



National Museums in Germany: Anchoring Competing Communities

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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, Germany

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 “Gegen Gründungen”, 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, Germany

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 Nationalmuseum	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.