	1953	Parliament	State	History	Anti-Fascist struggle in Slovak territory	Slovak territory. WWII, anti-fascist struggle (1938-1945) in the European context	Brutalist architecture, Central Banská Bystrica



National Museums in Spain: A History of Crown, Church and People

José María Lanzarote Guiral

Summary

The present report provides an overview on the history of national museums in Spain as well as an analysis of a selected set of case studies. In the first part of this report, a historical outline of the creation and evolution of museums is provided from the point of view of the enlarging scope of the concept 'national heritage'. The choice of national museums in the second part exemplifies the role played by different categories of heritage in the construction of national master narrative in Spain, including fine arts (*Museo del Prado*), archaeology (*Museo Arqueológico Nacional*) and nature (*Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales*). The study of the Museum of the Americas (*Museo de América*) allows for the exploration of the complex relationship between Spanish national identity and the imperial past, whereas the Museum of History of Catalonia (*Museu d'Història de Catalunya*) leads reflection to the competing nationalist projects within the state. Finally, the case of the Museum of the Spanish Army (*Museo del Ejército Español*) is considered in the light of the contemporary debates on 'historical memory' that have marked its recent renovation.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Prado Museum <i>Museo Nacional del Prado</i>	1819	1819	Crown, Spanish state	Royal (1819-68) State (1868-)	Fine Arts (painting and sculpture)	Spanish and universal	Classical to Neoclassical (sculpture) Middle Ages to beginning 19 th c. (painting)	Originally purpose-built for Museum of Natural Sciences (1785-1819), Neo-Classical in style, centre of Madrid.
National Archaeological Museum <i>Museo Arqueológico Nacional</i>	1871 1895 (new premises)	1867	Crown, Spanish state	Spanish state	Archaeology, History (Ethnography in its origins)	Spanish and universal	Prehistory to 18 th c.	Purpose-built (1866- 1892), 19 th c. historicism, centre of Madrid.
<i>National Museum of Natural Sciences Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales</i>	1815 1910 (new premises)	1815	Crown, Spanish state	Royal (1815- 1838) Spanish state (1838 -).	Natural Sciences	Spanish and universal		Purpose-built as palace of national exhibitions (1881), 19 th c. eclecticism, centre of Madrid.
Museum of the Americas <i>Museo de América</i>	1941 1962 (new premises)	1941	Francoist dictatorship, Spanish state	Spanish state	Archaeology, Anthropology, Aistory	Americas (particularly Spanish speaking territories)	Prehistory to today	Purpose-built for this museum (1943-1954). Historicist, inspired by Baroque monastic architecture Madrid.
Museum of History of Catalonia <i>Museu d'Història de Catalunya</i>	1997	1996	Catalan Autonomous Government	Catalan Autonomous Government	Catalan History	Catalan	Prehistory to today	Former customs house in Barcelona harbor, 19 th c. Industrial architecture, Barcelona.
Museum of the Spanish Army <i>Museo del Ejército Español</i>	1841 2010 (new premises)	1803	Spanish army, Spanish state	Spanish state	Spanish Military History	Spanish	Prehistory to today	Castle of Castilian and Spanish kings, 16 th c. Renaissance in style, Toledo.

Introduction

National museums are complex institutions: they are places for arts and sciences where knowledge is created and disseminated, but they are also institutions with a political dimension where collective identities are visualised and negotiated. Starting from the working definition provided by the Eunamus project (*national museums refer to those collections and displays claiming, negotiating, articulating and representing dominant national values, myths and realities*), the aim of this report is to provide an overview on the history of national museums in Spain, as well as an analysis of several selected case studies. The exploration of how those ‘national values, myths and realities’ are presented in museums, by whom and for whom, constitutes the main objective of this paper.

In 2009, the Spanish Ministry of Culture created the Network of Spanish Museums (*Red Española de Museos*). This network originally consisted of thirty-six ‘state museums’ (*museos estatales*), that is, those *de titularidad y gestión estatal*, both owned and administered by the Spanish state, divided into two categories: the first group is made up of a list of twenty-two ‘national museums’ (*museos nacionales*), whereas the second group comprises the rest of the ‘state museums’. Therefore, the number of national museums, according to the official definition by the Spanish Ministry of Culture, amounts to twenty-two institutions: starting with the Prado Museum, it includes displays devoted to several fields of knowledge (arts, archaeology, sciences, anthropology and ethnography), and more than half of them are located in Madrid. Nevertheless, these are not the only museums within the country that use the word ‘national’ in their official name, nor are they the only ones that claim to represent a ‘nation’ or a ‘people’, and therefore, the official definition provided by the Ministry of Culture only partially reflects the complexity of the Spanish case.

The historical evolution and the location of those national museums classed by the Ministry reflects a definition of Spain as a centralised and homogenous state, a political project started by the monarchy in early modern times and developed by the liberal state in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The continuity of this project, since the *Ancient Regime*, finds its correlate in the main national museums, which have inherited collections and spaces created before the advent of modernity. For this reason, in the last two centuries, Spanish cultural policies have striven to nationalise that ‘inherited heritage’, from the royal collections to the patrimony of the Catholic Church. This process has been complemented with other initiatives oriented towards the recognition of the role of the people(s) in national history, and has been characterised by conflicts and turning points; Crown, Church and People constitute three vectors in this complex cultural cartography, which do not always point in the same direction.

The aim of the first part of this report is precisely to understand the evolution of national museums in Spain in the light of those continuities and ruptures, by taking as guidelines the enlarging scope of the concept ‘national heritage’. The gradual recognition of different kinds of heritage and their institutionalisation in museums are approached here as processes of interaction between specialists, politicians and the public, crossed by tensions created by opposing political projects and/or the dialogue (or the lack of it) between centres and peripheries. For this reason, competing uses of heritage provoked by the circulation of cultural items (inside or outside Spain), or museum display policies will be considered in some detail.

The chosen approach allows to gauge the role of different fields of knowledge / kinds of heritage and their success or failure in representing the national community: whereas fine arts museums (the Prado in particular) remain until today the most successful strategy of Spanish national culture and international projection, other attempts to foster national narratives through museums of archaeology, nature, anthropology, and military history have been promoted in different historical moments, but they have not managed to provide real competition with the centrality of fine arts displays. Indeed, this model, which elevates arts museums as the 'national museum' par excellence, has also been reproduced in the territories that aspire to national self-determination (for instance, *Museu Nacional d'art de Catalunya* in Barcelona or the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao). In turn, the case of ethnography, the art of the people, shows the failure of a field of knowledge to get consolidated in a Spanish national museum and thereby to occupy a place in the official production of national narratives.

The selection of case studies for the second part departs from this reflection on the use of different kinds of heritage; given their role in the creation of a Spanish national master narrative, five national museums of Spanish representation are considered: *Museo Nacional del Prado*, *Museo Arqueológico Nacional*, *Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales*, *Museo de América* and *Museo del Ejército Español*, all of them located in Madrid, with the exception of the last one, which has recently been transferred to Toledo, in the vicinity of the capital. The discussion of a further case, the *Museu d'Història de Catalunya*, located in Barcelona, exemplifies the role of conflicting national identities within the country; even if it does not have the word 'national' in its official name, a national master narrative on Catalan history inspired its creation and display.

As opposed to the first four case studies devoted to particular areas of knowledge, the last two focus on a kind of museum in which the historical narrative is put at the centre of the display. The Museum of History of Catalonia uses a wide range of new museology devices in order to present a national master narrative in which Catalonia is defined as an essential reality and unitary discourse from prehistory until the present day, avoiding conflicting or problematic definitions. In turn, the renovated Museum of the Spanish Army, also inspired by an essentialist national narrative that stresses unity and continuity, had to confront in the last years the conflict-generating potential of the writing of Spain's recent history, particularly related to the Civil War and the Dictatorship. For their specific focus on history and their relevance, these two case studies allow the analysis of the negotiation processes between different social actors that converge in the creation of national museums.

Dealing with 250 years of history of national museums in Spain in less than 30 pages is not an easy task. It implies considering numerous factors and processing and summarising a large amount of information, but also selecting and omitting; the responsibility of these choices is entirely mine. This reflection has benefitted from the existing literature on the field and particularly from the comprehensive overview penned by María Bolaños (1997; extended edition in 2008), as well as some general accounts on the history of heritage recognition and protection in Spain (Alegre 1994, Hernández 1998, López Trujillo 2006). In order to understand the history of museums in its socio-political context, I drew on recent literature on the field of nationalism studies, in particular the historiography of Spanish nationalism (Riquer 1994, Fox 1997, Forcadell 1998, Serrano 1999, Núñez Seixas 1999 and 2006, Pérez Garzón 2000, Fusi 2000, Boyd 2000, Álvarez Junco 2001, Wulff 2003, García Cárcel 2004, Taibo 2007, Kamen 2008), as well as the

bibliography on Catalan (Riquer 2000, Canal 2005) and Basque nationalism (Corcuera 2001, Granja 2003). References to concrete studies on particular topics are to be found throughout the text.

Expanding national heritage: An overview of the history of museums in Spain (1750-2010)

1750-1800: Collections and museums on the eve of modernity

The history of national museums in Spain is rooted in the history of early modern collections. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Spanish elites, starting with the monarchs, benefited from the circulation of artists and objects within a large empire that included both European and overseas territories; when Philip II (1556–1598) merged a royal palace, a monastery and a dynastic pantheon in *El Escorial*, he chose paintings and sculptures by Italian and Flemish masters to decorate it and selected manuscripts and prints for a library that also included a collection of coins, medals and curiosities. In turn, the Catholic Church acted as the main patron for local artists, and the silver and gold from the New World contributed to the splendour of the Baroque liturgy that aimed at the spiritual conquest of the faithful (Morán & Checa 1985).

Another example of the iconographical display of power is provided by the palace of *El Buen Retiro*, created by Philip IV (1621–1665) at the gates of Madrid. This complex of gardens and buildings was not only conceived for the amusement of the court, but was also a carefully designed theatre celebrating the glory of the Hispanic Monarchy, particularly in a room that constituted the centrepiece of the complex, the Hall of Kingdoms (*Salón de Reinos*). Presided over by Velasquez's portraits of the king, queen and crown prince, and adorned with paintings of victorious battles and mythological representations, this space celebrated the role of the Habsburg dynasty in holding together the kingdoms that composed the Crown, and which were represented by their coats of arms on the vaulted ceiling (Brown & Elliot 2003). Only a few years after its completion, events ran counter to this self-congratulatory vision: in 1640 Portugal and Catalonia revolted against the king and in 1648, the independence of the Netherlands finally had to be recognised.

The transition to the eighteenth century was marked by a reorganisation of the state. After the War of Spanish Succession (1701–1715), the European territories were lost to the monarchy, while in turn the states of the Crown of Aragon (Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia and the Balearic islands) were subjected to Castilian laws and government. Philip V (1701–1746) thus began a policy of modernisation of the political structures of the country driven by the principles of centralisation and homogenisation on the French model. This goal was also pursued through the promotion of culture, and particularly through the creation of the Royal Library (1716) and several academies, such as the *Real Academia Española*, for Castilian/Spanish language (1713), and those devoted to History (1738) and Fine Arts (1752). The aim of those institutions was the establishment of a patriotic culture through its language, arts and history, which set the foundation on which nationalism was built on the nineteenth century.

Moreover, in the eighteenth century the state enacted the first measures to protect (and define) the Spanish art tradition; in 1779 Charles III (1759–1788) issued a ban on the export of paintings by 'well known deceased masters', and authorised the Academy of Fine Arts to decide

which paintings matched this definition. Another Royal Decree in 1803 established that every discovery of antiquities in the kingdom should be communicated to the Academy of History, the official body in charge of writing the country's history. Moreover, those institutions created their own collections of objects, such as the Cabinet of Numismatics in the Royal Library and the Cabinet of Antiquities in the Academy of History. Even if access was restricted to noblemen and a few learned scholars, those cabinets constituted the precedents of museums in as much as they were permanent collections conceived for the promotion of knowledge.

The cultivation of natural sciences was another of the key cultural policies implemented by the Bourbon dynasty, as part of their support for a more efficient and centralised administration of the colonial empire. Natural and ethnographic samples from the American territories and the Pacific were gathered in the Royal Botanical Garden (1755) and the Cabinet of Natural History (1771). In 1781, Charles III ordered the transfer of those institutions to the *Prado*, an area between the walls of Madrid and the royal palace of *El Buen Retiro*. This area, that started to be known as *Salón del Prado* (Hall of the Prado), was planned as a showcase for the king's patronage of arts and sciences. Although the new 'museum' built on the site never hosted the natural collections for which it was designed, in subsequent centuries it became a focal point of Spanish culture: the Prado Museum.

1800-1833: Royal museums for a new national public

The creation of the first 'national museum' ensued from the emergence of the 'nation' as an ideology and political programme. Whilst in Spanish historiography the start of the Napoleonic occupation of the peninsula (1808–1814) marks the end (albeit not the definitive one) of the *Ancien Régime*, 1812 has been considered the founding moment of Spanish nationalism. In that year, representatives of the self-organised Spanish resistance met in the city of Cadiz, the main colonial port of the Peninsula for colonial trade, and proclaimed the 'Spanish nation', which they defined as the 'reunion of all Spaniards from both hemispheres' (referring to the citizens of both the metropolis and the overseas territories). However, this first liberal experience in Spain was hampered by the war against the foreign occupation and the imposed king, Joseph Bonaparte (1808–1813).

It was precisely Bonaparte's government that took the initiative to create the first public museums in Spain. The objective was to promote the instruction of the people, but also to legitimise the new regime at a time of fighting and looting by the French troops. For instance, Napoleon requested from Paris a selection of paintings by Spanish masters to be exhibited in the *Musée Napoléon* (Louvre), and General Soult (1769–1851) confiscated more than thirty paintings by Murillo, from the convents of Seville, for his personal collection. In 1809, Joseph I decreed the creation of a national museum of fine arts, the *Museo Josefino*, which would display works of art from the royal collections and from the suppressed convents (Antigüedad del Castillo 1999). Similarly, a Royal Museum of Natural History was projected in 1810, but both initiatives shared the same fate: their opening was delayed, hindered, and finally cancelled by the war.

When the Bourbons regained the throne in 1814, the political structures of the *Ancien Régime* were restored. Nonetheless, the Crown was weakened, not just by the war's destruction but also by the process of independence of the American territories. Cultural policy, particularly the promotion of arts and sciences, was one of the means left to the monarchy to affirm its role in

definition of the national community: drawing on previous initiatives, Ferdinand VII (1814–1833) created the Royal Museum of Natural History (*Real Museo de Historia Natural*) in 1815 and the Royal Museum of Paintings (*Real Museo de Pinturas*) in 1819. Moreover, in 1830 the Royal Academy of History proposed the creation of a Museum of Antiquities (*Real Museo de Antigüedades*), using its own collections and those of the Royal Library; the project only materialised in 1867 when the *Museo Arqueológico Nacional* was established.

1833-1868: The nationalisation of the past

The death of Ferdinand VII in 1833 allowed for the definitive consolidation of liberalism in Spain; the new state centralised the administration, replaced the ancient kingdoms with a new territorial unit, the *provincia* (Forcadell & Romeo 2006), and promoted reform of the legal and economic structures of the country. In the name of the nation, the properties of the Catholic Church were seized by the state and subsequently auctioned; as a result of this transfer of property the liberal regime weakened its enemies while at the same time created a new class of landowners. However, these measures affected not only the lands owned by monastic orders, but also their buildings and cultural assets. Although the nationalisation acts excluded from public auction, those ‘monuments’ with ‘historical or artistic significance for the nation’, the very difficult situation of the Treasury and the on-going civil war between absolutists and liberals, urged completion of the process, regardless of the consequences for the arts (Bello 1997).

When some members of the intelligentsia protested against the loss of ancient buildings and artworks, the idea of a ‘national heritage’ started to emerge: they considered those ‘monuments’ and ‘artistic treasures’ to be testimonies of the Spanish ‘genius’, and asked the nation to assume their custody. As a result, the state created in each province *Comisiones de Monumentos Históricos y Artísticos*, under the coordination of the *Comisión Central de Monumentos*. Among other responsibilities, their members were entrusted with visiting the suppressed monasteries, gathering the most significant works of art and depositing them in provincial museums of fine arts (*Museos Provinciales de Bellas Artes*). As a result of this official policy, and of the decisive initiative of some local academies of fine arts, arts museums were created in Seville, Cordoba, Cádiz, Valencia, Zaragoza and Valladolid during the 1840s (Géal 2003; Kurtz & Valadés 2006; Bolaños 2008: 205-223, López 2010). Similarly, provincial archives and libraries were created for the safekeeping of archival and bibliographic records. The transfer of those objects from the sacred realm into the state institutions implied their secularisation and transformation into scientific sources of national history.

This was the aim of the first ‘national museum’ created in Spain: the *Museo Nacional de Pintura y Escultura*, better known as *Museo de la Trinidad* (from the name of the convent in Madrid where it was installed). Its collection, consisting of religious artworks from suppressed convents of the capital and the neighbouring provinces, was organised by the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. Although it was officially inaugurated in 1838, it only opened its doors to the public four years later. In spite of its very rich collection in Castilian masters, the Museo de la Trinidad was always secondary to the Royal Museum (Prado): it suffered from economic under-endowment and was criticised for the conditions in which works were displayed and conserved. Finally, in 1872, it was officially closed when its collections were merged with those of the Prado (Álvarez Lopera 2009).

At the same time as the *Museo Nacional* languished in Madrid, religious artworks from the Spanish convents flowed to other European countries, and particularly to Paris, where they formed *Gallerie Espagnole* in the Louvre, inaugurated in 1838 by king Louis Philippe of France (1830–1848) and dismantled ten years later. Those artworks, depicting scenes of martyrdom and saints in ecstasy, nurtured the romantic image of Spain that foreign travellers to the Peninsula contributed to create (Luxenberg 2008). They visually reaffirmed the myth of a backward country, in which intellectual development had been allegedly suppressed by centuries of religious zeal and inquisitorial control, as had been described by Enlightened thinkers. Drawing on similar perceptions, writers and travellers completed the picture by portraying a colourful and picturesque land of bandits and gypsies, like the one described in Mérimée's *Carmen*.

Meanwhile, partly assuming those historical interpretations and partly reacting to the stereotypes, Spanish scholars, writers and artists cooperated to shape a national culture, which took expression in historical painting (Reyero 1989, Díez 1992), commemorative sculpture (Reyero 1999, Lacarra & Giménez 2003) or the restoration of ancient monuments (Ordieres 1995). One institution in particular, the Royal Academy of History, centralised the writing of Spain's history and promoted the critical analysis of the sources. In 1856 it created the School of Diplomats (*Escuela Superior de Diplomática*) for the training of professional archivists, and museum specialists, called *anticuarios* in the administrative language until 1900 (Pasamar & Peiró 1995). The director of the school, historian Modesto Lafuente (1806–1866), stands out for this role in the shaping of a national master narrative based on an essentialist and teleological interpretation of Spanish history (Fox 1997, Álvarez Junco 2001). It was this interpretation of national history that was staged when a national museum of archaeology was created one year after his death.

Yet, although monuments and antiquities were important for the nation's definition, they were still fragile and the press of the period featured articles denouncing the destruction of ancient buildings, the deficiencies of state museums, and cases of the exportation of cultural items. The lack of effective measures to protect national treasures became evident following the export to the Parisian *Musée de Cluny* of a hoard of gold jewels (crowns, liturgical elements) discovered in Guarrazar (Toledo) in 1858. Some of those items, dated to the seventh century A.D., bore the names of the Visigoth kings of Hispania, and were therefore highly symbolic for the national history. After an unsuccessful petition to the French government, in 1860 the Parliament promoted the drafting of a law on antiquities. However, the project failed and this aspiration was not fulfilled until the first third of the twentieth century (López Trujillo 2006: 255-298).

1868-1900: National identity in the age of colonialism

In 1866 Queen Elisabeth II (1833–1868) laid the foundation stone of the Palace of National Museums and Library (*Palacio de Biblioteca y Museos Nacionales*). This building, projected by the architect Francisco Jareño (1818-1892), intended to unite the main repositories of national culture, namely the National Library and two newly-created institutions: the National Historical Archive (*Archivo Histórico Nacional*) and the National Archaeological Museum (*Museo Arqueológico Nacional*: MAN) (Layuno 2004). Nevertheless, in October 1868 a revolution dethroned the queen in the name of democratic principles. This did not imply a break in cultural policy: on the contrary, the governments of the six-year revolutionary period (*Sexenio Revolucionario*, 1868–1874)

promoted national museums in order to pursue, from a progressive political standpoint, the nation-state building process developed in the previous decades. Various political regimes were experimented with during the *Sexenio*: firstly, a parliamentary monarchy under the Italian Prince Amedeo of Savoy (1869-71) and secondly the First Republic (1871-72). The failure of the republican governments to control the country, afflicted by a federalist uprising and a traditionalist revolt, led to a military coup d'état that paved the way for the restoration of the Bourbons in 1874.

In 1868, the new revolutionary government nationalised all Crown properties, such as the *Museo Real de Pinturas*, as well as all artworks, libraries and archives belonging to the Catholic Church. Even if the latter measure was not fully implemented, it allowed for the confiscation of artefacts to be exhibited in the MAN, inaugurated in 1871. The *Sexenio* was also a period of the diffusion of new philosophical ideas, in which the scientific associations played a leading role. One of those, the Spanish Anthropological Society (*Sociedad Antropológica Española*), was responsible for the creation of the *Museo Antropológico* (today *Museo Nacional de Antropología*). Like many museums in the nineteenth century, it was designed by the architect and politician Francisco de Cubas (1826-1899), according to the language of classical architecture, as the temple for a discipline –anthropology–, which affirmed the new religion of scientific progress. Opened in 1875, the museum and its collections were purchased by the Spanish state after the death of its founder, Dr Pedro González de Velasco (1815–1882) (Romero de Tejada 1992).

At a time when national prestige was measured in colonial capacity, cultural policy reflected it. Yet, after the independence of most of Spain's overseas territories, only the Caribbean islands (Cuba and Puerto Rico) and the Philippines remained of the former Spanish empire. In 1887, the *Exposición de las Islas Filipinas* celebrated the civilising role of the metropolis, and as a result, the Museum-Library of the Overseas (*Museo-Biblioteca de Ultramar*) was established in Madrid. In 1892, a double exhibition commemorated the fourth centenary of the arrival of Columbus in the New World: *Exposición Histórico-Americana* and *Exposición Histórico-Europea* (Bernabéu 1987). It was for this occasion that the *Palacio de Bibliotecas y Museos* was completed and endowed with its iconographic programme of patriotic allegories and great men of national arts and letters, which reflected the efforts made by the conservative Restoration regime, in particular the statesman Antonio Cánovas del Castillo (1828-1897), to foster the writing of national history (Peiró 1995). After the end of the exhibitions, the MAN transferred to its new premises, which were inaugurated in 1895.

All these events celebrating the colonial past, present and future of the Spanish nation were promoted by the state in a period of instability marked by the uprisings for independence in Cuba and the Philippines. Moreover, the events in Madrid had to compete with those promoted by two 'young' nations: the united Italy (with the Exhibition organised in Genoa in tribute to Columbus) and the USA. The Columbian Exhibition of Chicago (1893) was intended to show the world the rising power of the North American union. Only five years later, in 1898, the United States decided to intervene in the anti-colonial war that had broken out in Cuba in 1895, and in a brief battle its navy defeated the antiquated Spanish fleet. One year later, with the Treaty of Paris, Spain signed the liquidation of its overseas empire: Cuba gained independence whereas Puerto Rico and Philippines came under USA control. Almost immediately afterwards, in Madrid the

government decreed the closure of the *Museo-Biblioteca de Ultramar*, symbolising the end of the colonial project.

While Spain acknowledged its secondary role in the concert of nations on the eve of a new century, it also seemed to reaffirm its romantic image as a backward country, alluring and picturesque, wealthy in art and poetry. During the same year as the military defeat in Cuba, the son of a US American tycoon, Archer M. Huntington (1870–1950) was travelling in the Peninsula. In 1904 he created the Hispanic Society of America in New York as a museum of Hispanic civilisation (Hispanic refers here to both Spain and Portugal and their colonies in the Americas), exhibiting its arts, crafts, archaeological and bibliographical treasures (Coddington 1999). As a metaphor for the new hegemonic power in the Americas, the cultural legacy of the bygone Spanish empire was displayed in New York, the economic capital of the nation. In 1898 a further scandal concerning the export of antiquities emerged; on this occasion, an outstanding piece of sculpture from the Iberian period (fourth century B.C.), the so-called ‘Lady of Elche’, was shipped to the Musée du Louvre, only a few days after it had been unearthed.

1900-1936: The quest for national identities

The colonial crisis of 1898 was perceived as a blow to Spanish national identity. The idea of the decadence of the national body obsessed a generation of intellectuals, who proposed scientific improvement and patriotism to regenerate the political, social and economical structures of the country. According to those thinkers, the essence of the nation had to be sought in the soul of its people. For this reason the history of Spain and the Hispanic Empire was redefined as the evolution of a civilisation, based on a common language and tradition, particularly in the work of the historian Rafael Altamira (1866–1951). These ideas informed a strong process of renovation of the country’s cultural and scientific structures in the first three decades of the century, which has been named the ‘Silver Age of Spanish culture’ (Varela 1999).

This early twentieth-century Spanish nationalism continued to consider the country’s history as a process of centralisation and homogenisation of its different territories, in which the Castilian language and tradition constituted the ‘backbone’ of the national identity (Esteban de Vega & Moya 2009). For this reason, the writers and scholars of this generation played particular attention to a city, Toledo, which represented the essence of Castilian culture, arts and history. Among other initiatives, the *Casa-Museo de El Greco* opened there in 1910, devoted to El Greco (1541-1614) an artist of Cretan origin who had been elevated as a master of the Spanish school of painting. The idea behind the museum was not just to pay tribute to his artistic genius, but also to recreate his life in a space that allowed the visitor to travel through time to the ‘imperial’ Spain of the sixteenth century. The museum was promoted by the marquis of Vega-Inclán (1858–1942), chairman of the official Tourism Board (*Patronato de Turismo*), who fostered other initiatives, such as the *Museo Romántico* (today *Museo Nacional del Romanticismo*) in Madrid, devoted to nineteenth-century history and lifestyles, and the *Casa-Museo de Cervantes* in Valladolid.

Moreover, the creation of a framework for the protection of the national heritage became one of the priorities of this period. The Ministry of Public Instruction began to compile inventories of national monuments (*Catálogos Provinciales de Monumentos*) and drafted a law on national heritage. After 1900 several bills were proposed, but they all of them failed to gain approval in the Parliament, partly because they addressed a highly controversial issue: the right of the Catholic

Church to sell its artistic assets (López Trujillo 2006). Owing to those difficulties, the legislators decided to proceed gradually: in 1911 the Archaeological Excavations Act (*Ley de Excavaciones Arqueológicas*) was passed and in 1916 the National Monuments Act (*Ley de Monumentos Nacionales*) (López Trujillo 2006: 209-33). The same year a Royal Decree envisaged the protection of natural areas through the creation of national parks (*Parques Nacionales*).

The interest in the manifestation of popular culture inspired new initiatives; in 1915, two leading anthropologists started to gather materials for an Ethnographic Museum of Hispanic Cultures (*Museo de etnografía de las culturas hispanas*). Although the celebration in Madrid of the 1925 Exhibition on Regional Costume (*Exposición del Traje Regional*) provided a collection and a new impetus for its creation, this initiative lacked official support and only materialised many years later. This project partially overlapped with another institution born in those years: the National Museum of Applied Arts (nowadays *Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas*), officially established in Madrid in 1912. This museum was the inheritor of several nineteenth-century initiatives, such as the National Industrial Exhibitions, and the short-lived *Museo Industrial*, opened in 1871. Since the museum's principal purpose was to provide examples for the development of national industry, it gathered collections of popular handicrafts, such as pottery and ironwork (Cabrera & Villalba 2004).

In the last third of the nineteenth century nationalist movements emerged in Catalonia and the Basque country, the most economically dynamic regions of the country. In both territories language was affirmed as the main element of collective differentiation vis-à-vis Spain, but the two projects differed in other respects: whereas Basque nationalism framed its main identity claim in the racial discourse, Catalan nationalism affirmed the cultural origins of Catalonia in the openness to the Mediterranean, from the Classical Time to the Middle Ages. These choices determined scientific and cultural policy; whereas Catalan nationalists promoted the archaeological excavation of Ampurias, the only ancient Greek settlement to be found in the Iberian Peninsula, Basque nationalism found in physical anthropology and ethnographic collecting the means to scientifically affirm the Basque race (Lanzarote 2011).

Consequently, Basque nationalism promoted institutions for its display, such as the *Museo Arqueológico de Vizcaya y Etnográfico Vasco* (nowadays the Basque Museum: *Euskal Museoa/Museo Vasco*), created in Bilbao, the economic capital of the region, in 1921. As opposed to other cities, neither Barcelona nor Bilbao had developed a relevant museum of fine arts in the nineteenth century that would satisfy the cultural demands of its citizens and elites. For this reason, the development of museums in Barcelona was one of the key policies of Catalanism from the turn of the century, and motivated the creation of the *Junta de Museus* (Museum's Board) by the city council in 1902. This institution gained relevance when in 1914 the *Mancomunitat*, a sort of autonomous government was instituted in Catalonia. In the same year, the Museum of Fine Arts (*Museo de Bellas Artes*) opened its doors in Bilbao thanks to private initiative.

The rise to power of nationalism in Catalonia, combined with the tensions provoked by a new colonial war in Morocco and by the workers' movement, destabilised the regime. Arguing that national unity and social stability were at stake, the military staged a coup in 1923 with the agreement of king Alphonse XIII (1900–1931). The dictatorial government led by General Primo de Rivera (1923–1930) dissolved Catalan institutions, suppressed the workers' organisations and affirmed Spanish nationalism. The dictator also enforced a regulation on cultural heritage that

liberal governments had not managed to pass; the 1926 Royal Decree of National Artistic Treasure (*Real Decreto-ley relativo al Tesoro Artístico Arqueológico Nacional*) severely limited the possibility of exportation of artworks and antiquities. Moreover, the regime sought to instil patriotism by organising events such as the international exhibitions of Seville and Barcelona, both in 1929.

While the *Exposición Ibero-Americana* celebrated in Seville stressed the links between Spain and its former Latin-American colonies, the *Exposición Internacional* in Barcelona was conceived for a European audience as a showcase for the industrial modernity of the country, but also its touristic potential. Although some attempts to display a differentiated Catalan identity were restricted by the central government, Catalan elites led the planning and development of the event. Josep Puig i Cadafalch (1867–1956), a Catalan architect and politician who was president of the *Mancomunitat* between 1917 and 1923, did the general layout of the exhibition on the hill of Montjuïc. The focal point of his project was the *Palacio Nacional*, constructed in an eclectic style reminiscent of Spanish Renaissance. The building hosted a temporal exhibition, *El Arte en España*, which offered a general overview of Spanish civilisation through the development of fine arts in more than 5000 artworks, from prehistory to the early twentieth century (Solá-Morales 1985).

Puig was also the mind behind one of the main attractions of the exhibition, *Pueblo Español*, a fabricated Spanish town composed of reproductions of selected examples of vernacular architecture. Its name, which plays with the word *pueblo*, both ‘people’ and ‘village’ in Spanish, was imposed by the dictatorship, and substituted the one proposed by Puig: *Iberona*. In between an open-air ethnographic museum and a fair attraction, *Pueblo español* presented a picturesque Spain through the diversity of its regions: surrounded by medieval walls, it featured a Catalan Romanesque monastery, an Aragonese parish church, Andalusian narrow streets with grilled windows and flower pots and a big main square (*Plaza Mayor*). This square was used during the Exhibition to organise ‘fiestas’ and traditional spectacles, and the houses hosted regional restaurants and shops selling traditional handicrafts. Although it was to be dismantled at the end of the event, its popularity worked in favour of its preservation (Bohigas & Carandell 1989; Storm 2010).

The social unrest provoked by the 1929 economic crisis precipitated the fall of the dictator. The defeat of monarchic candidates in the 1931 elections, led to the resignation of the king and opened the second republican period in the history of Spain (1931–36). The democratic governments set out to foster national culture, and in 1933 the Parliament approved the National Artistic Treasure Act (*Ley del Tesoro Artístico Nacional*); it insisted on the public function of museums and affirmed the role of the state in protecting the national heritage, which was defined in broad terms: natural, artistic, archaeological, ethnographical and historical (García Fernández 2009). The Republican authorities made an effort to favour popular instruction; *Misiones pedagógicas* were sent to rural areas with reproductions of the masterworks of the Prado. The process also involved revaluing the popular forms of art; in 1934 Republican authorities created the Museum of the Spanish People (*Museo del Pueblo Español*) to display the collection of ethnographic materials gathered over the previous years. Its opening, scheduled for summer 1936, was impeded by the outbreak of the Civil War (Bergés 1996).

The proclamation of the Spanish Republic in Madrid in 1931 was replicated in Barcelona by the proclamation of the Catalan Republic. From 1932 onwards, Catalonia developed an autonomous government, and its newly established executive power, the *Generalitat*, fostered the creation of museums for arts and archaeology. In 1934 the *Museu d'Art de Catalunya* (Museum of Art of Catalonia) was installed in the *Palacio Nacional*, which had been the core of the 1929 International Exhibition, and the *Museu d'Archeologia* has occupied, since 1935, another of the pavilions built for the Exhibition. After several failed attempts, an official law for the creation of an autonomous government in the Basque country (*Estatuto vasco*) was passed in October 1936, in a country already divided by the Civil War.

1936-1975: Francoism, the cross and the sword

During a Civil War (1936–39) that resulted in half a million deaths, both the destruction of cultural items and initiatives to protect them took place. Whilst on the Republican side religious art was systematically destroyed by the revolutionaries, the authorities also endeavoured to safeguard the collections of the national museums, and especially the masterpieces of the Prado, which were transferred to Geneva with the help of the League of Nations (Argerich & Ara 2003; Colorado 2008). The destruction of religious symbols by the Republican side was exploited in the 'National' side's propaganda and reinforced the idea of the self-proclaimed 'crusade' against the enemies of religion and Spanish tradition, as well as against separatism (meaning regional autonomy). The end of the war in April 1939 confirmed the leadership of General Franco (1939–1975); after some years of international isolation, the dictatorship promoted itself as a bulwark against communism in the context of the Cold War and gained the support of the USA.

Already by the end of 1939, Franco's government had achieved the return from Geneva of the Prado's masterpieces. At the same time, it started negotiations with the French authorities, overseen by the Nazi occupiers, to obtain certain art works of Spanish origin preserved in Parisian museums. The negotiations were successful, and in 1941 Francoist propaganda hailed the 'repatriation' of those heritage items 'lost to Spain' in different historical times as 'reparation' for old offences. The list of the items is a catalogue of what was considered the 'national heritage' at the time: Murillo's *Inmaculada de Sout* (a painting confiscated by the French general in Seville during the Napoleonic occupation), a collection of diplomatic records from the Simancas Archives (transferred to France in the same period), the Hoard of Guarrazar, and finally a set of Iberian sculptures, among them the Lady of Elche. While the archival records returned to their original location in Simancas, the artefacts were distributed among the national museums in Madrid. Unlike the other archaeological items, which were sent to the MAN, the Lady of Elche was put on display in the Prado, the symbolic temple of Spanish culture, detached from its archaeological context, but elevated as an artistic icon of the original Iberian race that it came to represent (Olmos and Tortosa 1997).

However, although important, during the dictatorship, archaeological past never enjoyed the very central role in the discourse on national identity occupied by late Middle Ages. The kingdom of Ferdinand and Isabella, the Catholic Kings, represented the political and religious unification of the country and the discovery of the Americas, the two founding myths of Modern Spain. This interpretation had been already developed by liberal historiography in the nineteenth century, but under Franco's regime acquired a propagandistic dimension evinced by the fact that the personal

emblems of the Catholic Kings, the yoke and the arrows, became one of the symbols of the dictatorship. The regime invested in the restoration of historical sites, such as the medieval town of Sos (Saragossa), the birthplace of King Ferdinand of Aragon, in order to recreate Spanish past (Casar & Esteban 2008). The imperial myth was further exploited when in 1941 the *Museo de America* was created to commemorate and celebrate Spain's role in the colonisation and evangelisation of the New World.

Nevertheless, the dictatorship also drew on the rhetoric of economic modernisation to foster national pride. In 1952, the Museum of Contemporary Art (*Museo de Arte Contemporáneo*) was created on the initiative of a group of young artists. This museum thrived during the 1960s and 1970s, in a period when the effects of the efforts to modernise Spanish economy had started to bear fruit (Lorente 1998b). Finally, in the later period, further initiatives were undertaken in order to come to terms with neglected areas of Spain's past, in particularly the Sephardic Museum (*Museo Nacional de Arte Hispanojudío y Sefardí*) established in Toledo in 1964. Installed in what used to be one of the synagogues of the city until the expulsion edict issued by the Catholic Kings in 1492, its collections show the life of the Sephardic Jewish community both before the expulsion and in the Diaspora.

1975-2008: The museums of democracy

The death of General Franco in 1975 opened the way for political reform under his designated successor, king Juan Carlos I. The construction of the democratic state, inaugurated by the 1978 Constitution, was based on a policy of reconciliation that presupposed amnesty for crimes committed by both sides during the Civil War and also during Francoism. Although the constitution declared 'the indissoluble unity of the Spanish Nation, the common, indivisible land of all the Spanish people', the democratic state inherited unresolved issues such as the nationalist question in Catalonia and the Basque Country, exacerbated by terrorism in the latter case. Moreover, it also had to deal with other lingering questions, and particularly the consequences of the appropriation of Spanish nationalism and its symbols by Francoism, which make them another source of tension between left and right and between centre and periphery. On account of those limitations, democratic governments have promoted loyalty to the constitution and the monarchy in order to foster patriotism (Balfour 2007).

The return of democracy to Spain was symbolically enacted by the arrival in Madrid of Picasso's *Guernica* from the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1981. The painting, commissioned during the Civil War by the Republican Government for the Spanish Pavilion of the 1937 International Exhibition in Paris, received its name after the bombing of the Basque town of Guernica by Nazi aircraft, under Franco's offensive. According to Picasso's will, it was kept in deposit in New York's MoMA until democracy prevailed in Spain. The *Guernica* was not just a cry against the cruelty of war actions against civilians, it was also a testimony to the division of the country that had caused the Civil War; a division that the young democracy aimed to overcome. First displayed in the Casón del Buen Retiro, then a dependency of the Prado, *Guernica* was transferred in 1992 to the new premises of the Museum of Contemporary Art, renamed *Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía*.

The democratic governments promoted modernisation of the country and integration into the European Union, which was achieved in 1986. New museums were created as a service to

society, such as the National Museum of Science and Technology (*Museo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología*) in 1980. Efforts to offer a new dynamic image of Spain to the world crystallised in 1992 with several international events: Barcelona hosted the summer Olympic; a World Exhibition in Seville celebrated the fifth centenary of Columbus arrival to America; and Madrid became European Capital of Culture. In that year the *Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza* was inaugurated in the *Paseo del Prado*, thus reaffirming the highly symbolic value of that urban area, as well as the central role of fine arts museums in Spain's cultural policy. If the Reina Sofia and the Thyssen were the priorities in the 1980s and early 1990s, the new conservative cabinet launched the renovation of the Prado after 1996; finally, as a collateral effect, this decision involved the relocation of the Museum of the Army (*Museo del Ejército*) to Toledo.

Democratic governments resurrected an old project, the national ethnographical museum. In 1986 its collections were dusted off for an exhibition to be put in storage again until 1993, when they became part of the *Museo Nacional de Antropología*. Finally, in 2004 the National Museum of the Dress (*Museo Nacional del Traje - Centro Investigación del Patrimonio Etnográfico*) was inaugurated; focusing on the history of clothing, the display privileges the evolution of elite fashion, while ethnographic garments are explained as a popular renderings of general international trends. For this reason, the current *Museo del Traje* subverts the original aims behind the Museum of the Spanish People, namely to enhance the value of popular manifestations of arts and crafts. Moreover, in 2008 the Ministry of Education announced the creation of the National Museum of Ethnography (*Museo Nacional de Etnografía*) in Teruel (Aragon). According to this plan, the *Museo del Traje* was to be divided: whereas a section of the clothing collection would remain in Madrid in a new Centre for Fashion, the bulk of the ethnographic materials would be put on display in Teruel. Justified by the Ministry as a means to decentralise culture and provide cultural institutions to Teruel (Spain's second least populated province), this decision instead evinces the secondary relevance of ethnography to official Spanish cultural strategy (Fernández de la Paz 2008).

One of the most important characteristics of the new Spanish democracy was the creation of the *estado autonómico*, a quasi-federalist system (or rather 'federalising', given the progressive nature of the decentralisation process), which also affected cultural policy. In 1985 the Historic Heritage Act (*Ley del Patrimonio Histórico Español*) established that the management of state museums could be transferred to the autonomous communities (*comunidades autónomas*). As a result, the management of most provincial state museums has been transferred, whereas the property of collections and buildings remains in state hands (Álvarez 2001). In turn, national museums are owned and managed directly by the Spanish state, and since 2006 they are integrated in the Network of Spanish Museums. Decentralisation has affected museum geography in different ways; for instance, some provincial archaeological museums, such as those of Tarragona or Mérida were elevated to the category of national museums due to the importance of their collections. In the second case the newly acquired status was highlighted by the construction of new premises by the internationally renowned architect Rafael Moneo.

Since the restoration of democracy, the autonomous regional governments have developed their own political agendas in the realm of culture and identity building (Roigé & Arrieta 2010). For instance, the Museum of the Galician People (*Museo do Pobo Galego*), created in 1976 in Santiago de Compostela, has become the hub of the network of ethnographical museums in

Galicia. In Catalonia, in 1990 the autonomous government (*Generalitat*) created the National Museum of Art of Catalonia (*Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya*), intended to become the flagship of the Catalan museum system. This museum resulted from the merger of some previously existing collections owned either by Catalan institutions (*Museu d'Art de Catalunya*), or by the Spanish state, such as a selection of old master from the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection (Carbonell 2001). The Basque country has also developed an intense policy in this field; in 1991 the autonomous government supported the establishment of the Museum of the Basque Country (*Euskal Herria Museoa / Museo Euskal Herria*) in Guernica (Biscay). In 1993 the Museum of Basque Nationalism (*Euskal Abertzaletasunaren Museoa / Museo del Nacionalismo Vasco*) opened its doors in Artea-Arratia, a small town in the province of Biscay; it pays particular tribute to Sabino Arana (1865-1903) and the origins of Basque nationalism. In April 2011 plans have been announced to move this museum to the centre of Bilbao.

On top of these initiatives, in the 1990s, the Basque autonomous government negotiated with the New York Guggenheim Museum to create a branch of this institution in Bilbao: as a centre of contemporary art, the new museum does not host a permanent collection but is designed to mount temporary exhibitions and to receive loans from the mother institution. The aspirations of the policy-makers to create a landmark known worldwide were satisfied by the building designed by architect Frank O. Gehry, which was inaugurated in 1997 (Esteban 2007). The role of contemporary art centres as cultural promoters had been successfully tested since the opening of the *Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona* (MACBA) in 1995, and has been emulated by other regional governments, such as the *Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León*, inaugurated in 2005.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century the central government has also endeavoured to renovate national museums and to found new ones. In 2006 the newly-established Ministry of Housing (*Ministerio de la Vivienda*) of the Socialist cabinet proposed the creation of the National Museum of Architecture and Urbanism (*Museo Nacional de Arquitectura y Urbanismo*). As announced in 2008, the museum will be divided between three venues: Madrid (a centre of documentation), and two exhibition centres in Barcelona and in Salamanca. It does not seem coincidental that in 2006 the Socialist cabinet had taken a decision that opposed those two cities, when it decreed the restitution of the archival records confiscated by Franco's regime to the *Generalitat* at the end of the Civil War, and preserved ever since in the Archive of the Civil War in Salamanca. Its restitution to Barcelona had been a claim of the *Generalitat* since the beginning of the democracy, but it was opposed by both the city council and the regional government of Castile and Leon, both ruled by the conservative party.

The restitution was the consequence of concrete political agreements but also of a general process of coming to terms with Spanish conflict-driven twentieth century history; since the mid-1990s, the debate had been fostered by different social and institutional actors, including political parties, regional governments, the Catholic Church and the Armed Forces, so that the concept of 'historical memory' (*memoria histórica*) moved to the forefront of the public debate (Aguilar 2008; Boyd 2008). In 2007, the Parliament passed the Historical Memory Act (*Ley de Memoria Histórica*), which requires the removal of the symbols of the division of the country and supports initiatives to open historical records and the mass graves of the repression. This has motivated a political debate on the legacies of the dictatorship and their future in democratic society, such as the

monumental mausoleum built by Franco, the *Valle de los Caídos* (Valley of the Fallen), and has particularly affected the recent renovation of the Museum of the Spanish Army, inaugurated in July 2010.

Case studies

The crowning of the masters: Museo del Prado and the ‘Triangle of Art’, Madrid

In terms of the number of visitors that it receives every year, the Museo del Prado is Spain’s foremost museum; and it is also so according to its central position in Spanish cultural imaginary (Gaya Nuño 1977, Portús 1994, Bettagno et al. 1996). Indeed, for most of their history, Spain’s fine arts museums, –the Prado in particular– have fulfilled the task of representing national identity. As a landmark of Spanish culture and its international projection, this museum is both universalistic in orientation and nationally rooted; it is intended to highlight Spain’s contribution to the development of the Western art tradition. Moreover, since its origins, and owing to the provenance of its core collections, the Prado is closely bound to the role of the Spanish monarchy as a patron of culture (Anes 1996). By attracting the most important artists of their times, Spanish rulers promoted the arts in order to represent their military achievements and their universal aspirations.

The opening of the royal collections to the public was attempted for the first time by King Joseph Bonaparte; emulating the example of the *Musée Napoléon* in Paris, his government created the *Museo Josefino* in 1809. Works of art from the royal collection and the suppressed convents were gathered in Madrid but the project was hampered by the war circumstances. Upon the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty in 1814, Ferdinand VII opened the *Museo Real de Pinturas y Esculturas* in 1819 and installed it in the *Museo del Prado*, which had suffered damage during the occupation, as had the rest of the complex of *El Buen Retiro*. The display included more than 300 paintings from the royal collections, mainly by Spanish artists, as well as original examples of ancient sculpture and plaster casts. Conceived as an institution for the training of artists and for the aesthetic enjoyment of the arts by the public, it also responded to a propagandistic endeavour by the Crown to affirm its role in the country’s culture.

The development of the Prado as a museum for the public was accelerated in 1838 when the painter José de Madrazo (1781–1859) was appointed its director. Madrazo was the first artist to hold this position and under his directorship, the museum expanded with new rooms devoted to Italian and Flemish masters (Géal 2005). Two of his sons also played a crucial part in the development of the museum: Federico de Madrazo (1815–1894), also a painter, served as its director in 1860–68 and again after the Revolution in 1881–94; and in 1843 Pedro de Madrazo (1816–1898), compiled the catalogue of the museum, which was subsequently corrected and re-edited every few years until the twentieth century. Thanks to their extensive scholarly and artistic networks within Spain and abroad, the members of this family shaped not only the evolution of the Prado but also the artistic and cultural life of Spain for most of the nineteenth century (Bolaños 2008: 163-205).

The Royal Museum became an instrument used by the monarchy to display its magnificence as well as to recount the history of the country through its kings, by associating the new-born idea of the Spanish nation with the history of the country’s ruling dynasties. In 1853, the central

room of the museum (the Oval Room) was renamed *Salón de la Reina Isabel* and a selection of what were considered the masterpieces of the collection was displayed, in emulation of the *Tribuna* in the Uffizi or the *Salon Carré* in the Louvre. The selection included works by Titian, Rubens, Van Dyck, Velasquez and Murillo, and the central position of the room was reserved for Raphael's *Christ Falling on the Way to Calvary*. Other Spanish masters such as El Greco or Zurbaran were less represented, and Goya was excluded (Géal 2001).

The Prado was nationalised by the revolutionary government after the fall of Queen Elisabeth II in 1868. Subsequently, it received the collection of the *Museo Nacional de Pinturas*, better known as the *Museo de la Trinidad*. Nevertheless, only 83 works from that collection were displayed in the rooms of the Prado, whereas the rest were distributed as loans to provincial museums or to other official institutions (Álvarez 2008). It was at around this time that the name 'Museo del Prado' started to become official when it appeared on the cover of the 1873 edition of Madrazo's Catalogue. In 1875, the painter Ceferino Araujo (1824–1897) produced one of the first critical accounts on the situation of museums in Spain and particularly the Prado. He criticised the gaps in the collection of the national museum (Dutch, English and German schools were particularly underrepresented), as well as the 'decorative criteria' used in the presentation of the works. According to Araujo, an overload of works should be avoided and paintings should be carefully selected and displayed according to scientific criteria: "by nations, by periods and by masters" (Araujo 1875).

The Prado has contributed to the creation and dissemination of the idea of the Spanish School of painting and to the consecration of its masters (Afinoguénova 1999; Géal 1999). It did so especially in the last decades of the nineteenth century when several artists (El Greco, Velasquez) were elevated to national cult figures. This was done in parallel to the reappraisal with Cervantes, and the affirmation of the Golden Age of Literature and Arts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. On the occasion of the third centenary of Velasquez's birth in 1899 the central Oval Room was transformed into the Velasquez Room. At the same time, a statue to the master was erected in front of the main entrance to the museum. By placing Velasquez and concretely his *Las Meninas* in the centre of the museum and thus in the symbolic centre of Spanish cultural geography, the Prado affirmed the importance of 'inherited heritage' for national identity; in the background of the painting, the mirrored gaze of King Philip IV reminds the viewer of the history of the Spanish monarchy (Portús 2009).

The consecration of the art museum as the focal point of national culture continued in Spain throughout the twentieth century. When Picasso's *Guernica* arrived from New York in 1981, it was installed in the *Casón del Buen Retiro*, an annex of the Prado, to be later transferred to the newly created *Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía*, devoted to twentieth-century art. The name of the queen was thus used to associate the values of democratic freedom and cultural modernity with the restored monarchy. During the 1980s, the Spanish state fostered the Reina Sofía at the same time as it negotiated the purchase of the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection. This acquisition was justified on the grounds that it filled the gaps in the Prado and the Reina Sofía with regards to international modern painting (impressionist and twentieth century art in particular). When the Museo Thyssen was inaugurated in 1992, the press began to call those three museums the 'Golden Triangle of Art', an imaginary figure that encompasses precisely the Salón / Paseo del Prado (Holo 1999).

Whilst the social-democrat governments under Felipe González (1981–96) favoured the Reina Sofía and the Thyssen Museum, the conservative cabinet led by José María Aznar (1996–2004) undertook the reform of the Prado. The extension and modernisation of its installations were intended to remedy the deficiencies of Spain's first museum (Tusell 2004). The project, designed by the architect Rafael Moneo, increased the display area for the permanent collections and for temporary exhibition. It also created a new entrance as well as all the facilities required by a modern museum: conference rooms, gift shop and restaurant. As part of the same project, the *Casón del Buen Retiro* was also restored and adapted to host the *Escuela del Prado* and the museum's research library (Azcúe 2009).

The historical making of the nation: Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid

Since 1833, the newly-established Spanish liberal state strove to create a civic and political nationalism, for which the writing of history should provide the grounding and archaeology the material testimony. For this reason, the creation of a museum of 'national antiquities', which had been already proposed by the Royal Academy of History in 1830 (Almagro & Maier 1999), was fostered by the School of Diplomats after its creation in 1856. When finally, the National Archaeological Museum (*Museo Arqueológico Nacional*: MAN) was created by Royal Decree in March 1867, its staff and first director, Pedro Felipe Monlau y Roca (1808-1871), came from this School (Marcos 1993). One year earlier, the National Historical Archive (*Archivo Histórico Nacional*) had been established for the preservation of the documental sources of the national history (Pasamar & Peiró 1996).

Characterised by a broad chronological discourse, the MAN covered from the origins of humanity to the Renaissance, and it even included technological items dating to the eighteenth century. In its endeavour to gather the material sources of the *historia patria*, the MAN collected artefacts from throughout the Spanish territory, but also from beyond its borders, such as Near Eastern and Classical antiquities, prehistoric collections from France and Scandinavia or overseas ethnographic materials (Marcos 1993, Barril 1993). In so doing, the MAN sought to place the history of Spain within a universal timeline of human development, from primitivism to civilisation. Nonetheless, medieval collections were predominantly of 'national' origin; they were chosen from the different regions of the country in order to stress the medieval origins of the Spanish nation in the *Reconquista*, defined as the process of Christian 're-conquest' of the territory from the Muslim 'occupiers'; as the foundational decree affirmed, 'the monumental history of that brilliant period of constant struggle, which began with Pelayo and ended with Isabella the Catholic, should occupy the main space in our museum' (Quoted in Marcos 1993: 26-27).

The governments of the *Sexenio Revolucionario* promoted the MAN; in 1869 it was decreed the nationalisation of all works of art, libraries and archives belonging to the Catholic Church, which were to be deposited in the state institutions. This decision was not implemented, but it justified the sending of commissioners to select pieces for the newly-created MAN, which opened its doors in a provisional venue in 1871. Nonetheless, those items were not enough to fill the empty rooms of a museum intended to compete with those in other European capitals; taking advantage of a diplomatic initiative, in 1871 a scientific mission was sent to the Eastern Mediterranean in order to purchase antiquities. However, the budget assigned was insufficient and, for instance, when the commissioners were offered a rich collection of Cypriot antiquities, they were obliged

to turn the offer down. I refer to the collection gathered by the USA consul of Italian origin Luigi Palma di Cesnola (1832-1904). His collection was eventually purchased by the Metropolitan Museum of New York, and Cesnola became his first director. Just as Spain did not manage in this period to affirm itself as a colonial power, so too did the MAN fail to create a significant collection of Middle Eastern antiquities.

The role of the MAN in the visualisation of national history was to be highlighted by its location in the Palace of National Libraries and Museums (*Palacio de Biblioteca y Museos Nacionales*) in Madrid, along with the National Library and the National Historical Archive. This building, designed in the 1860s, was only completed in 1892, on the occasion of the *Exposición Hispano-Americana*. Juan de Dios de la Rada y Delgado (1827-1901), director of the museum from 1891 to 1901, was the chief curator of this exhibition and also directed the installation of the collections in its new premises in 1895. It was then that the Palace received its iconographic programme, based on allegorical representations (for instance the personification of Hispania crowning the façade) and historical heroes, artists and writers (Layuno 2004). The Palace is located in the Paseo de Recoletos, on the same urban axis as the Paseo del Prado, in an area representing the bourgeois expansion of the city (*Barrio de Salamanca*) and adjoining Columbus Square, where the monument dedicated to the Admiral stands.

In the same way as MAN had given a privileged position to medieval times in its early stages, during the twentieth century it promoted the study and display of Peninsular archaeology, and particularly Iberian culture (second Iron Age), which reflects the growing importance of prehistory and archaeology in the definition of the national identity in the first half of the century (Lanzarote 2011). When in 1941 the MAN received the Iberian sculptures and the Visigoth crowns of Guarrazar from Paris, they were given prominent positions in the display rooms of the museum. In turn, the ethnographic collections were destined for the newly created *Museo de América*, which was installed in the premises of the MAN until 1962. Finally, since 2006 this institution has been undergoing a profound renovation of its building, which may also affect its collections according to some press releases (the opening is scheduled for 2012).

The lands of the nation: Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales, Madrid

The interaction between scientific practice and the creation of national master narratives can be explored in light of the National Museum of Natural Sciences (*Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales*: MNCN). The origins of this institution date back to the second half of the eighteenth century, when the Royal Botanical Garden (1755) and the Royal Cabinet of Natural History (1771) were established. Since the beginning of that century, the Spanish Crown had promoted natural history as an instrument to foster its prestige, as well as to bolster the economic exploitation of the colonies and their natural resources; plants, stuffed animals, drawings and reports were sent from the Americas to Madrid by administrators and scientific expeditions (Cañizares 2006, De Vos 2007). The Royal Cabinet expanded when King Charles III purchased the collection of natural history and curiosities created in Paris by an erudite scholar from Quayaquil (Equador), Pedro Franco Dávila (1711–1786), who became its first director (Villena et al. 2009).

The king promoted the reform and embellishment of Madrid, and particularly the area surrounding the Prado. A long promenade adorned with trees and fountains was created and it was completed with the construction of the Royal Observatory and the new building for the

Royal Cabinet and the Academy of Sciences. Following a design in neoclassical style by the architect Juan de Villanueva (1739–1811), construction work began in 1786, but was halted during the Napoleonic period. When the museum opened in 1819, the collection that it contained had little to do with natural sciences. Finally, in 1815 king Fernando VII founded the Royal Museum of Natural Sciences, which since 1838 has been under the scientific direction of the *Universidad Central de Madrid* (Barreiro 1992).

Throughout the nineteenth century, the museum shared the premises of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, until it was transferred to the basement of the *Palacio de Biblioteca y Museos Nacionales* in 1895. However, due to the fact that it was deprived of a space of its own and had inconvenient display conditions and laboratories, the museum was soon closed to the public. This lack of official support may relate to the marginal place of scientific research in Spanish official policies during most of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, a somehow negative appreciation of nature prevailed during most of the century; viewed from cities, it was described as hostile, it had to be curbed and domesticated, adapted to the needs of the new liberal state. For this reason the dry lands of the interior of the Peninsula and the mountain ranges that traverse it were considered obstacles against the nation's progress; indeed geography was defined by some intellectuals as one of the Spain's problems. Nevertheless, in the last third of the century some of the urban middle classes pioneered a new appreciation of nature through *excursionismo*, a phenomenon also related to the genesis of other national projects within the state, Catalan in particular (Casado de Otaola 2010)

After the turn of the century, the Museum of Natural Sciences regained a leading role in the scientific life of the country. Under Ignacio Bolívar (1850–1944), its director since 1901, the museum was relocated to the *Palacio de Industria y Bellas Artes*, which had been built for the National Exhibition of Industry in 1881 and had hosted the National Exhibitions of Fine Arts ever since. It is situated in the Paseo de la Castellana, which is part of the same urban axis consisting of Paseo del Prado and Paseo de Recoletos, where the museums previously studied (Prado and MAN) are also situated. The museum was provided with a larger budget and became the headquarters of the *Junta para la Ampliación de Estudios*, the institution that led the scientific regeneration of the country in the first decades of the twentieth century; finally, in 1913, the museum was renamed *nacional*. The renovation of the MNCN also affected its display rooms; a group of taxidermists created dioramas reproducing the autochthonous species of 'Spanish nature', turning the museum into the showcase for a natural space defined as 'national'. As a place of knowledge, the MNCN focused on research into geological history and fostered the study of prehistory, stressing the link between natural space and historical discourse (Lanzarote 2011).

As the MNCN was being developed in Madrid, nature itself was also transformed into a museum when the first 'national parks' (*parques nacionales*) were created in 1918. Their promoter, the marquis of Pidal (1870–1941), affirmed the need to preserve natural spaces for collective enjoyment and the regeneration of the younger generations. The USA national parks provided the template, but so did too an initiative undertaken in Catalonia to create a 'national park' in the mountain of Our Lady of Montserrat (Casado de Otaola 2010). For this reason, it was not coincidence that the first Spanish national park was created in the mountains that surround the sanctuary of Our Lady of Covadonga (Asturias); it was precisely in those mountains that the

Reconquista, one of the foundational myths of Spanish nationalism, had started in the distant ninth century, when Don Pelayo, the legendary founder of the Leonese monarchy had risen up with his men against the ‘Muslim domination’ of the Peninsula. Nature, history and religion mixed in a place sacralised through the declaration of a national park (Boyd 2002).

The empire of the language and the faith: Museo de América, Madrid

The role of imperial narratives in the creation of national museums warrants particular attention in the case of Spain, because of its role in the European overseas expansion. The origins of the *Museo de América*, created in 1941, are to be found in previous institutions and initiatives. In the eighteenth century, the scientific conquest of the natural realm was part of the political domination of the Americas by the Spanish Crown; the scientific and ethnographic collections then created and new ones gathered by scientific expeditions were displayed during the nineteenth century in both the *Museo de Ciencias Naturales* and the *Museo Arqueológico Nacional*, as well as in the *Museo Antropológico* thereafter (Cabello 2001).

The renovated colonial endeavour led to the celebration of national exhibitions in the last third of the nineteenth century; for instance, the one devoted to the Philippines organised in Madrid in 1887 (*Exposición de las Islas Filipinas*). Events of this kind not only presented the economic potential of colonial enterprise but also celebrated the civilising role of the metropolis; for this reason some ‘primitive peoples’ were displayed there for the pleasure of European visitors (Sánchez Gómez 2003). One of the Exhibition initiatives, the Museum-Library of the Overseas (*Museo-Biblioteca de Ultramar*) was turned into a permanent institution. Attached to the ministry of Overseas Affairs (*Ministerio de Ultramar*), it gathered information on Spain’s historical role in the discovery and colonisation of extra-European territories and was intended to encourage contemporary colonialism.

The prestige of the overseas empire was exploited for national identity building when the fourth centenary of America’s ‘discovery’ was celebrated with the *Exposición Histórico-Americana* in Madrid in 1892. As a token of mutual recognition, several Latin-American nations sent artefacts to be exhibited in Madrid, and delegates were dispatched to the events that took place in the province of Huelva (Andalusia), from where Columbus had departed on 12 October 1492 (Bernabéu 1987). However, these events celebrating the colonial past and present of the Spanish nation were held during a period of instability provoked by the uprisings in Cuba and the Philippines, which concluded in 1898 with the Hispanic-American War and the liquidation of Spain’s overseas empire. Subsequently, the government decided to close the *Museo-Biblioteca de Ultramar*, thereby symbolically enacting the end of the colonial project (Carrero & Blanco 1999).

However, the memory of the Empire and links with the Spanish-speaking world were again stressed in the context of early twentieth century reaffirmation of national identity. Intellectuals and politicians promoted the idea of *Hispanidad*, which was based on an assertion of a common ‘civilisation’ on both sides of the Atlantic. In 1913, celebrations of the 12th October were launched in both Spain and *Hispanoamérica* and in 1918 it became Spain’s national day (Sepúlveda 2005). The 1929 *Exposición Ibero-Americana* in Seville sought to stress the alleged fraternity with the former colonies, in the city that had monopolised trade between Europe and the Spanish Americas in early modern times.

The exaltation of Spain's imperial past became another of the propaganda tools used during Franco's regime. Shaping the idea of *Hispanidad* for his own purposes, in 1941 the dictator created the *Museo de América* to commemorate the role of Spain in the colonisation of the New World. Firstly located in the MAN, in 1962 the museum was transferred to the university campus of Madrid (*Ciudad Universitaria*), at the northwest exit of the city. The *Ciudad Universitaria* had been totally destroyed during the siege of Madrid during the Civil War. When its reconstruction was completed, the dictator erected a gigantic arch of triumph (*Arco de la Victoria*) in 1956, in commemoration of his victory.

Situated next to the arch, the *Museo de América* was thus part of a propagandistic programme of a regime that defined itself as *nacional-católico*. Not surprisingly, the purpose-built museum designed by the architects Luis Moya Blanco (1904-1990) and Luis Martínez-Feduchi Ruiz (1901-1975) was inspired by sixteenth century Spanish monastic architecture, highlighting the role of Spain in the extension of Catholicism to the American territories. For this reason, it displayed both archaeological and anthropological collections (which came from the MAN and the *Museo de Antropología*) and a large number of pieces dating to the colonial period. The museum was renovated for the fifth centenary of Columbus' arrival in America in 1992, celebrated with a World Exhibition in Seville that served as a showcase for Spanish modernity and universal projection.

Since then, the museum's discourse has been structured following the classification of human societies provided by anthropology – *Bands, Tribes, Chiefdoms and States* – and devotes attention to both the history of the pre-Columbian peoples and the colonial times. In so doing, the museum stresses the creative mixing of peoples and cultures and the legacy of Spanish civilisation to the New World, while avoiding the discussion on the legitimacy of the colonial enterprise. It thus seemingly reflects the motto that dominated the 1992 celebrations: 'Meeting of Two Worlds' (*Encuentro de Dos Mundos*). For instance, at the end of the permanent collection, the visitor is invited to watch a video projection on languages in the Americas in which Spanish is presented by both Spanish and Latin American writers as the language of modernity and dynamic international culture (González de Oleaga & Monge 1997). Moreover, as a result of the migratory trends that have changed the composition of Spanish society in the last decades, the museum is reframing its mission and its pedagogic activities in order to address the Latin American community in Spain.

The nation projected: Museu d'Història de Catalunya, Barcelona

One of the most important features of Spanish democracy is the creation of the *estado autonómico*, a quasi-federalist system (or better *federalising*, given the progressive nature of the decentralisation process). The management of most museums has been transferred to the *comunidades autónomas*, which have also developed their own cultural agendas. In 1996 the *Generalitat* created the Museum of History of Catalonia (*Museu d'Història de Catalunya*: MHC). This institution does not just represent an attempt to establish a master narrative on the history of this territory (or as the official motto puts it *la memòria d'un país*, 'the memory of a country'), but it also exemplifies a new museological concept. The MHC does not own a collection of artefacts and most of the historical objects and documents are on loan from other institutions. It is innovative in that it combines traditional museum presentation, based on the display of objects, with the new technologies,

notably media and interactive devices, to pursue its teaching goals (Hernández Cardona 1996; Vinyes 2006).

The permanent rooms invite the visitor to take a journey from prehistory to the twenty-first century, in which Catalonia is defined as an essential reality. In the first room the fossil remains of *Homo erectus* from Tautavel (Languedoc-Rousillon, France) are presented as the ‘first Catalan’. The museum concentrates on two historical periods particularly cherished by Catalan nationalism: on the one hand the Middle Ages, and on the other the age of industrialisation; in the second half of the nineteenth century, the Catalan culture revival movement (*Reinaxença*) constructed the medieval period as the Golden Age of Catalan language and arts. Barcelona was then at the centre of a larger political entity, the Crown of Aragon, which included not only the peninsular territories (Aragon, Catalonia and Valencia) but also the Balearic Islands, Sardinia and Southern Italy. For this reason, the museum describes medieval Barcelona as the capital of a Mediterranean empire open to external influences, drawing on the stereotypes of open-mindedness and adventurousness usually associated with mercantile peoples. This idea is reinforced by the location of the museum in the former building of the customs office in Barcelona’s port.

In their turn, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are presented as a period of decadence, and Catalonia is described as the ‘periphery’ of the Spanish empire. After those ‘dark ages’, nineteenth-century industrialisation is portrayed as generator of a new economic revival, which allows the renaissance of arts and culture and national re-awakening. Finally, the twentieth century is largely displayed as a time of both the rise (Second Republic), fall (Francoism) and resurrection (Democracy) of the Catalan nation. In the MHC, Spain is usually referred to as the ‘Spanish state’ (*estado español*) an impersonal expression that denotes the artificiality of such a construct according to Catalan nationalism: whereas in the museum Catalonia is charged with sentimental rhetoric, the ‘Spanish state’ is a mere bureaucratic entity and a repressive state superstructure.

Cartography features very prominently in the museum, particularly in mapping exchanges between Catalonia and other territories, or when reminding the visitor what the Catalan irredentist project calls ‘Catalan Countries’ (*Països Catalans*): the reunion of all territories in which varieties of Catalan are spoken, including the Valencian region and the Balearic Islands, but also Andorra, Roussillon and Cerdagne in Southern France, a strip of land in the East of Aragon, and the city of Alghero in Sardinia. Moreover, the museum makes good use of audiovisual devices, such as models, dioramas and reconstructions of historical settings (a medieval war tent, a Republican school class as opposed to a Francoist one, etc.). Particularly striking is the reproduction of the balcony from which Francesc Macià (1859–1933) proclaimed the Catalan Republic in 1931: the visitor enters the balcony to find the Catalan flag, a picture of the crowds in the foreground and a life-size mannequin of Macià, while a recording repeats his 1931 declaration. The re-enactment concludes with the roaring of the people and the playing of the Catalan national anthem.

When the museum was built, it covered the period until the first democratic elections held in Catalonia in 1981, which brought to power the conservative nationalist party, *Convergència i Unió*, the same one that promoted the museum in the 1990s. In recent years, a new section has been added. Entitled ‘Portrait of Contemporary Catalonia’ (*Retrat de la Catalunya contemporània: 1980–*

2007), this section highlights Catalonia's leading economic and cultural role in democratic Spain. Large pictures show the 'new Catalans', including members of minorities, such as a Roma (stereotypically characterised with a guitar) or an immigrant from Eastern Europe (with a scarf on her blonde hair). Catalan modernity is represented by several artists and professionals (a film director, a prestigious cook) or the picture of a gay couple: Catalonia was one of the first *comunidades autónomas* to grant civil partnership to homosexual couples in 1998, several years before the passing of the Spanish law on same-sex marriage in 2005 (Visited in November 2010).

The battle for historical memory: Museo del Ejército Español, Toledo

In contrast to the Catalan initiative just described, or the *Deutsches Historisches Museum* in Berlin, Spain has not created a museum devoted to national history. This is not surprising given that one of the tacit agreements upon which democracy was constructed after 1975 was that the tragic memories of the Civil War and Francoism would not be invoked or used politically. During the 1980s and early 1990s debate on Spain's conflict-driven twentieth-century history was confined to university faculties. Although some official initiatives made an effort to recover the memory of the Second Republic or the worker and leftist movements, the discussion of more sensitive and potentially dividing issues was avoided (Aguilar 2002).

Nevertheless, since the mid-1990s, public debate on 'historical memory' (*memoria histórica*) has moved to the forefront. At the origins of this movement is a grass-roots initiative in different parts of the country to unearth the mass graves and give proper burials to the victims of Francoist repression. This has gained the support of large sectors of the Socialist Party, at first in opposition (1996–2004) and since 2004 in government. In 2007, three years after their electoral victory, the Parliament passed the Historical Memory Act (*Ley de Memoria Histórica*), which requires the removal of those symbols of the division of the country and supports initiatives to open historical records and the mass graves of the repression. Meanwhile, in the last years of John Paul II, the Vatican reactivated its policy (frozen for several decades) to beatify victims of anticlerical repression on the Republican side during the Civil War (Aguilar 2008; Boyd 2008).

This renewed interest in coming to terms with the recent past has motivated, among many other initiatives, the restoration and opening to the public of the Civil War trenches on the Aragon Front, and the creation of the *Refugio – Museo de la Guerra Civil* in Cartagena (Murcia). These initiatives, undertaken by regional governments or municipalities, have not yet received support from the state authorities in the form of a national museum of history. Nevertheless, a recent project to renovate an old national museum, the Museum of the Spanish Army (*Museo del Ejército Español*) has become entangled in the debate on the 'historical memory'.

Created in 1803 as the *Museo de Artillería*, this national museum was installed in 1841 in the surviving wing of the palace of *El Buen Retiro*, where the *Salón de Reinos* is situated. Renamed *Museo Histórico del Ejército* in 1932, the collections of other sections of the army were then incorporated into it. The trilogy of the Spanish national military museums is completed with the Museum of the Navy (*Museo de la Armada*; nowadays *Museo Naval*), opened in Madrid in 1843, and the Air Force Museum (*Museo del Aire*), projected in 1948 and inaugurated in 1981 in the outskirts of Madrid. In the original display of the *Museo del Ejército*, national history was explained as a sequence of great men and their deeds, commemorated through venerable relics such as the sword of El Cid or the flags taken from the enemy in various battles. One room was devoted to

the War of Independence, presented as the rise of the nation against the French invader, while others displayed thematic collections of artefacts in evocative settings, such as the Arabic Room. The *Salón de Reinos* constituted the core of the display: under the coats of arms of the kingdoms painted on the vaulted ceiling, the room was decorated with portraits of generals (the original seventeenth century paintings had been transferred to the Prado), flags, armours and panoplies of weapons and guns (Castillo 2006; Rubio & García de la Campa 2006).

After 1939, the museum was refurbished as part of the dictatorship's propaganda programme. Inaugurated by General Franco in 1941, it became another piece in a much larger set of resources deployed for the memorialisation of the Civil War; a large equestrian portrait of the dictator greeted the visitor from the top of the staircase, and blood-stained uniforms of those fallen for God and Spain (*caídos por Dios y por España*) bore witnesses to the epic victory of the *Nacional* (that is Francoist) side. After the democratic transition the museum was left untouched and no symbols were purged. Therefore, in the first years of the twenty-first century, the Museum of the Army was still a mix of the Romantic decoration laid out the nineteenth century and the ideological discourse given to it by the dictatorship.

In 2003, the Ministry of Culture announced the transfer of the Museum of the Army from Madrid to Toledo's Alcazar, and the transformation of the *Salón de Reinos* into a dependency of the Prado. The decision to relocate the museum outside the capital was received with surprise, because it had been taken by the same conservative cabinet that had based its electoral campaign on the defence of the unity of the Spanish nation and the opposition to Basque and Catalan nationalism. Nevertheless, the decision can be contextualised if we consider other aspects: firstly, that one of the main cultural strategies of Aznar's cabinet was precisely the renovation of the Prado; and secondly, that in 2003, his cabinet initiated the process of professionalising the army, which entailed the suppression of the drafting system. From that year on, the army had to attract young men and women to the recruitment offices. In this context, the dusty and old-fashioned Museum did not serve the purpose of promoting a modern and dynamic image of the Armed Forces.

However, the newly chosen venue, the Alcazar of Toledo was no less controversial, because it was in fact another memorial to the dictatorship. The history of the Alcazar (a word of Arabic origins meaning 'fortress') goes back several centuries in time: a landmark of the city of Toledo, it was given its current shape when the Emperor Charles V transformed the medieval castle of the kings of Castile into a Renaissance palace. In the mid-nineteenth century, it became the property of the Army and housed the Academy of Infantry. After the military uprising that started the Civil War (18 July 1936) Colonel José Moscardó (1878–1956) barricaded himself with his garrison in the Alcazar and fought against the Republican forces that controlled the city. The siege lasted for seventy days until the troops sent by General Franco entered Toledo. The liberation of the Alcazar enabled Franco to affirm his prestige and leadership within the 'National' side.

After the end of the war, the ruins of the fortress were turned into a propagandistic memorial to Franco's victory: *El Alcázar* was the name of one of the main newspapers of the dictatorship; images of its ruined walls were included in every school text book and was also in the background of some of Franco's official portraits. It was not until the 1950s that the Alcazar was restored to its former shape, which did not mean that it lost its symbolism (Basilio 2004; Sánchez-Biosca 2008). Colonel Moscardó's office was reconstructed as it had appeared during the

siege; ragged curtains and shattered walls helped the visitor experience the anguish of the besieged under the enemy's bombs. Even more so, a recording (in audio) reminded the visitor of the heroic gesture of the colonel when he received a telephone call from the Republican militiamen holding his son hostage in Toledo, and demanding surrender of the Alcazar in exchange for his life: Moscardó is reported to have asked to talk to his son, whom he ordered to die dutifully as a patriot. This narrative, that historians have proved to be fabricated by the Francoist propaganda machine and its cinematographic industry, was re-enacted as the visitor entered the room, when the spectral voice of Colonel Moscardó resounded in its vaulted ceiling.

As had happened to the Museum of the Army in Madrid, the Alcazar was left untouched after the arrival of democracy, as if they too were protected by the policy of amnesty upon which Spanish democracy was founded. For these reasons, the choice of Toledo's Alcazar was contested; but this decision proved less controversial than the selection of the contents and the museographic treatment in its rooms of the Civil War and Francoism. The process was fraught by lack of agreement between the Army, responsible for the collections, and the social-democrat cabinet that resulted from the 2004 elections. In accordance with the provisions of the 2007 Historical Memory Act, the Ministry of Culture exerted its influence on the configuration of the permanent display, and the lack of agreement on key issues delayed the opening of the museum, scheduled for 2008, for more than two years. Finally, on 19 July 2010 (one day after the anniversary of the start of the Civil War), Crown Prince Felipe and the Minister of Defence inaugurated its renovated rooms.

The new museum is structured into two main sections, thematic and historical. The thematic rooms are devoted to particular subjects, such as the evolution of the national flag, the history of Spanish decorations and honorary orders or collections of tin soldiers. The historical rooms furnish an overview of Spain's military history in the context of its political and cultural evolution. Every section is divided into several subsections: each of them start with a historical briefing, to move further into the history of warfare and finish with the scientific and cultural contributions of the army and its men to society. Contrary to the old gloomy Madrid museum, the Alcazar offers a renovated atmosphere fully in line with current trends in museum display: whitewashed walls, glass showcases and large font texts constitute the museum's new image, and the objects are presented as scientific sources of history. Moreover, the museum is endowed with teaching resources, such as audiovisual reconstructions of historical battles (Salafranca 2010). The relocation has also provided an opportunity to undertake the scientific study of its collections, which has revealed some surprises; for example, a sixteenth-century fabric tent traditionally considered to have belonged to Emperor Charles V has proved to have been made by an Indian workshop for a Portuguese governor.

As regards the history of the twentieth century, the museum's discourse has not completely severed its links to the interpretations of history as seen from the Francoist side. For instance, the Second Republic is characterised as a period of confrontation and disorder, implicitly justifying the 1936 military uprising. Franco's bust figures prominently in the room that introduces the twentieth century section and a bronze cast of his mortuary mask is displayed in a showcase. As for Moscardó's office, after the museum's inauguration in July 2010, it was decided to keep its door closed. Reopened following protests by several historians, it is today open to visitors. Nevertheless, the room is now empty; its furniture has been removed and only the old telephone

hanging from the wall recalls the Colonel's dramatic conversation with his son, which can no longer be heard (Visited in November 2010).

The museum's discourse seeks to emphasise the new democratic order inaugurated by Franco's death. Next to the dictator's mortuary mask, three items represent the *Transición democrática*: first, a copy of the 1978 Constitution, second the cadet uniform of Crown Prince Felipe and third an audiovisual reproduction of the television message that king Juan Carlos I addressed to the nation on the night of 23 February 1981. The king, clad in military uniform as head of the army, condemned the military *coup d'état* against the democratic institutions initiated that morning by a sector of the armed forces. His role in persuading the military to lay down their arms has cemented the prestige of the monarch, since the failure of the 23-F *coup* is considered to be the final step in the transition to democratic order. Whereas in the old Alcazar the re-enacted voice of Moscardó resounded in the vaulted ceilings as a token of dictatorial propaganda, today it is king Juan Carlos' voice that reminds the visitor of the founding myth of the current Spanish state: the much-praised, peaceful and successful transition to democracy.

Conclusion: kingdom of nations?

After the relocation of the *Museo del Ejército* to Toledo, the *Salón de Reinos* was earmarked for the Prado. Different options were considered for this space; it was first proposed to restore its original iconographical programme, reinstalling the paintings of battles and the portraits of Philip IV and his family (Álvarez Lopera 2005). However, some experts have argued against the idea of separating Velasquez's paintings (the *Surrender of Breda* and the royal portraits) from the rest of the works by the Spanish master preserved in the Prado's central rooms. Nevertheless, in March 2010 the director of the Prado, Miguel Zugaza, announced a new project: to display three masterpieces there: Velasquez's *The Surrender of Breda* (an episode in the military repression of the Dutch revolt), Goya's *The Third of May 1808* (the execution by firing squad of several Spanish rebels at the beginning of the French occupation) and Picasso's *Guernica* (the bombing of the Basque town of Guernica by Franco's Nazi allies during the Civil War).

This idea recalls nineteenth-century initiatives to display masterpieces from different times together, such as the previously mentioned *Salón de la Reina Isabel*. However, the historical dimension of those paintings transcends even their artistic merit as outstanding examples of the Spanish school of painting. As Zugaza put it, the idea was to turn the *Salón* into a space for reflection on the universal concepts of war and peace. Moreover, these three paintings depict three crucial episodes in the narrative of Spanish history: the time of the Hispanic Empire, the rise of the 'nation' in the origin of modernity and the Civil War. Therefore, this initiative would have transformed this room into a sort of condensed museum of national history, a privileged venue for the reflection on the evolution of the country through its war conflicts and its art masterpieces, displayed in a historic space created in the seventeenth century by the monarchy to stress its role holding together the kingdoms of the composited Crown.

However, this plan implied an exchange between public museums and particularly, requesting from the Museo Reina Sofía the most valuable item of its collection. This is not the first time that the transfer of the *Guernica* had been proposed; in the 1990s the Basque autonomous government asked for the painting to be put on display in the new Guggenheim museum in Bilbao. As had happened then, the Reina Sofía Museum's trustees refused to loan *Guernica* for

Zugaza's projected *Salón de Reinos* in March 2010, arguing that the state of preservation of the painting advised against the transfer, but also that it remains central to the museographic programme of that museum. The project was subsequently shelved; almost like a metaphor for the whole country, the future of the *Salón de Reinos* is awaiting a decision.

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National Museums in Sweden: A History of Denied Empire and a Neutral State

Per Widén

Summary

The history of Swedish national museums is in many ways the story of the problematic relation to the nation's expansionistic past. During the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, Sweden had imperial ambitions in the Baltic area, ambitions that reached their zenith in the latter part of the seventeenth century and then slowly faded away during the eighteenth century. After some very turbulent decades around the turn of the century 1800 – that included the assassination of a king and several coup de états, as well as the loss of Finland, a third of the country's territory – the following two centuries were, on the whole, a very peaceful affair in Sweden. The latter part of the nineteenth century saw the industrialization of the country and during the first quarter of the twentieth century parliamentary democracy was introduced.

The development of the national museum landscape in Sweden more or less followed the same pace. The first national museums (in the modern sense), *Statens portättgalleri*, *Nationalmuseum*, the *Naturhistoriska riksmuseet* and *Historiska museet*, came to be as reaction to the loss of Finland and the nationalistic impetus that followed. These were all (except *Statens portättgalleri*) existing public collections that, as the result of pressure from the public sphere, were made into state-financed public museums. The late nineteenth century saw the creation of *Nordiska museet* and its open-air counterpart *Skansen* that were both museums of ethnography and cultural history and may be seen as a response to industrialization. *Nordiska museet* and *Skansen* were private initiatives that met with great opposition from parts of the state that saw them as an intrusion in the state's affairs. The affair was settled in the early twentieth century when *Nordiska museet* was incorporated into the state system of heritage management while still keeping its independent position.

During the twentieth century, all national museums got their own buildings, the last being *Historiska museet* that, before 1943, had lived under the same roof as the national art gallery in *Nationalmuseum* (the name usually refers to the art gallery only, after 1943 rightfully so). The latest important additions to the national museums are *Moderna Museet*, a gallery of modern art that opened in 1958 after the united efforts of a group of *Nationalmuseum* curators and public sphere pressure groups and *Världskulturmuseet* in Gothenburg that opened in 2004 after a governmental initiative.

The problematic relations with Sweden's imperialistic history are visible mainly in the way it is not dealt with in the national museums. Exhibitions are, with few exceptions, only dealing with present-day Sweden, leaving out objects and history connected to e.g. Finland but including the province of Skåne that has only been a part of the country for the last 350 years. The political ambitions of expansion during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries are also very seldom dealt with; instead most of the modern period is treated as cultural history rather than political history.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Portrait Gallery <i>Statens porträttgalleri</i>	1823	1821	Court, Monarch	State	Portraits of merited Swedish citizens	Territorial	Renaissance to present	Existing building, Gripsholm's Palace in Mariefred, solitary location, outside Stockholm.
National Gallery <i>Nationalmuseum</i>	1866	1828 1844	Parliament, Aristocracy, Civil Society	State	Archaeology, Cultural History and Art, only Art after 1943.	Territorial and universal, mainly universal after 1943.	Renaissance to late 19 th c.	Eclectic neo-renaissance style in central location, Stockholm.
Museum of National Antiquities <i>Historiska museet</i>	1866 1943 (reopened in own building)	Ca. 1800	Academy of Antiquities	State	Archaeology	Territorial	Pre-History to Middle Ages	National romantic and modern, central location in Stockholm.
Museum of Scandinavian Ethnography and Cultural History and Skansen Open Air Museum <i>Nordiska museet och Skansen</i>	1873	1872	Individual initiative, Civil Society	Foundation, with state funding.	Ethnography, Cultural History	Territorial	Renaissance to present	National romantic style, in solitary location, Stockholm.
Museum of Modern Art <i>Moderna Museet</i>	1958	Ca. 1953	National Gallery, Civil Society	State	Modern Art	Universal	Mainly 20 th c.	Post-modern style in central location, Stockholm.

Introduction

Sweden has a very long history as a state. The entity, known today as Sweden, began to take form in the eleventh or twelfth century and was definitely in place at least from the middle of the thirteenth century. During most of the fifteenth century, the country was part of a union between Denmark, Sweden and Norway, a union that ended in 1523 after a long period of civil war when Swedish nobleman Gustav Eriksson (Vasa) (1496-1560) was elected King of Sweden as Gustav I. This has traditionally been seen as the founding moment of the nation – together with the Lutheran reformation from 1527 and onwards and the establishment of the hereditary kingdom in 1544 – and Gustav I was given the role of "father of the nation" in the nationalistic narrative of Swedish history.

From about the 1560s, Sweden exhibited signs of imperial ambitions in the Baltic area, mainly directed towards Russia and Denmark. This development escalated during the early seventeenth century and the 30-year war. In the latter part of the seventeenth century, the Swedish empire reached its zenith and consisted of most of the Baltic shores, parts of Norway and substantial areas in northern Germany. During the first decade of the eighteenth century though, these ambitions proved to be futile and the Swedish eighteenth century is, in many ways, a story of the decline of the empire with the gradual loss of the Baltic provinces as well as parts of the 'heartland', especially in present day Finland.

The final blow to the Swedish ambitions to be one of the great powers of Europe came when – on the fringe of the Napoleonic wars – Russia declared war in 1808, a war that would profoundly change the country. After a year of disastrous warfare, parts of the Swedish political and military elite performed a coup de et'at, dethroned the king and rewrote the constitution. The peace that was signed with Russia in 1809 deprived the country of present day Finland; a third of its territory, a fourth of its inhabitants and a part of the Swedish mainland since the thirteenth century.

These events – were the culmination of three decades of political instability with three coup de et'ats (1772, 1789 and 1809), the assassination of Gustav III (1746-1792) in 1792 and political unrest in Stockholm – shocked the establishment and led to a, hitherto unseen in Swedish history, cultural self-examination and nationalistic frenzy. The new regime focused Sweden's interest on Norway, which after the treaty of Kiel in 1814 was forced into a personal union with Sweden, a union that was to last until 1905.

The 1813-14 alliance against Napoleon and the short war with Norway in 1814 was the last time Sweden was at war and since 1815, the country has been able to avoid armed conflict and remain neutral. During the nineteenth century, the country was industrialized at a slow pace followed by the rapid face of industrialization and urbanization during the years around 1900. The first decades of the twentieth century also saw the introduction of democracy with full and equal right to vote in 1921. The 1930s then saw the development of the modern welfare state, a trajectory that has continued since.

The slow pace of the development of democracy is due to the peculiar organization of the Swedish parliament in the early modern era where not only the nobility were represented but also the clergy, the bourgeoisie and the peasants. This broad representation of the people in the parliament led to a political culture that was rather conservative and slowed down both the

democratic introduction and different infrastructural projects of the state like canals and railways. It also slowed down the introduction of national museums and other cultural heritage projects. Together with a late but fast industrialization and urbanization, this forms not only a background to the slow introduction of national museums, but also to the need for a cultural negotiation of citizenship and a strong nationalistic ideology.

National museums and cultural policy in Sweden

As mentioned, the loss of Finland in 1809 generated a massive nationalistic impetus that led, among other things, to the establishment and restructuring of several museums with national ambitions. An example of this is *Nationalmuseum* (National Gallery), *Naturhistoriska riksmuseet* (The Swedish Museum of Natural History) that were both created and given status as objects of national interest by the parliament in the following decades. Other examples are the preexisting museums *Livruskammaren* (the Royal Armory), *Historiska museet* (The Museum of National Antiquities) and *Kungliga myntkabinettet* (The Royal Coin Cabinet) that were all established as public or semi-public collections during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but were restructured during the first half of the nineteenth century until, in 1866, they were incorporated into *Nationalmuseum*.

All of the museums mentioned above were organized in the intersection between state, court and civil society. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the royal academies played an especially important role in the history of national museums in Sweden. The academies had, and still have, a place in between state and civil society, being both state entities and self-governing bodies outside of governmental influence. *Naturhistoriska riksmuseet* was organized by the *Royal Swedish Academy of Science* as means of making their collections accessible for both public and scientists. It first opened as a public collection as early as the late 1740s and opened in a special museum building in 1778. In 1819, after the museum had received a grand donation in form a large collection, the museum received funding from parliament. At the same time, parliament also agreed to guarantee the future care of the collections. At least from that point, the museum received status as a national museum (Beckman 1999).

Both *Historiska museet* and *Kungliga myntkabinettet* share the same background but were made up by the collections of the *Royal Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities*, that, from the 1780s, collected Swedish antiquities and archeological findings. Part of the collections, especially the coin collections (today in *Kungliga myntkabinettet*), was older though and had its background in the royal collections. The collections were from, at least, circa 1800 and more or less accessible to the public, and in the 1840s the academy opened a proper museum in central Stockholm. In 1866, the museum, now known as *Historiska museet*, moved in to the new *Nationalmuseum* that opened the same year and in 1943, they got their own museum building again (Thordeman 1946).

Livruskammaren, on the other hand, was a museification of parts of the royal collections and was part of the court until the mid nineteenth century. *Livruskammaren* is perhaps the oldest museum in Sweden and it is said to have been founded in 1628 when king Gustav II Adolf (1594-1632) ordered that the bloodstained clothes he had used during his Polish campaign should be kept “in the armory as an eternal memorial”. This created an incitement for later monarchs who consequently saved clothes and objects considered to be of special interest in the armoury (Bursell & Dahlberg 2003).

Nationalmuseum finally traces its roots to the court and the probate of the assassinated Gustav III. Gustav had bought large amounts of classical sculpture in Italy during a journey in 1783-84, as well as paintings collected by his parents – art that he had paid for with state money. During work with the king's estate inventory, a decision were made that art bought from state funds should be considered state property and therefore should not be included in the late king's probate. Instead, Gustav III's brother, duke Karl (XIII), who served as the guardian of the young king Gustav IV, made the collection into a public art museum in one of the wings of the royal palace and (*Kongl. Museum*), the so-called Royal Museum opened in 1794 (Söderlind & Olausson 2004). *Kongl. Museum* was transformed into *Nationalmuseum* in the years between 1845, when parliament decided that a new museum building should be erected, and in 1866 the new museum opened its gates to the public. *Nationalmuseum* came to be as the result of pressure from parts of the civil society as well as the court, but was decided by and given grants from the parliament (Bjurström 1992, Widén 2009a).

The same era also saw the emergence of one of the most important and interesting additions to the Swedish museum landscape, *Statens porträttgalleri* (National Portrait Gallery) that opened at the palace of Gripsholm in 1823. Presumably the first national portrait gallery in the world, it drew on a tradition of Gripsholm being a palace with a large collection of portraits that had been more or less publicly available since at least the 1720s. What was new though in the 1820s was that what had been a collection of royal portraits, mainly of relatives to different Swedish royalties, was now converted into a national collection of, as it was said, "merited citizens". The initiative to create the gallery came from persons belonging to the court, but king Karl XIV must have at least been informed about the plans, and have made his approval there of, since the gallery is placed in a royal palace (Widén 2008).

For most of the period up until (at least) the late nineteenth century, it is clear that the state had no real interest in, or plans for, the museum and cultural heritage sector. The *Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities* e.g., had during the last decade of the 18th century been more or less deprived of its duties to collect and make inventories of archaeological remains, and during the first decades of the nineteenth century, its most important duty was to read and approve inscriptions in stone in e.g. churches and on public monuments (Hillström 2006: chapter 2). Instead, most initiative came from either private individuals or public or semi-public associations like *Götiska förbundet* (Gothic Society) – a group of former Uppsala university students that wanted to spread the perceived "gothic" ideals of the old Norse, and that also revolutionized the view of cultural heritage and archaeology in Sweden (Molin 2003) – and *Stockholms Konstförening* (Stockholm Art Association) (Widén 2009a). The outcome of these initiatives, in most cases mentioned above, was a museum that was owned and financed by the state. Two of the examples are a bit unclear, *Naturhistoriska riksmuseet* was owned by the *Academy of Science* until 1965, but received state funding from 1819 (Beckman 1999). *Historiska museet* and *Kungliga myntkabinettet* was owned by the *Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities* but was, on the other hand housed in, and part of, *Nationalmuseum* from 1866-1943 (Thordeman 1946). The conclusion seems to be that Sweden during the nineteenth century did not have any cultural policy worth mentioning, but that when initiatives were made, the state responded by taking responsibility for funding and housing of the museums.

If the loss of Finland and the coup de'etat in 1809 was the first impetus to create a set of museums with the ambitions to represent and create the nation, the next challenge that led to the creation of new museums was, as in most countries, the industrialization of the late nineteenth century. The two national museums that were created during this period, *Nordiska museet* (National museum of cultural history) and the open-air museum *Skansen* are interesting exceptions among the Swedish national museums since they are not state-owned. *Nordiska museet* was founded in 1873 by the linguist and collector Arthur Hazelius (1833-1901) who put up an exhibition in central Stockholm with the name *Skandinavisk-Etnografiska samlingen* (Scandinavian Ethnographic Collection). In 1897, the museum moved to its present location at Djurgården in Stockholm (Hillström 2006, Bäckström 2010a). By then, Hazelius had also created the open-air museum *Skansen*, also at Djurgården (Rentzog 2007, Bäckström 2010a).

Both museums were dedicated to the ethnography and cultural history of Sweden, but they also had pretensions to cover the same topics in all Scandinavian countries. Of this, very little is visible today though. The Scandinavian approach to cultural history and ethnography in the museums was due to the personal union between Sweden and Norway but also to the strong scandinavianism movement that was prevalent in the middle of the nineteenth century (Hillström 2010: 589f). The scandinavianism movement of the nineteenth century was a movement, similar to the pan-slavistic movement that meant to promote a Nordic or Scandinavian identity, inside which it was perfectly possible to promote a patriotic Swedish, Danish, Norwegian identity. Scandinavianism emerged in the 1840s as a transformation of the gothic ideas of the early nineteenth century and became an influential political force during the middle of the nineteenth century, but lost its political power during the latter part of the century (see e.g. Aronsson 2009). The final blow to the idea of a Scandinavian state came in 1905 when Norway proclaimed its independence from Sweden, but the idea of a special bond between the Scandinavian countries has held strong during the twentieth century. Interestingly enough, the collapse of the scandinavianism idea in 1905 did not make the museum board change the name of this museum when *Nordiska Museet* opened in its new building in 1907.

During the first years, Hazelius himself privately owned *Nordiska museet* and *Skansen* but in 1880, the ownership was transferred to a foundation that is owned by the state but still controlled by an independent board of trustees. *Skansen* was, in 1963, transferred to its own foundation that is owned by the state and the city of Stockholm together. The collections in the two museums were originally collected by Hazelius himself, but very soon he created a network of correspondents who went around the countryside to collect interesting objects. He also sought to get private donations from interested persons, who in turn got their name published in the newspapers as donors.

The two Hazelius museums are interesting because they are more or less unique in the history of Swedish national museums. Not when it comes to the private initiative, that seems to be the regular way of creating a new museum, but in the fact that they are not and have never been under state control. Nevertheless they are both publicly funded, but like the royal academies they are both self-governing entities.

In the period between the inauguration of *Nordiska Museets* new building and the Second World War, a few new museums with national ambitions opened. The first of several military museums opened in 1879 under the name *Artillerimuseum* (Museum of Artillery), from 1932

Armémuseum (the Army museum), which should be followed in 1938 by *Sjöhistoriska museet* (Maritime museum) that at least in part was dedicated to the navy. In 1923-24 *Tekniska Museet* (The National Museum of Science and Technology) was founded, a museum that got its own building in 1936. *Tekniska museet* is, like *Nordiska museet* and *Skansen*, a foundation. But as opposed to *Nordiska museet*, it did not have an individual as its founder, but one of the royal academies; *Ingenjörsvetenskapsakademien* (Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences) together with the *Swedish Inventors' Association*, the *Swedish Association of Graduate Engineers* and the *Confederation of Swedish Enterprise*. The museum is a foundation that, since 1965, has received state funding.

When looking upon the museums created during the early twentieth century, it is striking that they are all named in a very matter of fact way, one might also say a non-nationalistic or maybe functionalistic fashion where the national content of the museums are only implicit. This is also true when it comes to *Historiska museet* (literally “the historical museum”) that, although it has a much older history, got its own building only in the 1940s.

As mentioned, *Historiska museet* became a part of *Nationalmuseum* when the new building was finished in 1866. During the first decades of the twentieth century, plans were being made by the museum staff and the *Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities* to separate the museum from *Nationalmuseum*, and, between 1934-1939, a new building was erected in Stockholm to house the museum. Due to the Second World War, the collections at first couldn't be moved and the new museum couldn't open until 1943. The museum's permanent exhibition called “10 000 years in Sweden” became a huge success both with the audience and as a new museum exhibition ideal (Bergström & Edman 2004). It also brought forward the view that ethnic Swedes had inhabited Sweden since the ice age, a view that would strengthen the perception of Sweden as an ethnically homogeneous state even further.

After the Second World War, the most important addition to the museum landscape was *Moderna Museet* (Museum of Modern Art) that opened in 1958. The new museum started as a department within *Nationalmuseum*, but situated in a building of its own. As in most other cases, *Moderna Museet* came to be as the result of collaboration between private and public where large donations of art (and means to buy art) were made, but where the state took responsibility for the housing of the museum and for staff salaries etc. (Tellgren 2008, Widenheim, af Petersens & Hahr 2004, Bjurström 1992, Granath & Nieckels 1983).

The latest addition to the group of national museums in Sweden though, is *Världskulturmuseet* (Museum of World Culture) in Göteborg that opened in 2004. It has its background in *Etnografiska museet i Göteborg* (Ethnographic Museum of Göteborg) that opened in 1891 as a communal museum in the country's second largest city. In 1996, responsibility for the museum was taken over by the state, which then incorporated it into the new body of museums known as *Statens museer för världskultur* which included *Etnografiska museet*, *Östasiatiska museet* and *Medelhavsmuseet*, all of them existing museums that had been built around collections of ethnographic (i.e. African, Pacific, American), East Asian and Mediterranean objects respectively during the twentieth century (SOU 1998: 125). It was also decided that there would be a new museum building erected in Gothenburg and that the restructured museum should be called *Världskulturmuseet*. The new museum is, according to its instructions, supposed to promote contacts between Swedish and non-Swedish cultures and was created as an answer to the “change towards a multicultural society that is at present in our country” and is focusing on the “heritage

of the multicultural society” (SOU 1998: 125). The museum also hoped to protect cultural diversity in Sweden and help counter xenophobia and segregation. (Kulturutskottets betänkande 1996/97: KRU01). On the whole, the creation of *Världskulturmuseet* is one of the most visible outcomes of the late twentieth century’s political struggle to handle the new globalised world and the fact that Sweden was not the homogenic country it was thought to have been.

While not being a national museum as such, *Vasamuseet* – dedicated to the wrecked flag ship of the Swedish navy that, on its maiden voyage in 1628, sank in the harbour of Stockholm – is an interesting museum in that it is one of the few to deal with the Swedish imperial ambitions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (other exceptions are, of course, the military museums mentioned above). Interestingly enough, these imperial ambitions and Swedish warfare in Europe are illustrated with the failed ship of the line ‘Vasa’ that never harmed anyone except for the members of the crew that drowned when the ship sunk. The shipwreck is not presented as a tool for Swedish domination of the Baltic, but rather as an archaeological finding and as an example of Swedish technological development (even if this particular one was a failure). The ‘Vasa’ was relocated during the 1950s and finally salvaged in 1961. After extensive conservation (during which visitors were allowed to see the ship in a temporary museum) the museum would open in 1990 and is today one of the main tourist attractions in Sweden (Hocker 2006).

This disinterest in the political implications of Swedish imperial ambitions of mainly the seventeenth century is very much the case with other Swedish museums too. The army museum deals with the development of the army, with the logistic problems of warfare in the early modern period and with the sufferings of civilians (and soldiers) in wartime. But the question of *why* and *for what* the army was needed is seldom posed. War is more or less presented as one of many kinds of natural disasters, and not a result of politics. In fact, the first exhibition case in the permanent exhibition (opened in 2000) of the army museum shows a group of chimpanzee fighting, suggesting that war is an inherent aggressive behaviour in primates like ourselves.

Another signifier of this denial of the imperial Sweden is the fact that the history of Sweden in most museums is presented as the history of the geographical area that is Sweden today, thereby avoiding not only the question of Finland that was an integrated part of Sweden during 600 years, but also the different Baltic territories like Estonia, Swedish Pomerania and the city of Riga that, for centuries, were important parts of the Swedish domain. On the other hand, the province of Skåne is almost always included although it has only been a part of Sweden for the past 350 years.

This avoiding of the expansionist heritage is also obvious in the division of labour between the *Historiska museet* and the *Nordiska museet*. In 1919, the government decided that the areas of responsibility for the different historical museums (*Historiska museet* and *Nordiska museet*, but also *Nationalmuseum* and *Livrustkammaren*) should be divided so that the museums should not have to compete about the same objects (Hillström 2006: chapter 11). The division meant that *Historiska museet* took responsibility for the period before 1523, and that *Nordiska museet* took care of the period thereafter. This was the end of decades of struggle between *Historiska museet* and *Nordiska museet* about responsibility for the nation’s heritage.

In effect, this also meant that, with *Nordiska museet* being an ethnographical museum, the entire modern period was being treated as an example of ethnography, and not as political history. Effectively the modern history of Sweden was ethnified, turned into a history of ethnicity rather than the nation or the state. In this context, the history of Sweden was shown as the

history of Swedes, defined as the people living inside the borders of the post-1809/1905 country. Sweden is often described as a form of state nationalism, as opposed to an ethnically-based nationalism, which is probably true, but this state-based nationalism was based upon the notion that Sweden was an ethnically homogenous country where state and nation were one. *Nordiska museet* contributed to this idea by exhibiting people and popular culture from different areas of Sweden, but all flagged as Swedes, and then by contrasting this Swedish cultural history with other Nordic and Baltic cultures, thereby presenting a multifaceted set of regional identities as a homogenised Swedish ethnicity.

There are also other significant silences present in the museal history of Sweden, minorities like the Sámi or Romani are seldom treated, and, when they are, they are often treated as “the other” (Bäckström 2010b). As mentioned, Finland is seldom treated, but Norway and the union between the two countries during the nineteenth century are also treated very poorly. Swedish neutrality during the world wars, especially the second, is another topic that is often treated with silence.

The division of labour between *Historiska museet* on one hand, and *Nordiska museet* on the other, made *Nordiska museet*, together with its pendant *Skansen*, one of the most important producers of Swedishness, which, in fact, also was the outspoken goal of the museums founder Arthur Hazelius (Bäckström 2010a). This is also the reason I would consider *Nordiska museet* and *Skansen* to be among the most important national museums in Sweden. Together with, especially, the *Statens porträttgalleri* at Gripsholm, it created a national canon on Swedishness and a pantheon of memorable persons. *Statens porträttgalleri* is also an interesting example of the early phase of national museum development where royal collections were transformed into national museums.

During the late twentieth century, the need for security and deep historical roots seems to have lessened and I will make the case that the museum that really illustrates the Swedish self image of the late twentieth century was *Moderna museet*, not least because it, to a large extent, helped to uphold the idea of Sweden as the most modern country in the world. I will also consider *Nationalmuseum* and *Historiska museet* as two important national museums that have contributed significantly to the Swedish self-image.

The National Portrait Gallery - Statens porträttgalleri

For a very long time, the palace of Gripsholm has had a very special place in Swedish history. Most of the palace was built in the sixteenth century and it is heavily connected with the “father of the nation” figure of Gustav I, who had most of the palace built for himself. Due to their high symbolical value, Gustav I and the Vasa dynasty were used in royal propaganda from the eighteenth century onward, and Gripsholm Castle was early on used for propagandistic reasons. Gustav III, for instance, used the castle to emphasize his own, very distant, relationship with the Vasa dynasty. Gripsholm Castle was seen as an important monument and, as such, early on attracted visitors and what we might, somewhat anachronistically, call tourists. The first tour guide of the palace was published in 1755 (Widén 2008).

Other than this, the palace also got a reputation, early on, for having a very large collection of portraits, mainly of European royalty that was, in some way, related to the Swedish royal houses of Vasa, Pfalz, Prussia or Holstein-Gottorp. During the first half of the eighteenth century, Gripsholm was used more or less as a storage place for less modern furniture and portraits, but

from the middle of the century, the hanging of the portraits was systemized as a means to enhance the palace's historical importance. It was still a very traditional royal portrait gallery though.

In the late 1810s however, the idea was brought forward among members of the court to transform the collection at Gripsholm into a National Portrait Gallery, comprised of pictures of 'merited citizens' and foreign persons that had somehow affected Swedish history, thus creating the world's first National Portrait Gallery. The creator of this new museum was Baron Adolf Ludvig Stjerneld (1755-1835) and most probably in collaboration with other members of the court (Widén 2008). Stjerneld was former Chief Chamberlain of the Queen Dowager Sophia Magdalena (1746-1813).

Stjerneld was born in 1755 and served as an officer and courtier from his early youth. During the 1780s, he was one of the leading members in opposition against Gustav III. After the assassination of Gustav III, in which he apparently had no part, Stjerneld served as a loyal courtier during the reign of Gustav IV Adolf. After Queen Dowager Sophia Magdalena died in 1813, Stjerneld's life took a new turn and he dedicated the rest of his life to the study of history and the collecting of old manuscripts and historical portraits. In 1817, he founded *Kungliga samsfundet för utgivande av handskrifter rörande Skandinaviens historia* (Royal Association for the Printing of Manuscripts concerning Scandinavian History) and the same year he was made honorary member of *Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities* (Widén 2009b).

From at least 1822, Stjerneld worked with the gallery, enlarging the collections by donations and rearrangements of portraits from other palaces. Stjerneld's position at court and his widespread connections with scholars and the landed gentry made the task to find suitable portraits for the gallery easier, but although it was presented as a patriotic deed to donate pictures to the gallery, it seems like Stjerneld sometimes almost forced people to hand over interesting portraits (Livstedt 1987: 25).

The archival sources to the creation of the portrait gallery are very sparse, even though some of the activities, such as the transportation of different paintings to the palace, often over the ice of Lake Mälaren during wintertime, are possible to reconstruct. This archival sparsity is probably due to the informal character of the project. No formal decisions seem to have been made. Instead, all work was conducted by a small group of courtiers, all closely tied to King Karl XIV Johan.

The function of the gallery seems to have been at least twofold. First, it was a place where visitors could see the marvelous line of merited Swedish citizens that could set an example for their own time. In one of his numerous guidebooks to Gripsholm Stjerneld writes that "The Swede can proudly know that Sweden owns more exceptional men, from the sceptre to the plough, than any of the most brilliant countries, when the number of inhabitants is taken into account" (Stjerneld 1833: 21).

The persons represented in the gallery were, apart from royalty, also politicians, famous authors, scientists and scholars and other persons that might fit the description of being a 'merited citizen'. Set in the historical environment the marvelous line of depicted persons became a national and patriotic example of the classical "historia magistra vitae" where the visitor, peasant, noble or royal, could and should, see and learn. A similar purpose was also expressed

when, some thirty years later, the British *National Portrait Gallery* was founded (Pointon 1993: 227-245).

The second function, the dynastic aspects of the gallery, seems to have been central from the start. Among the first portraits to be transferred, already in 1821, was one of King Karl XIV himself and one depicting his predecessor and adoptive father Karl XIII. By displaying the line of Swedish kings, beginning in the late middle ages and ending with the new king, Karl XIV Johan, the new dynasty could place itself in a line of predecessors and thereby show the visitors that the new royal family was in fact royal and the latest link in a long chain. The two parts of the gallery, the traditional royal portrait gallery and the newly invented gallery of merited citizens thereby worked together, thus creating something at the same time modern and traditional.

The fact that the gallery was situated in what, already at the time, was considered to be a heritage site in the modern sense, also invited the visitor to draw parallels between Karl XIV and his predecessors, especially Gustav I, the builder of the palace. Gustav I was often used by Karl XIV to enhance the new Bernadottean dynasty's legitimate place on the throne. Not only had Gustav I a very important role in the founding myth of Sweden, the similarities between the careers of Karl XIV Johan and Gustav I were also striking. Both were successful commanders who had earned their crowns by their successes on the battlefields in spite of their lack of royal blood. That Gustav I, and the similarities between them was seen as important by Karl XIV Johan are not least underlined by the fact that the personal coat of arms of the Bernadottes are made up of the arms of the principality of Ponte Corvo, given to Karl XIV Johan by Napoleon I, and the arms of the Vasa Dynasty.

This line of thinking was, if not obvious, communicated to the visitors by the palace guides or by the different guidebook that were published and sold on the site. In them, Stjerneld underlined the palace's historical significance and told the reader that the palace was the place where the "Chronicles preferably should be read; surrounded by the proud of bad individuals of history" (Stjerneld 1826: preface). It is clear that Stjerneld wanted to put the visitor in a special kind of mood that would make him or her more perceptive towards the nationalistic or patriotic message of the museum.

This invitation to nationalistic feelings was then turned into royalism when confronted with the abundance of royal portraits and the overall royalist tendency in the guidebooks, where the kings are generally portrayed as "proud", "self-sacrificing", "a safeguard" and, in the case of Karl XIII, one who "saved the fatherland twice". In his texts, Stjerneld tries to draw a picture where he places the King Karl XIV Johan in a line of glorious predecessors bearing the name Karl and then turns to the future and the grandson of Karl XIV Johan, the forthcoming Karl XV. The young prince – to whom the book was dedicated – is then encouraged to use the gallery and the depicted persons as a model for his own actions as for the person reading the guidebook (Stjerneld 1833: 19-21).

The inspiration for the gallery seems to have been a mixture of enlightenment ideas about the role of the citizen and 'Sturm und Drang' romantic ideas about feelings and patriotism. In many ways, the portrait gallery at Gripsholm palace shows a striking resemblance with the *Musée des monuments français*. Both museums were arranged in historical buildings and wanted to be something more than the scientific museum of its time, a sort of *gesamtkunstwerk* where the environment were intended to support a certain narrative. Both museums also seem to have

drawn inspiration from the way contemporary garden architects worked with paths leading towards an object that, together with its settings, should awake certain feelings in the visitor (Carter 2010: 92ff).

The portrait gallery became very popular in the eye of the public early on, and with the help of new technological ways of travel, e.g. steamboat, it attracted large amounts of visitors during the summertime (Widén 2008: 85f). More importantly, apart from its popularity among tourists and visitors, the gallery established a national pantheon of Swedish history. This set of historically important persons was then reproduced in lithographic print as well as text to a much larger audience than the museum itself could ever meet. The paintings of the gallery became a source bank whenever pictures were needed of historical persons, but also the source you went to when you needed to know who was noteworthy and who was not in Swedish history. Perhaps the most important impact of the gallery was when compulsory elementary school reform was introduced in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the pantheon of Gripsholm became not only the main picture source of the historical parts of the elementary school textbook – *Läsebok för folkskolan* (Stockholm 1868 and numerous later editions) – but might also have inspired the selection of persons dealt with in the text and maybe some of the structure of the text with its focus on heroic persons and examples to follow.

The National Gallery - Nationalmuseum

In 1866, the national portrait gallery was organizationally incorporated into the new *Nationalmuseum* that opened the same year, although it was left at the palace of Gripsholm and was not moved into the new museum building in Stockholm. The new *Nationalmuseum* housed the state's collection of fine arts, archeological artefacts (*Historiska museet*), the royal coin cabinet and *Livruskammaren*. It was essentially four museums in one and was the parliament's attempt to solve several problems in one blow. Almost all of the state-owned museums had problems with their premises; they were too small and ill-equipped for their purposes. And when the decision to erect a new museum building for the state art collection – that since 1794 was on exhibition in the so-called *Kongl. Museum* (Royal Museum) in the royal palace in Stockholm – drew near, parliament thought to include the other museums as well in the building.

The discussions about the need for a new national museum had started much earlier though, already in the 1810s. As opposed to the national portrait gallery that was initiated by high officials of the court, the discussions about the need for a new art museum took place in what could be called civil society, even if some of the advocates had ties to both court and parliament (Widén 2009a: chapter 3). The persons most active in the quest for a new museum were a mixture of artists, civil servants and academics. Most of them were also part of the same generation; they grew up during the turbulent years between 1800-1810 and shared an interest in the rejuvenation of the nation following the loss of Finland. The plans for a new national museum were part of this and several of the involved persons were members of the above-mentioned *Gothic Society*. An even more important organization was the *Stockholm Art Association* (Stockholms konstförening) that was founded in 1832, modeled on the German *Kunstvereins* that had emerged in the 1820s.

The art association had, as its goal, to promote art life in Sweden by arranging exhibitions and buying art from promising young artists (to raffle among the members) and to promote the formation of a national art museum. To reach this last goal, the art association worked as a

pressure group against the monarch (with aid of the crown prince who was the protector of the association) and the parliament as well as engaging in public advocacy work in the form of art historical exhibitions that should serve as an example of what a new art museum could be.

Most important though, was that the art association could serve as a place where people could meet and discuss matters of art and the need for a new museum. The Swedish political situation with the four estates of parliament meant that it was equally important to get the support of the king, as it was to win parliament for a question. It was also very important to get support from the right persons, as a person could hold several important positions at the same time. For example, even though the art in *Kongl. Museum* was state-owned; the museum was situated in the palace that was the home of the king, and its director, curator and staff were listed among the courtiers and palace staff. As the director was also patron of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, as well as superintendent of the board of public works and buildings, this shows how deeply entangled court, state and also civil society were. During most of the 1840s and 1850s, the museum director/academy patron/superintendent Gustaf Anckarsvärd also was the chairman of the art association. During the 1820s and 1830s, he had also held positions at court when he, as an officer of the life guards, served as aid-de-camp to both the king and the crown prince. And he was no exception but rather an illustrating example. (Widen 2009a: 46f)

The first proper bill to parliament, suggesting the building of a new national art museum was put forward in 1828 in the estate of the nobility by Baron Fredrik Boije, publisher, graphic artist, chamberlain and cavalry officer (and later one of the founders of the art association). The bill was met by some positive remarks in the nobility, but was turned down, and met with more or less complete silence in the other three estates. A new bill was put forward with greater success in 1840 that led to parliament ordering the board of public works and buildings to make plans for a new museum for the next parliamentary session. That session was held in 1844-45, and this time the decision to build the new museum was made (Widén 2009a: 185f). The museum that was decided upon was a bit different from what had been discussed earlier though.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, discussions about the need for a national museum were all about the need for a new art museum. During the discussions in parliament in the 1840s, the members of parliament soon came to the conclusion that a new national museum should also have place for the other museums in need of space, but the discussions were more or less only about art and the art museum.

In the decision that was made in 1845, all four museums but also *Kungliga Biblioteket* (national library) were said to be housed in the new building. In the time between the decision and the opening of the museum, some 20 years later, it was decided that the library needed its own building, but the other museums moved in. It was soon concluded that the premises were too small for all four museums, and already in 1883 *Livruskammaren* moved out of the museum (Bursell & Dahlberg 2003). *Historiska museet* and the coin cabinet stayed in the building until 1943 when a new building in central Stockholm was finished (Bergstöm & Edman 2004: 62ff; Thordeman 1946).

The four museums that shared the new building all had their own identities when they moved in, something they continued to have. The only museum that really shifted its identity was the *Kongl. Museum* and its art collection. It became synonymous with the *Nationalmuseum* building in which it took up the majority of space. *Historiska museet*, on the other hand, never really seemed

to have identified itself with the building, and very early on planned for a new museum building of its own, already in the 1880s (Hillström 2006: 235ff). But between 1866 and 1943, *Nationalmuseum* was the home of the national museum of fine arts and the national museum of archaeology and was not, as today, a national gallery rather than a museum.

The prime value of *Nationalmuseum* when it comes to the nation-building process is that it, and the prolonged debate about it, was the starting point of Swedish national cultural policies. Before that, culture and cultural heritage weren't really seen as part of the state's responsibility (with the exception of the preservation of ancient monuments and objects made of gold or silver which had been subjects of the state's interests since the seventeenth century) but that changed during the debates on the building of *Nationalmuseum* (Widén 2009a). During the late nineteenth century, the museum took up a new role in the nation-building process when it started buying and promoting the production of historical nationalistic paintings, a genre that became popular all over Europe during the period (Bjurström 1992: 152f). Before that, the nationalistic content of the museum was downplayed. The museum did, from the 1850s onwards, buy contemporary Swedish art, but to a very limited degree, and the permanent exhibitions also displayed a national history of Swedish art, but the main theme of the museum was to imprint Sweden in the European art historical tradition. The other parts of the museum, *Livruskammaren* and *Historiska museet* did, of course, have a more nationalistic theme but did not explore it to the degree that they could have. The historical department in particular looked upon itself as a scientific institution where science should dominate over the more popular nationalistic ideas. During the late nineteenth century, the historical department/*Historiska museet* did try to play a role in the growing national romantic movement though, but that niche was already more or less filled by the private initiative *Nordiska museet* and *Skansen* that opened in the 1870s and 1890s respectively.

The Museum of Scandinavian ethnography and cultural history and Skansen outdoor museum - Nordiska museet and Skansen

Nordiska museet and its counterpart the open-air museum *Skansen* were, from start to finish, the work of Arthur Hazelius. Hazelius had started his career as a promising young linguist, but had, early on, started collecting Scandinavian ethnographical objects. In 1872, he announced that he intended to open what he called *Skandinavisk-etnografiska samlingen* (The Scandinavian-Ethnographic collection) and the following year, the first exhibition was opened. It was situated in a pavilion alongside one of the main shopping and walking streets of Stockholm, in an area that also contained several scientific institutions.

The first exhibition consisted of three tableaux with interiors typical to three different provinces of Sweden (Skåne, Halland and Södermanland). The centerpieces of the tableaux were several life-sized dolls complete with costumes typical to the different provinces (Hillström 2006: 157ff). In many ways the tableaux resembled the, at the time, fashionable genre pictures of farmhouse interiors, sometimes they were actually modeled directly after well-known paintings (Hillström 2006: 379). They were also a kind of frozen version of the popular *Tableux Vivant* games, where live models imitated a popular work of art.

The museum immediately became very popular and soon began to grow as Hazelius expanded his collections, not least by gifts from individuals that shared Hazelius' ideas. This complicated matters a little, because of uncertainty over the legal status of the collection. Was it a private or

public collection? Was it the private property of Hazelius or was it, as Hazelius himself said, the property of the state (Hillström 2006: 169-180)? The definite answer came in 1880 when Hazelius transferred the museum and its collections to a new foundation that would be under control of a board (with Hazelius as chairman) and owned by ‘the Swedish people’. The foundation should not be state-controlled but be a public body of its own which meant that its independence was secured. It was also said in the founding documents that the museum should forever remain in the capital and that the collections could not be scattered.

The rapid expansion also raised questions. In 1873, when it opened, the museum was a small pavilion with three interiors and less than twenty years later, the museum in 1890 filled up two entire town houses in central Stockholm, and the year after its open-air division *Skansen* opened at Djurgården in proximity of the city. What was the museum really about, was it an ethnographical museum, a museum of cultural history or an arts and crafts museum? Or, was it intended to become a national museum of cultural history, because that would be a serious intrusion into the state’s area of interest (Hillström 2006: 193ff), especially as *Historiska museet* was also making plans to create a role for itself as a national museum of cultural history and not only as a national museum of archaeology.

The magnitude of Hazelius’ plans for the museum became clearer when he, in 1891, presented the drawings for a new museum building, located at Djurgården. The drawings showed a very large building with four wings as a square in a northern European renaissance style with reminiscences of both Danish and Swedish palaces, not least the so-revered Vasa castles of the sixteenth century. The building should contain not only room for exhibitions, staff and storage areas, but also an enormous vaulted hall, called Folkhallen (Folk Hall), intended for large festivities (Hillström 2006: 206ff). The hall is one of the keys to understanding the intentions behind the museum, which by now had changed its name to *Nordiska museet*. It was not only intended to be a national museum of cultural history, but also a place of nationalistic and patriotic celebrations.

Together with its open-air counterpart *Skansen* that opened the same year, *Nordiska museet* was intended to be a socially reforming institution that would create bonds between high and low in the Swedish community as well as awaken the spirit of the Swedish people or “folk” (Bäckström 2010a: 69f). The civic ownership of the museum in Hazelius’ mind also enabled the museum to represent the Swedish people organically through patriotic love as opposed to the more modern institutions of the Swedish state (Bäckström 2010a: 75).

The most visible account of these patriotic and socially reforming ambitions of Hazelius were the so-called spring festivals at *Skansen*. The spring festivals were a way to reenact the idea of Swedishness and to tell the story of the Swedish ‘folk’, or people, to visitors, all done to make them aware of their cultural heritage and their belonging to this particular ‘folk’. The spring festivals were filled with national songs and national speeches, its nucleus being a traditional fair, and all framed by people dressed up in national dress. The persons in national dress were mainly women of good families, living in Stockholm, parts of the high society of the capital (Bäckström 2010a: 77f).

This was opposed to the everyday inhabitants of *Skansen*’s houses and cottages that were selected by their authenticity. On a normal day, it was crucial that the inhabitants of the *Morastugan* (cottage from the parish of Mora) or the Sámi of the Lapp camp dressed up in

traditional garb were actually from the parish of Mora or were actually of Sámi origin. Everything else would have been a betrayal to the scientific ideals of *Skansen* and *Nordiska museet*. At the spring festivals and other arrangements of the same kind though, these scientific ideals were abandoned in favour of a vision of the good, patriotic society, where good manners and breeding became more important than authenticity (Bäckström 2010a: 80ff).

This conflict between the scientific museum and the socially reforming museum was hard to solve and became a problem not only in the internal affairs of the museum, but also in the conflict with *Historiska museet* about its status as a national museum of cultural history. As mentioned above, *Historiska museet*, which was housed in *Nationalmuseum*, was, already in the 1880s, planning to open a new museum in a separate building, dedicated to the cultural history of Sweden. Cultural history in the mind of Hans Hildebrand, head of *Historiska museet* and director general of the *Swedish national heritage board*, did not include the lower classes or the peasantry but was all about the gentry and the bourgeoisie and their culture. The history of the peasantry and their culture was, in the mind of Hildebrand, the subject of ethnography and therefore the natural role for Hazelius' museum of Scandinavian ethnography (Hillström 2006: 235ff). Needless to say Hazelius did not share, with Hildebrand, the same vision of his museum, and the conflict between the two ways of viewing cultural history were to continue well into the twentieth century. This meant that the two museums, during the years around 1900, often competed for the same objects on the market and that the collections of the two museums gradually became more alike and overlapping. The conflict escalated when Hazelius made public his plans for *Nordiska museet's* building in 1891 and was not settled until 1919 when, by government decision, the borders between the respective areas of interest for the large state-owned museums *Historiska museet*, *Nationalmuseum* and *Livrustkammaren* were laid down.

The decision did not formally include *Nordiska museet* and *Skansen*, but, in effect, it did give the museum the responsibility to collect and display the cultural history of Sweden from the 1520s (when after the ascension of Gustav I to the throne, the modern history of Sweden was meant to have begun) and onwards. This meant that *Nordiska museet* kept its independence, continued to be a self-governing body in the public sphere, but, at the same time, became a part of the state system of heritage management (Hillström 2006: 337f). This agreement on the division of period responsibility between the museums was to be honoured until 2010 when *Historiska museet* opened a new permanent exhibition called "*Sveriges historia*" (History of Sweden) that intended to tell the cultural and political history of Sweden during the last 1000 years.

The impact of *Nordiska museet* and *Skansen* on the Swedish nation-building process can hardly be overestimated. The museum has, in many ways, defined what it is to be Swedish, both in the sense that it has published extensive research in the field of Swedish ethnology/ethnography, but also in the sense that it has created traditions and holidays as well as having harmonized the different local traditions of the big holidays like Christmas, Midsummer's Day etc. Before 1900, there were a lot of local ways of celebrating the different holidays, as well as there were local holidays that were only celebrated in certain parts of the country. Throughout the twentieth century, these local traditions have, with few exceptions, gradually been converted into more coherent forms.

This development is, of course, an effect of better communications and lesser divisions between the classes and modern media, but *Nordiska museet* and *Skansen* have also played a crucial

role in the process. The museum is an excellent example of what Hobsbawm called the “Invention of traditions” in his influential article of 1983 (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983). An example of this are the above-mentioned “Spring festivals” where one of the days, the 6th of June, was celebrated as a patriotic day of festivity (Bäckström 2010a: 76). The 6th of June date goes back to the time when the new constitution of 1809 was decided, which in turn alludes to the date when Gustav I was elected king of Sweden in 1523.

As Hazelius and his allies also were stout proponents of a more public and extensive use of the national flag, *Skansen* was covered in flags and the celebration was soon to be known as the day of the flag. In 1916, this, until then, informal celebration was formalized as the day of the flag (Svenska flaggans dag) by the government. The flag day had then, since 1905 and the dissolution of the union with Norway, become more important as the flag from that moment was the signifier of Sweden only, and not, as during most of the nineteenth century, of the union between Sweden and Norway.

In 1983, parliament decided that the day of the flag should be the official National Day of Sweden and, in 2005, it was decided that it should also be a national holiday. Hazelius and *Skansen* were absolutely crucial for this development. Without his involvement during the 1890s, there would have been no national day as we know it. The *Skansen* festivities of the 1890s still echo in today’s National Day ceremonies held at the same location. The royals still attend, handing out flags to merited citizens and organizations in a ceremony that traces its roots to the spring festivals.

The National Historical Museum - Historiska museet

After the establishment of *Nordiska museet*, the great era of nineteenth century museum building was over – with the exception of *Naturhistoriska riksmuseet* where a new building was erected between 1907 and 1916. New ideals on exhibition and museum design entered the stage after the First World War when a new generation of museum curators with new ideas about scholarly professionalism and pedagogy entered the institutions. The foremost example of this development is probably the new building for *Historiska museet* that opened in 1943 with the exhibition “10 000 år i Sverige” (10 000 years in Sweden) that was to change the way museum exhibitions all over Sweden were organized over the next decades (Bergström & Edman 2004: 101ff).

As noted above, *Historiska museet* had a long history before 1943 and was a part of *Nationalmuseum* from 1866 when it was housed on the bottom floor of the building. The exhibitions and collections were of Swedish history, prehistory and numismatics. During the late nineteenth century, the museum competed with *Nordiska museet* for the role as the national museum of cultural history, a competition that *Historiska museet*, in a way, lost after the governmental decision in 1919 mentioned above. The museum, because of that, refocused on prehistory and medieval ecclesial history (Hillström 2006: 337f; Thordeman 1946: 130f). The exhibitions of the museum had always been very scientifically oriented – quite the opposite of *Nordiska museet’s* cottage interiors – with exhibition cases containing typological series of objects describing the evolution of e.g. stone axes, medieval swords or ceramics (Nerman 1946). Like the other national museums in the country, the geographic area covered was the land inside the

borders of 1809/1905, even though the southernmost parts of the country had been Swedish for only the last 300 years or so.

Furthermore, the exhibitions claimed a cultural continuity from prehistory until today, where the first inhabitants of the region were said to have been ethnical Swedes. This claim was actually strengthened during the first half of the twentieth century and reached its climax in the 1943 exhibition “10 000 år i Sverige” (Bergström & Edman 2004: 109f). Unsurprisingly, the world war had further strengthened the want for nationalistic interpretations and rhetoric and the museum told a story of a people and their deep roots in the Swedish soil, claiming that the oldest human remains found in Sweden were, in fact, examples of the “Nordic race”, just like the inhabitants of the day (Bergström & Edman 2004: 109f, Aronsson 2011).

Technically, the exhibition – that at least in part was to be in place well into the 1970s – was groundbreaking insofar that it broke with the old tradition of the scientific museum and focused on the mass audience and how to mediate the story to them (Thordeman 1946: 158). Exhibition design inspiration was taken from, among others, the *Museum of Modern Art* in New York. This groundbreaking way of exhibiting prehistory also made its way into the regional museums (*Länsmuseer*) that were created during the 1930s and 1940s. In this way, the idea of the popular exhibition that connected the Swedish people of today with the prehistorical inhabitants of the region, ethnically and racially, spread all over the country during the 1940s and 1950s (Nerman 1946: 211f).

The idea of the long continuity of the Swedish nation or people in the geographical area of present day Sweden not only served a more traditional nationalistic claim, but also served the social democratic welfare state and its claim for consensus and harmony in society. The understanding that the entire people had common and extremely old roots should serve democratic society and create harmony between the classes (Bergström & Edman 2004: 109f). The new building, although a modernistic “exhibition machine” in its functions, had clear ties to the national romantic movement and its taste for renaissance castles of the sixteenth century, which further strengthened the museum’s nationalistic claims.

In the last decades of the twentieth century, *Historiska museet* was the leading actor in a movement to deconstruct the nationalistic history of Sweden, leading to major reconstructions of the exhibitions. A new kind of museum pedagogy was also established in which the audience was invited to ask questions about the exhibitions, and also to give their own answers. The idea was to be a more open, less authoritarian museum (see e.g. Svanberg 2010: 13, 23). This development has continued and is perhaps even more prominent today. In the newly reconstructed exhibition “Forntider” (Prehistories) there is no mention of state or nation at all. The exhibition starts with the statement that “There have been people living in what we call Sweden in thousands of years” and when individuals or groups of people are mentioned, they are referred to as people living at a certain place and not as parts of any people or ethnicity. There is a distinct non-nationalistic and non-ethnic idea in the exhibition, but the geographical borders of the exhibition are still present day Sweden that includes Skåne but excludes e.g. Finland. (see e.g. Aronsson 2010, 2011).

In 2010, *Historiska museet* also broke the 1919 agreement with *Nordiska museet* about the responsibility of the different epochs when they opened the exhibition “Sveriges historia” (History of Sweden) that deals with the last 1000 years. The exhibition – part of a collaboration between the museum, Norsted’s publishing house and TV4 that also includes a documentary TV-

series and an eight-part book on Swedish history – is rather small given its large scope, but, in relationship with the museal history treated above, it has some rather interesting features in that it explicitly wants to discuss some of the silences mentioned (Historiska museet 2009). Women's history is treated extensively as is migration in and out of Sweden. Ethnic minorities like the Sámi and the Romani are also present although, like most other subjects, they are treated very sketchily. The most striking thing about “Sveriges historia” though is that it still does not deal with the seventeenth century imperial ambitions in a political way. The expansion is briefly mentioned, but the focus is, like at the army museum, on the sufferings of the civilians and of the soldiers. The reason for this might be that the general perception is that this is part of the old, nationalistic, way of telling the history, when an analytical political retelling of Sweden's expansionist history in reality has been lacking for a very long time.

When it comes to understanding the political climate and view of history in Sweden during the decades around the turn of the millennium, *Historiska museet* is probably a good starting point. But even though *Historiska museet* was a very influential museum when it came to museum architecture and design of historical exhibitions, and probably helped to uphold a post-war nationalism in Sweden, the museum that meant the most when it came to nation-building and Swedish self image in the second half of the twentieth century is probably *Moderna museet*, the museum of modern art.

The Museum of Modern Art - Moderna museet

The idea of a new museum of modern or contemporary art seems to have originated around 1950 as the result of interior problems in *Nationalmuseum*. Although the art museum had acquired the entire building when *Historiska museet* got its own building in 1943, the need for more exhibition space was felt in the museum. This was especially so in the department that dealt with contemporary art. During the early fifties, a group of curators at *Nationalmuseum* put together several exhibitions on contemporary art in the museum and outside of it to raise the question of the need for a new exhibition space for the art of the twentieth century. Together with *Föreningen för nutida konst* (The association of contemporary art) that, in 1953, donated 149 works of art from contemporary Swedish artists and, at the same time, changed their name to *Moderna museets vänner* (Friends of the museum of modern art) the curators started to raise an opinion in the matter, a venture that was very successful (Bjurström 1992: 283ff).

In 1955, the decision were made that the naval base in central Stockholm would be moved out to the southern archipelago, which made several buildings close to *Nationalmuseum* on the island of Skeppsholmen available. The choice fell on the old exercise building and, in 1956, the rebuilding of the premises started, only to be interrupted a few months later when the opportunity arose to exhibit Picassos “Guernica” together with the sketches to the painting. The painting was put on display in the semi-finished museum, with no ceiling and a tarpaulin roof. The exhibition was a great success with the audience and the media though and made the new museum well-known and talked about before it even existed (Bjurström 1992: 291).

In May 1958, the museum was inaugurated and the decade that would follow came to be an extremely creative period under museum director Pontus Hultén. The first years saw groundbreaking (and nowadays canonized) exhibitions like “Rörelse i konsten” (Movement in art) – that introduced artists like Jean Tinguely and Alexander Calder to Sweden and sometimes

to Europe – and “4 amerikanare” (4 Americans) with pop artists like Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg (Granath & Nieckels 1983: 36, 39f, 80ff). The latter also introduced what would later be the iconic work of the museum to the Swedish audience, Robert Rauschenberg’s assemblage work “Monogram”, more commonly known to the public as “The goat”.

Even more important was the museum’s policy of participation. The museum, early on, adapted an idea of public participation and democracy that has since been an important part of its self image, expressed in a wish to engage both children and adults, a goal that became more or less equally important as showing the art itself (Eriksson 2008: 78, Burch 2010: 230ff). This participatory ideology was manifested in different performance works and in a pioneering children’s activity program and a children’s workshop (Göthlund 2008); the supreme manifestation of this being the 1968 exhibition “Modellen – En modell för ett kvalitativt samhälle” (The model – a model for a qualitative society) which was a social reformatory experiment, a play zone for kids and a performative work of art.

“Modellen” was a work by Danish artist Palle Nielsen and consisted of a long wooden platform above a sea of foam blocks in different shapes and colours. The surrounding walls were covered in paper giving the visiting children the opportunity to paint whatever they wanted with the materials that were supplied. There were also a lot of costumes, wigs and masks (depicting political figures of the day like Mao, Lyndon B. Johnson and de Gaulle) for the children to play with. It was stressed that “Modellen” was not a completed work of art, but rather that all those who participated in the play, children and adults, were part of the work, or rather were the actual art work (Burch 2010: 230ff).

“Modellen” became a hugely influential work of art that attracted hoards of visitors, not least children, and gave *Moderna Museet* the reputation of being a progressive and important museum suitable for children. The exhibition also initiated a discussion in society about children’s play and the importance of good environments for children’s play, and to some extent also about democracy and participation (Göthlund 2010: 267f). “Modellen” is probably the best example of the kind of exhibitions that made *Moderna Museet* into a symbol of Sweden in the post-war era. In a country that looked upon itself as being progressive – perhaps even the most progressive country in the world – a museum of modern art that invited children to participate in its exhibitions was the perfect symbol. The museum was taken into the arms of more or less the entire society and a visit to *Moderna museet* soon became a compulsory part of a visit to the capital, irrespective of whether you were a visiting school class, a group of elderly or a regular tourist. In a much reproduced photograph, the Minister of Education, later Prime Minister, Olof Palme – himself a symbol of the progressiveness of the country – threw himself merrily towards the foam blocks of “Modellen”. The (social-democratic) politician at play among the kids in the museum of modern art was an emblematic picture of the Swedish self-image in the late twentieth century, the essence of modernity, progress and rationality. In many ways, *Moderna Museet* also succeeded in being an active part of the debates in the public sphere, especially during the 1960s and 1970s with “Modellen” as the prime, but far from only, example.

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National Museums in Switzerland

Felicity Bodenstern

Summary

The confederate form of its government and the cantonal structure of the Swiss state largely conditions Switzerland's museum geography. Cultural affairs are not generally managed by the federal government but are traditionally the jurisdiction of the cantons, and all except a handful of Switzerland's 949 museums are not national (Federal Department for the Interior, 2005: 3). The birth of Switzerland's first national museum was long and arduous and great apprehension was repeatedly expressed at the idea of such an institution. For many Swiss, it represented an obvious contradiction to the state's federal-national principal. In the years between the establishment of the first Helvetic Republic (1798-1803) up until the creation of the Swiss confederate state in 1848 and following, no national museums of any kind were founded. A material reason for this was that the creation of the Federal state was not accompanied by any massive movement of secularization, such as that which had, in France, transferred huge quantities of church possessions and artworks into the hands of the state. In Switzerland, the secularization of ecclesiastical treasures was a gradual process going back to the period of the Reformation and thus predating national concerns. This process had already given rise to many local and regional museum institutions, as a well-developed pre-national principal that boasted fine collections of international stature. Indeed, the project for a national museum presented an obvious difficulty as it implied choosing one place where the country's national heritage would be presented and represented. However diplomatic difficulties were overturned by the need to stop the sale and export of Swiss antiquities abroad. Yet, since the establishment of the *Landesmuseum*, in Zurich in 1890, the national museum institution has, though somewhat half heartedly, tried to expand to provide more territorial representativity than the existence of one unique institution established in Zurich can offer. It has only, in the last two decades, come to include the museum of the Château de Prangins in French Switzerland and the *Forum Schweizer Geschichte Schwyz*, in the German speaking Alpine region (cf. Annex table). The *Forum* (1995) is, in a sense, the first museum to have been founded to celebrate an idea of the Swiss nation (the *Landesmuseum* was itself founded to deal with the exodus of Swiss material culture). Its foundation celebrates the 700th anniversary of the Swiss confederation.

In many traditional and high profile fields of collecting, such as the fine arts, especially contemporary art and foreign old masters, ethnography and classical antiquities, Switzerland's largest and most significant museums are either municipal, cantonal or private institutions. The federal government generally has no or little involvement in the promotion of contemporary artistic expression. In terms of subject matter, Switzerland's nationally owned museums deal mainly with traditional artistic practices or historical issues of national or local importance. Most authors underline the fact that the Swiss museum landscape is extremely varied and fragmented. The difficulty of obtaining a clear overview and statistical information concerning questions of financing and management of Swiss museums is a problem indicated by various sources (Brülisauer, Schüle, 2004). Yvette Jaggi, president of the Suisse federal cultural foundation, has

commented on the absence of public debate concerning a federal cultural policy as a possible consequence of Switzerland's plurilingual society, which, though source of cultural diversity and richness, also makes communication and exchange more difficult (Pro Helvetia, 2005: 8). The selection of museums chosen in the table below, and in the case studies, shows that Switzerland's most important 'national' museums do not necessarily correspond with Switzerland's most important museums, according to criteria of visitor numbers or general renown. In terms of art museums for example, and as included in the annex, the collections of Basel, Bern, Geneva or the *Kunsthaus* of Zurich are more renowned than those of the *Landesmuseum*. Furthermore, only two of the selected museums are directly run by the Federal state as part of the official network of Federal museums. Indeed, this selection is based on two principals allowing us to go beyond to the very strongly restricted *Swiss national museum* label (since 2010 it includes only 3 museums). The museums chosen are all mainly financed by the Federal state and their narrative is clearly of 'national' scope, in the Swiss context.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Swiss National Museum, <i>Schweizerischen Landesmuseum, Museo Nazionale Svizzero, Musée National Suisse</i>	1898	1883, 1890 (Federal foundation)	Swiss federal parliamentary act, city of Zurich.	State, autonomous establishment run by a museum council elected by federal parliament.	Medieval Art, Religious History, National History, Pre-historic and Ancient Archaeology	Swiss cultural history, period rooms, weapons and armour, military history, regional arts and crafts, clothing.	5000 BC to 20 th c.	Neo-Gothic castle, 19 th c. Zurich.
<i>Swiss Alpine Museum</i> <i>Schweizerisches Alpines museum</i>	1934 (current building)	1905	Federal funding. Dept. of Environment, Transport and Energy.	Municipal, Cantonal	History, Geology, Cartography, Alpinism	Alpine region.	Pre-history (ca. 10 000) to present day.	Modern purpose built construction Bern.
Swiss Open-Air Museum, Ballenberg	1978	1939	Federal and cantonal authorities, Fund for the "Swiss Open Air Museum".	Private run by foundation	Country Architecture, Country Life, Cultural History	Living culture and customs of Switzerland, representing all regions and craft techniques.	17 th to 20 th c.	Regional styles of architecture, Canton of Bern, Ballenberg.
Château de Prangins Swiss National Museum	1998	1975	Donations to the Suisse Confederation from the cantons of Vaud and Geneva.	State (SNM)	National political and economical history, 18 th and 19 th c.	Modern Swiss History.	1730-1920	Castle dating from 1730, Prangins, Lake Geneva.
Neuchâtel: Latenium, Park and archaeological museum	2001	1979	Federal and cantonal authorities.	Cantonal	Archaeology	Archaeology of the region of Neuchâtel and Môtiers.	500 000 BC to 1500 A.D.	Purpose built Modernist structure, Neuchâtel.

General aspects of the history of Swiss museums

Although Switzerland's territory boasts some of the world's oldest museums, the *Historischesmuseum* in Basel goes back to the public display of the cabinet of Boniface Amerbach, the legal heir of Erasmus of Rotterdam in the seventeenth century. As a federal nation, the Swiss were relatively late in joining the nineteenth century race for the creation of prestigious national museums. During the period between the first Helvetic Republic (1798-1803), dominated by France, up until the creation of the Swiss confederate state of 22 cantons (today 23) in 1848, and the years following its establishment, no museum related to any kind of 'national' discourse came into being. The creation of the Federal state was not accompanied by any massive movement of cultural material, as had been the case in France. The secularisation of ecclesiastical treasures for example, was a gradual process going back to the period of the Reformation; it had, since the sixteenth century, led to the creation of a series of municipal museums. However from 1870 onwards, the country saw a massive wave of local and regional museums being created (Lafontant Vallotton, 2007: 13) and, whilst in 1889 a confederate study counted 40 museums, by 1914 this number had risen to 130.

Swiss museums were, from the outset, run by municipal or cantonal authorities, attached to major urban centres, often founded by private persons or associations and historically based on cantonal treasures and ecclesiastic collections that had very ancient origins. Yet the most important municipal museums were of course also influenced by the major evolutionary stages that founded the federal state. The city of Geneva, for example, had a project for the creation of a universal museum inspired by the model of the Louvre in the 1790s and received paintings from the French state in 1805 and so, in a sense, its museum of art and history is related to the movement of museum creation that grew with, and in parallel to, the French Revolution (Lapaire, 1991: 7). The years running up to and following the creation of the confederate state, were also very important in the history of the major municipal museums such as the *Kunstmuseum* of Basel (reopened in a more important building in 1849); the *Historisches Museum* of Bern, first opened as the town treasure to the public in 1840 and the *Kunsthaus* in Zurich opened its first major permanent collection to the public in 1847 (Deuchler, 1981: 26).

Swiss confederation, established as a result of the victory of the progressive, protestant cantons in the War of the Sonderbund (the civil war of 1847), was a fragile construction in urgent need of a national identity in order to stay the opposition of the conservative catholic secessionist movement. The new confederate nation was built on very deeply rooted religious, linguistic, cultural and ethnic divisions. It was clear that a federal identity could only be constructed by affirming the existence of a common history and geography (Kaeser, 2006: 181). Yet, a national policy in the field of arts, culture and history only slowly began to take form between 1848 and 1874, and it was not until a revision of the Constitution in 1874 that the federal authority could claim enough authority to begin working on the establishment of two major national cultural institutions: the National museum in Zurich and the National Library in Berne, which opened in 1895 (Jost, 1988: 13).

After a long period of negotiations, Zurich was selected as host city and in exchange for this privilege the municipality was to finance the building of the new museum and the core of its collections. The other principal contestant was the federal capital of Berne, its bid for the national

museum lead to the expansion of the major historical museum in that city, interestingly more universal in scope than that created as national in Zurich (Basel and Lucerne were also in the running).

In terms of national state-owned museums, there were no further important creations in the first half of the twentieth century, aside from the *Schloss Wildegg*, a donated domain that opened to the public in 1912. The castle boasts 35 rooms decorated by the Wildegg family, including original furniture, arms and porcelains. The interiors span from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century and represent the life of a powerful Swiss family over 11 generations.

One of the most recent national museums, the Forum of Swiss History in Schwyz (1995) was founded to celebrate the 700th anniversary of Swiss confederation which commemorates a defence alliance charter against Austrian occupation made between three rural communes in 1291 and that, at the end of the eighteenth century, came to symbolise the origins of Swiss unity. It mainly illustrates and celebrates aspects of everyday culture in Switzerland from 1300 to 1800. A small state run customs museum opened its doors in a former border guard's outpost in 1949 and was nationalized in 1970; in dealing with the question of frontiers and Swiss neutrality, it addresses a very characteristic theme of Swiss nationhood. With the castle of Prangins, opened 100 years after the *Landesmuseum*, the SMN is finally represented in French speaking territory (it is halfway between Lausanne and Geneva). The official website states that the visitor is invited to "Discover History: Switzerland between 1730 and 1920. In Prangins, the visitor encounters a modern, democratic and industrialised Switzerland". The museum develops a more directly historical perspective, touching on the political, economic, social and cultural development of Switzerland and its diplomatic and economic relations with its neighbours. In this sense, it employs a very different approach to that of the *Landesmuseum* in Zurich, which is essentially occupied with presenting the evolution of material culture. It filled a gap in Swiss museum culture for a history museum in the full sense; an absence that had been deplored by Schärer in his preface to the 1984 guide to Swiss museums (Lapaire, Schärer, 1984: 32). Although only twelve percent of Swiss museums are classified as historic whilst twenty-five percent fall into the category of art and decorative arts museums, all the museums of the SNM essentially fall into the category of history museums (though they may be said to be of both categories). They currently, nearly exclusively, display material culture and themes directly related to Switzerland's national territory but we must add that they are only, in a very limited manner, museums of political or military history. These figures, given by Schärer, are doubtlessly very approximate (we find similar figures in Brülisauer and Schüle's EGMUS report of 2004), but interesting from a comparative point of view as they can be easily reversed: for example if we chose to class Swiss local museums (*heimatmuseen*, mainly encyclopaedic collections of local customs and natural history) that constitute forty percent of all the museums in Switzerland as history museums (which is not the case in Schärer classification). This would bring the percentage of museums dealing with some aspect of local or national Swiss history to a high fifty percent.

In terms of the representation of other civilizations, interestingly none of the federally-owned museums are dedicated to objects or themes pertaining to territories beyond Switzerland's frontiers. The largest universal collection covering extensive territories outside of Switzerland is not national but municipal and is probably Geneva's museum of art and history. The greatest fine arts collections of Switzerland were, for the most part, already existent as municipal museums

when the Zurich *Landesmuseum* was created in 1898. Encyclopaedic museums with collections aiming for universal scope were created in nearly every major Swiss town during the nineteenth century (Lapaire, Schärer, 1984: 25).

Ownership becomes a complex question once we leave the clearly definable management structures of federal run museums and large municipal museums. “There is no reliable investigation concerning the ownership structure in Swiss museums. It has to be stressed, that divided ownership structure often occurs. Therefore it needs to be asked, who is the legal body of the museum, who owns the collection, who is in possession of the house and who manages the institution.” (Brülisauer, 2006: 3) This is true for a series of museums that we can discuss here as devoted to themes of national interest, some examples are the Schloss Landshut – Swiss Museum for Wildlife and Hunting (1968); Museum of Swiss Citizens Abroad (*Musée des Suisses dans le Monde* - 1964). Others present types of productions, industries that have acquired national status: the Local Watchmaking Museum (*Musée d'Horlogerie du Locle* – 1959) or the *Alimentarium* funded by Nestlé and created in 1985.

National museums and cultural policy in Switzerland

In Switzerland, the federal government finances nine percent of all cultural activities (Pro Helvetia, 2005: 30). In the article ‘Culture and State’, a guide to Swiss cultural policy states that it is the federal government’s doctrine not to exert any kind of influence over the form of the cultural activities across the country and an important ideological point is that, at no point, may it be seen to promote any tendency that might be interpreted as an attempt to found a ‘state culture’, a concept which it claims to be absolutely alien to the reality of Switzerland. Indeed, this doctrine has been expressed in the Swiss constitution. Article 69 of Switzerland’s federal constitution stipulates that cultural affairs are the clear jurisdiction of the towns and cantons.

Major municipal museums of national significance

This means that, in the case of Switzerland (as in that of other countries), the question of important municipal or cantonal museums also needs to be addressed from a national perspective. Today, although federal involvement has increased, cantons and cities continue to provide the majority of resources in the cultural domain (Weckerle, 2010: 3). It is under municipal and cantonal tutelage that the greatest museum boom of Switzerland in the last half of the twentieth century took place with figures rising from 274 museums in 1960 to the very high figure of 1073 in 2010. As already touched upon above, many of these museums are of national significance, their development would appear to also have been influenced by the evolution of the nation-state and nationalism. The decades before and after the turn of the century saw the creation of Switzerland’s most important municipal museums, many are considered by Florens Deuchler (1981: 36) as having ‘überregionaler Bedeutung’, a significance that goes beyond their regional denomination. In some cases they quite simply own the most important holdings in the country for certain standard type collections, and so the question of why this is the case needs to be answered in this context as indicative of the relationship between the national and the regional in the geography of cultural diffusion so specific to Switzerland. They prove and enforce the absence of a centre and the prominence of the representation of universal values of art and science in the context of cantonal institutions appears to also symbolize this situation.

Towards a new federal policy

In 2000, after long debates concerning the necessity for more efficient federal involvement - a debate which began in 1975 with the so called Rapport Clottu entitled 'Elements for Swiss Cultural Policy' - cumulated in an amendment to article 69 of the constitution. It was henceforth to be stipulated that the federal government may intervene to encourage the arts and culture that 'present a national interest' however in 'accomplishing this mission it is to take into account the cultural and linguistic diversity of the country'. It is difficult at this point to evaluate what effect this will have in future on the network of Switzerland's national museums which, as we will show below, has already tried to establish better territorial coverage.

We can get a clearer picture of the ideology of Swiss cultural policy by considering the Suisse national culture foundation: *Pro Helvetia*. Founded in 1939, in the context of the rising menace of its belligerent neighbour, Germany to Swiss culture, it literally means 'for the defence of Switzerland's spirit' and its origins are based on an idea of culture as the expression of national identity, an idea that, in Switzerland, is considered synonymous with cultural diversity (Pro Helvetia, 2007: 25). *Pro Helvetia's* principal mission is to provide a fund for the promotion of comprehension and exchange between different linguistic regions but also between rural and urban areas, conserving and reinforcing cultural specificities and traditions (Pro Helvetia, 2007: 29). However, the main characteristic of its mission to preserve 'traditional culture' appears today to be in contradiction and often conflicts with an attempt to promote new cultural creations. This tension in terms of general cultural policy may explain why Switzerland has no federally-owned museums for contemporary art. Indeed Swiss federal cultural policy may be characterised by a rather marked interest for popular culture and traditional lifestyles.

Pro Helvetia (otherwise known as the Arts Council of Switzerland) was transformed into a public foundation in 1949. The main push for a new federal policy was undertaken in the 1960s and 1970s, notably with the establishment of a separate Swiss Federal Office of Culture (OFC) in 1975. Until then, federal involvement in cultural activities was minimal with the exception of resources provided to run the Swiss National Library and Museum. However the relative absence of a clear federal policy including a set of laws regulating the museum network in Switzerland has been the main reason for the major reform of museum policy initiated in 2005. Until then, the museums of the SNM were not related to a real national/federal organisation in the form of a museum network and no clearly identifiable cultural policy could be related to these institutions; federal involvement was intermittent and related to specific political or private initiatives (Federal Department of the Interior, 2005: 5). Five federal departments were involved in the museum's organisation: the Department for the Interior, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of the Environment, Energy, Transport and Communications and the Department of Finance.

The aim of the reform has been to generate a more unified cultural strategy and to give better visibility to federal involvement. In order to better coordinate this effort, the control of federally-funded museums is to be regrouped under the unique tutelage of one federal service, the aforementioned Federal Office for Culture or OFC run by the Federal Department for the Interior. Its activities were structured as a response to the constitutional amendment of 2000. However, the report of the EDI (Ministry for the Interior) on federal museum policy (Federal Department of the Interior, 2005) considered that the SNM as a current grouping of 8

institutions occupied a position whose image as Switzerland's historical national museum needed to be more clearly defined. It also pointed out that it has been all too conditioned by circumstantial development processes, making it an incoherent ensemble. It further considered that some of its houses did not really have 'gesamtschweizerische Bedeutung' i.e. 'significance for Switzerland as a whole', although no set of criteria was ever officially established to judge what might be considered to be of Swiss national significance. In 2007, an additional reform ruled for a reinforced grouping of Swiss national museums under the title *Musée Suisse Gruppe*, with a common, coordinated mission: to exhibit national history, to explore Switzerland's identity and finally to act as a leader in terms of competency and development of professional practice inside of all Swiss museums.

So between 2007 and 2010, the SNM included 8 museums under its administration and has tried to grow in such a way as to be present in as many areas of Swiss national territory as possible: the group referred to as *Musée Suisse Group* included the following institutions: *Landesmuseum Zürich* (1898); *Schloss Prangins* (1998); *Musikautomatenmuseum Seewen* (1900); *Forum Schweizer Geschichte Schymyz* (1995); *Schloss Wildegg* (1912); Swiss Customs Museum Gandria (1978); *Zunftbaus zur Meisen Zürich* (1956); *Museum Bären-gasse Zürich* (1976-2008). The federation also financed a series of isolated institutions, through the OFC - related to the state more as a result of chance circumstances (donation etc.) than due to any kind of general policy: *Museo vela*, in Lignoretto; the Oskar Reinhart collection of Winterthur; *Klosteranlage St. Georgen* at Stein am Rhein and the Swiss Alpine museum (Federal Department of the Interior, 2005: annexe 1). In the last decades, the federal government also provided very punctual financial support to about 50 institutions for exhibitions, publications, etc.

This however was not considered effective enough and a law passed on the 1st of January 2010 led to a streamlining of the group. This law dissolved the *Musée Suisse Gruppe* but has given the SNM an autonomous legal status, making it independent of the OFC. A museum council whose members are directly elected by the Federal Council directly manages it. It also reduced the group to its three most important museums: *Musée national de Zurich*, *Château de Prangins* and the *Forum Schweizer Geschichte Schymyz*. Control over the former museums of the SNM was given back to the cantons and the cities in which they were situated.

This development of a clear policy in terms of national museums has been accompanied by a strong improvement in terms of the professionalization of museum staff. The *Verband der Museen der Schweiz*, the Association of Swiss museums created in 1966 represents the institutions of the museum in relation to other authorities and promotes exchange between professionals of the museum world (Brülisauer, 1998: 48-49). In 1979, one of the first federal decrees concerning the organisation of Swiss museums prescribed the role of the museum in the 'preservation and care of the collections as well as development of new preservation methods', expressing its commitment to 'scientific research in the field of Swiss and international art and cultural history', and of course the responsibility to 'inform the public'.

However, in 2003, Martin Schärer noted on the absence of any specific educational structure, course or degree for museum professionals in Switzerland up until the beginning of the 1990s, when the *Verband der Museen der Schweiz*, organized for the first time in Switzerland a specialized ten-day course on museology. Since 2001, it participates (with ICOM Switzerland) in the organization of the first real course for museums professionals in Switzerland, a two-year post-

graduate course in museology for practicing professionals created at the university of Basel. The course combines a theoretical and practical approach with internships and considers itself to be interdisciplinary, addressing the needs of ethnologists, art historians, historians and scientists alike.

Case studies: Representing the Nation: Origins, Lifestyle, Art

The development of a national museum: Landesmuseum Zurich

The first national museum in Switzerland was founded by a federal parliamentary act on the 27th of June 1890 and opened in 1898. Several factors contributed to its creation: the development of a nationalist discourse, a new culture of historical research, a quickly developing art market, the exodus of many art works and objects of Swiss production and the desire to provide models for a renewal of traditional arts and crafts.

A form of patriotic discourse related to national antiquities, developed in most European countries during the first half of the nineteenth century developed later in Switzerland than elsewhere (Kaeser, 2004: 31). A culture of historical research emerged in the context of such societies as the Society of Antiquarians founded in Zurich in 1837 (*Gesellschaft für vaterländische Alterthümer*) or the Society of National Antiquities established in Basel in 1832. Likewise the development of the history museum also appeared later here than elsewhere (Lafontant Vallotton, 2007).

It was in 1880 that Salomon Vögelin (1837-1888), a professor of art history and cultural history at the University of Zurich and elected left-wing democrat, presented the first motion for a federal fund in view of financing a National Swiss museum of historical and cultural antiquities; at first to no avail. But the deputy tried again in 1883, in the context of the first major National exhibition being held in Zürich, where an extensive presentation of traditional Swiss ancient art was attracting the general public's attention. Vögelin put forward the quality and the value of this presentation to bring to the attention of his colleagues the problem of the rapid disappearance of Switzerland's antiquities due to growing sales of objects leaving the country with foreign buyers. Repeatedly referring to their creation in most neighbouring states, he reasoned for the need of a national museum as an essential component of every country's natural duty to its people and heritage. He pleaded the 'powerful influence that the visual representation of a people's history might exert on its ideas and actions (Lafontant Vallotton, 2007: 25). Although the idea of a national history museum did not immediately find favour, the necessity of introducing a system to protect Swiss antiquities from leaving the country was recognized – the first step was the creation of the Federal Commission for the conservation of Swiss antiquities (1886), a fund specifically dedicated to the acquisition of any nationally significant antiquities on sale. In the 1880s, the museum's future first director, Heinrich Angst, a Zurich textile merchant, became involved in the combat to stop this outflow. He developed a discourse on the national prejudice caused by artworks being drained out of the country by scrupulous and greedy foreign collectors and merchants, a discourse that proved highly effective for gaining parliamentary support for the project of a national museum.

This political context was accompanied by a debate concerning the renewal of the arts and crafts professions, increasingly menaced by growing industrial production. Alongside the growing

interest for questions of national material culture for the construction of a historical discourse there is also a growing interest for the industrial arts. Their promotion and the development of instruction in this area were becoming primordial concerns for many of the country's museums. The history museum as a developing concept – indeed according to Lafontant-Vallotton (2007: 24) nearly all important Swiss history museums were created between 1870 and 1900 – was invested with a second identity and mission in this context: to provide high quality models of artistic production in order to educate contemporary artists, artisans and other creative skilled workers.

In light of these strong motivational factors and arguments, the principal of the national museum was finally voted by the parliament in 1890. As mentioned above, a bitter competition ensued to decide which city should come to host the national museum; in the running were the towns of Zurich, Bern, Lucerne and Basel (Sturzenegger, 1999). The violence of the parliamentary debate that the situation incurred is very much representative of the tensions that structure Swiss cultural policy, as it pitted the partisans of a strong central state against the federalists (very much supported by the directors of the already numerous large cantonal museums, largely opposed to the idea of a national museum). Angst promoted the town of Zurich as the most suitable city, presenting the idea that it should finance the building of the museum and provide its first collections. Interestingly the federal government established an international committee including three experts to choose the city: Augustus Franks, curator from the British Museum, Alfred Darcel, director of the Cluny museum in Paris and August von Essenwein, director of the *Germanisches Nationalmuseum* in Nuremberg: they chose Bern in consideration of the value of the city's already highly precious and significant collections. However politics prevailed and Zurich was eventually chosen due to a federalist reaction of the parliament, ill inclined to have the political capital also become home to a national museum.

Swiss architect Gustav Gull (1858-1942) constructed the museum between 1892 and 1898. He took the *musée de Cluny* in Paris and the *Germanisches Nationalmuseum* in Nurnberg, both located in medieval ecclesiastical buildings, as models. The *Landesmuseum* however is rather based on a late medieval to early renaissance castle type plan and may be described as a composite historicist building whose aim was to create a coherent relationship between the collections and the building that was to house them (Lafontant Vallotton, 2008: 278). For the elaboration of the interior decoration the architect used as many authentic and antique elements as possible (Draeyer, 1999: 59).

The national museum had been created despite much reticence and fear that it would drain financial resources and works of art from already existing municipal and cantonal institutions. Its status and position in relation to them was thus clearly defined and restricted. In order to maintain harmonious and fruitful relations with other Swiss cantonal museums, it founded an association to unite different museums in a common cause '*Verband der Schweizerischen Altertums-Sammlungen*'. However it remained caught in competitive relationships with the historical museums of Bern and Basel, which both opened their doors in 1894. Bern's collections especially had been considered as superior to those of Zurich in terms of national antiquities but also because they boasted important series of foreign art and archaeology: fields of material culture that the national museum was never to develop, mainly so as not to run into any further competition with other major cantonal and municipal museums.

In 1892, Heinrich Angst was named as the director of Zurich's *Landesmuseum*, chosen for his expertise and connections in the world of the Swiss and international art markets, a necessary quality for a museum that was to be built nearly from scratch. The museum's first collections were made of those donated by the city of Zurich and the objects acquired by the confederation from 1894 onwards. These included the prehistoric collections of the Dr. Victor Gross related to the civilisations *lacustres* and bought by the confederation in 1884. According to Kaeser (2006), **the acquisition of this collection had been** one of the major catalysts for the definite creation of the national museum.

The museum's collecting policies also manifested an interest for objects of 'cultural history' related to the past lifestyles of different categories of the Swiss population: rural artisan work, costumes and agricultural tools. This reorientation towards more historic objects was due to the entry of the collections of the Zurich Society of Antiquarians in 1892 (*Antiquarische Gesellschaft*). So it was conceived of as a museum of *Kulturgeschichte* and, from the beginning, the picturesque was privileged through a series of period rooms; indeed the whole institution was to present itself as 'a picture book of Swiss history' (Schwarz, 1948: 9). For Furger (1998: 11) its scope has considerably widened since its creation and now seeks to be more balanced. According to him, when founded, the *Landesmuseum* concentrated very much on demonstrating ancient origins in a remote past. "Today its curators prefer to stress the importance of a comprehensive collection that covers every epoch in our history from the Stone Age to the Present". He describes its mission as encyclopaedic in terms of Swiss culture, indeed, its "legal obligation was to collect and publicly exhibit objects that reflect the history of Swiss culture from its very beginnings down to the present day. This essentially encyclopaedic approach was established during the 19th century and has been maintained ever since (Furger, 1998: 15).

However according to Laffontant Vallotton (2007: 205) despite these efforts three historical periods are clearly dominant in terms of the volume of their collections: the early modern period, prehistory and the early middle ages. The predominance of decorative arts from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century may be explained by the development of an art historical line of interpretation from the 1870s onwards that considered that national Swiss art began to exist from the sixteenth century onwards and was not so much expressed in monuments of 'high art' but in the more modest artisan type creations such as stained glass, metalwork, ceramics, wood sculptures and wood-work in general. It was underlined that these more modest domestic arts illustrated the efforts of a free bourgeois population rather than representing an art commanded by aristocrats and powerful men of the cloth. So it is that these so called minor art forms became particularly important in the acquisition policy of the *Landesmuseum* in its founding years as the products of national artistic genius (Laffontant, 2007: 185). These have come to represent the main contingent of the National museum's collections. It is interesting to note that the *Landesmuseum* was not established in the spirit of the fine arts paradigm so strongly present in other early national museums in countries such as France, Belgium or the Netherlands that had been created at the beginning of the nineteenth century. As defined by Schärer (Lapaire, Schärer, 1984: 125): 'The Museum's purpose is to acquire only objects that were made in Switzerland or were demonstrably used in the territory of modern-day Switzerland. Thus, the collection includes objects, primarily archaeological finds, from ancient and early history, weapons and inventories from the former Zürich Armoury, flags, uniforms, gold and silver, pewter, ceramics and glass,

textiles, costumes, coins, seals, stained glass, sculptures, paintings and prints, furniture as well as complete interiors, clocks, musical instruments, toys, farming implements and antique tools.'

The museum has, in the last five years, undergone complete renovation and expansion (Furger; Sieber, 2008) in the context of which the authors of the project hoped to reconsider the museographical conception of a museum that they consider to be out of touch with contemporary Swiss society. The new project has sought to work reflexively with the narratives, constructed at the end of the nineteenth century and which need to be interpreted differently today: they can no longer be accepted for what they are but need to be shown in the context that established them. The organizers of the project eliminated the idea of preserving them integrally (or even in part) as they argued that such a project would transform it into a museum for the history of history and museums (Furger, 2000: 97). The objective of the new project has been to find a place for contemporary history that presents an open-ended, non-definitive narrative of the twentieth century, placing the Swiss nation in a new post-communist context of Europe. The has moved the museum away from its very definite applied arts orientation to a stronger historical line but also from a chronologically organized presentation towards a more thematic approach. The decorative arts that played a fundamental role in the creation of the museum found their place in the so-called 'Collections gallery', including furniture, costumes and armour. However, the core of the museum is now 'The History of Switzerland' gallery which takes the visitor from the earliest populations to present day by the means of four separate themes – the first is the history of early settlements and migration, the second is religious or spiritual history and political history and economic development are the third and fourth thematic orientation.

Swiss Alpine Museum

For Kaeser (2004: 51), the lakes and the mountains held a similarly important and romanticised place in the Swiss imagination of a nation defined mainly through its territorial specificity (rather than through a linguistic or a religious community). The role of the mountain and a discourse related to its place in Swiss culture was developed by writers from the eighteenth century onwards, its pastures came to symbolize a place preserved from the upheavals of the modern era, a place of authenticity that could not be tamed despite the context of industrialisation and the development of an urban lifestyle related to rural exodus. A political national relationship to the mountains can be traced back to Alfred Escher's speech at the opening session of Parliament in 1850 in which he related the Alps to the notion of a 'high altar of freedom' (Jost, 1988: 19). It found civil expression in the creation of the Swiss Alpine Club in 1863.

The importance of the mountains as a place of Swiss identity was represented in the creation of the Swiss Alpine Museum (1905) that developed out of a private associative initiative in the Swiss Alpine Club section of Bern (in parallel to a similar initiative undertaken at the same time in Geneva). Since its creation it has benefited from continuous expansion and development, moving into a new building in 1934 and it was completely renovated in 1993. For the last four decades it has also received regular federal funding for its expansion and for the organization of temporary exhibitions.

Its creation and positive evolution are witness to the continuing important of the mountains as a cultural asset, and even as one of the iconic expressions of the Swiss state. In a sense, the museum feeds on the same nostalgic relationship to a rural past as the Open Air museum of

Ballenberg. The museum's discourse today seeks to contribute to the notion of sustainable development, heightening awareness of the mountain's fragile eco-system and the impact of human economic activities (http://www.alpinesmuseum.ch/index.php?article_id=5&clang=2).

Ballenberg: a national representation of country life

The Ballenberg open-air museum offers itself to the visitor as a place to 'experience the past' of 'Switzerland as it used to be' (Museum website, <http://www.ballenberg.ch/en/Welcome>, accessed 22 October 2010). Set in a beautiful mountain landscape, the museum is made up of 'more than one hundred century-old buildings from all over Switzerland, 250 farmyard animals, traditional, old-time gardens and fields, demonstrations of local crafts and many special events creating a vivid impression of rural life in days gone by. Ballenberg is indeed unique. These different architectures aim to demonstrate the cultural diversity in terms of construction and lifestyle in rural Switzerland, as stated by the museum's website again: "let it be said that there is no such thing as a typically Swiss farmhouse style. The fact that Switzerland is centrally located and thus influenced by different cultures, not only adds to the unique diversity of languages and life styles, but also leads to an impressive variety of building types."

The open-air museum at Ballenberg, opened in 1978, although not administratively a federally run museum, is supported financially by federal and cantonal authorities through the fund for the 'Swiss Open Air Museum'. However it certainly represents the expression of a desire to show a nationally representative picture of country life. Since the 1950s, the history of rurality as a strong component of Swiss culture has met with great resonance in terms of museum creation, as can be observed in the exceptional multiplication of *heimatmuseen* throughout its territory. Switzerland counted 12 museums of this type in 1900, about 50 in 1937 and over 200 in 1969 (Lapaire, Schärer, 1984: 26). Although not repositories of prestigious objects but of regional ethnology and culture, such museums provide moving evidence of a rural lifestyle that is rapidly disappearing. At Ballenberg, this widespread local nostalgia is given national amplitude. The importance and representative value of this theme can be traced back to the national fairs of 1896 and 1914, in both cases the Village Suisse (Geneva, 1896) and the *Dörfli* (Bern, 1914) became the aesthetic expressions of Swiss identity (Jost, 1988: 17). The principal was further developed in 1939 during the preparation of the *Landesausstellung* in Zurich that was to lead to the creation of two separate associative groups in the 1960s: the "*Aktion Bauernhausforschung*" and the "*Verein zur Schaffung eines Freilichtmuseums Ballenberg*". Again as had been the case for the *Landesmuseum*, the evolution of the project was hampered by a conflict concerning the actual location of the museum. A federal commission was set up to study the case for a range of sites, with strong support for the project also being formulated by the canton of Bern. Ballenberg ob Brienz was selected in 1968 from a choice of six possible locations (Rubli, 1995: 84).

Today the museum seeks to present an alternative kind of history from that of major political events based, as it states on its website, on "the biographies of kings, aristocrats and rich citizens or dealing with military campaigns and extraordinary events." It claims that up until recently "the life of the ordinary people was not regarded as a suitable subject." Its main intellectual objective is to promote the history of rural everyday life as social history, with a particular emphasis on the history of women.

Latenium of Neuchâtel: exploring a national myth

Neuchâtel's Latenium opened its doors in 2001, in a new modernist building that was conceived of as a dialectical exchange between the museum's interiors and the immediate outside environment. The Latenium is a museum and an archaeological park, situated on the edge of the Neuchâtel Lake at the foot of the Jura mountains and facing the Alps (like the Ballenberg Open-Air museum it profits from this beautiful and suitable setting for the subject matter of the museum). Today it is Switzerland's largest archaeological museum. Its name is a direct reference to the La Tène civilization, a Celtic civilization that was present across Europe from 450 to 50 BC; the museum however, illustrates themes from prehistory to the Middle Ages in both a regional and European perspective. The first collections of the museum came from Neuchâtel's municipal Museum of Art and History. No longer capable of presenting to the public, they handed them over to the cantonal state in 1952 under the responsibility of which they were provisionally housed in a different building. However it was the important series of new discoveries made in the 1960s due to major public work programs that led to the idea for a new museum in 1979. Its principal source of financing for the museum is the canton of Neuchâtel, the project for a new museum was accepted after a cantonal vote of the population in 1996, allowing Neuchâtel to provide the 21,5 million euros necessary for the construction of the new museum.

Though resolutely regional in administrative terms, the themes and history of the collections related to the so called lakeside civilizations place the museum clearly in a context of the history of national discourses on Swiss origins as was illustrated in a 2008 exhibition held in the *Latenium* in collaboration with the National Museum in Zurich, 'The imagery of the *lacustre*, vision of an immersed civilization'. Organized by Marc-Antoine Kaeser (2004: 56-64), the current director of the *Latenium*, it retraced the role of these lakeside civilisations in the construction of Swiss national identity. Kaeser underlines the significance of the discovery of the *Lacustres* in the nineteenth century during the same period that saw the birth of the modern Swiss confederation. This civilization provided an ideal support for a discourse of national unity in the nineteenth century mainly because more recent historical periods were already representative and instrumentalized in the context of the religious and political divisions that threatened to destabilize the young nation. National unity could only be found in the far off past: whilst Early medieval times were often referred to as a strong reference for the birth of a national principal, Kaeser (2004: 58) remarks that with the development of critical historical method in the nineteenth century, stronger scrutiny of many of the national legends (William Tell, the pledge of the Three Switzerlands) made them less effective.

In its presentation, the museum, which is the largest archaeological museum in Switzerland, combines a modern high-tech approach to display that presents the latest status of archaeological research whilst incorporating a reflexive turn on the history of the discipline. It presents a discourse clearly outside of the national paradigm by situating its subject - the lakeside La Tène settlements – as regional – yet directly related to the larger cultural Celtic community in a European perspective – from Ireland to Turkey (<http://www.latenium.ch/#latenium1?id=1>).

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Annex table

Name	Initiated	Inaugurated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Style Location
<u>Group of museums officially defined as the "Swiss national museum"</u>							
Swiss National Museum, Schweizerischen Landesmuseum, Museo Nazionale Svizzero, Musée National Suisse	Discussion began in 1883, federal foundation act, 27 June 1890	1898	Swiss federal parliamentary act, built by the city of Zurich. SNM (Swiss national museum)	State	Medieval Religious Art, Religious History, National History, Prehistoric and Ancient Archaeology on National Ground	Swiss cultural history: "several thousand years of the creative cultural activity of Switzerland's inhabitants". (Zwingli room), weapons and armour, military history, regional arts and crafts, clothing.	Zurich, 19 th c. neo-gothic castle.
Schloss Wildegge	Donated to the state about 1900	1912	Formerly part of the SNM – since 2010, managed by the canton of Argovie	State/cantonal	House and garden to visit: hosts temporary history exhibitions organised by the SNM.	Interiors from the 16 th to 19 th .	Castle perched above the village or Wildegge.
Swiss Customs Museum Cantine di Gandria	Border post until 1921	1949 (nationalised in 1970)	Directly affiliated to the SNM	State	Installation on smuggling and border control: objects hidden in baggage.		Former border guard's outpost, south shore of Lake Lugano across from Gandria.
Guilde house «Zur Meisen» Zurich		1956	Directly affiliated to the SNM	State	National Craft and Artisanat	Collection of porcelain and faience of the 18th century, mainly produced in Zurich by Kilchberg-Schooren.	Housed in Zurich in a house from about 1750.
Museum Bäregasse		1976 (but closed in 2008)	Formerly affiliated to the SNM, today city of Zurich	State	Cultural History, Museum of Historic Rooms	Period rooms as interiors of the city of Zurich (1650-1840) using collections that were part of the Landesmuseum.	

Museum für Musikautomaten, Schweiz		1979		State	Cultural History	World's largest collection of mechanical musical machines,	Seewen
Forum Schweizer Geschichte Schwyz, Swiss National Museum	1991	1995	Directly affiliated to the SNM	State	National Cultural Heritage/Material Culture	National cultural history, object based and multi-media, illustrating everyday life of the Swiss confederates from 1300 to 1800.	Schwyz, Alpine region, housed in a former granary and arsenal.
Château de Prangins: Swiss National Museum	Donation 1975, rehabilitation	1998	Donation of the cantons of Vaud and Geneva to the Suisse Confederation	State	National Political and Economical History, 18 th and 19 th c.		Prangins, above Lake Geneva, château dating from 1730.
<u>Museums whose principal source of finance is federal or that receive regular funding</u>							
Graphische Sammlung der Eidgenössischen Technischen Hochschule (Print collection of the Swiss federal Institute of Technology)		1867	State owned and funded by OFC, Federal Office of Culture		Art	Very important collection of prints. Italian Renaissance, but also German and Dutch artist. Swiss prints (15.-20 c.).	Zurich
Museo Vincenzo Vela	1895 (donation by the artist)	1898	State owned and funded by OFC, Federal Office of Culture		Art	Sculpture collection of the work of Vincenzo Vela (1820-1891) and Lorenzo Vela. And by the painter Spartaco Vela. (fonds d'atelier de Vincenzo).	Lignoretto
Schweizerisches Alpines museum	1905	1934 (current building)	Regular federal funding. Dept of Environment, Transport, Energy	Municipal	History, Geology, Cartography, Alpinism	Alpine region	Bern

Klostermuseum St. Georgen	1929		Owned by the Gottfried Keller foundation and funded by OFC, Federal Office of Culture		Cultural and Religious History and Art	The Benedictine Abbey of Saint Georgen is one of the most important historical monuments from the late middle ages and early Renaissance in Switzerland.	Stein am Rhein
Swiss theater museum		1944	Regular federal funding. From the OFC, Federal Office of Culture		Cultural History	Theater history from the Greeks, Shakespeare, up until the present day. Architectural models of theater constructions.	Bern
Oskar Reinhart collection	1951 (donation)		State owned and funded by OFC, Federal Office of Culture	Donated to the city of Winterthur	Art	Collection of considerable importance, Swiss, German and Austrian artists of the 18 th to the 10 th c.	Winterthur
Verkehrshaus der Schweiz, transport museum		1959	Regular federal funding. Dept of foreign affairs		Museum of Transport History	Airplanes, cars...	Lucerne
Swiss science center Technorama		1982	Regular federal funding. Dept of interior. State Secretary for Education and Research		Science and Technology Museum	Over 500 interactive displays investigating physical sciences. Also the largest collection of toy trains in the world.	Winterthur
Musée international de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant Rouge		1988	Regular federal funding. Dept of interior		Political/ Military History	Iconographic collection illustrating the history of the Red-Cross, collection of objects belonging to prisoners. Family archives...	Geneva
Fotostiftung Schweiz		2003	Regular federal funding. From the OFC Federal Office of Culture		Art	Swiss photography from 1840 to present day. Collection of classics of international photography.	

<u>Major municipal museums of national importance</u>							
Kunstmuseum Basel	Collections go back to 16th century; 1849, first important building and full public access	1936 current building		Municipal	Art	European old masters collection of importance.	
Historische Museum Bern/Einstein Museum	1840, opening to the public of a history collection based on the town treasure, 1881, founding of the Historical Museum	1894, opening in current building		Municipal	History, Archaeology, Ethnography, Numismatics, Coupled with a Biographical Museum dedicated to the life and work of Albert Einstein (since 1979)	A more universal collection compared with Zurich's historical collections, besides archaeological collections going back to prehistoric times of the Bern region, and large cultural history collection: arms uniforms, flags but also decorative arts. Universal coin collection, small greco-roman antiques collection. Ethnographic collections representing all the continents.	Constructed in Bern in 1894 in the historicist style of Swiss 15th and 16th century castles.
Geneva, Museum of Art and History	The fine arts museum opened in 1826. But decision to unite different types of museums in Geneva in one central institution under one roof = 1900.	1910, (present building)		Municipal	Archaeology, Art and Applied arts	Regional and European prehistory, oriental and greco-roman antiquity; European old masters... Swiss art of the 19 th and 20 th c. One of the most universal collections in Switzerland.	
Ethnographical Museum of Neuchâtel	1795	1904	Coupled with the University of Neuchâtel Ethnography Institut	Municipal	Ethnography	Universal collection representing all the continents with a department dedicated to European folklore or popular art.	Neuchâtel

Kunsthaus Zürich	Art Exhibits began in 1799, by the Zürich Art Assoc. And it is a permanent public museum since 1847.	1910 (present building)	Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft	Associative	Fine arts	Flemish masters. Representative of collection of 19th century swiss painting. Wide ranging collection of swiss prints. French and Swiss sculpture. Notably the largest collection of Giacometti. (Until 1920 it had collected only Swiss art).	Heimplatz, the current building dates to 1907-1910.
Neuchâtel: Latanium, park and archaeological museum	1979	2001	Canton of Neuchâtel	Cantonal	Archaeology, Préhistoire	Region of Neuchâtel and Môtiers, some of the most important prehistoric collections in Switzerland.	On the shore of the lake of Neuchâtel.
<u>Museums titled as "Swiss" or whose collections have specific national resonance</u>							
Schloss Landshut, Schwiezer museum für Wild und Jagd		1968		Municipal	Country Life, Culture		Utzensdorf in the canton of Bern.
Swiss Open-Air Museum, Ballenberg	1939	1978	Supported financially by federal and cantonal authorities through the Fund for the "Swiss Open Air Museum"	Private run by a foundation	Country Architecture, Country Life, Cultural History	Living culture and customs of Switzerland in all styles and materials representing all the regions and different craft techniques. 80 homes and farm buildings rebuilt and restored.	Town of Ballenberg in the Canton of Bern.
Birthouse of Huldrych Zwingli		1910			Biographical Museum, Religious History	Period rooms, collection of bibles	House where the reformer Zwingli was born in 1484, in the town of Wildhaus.
Museum of Swiss citizens abroad (Musée des Suisses dans le Monde)		1964			Political, Military, Economic, Diplomatic, Litterary History	History of Swiss citizen's achievements abroad.	In the castle of Penthes, canton of Geneva.

Swiss Jewish Museum		1966	Association for the Jewish museum of Switzerland	Associative	Cultural History	Art and cult objects of jewish culture	Basel
Musée d'Horlogerie du Locle		1959			Material Culture, Industry	Set in the home of an 18 th century watchmaker, collections of watches, clocks, automates etc.	Locle in the Canton of Neuchâtel.
Musée de l'alimentation/Alimentarium		1985 (renovated in 2002)		Nestlé funded, Alimentarium foundation	Cultural History of Food	A permanent interdisciplinary display looks at the realm of food from the point of view of history, ethnology and science.	Vevey (Suisse), housed in the first administrative headquarters of the Nestlé company.



National Museums in the Republic of Turkey: Palimpsests within a Centralized State

Wendy M. K. Shaw

Summary

This study considers how the various forms of the museum within the Turkish context serve in the production of a decentralized national narrative that becomes replicated to reify Turkish identity through multiple, non-hierarchized heritage sources. Through the overlay of institutions established during these periods, contemporary Turkish museums, whether public or private, serve as museums of the nation not because of their conceptual cohesion or administrative centralization, but because through this layering, they express the many competing threads through which national culture and heritage construct a complex, and at times contradictory, national narrative which enables competing segments of the population to coexist. The study provides a chronological survey of the development of museums with a special focus on five key case studies that each reflects changing relationships between the state, the nation, and the concept of the museum in various eras of Turkey's history.

In the Republic of Turkey, the Ottoman emphasis on museums of archaeology and military spolia became transformed into an emphasis on historic museums as a means of glorifying early imperial history and differentiating the republic from its Ottoman past; ethnographic-archaeological museums as a means of inscribing a unified historical and ethnological map of the country, particularly Anatolia; and, more recently, using art (in lieu of archaeology) as a signal of participation in European cultural practices, particularly among urban elite audiences. As explored in this report, these types can be best understood as a complex palimpsest of the four historical eras of national identity production during which different museum typologies were introduced for different needs: the late Ottoman era (1839-1922); the early Republican era (1922-1960); the era between two eras of military rule (1961-1983) and the current era (1984- 2010). The study will also focus on five key case studies that each reflects changing relationships between the state, the nation, and the concept of the museum in various eras of Turkey's history: the Ottoman Imperial Museum (1846); the Topkapi Palace Museum (1924); the Ethnographic Museum (1928); the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations (1968) and the Istanbul Modern Museum of Art (2004).

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
Ottoman Imperial Museum	1869	1846	Ministry of Education	Ottoman Empire	Archaeological	Territorial	Prehistory-18 th c.	Purpose-built on former palace grounds, Neo-Classical style, Istanbul.
Topkapi Palace Museum	1924	1910	Ministry of Education	Republic of Turkey	Historical	Territorial	15 th – 19 th c.	Historical site, Istanbul.
Ethnographic Museum	1928	1922	Ministry of Education	Republic of Turkey	Ethnographic	Territorial	18 th -20 th c.	Purpose-built, Neo-Ottoman style at former religious site, Istanbul.
Museum of Anatolian Civilizations	1968	1941 (as Hittite Museum)	Ministry of Education	Republic of Turkey	Archaeological	Territorial	Pre-history to 14 th c.	Historical site, purpose-built annex in universal modern style, Istanbul.
Istanbul Modern Museum of Art	2004		Eczacıbaşı Corporation	Eczacıbaşı Corporation	Art	Territorial	20 th c.	Former customs warehouse, Istanbul.

Introduction: Nation and museum in the Republic of Turkey

If we define the concept of a national museum as a single or limited network of institutions designated for and underwritten by the state for the express purpose of expressing issues of national identity, values, and ideals, then the Republic of Turkey has no national museums. At first glance, this may appear ironic for a highly centralized nation with highly ideological narratives of national cohesion. However, the lack of centralized cohesion in the museums of Turkey bespeaks a latent reluctance not only to adopt the paradigm of the museum as a primary node of collective identity production, but also to fix a singular narrative within the institution of a single museum. This paper will consider how the various forms of the museum within the Turkish context serve in the production of a decentralized national narrative that becomes replicated to reify Turkish identity through multiple, non-hierarchized heritage sources (Kushner, 1997; Zubaida, 1996). Through the overlay of institutions established during these periods, contemporary Turkish museums, whether public or private, serve as museums of the nation not because of their conceptual cohesion or administrative centralization, but because through this layering, they express the many competing threads through which national culture and heritage construct a complex, and at times contradictory, national narrative which enables competing segments of the population to coexist.

Turkey has numerous characteristics that would lend themselves to the formation of a strong national museum structure. Since its inception in 1923, a key characteristic of its state structure has been strong centralization. This is clearly expressed as one of the key defining policies of the country's first political party, the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP), led by Mustafa Kemal (who received the moniker 'Ataturk' [father Turk] from parliament with the legislation of mandatory surnames in 1934) until his death in 1938 and, was the only political party in the country until after World War II. The CHP expressed its national vision through six 'arrows', understood as vectors towards the future ideal state. These were populism (conceiving the state as emerging from the populace); revolutionism (support for the War of Liberation ending in 1922, but also of the revolutionary modernizing reforms undertaken between 1928 and 1935); republicanism (support of the republic as the proper state structure for the nation); laicism (placing religious institutions under the aegis of the state and promoting a non-religious outlook as the defining feature of modernity); nationalism (participation in the Turkish nation, defined both ethnically and as a willingness to take up the national designation of being a Turk) and statism (faith in a corporate state as the economic hub of the nation). The first decades of the regime were characterized by dramatic reforms that legislated these changes through new social structures (Webster, 1939; Pfaff, 1963). State support of numerous cultural institutions, such as the establishment of state theatre, orchestra, ballet, and state control over museums, established both during the Ottoman and republican eras, points to the strong deployment of cultural institutions in the construction of a cohesive state. However, while a national museum was conceived during the complex era of nation formation, instead a network of multiple museum types came to serve the function of preserving and exhibiting the material culture of the nation under the rubric of heritage.

Rather than relying on epistemologies in which an object functions as a symbol for an idea integral to its own culture, or a synecdochal relationship with an Enlightenment project towards universal knowledge, the impetus behind Ottoman and later Turkish museums can be understood as a translation of European forms in an effort to participate in modern cultural systems. Thus, although often conceived as spaces of conditioning citizens, they often function more effectively for foreign visitors enculturated with the museum ideal. As translations, such institutions have relied on select examples from Europe, primarily those of France, Germany, and England, while also responding to local political impulses. The types of collections housed in Turkish museums thus differ considerably from dominant trends in European counterparts. Instead of focusing on museums of art, science/industry, and history, Ottoman museums focused on archaeological preservation and military exhibition. In the Republic of Turkey, the Ottoman emphasis on museums of archaeology and military spolia became transformed into an emphasis on historic museums as a means of glorifying early imperial history and differentiating the republic from its Ottoman past; ethnographic-archaeological museums as a means of inscribing a unified historical and ethnological map of the country, particularly Anatolia; and, more recently, using art (in lieu of archaeology) as a signal of participation in European cultural practices, particularly among urban elite audiences. As explored in this report, these types can be best understood as a complex palimpsest of the four historical eras of national identity production during which different museum typologies were introduced for different needs: the late Ottoman era (1839-1922); the early Republican era (1922-1960); the era between two eras of military rule (1961-1983) and the current era (1984- 2010). The study will also focus on five key case studies that each reflects changing relationships between the state, the nation, and the concept of the museum in various eras of Turkey's history: the Ottoman Imperial Museum (1846); the Topkapi Palace Museum (1924); the Ethnographic Museum (1928); the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations (1968) and the Istanbul Modern Museum of Art (2004).

National museums and cultural policy in the Republic of Turkey

Ottoman museums (1839 – 1922) and their transition to the Turkish republic

With regard to the question of national museums in the Republic of Turkey, museums established during the Ottoman era need to be considered less as a prehistory to Turkish museums but as the first layer of the museological palimpsest in Turkey that establishes the conceptual foundations of the function of the museum in the country. While European museums largely developed from private collections of art and ultimately were often categorized through epistemological models rooted in natural history, Ottoman museums were rooted in military collections rather than in collections of art or other treasures, and branched out towards the collection of antiquities not through an interest in the works per se, but through an interest in territorial protectionism coinciding with military power (Shaw, 2003). Located in the former Byzantine Church of Hagia Irene, in the first courtyard of the imperial palace and in use as an arsenal since the sixteenth century, the Armory (*Dar ül-Aslibau*) served as the first space of display in the empire, featuring not only military spolia

but also relics inherited from the Byzantine era. Open to the perusal of private guests of the sultan, the collection served as a space of exhibition both through its viewing and through popular knowledge of the presence of relics within it. In 1846, the collection opened to the public in the new guise of the Magazine of Antique Weapons coupled with the Magazine of Antiquities, consisting of ancient inscriptions and sculptures salvaged by local administrators in response to a directive from the central government to protect such works from the predations of European travellers, collectors, and archaeologists. The 1869 renaming of the institution as the Ottoman Imperial Museum indicated an ideological shift towards national representation coinciding with the progressive loss of the empire's provinces and its subsequent redefinition of its collective identity. The closure of the weaponry collection and the relocation of the museum to the nearby fifteenth century Tiled Pavilion of the palace marked an equally important shift in the expression of cultural, rather than military identity, and the desired affiliation of that identity as one coincident with the heritage of Europe rather than one defined by conquest and conflict with it. This vision for an Ottoman identity tied to European heritage through a shared antique heritage grew between 1880 and 1910 under the directorship of the museum's first Ottoman director, Osman Hamdi, who broadened its scope in a purpose-built building, where the museum moved in 1891.

New directives for the museum's structure issued by the Council of State in 1889, as well as its organizational structure and catalogue information, suggest strong epistemological differences with European national museums. Although the directive called for the establishment of a collection of natural history, the conceptual backbone of many nineteenth century developmental display strategies, the museum administration actively resisted its realization. Even more surprising, despite Osman Hamdi's concurrent activity as one of the country's most renowned painters, the museum included no provisions for a museum of Western-style art. In addition, like the antiquities collections, the display of which followed a territorial rather than a developmental model, the Islamic collections established in 1891 emerged less as an attempt to use works as a means of expressing a broader cultural narrative through them than as a means of asserting territorial integrity and resistance to European practices of antiquities collection, understood as a form of imperial penetration. Although not explicitly part of the museum's program, the removal of objects from locations of worship for the purpose of protection shifted their meaning from a votive to a historical-aesthetic epistemology. Thus in contrast to the Western understanding of art, and the contextualization of antiquities within such an epistemological model, the Ottoman understanding of the museum did not regard the works within as metonymic expressions of a metanarrative viewed within the work, but rather regarded the museum institution as a whole as indicative of a metanarrative of modernization, collusion with Western civilization, and resistance to European imperial incursion. Nonetheless, in the framework of national museums as applied to the Turkish context, the Ottoman Imperial Museum has a unique place in that it is the only single museum that ever attempted a comprehensive representation of a national ideology, particularly through the inclusion of various departments and the establishment of branch institutions.

Although the Turkish Republic, founded by leaders of the Young Turk movement that gained power after the Second Constitutional Revolution of 1909, maintained this strong affiliation between

modernization and Westernization, the ethno-national emphasis adopted in the Turkish republic made this type of territorial appeal to a pan-European pre-history less pertinent in later eras. While it was only renamed as the Istanbul Archaeological Museum in the 1920s, its role as a center had already decreased in the 1910s as alternative exhibitionary institutions began to proliferate as part of the growth of civil society after the Second Constitutional Revolution of 1909 and the death of its powerful director (Osman Hamdi) in 1910. The reopening of an independent Military Museum in the Church of Hagia Irene in 1913 (where it remained until 1940), the 1914 segregation of the Islamic collections into a separate museum in a former school (madrasa) associated with the Suleymaniye Mosque (the Museum of Pious Foundations), the arrangement of the treasury and the collection of Chinese porcelains for purposes of exhibition at the former imperial palace (known as the Topkapı Palace), and the emergence of a collection of copies as part of the arts academy the same year serve as an early indication of the decentralization of museums which would continue to characterize the development of Turkey's museum even during its most heated era of national identity construction following the establishment of the republic in 1923 (Shaw, 2003; Shaw, 2011).

Museums and centralization in the early republic (1922-1960)

While museums of the Republic of Turkey maintained the general ideological outlook of Ottoman museums in that objects were used as metonyms for territoriality rather than being situated in an aesthetic discourse of art, the shift in focus from Greco-Roman to Anatolian antiquities and from military spolia to ethnographic artifacts underscored the ideological shift from imperial to ethnically based national identity. While in the early years of the republic, a national museum was part of a broader program of constructing this identity; the actual political and financial issues raised by the establishment of museums led to a series of institutions that function(ed) in concert in the construction of national identity.

In his *Essentials of Turkism*, published in 1923, the foundation year of the republic, one of the primary architects of Turkish nationalism, Ziya Gökalp, repeatedly mentioned the idea of a national museum as a core element in the formation of national culture. However, for him, it is the people themselves who are a "living museum" of national culture that the elite, educated through Western schools, need to visit in order to construct national identity. Metaphorically he explains that, "...thus the *Patrie* is a museum, an exhibit even, of the beauties of religion, morality, and aesthetics." Yet his understanding of a museum is also literal. "It is necessary," he writes, "to revive the coffeehouses where the military epics of the people are read, the nights of the holy month of Ramazan, Friday potluck dinners, and the joyous holidays for which children waited with impatience every year; and to collect the people's art and put it into national museums." His list of institutions necessary to "reveal national culture from the secret corners where it is hidden and place it before the eyes of the enlightened elites" includes a national museum, an ethnographic museum, a national archive, a library of national history, and a general directorate of statistics. While each of these institutions seem to parallel institutions familiar from their Western counterparts, they differ considerably in that he envisions them as emerging from the people rather than from the state. He points out that, in contrast to the Topkapı Palace Museum, which he understood as featuring works of European origin

displaying imperial wealth, a truly national museum would exhibit the “genius” of the national aesthetic through the exhibition of works of everyday use by and for the people that were being sold to Western museums: “curtains, carpets, shawls, silk fabrics, old carpentry and metalwork, tiles, calligraphic panels, illuminated manuscripts, fine bindings, and crafted Qur’ans.” He identifies such a collection in the Museum of Pious Foundations, which had inherited the Islamic collections of the Imperial Museum and had been reorganized by Friedrich Sarre, the future director of the Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin, in 1911-1913. However, Gökalp points out that such a museum needs to be national, both in its scope and its address. He also differentiates this national museum from his rendition of an ethnographic museum, which would collect the contemporary life of the nation rather than its historical products, housed in the national museum, and would emphasize a regional scope for the collections. In addition, it would invest in all sorts of practices of recording: photographs of architecture, costumes, and practices; sound recordings of songs and tales; record keeping of games and dances. Implicit in such a program, of course, is the projected demise of such a contemporary culture, to serve as the root of a national aesthetic not for future reproduction, but for the inspiration of a modern national aesthetic.

However, before an Ethnographic Museum emerged as the first fully realized attempt at a national museum in the country’s new capital city of Ankara, at the time still a small provincial town, work towards a national museum housing historical military artifacts and antiquities preserved from the fighting, was already underway. Individuals working within the provisional republican government began to collect works for a national, cultural museum in the fortress, where they set aside two small rooms with some glass cases. The museum was envisioned as bringing together archaeological artifacts, historical signet rings, small collectibles, embroideries, lacework, printed fabrics, and costumes. Founded officially in 1921, in 1924 the museum was still seeking funding for the production of an inventory and a budget for purchasing works throughout Anatolia. When the collection opened in 1925, it had practically no contents. The same year, the Directorate of Culture was established with a mandate to “protect national culture and raise our youth within [it].” Under consultation with the Turcologist J. Meszaros, the director of the Hungarian National Museum who had taught at Istanbul University, the Minister of Public Education Hamdullah Suphi (Tanrıöver) took on the project of a museum that would begin with an ethnographic-anthropological orientation rooted in collections culled from throughout Turkey, but which would include archaeological research to establish a scientific dimension. Like the ethnographic museum envisioned by Gökalp, this museum project envisioned the populace as both the font of national culture and as facing eminent extinction under the inevitable tides of modernization (Shaw, 2007).

Although at the foundation-laying ceremony of 1925, the museum was still referred to under several names – the Imperial Treasury, the Museum of the People, the National Museum, and the Culture Museum, by its public opening in 1930 it had become the Ethnography Museum. Located on an important hill overlooking the new city on the site of a former open site of public prayer and beside the new building of the Turkish Hearth, an organ of the ruling People’s Republic Party, the museum housed everyday items collected from the populace in all regions of the country as well as historical works from dervish lodges which had been forcibly closed in 1924. Whereas in Istanbul,

the Museum of Pious Foundations displayed similar works under the rubric of Islamic Art, the first museum of the capital, the Ethnographic museum, presented costumes and items from everyday life alongside objects of religious utility as sources for a national culture in a framework that would historicize them against the modernizing impetus of the city and the national ideology. The secularization of signs of religious devotion by shifting the act of the gaze from one of worship to one of aesthetic appreciation was part and parcel of the secularist ideology of the republican regime, and was inscribed not only by the Ethnography Museum, but also through the establishment of the Konya Museum of Antiquities in 1927 at the site of the tomb of Celaladdin Rumi, a thirteenth-century poet acknowledged by many as a spiritual master. While the establishment of the museum was presented as a means of preserving the cultural heritage embodied by the tomb, the transformation of such a site of worship from a holy to a secular site was also a clear statement against the powerful religious brotherhoods that had traditionally provided an alternative to the centralized power of the state. Likewise, the establishment of the Museum of Hagia Sophia in 1935 not only used the policy of secularism to cast the building less as a palimpsest of religious practices than as one of cultural histories, where Byzantine and Ottoman legacies were to be shown side by side and equally defunct (Shaw, 2002). A similar phenomenon can be observed with the downplaying of the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art when it reopened after its protective wartime closure in 1939 to a less central site (again a former madrasa) near the Valens Aqueduct in 1949. In contrast to the under-attended Ethnography Museum or Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art, however, the Mevlana Museum (renamed from the Konya Museum of Antiquities in 1954, during the populist regime of the Democratic party), the Museum of the Tomb of Hacı Bektaş (established in 1964), and the Hagia Sophia Museum remain among the most popular museums among Turkish visitors because of their continuing religious associations (Özbey, 2011).

The integration of center and periphery affected by the museum was emphasized by its proximity to the Turkish Hearth Building, the central node in a network of People's Houses established by the CHP in each city in order to inculcate the populace with republican ideologies (Karpas, 1974). Through these People's Houses, people were encouraged to help contribute to the local museums often established to collect artifacts from local archaeological sites. Thus people learned to identify their land with a narrative of national history as had been expressed in the Turkish Historical Thesis and popularized in national histories derived from *A General Outline of Turkish History* (1930). Throughout the country, small collections of archaeological artifacts established in regional centers were designated as museums, although many never actually opened until the further centralization of regional museums in the 1960s. [Table 1]

The 1935 of proto-Hittite sites in central and northern Anatolia led to the emphasis on Hittite identity as a model for Turkish autochthoneity, which like its ethnography, was mapped onto the Anatolian landscape. This association was strengthened with the opening of the Hittite Museum the Ankara fortress in 1945, the regional model that coupled ethnographic and archaeological collections as the two divisions of a normal museum became was established through two separate institutions in the capital. Like the Museum of Pious Foundations, the museum was originally organized by a European specialist, the Hittitologist Hans Güterbock, who saw it as an unparalleled opportunity for

a comparative history of Hittite history. The museum was conceived at the apogee of the Turkish Historical Thesis, which posited the Hittites as proto-Turkic, thus implying Aryan and autochthonous roots for modern Turks (Shaw, 2008; Tanyeri-Erdemir, 2006).

While the museums of the early republican era naturally emerged in the capitol city Ankara as a means of constructing national identity, with its vastly larger population and ponderous legacy, Istanbul remained the cultural capitol of the nation. As such, the new state had to negotiate the legacy of the Ottoman Empire: to glorify its accomplishments while vilifying its decline and naturalizing its demise (Zürcher, 1992). The first museum established in the Republic of Turkey was thus the defunct Topkapı Palace Museum, which opened to the public in 1924. By emphasizing early Ottoman history, the Topkapı Palace Museum glorifies the Ottoman legacy for the modern nation while disassociating it from the modern destruction of the empire by the republic.

However, as an era of populism that moderated many of the revolutionary impulses of the early republican era under the leadership of the CHP, the 1950s under the leadership of the Democratic Party of Adnan Menderes initiated a partial restitution of the late Ottoman period through new museums dedicated to the Ottoman era, including its later years. These included the Dolmabahçe Palace Museum, opened in 1952; the Istanbul Tanzimat Museum (1952), dedicated to the era of Ottoman reform between 1829 and 1976; the Istanbul Rumeli Hisar Museum (1958), the Istanbul Yedikule Museum (1959), dedicated to key fortresses associated with the conquest of Constantinople. The opening of the Bursa-Iznik Museum (1960), associated with the pre-conquest Ottoman era; and the Karatay Porcelain Works Museum (1955), affiliated with the pre-Ottoman, Seljuk era) also suggest a shift in emphasis from the apogee of Ottoman power towards an expanded national historiography. Similarly, the redesignation of the tomb of Celaladdin Rumi as the Mevlana Museum in 1954 signaled a relaxation in the revolutionary secularism of the early republic (Gerçek, 1999, pp. 441-447).

The late establishment of a museum of art, as well as its absence from the capital, suggests the vast difference between the institution of the museum as premised on an epistemology of art and that of the Republic of Turkey remained, even after the demise of the Ottoman Empire. Although arts played a significant role in the ideological program of the state from the beginning, and visual arts were promoted through regular state exhibitions held in the capital, an arts museum was not established until 1938 in Istanbul. Housed in the former apartments of the heir apparent at the Dolmabahçe Palace, the Istanbul Museum of Painting and Sculpture became the first permanent space devoted to the collection and display of Western-style Turkish art. Nonetheless, it remained underfunded and underattended, and was the sole museum of art in the country until the establishment of the Izmir Museum of Painting and Sculpture in 1952 (remodeled in 1973), and the Ankara Museum of Painting and Sculpture at the Turkish Hearth Building in 1981. The establishment of the Istanbul Museum of Painting and Sculpture outside the capital, in a wing of the nineteenth century Dolmabahçe Palace in Istanbul, and the relatively late proliferation of other art museums in the country underscores the relative unimportance accorded to art production in the definition of national identity through museums in Turkey (Shaw, 2011). Rather than conceiving of national culture as something linking the past with the present, Turkey's national museums have

served to identify various aspects of the past and historicized popular and religious culture as disconnected elements of a national heritage disassociated from the creation of culture.

If any single museum of the first republican era is to be considered as a predominant national museum, it would without a doubt be the Ethnographic Museum, the centrality of which was underscored when it became the temporary tomb of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk at the time of his death in 1938. However, with the temporary reduction of his stature as an iconic forefather to a political leader that characterized the rule of the Democratic Party from 1950 to 1960 and his reinterment at his permanent tomb, called Anıtkabir, in 1954, the importance of the museum decreased. With a complex architectural legacy determined in the 1940s by its architects Emin Onat and Orhan Arda, the tomb merged the kinds of devotional functions once reserved for the tombs of saints with an architectural vocabulary culled from antique Greece, Sumeria, and fascist monumentalism and decorated with Byzantine, Hittite, Sumerian, and folk motifs. A museum devoted to Atatürk opened at the tomb in 1960 underscores its function as a site of exhibition as well as one of remembrance. Along with the Ankara War of Liberation Museum (1961), the museum within Anıtkabir signals the continuing strength of Atatürkist ideology even during the 1950s when the country was first led by the oppositional Democratic Party. As the single site which all state visitors to Turkey must visit, the tomb may not officially be a national museum, but it perennially serves as the primary exhibitionary institution of the nation (Roy, 2006; Çınar, n.d.; Gerçek, 1999).

Regional proliferation of the national model under a technocratic State (1961-1983)

The 1960 military coup and the gradual reestablishment of civil government which lasted until 1965 initiated an era of top-town technocratic leadership that aimed to strengthen the policies of the early republic and counter the perceived threats of populism that had emerged during the 1950s. While no major museums were established during this period, it is marked by a systematization and nationalization of the national museum program. Rather than centralizing the national museum endeavor, however, they increased the regionalization, ensuring a similar epistemological structure throughout the country.

Initially dedicated to reestablishing the dominance of Atatürkist ideology, many museums dedicated to Atatürk and to the War for Liberation and foundation of the republic were established during this era, particularly at sites that had particular significance for the revolution. [Table 4]

During the 1960s and 1970s, the archaeological and ethnographic collections in the capital became the model for museum programming that was replicated in cities throughout the country. In 1968, the Hittite Museum was renamed and reorganized as the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations. Building on the centralized regionalism implicit in the Ethnographic Museum and Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, during the 1960s, the local archaeological depots and museums established during the early republican period were revamped into a national system of regional museums that combined the model of the ethnographic and archaeological collections in the capital. The plans for most of the museums of this era were designed in the 1960s, with an enormous proliferation of museums taking place between 1968 and 1973. This period can be seen as culminating with the 1973 institution of new antiquities legislation, replacing that which had been in force since 1906. Often

situated in sites designated as depots but never opened to the public, many museums were (re)established in this period. In cities where museums already had a dual function, collections were often moved from historic to purpose-built sites. [Table 2] In larger cities, this dual function was often created in two separate institutions. This is most clear in Istanbul, where the 1981 relocation of the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art to a more centrally-located site at the Ibrahim Paşa Palace, an 18th century mansion of a grand vizier located on the hippodrome that had been under renovation since the early 1970s. Including a new ethnographic section that somewhat incongruously emphasized the nomadic origins of Turks within a high-Ottoman residential structure, the museum reframed Islamic art as affiliated with ethnographic practices, displaying classical carpets upstairs and nomadic practices downstairs. Similarly, in Bursa, the archaeological collections moved to the early Ottoman era Yeşil Medrese, which continued to function as an archaeology museum until 1972, when the Bursa Archaeology Museum opened in a custom building. The Bursa Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts opened in 1975, housing both regional ethnographic collections and works from the early Ottoman era. Similarly, in Konya, archaeological collections that had been removed from the tomb of Celaladdin Rumi in 1954 were placed on exhibit in a new Konya Archaeological Museum opened in 1962. The Konya Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts opened in 1975. The Izmir Archaeology Museum, established in 1925, moved in 1951, and again in 1984. The rise of tourism during this era also fostered an increase in site museums during this era. While not, strictly speaking, national museums, these deserve mention within the national museum project of Turkey as key sites of the national project of representing the nation in institutions distributed throughout the country. [Table 3]

With the destabilization of the government after the silent military coup of 1971 and the subsequent political instability of both the government and society, the minimal attention already paid to museums in Turkey decreased even further. While the lack of attention paid to museums during this period limits its importance in terms of the history of the production of a national museum project in Turkey, the regionalization and standardization of museums as a national practice continued to serve as an important model during the 1980s.

Privatization of national ideology during an era of liberalization and democratization (1984-2010)

The era since the 1980s has been characterized by two distinct, but closely related, phenomena. First, the years immediately following the 1980 military coup were characterized by a nationwide mobilization of the museum as a site for reestablishing Atatürk, and through him the ideologies of the early republic, as an icon for the state. Secondly, the economic liberalization promoted by the civil government placed in power by the military government began an era of museum privatization in which major corporate players establish private museums, increasingly devoted to art, that reiterate national ideologies but without state intervention. Since the rise of moderate-Islamist governments in the mid-1990s, the proliferation of such private museums devoted to art has provided a locus of ideological expression of a national, republican opposition in keeping with the ideologies of the early republic and in opposition to the populism associated with Islamism, however democratic its roots.

One of the most prominent cultural policies of the 1981 military coup was the suppression of right and left wing opposition through the reinforcement of the political values of the early republic, as embodied in the person of Atatürk. This was perhaps most notably embodied in the statement by Kenan Evren, the leading general of the coup dressed in Atatürk's symbolic tuxedo with a top hat, on the anniversary of Atatürk's hundred birthday: "Atatürk is 100, we are 1 year old" in 1981. Throughout the country, regional museums added sections devoted to the revolution and, wherever possible, included memorabilia about Atatürk's visit(s) to the city. Where no regional museums had been established, new museums including a revolution/Atatürk section were established during the 1980s. [Table 4] In contrast to the Atatürk Museums opened after the first military coup, those of the 1980s had weaker links with historical events of the revolution and focused more on the person of Atatürk. Along similar lines, in 1982, the harem section of the Dolmabahçe Palace opened as a memorial to Atatürk, featuring the room in which he had died in 1938. This has become a major site of annual remembrance on November 11, the anniversary of his death. The importance of the military was underscored through the revival of plans to open the Military Museum, essentially closed since 1940, in a cultural complex the planning for which had begun in 1967. The long delay in the execution of these plans, and the large expenditure that enabled the opening of a new museum and cultural complex in 1993, points to the increased fiscal power of the military and its increased desire to represent Turkish history by connecting the early Ottoman legacy of conquest and the republican legacy of independence. Just as national ideology had been regionalized in the 1960s-1970s through the dispersal of regional archaeological-ethnographic museums, in the 1980s, nationalization of state ideology was affected through the dispersal of Atatürk museums throughout the country. The shifting affiliation of the 'ethnographic' from one associated with ancient antiquities to one associated with the revolutionary period – a site where Atatürk had visited – suggests a reconceptualization of folk identity from one situated in pre-history to one that entailed a continuation with popular folk memory at a time when the last generation of those who had fought in the War of Liberation were dying.

As the country returned to a civil system (with a strong backing of the military) in 1983, neo-liberal economic policies emphasized state privatization while support of the state was encouraged through increased populism. Part of this populism and privatization involved the increased mainstreaming of approved forms of religious expression, particularly of the Mevlevi dervish order. With increased power for provincial parliamentary representatives, local religious sects also gained power. Increased latitude for public religiosity was evidenced by the reestablishment of 24-hour Quranic recitation at the Rooms of the Mantle of the Prophet at the Topkapı Palace in the late-1980s, a practice that had been discontinued with the museumification of the palace (Shaw, 2010). This part of the museum subsequently came to function as a site of prayer and even minor pilgrimage, with a majority of adult Turkish visitors coming to the museum with a primary purpose of worship.

Neo-liberalization policies also increased opportunities for large corporate families and banks to invest in private museums and art institutions for the first time in Turkey. The first such institution was the Sadberk Hanım Museum (1980), dedicated to the matriarch of the Koç family, at the time

the wealthiest family in the country. Perhaps because it was the first private museum, this museum was unique among private institutions in replicating the geographically differentiated ethnographic-archaeological museum model established in Ankara and regional museums, but absent in Istanbul. With increased wealth and power due to privatization, several private banks began to underwrite major arts initiatives, with the Yapı Kredi Bank Vedat Nedim Tor Museum opening in 1992 and the Akbank Arts Centre opening in 1993, Garanti Platform Centre for Contemporary Art opening in 2000, and the Ottoman Bank Museum opening in 2002. During the same period, two other private museums for the first time privatized special interest collections through the support of major corporate funding: opening in 2002 and underwritten by the Jewish-owned Profilo corporation, the small Quincentennial Foundation Museum of Turkish Jews became the first and only museum celebrating the national role of a minority group; and opening in 2001, the Rahmi Koç Museum became the first major museum in Istanbul devoted to industry. On the one hand, such museums were enabled by privatization laws and thus implicitly reflect a support for the state. However, their general liberal inclinations, in particular of contemporary arts institutions and in contrast to relatively stagnant state institutions, can also be understood as providing a channel for cultural opposition to state policies that is somewhat segregated from actual political practice. Despite a renovation of the fortress district of Ankara in 2003-2005, including a second Rahmi Koç Museum dedicated to technology, the vast increase in Istanbul's population during the 1980s and 1990s, rendering it by far the most populous city in the country, made it the clear choice for almost all privately funded cultural enterprises.

With the rise of moderate-Islamic led governments since the mid 1990s, several corporate families have used the opening of art museums to privatize the representation of national culture through the exhibition of art (Gülalp, 2001; Lombardi, 1997). During the 2000s, fine arts museums have emerged for the first time in the century and a half old history of museums in Turkey as a primary means of representing national identity, both through their contents and through their appeal to an elite, urban, and urbane clientele following European cultural norms. Particularly during an era of populism, such elite-supported institutions emphasize a vision of state identity affiliated with Atatürkism (Özyürek, 2004). Thus the Proje4L Istanbul Centre for Contemporary Art, underwritten by the Elgiz family opened in 2001; the Sakip Sabancı University Museum at the Equestrian Mansion, funded by the Sabancı foundation under the auspices of the Sabancı family that had become one of the wealthiest corporate families during the 1980s, opened in 2002; the Istanbul Museum for Modern Art, funded by the longstanding pharmaceutical moghuls of Turkey, the Eczacıbaşı family, opened in 2004; and the Pera Museum, funded by the Suna and İnan Kırac Foundation, underwritten by one branch of the Koç Family, opened in 2005. A smaller initiative initially tied to Istanbul Bilgi University, the Santral İstanbul Arts Centre, which includes an exhibit of Istanbul's first electric company, opened in 2007 (Artan, 2008).

During this period, state initiatives have focused largely on strengthening exhibitions that emphasize Islamic heritage. For example, the 5.5 million dollars in 2005-2008 devoted to an extensive renovation of the Rooms of the Mantle of the Prophet at the Topkapı Palace stands out as a unique state expenditure at the country's most visited national museum, where no other major

renovation projects have been recently undertaken. Similarly, the 2008 opening of the Islamic Sciences and Technology History Museum in Gülhane Park underscores a new mode of contextualizing Turkish identity within a pan-Islamic cultural framework (Kılıçkaya, 2010). The government also uses non-museological forms of display to address the public, as in the popular and inexpensive park of architectural models, Miniaturk, opened by the Istanbul Municipality in 2003 (Aronsson, 2011). In contrast to the regional/territorial focus of earlier museum projects, this park focuses on sites in a manner completely disembodied from geography. While the park overtly aims at an ecumenical approach, including as one of its smallest models one of the Balat synagogue, the inclusion of symbolically loaded monuments from the territory of the former Ottoman Empire, including the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem and the Mostar Bridge in Bosnia-Herzegovina, signal a political message appealing to religious conservatives who look to a glorified Ottoman past. At the same time, a panorama of the Battle of Gallipoli, added in 2005, appeals to a populist nationalism without emphasizing the person of Atatürk, and thus suggests a democratic means of commemorating national history.

Since the early 1970s, there have been relatively few changes in the program of nationally owned museums in Turkey. While several of these museums, in particular the Topkapı Palace Museum, the Hagia Sophia Museum, the Mevlana Museum, and the Cappadocia and Ephesus open air museums host a high volume of foreign tourists, local museum tourism (other than school groups) at public institutions is often geared towards religious observance (particularly at the Topkapı Palace, at shrine-museums, and at Hagia Sophia, which Muslim nationalists seek to reinstitute as a mosque signifying Islamic nationalism; Gerçek 1999, Shaw 2007). Located in the nation's cultural capital, private museums have emerged as a place of representing the Turkish nation as its urban elites would like to see it, often with Atatürkist connotations and in contradistinction to the increased populism espoused by moderate Islamic governments. Particularly in light of the close ties between contemporary corporations and the state, not only in Turkey, but also all over the world, the Turkish example suggests that the model of the national museum needs to be broadened to include not only state-funded ventures, but institutions that are enabled through corporate cooperation with the state.

Case studies in chronological order

Changes in the cultural policy from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey, and across its historical development to the present day has led to dramatic changes in the types of museums most representative of the nation in each of the eras outlined above. While the Ottoman Empire began the trajectory of Turkish museums through a national model dominated by a territorial interest in archaeology embodied in the Ottoman Imperial Museum (1869), the number and type of museums in the Republic of Turkey became increasingly diverse as cultural policy changed to suit new needs. As the first museum of the young republic, the Topkapı Palace Museum (1924), served to negotiate its relationship with a glorified imperial past in Istanbul, two museums in the capitol, the Ethnographic Museum (1928) and the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations (1968) reflected a national/geographic model centered in the nation's new capitol city of Ankara to negotiate a cohesive national identity across various factors such as history, geography, and ethnicity. With the

decline in state-operated institutions following the liberalization and privatization of the 1980s and 1990s, private cultural institutions and museums, most notably the Istanbul Modern Museum of Art (2004) have conceptualized the nation as modern through emphasis on art in the Western modality, projecting a mode of national identity production that favors elite, urban culture over the populist policies of the early republican era.

The Ottoman Imperial Museum has a unique place among Turkey's national museums in that it is the only single museum that ever attempted a comprehensive representation of a national ideology through the inclusion of various departments such as archaeology and Islamic arts. This is particularly interesting as the notion of a nation had not yet fully emerged at the time of its mid-nineteenth century emergence, so might rather be conceived as proto-national or productive of a cohesive state identity not rooted in national traits. Rather, as various provinces achieved independence from the Ottoman Empire, the museum responded to the need in the remaining center to devise a new identity for itself. This sensibility was perhaps best embodied in the unprecedented popularity of Namık Kemal's 1873 play, *Vatan Yahut Silistre* (*Patrie* or *Silistria*), which became a rallying cry for the deposition of the reigning sultan and the development of a constitutional monarchy. However, while he translated the sentiment of patriotism, the collectivity which remained for a post-imperial Ottoman entity was not yet clear, as Turkish ethnicity had not yet been conceived as a collective national trope and those who envisioned an Ottoman state conceived of it as still divided along ethnic-religious lines. Within this context, an Ottoman Imperial Museum focusing on archaeological heritage provided an alternative to ethnic or religious affiliations for the nascent nation, suggesting a means of identifying territoriality with traditions already incorporated into the European civilization in which Ottoman elites already participated through their educations (Göçek, 1993, pp. 526-527). When a purpose-designed building replaced the former Church of Hagia Irene and the former Tiled Pavilion of the Imperial Palace, where the museum had originally housed, the new building reflected both the museum's territorial focus and its Western aspirations: although broadly conceived in accordance with neo-classical museum architecture, the museum plan was purportedly derived from an architectonic sarcophagus discovered at a necropolis at Sidon, fixing the neo-classical architecture within an Ottoman territorial framework. The museum's aspirations to have a national affect can be seen as well in the dissemination of branches to key cities throughout the empire, including Konya (1902), Bursa (1904), and plans for Jerusalem, Salonica, Sivas, and Izmir (Shaw, 2003, p. 171). While these often served as local archeological depots and were not open to the public, their affiliation with the museum suggests that they were imagined as future outposts of a centralized ideology.

With the establishment of the republic, cultural policy shifted from the assertion of territoriality embodied in the Ottoman Imperial Museum towards a negotiation of the country's imperial legacy. The first museum established in the Republic of Turkey was the defunct Topkapı Palace Museum, which opened to the public in 1924. Although in disuse since 1856, two parts of the palace – the Rooms of the Mantle of the Prophet and the Baghdad Pavilion – had been part of annual religious ceremonies conducted by the sultan. In the interest of secularism, only the later was initially opened (the Room of the Mantle of the Prophet opened in 1962). During the 1940s, an extensive renovation

of the palace was undertaken, largely erasing later eras of construction of the palace and returning it to an idealized sixteenth-century form representing the apogee of the Ottoman state. As one of the most visited Turkish museums, the Topkapi Palace remains one of the country's most important museums in representing national identity. Although, and in a sense because, the museum excludes the modern era, the Topkapi Palace Museum provides the nation's most important site through which to negotiate its imperial history. The nation of Turkey has to mediate a careful dialogue with its imperial past. Unlike many former empires, such as Great Britain or France, Turkey's modern identity is based on a split with its imperial past. On the one hand, that state was overthrown, and with it the capitol changed and the political structure shifted from monarchy to republic during a very short period in the quite recent past. On the other, Turkey harnesses the history of Ottoman imperial might and breadth both as part of national pride and as part of international political strategies. By emphasizing early Ottoman history, the Topkapi Palace Museum glorifies the Ottoman legacy for the modern nation while disassociating it from the modern destruction of the empire by the republic.

Yet the nation was soon engaged in a far more comprehensive project of self-definition that combined centralized regionalism with modernizing secularism, embodied in the centrally-located Ethnography Museum in Ankara. Secularization in the Republic of Turkey not only meant the establishment of a laicist system of state control over religion, but also a shift in the language of diversity from the religiously-based *millet* system of the Ottoman era to one of geographic difference inscribed in the museum. The museum reduced religious and ethnic difference to regionalism and, at the same time musealized, and thereby historicized these cultures in contrast to the modern world represented by the everyday life of the newly constructed city outside. The purpose built architecture, designed in the so-called First National Style by the architect Kemaleddin, reflects the idea of a secular temple by coupling the domed architecture of a traditional religious structure with the longitudinal form of a European museum. By dividing the country into geographic regions and ascribing the various costumes and practices to each region, the museum constructed a model through which difference could be redefined in geographical, rather than ethnic, terms. Instead of considering various religious groups as millets, as had been common in the Ottoman period, people learned to affiliate their differences as regional rather than ethnic. This enabled the elision of the enormous cultural change which had taken place during the transition from the Ottoman to the Turkish era, including the loss, through massacre and the violent deportation of Armenian populations in Eastern provinces and the loss, through war and population exchange, of Greek populations in the West, including enormous populations in Istanbul and Izmir (Bloxham, 2003; Beeley, 1978). Regionalization of national dress and objects served as a metonym for the regionalization of history, enabling the erasure of differentiated ethnic compositions and regional histories in the country. Just as Atatürk's implicit definition of the Turkish citizen as, "How happy is (s)he who says, 'I am a Turk'" – anyone who declares his current identity as "Turk" rather than relying on an implicit ethnic or regional affiliation – objects from various regions in the country to declared themselves to be part of a variegated, but unified nation. Featuring customs such as the use of a floor table or a bed for a circumcision ceremony, the museum also served to categorize still common

everyday practices as historic, emphasizing that the contemporary identity of Turkey would look upon its ethnography as something made historical and thereby foreign. The very conception of local culture as ethnographic carried with it an implicit definition of the state, as a construct of urban elites, as one that gained its identity from the nation but which would also supplant archaic ethnographic practices with modern, universal ones. Although the Ethnographic Museum still exists, undergoing renovation in 2006, its original function as a showcase of regional practices has decreased, in part due to the increased acceptance of folk as mainstream culture as part of the populist democratization taking place in Turkey since the 1980s.

Complimenting the organization of the Ethnographic Museum, in 1968, the Hittite Museum was renamed and reorganized as the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations. While the Aryanist undertones of the original institution were subdued, the museum's emphasis on autochthonous ancient cultures became even stronger as the museum established a timeline for the growth of civilization in Anatolia from prehistory to antiquity, presented as though all of Anatolia could be considered through a cohesive narrative and thus naturalizing the geography of the modern nation. The temporal layout of the museum underplays the very local nature of the many civilizations described, thus underplaying the ethnic diversity that they imply, thereby also underplaying contemporary ethnic diversity. For example, while Urartu and Phoenician legacies have been associated with modern Armenians and Greeks through their nationalist historiographies, the museum subsumes these cultures into a broad Anatolian culture that overlaps with the territory of the modern Turkish state. In contrast to the site-based layout retained at the Istanbul Archaeology Museum, which underscores a shared ownership of the antique past with the West, the developmental narrative at the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations emphasizes Anatolia (through its proximity to Mesopotamia) as the cradle of civilization as well as the cradle of the modern nation. The museum thus compliments the Ethnographic Museum's historicization of what are still often contemporary rural practices and, in mapping them into discrete regions, defines the diversity of the nation while erasing ethnic fault lines. The proliferation of ethnographic/archaeological collections throughout the country beginning in the 1930s, but institutionalized in the 1960s and 1970s, underscores the notion of regional variance within a national narrative centered in Ankara suggested by the larger institutions in the capitol.

The rise of a liberal market economy and the growing economic and cultural power of corporations following the 1980 military coup in Turkey resulted in the increasing privatization of the nation's most active cultural institutions, including the museums. While these new arts institutions all suggest a private, corporate model that engages the arts exhibition as a mode of promoting national identity on a local elite and global stage, probably the most internationally visible, and using the most national rhetoric, has been the Istanbul Modern Museum of Art, which claims to attract half a million visitors a year (Benmayor, 2011). The museum opened to great fanfare with a speech by the moderate Islamist Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Although he made an aside that he didn't really understand art, thus appealing to his popular base, his official statements identified the museum and subsequent projects with ameliorating Turkey's international status. Although it is a private initiative, he emphasized his political role in supporting it and subsequent endeavors (anon., 2004). The state has continued to support the museum, as made evident by a

presidential award granted in 2010 (Hızlan, 2010). Although, like the other private museums, Istanbul Modern makes an effort to approach the general public through child education programs, the institution primarily addresses people who have already developed some interest in art through their education, and thus who often already are part of the middle or upper-middle class. While this closely resembles earlier studies concerning the relationship between status and art, it contrasts with the more populist and overtly nationalist narratives offered by state museums in earlier eras (Bourdieu, Darbel, & Beattie, 1997). This appeal is underscored by a recent six-week course offered by the museum in contemporary art collecting (Arna, 2011). Despite the museum's lip service to populism, however, its emphasis on artistic production over patrimony as a model for collective identity production suggests an alternative to earlier definitions of the nation and its relationship with museums. However, this shift towards elite-based institutions led by corporations rather than the state can also serve to exacerbate the growing divide between traditional secularist urban elites and the populist, moderate Islamist government.

Conclusion

In contrast to the museum institution in many countries with strong centralized states, the museum in Turkey has emerged as a polyvalent institution, comprising a wide variety of small institutions that reinforce various narratives of state ideology, heritage, and identity construction as these narratives have changed over the course of time. While this has enabled multiple competing narratives of collective identity, rooted in ideologies such as secularism, indigenism, Islamism, Turkism, Atatürkism, technocracy, etc., such apparent multiplicity has not encompassed all possible aspects of the national narrative to emerge. While Western critics of Turkish historiography have tended to emphasize one of the earlier examples of the conflict between Turkish nationalism and the earlier Ottoman millet system enabling multiple religious affiliations within a single state, the situation of Turkish minority populations is far more complex than any single example. The history of Turkish minorities – Armenians of Eastern provinces who suffered during the forced deportations under late Ottoman rule around 1915; Greeks of Anatolia, Thrace, and Istanbul whose numbers dwindled following three population exchanges and mass migrations in 1924, 1956, and 1974; Jews who suffered exorbitant taxes and sometimes internment during World War II, many of whom migrated to Israel after 1948; the Kurds, whose separatist movement and low-level civil war of the 1980s resulted in the destruction of hundreds of villages and mass migration to Turkish and European cities that has only recently subsided; and the limited freedoms given to Alevi Muslims, perceived as heretical under state-sponsored understandings of Islam – subsumed under the rhetoric of national Turkism, folklore, and regionalism during the republican period, is almost never mentioned in Turkish museums (Secor, 2004; Dressler, 2003; Baer, 2004).

In a situation not unique to any single country, the polyvalence of Turkey's museums, augmented by the recent growth of private museums, may function with multiple narratives that enable competing narratives of identity to coexist, but does so within a paradigm that excludes as many stories as it includes. In large part, this can be understood as a double cultural difference from parts of Europe in terms of the utility of museums. Turkey's museums are founded on historical rather

than artistic or scientific paradigms. Such an emphasis may lead some Western observers to expect a critical outlook such as has developed in history museums in Europe, particularly in response to post-World War II historiographies of Germany and its allies and issues of multiculturalism in Britain and the United States of America (Harms, 1990; Hoffmann, 1994; Heuser, 1990; Karp & Lavine, 1991). However, historic or otherwise, Turkey's museums are implicitly understood as places of positive representation and the celebration of particular narratives, not of collective critique or of community building. In this sense, although museums have proliferated and modernized immensely in the last few decades, they remain spaces not informed by new historiographic or museological approaches and defined by a classical hegemonic paradigm where the narrativization of collective identity production is top-down, and thus is either informed by the state or by elite private actors often closely affiliated with it (Duncan, 1995). Nonetheless, particularly in light of a widespread concern over the Islamicization of Turkey, evinced both in Europe and by many Turkish urban elites, the ever-increasing variety of self-representation within Turkey's museums also reflects an increased democratization of the social and political spectrum.

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Annex tables

Table 1: Case Studies of Key Museums of the Republic of Turkey

Name	Institution /Opening	Major Actor	Ownership	Type	Narrative Objectives
Ottoman Imperial Museum	1846/1869 Name changed to Istanbul Archaeology Museum, 1924	Ottoman Ministry of Education	State	Archaeological, with Islamic section 1891-1914	Integrate Ottoman Empire into narrative of Western Civilization while emphasizing archaeological territorial ownership against European imperial interests to prove inherent Ottoman belonging to Western civilization.
Topkapi Palace Museum	(1483-1856 use as palace); 1924 designation as museum	Republic of Turkey	State	Historical	Glorify Ottoman legacy while distancing it from modern era; secularize legacy of the sultan's caliphate embodied by relics of the Prophet.
Ethnographic Museum	(1922) 1928	Republic of Turkey	State	Ethnographic	Use ethnographic collections to replace ethnic with regional difference; secularize religious objects; use both collections to create a distinction between the historicized objects inside the museum and the modernizing real world outside.
Museum of Anatolian Civilizations	1941 (Hittite Museum); name and organization change, 1968	Republic of Turkey	State	Archaeological	Use artifacts to transform regionally significant civilizations in Anatolia into a single historical trajectory that creates a unified prehistory for the nation.
Istanbul Modern Museum of Art	2004	Eczacıbaşı Corporation	Private	Art	Replace patrimonial with creative models of national identity, thus promoting Turkey as participant in Western culture not through history but through cultural production and practice.

Table 2: Regional Museums in the Republic of Turkey¹

Location (Alphabetical)	Institution as Depot/Directorate	Public Opening in historical building	(Re)opening in custom building ²	Two sections ³	Extensive renovations or new museums
Adana	?	1924; 1935 (ethnographic)	(1966) 1972	Yes	1994
Afyon	c. 1929	1933 1948 (ethnographic)	(1966) 1971	Yes	
Amasya	1925	1962	(1969) 1972	Yes	
Antakya	1932	1948	1970 (1975)	Yes	
Antalya	1919	1922	(1964) 1972	Yes	1985
Burdur			(1967) 1969	Yes	
Bursa - Iznik			1969	Yes	
Çanakkale	1911	1961	1984	?	
Çorum	1937		(1962) 1968		
Diyarbakır		1934	1988	?	
Edirne	1925	1936 (ethnographic)	(1969) 1971	Yes	
Elazığ	1965		1982	Yes	
Eskişehir	1945		1974	Yes	
Erzurum	1942	1947	(1964) 1967	Yes	Ethnographic Museum added 1994
Gaziantep	1944	1958	1969	Yes	Ethnographic Museum added 1989
Izmir-Bergama	1934	1936	1964 (annex to 1936 building)	Yes	
Izmit	1938		1967	?	
Kahramanmaraş	1947	1961	(1970) 1975		
Karaman			1962	?	
Kars	1959	1964	(1971) 1981	Yes	
Kastamonu	1943	1950	1980 (1981)	Yes	

¹ This table only includes smaller museums with relatively unexceptional histories.

² Parenthesis indicates planning start date

³ Two sections, referring to the pairing of Archaeological and Ethnographic collections established in the 1960s

Kayseri	1928	1938	1969	Yes	
Kütahya	1945		1982	Yes	
Malatya			(1962) 1977	Yes	
Manisa	1935	1943	1963, 1972	Yes	
Nevşehir- Hacıbektaş ⁴			(1975) 1988	Yes	
Niğde	1936		(1971) 1977		
Samsun			(1976) 1981		
Şanlıurfa	1948		1969	Yes	1987
Sinop	1925		(1966) 1970	Yes	
Sivas	1922	1934	1968	Yes	
Tekirdağ		1967	1987		
Tokat	1926	--	(1976) 1983	?	
Van	1932		(1968) 1972	Yes	

⁴ Not to be confused with the Nevşehir Hacıbektaş Museum, located at the former dervish lodge made into a museum in 1964, this listing refers to the Archaeological and Ethnographic museum in the town.

Table 3: Museums in Small Towns Associated with Archaeological Sites

Location (Alphabetical)	Institution	Opening	Two sections⁵
Ankara (Gordion)		1966	No
Antalya-Side (Aspendos Theater)		1962	No
Bitlis Ahlat		(1968) 1971	?
Çorum Alacahöyük (Hittite)		1982	
Çorum Boğazköy (Hittite)		1966	No
Izmir Selçuk-Efes (Ephesus)	1930	1960 (1964)	?
Izmir-Tire	1936	1971	Yes
Isparta Yalvaç (Antioch)	1947	1970 (1975)	?
Kayseri Kültepe (Hittite)		1968	No
Muğla-Bodrum Underwater Museum		1964	No
Nevşehir Ürgüp (Cappadocia)	1965	1971	?
Trabzon (Hagia Sophia)		1964	No

⁵ Two sections, referring to the pairing of Archaeological and Ethnographic collections established in the 1960s

Table 4: Atatürk Museums in the Republic of Turkey

Location	1930-1960	1961-1980	1981-2011
Ankara Anıtkabir	1954 (tomb) 1960 (museum)		
Ankara Museum of the War for Liberation		1961	
Ankara Museum of the Republic		1981	
Antalya Alanya Atatürk House and Museum			1987
Antalya Atatürk House Museum			1986
Bursa		1973	
Çanakkale Bigalı Çamyayla		1973 (purchase)	1984
Denizli Atatürk and Ethnographic Museum			1984
Diyarbakır	1939		
Atatürk Room at Dolmabahçe Palace Museum			1982
Erzurum Atatürk House Museum			1984
Eskişehir		1970	
İçel Silifke Atatürk House Museum			1987
Istanbul Atatürk House Museum	1942		
Izmir Atatürk and Ethnographic Museum	1941 (Atatürk House Museum)	1978	19886
Kayseri			1986, 1995
Konya		1964	1982
Konya-Akşehir		1966	
Rize			1985
Samsun		(1960) 1968	
Sivas			1990
Uşak Atatürk and Ethnographic Museum			1981

⁶ The Ethnographic Museum became independent in 1988.

Table 5: Chronological table of major non-regional museums and exhibitionary institutions

	Name of Institution	Location	Dates
1846-1922	Magazine of Antique Weapons & Magazine of Antiquities	former Church of Hagia Irene, Istanbul	1846
	(renamed) Ottoman Imperial Museum		1869
	(renamed) Istanbul Archaeology Museum	purpose-built building, 1891	1881
	Military Museum	Church of Hagia Irene, Istanbul	c. 1922
	Museum of Pious Foundations	former medrese (school) of the Suleymaniye Mosque foundation, Istanbul	1913-1940
1923-1960	(renamed) Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art	(relocated) small former medrese, Istanbul	1949
	Topkapı Palace Museum	Istanbul	1924
	Ethnography Museum	purpose-built building, Ankara	1930
	Konya Museum of Antiquities	Tomb of Cellaleddin Rumi, Konya	1927
	(renamed) Mevlana Museum		1954
	Museum of the Tomb of Hacı Bektaş	Hacıbektaş, Nevşehir	
	Museum of Hagia Sophia	former Church/Mosque of Hagia Sophia, Istanbul	1935
	Anıtkabir (Tomb of Atatürk)	Ankara	1954
	Istanbul Museum of Painting and Sculpture	former apartments of the heir apparent, Dolmabahçe Palace, Istanbul	1938
	Hittite Museum	Ottoman han and purpose-built building, Ankara	1945
1961-1982	(renamed) Museum of Anatolian Civilizations		1968
	Dolmabahçe Palace Museum	Dolmabahçe Palace, Istanbul	1952
	Izmir Museum of Painting and Sculpture	Izmir	1952
1983-2011	Sadberk Hanım Museum	Istanbul (private)	1980
	Ankara Museum of Painting and Sculpture	former Turkish Hearth Building, Ankara	1981
	Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art	(relocated) İbrahim Paşa Mansion, Istanbul	1981
	Military Museum	Purpose-built building, Istanbul	1993
	Sakıp Sabancı University Museum	former mansion, Istanbul (private)	2002
	Miniaturk	Istanbul	2003
	Istanbul Modern Museum of Art	remodeled customs depot, Istanbul (private)	2004
	Pera Museum	remodeled building, Istanbul (private)	2005
Santral Istanbul Arts Center	Former electric company and purpose-built building, Istanbul (private)	2007	



National Museums in Wales

Sheila Watson & Andrew Sawyer

Summary

This report considers national museums in Wales. Welsh MPs have sat at Westminster since the early sixteenth century, and the country was integrated with England to a greater extent than other nations making up the UK. In addition, there are strong contrasts between the rural centre and north of the country and the industrial south. The country is very mountainous which has affected its development.

Nationalism in Wales reflected this, and is outlined in the Introduction. For a range of reasons, including conquest by the English in the medieval period, and the Tudor incorporation of Welsh leaders into the English elite, together with the country's shared border with southern England, nationalism in Wales was less strident than that in Scotland and Ireland. For reasons explored below, there was something of a rift between the Anglican Church, which became associated with the English, and 'Dissenters' who were associated with Welshness. In the nineteenth century, the mineral reserves of South Wales, especially coal, led to an industrial revolution that provided employment for many Welsh people (and drew in English immigrants). As with other British nations, the experience of the Second World War helped develop a shared unity with the rest of the UK. Nevertheless, Welsh culture, which varied somewhat in different areas, remained distinctive, especially obvious in language and music.

Some of the reasons for the rise of nationalism are explored in the report. Welsh nationalism is complex and is usually defined as a form of cultural and ethnic nationalism that emphasises language, songs, literature and poetry, along with Welsh antiquities and the idea of the Welsh associated with the landscape and territory of Wales. In the nineteenth century this began to take a more political form though always within the notion of Wales remaining within the United Kingdom. It made little headway in the first half of the twentieth century as Britain fought and won two World Wars. In the 1970s it failed to gain enough support to prompt legislation giving more powers to Wales, but in 1997 a referendum resulted in a small majority in favour of devolution. An Act of Parliament implemented this in 1998. Since then, the Welsh Assembly has had direct responsibility for funding and policy for national museums in Wales.

The early history of national museums in Wales can be traced to the activities of learned societies. These had many features in common with similar activities by elite groups elsewhere in Britain; they were formed in Wales and were made up of Welsh people. Elements of Welsh culture – literature, song, poetry, the Welsh language and antiquities – were therefore prominent, as well as scientific subjects, especially those relating to science and industry, which might have more in common with British scholarly activities. Later, museums became implicated in the civic competition between leading towns in the country, where sections of the local elites regarded museums as positive institutions and a mark of civic pride. When the competition for

recognition as ‘capital’ of Wales became an issue, civic leaders similarly saw the possession of a major museum as an advantage. In these early years, Welsh nationalism was rarely explicit in the founding of museums. In this Wales resembles, to a certain extent, Scotland, where the idea of a national museum was, for some time, a museum in a capital city.

The gaining of national status (the National Museum of Wales was granted its charter in 1907) was therefore not in itself associated with driving nationalism. Nevertheless, by the time the Museum opened in 1912 ‘[T]he promotional literature of the Museum, the coverage in the local press and even the speech by the British Monarch himself all point towards a a more public acceptance of Welsh distinctiveness’ (Mason 2007a: 134). To what extent the development of a national institution such as the Museum in Cardiff contributed to this increased interest in Welshness and to what extent it reflected it is impossible to say. In the succeeding decades, the National Museum (NMW or in Welsh, ‘Amgueddfa Cymru’) established strong links with regional museums, and incorporated some other museums into its structure. In outline, the National Roman Legion Museum, Caerleon, dated back to the nineteenth century, but was incorporated into the National Museum in 1930; St Fagans, a folk park, was set up as part of the museum, in 1948; the National Woollen Museum was opened as part of the National Museum in 1976; Big Pit, initially a local authority museum created partly in response to the closure of the coal industry, was incorporated into the National Museum of Wales in 2001; and the National Waterfront Museum, previously a local authority industrial museum, was opened in 2005 as a national museum in a new building in Swansea. Whilst these newer museums often addressed a uniquely Welsh past, it is questionable whether nationalism played a significant role in their development. At the same time, there is a sense in some of the works studied for this report, that successive British governments treated Wales as simply another part of England, and (in some official reports into museums) ignored the National Museum of Wales altogether. By contrast the Welsh Assembly has much more interest and more effective control of heritage organisations in Wales. This gives the National Museum a consciously and distinctly Welsh context in which to operate, responding to more coherent government policies. Nevertheless, the different institutions combining to make the National Museum, present very different aspects of Welsh life and culture.

Summary table

Name	Inaugurated	Initiated	Actors	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach	Style Location
National Museum Cardiff	Late 19 th century	1912	Local and national politicians	British government Later, Welsh Assembly	Art and Geology	Universal art and national collections	Prehistory to the present	Classical style, with Doric columns, in Cathays Park, the civic centre of Cardiff.
St. Fagans National History museum	1946	1948	Aristocracy and National Museum of Wales	As above	Folk Museum	National	Pre-history to 20 th c.	Open-air museum with many buildings from different periods in the grounds of St Fagans Castle, a late 16th-c. manor house, outside Cardiff city centre.

Introduction

Wales was part of Britannia in Roman times. After the withdrawal of Roman troops the native Britons continued to live in what is now Wales and maintained a separate existence from Saxon settlers who pushed many of the original inhabitants of Britain westwards into the area. The Welsh had their own Celtic language and traditions and the mountainous nature of most of their country led to the establishment of separate principalities. Thus historians such as K. Morgan claimed that an 'awareness of an identity of language, culture and race' existed as early as the sixth century AD (Morgan, 1971: 154).

Following the Norman Conquest of England in 1066, Norman lords built castles and raided across the border with Wales, and this area became known as the Welsh Marches. In 1282, the Prince of Wales, Llewellyn, was defeated by Edward I and Wales came increasingly under full English control. The Tudor monarchs in the sixteenth century brought the administration of Wales much closer to that of England, with Welsh MPs sat in the Westminster parliament.

Although most of Wales was (and is) rural and agricultural, the southern part of Wales became heavily industrialised in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, based on coal mining and the smelting of metals. This area suffered badly during economic slumps, and during 'de-industrialisation' from the 1970s, leading to serious unemployment.

Wales (like Scotland) had separate flags, saints' days, language, sporting teams, and media provision. Specific educational provision recognised its separateness. However, Wales had no powers to raise taxes, decide foreign policy or to make laws. Until the recognition of Cardiff in 1955, Wales also lacked a capital city, and until that time London was the capital of Wales. Since devolution in the late twentieth century Wales has acquired some legislative powers.

Welsh nationalism

Welsh nationalism was not asserted with the vigour of Scots or especially Irish nationalism. Hechter (1999) [original 1975] along with Bala (1999) and Lord (1992) have seen Wales as dominated by England and have argued that as a 'stateless nation' Wales has suffered culturally. Hechter postulates an internal colonial model for Britain through which, though industrialised and thus more homogenous in some respects, different nations within Britain retain a heightened distinctive ethnic awareness, partly because of regional economic inequality. According to the theories adopted by these commentators a nation such as Wales is oppressed and tends to over identify with the culture of the oppressor, losing its own distinctiveness in the process. However, Mason (2007a: 15) points out that we cannot begin to equate the experiences of Wales and Scotland with those of modern previously colonial nations in Africa. She points to the work of Aaron and Williams (2005) who look at the historical context of this colonial relationship. Legislation (Acts of Union) in 1536 and 1534 resulted in a system by which Welsh voters sent MPs to Westminster and the Welsh acquired equal status under English law.

For all intents and purposes the Acts of Union abolished the distinctions between Wales and England: Wales was no longer a colony, but part of an expanded England or Greater Britain. After the Act of Union all legislation that applied to England applied also to Wales. The border between the two countries ... largely ceased to have any meaning [and]... Wales

became a junior partner in the expanding British state. (Williams 2005: 4 – 5 cited Mason 2007a: 16)

Morgan summed up nationalism in Wales in 1971, and argued that 'an identity of language, culture, and race' survived after the sixteenth century legislation, 'but lacked any institutional focus', while 'the the natural leaders of Welsh society, the landed gentry, adopted the speech and customs of their English counterparts [...] and became increasingly isolated from the great mass of a peasant population' (Morgan 1971: 154). All this suggests that Welsh nationalism is complex and interpretations depend upon the approach taken to the question. Whatever theory is adopted it cannot be denied that the establishment of the Welsh Assembly has brought with it a growing enthusiasm for the Welsh to govern their affairs, as witnessed by the referendum 'yes' vote in March 2011 to the question on whether the National Assembly for Wales should gain the power to legislate on a wider range of matters.

Thus any study of the national museum institution in Wales will need to take account of the shifting sense of nationhood within Wales over time, and be aware that some nationalists may attempt to place nationalism earlier than most academics would expect to find it. In addition, it must take account of different places: for example, those working for a national museum in the industrialised south had different ideals from those of the more traditional, agrarian north, and this helps to explain the rivalry between Caernarfon in the north and Cardiff in the south as the sites for the national museum.

Welsh nationalism in the nineteenth century

During the Victorian period there was increasing interest in Welsh folk life and history and a greater sense of Welsh separateness (which would continue into the twentieth century with Welsh arts organisations celebrating the distinctiveness of Welsh culture). In Morgan's view (1971: 155-56), two factors played a significant role in this developing nationalism. The first was the industrialisation of the south. Here, the exploitation of high quality Welsh coal reserves was the basis of mining communities, and the area became a mainspring of British industrial might by 1914. This was reflected in rapid urbanisation and the growth of towns such as Cardiff, Newport, Swansea and Merthyr Tydfil. The surplus population of impoverished farms found employment here (rather than in England or America) and the economy helped support a Welsh language press and cultural expression through local *eisteddfodau* (traditional literary, musical and performance festivals) and choral festivals.

The second factor Morgan highlights was the explosive rise of non-conformity (1971: 156-7). A series of religious revivals in Wales in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries meant that large sections of the population were strongly influenced by a 'non-conformist' form Christianity, that is, they did not 'conform' to Anglican custom or organisation. Since the Anglican Church was the 'established church' and was closely allied to the British elite, this caused difficulties. For example, the 1902 Education Act made local authorities (county councils) support schools, including Anglican schools, from local taxes. In parts of Wales, the bulk of the population (and usually the councils too) were staunchly nonconformist, and they deeply resented paying for Anglican schools. As Morgan notes:

Sparked off by the Methodist revival, finding a new buoyancy in the 'older dissent' of the Baptists and the Independents, non-conformity gave a new unity to Wales. Migrants from

the countryside brought the institutions and the ethos of the chapels with them into the new industrial communities, and shaped their character in fundamental respects. (Morgan 1971: 156)

Although they shared many of the ambitions of English non-conformists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Morgan (1971: 154) claims that, by the 1840s, it was clear that Welsh non-conformists were developing a separate culture and momentum. An example can be seen in the 'Blue Books scandal', around a government commission into the state of education in Wales in 1847. The three commissioners spoke no Welsh, and took evidence only from English speakers, many of whom were Anglican clergymen. They submitted an extensive report, some sections of which were sharply critical of the Welsh. Non-conformism and the Welsh language were cited as causes of the 'laziness' and 'backwardness' of the inhabitants. The report drew a mixed but sometimes hostile response from the Welsh.

Thus the (English) Anglican establishment was increasingly rejected, and legislation in the late 1800s and early 1900s led to the dis-establishment of the Anglican Church in Wales, completed in 1920 (having been delayed by the First World War). Alcohol abuse was high on the list of reforms wanted by these keen nonconformists, and moves were made to impose restrictions on the sale of alcohol in Wales. Meanwhile, electoral and local government reform in the nineteenth century meant that local landowners and gentry lost control of many Westminster seats and county councils, which passed to non-conformists and Liberals.

In the later nineteenth century, with electoral reforms, Welsh nationalism began to influence politics. This was not a strident nationalism, and there was no widespread movement for independence or even home rule, but it expressed itself more in those areas where Welsh identity was not recognised. For example, the 1880s saw the establishment of *Cymru Fydd* ('Young Wales'). It had a somewhat romantic view of the Welsh past and was in favour of a national library and museum. Furthermore Welsh living in London initially promoted it, although it soon established branches in Wales. Morgan notes that whilst Welsh MPs might talk of nationalism, the 'supreme object of these Welsh national leaders was essentially equality within the United Kingdom and an expanding empire, not severance from it [...] As a result, the demand for Welsh home rule was a relatively minor feature of Welsh politics down to 1918' (Morgan 1971: 165). *Cymru Fydd* was relatively short-lived, but did have close links with the British Liberal Party, and many Welsh MPs belonged to it.

The career of David Lloyd George (1863-1945) illustrates this. Born in Manchester, England, to Welsh parents, Welsh was his first language. He was a Liberal and entered Parliament at Westminster in 1890 as MP for Caernarfon Boroughs, in Wales. He was active in causes that might seem nationalistic (the disestablishment of the Anglican Church for example), and was initially active in *Cymru Fydd* and 'flirted with home rule in the mid-1890s' according to Morgan (1971: 164). At the same time, he was a successful British MP and was to become Chancellor of the Exchequer, introducing an element of welfare provision in Britain. He became Prime Minister in 1916 and led Britain through the First World. This is illustrative of integration of Wales and imperial Britain.

Learned societies were also founded or revived, in the nineteenth century, for example the Royal Cambrian Academy and the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion (Morgan 2007: 14-15). These had an interest in preserving specifically Welsh monuments and artefacts. The Cambrian

Archaeological Association (which was national in the sense of having branches across Wales) supported the preservation of Welsh antiquities and was arguing for museums to be established across Wales for this purpose in 1847. Campbell claims that 'whilst the Association was not at that stage promoting the idea of a national museum for Wales it was identifying the need for museums as storehouses' (Campbell 2005: 14).

Welsh nationalism in the twentieth century and after

Wales had always been divided, not least because of its mountainous geography, but by 1900 there were new divisions in Wales, most obviously between the rural, agricultural central and northern regions and the industrialised, more cosmopolitan south. As the same time, by the early years of the twentieth century nonconformist religion was weakening, whilst industrial disputes had sharpened the division between labour and other parts of society: in 1898, industrial disputes put thousands of Welsh miners out of work for six months. The Welsh, non-conformist, Liberal elites in the south were losing support, and Labour and socialist MPs began to gain seats, as Welsh miners made common cause with English and Scottish miners (in fact large numbers of English migrated to industrial Wales in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries). By the end of the First World War, the older nationalism of opposition to the 'bishop, the brewer and the squire' seemed ludicrously irrelevant (Morgan 1971: 168). As one Welsh historian argued:

Women, whose expectations had been raised by new job opportunities during the Great War, were once more enslaved in the kitchen, the wash tub, the mangle and the front door step. The expectations of men who had survived the horrors of the Western Front were cruelly dashed by a combination of harsh global economic forces and sheer ineptitude or lack of compassion on the part of stony-faced politicians at Westminster. (Jenkins 2007: 234)

The period between the wars was dominated by Labour and powerful left-wing politicians such as Aneurin Bevan (1897-1960) who could dismiss Welsh nationalism as a bourgeois illusion (Morgan 1971: 168). Some of these figures were themselves Welsh: 'it is no accident that the three seminal figures in the creation of the British welfare state – Lloyd George, Aneurin Bevan and James Griffiths – were Welsh' (Jenkins 2007: 233).

Welsh nationalism therefore made little headway in the early twentieth century. *Plaid Cymru*, a Welsh nationalist party, was founded in 1925 but did not manage to achieve an electoral victory until the 1960s. However, it did support the preservation and use of the Welsh language, and this is an indication that nationalism might express itself especially in language, when political nationalism was very weak (Miller 1984: 111). This was reflected in the formation of The Welsh Language Society, a pressure group founded in 1962. This campaigns for Welsh, and its activities have led to prosecutions and gaol sentences. Small (and largely forgotten) extremist groups also appeared from time to time. In 1955, following a referendum among local authorities in Wales, it was decided that Cardiff should be recognised as the capital of the country, despite strong opposition from Caernarfon in North Wales.

A Welsh Office, headed by a Secretary of State for Wales, was established in 1965, which took responsibility for a range of domestic issues, and expanded in the following years, illustrating that only modest, incremental changes to the status of Wales took place in these years.

Morgan was able to summarise the achievements of Welsh nationalism by 1971:

The national movement of these earlier years [*the nineteenth century*] still dominates much of the life of Wales today. It gave Wales a dis-established church and a disestablished gentry; its own university, national library and museum; its own distinct system of higher education; its own legislation and departmental autonomy. Wales by 1914 had achieved recognition as a nation, not as a mere duplicate of Kent or Yorkshire. Ultimately, though, Welsh nationalism was a crusade against indifference, and here, even after the careers of Lloyd George and Aneurin Bevan, this battle is still far from won. Perhaps it never will be. (Morgan 1971: 172)

There was certainly a sense that London was ignorant and indifferent to Welsh affairs during these years (Morgan 1971: 172; Jenkins 2007: 234). A careful reading of Bassett's history of National Museum Wales also reveals an implicit criticism of London's inept handling of national issues (Bassett 1982, 1983, 1984 and 1990).

In 1969, in response to a rise in support for Welsh and Scots nationalism, the British government established a Royal Commission (known as the 'Kilbrandon Commission') to consider the constituent countries of the UK. In 1970, Plaid Cymru contested every seat in Wales and increased its share of the vote to over ten percent, confirming that the issue was a live one. The Commission eventually recommended devolved assemblies for Scotland and Wales. This led in turn to a referendum in Wales in 1979, but devolution was rejected. However, interest in devolution continued, and in 1997, a new Labour government was elected in Britain and ran another referendum, in which Wales voted by a narrow majority in favour of devolution. Following this, the Welsh Office was formally disbanded, and the new National Assembly for Wales, created by the Government of Wales Act (1998) was created, strengthened by a further Act in 2006.

Wales now has a National Assembly for Wales (*Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru*), which is a democratically elected body with legislative powers which holds the Welsh Assembly Government to account, and the Welsh Assembly Government (*Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru*), the executive arm which makes decisions on a range of matters for Wales, develops and implements policies, and proposes laws ('Assembly Measures').

Westminster retains control of areas such as defence and taxation, the police and justice system, while the Welsh Assembly Government (henceforth 'WAG') is responsible for education, health, local government, transport, planning, economic development, social care, culture, environment, agriculture and rural affairs.

National museums and cultural policy in Wales

The nineteenth century

In the early nineteenth century, although there was no formal cultural policy in Wales, the leading members of society shaped the nation's cultural activity by a range of activities, for example by forming learned societies. This activity was typical across Britain.

An early example in Wales was the founding of the 'Cambrian Institution for the Encouragement of Pursuits in Geology, Mineralogy and Natural History' in Swansea in October 1821. Campbell notes that it 'emulated similar societies established in Liverpool, Manchester, Bath, Newcastle and Penzance and aimed to facilitate the diffusion of knowledge amongst the land-owners, agriculturalists and miners as well as the local and visiting philosophers'. The Institution was to include a library and a well-arranged museum illustrating the different branches

of natural history (Campbell 2005: 46-47). It was seen by Swansea as an asset to the town, providing a source of 'rational pleasure' and 'in common with other similar societies' the Cambrian Institution extended its interest to the history, antiquities and literature of the area whilst its primary interest lay with science (Campbell 2005: 47).

Other societies were established in the town, including the Swansea Philosophical and Literary Society (1835), which was renamed as the Royal Institution of South Wales (RISW) when Victoria granted it a royal charter (RISW 2004). It constructed a museum for its collection, opened in 1841, which was seen as 'tangible evidence of Swansea as the leading town in the Principality at this time'.

The formation of these societies was typical of the social elites across Britain. However, there was an element of civic competition in Wales. Cardiff, which was a small town of less than two thousand inhabitants in 1801, began growing rapidly from the 1850s, and there was some competition between Swansea, Cardiff and other South Wales towns.

The twentieth century to devolution

In terms of population, by 1901, five urban centres in South Wales dwarfed the rest of the country: Cardiff with a population of 164,333, Rhondda with 113,735, Swansea with 94,537, Merthyr with 69,228 and Newport with 62,270 inhabitants (Jenkins 2007: 183). There was a strong element of civic competition between these towns throughout the 1800s and into the twentieth century. Several examples of this competition are noted by Campbell (2005: 69, 73, 74, and 78), who quotes the Honorary Curator of Cardiff Museum saying, in 1873:

In a town such as this, then, second to none in Wales for the interest which attaches to its long and varied history, its noble castle, and its ancient neighbourhood cathedral, and superior, as we are often reminded, to any other town in this part of the kingdom in regard to population and commercial enterprise, surely we have some reason to expect that if the rate [*that is, a local tax*] is properly apportioned, we shall obtain a Museum which shall not come behind any other in the Principality. (Winks 1877 cited Campbell 2005: 92)

Likewise, interested parties in Cardiff in the 1880s 'were cognisant of the opinion of the Cambrian Archaeological Association in 1880 that recommended the Powysland Museum [in Welshpool] as the central museum for Welsh antiquities as no other museum in Wales had facilities or the nucleus of a collection to match' (Campbell 2005: 95).

Besides civic pride, nationalism played a part. Morgan's essay (2007) links the story of the foundation of a national museum (and library) for Wales to developments in nationalism in the mid-nineteenth century. The hostility roused by the 'Blue Books' scandal led to demands for national institutions, including a national museum, as a means of social progress (Morgan 2007: 13-14; Bassett, 1983: 155). This might be seen as part of a wider move in Victorian Britain towards self-improvement, but was clearly Welsh in nature.

By the 1880s, Bassett argues, there was a more general movement in favour of national institutions, reflected in the activities of some Welsh MPs who began raising the issue at Westminster from the 1890s, though with disappointing results on some occasions as the ideas was met with derision (Bassett 1983: 157-8). However, the British Museum was regarded as the repository for Welsh (or any other British national heritage) antiquities. The Victoria and Albert Museum (which managed some education activity in the regions) was a source for such technical

and educational instruction as was required. In many respects, Wales was regarded as no different from any English region. The discovery of valuable antiquities in 1899, classified as treasure trove and therefore deposited in the British Museum, caused Cardiff's Curator, John Ward, to enquire from J.M. Maclean MP if such finds could be kept in the Cardiff Museum, but this was rejected as Cardiff was not recognised as the chief town of Wales (Campbell 2005: 118).

Once established, Westminster's attitude to the new national museum seems to have been one of indifference. Bassett notes (1984: 237-9) that the Royal Commission on Museums and Galleries 1927 did not cover the National Museum of Wales (which had been established in 1907); the Miers report of 1929 included the museum in his list of non-national museums; the Markham report in 1938 added it as a footnote to the national museums in London and Edinburgh; and nor was the National Museum of Wales considered by the Standing Commission for Museums and Galleries, until, in 1949, the Treasury allowed the appointment of a Welsh representative to the Standing Commission. However, it is fair to add that the governing body (a 'Court of Governors') was representative of the wider population of Wales and provided a venue for the development of policies and strategy.

In 1973, a Department of Education and Science report on provincial museums and galleries (the 'Wright Report') noted that the National Museum of Wales collaborated with many other Welsh museums to the benefit of all. At the same time, the report noted that there was no museum of any size in North Wales (Department of Education and Science, 1973: 57-8). Perhaps the most significant observation was the recognition that Wales (and Scotland) had particular challenges that would need to be addressed separately. Wales was no longer being treated as another English region by Westminster. A Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries report in 1979 (the 'Drew Report') was intended to progress Wright's recommendations, but did not cover Wales in detail, probably because at the time, it was thought that devolution was imminent (Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries 1979: 2; Bassett 1984: 311). The 'Morris Report' of 1981 took up the issue of Wales, and noted aspects of museum provision that seemed particularly 'Welsh': the role of the National Museum of Wales in supporting museums in the regions; the Museum Schools Service, run by the museum and local authorities; the Affiliation Scheme, by which the museum provided expertise to local museums; the absence of a 'National Gallery' and 'National Portrait Gallery' in Wales; the successful opening of a number of industrial museums; and the significance of the Welsh language (Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries 1981: 38-43).

The timing and subject of these reports suggest a growing awareness of the uniquely 'Welsh' nature of the country's national museum. In addition, there was a Council of Museums in Wales (CMW), where the National Museum was represented, funded by the Welsh Office and subscribing museums and authorities.

Devolution and after

CyMAL (Museums Archives and Libraries Wales) was established in 2004 (replacing CMW in some respects). CyMAL is a division of the WAG and the 'Sponsorship Division' for National Museum Wales. This is therefore different from MLA's role in the UK, since the latter is a 'quango' or non-departmental public body – that is, in England government had devolved power to a quango, whereas CyMal is part of government. Besides providing funding for accredited

museums, CyMAL advises on insurance for the loan of objects of exceptional value. It also acts as the interface between government and museums in Wales, advising the government, and shaping strategy for the sector, besides overseeing National Museum Wales.

In 2000, eighteen months after the establishment of the National Assembly for Wales, the Assembly's Post 16 Education and Training Committee published *A Culture in Common*. They had consulted widely, including with the National Museum Wales. They hoped that by 2010, the country would have a range of cultural attributes including: bilingualism as a 'particular and a growing reality - embracing a celebration of the Welsh language as unique, rich and dynamic with other Welsh dialects [a] valued and respected part of our linguistic inheritance'; multi-culturalism as a fundamental part of Wales'; rich diversity; an equal respect to the 'innovative and the traditional'; strong links between 'grass-roots' and national cultural institutions; cultural development integrated with tackling social exclusion, learning, the economy, and quality of life; 'a co-ordinated cultural strategy delivered by publicly funded sponsored bodies both accountably and efficiently for the people of Wales'; cultural tourism as an important part of the Welsh economy; information communication technology used effectively to increase participation in Welsh culture; and a 'highly participative and democratic' arts scene (Post 16 Education and Training Committee 2000: 4)

The report focussed on the arts as a whole, but also stated that 'museums, galleries and libraries are intrinsic to our cultural identity', along with other institutions (Post 16 Education and Training Committee 2000: 13), and generally called for closer links between museums and between museums and the arts in Wales. There were several references to the need for a 'National Gallery' to show more Welsh art, though representatives of National Museum Wales pointed out that in fact, one third of their exhibits were already from Welsh artists (Post 16 Education and Training Committee 2000: 71). Whilst it supported the 'arms length' principle, the report strongly urged that a Culture Secretary be appointed. Another common theme is the desire for collaboration and cooperation across a wide range of arts, whilst 'avoiding the pitfalls of centralisation' (Post 16 Education and Training Committee 2000: 38-40).

This was developed in early 2002 in the report *Creative Future. A Cultural Strategy for Wales* (WAG) which stressed the role of information technology and 'encouraging activities other than conservation and display' in museums (WAG 2002: 22). It declared support for the Waterfront Maritime and Industrial Museum, which was already planned (WAG 2002: 24). Also in 2002, a new cabinet post of Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language was established, overseeing museums, with Jenny Randerson as the first holder of the post. The Minister for Heritage chairs the CyMAL Advisory Council, which has 12 members. Four members of the Council serve in an ex officio capacity representing Archives and Record Council Wales, the National Library of Wales, the National Museum Wales, and the Welsh Local Government Association. Research by CyMAL carried out in 2006, resulting in *Spotlight on Museums* (WAG 2007a), provided a comprehensive picture of museums in Wales, as at 2006, including the national museums.

The Welsh Assembly in 2007, issued a significant policy document, *One Wales, A progressive agenda for the government of Wales* (WAG 2007b). This presented itself as 'an agreement between the Labour and Plaid Cymru Groups in the National Assembly' and its declared aim was to 'transform Wales into a self-confident, prosperous, healthy nation and society which is fair to all'.

The publication of *One Wales* in 2007 may have been as much about implementing coalition government as strategy, but it did include a clear indication of what the Assembly expected of government assisted cultural activity in Wales, aiming at: 'Supporting the Welsh Language', 'Promoting arts and culture' 'Encouraging sport and physical activity' and 'Placing Wales in the World' (WAG 2007b: 34). In terms of requirements on museums, it notes only that entry will be free (WAG 2007b: 35).

In 2010, following widespread consultation, CyMAL's strategy document for the period 2010-2015 was published, *A Museum Strategy for Wales* (WAG 2010: 4), outlining three 'guiding principles':

Museums for Everyone: Museums will contribute to living communities, promote the values of a fair and just society and provide lifelong learning opportunities for all.

A Collection for the Nation: Museums will hold, care for and continue to develop collections for the nation which represent our rich and diverse culture.

Working Effectively: Museums will manage their sites, operations, collections and people more effectively to continue providing services for citizens that are relevant, robust and sustainable.

With regard to 'a collection for the nation', the strategy states that museums 'are integral to the collective memory of our nation' (WAG 2010: 5). The concept of a distributed national collection is important in a Welsh context, and CyMAL wishes to see it supporting a coordinated approach to collecting (WAG 2010: 5)

As part of their mission, CyMAL emphasises that museums must help provide environments where Welsh language learners have an opportunity to practice Welsh. The National Museum already provides centres for adult learners, at St Fagans, the National History Museum and the National Wool Museum respectively. Here they can use the museums' resources as a basis for learning activities. The Report asks that museums develop a Welsh Language terminology for museums (WAG 2010: 19). At the same time, it asks museums to consider the local demographic profile and provide accessible information in other languages.

Although the Report declares that 'museums have a role to play in raising the profile of Wales in the world' the focus is international and not European: collaborative examples quoted are with a slate museum in New York State, and the Dublin Maritime Museum, and the holding of the ICON (Institute of Conservators) conference in Cardiff. It also draws attention to the affinity with the Welsh communities that settled in the Chubut region of Patagonia in the nineteenth century. The action requested is that Welsh museums develop international links where possible, 'creating a positive impression of Wales' (WAG 2010: 31-2). A very strong theme in the Report is that of collaboration among all museums in Wales. 'The Action Plan 2010-2015', on pages 38-8 of the Report, assigns a 'lead' to specific actions. Here, CyMAL appears to play a very significant role, more so than NMW. Another notable element of policy is its role in affirming and nurturing a Welsh identity.

Case studies in chronological order

National Museum of Wales

National Museum Wales is a chartered body and a registered charity, and as an Assembly Sponsored Public Body (ASGB) it receives its funding not from the UK's DCMS, but from the WAG. It generates other income from its trading company and grant giving bodies such as Heritage Lottery Fund. The National Museum Wales (formerly the National Museums and Galleries of Wales), comprises the following museums

- National Museum, Cardiff
- National History Museum, St Fagans, Cardiff
- Big Pit National Mining Museum of Wales, Blaenafon
- National Woollen Museum, Dre-fach Felindre
- Welsh Slate Museum, Llanberis
- Roman Legionary Museum, Caerleon
- National Waterfront Museum, Swansea

It is important to note the breadth of the collections making up NMW. St Fagans, a folk museum, is one of the most extensive in the British Isles. The Big Pit, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in its own right is, in effect, a complete coal mine, with visitors descending 90 metres below ground for some 'exhibits'. The Slate Museum currently is likely to be exhibiting a touring display on biodiversity at the same time as a working steam engine.

The National Museum, Cardiff, was the first national museum in Wales, with the other branches listed above coming under the National Museum's remit later. For the purpose of this paper, we will focus on two museums, the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, as this was the first national museum (and the founding museum of those collections making up NMW), also St Fagans, a folk museum with a significant relationship to Welsh nationalism.

The Cardiff Museum to 1907

A number of learned societies were founded in Cardiff from as early as 1826, but Campbell observed that they initially lacked focus and continuity (2005: 76). For example the Cardiff Literary and Scientific Institution had been founded in 1835, which had its own library and museum. Whilst the historical records about this early society are not clear, Campbell's research suggests that it had ceased around 1863 due to lack of funds (2005: 81-2).

Meanwhile, the British government had passed the Libraries Act in 1850. This allowed local authorities to use one halfpenny in every pound raised by local taxes to establish libraries, which were to be free to the public. This was found to be insufficient, and the sum was raised to one penny in the pound in 1855. Cardiff's town Council was encouraged to consider this, and to adopt the Institution's collections and books in 1860, but the proposal had failed by one vote. However, the public raised funds and this seems to have persuaded the Council to act. In 1864, the Cardiff Library and Museum was set up in rented rooms. It was a local authority museum in that it was established by the City Council, but the museum could not be opened to the public for lack of funds (Campbell 2005: 81).

In 1867, the Cardiff Naturalists' Society was established. As with most societies, a museum was seen as essential, and from the beginning the Society planned to work with the Council to provide Honorary Curators for the city's museum. Thus whilst it was the possession of the Cardiff Corporation, the Cardiff Naturalists' Society managed the collections and created the displays. This they arranged through a management committee of honorary curators affiliated to the Corporation's Free Library Committee. The museum was finally open to the public, if only for a few hours a week, in 1864 (Campbell 2005: 87).

A larger, permanent home was sought, but the Council initially refused to help, claiming that there was no suitable land available. However, eventually a suitable site was found and in 1882, a new Free Library, Museum and Science and Art Schools were opened. Besides civic pride, it was 'a tangible demonstration of civic status and, therefore, the status of the people involved in the museum, a reinforcement of the power of the middle classes to indulge in recognised middle class activities' (Campbell 2005: 96). The establishment of University College Cardiff in 1883 also assisted the museum, whilst specialist societies also developed in the city. Campbell observed that these remained part of the overarching civic structure (being within the Naturalist Society's establishment), which helped the museum (Campbell 2005: 99)

By the 1860s, Cardiff's population was beginning to outstrip all the other South Wales cities. The museum was popular and over-crowded on holidays when visitors from the mining communities nearby came to town, and in the late 1880s, great efforts were made to find a larger (ground floor) accommodation. Although the city authorities were adamant that funding was not available, supporters of the museum were encouraged when another Westminster edict, the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891 enabled local authorities to raise further funds via the rates. The Council finally gave permission to consider a site near the town centre on land of the Bute Estate, only to approach the Museum Committee in 1897 to ask their views on the possibility of a new building being sited at Cathays Park.

It was during these years that the possibility of a national museum for Wales was being seriously considered, and the Council had sent a Memorial to Parliament in support of a national museum, preferably located in Cardiff. The Cathays Park site offered much more space and more open aspects, allowing for a larger museum. The Committee and the honorary curators prepared some new plans for the floor space required, which were examined by W. E Hoyle, the Director of Manchester Museum, but further work was put on hold as the possibility of a national museum sited at Cardiff became a real possibility (Campbell 2005: 111). Meanwhile, seriously short of space, the museum managed to secure off-site storage nearby to ease the problem.

National status

In the later nineteenth century, the civic leaders of Cardiff were striving for city status (formally it was still a town at this time). The 'achieving of city status could bring with it the recognition of capital status', and when it became clear that the establishment of a national museum could serve to forward this drive for civic advancement, the town's leaders were prepared to back a proposal (Campbell 2005: 116-17). There was support from Welsh MPs who were led by Sir John Herbert Lewis, the Liberal MP for the Flint Boroughs. They were 'acutely conscious of representing a large Nonconformist Welsh constituency and their national interest' (Evans 1989 cited Mason 2007a: 116). Lewis had campaigned for several years to get central government funding, pointing

out that Ireland and Scotland both benefitted from it. Mason goes on to say 'it is difficult to identify in the parliamentary records what motivated these MPs to focus on the cause of the National Museum. One can surmise that the museum provided a useful rallying point around which to mobilize popular support for the greater good of Wales' (Mason 2007a: 116-17). Mason also suggests it might have been useful to these MPs to have something they could all support regardless of party that would show their constituents that they were all working together for the good of Wales.

Campbell (2005: 157) notes that rivalries between different Welsh towns made campaigning difficult. Civic leaders in other towns and cities were also debating the value of additional support for their own museums, in some cases to bolster their status as Wales' leading city. 'The closer the realisation of a government grant, the greater the political activity at both the Parliamentary' and civic levels. Here, the manoeuvres for status and power took centre stage, and 'the final campaign was fought on a number of fronts highlighted by a series of bitter skirmishes' (Campbell 2005: 133, 166). The competitors for the site of Wales' national museum emerged as Cardiff, Swansea, Caernarfon and Aberystwyth. Caernarfon, situated in the north west corner of Wales, was an ancient town and pressed its case on the basis that most national institutions were based in the south, and that for North Wales, London was as good a site as Cardiff for a national museum. Caernarfon's Town Council attempted to rally support:

There exists a very real danger that unless North Wales bestirs itself and its public authorities act with energy and unanimity, these two sister institutions -a Welsh National Library and a Welsh National Museum - may be both located among a people having little in common with the nationality for whose benefit they are intended. (*Western Mail* 3rd March 1905) cited Campbell 2005: 177

The competing communities made written submissions to a Committee of the Privy Council in London. The result was announced on 10 July 1905: Cardiff was successful in its application (though the site of the new National Library, decided at the same time, was to be Aberystwyth, despite Cardiff's protests). A Royal Charter therefore established the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff in 1907. The Charter outlined the management structure of the museum, with a 'Court of Governors' representing all parts of Wales, a Council as the executive body, and a Director. One of the Council's first actions was to establish a bilingual title (in Welsh, the museum was 'Amgueddfa Genedlaethol Cymru').

Campbell argues persuasively that Cardiff 'saw the acquisition of the national museum for Wales towards the end of the nineteenth century as further supporting evidence in their claim for city and capital status, using the proposal for the future presence of the museum as an 'instrument in their drive for civic hegemony' (2005: 6). He goes on to note that:

It took Cardiff twenty two years to complete the National Museum of Wales compared to just eight years to complete the new, larger and more complex, Town Hall and Law Courts which opened in 1906 on the same Cathays Park site. It was 1912 before even the foundation stone was laid for the Museum and it didn't open to the public until 1927. Clearly, the mere nomination for the Museum had been instrument enough in the drive for civic hegemony, its creation would add little further to their aims. (Campbell 2005: 237)

Once established, the museum endured some difficult years as economic depression and war interrupted construction (Bassett 1984: 226-27; Mason, 2007a: 143). The museum could only be opened to the public after the intervention of Sir William Reardon Smith, who donated large sums to the museum (Bassett: 1984: 232), and even then it was not complete. In the second half of the twentieth century, the museum operated in a context where nationalism was muted and with limited political ambition, but 'a symbolic space was carved out for its cultural autonomy' (Mason 2007b: 27). However, once devolved government was established in Wales in the late 1990s, the ultimate source of funding came from the Welsh Assembly, not from Westminster, and from 2000 onwards a series of strategy documents outlined the requirements for a truly Welsh national museum.

The museum opened initially for seven days of the week, with free entrance except on Fridays which was a Student Day, everyone else paying sixpence, and on Sundays, when sixpence was also charged (Bassett 1984: 235)

Expressions of nationalism

The museum was not only for Wales but of Wales as its Charter stated that its purpose was to provide a 'complete illustration' of the natural history of Wales and the 'physical environment, history and achievement of man therein' (cited Williams 1983: 17). When King George V opened the new building in 1927, he was told 'this institution was intended to teach the world about Wales and the Welsh people about their own fatherland' (Anon 1927, cited Williams 1983: 17). Mason (2007b: 27) believes that once the national museum was established, 'much care was taken by its directors to emphasise that Wales was seeking parity rather than full independence'. Bassett (1983: 213) noted that 'the national nature of the museum did not get the consideration that one might have expected', but goes on to describe the functions that were national:

- the nature of the Court of Governors, which was large enough to represent all of the Welsh nation, and the Council, which had executive powers
- the specification of Welsh exhibits for the entrance hall of the new Museum
- a system of 'Museum Correspondents' set up in 1910 in the regions to report to the Museum on finds and specimens that might be of significance to the Museum
- formal engagement with the University of Wales' Board of Celtic Studies in 1920
- the development of 'branch museums', initially the Turner House Gallery in Penarth in 1921
- the close association between the National Museum and regional museums afforded by an Affiliation Scheme established in 1922
- the National Museum's connections with other national museums in the UK and the right of pre-emption on Treasure Trove found in Wales, granted in 1943
- the establishment of a national service to schools in 1948

The fourth part of Bassett's history of the museum claims to be 'a return to the primary task of demonstrating how the Museum authorities set out to create a truly national institution' (Bassett 1990: 193). Bassett is concerned with exploring the curatorial issues around developing collections that are both Welsh and representative of wider contexts, particularly as the National Museum was a relatively new museum and its collections had some gaps. Such 'nationalism' as is here, is in line with the nature of Welsh nationalism as outlined above.

One aspect of interest in this context is that, in the 1920s and 1930s, the museum was one of the leading organisations in Welsh archaeology. As summarised by Bassett (1990: 247), Fox's work on Offa's Dyke (an early medieval boundary earthwork marking a border between England and Wales), his publications (especially *The Personality of Britain*, first published 1932), and his work on Celtic finds, all contributed to a picture of Wales as separate and Celtic rather than Anglo-Saxon.

Mason's view (2007a:144) is that 'the range of branches means that there is no one version of Welsh history, culture or identity on display but many different and competing ones.' She believes therefore that four factors shape the nature of national identity that results, and that is on display: the national context which accompanied a particular museum's creation; the collections of each museum; the type of museum or discipline of the department, collection or museum; contemporary concepts of what constitutes 'the nation' and its national culture or cultures. Mason considers this further in the third, fourth, and fifth chapters of her book.

Mike Houlihan was Director General of National Museums Wales from 2003. In 2010, he resigned, to take up a post at Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (a 'bicultural' and bilingual museum). In a closing speech he made clear his dissatisfaction with WAG's policies around Welsh culture. Besides calling for a more integration of cultural organisations, he was unhappy with a 'brand' built around technological industries (to attract inward investment) and a landscape suitable for outdoor pursuits (to attract climbers and walkers etc.), and added:

Cultural tourism, in its broadest sense, has singularly failed to turn up for Wales, in contrast to, say, Ireland or Catalonia [...] The basic point was being missed – the singular, sometimes unsophisticated, sometimes contemporary but always authentic expression of a small nation's culture can be far more attractive and engaging to the outsider than the marketing messages that make it look indistinguishable from any other western, industrialised complex. (Miller 2010)

The European Union is important for Wales, not least because of the EU assistance it has received. However, like other national British collections, national museums in Wales tend to present themselves in an international, rather than a European context. A history of international trade, involvement in Britain's imperial past, Welsh ex-patriot communities such as that in Patagonia, and, perhaps, significant international investment may have all contributed to this view.

Second World War

With the outbreak of war, staff prepared to move the most valuable items to safety. However, apart from a brief closure in August/September 1939, the museum remained open throughout the conflict, though with limited displays. There were some patriotic temporary exhibitions (such as 'The RAF in Action' in 1942). A Welsh Reconstruction Advisory Council was set up by the government during the war and the Museum submitted a memorandum with a 'shopping list' of improvements, but received very little in return (Bassett 1984: 256-60).

1945 and after

In 1946 the Museum was offered St Fagan's Castle and grounds for use as a folk museum. This was a great opportunity, but the Museum Council was only prepared to accept the gift if central

government help from London would be forthcoming. The Treasury was prepared to offer running costs, but not capital expenditure, so a public appeal for £100,000 was made (Bassett 1984: 263). The guidebook of 1964 explained just how important the new Folk Museum was seen to be to the Welsh and their sense of identity:

A folk museum represents the life and culture of a nation, illustrating the arts and crafts, and in particular the building crafts, of the complete community, and including in its illustration the activities of the mind and spirit, - speech, drama, dance and music – as well as of the hand....This...has been fully achieved on several sites in the Scandinavian countries, where the influence of the folk museum in improving the standard of taste and maintaining the pride of the people in the best traditions of their past has been remarkable. Such a museum, indeed, comes to be a cultural centre of the nation which it serves. (Peate 1964: 5)

In the 1950s, two bequests (the Gwendoline Davies Bequest of fine art and the Tomlin Bequest, a shell collection and library) significantly enhanced the Museum's art and natural history collections. The Margaret S. Davies bequest in the 1960s added a further major art collection to the Museum's holdings. The two Davies requests could be said to have created Wales' national art collection (Bassett 1984: 289).

It was initially planned to have a department for Industry, but Bassett notes that there was no mention of this when staff were appointed in 1914. In 1948, a committee was appointed to examine the possibilities of preserving industrial 'relics). With the removal of the folk life material to St Fagan's, space was available at the Museum and funding was sought from the Treasury to establish a Department of Industry. This was finally granted in 1959. According to the then Minister for Welsh Affairs, it was to be 'a Department of Welsh industries, not a general department of technology, still less a miniature museum of science and industry' (Bassett 1984: 279).

The Museum at Cathays Park was still incomplete, and in the early 1960s the West Wing of the building was completed. The Treasury (i.e. the British government) provided ninety per cent of the cost but it had declined to assist with funding for St Fagan's. Major works at St Fagan's did go ahead, with some central government funding, over a twelve-year programme, completed in 1977.

In 1967, following an exploratory meeting with a wide range of heritage and industrial organisations, it was decided to consider an external site for the short term storage of industrial equipment and the eventual opening of an industrial museum (Bassett 1984: 302). The background to this development was that heavy industry in Wales had relied on physically large plant and machinery (for example, colliery headgear or engine houses and associated machinery), which could never be exhibited inside a building. In 1973, the Welsh Office indicated that funding might be available for this, and the Welsh Industrial and Maritime Museum was established in Cardiff docks. However, it was envisaged that this might move to another site later.

Funding

According to Mason, "The importance of individual donors and the so-called "merchant princes" of Cardiff in the history of the first branch of the National Museum cannot be underestimated" (Mason 2007a: 141). Even in the beginning of the twenty first century, the museum is dominated by individual benefactors and donors. This pattern has been repeated in the other sites and

Mason compares the National Museum Wales with donor museums in America. Mason makes the point that the National Museum in Cardiff is an expression of wealthy and middle class aspirations, politics and ownership of culture whereas the Folk Museum in St Fagan's celebrates the working class origins and contribution to Wales.

As is clear from this case study, the Museum struggled to realise its original plans. In 1912, the Treasury had approved the expenditure of £230,000 for the building and equipping of the first stage (just over one half of the planned building), and agreed to contribute one half of that amount. The Council had £60,000 assigned for the work and thus needed another £85,000. However, the First World War prevented completion of the works so far planned. The work then stalled, until Reardon Smith's donations enabled a major extension to take place in 1932. As Bassett points out (1984: 250), it seems that the National Museum of Wales received a lower than average increase in funding when compared with the UK's overall spending on national museums. In 1937, an attempt was made to raise a further £88,000 to complete the building. Fundraising efforts were focussed on Welsh Americans, with an appeal committee being established in New York, but the outbreak of the Second World War limited its effects.

The imposition of admissions charges by Britain's Conservative government on 1 January 1974 caused attendances to fall by fifty per cent. On the abolition of charges on 1 April that year, following a change of government, attendances returned to normal (Bassett 1984: 301).

In 1960, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury visited the Museum to consider changes in funding. Up to 1960, the Museum had obtained grants directly from the Treasury, in contrast to most other national museums whose budgets were voted through in the Westminster Parliament. From 1965, the Welsh Office took over from the Treasury as the sponsoring body through which funding would be directed (Bassett 1984: 284, 290).

The museum now derives its core funding from Grant in Aid from the Welsh Assembly Government as an Assembly Government Sponsored Body (AGSB). Each year, the Minister for Heritage sets out his vision for the Museum in a Remit Letter that establishes the Museum's priorities, identifies the key deliverables and provides details of the budgetary resources available to deliver the museum's activities. The 'Remit Letters' issued to NMW also stress the need for the National Museum to seek additional funding, beyond that provided by the government.

There was significant investment from Britain's Heritage Lottery fund in the 1990s, in the form of a grant of around £42 million towards the refurbishment of three existing sites, the creation of a new Collections Centre and redevelopment of the National Waterfront Museum at Swansea, practically a new museum.

Management and staff

The early history of the museum in Cardiff is linked to that of the learned societies of the city, but even before it was a national museum, power was shifting from these voluntary associations to the local bureaucracy. For example, around 1879, The Free Library Committee reorganised the Museum Sub-Committee, and from being made up entirely of members of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society, their membership was reduced to six of the nine places.

In terms of early staff, in 1876, John Storrie was appointed on a part time basis and it was reported that 'the condition of the Museum has been during the year very considerably improved. It is now open to the public every evening of the week, and all Wednesday and Saturday; the

work of labelling the objects is progressing rapidly, and members having objects to present may rely now upon their being well cared for' (Campbell 2005: 91, 47). Storrie was born in Muiryett near Glasgow in 1844. Although it is likely he came from a working class family, his ability took him to St David's School in Glasgow where he excelled in botany and geology winning a prize for the best collection of Scottish alpine plants. The geologist and author, Professor Page, took John Storrie under his wing and tutored him in geology. He wrote a number of articles for the Society's Transactions on geology and archaeology. At nine pence an hour, it is probable that his post did not suffice for the upkeep of a family, and as he was only required to keep the Museum open in the evenings, he continued working in the printing section of the Western Mail. The shift of control to the Corporation in the late 1870s led to attempts to save money on the cost of a curator, and the Cardiff Naturalist Society, now with less influence, had to lobby for the retention of the post.

John Ward FSA was appointed Curator of Cardiff Museum in 1893. Ward had met and been impressed by John Storrie. Ward was the first Curator to be appointed who was not originally a member of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society so his loyalties would have leant more naturally to the Corporation rather than to the Society.

Governance after the establishment of the National Museum was based on the founding charter, and based on this and the public statements by officials at the time, Bassett (1983: 188) distinguishes two main objectives. The first was 'to teach the world about Wales and the Welsh people about their fatherland', and the second about scholarly research (and by implication, more general education and inspiration).

Dr W.E Hoyle was appointed as first Director in 1907. He had until then been Curator of the University Museum, Manchester, and had considerable experience of the sector (he had been President of the Museums Association in 1906) as well as being a noted zoologist. He had travelled widely to see how museums were organised elsewhere and was regarded as an authority on the planning and development of museums. One of his initial actions was to visit museums in Frankfurt, Berlin and Stockholm before preparing a brief for the architects of the new national museum (Bassett 1982: 167-8; 1983: 191-3).

Initially the museum had a small staff, though in 1912 they were joined by the Curator and staff of Cardiff's Municipal Museum (along with the municipal collections). In 1914, four departments were established, Art and Archaeology, with qualified Keepers, and Botany and Geology, with Assistant Keepers (who did not have formal specialist qualifications). However, in 1919 Zoology was added, and Keepers henceforth headed all departments. At this point there were a total of twenty-six staff (Bassett 1983: 189).

R.E.M. Wheeler (1890-1976) was appointed as Director on Hoyle's retirement in 1924 from his post as Keeper at the museum. Wheeler was a controversial archaeologist, but and played an important role in completing the building in Cardiff, and establishing close links with regional collections (McIntosh 2004). However, he left in 1926 to become head of the London Museum and C.F. Fox (1882–1967), an English archaeologist, succeeded him, and remained Director until 1948. Fox's time at the museum is remembered for his support for the development of the Welsh Folk Museum at St Fagans (Jope 2004).

In 1927, Iorwerth C. Peate (1901–1982) was appointed Assistant Keeper to the Department of Archaeology, in charge of the 'bygones' collection (what would now be called a folk

collection). This was to prove significant in later years, as Peate was an expert and an advocate of folk collections, and served as first Curator of the Welsh Folk Museum (now St Fagans). A biographer has described him:

He was a man of strong convictions and forthright manner, especially when expressing his views about the fate of the Welsh language: he did not believe that there could be a future for it in a bilingual society, contrasting what he saw as the barbarism of urban, English-speaking Wales with the stability of the culturally rich, monoglot, Welsh-speaking, rural society of his youth [...] In religion he was not only nonconformist but Independent and opposed to ecumenism. (Stephens 2004)

Peate was a conscientious objector to military service and registered as a pacifist in 1941, causing him to be suspended from his employment at the museum, only to be reinstated after some public controversy.

Fox retired in 1948 and Bassett (1984: 269) believes this and other staff changes at this time changed the nature of the museum. Dr. D. Dilwyn John, previously the Deputy Keeper in the Department of Zoology at the British Museum, succeeded Fox. He was the first Welsh person to hold the post of Director.

Buildings

The brief for the new National Museum, when issued, was for works costing £250,000, to house six departments: Antiquities and History; Geology and Mineralogy; Botany; Zoology; Art; and Science/Industrial. The building was to be in harmony with other buildings at Cathays Park, that is the City Hall and the Law Courts. The winning design was by Messrs. Dunbar Smith and C.C. Brewer, a London firm. Although their design was clearly the favourite, it was subject to some review and Hoyle and Smith visited further museums abroad, and benefited from discussing the plans with key staff at the museums they visited. The resulting building is classical in style, with Doric columns and extensive use of Portland stone and marble, and has had several extensions added (Coflein Database 2011).

Work was then put in hand, but with the outbreak of the First World War, was badly interrupted. The British government had agreed to provide a pound for every pound raised by subscription for the first part of the construction, and one third of the cost of the third phase of the building. By 1922 however, the museum was in serious debt, and was only able to continue construction when Sir William Reardon Smith and Lady Reardon Smith cleared the debts with a gift of over £20,000. In total, the Reardon Smiths were to give £50,000 to the museum, and there were, in addition, other significant benefactors (Bassett 1983: 199). Building recommenced after the war, and sections were opened informally from 1922, but it was not until 1932, with financial help from the British government, that it was officially opened by H.R.H Prince George (Bassett 1982: 17).

Displays at Cardiff

Despite slow progress on the building, from 1912 a series of temporary exhibitions were mounted near the City Hall, until enough of the new building was open for permanent displays from 1922. One, in 1912, was of articles representing old Welsh ways and customs, and was associated with moves to form a British Folk Museum. Another, opened in the spring of 1915,

was of paintings by Belgian artists and sculptors. It had previously been on display at the Royal Academy (Bassett 1982: 183-4) and clearly had some propaganda value.

Another exhibition, of work by Welsh artists, was mounted in December 1913. The proposal was regarded as 'at least premature, and perhaps ill-advised: not because such an exhibition was undesirable, but because it was thought to be impossible', that is, there was concern that there might not be enough 'Welsh' artists to provide an exhibition (Bassett 1982: 184-5). The exhibition was successful however.

As to the collections, a significant nucleus was formed by Cardiff's municipal collections, donated to the new national museum in 1912. This included a geological collection together with art, sculpture and ceramics. The establishment of the museum prompted the donation of many other items (Bassett 1982: 176-81).

Refurbishment in 2010 will result in improved Art and Modern Art displays, including one of Europe's best collections of impressionist work. Other permanent exhibitions at present include 'The Evolution of Wales', enabling visitors to 'follow Wales's journey as it travels across the face of the planet from its origins billions of years ago' (NMW 2010 a). This is a large geological exhibition covering the creation of Wales's existing geography. In 'Origins: In Search of Early Wales', the period of earliest human settlement, the Roman conquest, and the medieval period to around the 1530s, is addressed.

National History Museum, St Fagan's, Cardiff

Background and establishment

Mason points out that this museum is 'the nation in miniature' (Mason 2007a: 150). It attempts to see how the people of Wales lived and worked in the last 500 years. It is situated on the edge of Cardiff and its collections were originally held in the National Museum Cardiff until being relocated to St Fagan's in 1946. St Fagan's consists of a 20-acre site with St Fagan's Castle, donated by the Earl of Plymouth in 1946. It was the first of its kind in Britain though folk museums did exist in the Isle of Man and in the Highlands. It aimed to create 'Wales in miniature' (National Museum of Wales, 1946: 6, cited Mason 2007a: 152). It consists of a range of historic buildings, taken from all over Wales and re-erected on the site that has now been set out to resemble a village within an extra forty-five acres. The museum also houses a reconstructed 'Celtic village' and an ecological house for the future, a temporary exhibition space and large permanent galleries of agriculture and costume. The site also hosts the activities of people undertaking traditional crafts. Between 2006 and 2007 it had the largest number of visitors out of all the National Museum sites.

Local enthusiasts (T.H. Thomas, an artist, T.C. Evans, a local historian, and T.W. Proger) had developed a collection of folk items and a small 'Welsh Bygones' gallery was opened at the National Museum in 1926 by Fox. I.C. Peate nurtured this collection, whilst in 1930 Fox and others visited Swedish open-air folk museums. A new Sub-Department of Folk Culture and Industries was created in 1933. In 1934, apparently without any notice, the museum received three visitors: Prof. Séamus Ó Duilearga, Director of the Folklore Commission of Ireland, Dr. Ake Campbell, an ethnologist from the University of Uppsala, and the folklorist Prof. Carl Wilhelm von Sydow of the University of Lund, who convinced Fox of the need for a full Department of Folk Culture and Industries (Bassett 1984: 242). At the same time, the Museum

Council confirmed its intention to create an open-air folk museum when the opportunity arose. (All this took place in a context where interest in folk museums was growing and in London the government had sanctioned some initial investigative work.) Bassett goes on to make the point (1984: 246-7) that in Wales especially, the impact of modern industries, the provision of electricity via a national grid, the rapid growth in the use of cars, the introduction of new, artificial fibres and much else was resulting in great changes in society.

Most sources attribute the creation of the museum and the form it ultimately took to Dr Iorwerth Peate who joined the National Museum of Wales in 1927 and was head of the Welsh Folk Museum, St Fagan's between 1948 and 1971. A member of the Welsh Nationalist Party he was clearly very important in the formation and development of the museum but Mason argues that other factors, often overlooked, were equally important. These include the work of a series of National Museum directors such as Cyril Fox (Mason 2007a: 157). In addition the creation of the St Fagan's Museum was influenced by visits to the open air museums in Scandinavia paid by two members of the museum's council. Other European collections, and especially Skansen, were very influential on the planning for the museum. Peate in particular was aware of the nuances of language, which meant that 'Folk Life' (in English) did not quite capture the meaning of the Swedish term (Bassett 1984: 262). Under its influence, Peate conceived of folk culture as the true character of the nation. At the same time the impact of industrialisation and the loss of public memory of the rural and traditional ways of life added urgency to the need to record, collect and preserve the folk traditions and cultures of the nation.

What is interesting is that this movement to create and develop such a museum was led very much by the intelligentsia, not the folk themselves. When the museum was first established it was far more concerned with rural material than urban. This was seen as more authentically 'Welsh' than the industrial anglicised past. The museum followed the principle of waiting for things to be offered to it (particularly buildings), rather than seeking out material on the grounds that it would rather buildings remain in their original sites than be moved to the museum. Thus it was not until the 1980s that redundant industrial sites under threat entered the museum and changed its former rural remit. However, as Mason points out, during the period of the development of the museum there is very little documentation left to indicate how and why different decisions were made at different times about the nature and purpose of the museum. Bassett (1984: 276-7) noted the development of oral history at the Folk Park in the 1950s, in association with work at University College, Cardiff, and this might be linked to a gradually growing interest in the Welsh language after 1945.

Displays at St Fagan's

Mason states that there is not a great deal of literature written on this museum (2007a: 155). However, she does point to Lord (1992) and his critique of Welsh visual culture in the National Museums. According to Lord the National Museum Wales had marginalized indigenous visual culture in favour of an Anglicized, Europeanised aesthetic canon. He sees St Fagan's as complicit in this process. Dicks (2000) also points out that the collecting policies are driven by a romantic and selective view of Wales. Her book provides a useful summary of the development of this museum and she points out how reluctant the museum is to exhibit conflict or dissent (cited Mason 2007a: 156). Most writers attribute changes, if there are any, in this museum and in other

Welsh museums, to curators. Mason argues that this underestimates the internal reasons for exhibitions and collections to be as they are. She argues that the 'text of the museum is far more organic, open-ended and internally contradictory' than is normally recognised by most writers (Mason 2007a: 157). She argues that this museum operates as a space with competing ideas of Welshness.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the National Museums Wales became more visitor focussed and adopted new marketing strategies. This perhaps marks an increased awareness of the importance of tourism. St Fagans National History Museum now presents itself as one of Europe's leading open-air museums, and is Wales's most popular heritage attraction. It covers the period from Celtic times to the present day, with the new Oriol 1 gallery having significant recent historical material.

The opening of the Oriol 1 gallery in 2007 deliberately addressed nationalism, but acknowledged that nationalism and identity are complex. As documented in its original interpretation strategy:

There is no such thing as one Welsh identity - there are many. The exhibition will explore how our sense of who we are, and where we belong, is shaped by language, beliefs, family ties and a sense of nationhood. It will show that culture and traditions are constantly evolving, and will question what the future holds for a nation like Wales in a global age. (NMW 2005: 1)

Its first exhibition asked 'Welsh people to think about the meaning of belonging' in which visitors from Wales and beyond 'play an active role in investigating their beliefs, their roots, their language and who they are.' It included a 'Wall of Languages', displaying over eighty languages currently spoken in Wales (24 Hour Museum Staff 2007). The online description states that:

National symbols and traditions are at the heart of Oriol 1. Through explaining stereotypes and the origins of traditions we can learn how they fit into society today, and how Wales is constantly re-inventing itself. (NMW n.d.)

National Museum Wales, Management and collections

In terms of management, NMW is notable for its networked structure, since it is effectively seven museums. It also has very close connections with regional museums in Wales, and on the other hand relates directly to the WAG via CyMAL.

CyMAL issues the museum with a Remit Letter every year. This sets out the National Museum of Wales' role in relation to the government's strategic agenda, and details priorities and outputs expected, together with how much funding will be provided (WAG n.d.). It also emphasises NMW's responsibility to adhere to WAG's main strategy document, *One Wales*, which aims to 'transform Wales into a self-confident, prosperous, healthy nation and society which is fair to all' (2007b)

A Board of Trustees is appointed to oversee NMW. At the time of writing the posts of President, vice President and Treasurer are held respectively by an ex-CEO of the Welsh Tourist Board, a barrister, and an accountant who had served as CEO of a major manufacturer of steel products. A Directorate, led by a Director General, reports to the Board. The Directorate covers Operations, Collections and Research, Learning and Programme Development, Finance and Communications.

The most recent appointment is David Anderson (awarded an OBE in 1999 for his services to museums and education). Anderson, born in Belfast, was previously Director of Learning and Visitor Services at the Victoria and Albert Museum. His previous appointments included spells at the Royal Pavilion, Art Gallery and Museums, Brighton, and the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich. He was also responsible for some key strategic publications by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport in the 1990s. As with many other national museums in the UK, NMW has drawn on a British 'pool' of talent for this critical post.

Collecting focus

According to *A Museum Strategy for Wales*, National Museum Wales's object is the advancement of the education of the public:

i) primarily, by the comprehensive representation of science, art, industry, history and culture of, or relevant to, Wales, and

(ii) generally, by the collection, recording, preservation, elucidation and presentation of objects and things and associated knowledge, whether connected or not with Wales, which are calculated to further the enhancement of understanding and the promotion of research. (WAG 2010: 11)

In Wales, Amgueddfa Cymru collects on behalf of the nation, while most local authority museums collect to reflect the culture and history of the geographic area they cover. (WAG 2010: 21)

A case study quotes a regional museum (Gwynedd), which staged an exhibition on Jewish Life in North Wales (WAG 2010: 22) and the Report stresses in several places the need to acknowledge diverse communities in Wales. It also stresses the need for Welsh museums to work together to ensure limited resources, such as space for collections, are managed effectively across the nation.

Conclusion

The development and current management of national museums in Wales is typified by a pride in Wales, its culture and history. As the historical survey shows, Welsh nationalism has generally been less energetic in the pursuit of its aims than that of other nations in the UK. This is not to devalue it. Despite Wales' virtual integration into England by the Tudors, and the adoption by the Welsh elite of English ways and attitudes, a distinctive culture seems to have remained, albeit bereft of leadership. This developed during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and was to an extent strengthened by the rise of learned societies with an interest in the country's Celtic past. This interest, wider British trends in support of museums, and civic competition all helped establish museums that would one day gain national status.

Civic status was again important when Cardiff's museum became the basis of the National Museum of Wales. This museum's collaboration with and support for smaller museums in Wales was perhaps a distinctly Welsh feature. The following years saw the addition of further sites, reflecting aspects of Welsh life: as a far-flung outpost of Rome, and as home to woollen textiles and mining and quarrying (coal and slate). Welsh rural life was also significant, recognised at St Fagans, and Wales' industrial is past recognised at Swansea. The connection between Welsh culture (or perhaps cultures) and these museums would seem to be real enough. As part of a

wider devolutionary impetus in the UK in the late nineteenth century, Wales gained its own assembly. This has brought the museum into much closer focus since the Assembly, rather than distant Westminster, now has responsibility for it. As such, the museum is now guided by policy documents that stress the need to present the life and cultures of Wales.

It will be interesting to see how far Welsh identities as distinct from, and superior to, British ones develop as a result of devolution and how, in turn, this affects National Museums in Wales. A survey of peoples' attitudes to their national identities over time, starting in 1979 and ending in 2003, suggested that those prioritising Welsh identity over a British one rose slightly. In 1979, 57% of those surveyed selected Welsh as their first identity with British second, with 33% selecting Britishness over Welshness as their preferred identity (Heath et al 2007: 11). By 2003, 60% prioritised Welsh identity and 27% British identity. Indeed across the UK a preference for British identity over a separate national identity within the UK has shown a decline. How this will affect national museums, if at all, is not clear at this moment but it will be interesting to see how the Welsh national museums position Wales within Britain in any future developments.

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The authors: Dr Sheila Watson, is a lecturer in the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, England. Dr. Andrew Sawyer is a Research Associate in the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, England.

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Annex table

Name	Initiated	Inaugurated	Actor	Ownership	Type	Values	Temporal reach
National Museum Cardiff	1912	Late 19 th c.	Local and national politicians.	British government at arm's-length. Later, Welsh Assembly	Art, Archaeology and Geology	Universal art and national collections	Prehistory to the present.
St Fagans National History museum	1948	1946	Aristocracy and National Museum of Wales	As above	Folk Museum	National	Pre-history to 20 th century
National Waterfront Museum Swansea	2005	2005	National Museum of Wales and city and county of Swansea	As above	Industrial Museum	National	Late 18 th century to present day.
Big Pit National coal museum	2004	2001	Local authority, later National Museum of Wales	As above	Mining	National	18 th century to the 1980s.
National Wool Museum	2004	2004	National Museum of Wales	As above	Textiles	National	19 th and 20 th c.
National Roman Legion Museum Caerleon	1930	1930	National Museum of Wales	As above	Roman Archaeology	National	Roman period in Wales.
National Slate Museum	2005	2005	National Museum of Wales	As above	Industrial Museum	National	2000 years ago to the present.



This publication presents the first comprehensive overview over national museums in Europe and outlines the basis of comparative elements and significant variables. In a comparative light and as a rule, the trajectories of the European national museums provide an account of the parallel interactions between museum, nation and state and give witness to the long standing relevance of national museums as constituent components of what is analysed as negotiated cultural constitutions. It is through these that nations have expressed a yearning for a golden and legitimate past. Attempting to balance such perceived needs for continuity with the increased diversity and difference of the contemporary world turns the notion of a unified agenda of the future into a challenge.

The national reports in the proceedings have been presented and discussed at a workshop in Stockholm in April 2010 and at a conference at the University of Bologna 30 March – 1 April 2011. The conference proceedings include 37 reports by 33 researchers.

The conference proceedings and its reports are produced within the three-year research programme EuNaMus – European National Museums: Identity Politics, the Uses of the Past and the European Citizen, coordinated at Tema Q at Linköping University (www.eunamus.eu). EuNaMus explores the creation and power of the heritage created and presented by European national museums to the world, Europe and its states, as an unsurpassable institution in contemporary society. National museums are defined and explored as processes of institutionalized negotiations where material collections and displays make claims and are recognized as articulating and representing national values and realities. Questions asked in the project are why, by whom, when, with what material, with what result and future possibilities are this museums shaped.

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