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国立民族学博物館学術情報リポジトリ National Museum of Ethnology

## From “Collection Royale” to “Collection Publique” : The Formation of the Louvre

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## From “Collection Royale” to “Collection Publique”: The Formation of the Louvre

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to clarify the process by which art collections were established as French cultural assets, by way of the history of the creation of the Louvre. Below, I will trace the process through which the museum came into being, mainly in the period around the revolution of 1789, but first, as a working hypothesis for this inquiry, I would like to classify collections into three types, based on ownership, namely “private collections,” “national collections,” and “public collections.” The first, “private collections,” indicates those held by an extremely small privileged class of royalty and aristocrats under the ancien regime; in the French case, the royal collections were the most important of these. Concerning the second, nowadays we tend to automatically regard “national collections” as public property. However, one should not immediately consider “national collections” as in and of themselves “public collections,” except in those cases where a particular social system is in place, namely, one in which not only is the state regarded as the whole of society, but the people themselves are aware that the state represents the interests of the society as a whole, that the state itself belongs to them. This is because, following the common-sense meaning of the word, one can only use the word “public” for those things which are associated with all those individuals who make up the “people” (*peuple*), or “nation,” that is, with society as a whole. Thus in the French case, we can designate as “public collections” those collections which, under the republican system, are public assets under the due control of the people, contributed broadly and free of charge to the general public’s enlightenment, education, and leisure. Of course, one should also question the formation of this “public” as the audience for literature, art, and journalism, but in this essay I do not

want to touch on this subject.

What is a “collection”? And what makes a “collection”? Perhaps a few words are needed to answer these preliminary questions. In a book, *Collectionneurs, amateurs et curieux Paris, Venise: XVIe-XVIIIe siècle*, which is highly suggestive for our purposes, Krzysztof Pomian, of the French National Science Research Center, mentions the following four conditions for a “collection” [POMIAN 1987].

The first condition for a collection is that, whether temporary or permanent, it has to be distinct from profit-making activity. (Things gathered on a store’s shelves are there to be sold and, whether or not they form a set, are not a “collection.”) The second such requirement is that a collection has to be placed under special protection. (Trash at a dumping ground may have been “collected,” but it is not a “collection.” A collection must be physically protected from destruction, donation, and theft. Depending on the circumstances, this also raises the question of repair.) Third, it has to be arranged in such a way that it is exposed to a kind of public view, in a fixed, enclosed environment. That is, it has to be “put in a cycle of non-profit exchange.” (Old coins which are sealed in a jar and placed in the ground may have been assembled, but they do not form a collection.) The fourth condition is that the space which surrounds the objects has to be prepared and the design schema fixed in such a way as to have a sense of unity, giving the impression that the objects compose a single, self-same whole. (The collection must have an appropriately designed environment, including display, lighting, and itinerary.)

Certainly during a time of upheaval such as the French Revolution, an environment emerges in which it is impossible to satisfy these conditions; there are a number of examples in which objects which had previously made up splendid “collections” became simply “aggregations of things.” On the other hand, there were also collecting movements which sought to bring together in one building objects which were scattered across multiple locations, to keep these as the permanent property of the nation, to arrange them in such a way as to provide a unifying appearance, to open them to “public” view, whether or not this involved in fact only a limited number of people, and actively to make use of them as contributions to education and enlightenment, albeit nationalist in character. The history of the formation of public museums is a “history of the reorganization of collections,” parallel to the process leading from the individual to the state, and from the state to the people, through which modern society was organized and systematized. As I suggest below, in France this history becomes apparent from the history of the creation of the Louvre as a museum.

Before I begin, I would like to express my appreciation to Suzuki Tokiko, of Meiji Gakuin University, who has written a detailed treatment of the birth of the Louvre in her research on the revolutionary painter, Jaque-Louis David. I have used this work extensively for basic information [SUZUKI 1991].

## 2. THE OPENING OF THE "ROYAL COLLECTIONS" TO THE PUBLIC BEFORE THE REVOLUTION

The Louvre Palace, which was to become the stage for the creation of a French public museum, has a long history, whose origins can be found in the castle built around 1200 C.E. by the Capet King Phillippe II as a rampart for the city of Paris. Subsequently the castle was repeatedly enlarged and renovated, and was also used as the king's residence. However, in 1682 Louis XIV moved the royal residence to Versailles, after which the Louvre was no longer used as a palace and its role was limited to a cultural one. In fact, in 1685, first the Academy of Monuments and Literature (*Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*) and then in 1692 the Academies of Painting and Sculpture moved from the Hôtel de Brion to the Louvre. With this transfer of the academies, the royal painting collection of over four hundred pieces which the king had left in the Louvre Palace was opened to artists and amateurs, though only if one had the requisite permit.

Before long Louis XIV commanded an Italian architect to expand the east wing of the Louvre, but this plan was abandoned in midstream due to a lack of funds. In the eighteenth century, artists and the general populace began to live in combined studios and apartments on the first floor of the Grande Galerie, and the former palace began to fall into disrepair. Still, the academies continued their activities, and in fact, exhibits of members' work were held intermittently in the Salon Carré within the palace in 1699, 1704, and 1725. From 1737, the number of exhibits increased to one every two years, and from 1751 to twice a year.

From the 1740s, however, there were almost no noteworthy works of art inside the palace, apart from the murals and decorative sculpture which could not be moved. In 1745 and again in 1749 Voltaire lamented that the Louvre was in a "shameful state." In a pamphlet (*libelle*) dated 1749, La Font de Saint-Yenne, the founder of the neo-classical movement in aesthetics, proposed restoring the gallery facing the river (the present Grande Galerie) as a display space for the royal collection which was then being stored in poor conditions at Versailles. He pronounced that a special gallery should be established in the Louvre, and that the royal collection should be moved there and opened to the public, thus providing an opportunity for young artists to learn from the great works of the past.

In response to this argument, Louis XV agreed to restore the Louvre and transfer there the library and art works from Versailles. These were duly brought to Paris in 1750, but since at that point the restoration work had not yet been completed, as a provisional measure the transferred objects were stored at the Palais de Luxembourg, and there put on public view — in the extremely limited sense of 100 paintings from the royal collection being exhibited twice a week. This was, however, the first public display of artwork from the royal household, and can be commemorated as such.

The argument for establishing an art museum inside the Louvre Palace to display the royal art collection and for opening it to the public was reiterated in the

entry on the “Louvre” in the *Encyclopédie* published in 1765. Diderot, the author, proposed transforming the Louvre into a temple for the arts and sciences, using the Grande Galerie to display the picture collection and the first floor as a sculpture museum and apartments for artists. Happily, his suggestion was received favorably by Louis XV, but was not realized immediately due to a lack of funds. In 1774, however, Louis XV died. A palace was needed for the Comte de Provence, his son, who had newly ascended the throne as Louis XVI, and from 1779 the Palais de Luxembourg was used for this purpose, raising the problem of where to transfer the painting collection which was on display.

In 1778, the Comte d’Angiviller, who was serving at the time as Director of the King’s Buildings (*Directeur des Bâtiments du Roi*), organized a committee to investigate the establishment of a “French Museum at the Louvre” (*Muséum français au Louvre*). In the 1780s, based on d’Angiviller’s plan, art was brought from the palace at Versailles and the Palais de Luxembourg to the Louvre. However, the lighting in the Grande Galerie was inadequate and in the end the plan to establish a museum collapsed, without any exhibits being put in place.

A plan to install top lighting, by putting a glass ceiling in the gallery, was announced in January 1788, and in due course was installed and on view at an Academy exhibition held the following August in the Salon Carré. Plans for the Grande Galerie, however, amounted to no more than an oil painting of a plan to renovate the space, exhibited in the Salon of 1798 by Hubert Robert, a painter who was serving at the time as director of the Louvre museum. According to d’Angiviller’s memoirs, the severe financial crisis which France was facing at the time, together with the technical problem of how to resolve the question of load distribution, were the main reasons preventing the realization of the renovations. In 1803, a skylight was put into part of the ceiling, but it would be over 100 years before top lighting was installed throughout the gallery.

### 3. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE *MUSÉUM CENTRAL DES ARTS*

On 14 July 1789 the revolution broke out. Looking back over French history, one frequently encounters cases where changes of political system or ideology did not necessarily prevent the transmission and continuation of cultural policies. This was one of those times when this national characteristic was manifest. In fact, the national parliament, which became the first ruling body following the revolution, delivered a series of measures aimed at overturning the ancien régime. Exceptionally, however, it retained the plans for the Louvre Museum which had been formulated during the ancien régime, and came up with various policies through which they might be realized. In a proclamation of 26 May 1791, it was decided that the Louvre and Tuileries palaces “were to be used as the king’s residence, as a place to gather all the monuments of science and art, and as the main facilities for public instruction.”

The first step was a plan to nationalize all the works of art within France. In

order to realize this policy, the royal collections at Versailles and various other sites were confiscated and brought together in the Louvre, while the property confiscated from the aristocracy in exile was assembled in the Hôtel des Nels. Church property was no exception; on 2 November 1789 an order for the confiscation of church property was proclaimed. In 1790 a Commission des Monuments was organized, and under its leadership the works of art from the churches in Paris and the surrounding area were assembled at the Abbé Petits-Augustins (which subsequently became the facility for the Ecole nationale des Beaux-Arts). The Commission des Monuments also intended to compile a complete catalogue of the state's art assets, which had thus been confiscated from sites throughout the country, but there was no intention of putting this into immediate effect. (This plan continues today, at the end of the 20th century, as a state project.)

On 10 August 1792, the Sans-Culottes in Paris attacked the Tuileries, which had become the royal residence, and the following day proclaimed the end of the monarchy. The national parliament was dissolved and a popular assembly was convened to draft a new constitution. The same day as the abolition of the monarchy, by order of the minister of state, a Commission du Muséum was organized to select the works of art which were to be assembled in the art museum; the following month 225 paintings were moved from Versailles to the Louvre in accordance with this committee's decisions. On 27 July 1793, the popular assembly decided to establish a Muséum de la République, an issue which had been left unresolved under the ancien régime. It was to be known as the Muséum Central des Arts, and from 10 August, the first anniversary of the abolition of the monarchy, 537 paintings were put on public view in the Grande Galerie, although the lighting problem remained unresolved. This historically significant "art museum," however, soon closed due to construction work, and did not reopen until 18 November.

The aims of putting these works on view, however, differed in a number of ways from the way we now think about general art museums, largely because its chief aim was the education and enlightenment of artists, and therefore its character was predominantly that of an educational museum. Its opening policy was such that, of the ten day period which made up the revolutionary calendar, five days were devoted to artists and sculptors, three days were days when the general public could enjoy the exhibit, and two days were working days for the members of the museum's supervisory committee. According to the museum's records for the opening year, the royal collection made up three quarters of the 537 paintings on display, and the majority of the remainder were pieces confiscated from the Church. The policy governing the museum's opening was also clearly reflected in the choice of work. Whimsical, rococo subjects such as "fêtes galantes" and "pastorales" were naturally excluded from display. There was sophisticated museological consideration given to dividing the exhibited work by school, but there were no labels giving the work's title or artist, and periodization and genre seem to have been largely inaccurate.

With the opening of the Muséum Central des Arts, the Commission du Muséum was disbanded, and in its place a Conservatoire du Museum was inaugurated on 16

January 1794, with members drawn from the Comité d'Instruction Publique of the popular assembly. The activities of this committee continued for three years, until January 1797, during which time the leading role was played by the painter Jacques-Louis David, a member of the popular assembly. He had positioned the Muséum Central as an educational institution for artists and citizens, with the diffusion of revolutionary thought and an artistic renaissance as its aims; now he spearheaded a radical cultural policy using Jacobin ethics and neo-classical aesthetics. During the Thermidor Reaction which overthrew Robespierre on July 27, David was arrested, the activities of the Conservatoire in reforming the institutions of cultural administration were halted, and its functions were transferred to the Conseil d'Administration du Muséum Central des Arts, established as a non-government agency in 1797.

According to Suzuki, the thinking of the Conservatoire about the Muséum Central was, "to educate the public by displaying in a systematic fashion as many as possible of the works of art which humankind had produced to this point, and also to use this for artists' education" [Suzuki 1991]. The character of the Muséum Central was determined in accordance with this, as an art museum aiming to educate and enlighten, and thus the initial step was made in realizing the principles of a modern art museum. The modern character of the Muséum Central is also apparent in its emphasizing the conservation and restoration of the works of art. This can also be seen in its planning conferences on restoration technique, and in putting all the paintings in frames with the name of the work and the artist.

On 30 March 1795 the Conservatoire was reorganized, and in order to properly organize and expand the museum, it was resolved to quickly transfer to the Muséum Central the royal, church, and aristocratic collections which were being stored throughout Paris. The Abbé Petits-Augustins, which had become the repository for the objects seized from the Church, was opened as the Musée des Monuments Français in 1795. Since 30 paintings from among the seized objects were transferred to the Muséum Central, it became mainly an exhibit of French sculpture since the Middle Ages. Then, in 1797, a Musée Spécial de l'Ecole Française, focusing on Rococo painting, was opened in the Louvre palace. The Italian paintings at Versailles were moved to the Louvre, and the work of minor French artists with which they were replaced became the center of the exhibit.

The educational philosophy of the Muséum Central, namely trying to use historical works of art to educate and enlighten young painters and the general public, encouraged the emergence of regional art museums throughout the country. Or rather, the museum's title — Muséum Central des Arts — itself provides a contrast with regional art museums. Already at this historical stage, people were aware of the class hierarchy which nowadays dominates the museum system. In the art museums of Rouen, Toulouse, Dijon, Nancy, Anjou, Tours, and Bordeaux, objects which had been seized from the local churches, monasteries, and aristocrats were assembled and put on public view. On 1 September 1800, by order of consul Bonaparte, 846 paintings which could not be stored at the Muséum Central — and which were hardly

outstanding pieces — were redistributed to the regional museums, as a way of encouraging regional art. These works made up the core of the collections of the major regional museums, which subsequently became the "musées classés" during the period of museum reorganization following the Second World War.

The idea of these "public museums," established on the basis of the educational philosophy of the age of enlightenment, took off throughout Europe, which was then under French rule. Starting with the Belgian royal museum and academy of art in Brussels, art museums in the Italian cities of Milan, Bologna, and Venice, a national museum in Amsterdam, converted from the city hall, and the Prado in Madrid all appeared following the model of the French *Muséum Central*.

#### 4. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MUSÉE NAPOLEÓN IN 1803

In 1796 the *Muséum Central* closed. The following January 26, the *Conservatoire* was dissolved on order of the Home Minister. In its place was established a comparatively reliable *Conseil d'Administration du Muséum Central*, composed of artists, which came to assist the newly appointed "Directeur du Muséum." In 1799, the general Napoléon Bonaparte, who had been supreme commander for the invasion of Italy, was appointed as first minister of state through the coup d'état of "Brumaire 8 in the 9th year of the revolutionary calendar" (1800/11/9). With this, for the time being, the turmoil of the revolution came to a close.

As the social situation settled down, the *Muséum Central* gradually reopened. Part of it reopened in 1799. In 1800, a gallery for the display of ancient artworks acquired during the invasion of Italy was set up in the *Petite Galerie*, and on July 14, 1801, 643 works of various foreign schools was put on public display in the *Grande Galerie*. Following the subsequent reopening of the *Salon Carré* and the *Galerie d'Apollon*, a large-scale exhibition opened in March 1802, with masterpieces of Italian painting which had been seized in Italy hung in the *Salon Carré*, and French, Dutch, and Italian paintings in the *Grande Galerie*.

The person in charge of this exhibition was Dominique Vivant Denon, an archaeologist who had managed to win the trust of Napoléon. His method of displaying works by country and in chronological order was drawn from the art historical perspective of Giorgio Vasari's *Lives* (1550), and remains an effective method even today. This systematic display, which enabled one to compare the differences between regions and painters, was clearly quite different from previous displays, which emphasized decorative quality or were based on genre, and was to prove a decisive influence on subsequent display methods. The *Muséum Central*, as the accumulated result of the nationalization of works of art, and with the exception of medieval art (which still was not recognized as "art"), was intended to enable a historical, scholarly survey of the whole of art, from ancient times to the present.

Following the success of this huge exhibition, in November 1802 Denon was installed as *Directeur Général du Musée Centrale des Arts*. At the same time he was



appointed as *Directeur des Musées*, in charge of the *Musée des Monuments Français*, the *Musée Spéciale de l'École Française*, the mint, and the state-managed Gobelins tapestry factory and ceramics factory at Sèvres. In August 1802, the *Musée Central des Arts* was renamed the *Musée Napoléon* by decree of the second minister of state, Cambacérès.

Following this, Denon, who was both a friend of the Emperor Napoléon and an able cultural administrator, advanced the preparations for the *Musée Napoléon*, with the aid of Dufourny, the keeper of paintings, Ennio Quirino Visconti, the curator of ancient art, and the architect Pierre Fontaine. First, he relocated the artists who had had studios and homes in the Louvre palace to the Abbé des Capucins. Next, he appointed the architects Fontaine and Percy to oversee an expansion which would join the Tuileries and Louvre palaces, but due to a downturn in the financial situation this had to be abandoned. Then in 1805, he carried out renovations in the Grande Galerie — including top lighting for part of the ceiling — and in 1806, with work on the Caryatids, the building of the Carrousel, the construction of a loggia facing the Rue de Rivoli, and the completion of the Cours Carré, a series of projects were realized in quick succession. Needless to say, the national collections also expanded rapidly during this period.

## 5. THE FORMATION OF THE “NATIONAL COLLECTIONS”

It was of course the royal collections which became the core of the *Musée Napoléon*. The French royal collections began with François I building the Palais de Fontainebleau, and there collecting Italian Renaissance pictures. The collection did not expand much under Henri IV and Louis XIII, from the late 16th to the early 17th centuries, but the situation changed during the time of Louis XIV. In 1642, the painting collection of Richelieu, advisor to Louis XIII, was bequeathed to the royal house, and in 1661 the much-loved collection of Mazarin, advisor to Louis XIV, was acquired. Work of the period was also energetically acquired, beginning with the banker, Eberhard Jabach's collection of Holbeins, and including French, Flemish, and Dutch work, as represented by Poussin, Rubens, and Rembrandt respectively. Thus all of a sudden the royal painting collection expanded.

During the reign of Louis XV, although Rococo painting of the period, such as that of Boucher and Chardin, was bought, the number of acquisitions dropped off markedly compared to the previous period. In contrast to the decline in the number of royal acquisitions, an art market was created during this period, centered on England and Holland, and the trading of paintings took off, particularly among the aristocratic and merchant classes. In the 18th century, attention began to focus on the educational value of works of art for young artists and the general public, and a striking trend began toward the comprehensive collection of official Academy painting, for technical education, and of enlightenment history painting, as a way of inspiring patriotism.

The collecting tradition whereby collections were “acquired” collapsed

overnight with the outbreak of the revolution. With the overthrow of the ancien régime, the Commission des Monuments, which sought to realize the radical philosophy of the revolutionary government, took the steps of forcibly seizing the property of the royal household, the Church, and the aristocracy in exile, and apart from some objects which it sold, collecting it all together, making it national property, and registering it in the national collections.

What was the situation like in the neighboring countries? In 1793, the army of the national assembly conquered what is today Belgium. The Commission Temporaire des Arts, the body which had replaced the Commission des Monuments, proposed to the Comité de Salut Publique that it seek to make "the conquered countries pay reparations by using works of art." The Comité accepted this, and ordered the Commission de Commerce et Approvisionnement to "seize" works of art. On this basis, academic specialists were sent from the national educational committee to Holland and Belgium, nominally to survey and collect the paintings of the conquered regions. In the subsequent "Thermidor Reaction," Robespierre was overthrown and the situation inside France changed radically, but the plundering of Belgian works of art proceeded as planned. In September 1794, the altar paintings of Rubens from Belgian churches, 17th-century paintings by Van Dyck and Jordaens, and early Flemish painting by Van Eyck and Memling was brought back to Paris with the other war booty.

The national plundering of works of art from conquered regions continued uninterrupted during Napoléon Bonaparte's invasion of Italy. The government-general which had ordered Napoléon to the front requested that the commander enrich Paris, the "city of freedom," by collecting outstanding examples of Italian art and so augment the splendor of the military booty through the enchantment of art. In response to this request, Napoléon twice brought back vast numbers of art works from his Italian campaigns, first between 1796 and 1797, and then in 1800. This state-orchestrated "collecting" was nominally legalized as collateral for the ceasefires and as a condition of the treaties, but in fact it was nothing more than "plundering." The technique was simple. The one to two hundred works of art delivered by the conquered city would be divided up, classified into painting and sculpture, and drawn up into a detailed list. Based on this the collected works would be packed up, and sent off to Paris by land or sea as booty, where there would be a victory ceremony, accompanied by a magnificent festival. The third such Italian-booty-welcoming ceremony, held over two days in July 1798 on the fourth anniversary of the deposition of Robespierre, was the largest of its kind.

Of course, this is not to say that the choice of works proceeded in a random fashion. It was natural that Greek and Roman sculpture and works of art were sought after, given the works' aesthetic and ideological value. In painting, works by the artists of the Renaissance, who were considered to have revived the classical age, such as Raphael, Corregio, Veronese, Titian, and Guilio Romano, were much prized as were painters of the Bologna school, who were regarded as their legitimate successors, such as the Caracci family, Guido Reni, and Il Domenicino, and the

French, Flemish, and Dutch masters who became the models for Academy art education from the 17th century. In sum, their target was any work which belonged to what people in the West imagine to be “the orthodoxy of art history.”

There were those who condemned these acts of plunder as barbaric. In fact, the classical aesthete Quatremere de Quincy made a public declaration opposing the government’s program of carrying away large numbers of art works from their nurturing environment. “The custom of demanding booty,” he said, “returning wealth to the hands of the strong, was the exorbitant, barbaric practice of ancient Rome. That people in the 18th century should try to revive this is an outrage beyond imagining.”

Of course, the creation of the collection during the revolutionary period was not entirely based on “plunder.” There were also acquisitions based on “purchase” and “exchange.” It was the Conservatoire du Musée Central des Arts which had the power to do this. The basic condition for purchasing work was to collect as far as possible the works of a great number of painters, without favoring any particular artist, and to limit acquisition of works by artists who were already included in the collection to those which were clearly of higher quality than those in the collection. Although the examples are limited, there are records of “purchases” from citizens, as well as “exchanges” with domestic art dealers and the old aristocracy.

Vivant Denon became director of the Musée Central in 1802 and, with the accession of Napoléon as emperor, was appointed as the highest official responsible for cultural administration. In the emperor’s name, he actively implemented a public “system for ordering” art works and monuments, aiming to exalt the nation’s prestige and extol its emperor. There were a vast number of these, including the columns in the Place Vendôme, the decoration of the Carrousel, monuments to Général d’Orcy, an official memorial painting of the emperor’s enthronement ceremony, a memorial painting of the victory at Austerlitz, and all sorts of other memorial paintings of official events and official portraits. It was natural that Denon, who was in his honeymoon period with the emperor, should try to legitimize the plunder of works of art from foreign countries. In fact, in a lecture he gave in 1803, “On the ancient works of art which have arrived from Italy,” he noted that, “The heroes of our age... have demanded trophies of peace from our enemies... Countless... objects have passed through enemy lands and seas, made their way up our seas and canals, and arrived in our galleries, where they will be kept in perpetuity as victory memorials.”

Plundering had subsided for a while following the second Italian campaign, but again took off after 1806. On this occasion, collections throughout Germany, Austria, and Italy, and the Spanish royal collection were the targets. In addition, Denon himself went to the sites, meticulous in the way he selected works. I will not go into detail about exactly what was taken, but it should be pointed out that Denon did turn his attention to regions and periods which until then had not been generally appreciated, such as 17th century Spanish painting and early Italian painting, from before the 15th century.

In March 1814 the combined European forces entered Paris. The following

month the emperor abdicated and was banished to the island of Elba. With the fall of Napoléon, the neighboring countries began to demand the return of the plundered artworks. Initially their target was the works in the collections of the Louvre and Tuileries palaces, and only 200 or so paintings and craft works were returned to the Prussian and German princes, and the Spanish aristocracy. With the beginning of the second monarchy, however, there were increasingly strident demands from foreign countries for the return of their objects. In fact, the principle was acknowledged whereby all works which had been seized between the revolution and the empire should be returned to their original sites; by the end of 1815, requests had been made for the return of a total of 5,253 works. Denon was in charge of the negotiations over these demands from foreign countries, and through his superior intelligence and polished social skills was successful in keeping for the Louvre 100 paintings and 800 sketches, centering on 14th and 15th century Italian altar paintings.

Denon's successor as director of the *Musées Royaux* was Forbin, who claimed the 16th and 17th century works in the *Musée des Monuments Français* for the Louvre. Subsequently the *Venus di Milo* was brought to the Louvre as a gift to the king by the Duc de Rivières. With the purchase of paintings such as David's *The Rape of the Sabine Women*, Gericault's *The Raft of Medusa*, and other works of the period and the consignment of works from the Palais de Luxembourg, the Louvre collections were again enriched. By this point the *Musées Royaux* finally began to function as "public museums."

In 1824, 94 sculptures, many of which had been produced by order of Napoléon I, were put on display in the newly built Galerie d'Angoulême. During the reign of Charles I, ancient sculpture and medieval craft sections expanded rapidly. In 1825 Edomé-Antoine Durand sold to the Louvre his collection of over 1,000 pieces of ancient sculpture and over 500 medieval and Renaissance craft pieces, and three years later the painter P. Révoil, a disciple of David, donated his collection of medieval and Renaissance crafts to the Louvre.

During this period the Louvre was popularly known as the "Musée Charles X." In 1826, Champollion succeeded in deciphering ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, and thereupon an "Egyptian section" was established. Champollion, who was put in charge of the section, bought in one transaction the 4,000 piece collection of Salt, the British Consul General in Cairo, and had renovations made to the galleries for its display. In 1838, under the July monarchy, a gallery was opened with the 450 Spanish paintings bought by Baron Taylor as a representative of Louis-Philippe. Unluckily, however, with the fall of Louis-Philippe, the king's personal collection was put up for sale at auction in London. This shows that the king's collection was regarded as a "private collection," separate from the "public collection." Nevertheless, under Louis-Philippe an "Oriental section" was established, and in 1847 Paul-Émile Botta, the French consul in Mossoul, brought to the Louvre works of art which had been unearthed from the remains of the Khorsabad palace of the Assyrian king Sargon II.

During the Second Empire, under Napoléon III, there was a plan to join the

Louvre to the Tuileries, and this was realized in 1857 thanks to the efforts of the architect Hector Lefuel. With this increase in the space for displaying pictures, in 1862 the collection of Baron Campana was acquired, comprising over one hundred 14th and 15th century pictures on wood, Greek ceramics, and Etruscan works of art. Then, in 1869, the museum received a donation of masterpieces of 18th century painting from Doctor La Caze. With this, 18th century painting gradually began to be shown in the Louvre. The collection of ancient art also expanded greatly with the excavated objects brought back by French teams conducting surveys of ruins in the Orient. In 1852, the Mariette team brought back artifacts from graves at Sakkara in Egypt, in 1860 Renan brought artifacts from ruins in Lebanon, and in 1863 Champoiseau donated the *Nike of Samothrace* to the nation. This may recall the above-mentioned donation of the *Venus di Milo* to the king.

Subsequently, the Louvre collections increased mainly through purchases. The body responsible for the work of collecting was the Réunion des Musées Nationaux, established in 1895 with the aim of the protection and conservation of cultural assets, and a national acquisitions strategy has long been sustained through this organization. On the financial side, the Société des Amis du Louvre, founded in 1897, has made great contributions. Today, 100 years later, this society has grown to a membership numbering over 40,000 people.

## 6. THE PUBLIC MUSEUM AND THE BIRTH OF “PUBLIC COLLECTIONS”

Above I have reviewed the process through which the Louvre museum and its collection was created. What is undeniable is the fact that the establishment of the institution and facilities of the museum has paralleled the rise and fall of the collection. The formation of the collection was bound up with the gradual process of development leading from the birth of the Louvre as a public institution, and it is due to the experience of this natural evolution that museum facilities in contemporary French society can be seen to be “public museums.”

At this point, I would like to introduce Pomian’s classification of “public museums” into four types, on the basis of the process by which they come into being [POMIAN 1987].

The first is what one can call the “traditional type.” That is, a museum facility which performs social functions for the community and which in addition owns a collection open to the public, rather like a church which has amassed over the centuries paintings, sculpture, ceremonial objects, and relics. This also includes the palaces of aristocrats and monarchs who have assigned themselves the task of assembling and showing off large quantities of rare and beautiful things. The objects which have thus been accumulated, by being incorporated within the institution of the museum, naturally lose the ceremonial, social, or decorative role which they originally possessed. Art museums such as the Uffizi in Florence, the Ambrosiano in Milan, and the Pinakothek in Munich, together with many church collections, belong

to this type.

The second is the "revolutionary type." That is, the kind that gathers together objects with various individual histories, plundered by the state, in a building which was a facility with no ties or connections to them and has been renovated as a museum, created and administered by order of a centralized national authority trying to promote modernization. The Musée Central des Arts in France, as well as the regional art museums which were created in its wake, and the Prado, created by order of Joseph Bonaparte in 1809, are examples of this type, informed by the spirit of enlightenment. There is not a single example of this type of museum facility in the Anglo-Saxon countries.

The third is the "benefactor type." That is, one created by the founder of a private collection making his or her own collection of use to the public by donating it to his or her home country, a self-governing body, or an educational institution. This type of public museum emerged between the 19th and the early 20th centuries, with many examples particularly in Italy. In the Old World, it plays no more than a complementary role to the "traditional" and "revolutionary" types, but in the United States public museums such as the Smithsonian Institution, the National Gallery, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and university museums all belong to this type. Where there is a high level of individual participation in public affairs, individuals try to make their own property useful to the public. Conversely, it is hard for this to exist in absolute monarchies, or feudal or totalitarian states.

The fourth is the "commercial type." That is, a museum facility created by an institution purchasing *in toto* the works or collection which will go to make up the museum. This type can perhaps be represented by the British Museum, inasmuch as it was created on the basis of the collection purchased for 20,000 pounds in 1753, by parliamentary decision, from the executors of Sir Hans Sloane. Expansion of the collection for this type occurs through donations, direct purchases, or mediated purchases (incorporating objects acquired through excavations or offers of capital).

Of course, various elements intervene in the process by which a public museum is created, and there may well be objections to this Pomianesque four-fold typology. However, if we can understand public museums as having been established through a combination of these four types, then one might say that this classification provides a reasonably comprehensive understanding of the historical facts. The Louvre is in fact a case in point. The royal collections were its initial core, and with the revolution these were made public property. At the same time were added the collections which Napoléon had plundered from various regions, combining to create a rapid expansion of the "national collections." With the overthrow of the emperor, many of the plundered objects were returned, and the collection shrank. Subsequently, however, through the mid-19th century, there were successive donations and bequests to the nation of "private collections" by benefactors, as well as purchases of objects collected by archaeological surveys, and the "national collections" were once again enriched. Then, toward the end of the 19th century, a national acquisition system was established through the financial support of the

populace. And recently, a national consensus has been established to make use of nationally-owned works of art, as “public collections,” in various aspects of the society’s life, through a multi-faceted initiative of various administrative measures, including the setting-up of museum institutions, public education on historical cultural assets, and tax benefits and special provisions.

In closing, I would like to slightly shift my emphasis by indicating some of the differences between this and the process through which museums were created in modern Japan.

The first difference is that Japan during the early Meiji period had nothing like the Louvre’s “royal collection.” Neither the imperial collection, considered to be *gomotsu* (lit., “honorable things”), nor the treasures in temples and shrines, nor the military families’ collections of tea utensils and arms and armour, nor the medicinal plant collections of the Dutch and Western Learning scholars were made into national or public property. Thus throughout the country, “private collections” were retained as such. In other words, the sense of “my own exclusive possessions,” understood in museological terms to precede modernity, was preserved in Japan even during the modern period.

Second, in the West, national museums were created in order to use the national collections as a means of education and enlightenment, and of exalting national prestige. In Japan, by contrast, national museums were created before collections were formed, as an institution for social education, essential in the formation of a modern state on the western model. In addition, the collections that were acquired were limited to objects which were regarded as “things Japanese,” as the territory corresponding to this designation changed over time; there was nothing which transcended this framework. Thus the national museums have always had the character of sites for the “unveiling” of national treasures.

Third, the museum which has been successively named, under the Meiji Constitution, the Imperial Museum and the Tokyo Imperial Household Museum, and under the new constitution, the National Museum and the Tokyo National Museum, has always been characterized as an “imperial” or “national” “treasure house,” and has never been truly public. Even under the new, postwar constitution, the idea of a “public museum” has not been encouraged. This is a phenomenon coterminous with the persistent immaturity of democracy, which is premised on the direct participation of individuals in society. It is because of this that there are few public museums in Japan of the “benefactor type,” which are very common in the West. Conversely, the “commercial type” has flourished, as can be seen in the art museums administered by department stores.

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