



Making National Museums in Europe – A Comparative Approach

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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 2011b). 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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