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Art exhibitions as a tool for international cooperation: the case of the Council of Europe

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Introduction

Today we are witnessing profound cultural and social changes, including a growing skepticism towards the European Union, started with the 2008 crisis and culminated with the Brexit referendum in 2016. In addition, the outbreak of numerous wars and the great debate on immigration and integration create a sense of instability all over the world. In general, we observe more closure within national borders at the expense of a cultural international dialogue. This thesis does not set out to solve geopolitical problems, but the question to be asked is whether culture and art exhibitions can contribute to greater understanding between countries and a dimension of dialogue between different cultures. To explore this, the thesis examines the exemplary art exhibitions organised by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, the institution dedicated to the promotion of democracy, human rights and European cultural identity. In 1954 immediately after the end of the Second World War and the beginning of the Cold War, the Council of Europe started a series of art exhibitions to promote European cultural heritage as a common heritage to strengthen the notion of European culture without giving up national differences. Subsequently, the focus shifted to promoting the knowledge and appreciation of European art as one of the highest expressions of common European culture and values. The exhibition project presented in many European capitals the chronological development of European art, influential historical personalities who influenced the history of the continent, movements of people and the relationship between society and art.

This thesis aims to analyse these cultural events in every aspect, both the curatorial path, the scientific project, and the more organisational and financial aspect. Specifically, the thesis will analyse in detail three exhibitions – *La Révolution française et l'Europe* (Paris, 1989); *Emblémes de la liberté l'image de la République dans l'art* (Bern, 1991)*; Art and power, Europe under dictatorships from 1930 to 1945* (London, Barcelona, Berlin 1995 1996) – realised in the late 1980s and early 1990s, a period of extreme socio-cultural and identity change throughout Europe. Indeed, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the end of the Cold War established a new equilibrium within the European continent, leading to the emergence of new countries that had to define their cultural identity, many of which signed the European Cultural Convention and became Member states. In fact, since the 1990s, Council of Europe

exhibitions have aimed to reflect on the relationship between art and society, on the concepts of democracy and freedom.

The thesis is divided into three chapters, each of which addresses a crucial aspect of the subject matter, providing an exhaustive overview.

The first chapter adopts an interdisciplinary approach to build a solid conceptual framework for the research. Contributions from different fields, such as art history, sociology and cultural diplomacy are integrated here. In this section, European integration and cultural identity are explored through the work of Irish sociologist Gerard Delanty. The concepts of soft power and cultural diplomacy are clarified through the studies of American international relations expert Joseph Nye, historian and public diplomacy professor Nicholas Cull, and Italian scholar of cultural diplomacy Federica Olivares. In addition, a historical overview of art exhibitions and their role in the construction of cultural identity is drawn, based on contributions by art historians Francis Haskell, Bruce Rampley and historian Eric Hobsbawm.

The second chapter focuses on the Council of Europe, analysing its historical development and its significant role in defining cultural policies. This section explores how the Council has promoted European culture through a series of art exhibitions held in collaboration with Member and Non-member States. A detailed analysis of the administrative, organisational and financial aspects of the exhibitions is carried out, providing an in-depth understanding of how they were realised and how the organisation evolved from 1954 to 2012.

Finally, the third chapter focuses on the three exhibitions mentioned above, examining them from an art-historical, museographic and organisational perspectives. It aims to provide a comprehensive analysis, covering aspects such as scientific research, funding, international cooperation in terms of loans, the involvement of art history experts, and the participation of Council of Europe Member States.

An innovative aspect of this research lies in its analysis of an exhibition project that had a significant historical and artistic impact by promoting a transnational European culture, with the aim of shaping both the academic world and the broader European public. It is a rare example of an exhibition project initiated by a major international institution, such as the Council of Europe, which began a place for cultural dialogue between experts from all over the world. Moreover, this research is

also characterised by the scarcity of sources, as little literature has been devoted to the subject, thus making this exhibition a fertile topic yet to be discovered.

To answer the research question, I adopted a qualitative approach based on documentary and archival research of primary and secondary sources. For the first chapter, the research included the study of articles and publications by experts in exhibition history, sociology and cultural diplomacy. These academic sources offered a broader theoretical and historical framework necessary to understand the context of exhibition practices and the dynamics of cultural diplomacy.

The research for the second chapter was mainly based on the analysis of the Council of Europe archival documents, consulted on its online database. These documents provided crucial information on the Council's role in promoting and supporting art exhibitions, offering a detailed insight into cultural policies and administrative and financial decisions. These materials provided a clear picture of the institutional strategies that influenced the development of the exhibitions studied.

Finally, for writing the third chapter, I examined the exhibition catalogues in their original languages, in French for the exhibitions *La Révolution française et l'Europe* (Paris, 1989); *Emblémes de la liberté l'image de la République dans l'art* (Bern, 1991) and in English for *Art and power, Europe under dictatorships from 1930 to 1945* (London, Barcelona, Berlin 1995 1996). Therefore, I made full use of the three languages I know (French, Italian, English) for both the research and the writing of the thesis. In addition, these catalogues were a fundamental resource for understanding the artworks in display, the finances and the loans. By analysing them, it was possible to assess the scientific project behind the exhibitions and their art-historical impact. Another important component of my research was the analysis of critical articles written by experts and art historians, found in the online archives of various newspapers and magazines. These articles provided a contemporary critical perspective, allowing us to understand how exhibitions and artworks were perceived and interpreted by experts in the field. These critical contributions were essential to enrich my analysis with different interpretations and to contextualise the exhibitions within the artistic debate of the time.

As mentioned before, some limitations in the research have emerged. Since there has been little research on the exhibitions organised by the Council of Europe, it has

made difficult to find published sources. The only thesis written on the subject which I could locate is entitled *How Art Has Been Presented as Common Culture for Europe – The Case Study on the Art Exhibitions of the Council of Europe since 1954* by Haruka Koike, whom I contacted to discuss the topic. Moreover, many of the museums that hosted the exhibitions do not have well-organised archives to provide photos or further information about them, and even the archive of the Council of Europe has gaps in the documents, which are not organised in a linear and intuitive way. Despite the richness of the catalogues, there is no information about the curatorial and museographic choices. To fill these gaps, photographs were needed, but not always could be found, as in the case of the Grand Palais in Paris and the Museum of History in Bern.

CHAPTER I: European Cultural Identity through art exhibitions

1.1 European integration

Since the second half of the 20th century, there has been a process of European integration, a true novelty in modern history, which has brought about industrial, political, legal, economic, and consequently also social and cultural integration. This was made possible by a major institutionalisation, sacrificing national sovereignty in favour of a single voice to shape political, economic, and legislative choices, even in the absence of a federal state. European integration has made possible the creation of a single market for goods, workers, services, and capital, monetary unification, the creation of a common citizenship alongside national citizenship, and the identification of values for the protection of human rights, fundamental freedoms, and social solidity. The driving centres of this phenomenon are the European Union and its bodies in Brussels and the Council of Europe in Strasbourg[1].

The Ventotene Manifesto, entitled *For a Free and United Europe*, drafted in 1944 by Altiero Spinelli, Ernesto Rossi, and Eugenio Colorni with Ursula Hirschmann, lies at the heart of the idea of integration. The authors were confined to the island of Ventotene as opponents of the fascist regime. This was an opportunity to draft a text that prefigured the concept of the contemporary Europe Union, based on the

[1] Calandri E., Giasconi E., Ranieri R., *Storia politica e economica dell'integrazione europea. Dal 1945 ad oggi*, EdiSES, 2015, p. 10.

establishment of a European federation with a parliament and a democratic government with real powers in certain key areas, such as the economy and foreign policy. The authors criticise all totalitarian forms and propose a single solution to the war situation of World War II: a free and united Europe "necessary prerequisite for the enhancement of modern civilization, of which the totalitarian era represents a stop[2]". In the post-World War II era, the need for international reconciliation was clear, and it was in this atmosphere that European integration was initiated, leading to the creation of the first International Institutions based on military protection, political and economic cooperation[3]. Subsequently, it is the Schuman Declaration that represents the beginning of the European integration process. On 9 May 1950, within the Clock Hall of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Schuman gave a speech articulating the concept of Europe as both an economic and political union for the first time. Notably, he proposed placing key materials for the arms industry under the oversight of a common authority[4]. This measure served as a barrier against future conflicts among Member States, as no individual nation could independently produce weapons for use against others. Subsequently, Robert Schuman, Jean Monnet, Konrad

[2] They advocate for the consolidation of similar movements across countries to create a new broad federal state. This entity would have a European armed force, issue deliberations to maintain a common order among the states and allow for the necessary autonomy for political development based on each nation's peculiarities. In particular, Colorni envisions a Europe with a single federal army, monetary unity, the elimination of customs barriers and restrictions on emigration between member states, direct representation of citizens in federal councils, and a unified foreign policy. Although their vision may not reflect the current state of Europe, this historic document is appreciated for its avant-garde value, as it views the European Union as the only means to achieve peace and social progress, countering inequalities and totalitarian regimes. Spinelli, A., Rossi, E., Bobbio, N., Pistone, S., & Colorni, E., *Il manifesto di Ventotene*. Bologna: Il mulino, 1991, p. 10.

[3] On 17 March 1948, the Western Union was founded by the Treaty of Brussels, an international organisation for military security and political cooperation, with 10 members, and other nations as observers or associate members, for a total of 28 countries. On 5 May 1949 with the Treaty of London, the Council of Europe was founded, an international organisation whose purpose is to strengthen unity between European countries and promote the ideals that make up their common heritage, such as parliamentary democracy, human rights, European cultural identity, and economic and social development. This initiative was proposed in July 1948 by French Foreign Minister Bidault, who envisaged the creation of a Parliamentary Assembly, consisting of representatives of national parliaments, independent of governments. Calandri E., Giasconi E., Ranieri R., *Storia politica e economica dell'integrazione europea. Dal 1945 ad oggi*, EdiSES, 2015, p. 43.

[4] Robert Schuman, a French politician, played a significant role in the French resistance during the Second World War, where he was captured and held prisoner by the Nazis. Collaborating closely with Jean Monnet, he crafted the Schuman Plan, published on 9 May 1950. This date is revered as the birth of the European Union and is commemorated annually as "Europe Day." https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/history-eu/eu-pioneers/robert-schuman_en, last check on 5 June 2024.

Adenauer, and Alcide De Gasperi established the ECSC, the European Coal and Steel Community, in 1951[5]. Six years later, in 1957, the Treaties of Rome, in which Italy, France, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg participated, created the EEC, European Economic Community[6].

In this geopolitical milieu, the International World's Fair was organised in Brussels under the theme *Assessing the World, for a More Humane World*. On April 17, 1958, Expo 58[7], the first World's Fair since World War II, opened. The fragile geopolitical balance between scientific hope and fear of the atomic bomb emerged from the exhibition. The Atomium, a monument celebrating the scientific discoveries of the time, the Soviet and American pavilions at its foot, as well as the pavilions of international organisations reflect the geopolitical climate of the time[8]. The existence of transnational organisation pavilions can be understood in the geopolitical context, characterized by the fear of further conflicts and the need for global peace and international cooperation. Indeed, the expo involved forty-four countries and one hundred pavilions, contributing to its success[9], evidenced by the 41 million visitors during the six months it was open (17 April to 19 October 1958)[10].

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[5] Calandri E., Giasconi E., Ranieri R., *Storia politica e economica dell'integrazione europea. Dal 1945 ad oggi*, EdiSES, 2015, pp. 56-60, 63-66.

[6] Ibid., pp. 93-95.

[7] Website for virtual tour of Expo 58 in Brussels: https://expo-58.historia.europa.eu/#/en/lobby [last access on 24 April 2024].

[8]This occurred during a pivotal historical moment: Western Europe was recovering from the war's devastation, while the Cold War was transitioning towards fragile peaceful coexistence. The UN (founded in 1945) and the European Community (born in 1957) were moving their first steps into the international scene. This hopeful atmosphere was also fostered by technological advancements, such as the launch of Sputnik, the first artificial satellite sent into orbit around the Earth (on 4 October 1957). The Atomium, an architectural marvel designed by André Waterkeyn, eloquently represents this era's scientific trust. Its steel structure, representing the nine atoms of an iron crystal, symbolizes both hope for international cooperation and scientific progress, and the underlying fear of nuclear conflict. The visitors could understand this duality as the United States and the Soviet Union pavillons were positioned at the foot of the monument. While the former showcased consumerism and the American dream, the latter replicated the Sputnik satellite. https://www.atomium.be/expo58. [last access on 5 June 2024].

[9] The Expo did not only host national pavilions but also those of international organisations, such as the United Nations, the Benelux Union (a union of three member states, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, established in 1944), the Council of Europe and the European Organisation for Economic and Cooperation (OEEC), the World Cooperation Pavilion, and the European Community Pavilion. Walker L., *Today in History: 1958 Brussels World's Fair opens to the public*, in "Brussels Times", 17 April 2023, https://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/460710/today-in-history-1958-brussels-worlds-fair-opens-to-the-public [last access 5 June 2024].

[10] Walker L., *Today in History: 1958 Brussels World's Fair opens to the public*, in "Brussels Times", 17 April 2023, https://www.brusselstimes.com/belgium/460710/today-in-history-1958-brussels-worlds-fair-opens-to-the-public [last access 5 June 2024].

Subsequently, the path of European integration continues until the Treaty of Maastricht, which lays down clear rules on the future single currency, foreign and security policy and closer cooperation in the fields of justice and home affairs. The Treaty will enter into force on 1 November 1993, formally establishing the European Union[11]. In the years to come, the question arose as to how it was possible to implement European integration with not only the institutions but also the citizens of the different European countries. Alongside the political-economic question, sociologists, historians, and geopolitical experts have looked at the phenomenon of European integration from different perspectives in accordance with their areas of specialisation. In the following paragraphs, we focus on political scientist Nye's theory of soft power, sociologist Delanty's theory of identity, and historian Haskell's theory of temporary art exhibitions as necessary methodologies to understand the phenomenon of art exhibitions organised by the Council of Europe.

1.2 Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy

The concept of soft power, an essential element for understanding the following paragraphs, emerged at the end of the Cold War. During this period marked by sharp geopolitical divisions, culture was a strategic tool for the two superpowers' diplomacy to promote their ideological values internationally. The two blocs invested many resources in promoting culture by supporting artists, writers, and musicians. For example, the CIA Central Intelligence Agency implemented a cultural program of extreme secrecy to promote American culture and values abroad as opposed to Soviet ones[12]. In addition, another emblematic example of such a strategy were the American and Soviet expositions organised in 1959: the Soviet one opened in NY in June and the American one in late July was inaugurated in Moscow in the presence of U.S. Vice President Richard Nixon [13]. In this political contest, the American specialist in

[11] Calandri E., Giasconi E., Ranieri R., *Storia politica e economica dell'integrazione europea. Dal 1945 ad oggi*, EdiSES, 2015, pp. 251-257.
[12] A key act was the establishment of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, which operated between 1950 and 1967 (and until 1979 as the International Association for Cultural Freedom). The Congress had offices in thirty-five countries, published more than twenty prestigious journals, organised art exhibitions, international conferences, and rewarded artists with prizes. Saunders, F. S. *La guerra fredda culturale. La CIA e il mondo delle lettere e delle arti*, Roma: Fazi Editore, 2004, pp. 1-12.
[13] Moretto, Giovanni. *Politica e cultura dei consumi in Unione sovietica nell'epoca chruščëviana,* "Esamizdat", vol. 3, 2-3, 2005, pp. 93-109.

international relations, Joseph Nye was the first to put forward the new notion of soft power in a book entitled *Bound to leave* in 1990, an additional type of power, along with hard power, namely soft power. Both powers can influence the behaviour of others to achieve their aims, but hard power is implemented through force, sanctions, payments, and barbarity, while soft power is achieved through attraction and cooperation. A country's soft power can persuade and attract through three intangible assets: its culture, its political values, and its foreign policies[14]. In particular, culture is defined as the set of values and practices that create meaning for a society. We can distinguish between high culture, such as literature and art; and popular culture, which focuses on mass entertainment[15].

Nye claims that soft power plays a crucial role in promoting democracy, human rights, and open markets, indeed, "it is easier to attract people to democracy than to force them to be democratic[16]." However, Nye identifies the limits of soft power, namely the dependence on interpreters and receivers, and results that are difficult to quantify because they produce a widespread and general effect[17]. Therefore, in this thesis, the means of interpretation are the exhibitions organised by the Council of Europe, which are addressed to European citizens, but it will not be easy to identity the quantitative effect of these cultural events on European society. Joseph Nye gives as an example the role that popular culture played in the relationship between the US and Europe, influencing young Europeans through blue jeans, Coca-Cola and other American products. This soft power contributed to the achievement of foreign policy goals, such as the democratic reconstruction of Europe after World War II through the Marshall Plan and NATO. Soft power also became an instrument to create a crack in the Berlin Wall, which contributed to its effective fall in 1989. Palazchenko, Gorbachev's interpreter and assistant testified that "The Beatles were our silent way of rejecting the 'system' while conforming to most of its demands[18]." Soft power became central in European politics, as European fashion, culture and food are "global cultural

[14] Nye J., *Soft Power. The means to success in world politics*, New York: PublicAffairs, 2021, pp. 1-15.
[15] Ibid., pp. 44-53.
[16] Ibid., p. 17.
[17] Ibid., pp. 15-18.
[18] Palazchenko, P., *My Years with Gorbachev and Shevardnadze: The Memoir of a Soviet Interpreter*, Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997, p. 3.

magnets[19]" according to Joseph Nye. The European Union called upon soft power to become a symbol of unity, as the idea of strong unity among nations that have fought each other throughout history creates a powerful collective imagination. Historian Timothy Garton Ash wrote that Europe's "soft power is demonstrated by the fact that not only millions of individuals but also whole states want to enter it. Turkey, for example[20]."

The historian and professor in public diplomacy, Nick Cull places the concept of soft power alongside that of defined public diplomacy: "An international actor's attempt to manage the international environment through engagement with a foreign public."[21] According to Cull, there are five means to put this into practice: listening, promotion, cultural diplomacy, intercultural exchanges, and international broadcasting[22]. We focus on cultural diplomacy, described as "an actor's attempt to manage the international environment through making its cultural resources and achievements known overseas and/or facilitating cultural transmission abroad."[23] This definition reflects the historical origins of cultural diplomacy, as a form of promotion of national culture abroad, which we find today in cultural institutions, museums, and art exhibitions. However, the American political scientist Milton Cummings defined cultural diplomacy as "the exchange of ideas, information, artistic productions, and other cultural aspects between nations in order to promote mutual understanding.[24]" This thesis aims to highlight precisely this aspect of cultural diplomacy, namely the mutual exchange of culture between at least two countries to create understanding and cooperation.

The expert in Cultural Diplomacy, Federica Olivares defines museums and art exhibitions as actors of cultural diplomacy and economic growth, as demonstrated by

[19] Nye J., *Soft Power. The means to success in world politics*, New York: PublicAffairs, 2021, p. 75.
[20] The Turkish government has passed legislation that reduces the role of the military in politics and gives more weight to human rights in order to enter the European Union. Quotation of "A Personal History of Europe" by Timothy Garton mentioned by Nye J., *Soft Power. The means to success in world politics*, New York: PublicAffairs, 2021, p. 78.
[21] Cull N. J., *Public diplomacy: Lessons from the past*, Los Angeles: Figueroa Press, 2009, p. 12.
[22] Ibid., p. 10.
[23] Cull N. J., *Public diplomacy: Lessons from the past*, Los Angeles: Figueroa Press, 2009, p. 19.
[24] M. Cummings, *Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government: A survey*, "Center for Arts and Culture", 26 June 2009.

the agreements between MIBACT[25]'s Department of Cultural Heritage Promotion and the Chinese State to organise exhibitions in the two countries between 2012 and 2014[26]. In 2013, a very similar project was created: the *Year of Italian Culture in the United States*, a public and cultural diplomacy event resulting from the agreements between President Barack Obama, Prime Minister Mario Monti, and Foreign Minister Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata[27]. Therefore, museums and exhibitions are resources for a country's positive reputation abroad because they contribute to its influence and attraction around the world. However, this research aims to highlight cultural events that promote cultural values that transcend national borders, such as the exhibitions of the Council of Europe, which operates as an international organisation and addresses an international audience.

The French politician and supporter of European integration, Jean Monnet realised the power of culture in fostering European integration, in fact, he claimed that if it were possible to restart Europe's integration process, he would have preferred to start again from culture rather than from coal and steel[28]. The role of cultural mediation in promoting greater dialogue between European countries is therefore fundamental, so as to achieve the goals of cooperation and understanding, which are reflected not only from an economic-political point of view, but also from a social one.

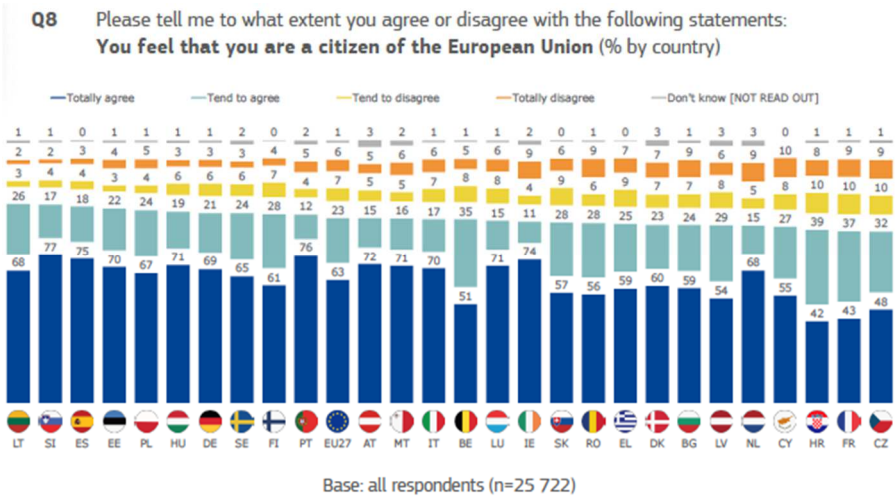
1.3 European cultural identity

One of the key concepts underlying this thesis is European cultural identity. The Irish sociologist Gerard Delanty has devoted his research to the concept of identity and, more specifically, to the definition of European identity. First of all, it is necessary

[25] MIBACT stands for *Ministero dei Beni Culturali e delle Attività Culturali*, namely the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities.
[26] China's National Museum in Beijing hosted the exhibition "Renaissance in Florence: Masterpieces and Protagonists," while Italy's Palazzo Venezia in Rome displayed the exhibition "Archaic China: First exhibit of the Chinese civilization, 3500–221 BC" in 2013. In the 2014, the National Museum of China hosted the exhibition "Rome/Seventeenth Century: Towards Baroque".
[27] Michelangelo's David-Apollo was lent by the Bargello Museum in Florence. The same masterpiece was brought to the National Gallery in 1949 as a symbol of gratitude for American postwar aid, and for the reelection of two American presidents: Harry Truman in November 1948 and Barack Obama in November 2012. The whole program of *Italy in the US* consisted of more than 180 cultural events in 40 American cities. The exhibit was sponsored by the Italian energy provider Enel Green Power North America, because it installed more than 150 turbines for wind energy production in Kansas, one of the largest energetic projects in the world.
[28]" Si c'était à refaire, je commencerais par la culture". Monnet J., *Mémoires*, Paris : Fayard, 1976.

to understand what is meant by identity: it is a mode of self-understanding that is expressed by people in ongoing narratives. The author identifies *personal, collective, and social* identities: the first identity refers to the ability to define oneself as an individual; the other two categories have a relational dimension. The collective identity is not simply the aggregation of several individual identities but the self-understanding of a particular group. In other words, a collective identity exists if a social group that expresses cultural or political identities, or even both, emerges with a collective project[29]. While social identity emphasises the degree to which each member identifies with the social group and how they relate to that membership.

Every three years, the European Union produces a report in which it analyses European identity using the Eurobarometer. This tool regularly monitors the state of public opinion in Europe on the European Union and other political or social topics[30]. The latest *Citizenship and Democracy report* shows that 87% agree that they feel they are citizens of the European Union, with 63% totally agreeing. Only 12% disagree with this statement. The percentage of those who feel they are EU citizens is at least 80% in all member states and rises to 90% or more in seven: Germany (90%), Hungary (90%), Poland (91%), Estonia (92%), Spain (93%), Lithuania (94%), and Slovenia (94%)[31].



Ill. 1 Table from the Report Flash Eurobarometer 528, Citizenship and democracy,

[29] [29] Delanty, G., *Is there a European identity?* "Global dialogue", Vol. *5*(3/4), 77, 2004.
[30] https://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/it/be-heard/eurobarometer. Last access on the second May 2024.
[31] Report Flash Eurobarometer 528, Citizenship and democracy, European Union, April-May 2023 - https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2971

European Union, April-May 2023. https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2971

Since the 1950s, the concept of identity has become increasingly used, often inappropriately and simplistically because of its complexity. The three categories of identity are composed of a narrative component of the self (in the case of personal identity) and a relational component with the other (in the case of collective and social identities) that change over time. Moreover, the three categories are heterogeneous and multiple as they contain within them cultural associations (ethnic, regional, political, and national identities). The difficulty increases in a globalised and multicultural world, where societies are becoming increasingly plural and interpenetrated. This change has led to greater heterogeneity in so-called "national identities", which are becoming increasingly decentralised, liquid, and reflexive. The complexity increases when examining identity at a transnational or supranational level, particularly at a European level, given the continent's national, cultural, and linguistic diversity.

While scholars agree on the constructivist and dynamic nature of identity, this term is much more mentioned and simplified by politics, speaking of the nation-state identity, or rather "national collective identity.[32]" Nations, the basis of political organisation in the modern era, have been defined by the sociologist Benedict Anderson as "imagined communities[33]" because: "The members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion[34]". However, the author points out that, despite this fraternity being imaginary, millions of people have been and still are willing not only to kill but also to die for these unreal collective imaginaries.

"Imagined communities" are the basis of nationalisms, which exalt "national identities" as opposed to the concept of Europe. However, Delanty claims that "national identity and European identity do not exist in a relationship of tension, but

[32] Research for CULT Committee - European Identity, European Parliament, 2017, p.5. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/585921/IPOL_STU(2017)585921_EN.pdf

[33] B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* London; New York: Verso, 1991, p. 7.

[34] Ibid.

of complementarity."[35] In other words, all national identities in Europe contain elements of a European identity, which is not an identity that exists beyond or outside national identities. In fact, according to Alan Milward, European integration has been a project of nation-states, which are not the antithesis of European integration, but rather integration is the culmination of the development of European nation-states alongside each other, and today they are closely interconnected[36]. European identity in all these meanings — personal, collective, and social — is not in competition with national identities, but is a form of self-understanding that expresses itself within and beyond national identities. This idea has been summarised in the slogan "united in diversity", according to which unity can only exist in the recognition of diversity, which must become a resource[37]. Philosopher Massimo Cacciari describes Europe as an archipelago, a mosaic of diversities that overlap and connect, without creating an overall unity, but a connection[38].

Only the *Declaration on European Identity*[39], signed in 1973 in Copenhagen by the nine Member States of the then European Community, seeks to articulate a European identity based on a "common European civilization", "common heritage" and "convergent" attitudes and ways of life[40]. However, the literature tends to remain generic, creating confusion between identification with Europe and the European Union. Scholars have distinguished two divergent concepts of European identity: On the one hand, Europe as a cultural identity or Gemeinschaft ("community") of shared values, reflecting the same concept of identity as applied to the nation-state and seeking to emphasise common history; On the other hand, Europe as a political identity or community based on democratic values and active civic engagement, the democratic political culture defined as "constitutional patriotism[41]" or *Verfassungspatriotismus*, coined by Dolf Sternberger in the late 1970s and taken up by the German philosopher

[35] Ibid. p. 79.
[36] ibid. p. 79. Delanty mentioned "The European Rescue of the Nation-State" by Alan Milward.
[37] ibid. pp. 79-81.
[38] cf. Massimo Cacciari, *L'Arcipelago*, Milano, Adelphi, 1997.
[39] Article 1 notes the "variety of national cultures" and the "dynamism" of the European identity, emphasizing the common cultural elements of European nations and on their attachment to "common values and principles" (Articles 1 and 3), which include representative democracy, the rule of law, social justice and respect for human rights and together are considered fundamental elements of the European identity. The declaration concludes with a clear commitment to an even more cohesive united Europe.
[40] G. Delanty, *Is there a European identity,* "Global dialogue", 5, 3/4, 2004, pp. 79-80.
[41] Prutsch, M. J. *Research for CULT Committee - European Identity*, European Parliament 2017, pp. 5.

Jürgen Habermas. This concept is based on the assumption that people should identify with a community through the central role of liberal democratic institutions, rather than national culture[42]. The idea of a united Europe under the aegis of democratic values, rooted in civil rights and political participation, has shaped documents such as the *European Identity Charter* of 1995, which sees Europe based on the values of "tolerance, humanity, and fraternity"[43]. This same idea of Europe is supported by the former President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, who gave voice to this vision of Europe as the foundation of democracy[44]. However, "constitutional patriotism" has been subject to considerable criticism because it appears too abstract and elitist to guarantee the emergence of a widespread trans-European sense of belonging. The weakness of this concept is highlighted by the failed project of a European Constitution, caused by the negative outcome of the 2005 referendum in France and the Netherlands.

The research for the CULT Committee on European Identity carried out by the European Parliament in 2017 argues that we must recognise the political and cultural nature of European identity, promoting the role of European historical memory to strengthen the legitimacy of the European project[45]. History and its collective memory are *a conditio sine qua non* for community-building processes. Indeed, sociologist Anthony D. Smith identifies five fundamental elements that create a community: common myths and historical memories; a common mass culture; common (legal) rights and duties; and a common economy source. History has been identified by European policymakers as a key element in promoting European cultural identity on a heterogeneous continent like Europe, with no common language. However, this concept faces major obstacles due to the strong divisions caused by historical periods such as dictatorships and the two world wars. But history can become a hub of unity if the aim is not to build a common past but to seek a common approach to the past through a spirit of mutual respect and understanding. A decentralised approach and a

[42] Ibid., 16.
[43] The chart was proposed by Vaclav Havel in 1994 and taken up by Europa-Union Deutschland and drafted in 1995. It can be found at https://www.europa-union.de/fileadmin/files_eud/PDF-Dateien_EUD/Allg._Dokumente/Carta_dell_identita_europea.pdf
[44] Delanty, G. (2004). "Is there a European identity?". *Global dialogue*, *5*(3/4), p. 82.
[45] Prutsch, M. J. *Research for CULT Committee - European Identity*, European Parliament 2017, p. 6.

critical reworking of the past based on common European principles and values are needed, so that history participates in the creation of a transnational identity. Creating a European culture of memory means looking at Europe's past on the basis of values such as humanism, tolerance, and democracy and refraining from any judgmental evaluation of the past[46].

1.4 Art exhibitions and national identities

Once we have defined the concepts of "European cultural identity", "soft power", and "cultural diplomacy" we need to examine the instrument used by the Council of Europe, namely art exhibitions. In 1995 the English art historian Francis Haskell proposed the notion of "ephemeral museums" as a definition of temporary art exhibitions of old masters, arguing that "[t]he ephemeral presentation (...) can radically change our perception of even the most renowned orthodoxies (…).[47]" Haskell considers temporary art exhibitions a powerful medium that can alter people's perceptions. This strength makes them an ideal means for rewriting art history from a different perspective. Similarly, art historian Negri traces art history not through historical events and artists' biographies, following the Vasarian model, but through the sequence of temporary exhibitions. This method allows for extensive research, as exhibitions reflect the socio-cultural context of their time. They enable us to analyze not only the art-historical value of the works on display but also the messages curators and organisers wish to convey and their impact on visitors. Specifically, art historian Passini argues that studying the system of international exhibitions developed at the end of the 19th century has significant strategic power in the construction of national identities and, therefore, "needs to be conducted as a geohistory, if not a geopolitics of exhibition practices[48]".

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[46] Ibid., p. 27-33.

[47] F. Haskell, *The Ephemeral Museum: Old Master Paintings and the Rise of the Art Exhibition*, London: Yale University Press, 2000, p. 2.

[48] Passini M., *Historical Narratives of the Nation and the Internationalization of Museums: Exhibiting National Art Histories in the Jeu de Paume Museum between the Wars,* in *Great Narratives of the Past Traditions and Revisions in National Museums*, conference proceedings (EuNaMus, European National Museums: Identity Politics, the Uses of the Past and the European Citizen, Paris 29 June – 1 July & 25-26 November 2011), edited by Dominique Poulot, Felicity Bodenstein & José María Lanzarote Guiral, Linköping University Electronic Press, 2012. p. 459.

In the 19th century, artists realised the potential of art exhibitions, which became platforms through which artists challenged and redefined dominant artistic conventions supported by traditional art institutions such as museums and academies. A prime example is the *Pavillon du Réalisme* was an exhibition organised independently by Gustave Courbet in 1855 in response to the rejection of his most significant works from the Universal Exhibition in Paris[49]. The idea of creating a self-directed exhibition by an artist, accompanied by a poetic statement diverging from academic conventions, became a model first for the Salon des Refusés in 1863, Impressionists' exhibitions between 1874 and 1886, and from 1884 the Salon des Indépendants. This model was later adopted by the twentieth-century avant-gardes. However, 19th-century art exhibitions reflected not only emerging artistic movements, but also a particular geopolitical context marked by the establishment of many European nation-states, including Italy in 1861, and the second industrial revolution in the mid-century. These elements fostered a sense of general optimism in European societies, as evidenced by the great exhibitions, starting with London's Great Exhibition at Crystal Palace in 1851, followed by the Paris Exhibition in 1855. Advances in industry were prominently displayed not only in exhibition sections but also in the construction of the exhibition buildings themselves, made entirely of glass and iron. For instance, the London exhibition building was designed by garden architect Joseph Paxton, prefabricated in three months, and assembled in six[50].

Art exhibitions became a means of promoting national unity by showcasing the country's industrial development and cultural heritage, viewed as symbols of wealth and objects of trade and as central elements in forming a common national sentiment. Following the model of the Great Exhibition in London, a group of local manufacturers and businessmen organised the *Art Treasures of the United Kingdom,* opened at Old Trafford in Manchester industrial capital of northern England, on 5 May 1857. The title had been inspired by the three published volumes *Treasures of Art in Great Britain* by Dr Gustav Waagen, director of the royal picture gallery in Berlin, who claimed that "the art-treasures in the United Kingdom were of a character to surpass those contained

[49] A. Negri, *L'Arte in mostre. Una storia delle esposizioni*, Milano: Bruno Mondadori, 2011, pp. 46-51.
[50] Ibid., p. 22-23.

in the collections of the continent[51]". However, the exhibition title differed by the preposition "of" instead of "in," giving it a much more identitarian-national impact[52].

The image of a country's treasures exposed to the public is echoed in the words of Brera superintendent and director Ettore Modigliani, who wrote that the exhibition *Italian art 1200-1900,* which he oversaw, "shows that although Italy has been robbed and looted for centuries she still remains a great lady when she opens up her own treasure chests.[53]" This exhibition, held in London in 1930 at the suggestion of Lady and Sir Chamberlain, British Foreign Secretary, epitomizes the use of patriotism as the driving force behind art exhibitions. Indeed, under dictatorships, exhibitions are intended as propaganda tools to convey patriotic messages domestically and abroad. This exhibition was a unique opportunity for Mussolini to regain prestige lost after Matteotti's murder and to promote fascism abroad as well as "italianity"[54]. The newspaper *Corriere della Sera* reported these words: "The exhibition at Burlington House is a portentous sign of the eternal vitality of the Italian race, which enabled it to be always and everywhere in the vanguard, leaving others the freedom only to imitate[55]".

During the same years, many exhibitions characterised by a strong desire to exalt national identity were organised, such as two exhibitions held in Florence and in Paris. In 1922, Palazzo Pitti in Florence hosted the Exhibition of *17th and 18th Century Italian Painting*. This exhibition aimed to commemorate Italy's recent victory against Austria on the side of the Western Allies. But from an art-historical perspective, curator Ojetti sought to reclaim the art-historical quality of the 17th and 18th century Italian art, emphasising the centrality of Caravaggio, whom he called "the last classic", influencing many European artists. Ojetti's example was followed by the exhibition *Les Peintres de la Réalité* opened on 24 November 1934 at the Orangerie, conceived by Charles Sterling. He wanted to celebrate French realist artists, such as George de

[51] Ulrich Finke, *The Art-Treasures Exhibition*, in *Art and Architecture in Victorian Manchester* by John H. G. Archer, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985, p. 105.
[52] F. Haskell, *The Ephemeral Museum: Old Master Paintings and the Rise of the Art Exhibition*, London: Yale University Press, 2000, pp. 82-29.
[53] Ibid., p. 113. Quote of a letter written by Modigliani and sent to the Italian ambassador in London.
[54] Ibid., pp. 107-127.
[55] The Times, 3 January 1930.

La Tour[56]. These two exhibitions demonstrate the extent to which art is seen as an element of identity to be claimed at the national level, even in the absence of direct intervention by political or economic forces, unlike previous cases. Similar events emerged in the 19th century, when several exhibitions and festivities were organised to celebrate the centennials of births and deaths of artists as well as important historical occurrences in the country[57].

To understand the relationship between art history and the national identity, we turn to the theories of art historian Matthew Ramplay, who investigated the reasons for this link. He notes that art history is a discipline originated simultaneously with theories of race. Furthermore, early manuals divided art history into national and regional schools, contributing to the identification of art history as a discipline closely linked to the much more recent concept of nationhood. This national interpretation of art history was officially recognised at the Thirteenth International Congress of the History of Art held in Stockholm in 1933, where national art was the major theme. Just as Delanty states that we cannot speak of a national identity, Ramplay argues that:

> No culture is, of course, homogeneous, its boundaries are porous, and the attempt to identify the essential national characteristics of art is one of the ideological delusions characteristics of the modern era.[58]

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[56] The catalogue, written by Paul Jamot, head of the Department of Painting at the Louvre, distanced itself from his Italian colleagues and argued that French artists would have achieved the same result without Caravaggio, considering artists like Cardin or Carot. Francis Haskell, *The Ephemeral Museum: Old Master Paintings and the Rise of the Art Exhibition*, London: Yale University Press, 2000, pp. 128-142.

[57] In the 19th century, patriotism was a relevant aspect in many art exhibitions. An example is the celebration held on 6 April 1828, in occasion of the third centenary of Albrecht Dürer's death. This event did not display any of Dürer's artworks. Instead, a bronze monument was erected in his hometown of Nuremberg, the first statue ever dedicated to an artist. Twelve years later, similar ceremonies were held in Antwerp to honor Rubens. In September 1875, three major exhibitions were opened in Florence to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Michelangelo's birth. In 1877, the 300th anniversary of Rubens' birth was celebrated in Antwerp, but logistical challenges made it impossible to borrow a representative selection of Rubens' works. So his artworks were presented through reproductions, much like Michelangelo's earlier exhibitions. In 1898, Amsterdam hosted an exhibition dedicated to Rembrandt, an event that marked the birth of the modern blockbuster exhibition. Held at the Stedelijk Museum, this exhibition coincided with the inauguration of Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands.
Francis Haskell, *The Ephemeral Museum: Old Master Paintings and the Rise of the Art Exhibition*, London: Yale University Press, 2000.

[58] Rampley, *The Construction of National Art Histories and the 'New' Europe* in *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe: Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks by* M. Rampley, T. Lenain, H. Locher, A. Pinotti, C. Schoel-Glass, & K. Zijlmans (Eds.)*, Leiden:* Brill, 2012, p. 237.

In fact, Ramplay argues that the boundaries of nation-state are fluid, as history shows, making it difficult to determine the geographical scope of a national art history, where cultural and artistic currents are never consistent and homogenous. However, Ramplay gives some examples where cultural heritage was appealed to create continuity narratives between past and present in order to justify the present. Ramplay argues that after World War II, some countries, such as Germany, needed to renew their image by resorting to art history, in this case the Holy Roman Empire. Subsequently, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Soviet Union, some countries (such as Poland, Hungary, and Romania) needed to create their own post-communist culture, while other newly created countries (Croatia, Ukraine, the Baltic States, Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, just to name a few) had to construct their own national narratives. Narratives had to be developed that would convince people to believe in a continuous tradition in order to preserve the image of the nation-state concept as a stable and enduring vehicle of cultural, social, and political identity[59].

The importance of creating traditions by referring to a country's history and past also interested historians Hobsbawm and Ranger in their work *The Invention of Tradition* published in 1983. They argue that inventions have three social functions: social cohesion, legitimization of social hierarchies, and affirmation of cultural beliefs and codes of behavior. In particular, the authors see an application of this concept in the nation and nationalisms that "invent a tradition", creating a continuity between past and present to legitimize hierarchy and create social cohesion[60].

Once we have analysed the trends of art exhibitions and the relationship between art history and national identity, we have the methodological tools necessary to carry out the research of the art exhibitions organised by the Council of Europe from 1954 to 2014.

[59] Rampley, *The Construction of National Art Histories and the 'New' Europe* in *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe: Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks by* M. Rampley, T. Lenain, H. Locher, A. Pinotti, C. Schoel-Glass, & K. Zijlmans (Eds.)*, Leiden:* Brill, 2012, 231-246.
[60] Hobsbawm E., Ranger T., *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge University Press, 1983.

CHAPTER II: Art exhibitions organised by the Council of Europe

2.1 Council of Europe

The Council of Europe, based in Strasbourg, is an international organisation founded in the aftermath of World War Two, on 5 May 1949, to achieve "a greater unity between its members [...] through common actions and activities in economic, social, cultural, scientific, legal, and administrative matters.[61]" This international organisation is committed to developing a European identity, based on shared values that transcend the cultural diversity of different countries. These objectives are implemented through agreements to harmonise the social and legal practices of Member States[62]. However, its activities are unrelated to the European Union, whose history was outlined above to give historical context to the cultural European integration and the Council of Europe's exhibitions. Indeed, of the forty-six member states of the Council of Europe, twenty-seven are members of the European Union. Ten are the founding members (Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) and subsequently, other thirty-six have become members.

Since the inception of the Council of Europe, culture and art have been central to its mission, seen as the best way to prevent the recurrence of international crises by showing the nations of the continent that they belong to the same civilization[63]. The historian Lucien Febvre, in his series of lectures at the Collège de France in 1944-45 entitled *L'Europe. Genèse d'une civilisation*, emphasized that "Europe was not a political entity of which one can easily and usefully write an external, methodical, and classic, unproblematic history. Europe is a civilization[64]." Indeed, the Council of Europe was the main international organisation for cultural cooperation in Europe until the late 1970s, as the early policies of the initial European Community deliberately

[61] Statute of the Council of Europe, 5 May 1949, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CETS 0001.
[62] Wassenberg B. and Bitsch M. T., *History of the Council of Europe,* Strasbourg, France: Council of Europe Publishing, 2013.
[63] Vedovato G., *Le Esposizioni d'arte del Consiglio d'Europa*, "Rivista di Studi Politici Internazionali", vol. 47, No. 1 (185), January-March 1980, pp. 120-122.
[64] Quoted in Vittorio Dini, *Lucien Febvre and the Idea of Europe*, in *Europe in Crisis. Intellectuals and the European Idea 1917-1957*, edited by Hewitson M. and D'Auria M., New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012, p. 271.

excluded culture from their priorities. It was only after the "Declaration of European Identity" in 1973, signed in Copenhagen, that the European Union began to expand its cultural activities, often adopting practices previously implemented by the Council of Europe[65].

In 1950, a Committee of Cultural Experts was formed, consisting of experts and previously Ministries of Education of member states. This body was responsible for presenting proposals on cultural and educational issues. For instance, the Committee of Cultural Experts proposed a revised national history textbook, entitled *Notre Europe* published in 1958[66], to introduce the European perspective into history teaching across the educational systems of member countries. The aim was to raise awareness of European unity and spread this concept throughout society. This book, along with the art exhibitions, is part of the process of European cultural integration based on the "will of the common people inspired by community of interests, by a feeling of solidarity and by a common faith.[67]" Although, a 1953 report claims that the feeling of unity had "indeed existed, but only in the minds of a cultured few[68]" and noted that the eighteenth-century ideal of Europe as a second fatherland failed because it was a product of an intellectual elite and lacked popular roots. Thus, it was decided that each exhibition should be replicated for further itinerant exhibitions to "acquaint the general public and schoolchildren with the themes of the exhibition[69]". These itinerant exhibitions were displayed in small and medium-sized, and they were composed of mobile panels, easy to set up by two people in less than an hour. Moreover, the reproductions would be carefully described and explained by a textbooks and art books in the grand format published in different European languages and written by prominent art historians, who have participated in the organisation of

[65] Spyrou L., *Europe as a Celebrated Community of Culture. The Council of Europe's Art Exhibitions in the 1950s.*, in "Artl@ s Bulletin", vol. 12, 1, 2023, p. 95; https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1319&context=artlas

[66] Dehousse F., Agothoclès R., *Notre Europe*, Bruxelles: European Commission, 1958.

[67] Convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms as amended by protocol No. 11 with protocol Nos. 1,4,6,7,12 and 13, 1 September 2003, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, ETS.5 https://search.coe.int/archives?i=0900001680928ea8

[68] Text of the Resolutions adopted in Nancy on the presentation of the European Idea in primary schools And Teachers' Training Colleges, 7th Meeting Strasbourg, 1st-3rd December 1953, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, EXP/Cult (53) 24.
https://search.coe.int/archives?i=090000168092b990

[69] Ibid.

exhibitions, such as André Chastel, Marcel Brion, Arno Schönberger, Halldor Soehner, Jean Cassou, Nikolaus Pevsner etc.

At the 5th Session of the Committee of Cultural Experts, in October 1952, the socialist Belgian delegate and Chief of Staff of the Ministry of Public Education, Julien Kuypers, proposed the organisation of a series of European exhibitions, which would "illustrate some of the more outstanding epochs, transcending national bounds, of European culture: Renaissance Europe, Baroque Europe, Neo-classical Europe, Romantic Europe, Realistic Europe etc.[70]" and would demonstrate "the universal character of the European spirit and the unity of its artistic heritage down the ages.[71]" Kuypers claimed that this initiative would certainly capture the interest of the generally educated public and could potentially attract a broader audience as well[72].

On 19 December 1954, three days after the inauguration of the Brussels exhibition, the European Cultural Convention was adopted as one of the Council of Europe's main instruments in the cultural field. The Convention encourages cooperation among member countries in culture, education, science, and sport. It promotes the exchange of knowledge and ideas, the protection of cultural heritage, and the dissemination of various European cultures. Through specific projects and transnational collaborations, the Convention supports mutual learning and respect for cultural diversity, thus strengthening European identity and a sense of common belonging among European citizens. The first article states: "Each Contracting Party shall take measures to safeguard and encourage the development of its contribution to the common cultural heritage of Europe[73]." It was the inaugural official proclamation on culture by a European organisation in the post-war period, and notably, the first official record to feature the term "cultural heritage". In this document, a comprehensive definition of European culture was embraced, encompassing both tangible artifacts ("objects of European cultural value") and intangible elements

[70] Proposal concerning the organisation of a series of European Exhibitions, submitted by the Belgian Delegation in the 5th Session of the Committee of Cultural Experts, 25 October 1952, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, EXP/Cult (52) 27AppD.
https://search.coe.int/archives?i=090000168092b963
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid.
[73] European Cultural Convention, 19 December 1954, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, ETS.018, https://rm.coe.int/168006457e

("languages, history, and civilization"). Three days before the European Cultural Convention signature, the first Council of Europe art exhibition opened at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels on 16 December 1954 under the theme of Humanism, defined as "the foundation of what Europe is and what Europe wishes to share with the rest of mankind.[74]"

These exhibitions had been conceived in a period when the memory of the devastating Second World War and its dreadful consequences were still fresh and the concerns of the bipolar world due to the Cold War were more and more present. In this scenario, it is clear why the first aim was to turn to history to highlight the shared cultural past of the European continent, transcending narrow national feelings to reconstruct Europe on new symbolic foundations. The European art exhibitions have sought to showcase the shared cultural past of Europe, promoting European awareness within the population by constructing an imagined community represented by a supposed homogeneous cultural heritage. In the catalogue of the Brussels exhibitions, the socialist Belgian Minister of Public Education Léo Collard proposed this project firstly called "European Exhibitions", claiming that:

> We wish to strike the imagination of the cultured public at large, and indeed the masses, with a spectacular demonstration of European unity. We suggest organising a series of major exhibitions illustrating the universality of the European spirit and the community of Europe's artistic heritage down the ages[75]

The significance of the first exhibition is also highlighted by the nation where it took place: not only did Belgium host the institutions of the European Union, but it was and still is a deeply divided country with three official languages, in which Brussels acts as the unifying link of the nation.

From the very first exhibition, the display methods transcended the concept of World Exhibitions characterized by the presence of national pavilions. The arrangement of the artworks did not allow for any national divisions but instead emphasized the interrelation of artistic movements, placing them within a much

[74] Mardell D., *50 years of the Council of Europe art exhibitions. 50 ans d'expositions d'art du Conseil de l'Europe*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2004, p. 10.
[75] European Art Exhibitions Organised Under the Auspices of the Council of Europe, Secretariat Memorandum Prepared by the Directorate of Education and of Cultural and Scientific Affairs, 10 January 1977, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, SG (76) 3, https://rm.coe.int/168067d864

broader European context[76]. In this regard, the British art historian Kenneth Clark pointed out in his foreword to the catalogue of *The Romantic Movement* – the 5th art exhibition realised under the auspices of the Council of Europe in 1959 in London – that these exhibitions demonstrated the interdependency of the great European artistic movements "in spite of national and religious differences and have helped to form the single culture we now know.[77]" Consequently, the exhibitions encouraged a reinterpretation of cultural movements within a European framework, rather than about the national histories. As art historian Benedict Nicolson underscored in his editorial in the "The Burlington Magazine" in January 1961:

> The main purpose of this series – to demonstrate that the term "Europe" has a real meaning – is a fine one, and there can be no question that it has gone a long way towards breaking down narrow national prejudices, and towards popularizing the conception of European unity in the arts.[78]

The following five exhibitions were characterized by a cultural policy that, the scholar specializing in the cultural policy of the Council of Europe, Brunner defined as "idealism" when the members of the Council of Europe claimed a European culture based on "humanism" and universal values[79]. Later, as the notion of culture changes within the cultural policies of the Council of Europe, the aim of the exhibitions does as well. Subsequently, as European societies and historical periods were changing, the role of exhibitions had to be re-evaluated.

According to art historian Spyrou, these exhibitions could be seen as examples of a top-down process based on the instrumentalisation of culture, where elites aimed to inject European consciousness into the masses[80]. Like the nation-building process, the Council of Europe adopted mechanisms and tools used in the creation of nation and patriotism, such as the platforms of art exhibitions themselves, as well as the Flag of

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[76] Spyrou L., *Europe as a Celebrated Community of Culture. The Council of Europe's Art Exhibitions in the 1950s.*, "Artl@ s Bulletin", vol. 12.1: 8, 2023, p. 101.

[77] Clark K., *Introduction*, in *The Romantic Movement*, *Fifth Exhibition to Celebrate the Tenth Anniversary of the Council of Europe*, exhibition catalogue (London: The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1959), edited by Arts Council of Great Britain, 1959, p. 10.

[78] Nicolson B., *Editorial*, "Burlington Magazine", vol. 103, no. 694, 1961.

[79] Brunner, *Le Conseil de l'Europe à la recherche d'une politique culturelle européenne, 1949-1968*, in *Les lucarnes de l'Europe. Télévisions, cultures, identités, 1945-2005*, edited by Lévy M.F. and Sicard M.N., Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2008, pp. 29-46. https://books.openedition.org/psorbonne/43713

[80] Spyrou L., *Europe as a Celebrated Community of Culture. The Council of Europe's Art Exhibitions in the 1950s.*, *"Artl@ s Bulletin"*, vol. 12.1:8, 2023, p. 107.

the Europe which consists of a circle of twelve golden stars on a blue background, which was designed for the Council of Europe in 1955.

2.2 Themes

> Art speaks as much to the heart as to the intellect and has consequently considerable, if not always recognized, influence on what people are or how they consider themselves. It was not without reason that so many artists were employed to glorify the accomplishments of totalitarian leaders and regimes who, at the same time, ruthlessly persecuted talent unfavourable to their cause. The way cities are laid out, the style of architecture, public squares, avenues and statues, and representations in pictures, museums or schoolbooks, all contribute strongly to people's sense of belonging, in a word, to their identity.[81]

With these words, the Council of Europe Art Exhibitions Coordinator David Mardell resumes the concepts already faced in the first chapter. He emphasizes the profound impact of art exhibitions on shaping people's perceptions and the sense of community. For this reason, totalitarian regimes have historically utilised art exhibitions as a tool for influence.

From 1954 to 2014, the Council of Europe organised thirty exhibitions[82], every year since 1954, every two years since 1966, and with varying regularity after 1972. The first six exhibitions, held between 1954 and 1960, faced the great artistic styles from the 15th to the 20th century: starting from the Bronze Age, through the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Classical and the Romantic periods, right up to the present day. During the 1960s, various other important periods, especially those focusing on the Middle Ages, were explored without a specific sequence, resulting in a somewhat comprehensive overview of European art history. We notice that the Gothic Art Exhibition was initially skipped (in 1961 *Romanesque Art* was organised in Barcelona and Saint James of Compostella and then in 1962 *European Art around 1400* in Vienna). Later, in 1962, the missing Gothic art was pointed out in the meeting of the ad hoc Working Party for the Art Exhibitions and then, it was realised in 1968 in Paris[83].

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[81] Mardell D., *50 years of the Council of Europe art exhibitions. 50 ans d'expositions d'art du Conseil de l'Europe*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2004, p. 11.
[82] A detailed list is in the annex 1.
[83] Council for Cultural Co-operation, Ad Hoc Working Party on Fine Arts (Paris, 13-14 March 1962), Draft Agenda with Comments, 25 January 1962, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CCC/GT/Art (62)2, https://rm.coe.int/1680725d8d ; Council for Cultural Co-operation, Report of the

Since the opening of the first exhibition, Kuypers proposed a second trend focused on European personalities, who changed European history, for example, Charlemagne (*Charlemagne – His life and work*, Aachen, 1965), Queen Christina of Sweden (Queen *Christina of Sweden*, Stockholm,1966), the Knights of Malta (*The order of St John in Malta*, Valletta, 1970), the Medicis (*Florence and Tuscany under the Medici*, Florence,1980), and King Christian IV (*Christian IV and Europe*, ten venues in Denmark,1988). This new theme gave the possibility for other countries to host exhibitions. However, the second trend was officially accepted by the Committee of Cultural Experts in 1966[84].

A third trend focused on "movements of people and ideas[85]" which marked the cultural life of Europe started with the *Anatolian Civilizations* exhibition (Istanbul, 1983), then, other exhibitions were held: *Portuguese discoveries and Renaissance Europe* (Lisbon, 1983), *The French Revolution and Europe* (Paris, 1989), *Emblems of Liberty – The image of the Republic in art* (Bern, 1991) and *From Viking to Crusader – Scandinavia and Europe 800-1200* (Paris, Berlin and Copenhagen, 1992-1993).

Around the 1980s the focus of the theme shifted: the aim became more socially oriented, focusing on the beneficial impact of exhibitions on the public. During this period, the exhibitions were characterized by a more educational function, as emerged in the fourth trend of themes focused on European personalities[86]. Indeed, a symposium for teachers was organised during the *Portuguese Discoveries and Renaissance Europe* in 1983 to provide a wider perspective to narrate this historical period[87]. In the late 1980s and the 1990s, given the tremendous upheavals in European society, the exhibitions focused their attention on the powerful interplay between art and society, politics and economics. It allowed curators to deal with the problems

Ad Hoc Working Party on Travelling Educational Exhibitions (Paris, 15th and 16th March 1962), 19 March 1962, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CCC/GT/Art (62) 16 Revised. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=0900001680725d76

[84] Committee of Cultural Experts, 15th Session, Draft Report of Fifteenth, Session held in Strasbourg from 28th May to 3rd June 1959, 12 June 1959, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, EXP/Cult (59) 33, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016807299ab

[85] Mardell D., *50 Years of the Council of Europe Art Exhibitions. 50 ans d'expositions d'art du Conseil de l'Europe, Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publ., 2004*, p. 12.

[86] Council for Cultural Co-operation, *Lessons in History: The Council of Europe and the Teaching of History,* Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 1999, pp. 30-31, https://rm.coe.int/1680686326

[87] Ibid., p. 30.

encountered in modern Europe and to focus on certain important ideas, such as identity[88]. This new approach meant to pursue three new principles:

1. Culture as a vector of values and citizenship
2. A pro-active approach
3. Reaching out to wider public[89]

Some examples are the exhibitions *Emblems of Liberty – images of Republics, French Revolution and Europe*, *The Dream of Happiness – the Art of Historicism in Europe* (held in Vienna in 1996-1997), and *Art and Power - Europe under the dictators 1930-45*. This new concept of art exhibitions characterized the series until the 30th and last one, *the Desire for Freedom: Art in Europe since* 1945 (Berlin, Milan, Tallinn, and Cracow in 2012-2014). The exhibits of one hundred thirteen artists, coming from twenty-eight European countries, explored the artists' reflection of universal human rights, freedom and democracy[90].

The fall of the Berlin Wall opened a new chapter in history and in the Council of Europe (as well as the European Union), as several countries from Central and Eastern Europe asked to be admitted and simultaneously signed the Cultural Convention[91]. In this scenario, the art exhibition series started emphasizing diversity and differences, alongside unity. Moreover, the social transition and the enlargement of the Council of Europe from 1989 onwards established the Council of Europe as the leading institution for maintaining democracy, transforming it into a pan-European organisation.

In May 1996, the Culture Committee discussed the role of themes in order "to spread them more evenly over the geographic area covered by the European Cultural

[88] Middleton-Lajudie E., Evaluation of Council of Europe Art Exhibition Series, 1st February 2002, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016807fc780
[89] Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape, 9th Meeting of the Bureau (Strasbourg, 23-24 November 2015), Rethinking Council of Europe Art Exhibitions: Towards a Revised Concept, 11 November 2015, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CDCPP-Bu (2015) 26. https://rm.coe.int/1680641c8c
[90] Ibid.
[91] Wassenberg B. and Bitsch M. T., *History of the Council of Europe*, Strasbourg, France: Council of Europe Publishing, 2013, p. 135.

Convention and to endeavor to include as soon as possible the new member states.[92]" Two exhibitions, *Art and Power* and *The Dream of Happiness – the Art of Historicism in Europe – Europe under Dictators 1930-1945*, were proposed by the Consultants in order to address this need. In addition, during the discussion, two other topics have been addressed: firstly, the inclusion of more contemporary works of art in exhibitions that deal with the art of the twentieth century; secondly, themes dealing with the interplay between European and non-European art. The last one wanted to widen the European perspective to consider truly international cooperation.

In the 2000s, after *the year 1000 A.D* (held in Budapest, Berlin, Mannheim, Prague, Bratislava between 2000 and 2002) and *Otto the Great* (held in Magdeburg in 2001) exhibitions, the aim migrated towards a more interdisciplinary and research-based conception of exhibitions, for example, the numerous, and varied shows being organised around the *Universal Leonardo,* exhibition realised in Florence, Milan, Munich, London and Oxford, between 2006 and 2007[93].

2.3 Organisation

The Cultural Division of the Council of Europe oversaw the administration of the Art Exhibitions. The organisation was initially established as the Committee of Cultural Experts. In 1961, it was renamed the Council for Cultural Cooperation (CCC). Adopting a broader approach that expanded its activities to include education, the CCC evolved into the Steering Committee for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC) in 1976[94]. The CDCC was dissolved in 2002, and its responsibilities were taken over by the Steering Committee for Culture (CDCULT), which became one of the four committees within the new structure of cultural cooperation[95]. In 2011, the Steering Committee for Culture (CDCULT) merged with the Steering Committee for Cultural Heritage and

[92] Council of Europe art exhibitions : organisation and future orientations, Meeting, (12th, 19960513-19960515, Strasbourg), 23 March 1996, Strsbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CC-Cult (96) 9, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809285b3

[93] Mardell D., *50 Years of the Council of Europe Art Exhibitions, 50 ans d'expositions d'art du Conseil de l'Europ*e, Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2004, 13.

[94] Wassenberg B. and Bitsch M., *History of the Council of Europe*, Strasbourg, France: Council of Europe Publishing, 2013, pp. 39- 84.

[95] Ministers' Deputies, Information Documents, New Structures for European Cultural Co-Operation, Terms of Reference of the Four Steering Committees, 6 December 2001, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CM/Inf (2001) 43.
https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016804e8cd7

Landscape (CDPATEP), creating the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage, and Landscape (CDCPP), which has been overseeing the exhibitions until the last exhibition in 2014[96].

During the first period, the Council of Europe had to develop the organisation of the project along with the preparation of the exhibitions[97]. In the report addressed by the Art Specialist to Committee in 1953[98], we can see that they had already planned four exhibitions after the first one in Brussels, involving France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy. The report stresses that the host countries would oversee the main financial contribution. It is interesting to highlight that in this first stage of the project, the year and the host country of the future exhibition were chosen before the theme and the objects to display. However, at the beginning of the projects, the Council of Europe did not establish specific regulations to organise the series of exhibitions. The Committee and their sub-committee discussed themes and future exhibitions sequentially, consulting the ad-hoc committee of Art Specialists, but without following a specific organisational structure.

In 1961, when the Committee of the Cultural Experts became the Council for Cultural Co-operation (CCC), general principles for the organisation were set out. The ad-hoc committee of Art Specialists was replaced with the Working Party on Fine Arts, which proposed and approved general principles during a meeting in 1962[99]. It was decided to set up a European organising committee consisting of experts on exhibition topics and members from the Working Party on Fine Arts[100]. The European organising committee had a limited role due to the few meetings, restricted to three times, and the limited tasks. They had to draw up the list of exhibits and manage the loans in

[96] Steering Committee for Culture, 10th Meeting of the Bureau (Paris, 8 July 2011), Bureau Meeting Report, 20 July 2011, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CDCULT-BU (2011) 14 https://search.coe.int/archives?i=090000168064b197

[97] Report to the Committee of Cultural Experts, 10 September 1953, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, EXP/Cult (53) 21, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=090000168092b988

[98] Committee of Cultural Experts, Meeting of Art Specialists (Strasbourg, 10-11 September 1953): Report to the Committee of Cultural Experts, 10 September 1953, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, EXP/Cult (53) 21, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=090000168092b987

[99] Council for Cultural Co-operation, 2nd Session (Paris, 13-14 March 1962), Report of the Ad Hoc Working Party on Fine Arts, 19 March 1962, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CCC/GT/Art (62) 12 revised, https://rm.coe.int/1680725d70

[100] Council for Cultural Co-operation, 2nd Meeting (Strasbourg, 22-30 May 1962), Cultural Activities Report Presented by the Cultural Division, 23 March 1962, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CCC (62) 21, https://rm.coe.int/09000016807257e2

accordance with the government of the host country, with a first meeting set two years before the opening date.

The government of the host country oversaw further administrative responsibility and technical organisation through the work of a national executive committee[101]. The main roles were the chief organiser and the assistant, who were in charge of editing the catalogue. However, we cannot find a strict regulation for catalogues, which had to be published in two languages at least, the national one and another one among the official languages of the Council of Europe (English and French). To give homogeneity to the series of catalogues, the format (in terms of size and number of reproductions) had to be replicated according to the previous editions[102].

According to the principles of 1962, the exhibitions had to take place every two years. Member States had to send in a written proposal in which they framed the theme and its outline and sent it three months before the meeting of the ad-hoc European organizing committee[103]. However, these principles were not fully respected, as the proposal of the Delegation of Malta in the third meeting of the Council for Cultural Co-operation (CCC) demonstrates[104]. The Delegation of Malta offered to organise an exhibition without a specific topic to display.

In 1976 the Council for Cultural Co-operation (CCC) became the Steering Committee for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC). During this period, each project had one sub-committee, composed of representatives or delegations at the Council of Europe. Moreover, a committee of Art Specialists and Consultants was created to provide expertise in the choice of exhibition themes and to give recommendations[105]. Members were appointed by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, based on

[101] Ibid., pp. 28–29.
[102] Ibid., p. 30.
[103] Ibid., pp. 26-28.
[104] Council for Cultural Co-operation, 3rd Session (Strasbourg, 8-11 January 1963), Cultural Activities Progress Report Presented by the Cultural Affairs Division, 28 November 1962, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CCC (62) 49 Confidential, https://rm.coe.int/0900001680725861
[105] Committee of Cultural Experts, Meeting of Art Specialists (Strasbourg, 10-11 September 1953): Report to the Committee of Cultural Experts, 10 September 1953, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, EXP/Cult (53) 21
https://search.coe.int/archives?i=090000168092b987

their art historical knowledge, and significant experience. They have been mostly Directors of prominent European museums[106].

As the 1980s marked a period of profound societal and geopolitical transformation, the art exhibition series underwent consequential shift. In 1987 Consultants involved in organizing the exhibitions questioned the role and the need for the Council of Europe exhibitions[107]. In the first decades most of the exhibitions were organised nationally, so the Council of Europe exhibitions represented the first examples of international art exhibitions. However, in the second half of the 20th century, the number of international exhibitions increased significantly, questioning the role of the series. The decision was to keep displaying European art internationally, following two priorities: firstly, the exhibitions had to be of the highest possible quality, and secondly, the themes must be central to European art[108]. Almost a decade later the Culture Committee reiterated these two aims of the exhibition series[109]. In 1988 a set of exhibition Guidelines was published[110], (the first set was lied in 1978[111], which demonstrates a certain level of disorganisation, as the first exhibition was held in 1954), where we can read that the aim was "to stimulate appreciation and increase knowledge of European art[112]", as one of the highest expressions of Europe's culture and common values.

Firstly, the Guidelines declare that Delegations of the member states and signatories of the Cultural Convention can submit an exhibition proposal to the Secretary-General. The proposal contained the theme, suggestions for artworks to

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[106] Middleton-Lajudie E., Evaluation of Council of Europe Art Exhibition Series, 1st February 2002, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016807fc780
[107] Ibid.
[108] Middleton-Lajudie E., Evaluation of Council of Europe Art Exhibition Series, 1st February 2002, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016807fc780 p. 3.
[109] Council of Europe art exhibitions: organisation and future orientations, Meeting, (12th, 19960513-19960515, Strasbourg), Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CC-Cult (96) 9. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809285b3
[110] Guidelines for the Organisation of Council of Europe Art Exhibitions, adopted at the 54th Session of the Council for Cultural Co-operation 21-24 June 1988 in Strasbourg, 1st January 1988, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, DECS/EXPO (88) 1. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=090000168097ba30
[111] Guidelines for the organisation of European Art Exhibitions 1978, 28 February 1978, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, DECS/DC(78)10. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809a0f2f
[112] Ibid.

exhibit, the chief organiser, the budget, and the approximate date[113]. Ideally, the official proposal should be received six years before the proposed opening of the exhibition. The Secretary-General then forwards these proposals to the group of consultants, who assess the suitability of each proposal for inclusion in the series. Moreover, the chief organiser presented orally the proposal to the Consultants, and in case of modification, the chief organiser would be notified. Following their evaluation, the Consultants make recommendations to the Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC), which ultimately decides which proposals to approve[114].

Once the theme is accepted, technical and administrative aspects (such as conservation, security, or transportation, but also cataloging, educational aspects, and publicity) are up to the organizing institution. The guidelines provide for a dedicated organizing committee, established by the relevant national authority, whose Chief Organiser is an expert in managing large-scale international exhibitions. If this is not feasible, the Council of Europe emphasizes the critical importance of experts, who supported the Chief Organiser. Moreover, two administrative groups were set up: the European Organizing Committee (EOC) and the Group of Consultants. The EOC was set up for each exhibition after the theme was approved by the CDCC. This committee includes representatives from the organizing country and other member states that wish to participate in the exhibition. Its role was to give technical advice for organizing the exhibition and to assist the chief organiser. The first meeting was typically held no less than four years before the exhibition's proposed opening date, which was two years earlier compared to the principles in 1962.

The Group of Consultants was initially called the Group of Advisers before the 1988 Guidelines. It was composed of directors from seven leading European museums, and a Russian representative museum was involved after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The eight-member museums were: the British Museum (London, UK), the Museo del Prado (Madrid, Spain), the Opificio delle Pietre Dure (Florence, Italy), the Rijksmuseum (Amsterdam, the Netherlands), the Graphische Sammlung Albertina (Vienna, Austria), the Hermitage Museum (Saint Petersburg, Russia), the Musée du

[113] Ibid., p. 6.
[114] Ibid., pp. 6-8.

Louvre (Paris, France), and the Bundes-und Ausstellungshalle (Bonn, Germany)[115]. They were responsible for making suggestions on exhibition themes, calendars, and methods for the CDCC. Additionally, they first approved the proposals when the Secretary-General received them from the country wishing to organise an exhibition[116].

Regarding the catalogues, the guidelines claim that each exhibition should publish the catalogue in two languages, at least, including one of the official languages of the Council of Europe[117]. However, some catalogues have only one version. Moreover, every state could create its version, without following a standard format[118].

In 2004, the Steering Committee for Culture (CDCULT) took charge of the art exhibition series, rethinking and redefining it[119]. David Mardell, serving as a special adviser for the third meeting of the Bureau, wrote an overview of the Art Exhibitions of the Council of Europe[120]. His paper recalls the origins of the exhibitions, objectives, and values upheld by the Council of Europe, with references to the organizing structure. It also describes of the Consultants and the central role they play in ensuring the feasibility and quality of the exhibitions by providing, free of charge, advice and recommendations[121]. However, the Group of Consultants was disbanded during the preparations for the twenty-eighth exhibition. The document includes recommendations for the guidelines and potential exhibition theme, encouraging a focus on the connection between art and society. Additionally, it promotes the

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[115] Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape, 9th Meeting of the Bureau (Strasbourg, 23-24 November 2015), Rethinking Council of Europe Art Exhibitions: Towards a Revised Concept, 11 November 2015, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CDCPP-Bu (2015) 26. https://rm.coe.int/1680641c8c

[116] Guidelines for the Organisation of Council of Europe Art Exhibitions, adopted at the 54th Session of the Council for Cultural Co-operation 21-24 June 1988 in Strasbourg, 1st January 1988, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, DECS/EXPO (88) 1, pp.5–7. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=090000168097ba30

[117] Ibid.

[118] Middleton-Lajudie E., Evaluation of Council of Europe Art Exhibition Series, 1st February 2002, Strasbourg, CoE's archives, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016807fc780

[119] A list of recommendations on the reorientation of Council of Europe Art Exhibitions adopted by the Consultants in Florence in 2000.

[120] Art Exhibitions of the Council of Europe, 3rd meeting of the Bureau, Strasbourg, 15-16 March 2004, 1st December 2003, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CDCULT-BU (2004) 25. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809290d7

[121] The per diem provided by the Council of Europe is quite insufficient to cover the real expenses of these rather eminent people who actually find themselves out of pocket when working for us.They are not in the usual sense of the term 'civil servants' and any extra expenses they incur working for the Council must be met out of the budgets of their own institutions.

participation of newer and smaller member states of the Council of Europe, as the exhibitions had predominantly been hosted by Western European countries — a point of criticism against the project. The Consultants suggested that the exhibitions should engage smaller states by choosing themes important to these countries, staging exhibitions in partnership with them or hosting exhibitions directly in the concerned country. Relocating existing exhibition was also an option, exemplified by 27th exhibition *The Centre of Europe around 1000 AD*, which was mounted in Budapest, Berlin, Mannheim, Prague and Bratislava[122].

Mardell identifies three criticisms of the art exhibition series: the elitist standards hindering broader audience reach, a focus on historical art neglecting contemporary artistic expression, and unequal representation among the Council of Europe member states[123]. Nevertheless, he outlines a list of objectives and positive impacts, including scientific research, restoration, institutional collaboration, and the social, political, and influence of these exhibitions. Indeed, these exhibitions are seen as the best way to promote international understanding and increase the visibility of the Council of Europe's activities. Furthermore, the scientific quality of the exhibitions is a central focus of this document. Mardell advises participating countries or institutions to exhibit their collections while minimizing the transport of valuable works. He also recommends increased collaboration with national institutions specializing in mounting exhibitions, such as the Kunsthalle, while the Consultants argue for a limited number of exhibitions under the auspices of the Council of Europe to maintain high quality.

2.4 Funds and Contributions

Since the first proposal for art exhibition organisation by the Belgian delegation, a budget suggestion was given. The host country had to provide the budget for the exhibition, receiving a subsidy, despite the series being organised under the auspices

[122] Art Exhibitions of the Council of Europe, 3rd meeting of the Bureau, Strasbourg, 15-16 March 2004, 1st December 2003, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CDCULT-BU (2004) 25, p.8. .https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809290d7

[123] Art exhibitions of the Council of Europe, 3rd meeting of the Bureau, Strasbourg, 15-16 March 2004, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CDCULT-BU (2004)25. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809290d7

of the Council of Europe[124]. The approximate budget, given by the Council of Europe as a subsidy for each exhibition, should have been between 750,000 and one million Belgian francs[125]. Even though the main financial contribution was up to the host country, this contribution represented one of the main expenses in the Council of Europe's budget, according to a draft report in 1959. For 1960, the budget for the Exhibitions was 8,000,000 francs out of 35, 875, 000 francs. It took the second place in the budget following the first one for the research fellowship[126].

Regarding the loan of artworks (which other member states could contribute to) are the major expenditure in the overall budget. The principles of 1962 state that the host country was to receive a subsidy from the Cultural Fund, established in 1956, for two years. The organizing country would have received NF (Net Financial) 40,000 for the organisation during the year before the exhibition, and NF 80,000 as a grant in the year of the exhibition. Then, a third sum of NF 40,000 would have been kept by the Cultural Fund "(...) for making full use of the result of the exhibition.[127]"

This set-aside sum could be allocated for the documentary traveling exhibition, which we talk about the next paragraph. On the other hand, participating countries have to establish a budget for the Cultural Fund to cover transportation or insurance costs for the loan of artworks. Additionally, participating countries must bear the costs associated with loans from non-national collections. The countries were divided into three categories based on their size:

1. Large countries/ NF 15,000: France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy and the UK
2. Medium-sized countries/ NF 10,000: Austria, Belgium, Greece, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey

[124] Meeting of Art Specialists (Strasbourg, 10th-12th September 1953), Report to the Committee of Cultural Experts, 10 September 1953, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, EXP/Cult/Art(53)1. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=090000168092b987
[125] Ibid., 3.
[126] Committee of Cultural Experts, 15th Session, Draft report of the Programme Sub-Committee, 3 May 1959, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, XP/Cult (59)rev3. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016807299a4
[127] Council for Cultural Co-operation, 2nd Meeting (Strasbourg, 22-30 May 1962): Cultural Activities Report Presented by the Cultural Division, 23 March 1962, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CCC (62)21. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016807257e2

3. Small countries/ NF 5,000: Cyprus, Denmark, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, and Norway[128].

The 1988 Guidelines upheld the financial responsibilities of the host country. This included covering the costs for EOC meetings, research on the exhibition theme, installations, and any additional loan expenses not covered by the lending countries or the CDCC grant[129]. The Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC) created a specific account within the Cultural Fund to financially support the art exhibition series, mainly to secure loans of foreign artworks, packing, transport, insurance, and couriers. Annually, it received £30,000 from the Cultural Fund and voluntary contributions from all countries participating in the European Cultural Convention. Each year, a suggested contribution scale was prepared based on the contributions to the Council of Europe's General Budget. The goal was to raise an additional £50,000 through these voluntary contributions. Therefore, the Cultural Fund and the voluntary contributions provide the art exhibition series with a budget of approximately £80,000 per year. Until 2002, this arrangement allowed for a budget of around £200,000 to be allocated every three years for organizing a major exhibition. The organizing country can also seek additional funding from private sponsors, such as foundations[130]. When the project responsibility shifted from the Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC) to the Steering Committee for Culture (CDCULT), the account for the exhibitions remained active. However, continued annual contributions to the account were questioned due to the lack of a clear policy within the CDCULT[131]. Ultimately, the special account for the Art Exhibitions was closed after the twenty-seventh exhibition in 2006. This also reflects the Council of Europe's reduced interest in organizing Art Exhibitions, as it prioritized democracy and human rights.

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[128] Ibid.

[129] Guidelines for the Organisation of Council of Europe Art Exhibitions, adopted at the 54th Session of the Council for Cultural Co-operation 21-24 June 1988 in Strasbourg, 1st January 1988, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, DECS/EXPO (88) 1.
https://search.coe.int/archives?i=090000168097ba30

[130] Middleton-Lajudie E., Evaluation of Council of Europe Art Exhibition Series, 1st February 2002, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe.
https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016807fc780

[131] Art Exhibitions of the Council of Europe, 3rd meeting of the Bureau, Strasbourg, 15-16 March 2004, 1 December 2003, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, CDCULT-BU (2004)25, p. 6.
https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809290d7

2.5 Cooperation

In facing the role of international cooperation concerning the art exhibition series, we must take into account the development of the Council of Europe. Until 1956 the Council of Europe had only fourteen member states, by 1989 the number had increased to twenty-three. In the 1990s this number increased to forty-one member states, and Georgia joined in April 1999[132]. Now the member states are forty-six. The international nature of the Council of Europe's art exhibition series has enabled ongoing collaboration among more than forty countries. These exhibitions were possible thanks to the international cooperation among members and non-member states. Even though, the focus on European art has always remained, the horizons have spanned beyond Europe. In particular, the role of Eastern European countries has been important, notably, in organizing the *hors series* exhibitions, which will be presented in the next paragraphs. Indeed, a large proportion of the exhibitions have explicitly dealt with subjects which led to the participation of Eastern European countries. Their increased participation can be explained by the political scenario in Europe and considering the continually increasing member states of the Council of Europe and European Union too. This is exemplified by the exhibition *The Centre of Europe around 1000 A.D.*, which will be the first exhibition to be hosted by several Central and Eastern European Countries (such as Budapest, Berlin, Mannheim, Prague, Bratislava).

Understanding to what extent the international cooperation among countries in the realisation of the art exhibition series is central to evaluating their role and importance. First of all, participation refers to countries represented on the organising and expert committees as well as those which have acted as lenders of works of art and artifacts. The reason why only the European Western countries participated in organising the first exhibitions is that the ten funding members were mostly located in Western Europe. According to the evaluation realised in 2002, among the original member states, two of them, France and the United Kingdom, were involved in the organisation of all exhibitions. While, only Ireland, Luxembourg, and Norway have been involved in less than twenty. The overall participation of the ten original member

[132] Evaluation of Council of Europe Art Exhibition Series, Elina Middleton-Lajudie, February 2002, p. 13.

states is regular, apart from Luxembourg, which participated in six of the twenty-six exhibitions[133]. At the first meeting of the Council of Europe, Greece and Turkey were also invited, and their participation became quite regular throughout the series. Four other countries, which were not among the ten founding members, have participated regularly since the beginning of the series: Germany (the Federal Republic of Germany until 1989 and the reunified Germany thereafter), Austria, Switzerland, and Spain. While Portugal and Finland have less frequent participation, as they have been involved in six and five exhibitions respectively; Cyprus and Malta have only participated in three and San Marino in two[134]. All the eighteen new signatories since 1990 are Central and Eastern European states, apart from Andorra, which became a member state in 1994. The participation of Hungary, the Czech Republic (including the former Czechoslovakia), Poland, and Russia (including the former USSR) was regular. While, Romania has participated in the event three times, Macedonia has joined twice. Additionally, four of the remaining Eastern European countries have been involved only once, and seven have never participated at all[135].

This art exhibition series encouraged cooperation between European countries that are not signatories of the Council of Europe statute, including countries bordering Europe, and fostered international cooperation with Australia, Asian nations, as well as North and South America. Among them, the United States is the most frequent participant in the European exhibition series, its extensive collections of European artworks. As we mentioned before, the USSR participation was regular since 1965, and the German Democratic Republic was a central lender for the exhibitions in 1966 and 1988. Another significant participant was the Holy See, which took regularly part in the organisation, expert committees as well as in providing loans[136].

This *excursus* testifies to a huge imbalance of Eastern European participation compared to Northern and Western countries. Nevertheless, the imbalance is justified by the geographical (in terms of location and size) and historical scenarios. The core of the cooperation for the exhibition series tends to be the largest member states. While

[133] Middleton-Lajudie E., Evaluation of Council of Europe Art Exhibition Series, 1st February 2002, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, p. 11.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid.

the less frequent participants are often situated on the outskirts of Europe or are smaller nations, which also possess some of the most extensive collections of European art[137]. During the 1990s many new member states participated, starting from the exhibition *From Viking to Crusader – Scandinavia and Europe 800-1200* (Paris, Berlin, Copenhagen, 1992-1993), which involved cooperation with Estonia and the Ukraine, and the exhibition *Gods and Heroes of the Bronze Age* (Copenhagen, Bonn, Paris, Athens, 1998-1999), which saw Bulgaria and the Slovak Republic participating for the first time.

Regarding the host nations, among the forty-one countries that have participated at least once, only twenty have served as hosts. Among these, seven have hosted exhibitions on multiple occasions. Germany hosted twelve exhibitions, France five, Italy and the United Kingdom four, and Austria, Denmark, and Spain two. The following countries have hosted only one exhibition: Greece, Belgium, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey. The gap mentioned earlier concerning Eastern European countries becomes far more evident within the context of the host countries.

To encourage greater diversification of host countries and to widen the scope of cooperation, the choice of themes became an effective tool for involving new member states[138]. For example, the fourth trend, focused on European personalities, was promoted by Sweden to increase the number of host countries. This approach enabled Sweden to participate in 1966 with the exhibition *Queen Christina of Sweden* and Malta in 1970 with the exhibition *The Order of St. John in Malta*. The third trend, related to significant events in European history, had a similar outcome. The *Portuguese discoveries and Renaissance Europe* exhibition allowed Portugal to host an exhibition, and the *From Viking to Crusader - Scandinavia and Europe 800 - 1200* exhibition enabled Iceland to participate in the series for the first time. Additionally, the *Center of Europe around 1000 A.D.* exhibition allowed three Central and Eastern European countries—Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland—to host exhibitions for the first time.

[137] Ibid., p. 12.
[138] Ibid., p. 13.

2.6 Impacts

> The council provided the stimulus for some of the greatest exhibition ever held and even today, exhibitions organized under the Council of Europe's auspices remain distinctive by their scale, their quality, their scholarly approach and, above all, by their public appeal[139].

These exhibitions created multiple effects that we can resume in two categories with quantitative and qualitative impacts: quantitatively measurable benefits and those that address quality. To evaluate the success of exhibitions in quantitative terms, it's important to focus on visitor numbers and other measurable factors. But the success of exhibitions should not be solely judged by data. In addition, the attendance and sales figures for the exhibitions are often unavailable, before the end of the 1990s. The *War and Peace in Europe* exhibition (Münster and Osnabrück, 1998-1999) involved over 200 experts from fourteen countries and featured 1300 works of art and artifacts from 500 different lenders. To date, more than 4000 articles have been written about the exhibition worldwide. In terms of success, the attendance figures revealed 200,000 visitors in the first three months and that 16,000 catalogues were sold during this period. The *Art and Power, Europe under the dictators 1930-1945* (London, Barcelona, Berlin, 1995-1996) exhibition attracted 40,000 visitors in Barcelona, which might seem modest compared to Paris but was the second most visited exhibition in the city's history. Similarly, the *Emblems of Liberty – The image of the Republic in art* (Bern, 1991) exhibition drew 20,000 visitors, a notable number for an exhibition in Bern. The *From Viking to Crusader - Scandinavia and Europe* exhibition was attended by over 700,000 people in Paris, Berlin, and Copenhagen, and the exhibition *Eighty, les peintres d'Europe,* held in Japan, drew 800,000 visitors[140]. The report written by Elina Middleton-Lajudie states that Council of Europe art exhibitions are successful qualitatively speaking. Indeed, the exhibitions have achieved considerable success in terms of qualitative impact. The exhibitions have spotlighted significant aspects of European cultures, notable events, and influential personalities that shaped European history. They serve as a platform to display the artworks of a particular country while

[139] Mardell D., *50 Years of the Council of Europe Art Exhibitions, 50 ans d'expositions d'art du Conseil de l'Europe*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2004, p. 8.
[140] Middleton-Lajudie E., Evaluation of Council of Europe Art Exhibition Series, 1st February 2002, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, pp. 7-8.

also bringing together artifacts from other regions. Often, these exhibitions have been organised to coincide with national and international commemorative events. For instance, the *Christian IV and Europe* and the *Emblems of Liberty – The image of the Republic in art* (Bern, 1991) exhibitions were organised to celebrate the anniversary of the Swiss Confederation. *The French Revolution and Europe* exhibition was part of the bicentenary festivities, and *War and Peace in Europe* commemorated the 350th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia[141].

The art exhibition series embodies genuine scientific endeavors conceived and developed by experts in the field. These initiatives have facilitated the assembly of collections, allowing visitors to rediscover them in their entirety. Extensive research has been conducted for historically themed exhibitions, such as the exhibition *Byzantine art* (Athens, 1964) and the exhibition *Portuguese discoveries and Renaissance Europe* (Lisbon, 1983). Additionally, the exhibitions have fostered significant advancements in art historical research, by offering a renew European perspective on major cultural movements and events, such as *The French Revolution and Europe* and *The Art of Devotion* (part of the *hors séries*) exhibitions.

It is possible to study these exhibitions through their catalogues, which aim to serve as a testament to the exhibitions and the research they generated. While the earlier catalogues were not regulated by strict rules, resulting in traditional formats, offering analyses and descriptions of the artworks, since the 1980s, more comprehensive catalogues have been produced. These newer catalogues include detailed entries on individual works as well as essays on the exhibition themes. For example, notable scholars participated in writing prefaces, such as introductions by Kenneth Clark and Eric Hobsbawm for the *Art and Power* exhibition, and by Gombrich for the special exhibition in Japan, entitled *Eighty, les peintres d'Europe* [142]. Each Member State was responsible for creating the catalogue for the exhibition organised in their countries. Consequently, the Council of Europe art exhibition catalogues do not follow a standard format, but they have gained a reputation for being substantial collections of essays and are frequently used for reference. These catalogues are often cited by other experts and serve as educational tools for schools

[141] Ibid.
[142] Ibid., p. 8.

and universities. Additionally, for each exhibition, catalogues had to be published in at least two languages. The available languages included Catalan, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, and Portuguese[143].

The quality impact of art exhibitions series lies in the ability to provide a visual presentation of important ideas and values, as images overcome language barriers that exist between countries. Art has the power to shape and inform people's understanding of their society as well as unfamiliar cultures. The interaction between society, art, and individuals is crucial to comprehending the impact of these exhibitions. Indeed, since the first Council of Europe art exhibition in 1954, the aims have been framed in terms of social and cultural impact. Initially, the aim was to promote European unity and shared cultural heritage among citizens. Over time, the focus shifted to addressing issues of both diversity and unity, fostering an understanding of these concepts among exhibition visitors. Later, the emphasis moved to recognizing the importance of cooperation, which is central to both the Council of Europe and the organisation of these exhibitions. Thus, the emphasis should lie on the impact of the exhibitions on visitors rather than simply the number of attendees. Moreover, the discussion on qualitative impact is particularly significant in a changing context, such as that of the 1990s and 2000s on the European continent. This context has raised questions of identity for all European countries, both for long-standing Member States and for countries where questions of identity are being questioned.

The exhibitions have also created a network of partnerships between museums and scholars of many different disciplines. In some cases, the greatest effect of these exhibitions has been the creation of a new museum department, as happened in Florence, Istanbul, and Lisbon[144]. Furthermore, they greatly contribute to enhancing the reputation and revitalizing the perception of museum collections, where other exhibitions were created afterward. That is possible because exhibitions serve as catalysts for innovation in museology, by encouraging creative endeavors by artists,

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[143] Guidelines for the Organisation of Council of Europe Art Exhibitions, adopted at the 54th Session of the Council for Cultural Co-operation 21-24 June 1988 in Strasbourg, 1st January 1988, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, DECS/EXPO (88) 1.
https://search.coe.int/archives?i=090000168097ba30

[144] Mardell D., *50 Years of the Council of Europe Art Exhibitions. 50 ans d'espositions d'art du Conseil de l'Europe*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2004, p. 9.

curators, restorers, and other professionals in the field. In several instances, the preparatory work for exhibitions has resulted in the foundation of new institutions dedicated to conservation or research in the relevant field. Additionally, the catalogues produced for these exhibitions serve as lasting contributions to the study and appreciation of art.

The relevance of the qualitative benefits of art exhibitions and cultural policies are widely recognised. In fact, following the last exhibition in 2014, it was mainly the European Union that implemented the promotion of European heritage. The European union, in agreement with the Council of Europe and UNESCO, proclaimed 2018 as the European Year of Cultural Heritage, seeking to encourage "more people to discover and engage with Europe's cultural heritage and to strengthen their sense of belonging to a common European space[145]". Later, during the economic crises in 2008, the Museum, the House of European History was conceived and opened in May 2017. The idea of temporary exhibition or ephemeral museums, as Haskell would say, was translated into a transnational museum contrasting the concept of patriotic national museums of the 19th century.

2.7 Other activities and *hors series*

The Council of Europe organised parallel exhibitions alongside the series of official art exhibitions. As mentioned previously, in the 1960s, the Council for Cultural Co-operation (CCC) realised a parallel project consisting of a traveling documentary exhibition, composed of the mobile panels which could be easily packed and installed by two persons. Moreover, black and white reproductions of the original exhibits were printed and displayed with captions in English, French, German and Spanish[146]. The draft agenda of the ad-hoc working party on fine arts in 1964 confirms that the documentary exhibitions of the sixth and eighth exhibitions were being shown or were scheduled to be shown at that time, and preparations for the seventh and ninth

[145] https://culture.ec.europa.eu/cultural-heritage/eu-policy-for-cultural-heritage/european-year-of-cultural-heritage-2018 [last access 14 September 2024].
[146] Records of European Exhibitions Held under the Auspices of the Council of Europe, 19 March 1963, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, DECS/Inf(63)2.
https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016807263a1

exhibitions were in progress[147]. Along with the documentary exhibitions, there have been several exhibitions organised under the auspices of the Council of Europe, but out of the series previously analysed[148]. Indeed, following the 1988 Guidelines, exhibitions had to be approved by the Steering Committee for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC) to be part of the series of the Art Exhibitions. The first three exhibitions were organised in accordance with the City of Strasbourg. to display important artwork of the twentieth century.

1. 1968: *Art in Europe around 1918*
2. 1969: *The Russian Ballets of Serge de Diaghilev: 1909-1929*
3. 1970: *Art around 1925-1930*

The first and third of these exhibitions were dedicated to exploring works from significant periods in the development of contemporary art. While the second exhibition was intended to complement the others by highlighting the importance of Diaghilev's work as a source of influence on various forms of twentieth-century art. It provided insight into how a Russian artist could influence Western European artists such as Cocteau and Valery, as well as numerous choreographers and painters. The decision to showcase contemporary art aims to address the gap in contemporary art that had only sporadically been covered in the series. The only exhibitions that displayed some contemporary artworks were the fifteenth exhibition *Trends in the 1920s* (1977) and the thirtieth one *Desire for Freedom* (2012-2014). The Council of Europe saw the first three exhibitions of the *hors de série* as an opportunity to collaborate with the City of Strasbourg on a specific project that did not align with the main exhibition series. Additionally, certain exhibitions were excluded from the main series due to funding constraints, as many did not adhere to the stringent financial limitations set by the 1988 Guidelines. Furthermore, these exhibitions were not included in the series because they did not align with the primary aims or themes of the European art exhibition series, as *hors de série* generally focused on broad or

[147] Draft Agenda with Explanatory Notes,6th Session (Strasbourg, 1st – 5th June 1964), Ad Hoc Working Party on Fine Arts (Athens, 2nd and 3rd April 1964), 3rd March 1964, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, DECS/Art (64) 2. https://rm.coe.int/16806afedb
[148] Annex n. 2.

contemporary art topics. Additionally, many of these exhibitions were proposed by external organisations, such as magazines or foundations, rather than by Member States. For example, the Belgian exhibition of 1975, *Love & Marriage: Aspects of Folk Life in Europe*, focused on marriages, considered a fundamental element of European society, is not aligned with the main series. However, there are not specific criteria to classify these exhibitions as out of the main series. For instance, it is unclear the exclusion of *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe* (Amsterdam, 1994-1995) and *Rudolf II & Prague* (touring exhibition, 1997). The Evaluation claim that "[...] Each of the hors series exhibitions [has] been categorised for very different reasons.[149]"

However, among the numerous *hors de série* exhibitions organised, we can mention a few that have played a significant role in historical-artistic terms and in international dialogue. In 1987, two contemporary art exhibitions were organised based on proposals from two art magazines. The contemporary art magazine "Eighty" proposed the exhibition *Eighty, les peintres d'Europe* in 1987, while the Japanese newspaper "The Yomiuri Shimbun" suggested the idea to organise the exhibition *Space in European Art* in Tokyo to David Mardell, the Council of Europe Art Exhibitions Coordinator. A team of participant museums (including the Metropolitan Museum in New York) was set out in order to define the theme[150]. The topic chosen was "Space in European Art" because of the notable differences between the depiction of space in visual art between the Far East and Europe throughout history. The exhibitions covered a large period of European history, from ancient Greece up to 1914, displaying works of the most prominent artists, such as Michelangelo, Cranach, Dürer, Bruegel, Degas, to mention just a few. The exhibition *Space in European Art* (Tokyo, 1987) was significantly symbolic as it was the first to be hosted outside of Europe, where it presented an overview of European art out of the European continent. Moreover, this allowed for greater international cooperation, not only European, in the realisation of the exhibition, as evidenced by the participant list in annex 2 of the exhibition. This exhibition probably did not fit into the main series because it did not

[149] Middleton-Lajudie, Evaluation of Council of Europe Art Exhibition Series, 1st Febrary 2002, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, pp. 6–7, pp. 26–28.
[150] https://70.coe.int/the-art-exhibitions-of-the-council-of-europe-en.html [last access 22 June 2024].

align with the objectives of the exhibitions, having a broader, non-European focus. Additionally, the significant financial contribution from the "Yomiuri Shimbun" newspaper prevented this exhibition from being part of the art exhibition series.

While this exhibition presented European art history before the abstract painting, contemporary art was central in the two exhibitions *Exhibition Dialogues on Contemporary Art*, held in Lisbon in 1985, and *Eighty, les peintres d'Europe*.

Exhibition Dialogues on Contemporary Art was organised with the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon. The title reflects the dialogue which exists between artists, museums, and the public. It was proposed by the Modern Art Centre in Lisbon with the idea of helping Portugal to catch up with contemporary expressions, which had not been promoted by post-war regimes.

The exhibition *Eighty, les peintres d'Europe* displayed contemporary art from fifteen European countries, on the base of a selection made by the public vote. The newspapers and magazines created a space devoted to contemporary artists and ask their readers to vote. The success of this initiative is also due to the previous role of David Mardell in the Council's Press Department. Indeed, David Mardell used his journalist contacts to obtain the participation of almost half the major newspapers in Europe. The magazine "Libération" dedicated two full pages on more than one occasion to display the works of contemporary artists. The result was an impressive touring exhibition that travelled to fifteen or sixteen countries[151]. However, this exhibition lacked artworks from Eastern European Artists.

Consequently, in 1989, the exhibition *Seven Contemporary Soviet Painters* in Strasbourg was organised to fill this gap. This marked a significant step forward because, until then, Soviet participation had typically been limited in the organisation of exhibitions rather than directly including Russian artists. The exhibition also marked a historic occasion with Secretary General Gorbachev's historic visit to the Council of Europe.

In 1997, the exhibition *Rudolf II & Prague* was focused on Rudolf II's reign, when Prague emerged as a prominent European cultural hub, the exhibition showcased

[151] https://70.coe.int/the-art-exhibitions-of-the-council-of-europe-en.html [last access 22 June 2024].

this pivotal period in history. This exhibition must be mentioned because involved it several Easter European countries in the organisation, as the annex 2 shows.

2.8 Rethinking art exhibition series after 2014

In November 2015, the Bureau of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) discussed redefining art exhibitions to fully utilize their potential in promoting Council of Europe values[152]. This document hypothesizes three organisational scenarios for upcoming exhibitions: the Council of Europe could be the active organiser of an exhibition; exhibitions could be proposed by member states, as previously, and cultural institutions; finally, the Secretary General could lend his patronage to selected events according to specific criteria. Furthermore, the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) proposes some themes to address in future exhibitions, such as current challenges and concerns of contemporary European society, like the construction of identity (defined as "the idea of the modern self", its impact on culture, economy, and politics) and the relationship with nature, including climate change, seen as an issue where cultural, social, and political concepts and interests converge. Therefore, future exhibitions should focus on current reflection on issues affecting the entire European population, emphasizing intercultural dialogue and solidarity as foundations for democratic security based on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

On 2 May 2016, a second meeting took place at the Council of Europe with five experts from the cultural sector and the Vice-Chair of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP). However, the invited Parliamentary Assembly member of the Council of Europe declined the invitation, indicating that the urgency of these exhibitions was diminishing[153]. During this meeting, the experts underlined the role of culture as the basis of Human Rights, claiming that "there were

[152] Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape, 9th Meeting of the Bureau (Strasbourg, 23-24 November 2015), Rethinking Council of Europe Art Exhibitions: Towards a Revised Concept, 9 November 2015, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CDCPP-Bu (2015) 26. https://rm.coe.int/1680641c8c

[153] Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) - CDCPP(2016)9 - Item 5.1 on the agenda – Council of Europe Art Exhibitions toward a new concept and initiative: "we, the others" - For information and action, 23 May 2016, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CDCPP (2016)9. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016806a4886

no Human Rights without culture[154]", above all, in a period of economic, social, cultural insecurity. The mission of this new initiative was to empower Europeans, both natives and newcomers, enhancing their mutual understanding through arts and culture. In addition, the 2016 document states that the redefinition of art exhibition series aimed to renew the "European humanistic narrative".

The title of the 31st exhibition was set to be *We, the Others*, explained as follows: "We believe that the understanding of the self is related to the understanding of the Other and that more than individuals, we are part of a broader system called humanity.[155]" This exhibition would have been inaugurated in 2017, if political decisions, resources, and cooperation agreements had allowed, but no further documents after 2016 mention the project.

The proposed 31st exhibition was based on three principles:

1. Empowering contemporary formats in order to engage contemporary audiences;
2. Avoiding emphasis on national cultures;
3. Avoiding concentration of events in culturally already well-served cities[156].

While the second point reiterates the desire to more beyond a national conception of culture, as analyzed in the first chapter, the other two points represent improvements over previous exhibitions, the first one stresses the need to renew exhibition formats to engage more visitors, reaffirming the social mission of art exhibition series begun in 1989. The last one calls for diversifying host cities with fewer cultural events and activities, allowing for a greater degree of development.

Additionally, the *We, the Others* exhibition had to feature the following characteristics:

1. Travelling exhibition, replicated and shown at the same time in different places;

[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Ibid.

2. Use different means – pictures, video, cinema, music, artefacts and online / digital artistic initiatives, interactive installations or games[157];
3. Include a focus on a "exhibition of idea" (discourse and philosophically oriented);
4. Combine arts/science/technology elements;
5. Include participatory formats, e.g. be accompanied by discussions and online community building performances[158].

The project clearly aimed to be broader in scope, targeting a diverse audience and encompassing a wide range of topic and artifacts. Indeed, the means exhibited had to be significantly expanded compared to previous exhibitions. This exhibition had to display not only traditional forms of art but to highlight also its dialogue with science and technology. It had to incorporated participatory formats, including cinema, music, installations, digital initiatives, and games. The digital revolution had to play a central role in the organisation of the exhibition, because it had to be displayed in both physical and virtual spaces. These had to include cultural institutions, schools and educational spaces, public areas including streets (thanks to the intervention of artists like JR), as well as online platforms and tools, such as social media for community building and sharing values. The ZKM's "Globale" project (Zentrum fur Kunst und Medientechnologie[159]) was seen as an inspirational model due to its similar artistic,

[157] The 2016 document mentions ome digital tools that contributed to the realisation of the 31st exhibition: the Spanish-based project BeAnotherLAB, which works with Oculus Rift, a pair of virtual reality goggles; the hybrid street and video games "Solar Pink Pong" that uses interactive media and daylight as a medium; a the German-based projects SIMULACRA, an opto-physical experimental arrangement as a metaphor for experiencing otherness.

[158] Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) - CDCPP(2016)9 - Item 5.1 on the agenda – Council of Europe Art Exhibitions toward a new concept and initiative: "we, the others" - For information and action, 23 May 2016, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CDCPP (2016)9. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016806a4886

[159] The Center for Art and Media (ZKM) in Karlsruhe, Germany, launched the expansive, multidisciplinary "Globale" project in 2015. The project's goal was to investigate and address the changes that the 21st century's digitization and globalization. "Globale" sought to promote communication and cooperation between artists, curators, scientists, and intellectuals from all over the world, in contrast to conventional exhibitions that focus on individual artists or certain art trends. A number of exhibitions, performances, conferences, and workshops were part of the initiative, which addressed global concerns like migration, climate change, the digital revolution, and cross-cultural interchange. It aimed to dissolve barriers between art and science as well as between various cultural. "Globale" was not only a one-time event but a continuous conversation that challenged the role of art in a changing world.

pedagogical, and political nature. The political and artistic nature was reaffirmed in the 2016 document, which aspired to involve prominent figures from the cultural and political worlds.

Future funding methods were also outlined, differing from previous ones. The main sources of funding identified were the traditional system stated in the 1998 Guidelines (voluntary contributions by Member states, from cultural partner institutions and initiatives, allocations from the Council of Europe Ordinary Budget for 2017/2018), along with EU funding schemes and support by foundations and European grant donors[160]. Additionally, projects that could be associated with the "We, the Others" exhibition are listed in Annex 8. However, as previously mentioned, this project was never realised, but it demonstrates the intention of the Council of Europe to continue the art exhibition series initiative.

CHAPTER III: Three cases studies

The following chapter will focus on three exhibitions organised under the auspices of the Council of Europe at the end of the 1980s and during the 1990s. The selection of these three exhibitions is based on the period in which they took place, the themes they explored, and the organisational methods employed. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent inclusion of a large number of Eastern European states into the Council of Europe redefined the geopolitical and social balance of the continent. During this period, many Eastern European countries sought to redefine their identity, also looking at history and art history, just as Europe had to redefine its identity as a result of these changes. It is no coincidence that these three exhibitions specifically address the relationship between society and art, as well as the concepts of democracy and freedom. These three exhibitions are characterised by three very complex scientific projects that tackled these topics from a transnational perspective. Indeed, national events (such as the commemorations of the French Revolution and the Swiss Confederation, or the nationalisms of dictatorships) become tools for analyzing the broader European context and its responses to these events. From a historical and

[160] Ibid.

museographic point of view, they are important cultural events that open up research to new perspectives.

The first exhibition *The French Revolution and Europe,* was opened on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the French Revolution. However, the celebration of an anniversary is no longer considered a purely national occasion, but is interpreted in the European scenario, in dialogue with European countries. Furthermore, 1989 is also the date of the fall of the Berlin Wall, a moment that will open a new phase in European and world history.

The second exhibition, *Emblems of Liberty – the Image of the Republic in Art* focuses on the concepts of freedom only possible in the republic and coincides with the celebration of the 700th anniversary of the Confederation and the 800th anniversary of the founding of the federal city of Bern. Therefore, this exhibition not only commemorates a historical event, but also aligns with the trend of promoting civil and democratic values through art.

Finally, the latest exhibition *Art and Power. Europe Under the Dictators 1930 1945,* opened in occasion of the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, also wants to promote democratic values in stark contrast to the dictatorships that were established in Europe during that period. In addition, it explores the complex relationship between power and art, highlighting how art was wielded as a tool of propaganda by many governments and, conversely, as a means of resistance by numerous artists. Notably, this exhibition was the second (after the 22nd Art Exhibition – *From Viking to Crusader – Scandinavia and Europe 800 – 1200*, Paris, Berlin, Copenhagen, 1992 – 1993) in the series organised under the auspices of the Council of Europe to tour multiple cities, including London, Berlin, and Barcelona. This touring exhibition model set a precedent for future series, highlighting the substantial organisational and diplomatic efforts necessary to foster dialogue between diverse cultural institutions and member states.

3.1 *La Révolution française et l'Europe*, Paris, 1989

Ill. 2 *The French Revolution and Europe* exhibition poster

A set of celebrations were organised for the French Revolution's bicentenary, among them the Council of Europe's 20th exhibition entitled *The French revolution and Europe*. This was the third exhibition organised in France under the auspices of the Council of Europe, following the exhibition *The sources of the 20th century* in 1960 and *Gothic art in Europe* in 1968. The commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the revolution in 1889 had not been celebrated with much commitment, in a mostly monarchical Europe, much worse was the commemoration of the 150th anniversary, which coincided with the beginning of the Second World War and the triumph of dictatorships[161]. Therefore, this anniversary was of enormous importance, because it was an opportunity to truly celebrate the French Revolution not only as a national event, but to interpret it from a new perspective and analyse it as a historical event that changed international balances. Indeed, this exhibition, as well as the last two organised by the Council of Europe (*The Portuguese Discoveries and Renaissance Europe*, Lisbon 1982; and *Christian IV and Europe*, Copenhagen, 1988) is part of the trend to reinterpret a historical episode in the light of its transnational and European importance.

Another distinctive aspect of this exhibition is the focus on human rights and the revolutionary values of "*liberté, égalité, fraternité*", which originated from the

[161] Lang J., *Preface*, Exh. cat. *La Révolution Française et l'Europe : 1789-1799, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 1989, 1 Introduction générale ; l'Europe à la veille de la Révolution*. Paris : Ed. De la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1989, pp. XV. – XVII.

Enlightenment. This important focus, difficult to translate into an exhibition due to its abstract nature, is not only crucial for fully understanding the revolutionary period, but it also seems entirely appropriate considering that the organisation is entrusted to the Council of Europe, a promoter of human rights and democracy.

The exhibition aims to framing a very broad political and social context and to analyse the visual arts of a very broad period. The path of the exhibition is divided into three sections: "Europe on the eve of the Revolution", "Episodes from the Revolution", and "The Revolution as a Creative Force", which in turn are divided into further subsections as we shall see in the following paragraphs. Thus, the exhibition covers not only the ten years preceding the storming of the Bastille, but also the period from the pre-revolutionary period to Napoleon's rise to power.

As Jack Lang states in the catalogue's preface, artistic creations are "the best mirrors of the spirit and passions of an era.[162]" In order to understand the spirit of the time, the organising committee requested a loan of 1140 works of art from both French and foreign museums and collections[163]. More precisely, 450 artworks had been borrowed from 150 foreign institutions including the USA and the USSR[164]. This choice was made to provide an international perspective on a historical event that had repercussions abroad, as evidenced by many works from England and other countries. However, providing a European perspective on the revolution becomes particularly difficult when considering the ten years following the event, during which a rift occurred between France and the other European countries. The international and European emphasis desired by the curators is certainly a distinctive feature of the exhibitions organised by the Council of Europe, but it was also a strategic choice, allowing this exhibition to stand out from the numerous cultural events organised to mark the bicentennial of the revolution, taking place in the same period and sometimes in the same city. Moreover, an exhibition exclusively devoted to the French context would not only have been very similar to the others but would have ended up

[162] Ibid., p. XVII.
[163] The French revolution and Europe, 1st Jenuary 1989, Strasbourg, the archives of the Council of Europe, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809b4f80
[164] Report on the meeting of the Group of Consultants on Council of Europe Art Exhibitions, 56th Session (24th meeting as a Steering Committee, 20-23 June 1989, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CDCC(89)23, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809adf7b

duplicating the collection present at the Carnavalet Museum in Paris, which houses the most important collection on the French Revolution[165].

This enormous project was made possible by a collaboration between the Council of Europe, the Réunion des *Musées Nationaux* (RMN) and the French Ministry of Culture. For the organisation, the *Comité d'organisation Européen* and the *Comité Scientifique* were created, boasting the directors of Europe's major museums, superintendents and conservation directors, and lectures. Another key contributor to the exhibition was the National Centre for Pedagogical Documentation in Paris (CNDP), which collaborated on the production of a film aimed at boosting sponsorship efforts, with no commercial intent[166]. In addition, numerous cultural and museum institutions in different countries collaborated. The exhibition, being also part of the bicentennial celebrations of the French Revolution, was supported by significant government funding and various private sponsors and international cultural institutions, listed in the catalogue. In total, the costs amounted to around 8 billion francs (excluding the custodians). Of this, 1.3 million francs was provided by the Council of Europe and 500,000 francs by the Association of Patrons of the Bicentenary Celebrations of the French Revolution[167].

Meeting documents show the considerable international commitment to the organisation of the exhibition. The first meeting of the European Organising Committee was attended by representatives of France, Great Britain, Germany, Switzerland, Portugal, Belgium, Turkey, Sweden, Austria, Ireland, Luxembourg and Denmark. The absence of Spain, Italy, Greece and the Netherlands was noted in the

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[165] Gaborit J. R., *Avant-Propos*, Exh. cat. *La Révolution Française et l'Europe : 1789-1799, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 1989, 1 Introduction générale ; l'Europe à la veille de la Révolution*. Paris : Ed. De la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1989, pp. XVIII. – XX;
Report, 20th Council of Europe Art Exhibition, the French Revolution and Europe, Paris, 1989, 1st meeting of the European Organizing Committee, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, 16-17 February 1987, DECS/EXPO(87)2, p. 8, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809c4a89

[166] Meeting report, 58th Session (26th meeting as a Steering Committee), 19-22 June 1990, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CDCC(90)17, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809d71e1
Report on the meeting of the Group of Consultants on Council of Europe Art Exhibitions, 56th Session (24th meeting as a Steering Committee, 20-23 June 1989, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CDCC(89)23, p. 8, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809adf7b

[167] Report on the meeting of the Group of Consultants on Council of Europe Art Exhibitions, 56th Session (24th meeting as a Steering Committee, 20-23 June 1989, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CDCC(89)23, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809adf7b

report of the meeting[168]. Regret was expressed for the absence of Italy, as the country had played a significant role in the dynamics of the French Revolution and many Italian collections hold works from the period in question. The speeches from Belgium and Switzerland were particularly interesting, especially the criticism of the subsequently abandoned concept of sister republics, which excluded Belgium as a department. Denmark also attracted attention, as many French artists resided there during the Revolution. Turkey pointed out that the principles of the Revolution were the basis of the Young Turks and their 1876 manifesto and constitution. In addition, it was evident that synergies between different experts were crucial for the cooperation between the different member states. For example, Mr. Bott, representing Germany, presented the exhibition he was organising, entitled *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity - 200 Years of the French Revolution in Germany*, at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg, to provide interesting insights for the Council of Europe event[169].

3.1.1 Europe on the eve of the Revolution

It would not be possible to understand the French Revolution in its entirety without examining the period preceding the revolutionary events. For this reason, the exhibition begins with a detailed analysis of the pre-revolutionary period divided into eleven subsections to give a complete picture of the social and political context of Europe before 1789.

1. Political power
2. The aristocracy and the ruling classes
3. Protected manufactures
4. Rural World
5. Urban society
6. The Europe of Lights

[168] Report, 20th Council of Europe Art Exhibition, the French Revolution and Europe, Paris, 1989, 1st meeting of the European Organizing Committee, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, 16-17 February 1987, DECS/EXPO(87)2, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809c4a89

[169] Report, 20th Council of Europe Art Exhibition, the French Revolution and Europe, Paris, 1989, 1st meeting of the European Organizing Committee, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, 16-17 February 1987, DECS/EXPO(87)2, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809c4a89

7. Science and Knowledge
8. Manufactures and technical progress
9. The movement of ideas at the end of the 18th century
10. New themes in visual arts
11. The precedents of the revolutionary movement

The curators decided to open the exhibition with a focus on the society before the French Revolution, examining aristocratic, agricultural and urban society. The first gallery showcased a series of portraits and representations of court life, as European politics was dominated by sovereigns and their courts before the French Revolution. This initial hall illustrated both the prestige of monarchical institutions and their relatively archaic nature. Alongside the artworks, a selection of precious objects and items from the daily lives of the privileged classes illustrated their taste for luxury and refinement. In contrast, the following gallery focused on agricultural society, a dominant segment of the population at that time. Everyday objects, including plows and works tools, were on display, offering insight into the daily life of farmers. A third gallery explored urban society, which was undergoing significant changes. This part featured city views, plans and architectural perspectives of European capitals[170]. The role of women and the representation of domestic environments is also given attention, as we see in the works *Woman Sitting in the Kitchen* attributed to Jacques Sablet or *The Tailors' Shop* by Antoine Raspal in Arles. This curatorial approach allowed visitors to fully understand the period through both visual art and daily life objects.

Subsequently, there is a succession of micro-topics that contribute to the comprehensive understanding of such a broad topic, including the centrality of the sciences, a room in which the *Encyclopédie*, maps, botanical plates, scientific instruments, models of monuments and machines are displayed[171]. Special emphasis is also placed on textile manufactures, such as wallpaper, as the revolt of the workers at the Révillon factory in Paris was one of the events that set the revolutionary process in motion[172].

[170] Ibid., p. 121.
[171] Ibid., p. 179.
[172] Ibid., p. 235

One of the last galleries of the first section was dedicated to the new themes in the fine arts, an important topic for a later understanding of the development of the revolutionary arts. The pre-revolutionary arts reflected both public tastes and the artistic policy of the monarchy, according to which works were to offer examples of heroism and civic virtue from ancient and contemporary history, somewhat anticipating later moods[173]. Such *exempla virtutis* were encouraged by the French monarchy itself, and in particular by D'Angiviller, appointed Director general of the king's palaces by Louis XVI in 1774. However, it is difficult not to read these representations as criticism of the monarchy and a prelude to future events. The most emblematic example is David's *Oath of the Horatii* presented in the Salon of 1785, which became the very symbol of love of country and civic devotion. In this section, it was possible to compare David's works, including *the Oath of the Horatii* in the form of a painted sketch loaned to the Louvre, to porcelain works such as the porcelain group by Paul-Loius Cyfflé and Konrad Linck[174].

3.1.2 Episodes from the Revolution

For the beginning of the second section, it was necessary to create a break with what was shown above. From the musicographic and architectural point of view, the galleries of the second section are described by critics as brighter and more spacious, an effect sought by the curators themselves to emphasize the brutal change brought about by revolutionary events[175].

The first gallery is evocative because it exhibits the remnants left by revolutionary iconoclasm, represented not only through paintings and graphics, but also brought directly into the hall through fragments of equestrian statues of Louis XIV, Louis XV and Henry IV, as well as a fallen bust of Louis XVI. Following this powerful introduction, the exhibition unfolds into ten subsections, where the Revolution is meticulously analysed in all its aspects, not only artistic but also historical and social.

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[173] Mucius Scaevola, Regulus, Manlius Torquatus, the Horatii were almost mythical historical characters in the artworks of the time. Other central themes were the victims of tyrants, such as Belisarius and Miltiades, as well as the sacrifices of the heroines of antiquity, such as Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, and the Roman women who gave up their treasures for the good of the state.

[174] Ibid., pp. 291-297.

[175] Nochlin L., From the Archives: Fragments of a Revolution, "Art in America", October 1989. https://www.artnews.com/art-in-america/features/from-the-archives-fragments-of-a-revolution-63178/

The second section consists of ten subsections:

1. The first events and the storming of the Bastille
2. The fall of the monarchy and the death of the king
3. The struggle for power
4. Emigration
5. The foreign war
6. The all-religious struggle
7. The internal war
8. Propaganda and counter-propaganda
9. War through images
10. The involvement of artists

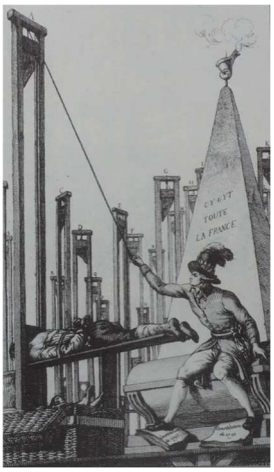
In developing this section, the curators faced the challenge of determining the start date of the French Revolution. Options included the "Day of the Tiles" in Grenoble (7 June 1788), the meeting of the States General on 5 May, The Tennis Court Oath – a moment the curators considered an ideal starting point, had they been able to acquire David's unfinished canvas, which unfortunately could not be moved. Instead, this event is represented in the exhibition by a drawing from Monnet. Ultimately, 14 July 1789, the day of the storming of the Bastille, was chosen due to its powerful significance, even though similar uprisings were common during those years[176]. The curators decided to explore this topic through graphic arts, despite the Bastille theme being widely represented in ceramics and textile prints as well[177].

The common element of the second section is the sense of destruction that revolutionary events leave behind them. A necessary tool used to destroy and kill those who were against the revolution was the guillotine, which we find depicted in a number

[176] The storming of the Bastille, a royal prison in Paris, was viewed as an act of rebellion against the absolute power of the monarchy and a symbol of the French people's struggle for freedom and rights, so July 14 has great historical significance. Even though the Bastille only housed a small number of prisoners, its collapse dealt the king a fatal blow. This incident turned into a potent emblem of uprising and political transformation. But in the years preceding the Revolution, such revolts and upheavals were not uncommon.

[177] Exh. cat. *La Révolution Française et l'Europe : 1789-1799, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 1989, 1 Introduction générale ; l'Europe à la veille de la Révolution*. Paris : Ed. De la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1989, p. 375.

of works including an anonymous satirical drawing. In the centre, Robespierre is depicted in a surreal landscape of guillotines as he decapitates the executioner. Next to it, a memorial pyramid bears the phrase "here lies all France".



Ill. 3 Anonymous engraving, *Robespierre himself guillotining the executioner who has finally succeeded in guillotining every last Frenchman*, 18th century, inches, Musée Carnavalet, Paris

Ill. 4 James Gillray, *Un petit souper à la Parisienne*, 1792, etching, British Museum, London

In the subsection "Propaganda and counter-propaganda", the curators had grouped a series of satirical works by theme and not by their political party. Some of the themes were: the two-faced character, the descent into hell, the severed head, the fat and the thin. Drawings, caricatures and images representing emblematic events were exhibited as well, such as the abolition of feudalism by the National Assembly and the execution of Louis XVI[178]. In "the War of Image" section, the sense of revolutionary destruction is harshly criticised by anti-revolutionary propaganda, as represented by *Un petit souper à la Parisienne* by the English satirical author James

[178] Ibid., p. 557.

Gillray. This is a grotesque scene in which revolutionary sans-culottes indulge in violent cannibalism[179].

The religious theme is also addressed here, as the French Revolution gradually became an anti-religious campaign as well. To represent this conflicting relationship, objects from clandestine Catholic worship were displayed alongside objects from the church of the *prêtres-jureurs* (priests who had sworn loyalty to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy)[180].

Ill. 5 Jean-Baptiste Regnault, *Freedom or death,* 1794/95, oil on canvas, Hamburger Kunsthalle

The final theme of the second section explores the political commitment of artists, actively involved in promoting revolutionary values[181]. One notable work from the third section is Jean-Baptiste Regnault's painting *The genius of France between freedom and death*, awarded at the 1795 Salon. This neoclassical style painting hides behind its apparent absence of disturbance, the strong contrasts of hope and despair of the revolutionary period. The centrality of this artwork is highlighted by its selection for one of the exhibition's promotional posters. The artwork represents France's

[179] The profusion of prints was possible thanks to the freedom granted to publishers from 1789 to 1799, creating a real war of both pro-revolution and anti-revolution propaganda images. The abundance of anti-revolutionary royalist and English prints convinced the *Comité de Salut public* (Committee of Public Safety) to commission its own caricatures to spread the values of the French Revolution instead. Jacque-Louis David was charged with producing as many engravings and caricatures as possible to respond to the propaganda of the opponents of the revolution. Ibid., p. 567.
[180] Ibid., p. 523.
[181] Ibid., p. 605.

precarious condition during the revolution, balanced between hope for a brighter future and the fear of anarchy and tyranny. At the center stands the Genius of France, between Liberty (on the right, representing the revolutionary ideals of emancipation, equality and fraternity) and Death (on the left, symbolizing violence and destruction), which we can interpret according to a double interpretation. Death and destruction represent in the eyes of revolutionaries what would happen if the revolution were not carried forward; however, destruction is also the direct consequence of the revolution itself. In addition, three figures flu above planet earth, a symbol not to be underestimated, because it represents the international impact of the revolution[182].

3.1.3 The Revolution as a Creative Force

The third section is in turn composed of nine subsections:

1. Human rights
2. Trial Constitution
3. The administrative organisation of France and the sister republics
4. The revolutionary party
5. Science and Revolution
6. The reform of metrology
7. Public education
8. The revolution and cultural heritage
9. Artistic creation under the revolution

As we can understand from the titles of the subsections, this third part wants to emphasise the creative character of the revolution, which is not only a moment of destruction and of antithesis, but also of thesis, in other words, of creation of values and ideals. The Declaration of Human Rights is one of the products of the creative revolution, which also contributed to the creation of a new iconography. The curators faced another challenge, namely bringing on display the abstract values declared in the

[182] In fact, the French Revolution had a much more important political impact than previous ones. Furthermore, the strong contrast between the two figures on the right and left can be explained in light of the context in which it was created. Regnault began this painting at the end of the year 1793, during the so-called revolutionary government of terror, marked by political instability and the reorganisation of the revolutionary government. Ibid., p. 624.

Declaration of Human Rights through artworks, such as Regnault's painting *the Allegory of the Declaration of Human Rights*, rich in symbolism and references to the iconography of Roman mythology[183]. The result of the French Revolution is also the scientific and metric system, as well as the right to public education and literacy, concretised in Article 22 of the *Declaration of Human Rights* of 1793: "Education is the need of all. Society must favour public reason with all its strength and put education within the reach of all citizens.[184]" However, it was a project too ambitious to make it possible at the time.

Ill. 6 Jean-Baptiste Renault, *The allegory of the Declaration of Human Rights*, 1790, oil on canvas, Musée Lambinet, Versailles

The following subsection sheds light on lesser-known aspects of the revolution, such as the relationship between "The Revolution and Cultural Heritage", as opposed to revolutionary vandalism and iconoclasm. Indeed, the revolution is characterised by its contrasting aspects, which the exhibition attempts to bring to light. While many artworks belonging to or depicting the *ancien regime* were destroyed, many institutions to preserve cultural heritage were created[185].

[183] Minerva, seated on the threshold of the temple of liberty, completes the drafting of the Declaration of Human Rights. Prudence and justice advise her and Hercules helps France, seated on the throne, to place on a pedestal a bust of Louis XVI, contemplated by Commerce and Abundance, at whose feet is represented the Genius of the Arts. Ibid., p. 647-648.

[184] Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen from the Constitution of Year I, 1793. https://www.columbia.edu/~iw6/docs/dec1793.html

[185] The revolutionary governments led to the creation of numerous museums and directly intervened in the visual arts by awarding artists. The intention was not only to support revolutionary artists, but also to preserve some artistic genres while discouraging others. However, heritage conservation was obviously understood differently than today. Many works were expelled and imported to France from other countries (masterpieces from Flanders, Germany, Italy, just to mention a few) to create a central museum, a kind of universal artistic encyclopedia, which obviously had to be on French territory. This policy would only be completed under Napoleon, when many convents and towns in Italy were expelled following the suppression of religious orders and military campaigns. From 1793 onwards, the

The exhibition concludes with a focus on revolutionary art, which, as mentioned above, stands in continuity with pre-revolutionary art in terms of style and themes, mostly drawn from ancient history. We can notice that curators concluded the three sections in a circular way. After a thorough analysis of the period in question and society, each section culminates with a focus on the visual arts. Revolutionary art tried to combine a neo-classical taste with the pathetic and emotional power of pre-Romantic and Baroque art to represent themes from antiquity, which were already part of pre-revolutionary art. it is a complex art, as individualism and patriotism intertwine, as well as reason and the irrational. In the introduction, Herding emphasises that the secret power and strength of the plastic arts is to "[...] offer what reason seemed to reject, namely, to give the emotions a place in a rational society[186]". The ambiguity and contradictory nature of revolutionary art, which is often interpreted as a lack of harmony, is actually the hallmark of this art, as Klaus Herding points out[187]. A dominant figure among the artists was certainly Jacque-Louis David, not only an artistic exponent, but also a member of the Robespierrist Convention. His political positions limited his artistic production to a few paintings, some unfinished, such as *The tennis court Oath*[188], which, as said before, was not on display due to restation reasons. As Commissioner General Jean-René Gaborit points out, the exhibition faces numerous difficulties and obstacles, including the lack of many artworks and the numerous similar events for the bicentenary of the revolution[189]. For example, the exhibition dedicated to Jacques-Louis David prevented the loan of *Death of Marat*, so the replica preserved at the Musée de Versailles was displayed[190]. Moreover, art historian Klaus Herding points out that the short duration of revolutionary events is

revolutionary government promoted ad hoc competitions, in particular the Year II competition required artists to depict the glorious moments of the Revolution, thus encouraging the expression of patriotic devotion and enthusiasm for the new ideologies and values. Exh. cat. *La Révolution Française et l'Europe : 1789-1799, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 1989, 1 Introduction générale ; l'Europe à la veille de la Révolution*. Paris : Ed. De la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1989, p. 811.

[186] Ibid., p. XXIII.

[187] Ibid., p. XIV.

[188] Ibid., p. 823.

[189] Gaborit J. R., *Avant-Propos*, Exh. cat. *La Révolution Française et l'Europe : 1789-1799, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 1989, 1 Introduction générale ; l'Europe à la veille de la Révolution.* Paris : Ed. De la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1989.

[190] Report, 20th Council of Europe Art Exhibition, the French Revolution and Europe, Paris, 1989, 1st meeting of the European Organizing Committee, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, 16-17 February 1987, DECS/EXPO(87)2, p. 8, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809c4a89

incompatible with the long duration of artistic production, making revolutionary works rare. For this reason and because of the rarity of these works, canvases under restoration were displayed at the exhibition[191]. In this last section, the winning artists of the competitions were exhibited: not only David and Houdon, but also artists less known to the public. However, critics point out that this room was not well explained by panels and inscriptions, but the catalogue contains essays on salons and revolutionary competitions by experts such as Régis Michel. Finally, the exhibition ends with 18 Brumaire and Napoleon Bonaparte's rise to power. From this moment on, a military government was instituted based on the power of the consul, which would undo many of the innovations of the Revolution[192].

3.1.4 Reviews

Art historian Linda Nochlin publishes a detailed and critical review of the exhibition as a whole and identifies its main message, namely the paradox inherent in revolutionary visual arts: "Creation as well as destruction were part of the revolutionary project[193]." On the one hand, the exhibition has been criticized as a failure due to its lack of clear communication, overwhelming amounts of material, as well as a lack of political impact. On the other hand, Nochlin views the exhibition as a success, highlighting the extensive scholarly art-historical research that it generated. As evidenced by the catalogue, this research provides a valuable resource for future art-historical studies, offering rich insights into the art of that period not only in France but across Europe. The virtue and failure of the exhibition is its breadth and variety of material, which contributed to the definition of revolution as a totalising concept and not just limited to France. It was therefore necessary to educate the visitor, rather than overwhelm him or her with the excessive material before which the curators remained silent, as Nochlin writes. However, to cope with this complexity, a didactic section

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[191] Herding K., *Utopie Concrète à l'èchelle Mondiale: L'Art de la Révolution*, Exh. cat. *La Révolution Française et l'Europe : 1789-1799, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 1989, 1 Introduction générale ; l'Europe à la veille de la Révolution*. Paris : Ed. De la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1989, pp. XXII.

[192] Exh. cat. *La Révolution Française et l'Europe : 1789-1799, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 1989, 1 Introduction générale ; l'Europe à la veille de la Révolution*. Paris : Ed. De la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1989, p. 911.

[193] Nochlin L., From the Archives: Fragments of a Revolution, "Art in America", October 1989. https://www.artnews.com/art-in-america/features/from-the-archives-fragments-of-a-revolution-63178/

was created, separate from the main body of the exhibition, to help visitors understand the complex chronological sequence of the main events[194].The problems posed by the Revolution are explained through contemporary works selected by a committee of specialists appointed by the 22 member states of the Council of Europe, to the exclusion of any retrospective representation or reconstitution.

In general, the criticism is harsh: Nochlin describes the first section as a series of dark, barely comprehensible rooms, where everyday objects are placed next to works of art without being accompanied by a written explanation. The subsequent galleries are more spacious and brighter, but lack coherence and explanation, making it difficult to understand such a complex subject as the French Revolution, made geographically broader by its relation to Europe and much more complex by its many sections and subsections. Nichlin notes a huge gap between the confusion of the exhibition and the clarity and richness of the catalogue, where many of the doubts created by the exhibition route are answered. However, she points out the enormous size of the catalogue, divided into three volumes, weighing almost ten and a half kilos and priced at 400 francs (about 60 euros).

The most criticised sections are the one dedicated to the rural world, hardly distinguishable from the previous ones dedicated in turn to the aristocracy and the production of luxury objects wanted by the state. In this section, ploughs, scythes and salt mills were displayed without any explanation, as if an everyday object did not need to be historically framed in an exhibition.

Specifically, the first section shows many weak points due to the lack of more concrete explanations. One of the most difficult moments for the average visitor to understand, who risks a superficial understanding of the theme, is the room devoted to Enlightenment and pre-Romantic thought on the irrational. The former is presented through a semicircle of busts of Voltaire, Rousseau and Diderot, and the latter by exhibiting the engravings of Swedenborg and Lavate yet translating complex thoughts into an exhibition requires the aid of explanatory texts and more material for cultural mediation.

[194] The French revolution and Europe, 1st Jenuary 1989, Strasbourg, the Archives of the Council of Europe, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809b4f80

On the contrary, historian Pascal Dupuy praises both the exhibition, as one of the most important events of 1989, and the catalogue, which highlights the iconographic changes of the revolutionary period. The great novelty of the exhibition is the analysis not only of the revolutionary decade, but especially of the pre-revolutionary one, creating a visual inventory that foreshadows the revolutionary events. It also provides a comprehensive overview of the political, artistic and cultural engagement of artists during the revolution. Dupuy emphasises the extraordinary effort by the curators in bringing together original visual sources to give the revolution an international accent, especially in the first two sections[195].

In conclusion, we can certainly claim the enormous international effort that went into the realisation of the project based on enormous scientific research by numerous international experts, as the three volumes of the catalogue demonstrate. Furthermore, as emphasised in the previous paragraphs, the exhibition had to cope with numerous limitations, including the many exhibitions on the same theme that took place simultaneously all over the world. In England, at the same time as the Council of Europe exhibition, an exhibition entitled *British Portrayals of the French Revolution* was planned, which would highlight the representation of the French Revolution in British culture. In addition, another exhibition dedicated to Wright of Derby, a significant artist for the section on industrial society, was planned. In Switzerland, the Musée Historique in Lausanne was hosting an exhibition on the relationship between Switzerland and the French Revolution. Shortly afterwards, an exhibition dedicated to the *Architects of Liberty* was to be held in Paris, focusing mainly on French architecture of the revolutionary period[196]. However, it is interesting to note how the national commemoration used in previous centuries as an expedient to exalt national identity, here becomes an opportunity to reinterpret national history in the light of international influence and its consequences, including contemporary ones.

[195] Dupuy, P., *Iconographie, gravure satirique et Révolution française*, in *La Révolution à l'œuvre*, edited by J.-C. Martin, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2005. https://doi.org/10.4000/books.pur.16054
[196] Report, 20th Council of Europe Art Exhibition, the French Revolution and Europe, Paris, 1989, 1st meeting of the European Organizing Committee, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, 16-17 February 1987, DECS/EXPO(87)2, p. 8, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809c4a89

3.2 *Emblémes de la liberté. L'image de la République dans l'art*, Bern, 1991

Ill. 7 The exhibition poster of *Emblems of Liberty. The Image of the Republic in Art from the 16th to the 20th Century*

The 21st exhibition, entitled *Emblems of Liberty. The Image of the Republic in Art from the 16th to the 20th Century*, held under the auspices of the Council of Europe, aims to display the ways in which republican freedoms and values have been represented in art and how they have evolved throughout European history[197]. The Swiss proposed the theme to the Council of Europe in 1986 and the exhibition took place in Switzerland, which for the first time hosted a Council of Europe exhibition, in 1991, the year of the 700th anniversary of the Confederation and the 800th anniversary of the founding of the federal city of Bern. Unlike the exhibition analysed above, it seems to be a mere coincidence that the exhibition was held on the occasion of these anniversaries, as the catalogue reports[198]. As in the previous exhibition, a purely national event is once again interpreted from a European perspective; in fact, the introduction to the catalogue emphasises Switzerland's central role in contributing to the integration of the various countries of the European continent[199].

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[197] Report - 2nd meeting of the European Organising committee for the 21st Council of Europe art exhibition on *Emblems of Liberty – Images of the republic in 16th-20th century art* (Bern, 19/20 March 1990), 19 April 1990, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, DECS/EXPO (90) 3 CH https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809d8019

[198] Cotti F., *Préface*, *Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, p. IX.

[199] De Capitani F., *Introduction*, *Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991.

The initial title of this project was *The Image of the Republic*, understood as the representations of the republic and the images produced in a republic. However, the curators' intentions were to exhibit the artistic expressions of republican ideals up to the 20th century, instead of limiting themselves to the art of the republics of the *Ancien Régime*. For this reason, *The Image of the Republic* became a subtitle, giving priority to *Emblems of Liberty*, as it allowed for a broader interpretation[200]. Indeed, by the 19th and 20th centuries, the concept of the republic was well established and encompassed different forms of government, no longer constituting an expressly central theme in the fine arts. Whereas the struggle for individual freedom and that of an entire people had motivated the triumph of the concept of the republic in Europe and the United States of America. Thus, the title *Emblems of Freedom* was added.

The title raised problems during a meeting with the Council of Europe Art Exhibitions advisory group, as it was considered misleading. In fact, "'emblems' were not considered 'art' and 'pictures' were not considered 'painting'.[201]" This could create difficulties in international loan, as such the title would suggest a very general history exhibition, but museums give priority to art history exhibitions of scientific relevance with a clear research project[202]. In addition, other issues arose for example, the choice of Goya, who cannot be defined as a republican artist, and Venetian processions, which are more aristocratic than republican. In addition, the consultants recommended limiting the reference period to the artistic production between the French Revolution and 1848. However, these suggestions were not fully heeded.

From a museological point of view, the exhibition was divided into two parts, one exhibited at the History Museum and the other at the museum of Fine Arts in Bern, as can be seen from the plans.

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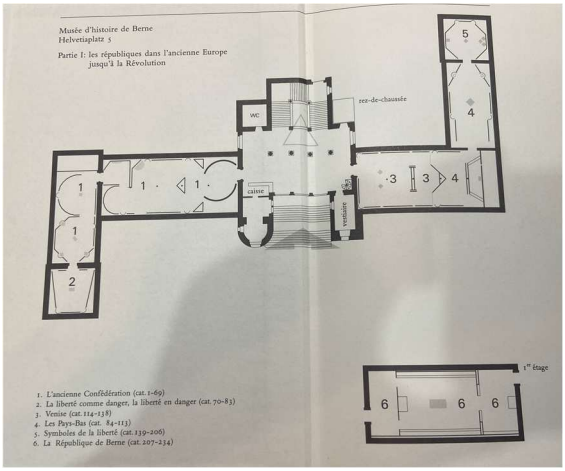
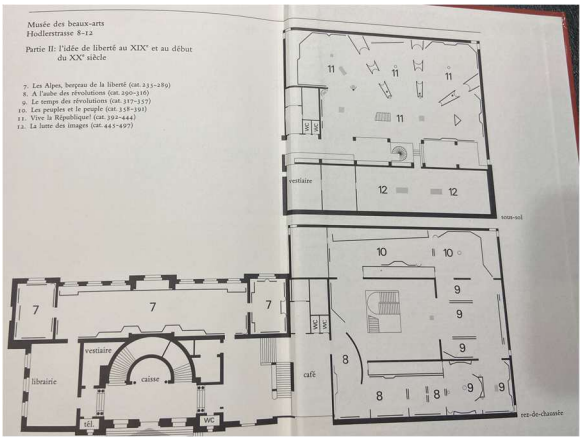
[200] Von Tavel H. C., *Avant-propos*, *Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, p. XIX.

[201] Report on the meeting of the Group of Consultants on Council of Europe Art Exhibitions, 56th Session (24th meeting as a Steering Committee, 20-23 June 1989, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CDCC(89)23, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809adf7b

[202] Ibid.



Ill. 8 Plan of the Bern History Museum



Ill. 9 Plan of the Bern Museum of Fine Arts

In the exhibition path, the visitor encounters both representations of the republic and images of revolutionary struggles to have a republican state or for the liberation of a people, although these struggles often led to tragic consequences and few times to the lasting establishment of political freedom.

Given the broadness of the topic, the curators attempt to set temporal and geographical limits to explore the link between freedom and republic. Although the republican form of state was created in antiquity and became the object of study of numerous philosophers of the Enlightenment, the curators decided to focus on European republics from the modern age onwards, renouncing the art of ancient republics and Italian city-states of the late Middle Ages. Indeed, the oldest artwork on display is the cycle of stained-glass windows depicting the coats of arms of the ten

confederate cantons and the city of Baden, realised around 1490 by the Zurich master glassmaker Lukas Zeiner for the town hall of the Federal Diet in Baden, a body that regularly brought together the envoys of the cantons whose alliances formed the Confederation[203].

The exhibition begins this excursus on the representation of the republic with the founding myth of Switzerland's origins, namely the Rütli oath, taken by the cantons of Schwyz, Uri and Nidwald when they united to defend their freedoms in 1291. In addition to Switzerland, the exhibition celebrates other examples of European republics, such as the Republic of Venice and the United Provinces of Netherlands, by displaying portraits of Grand Councils, Assemblies, and their citizens. The first part of the exhibition ends by bringing the focus back to Switzerland, tracing the history of its cantonal republics, and particularly the city-state of Bern, the most powerful of all, which became a republic in 1648. The second section opens by illustrating the theme "The Alps, Cradle of Freedom in Europe", showing works depicting Alpine mountains landscapes, a symbol of freedom and discovery for many Swiss artists. The following galleries show contemporary works of art in which artists have tried to shape the concept of freedom in Europe and the world. Initially, the curators considered displaying artworks from Dada movement, which would have underscored another Swiss myth –its historical neutrality – since the Dada movement emerged during the First World War in the neutral territory of Zurich. However, the curators ultimately chose not to focus on Dada, as doing so would have shifted the emphasis to the broader theme of artistic freedom, diverging from the project's focus on political freedoms in republics.

The exhibition project was directed by the team of experts headed by Swiss art historian Hans Christoph von Tavel. The project was made possible thanks to David Mardell and his collaborator Irene Herrenschmidt, the Art Exhibitions Division of the

[203] The Diet of the Swiss Confederation in the 16th century was an itinerant assembly, without a fixed location, that gathered the cantons to discuss common issues. It moved between cities like Lucerne, Zurich, and Basel to maintain a balance of power among the cantons. Baden became an important frequent venue due to its central position and neutrality, especially during the religious tensions of the Reformation. Specifically, this series of stained-glass windows was commissioned from Lukas Zeiner by the Confederate cantons when the Baden Council requested the decoration of the Diet hall's windows with coats of arms, following its reestablishment. It includes the 10 cantons that formed the Confederation in 1500, as well as the city of Baden, which added, at its own expense, a stained-glass window depicting its own coat of arms.

Preservation of Historic Monuments and Cultural Heritage Protection of the Federal Office for Culture in Bern. Georg Germann, director of the Museum of History in Bern, as catalogue manager, François de Capitani as exhibition commissioner, Harry Zaugg and Fritz Bürki as architects, Dario Gamboni as editor and Regina Bühlmann as assistant and Hans Christoph von Tavel as general commissioner[204]. They were accompanied, advised and assisted by a committee of international experts, consisting of representatives from the main lender countries of the Council of Europe and a scientific committee of Swiss experts, as well as a team in charge of finances and public relations[205]. Regarding the financial support, since 1989 the fund ceiling for individual exposures had been raised to 1.5 million francs, as opposed to the previous 1.1 million francs per exposure[206]. Moreover, a significant financial contribution came from the Swiss Confederation, and, notably, the publication of the catalogue (both in French and Germam) was provided also by the Canton of Bern and the City of Bern, lottery funds and the Stanley Thomas Johnson Foundation[207]. Switzerland proposed to the Steering Committee for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC) to organise the exhibition without relying on subsidies from the Special Account, while continuing to provide support. Switzerland also proposed to cover the cost of loaning artworks from Eastern European countries (such as Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary)[208]. As a result, the Steering Committee for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC) supported this exhibition with a grant of 500,000 francs[209].

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[204] Ibid.

[205] Susanne Neeracher and Küngolt Bodmer were in charge of the secrétariat, Hannes Schläfli of the financial administration; Magrit Bütikofer kept the accounts; the preparation of the pedagogical dispositions is the work of Kathrin Butikofer, Thomas Meier, Hans Rudolph Reust and Beat Schüpbach, public relations is managed by Ewa Hess and Atelier Jaquet (berne), from the state of 1990 Markus Landert provided general assistance.

[206] Report on the meeting of the Group of Consultants on Council of Europe Art Exhibitions, 56th Session (24th meeting as a Steering Committee, 20-23 June 1989, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CDCC(89)23, p.8, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809adf7b

[207] Von Tavel H. C., *Avant-propos*, *Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, p. XXIII-XXIV.

[208] However, we are not in possession of a document confirming that this was done.

[209] Meeting report, 58th Session (26th meeting as a Steering Committee), 19-22 June 1990, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CDCC(90)17, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809d71e1 Report, 2nd meeting of the European organising Committee for the 21st Council of Europe art exhibition on "emblems of liberty – images of the republic in 16th – 20 th century art" (Bern, 19/20 march 1990, 23 March 1990, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, DECS/EXPO (90) 3CH Meeting report, 58th Session (26th meeting as a Steering Committee), 19-22 June 1990, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CDCC(90)17, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809d71e1

The loans of the exhibited works were granted by public and private collections located in Germany, Austria and Belgium, Spain and the United States of America, France, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy (with the main participation of Venice - Fondazione scientifica Querini Stampalia, Galleria dell'Accademia, Musei civici di Venezia, such as Ca' Rezzonico, Museo Correr -), the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, San Marino, Switzerland and Russia[210]. This enormous international organisational effort is also explained in the light of the many Eastern European countries that have joined the European Cultural Convention.

3.2.1 First section - Musée d'Histoire

1. The former Confederation
   - The oath
   - Republic among monarchies
   - Holbein and the Great Council in Basel
   - A warlike society
   - National myths
2. Freedom as a danger, freedom in danger
4. The Netherlands
   - Events and portraits
   - Amsterdam City Hall
5. Venice
6. Symbols of freedom
   - Models and interpretations
   - Coins and medals
7. The Republic of Bern
   - The Council Chambers of the Town Hall
   - The city of magistrates

[210] Ibid.

As mentioned before, the curators decided to delve into the history of the republics in the catalogue[211], which demonstrates the deep historical research behind the exhibition, and start the exhibition path from the modern epoque. From a museographic perspective, the first section is divided into two wings: the first consists of the initial two galleries – "The Former Confederation" and "Freedom as a Danger, Freedom in Danger" – which introduce the theme of liberty and the Helvetic Confederation. The second wing covers the other two republics, the Republic of Venice and the Netherlands. Finally, the first-floor hosts three small galleries dedicated to the Republic of Bern.

The first hall, devoted to the Helvetic confederation[212], stands out from the others for the use of circular panels, creating rounded spaces as opposed to the more linear and geometric galleries. The central artwork of the first gallery was Johann Heinrich Füssli's painting *The Rütli Oath* by, created for Zurich City Hall. This iconic work symbolizes the Helvetic Confederation's pursuit of independent and freedom, only possible through the collective responsibility of its citizens[213]. In the same gallery,

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[211] The term republic comes from *res publica*, from the Latin "the public thing", and was originally used to refer to the State and its functions. From the Renaissance onwards, the term was used to refer to states governed by a group (the aristocracy) or by the people as a whole (democracy), although it was often a government combining the two forms. The defining feature of a republic is freedom—citizens' freedom of thought, action, profession, property, and minority rights – safeguarded by the state through laws or implicit consent. Additionally, republics uphold the principle of equality, ensuring that all citizens have equal rights. The ancient republics (just to name a few, Athens, Sparta, Thebes) fought each other until their submission to Rome, which abandoned the republican form for the monarchical form of the Empire. The republic re-emerged in the Middle Ages when city-states claimed autonomy and complete independence from their feudal lords. The first cities to obtain independent republic status were in Italy, such as Siena, Florence, Genoa and Venice. Many of these formed alliances to protect themselves from neighbouring powers, such as the Lombard League, the Spanish Hermandades, the Alsatian Décapole, the alliances of the Swabian, Frankish and Rhine cities, the Hanseatic League and the pacts of the Helvetic Confederation. Von Tavel H. C., *Avant-propos*, *Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, p. XXIII-XXIV.

[212] The Helvetic conferation is based on three systems of alliances: the three rural Waldstätten on the one hand, Zurich and the towns around Lake Constance on the other, and finally Bern and the Burgundian confederation. From the 14th century onwards, a confederation of 13 Cantons and Allies was established against Habsburgs, Savoy and the Duchy of Milan, and conquer the Alpine passes and river routes. From this moment on, the founding myth of William Tell, the destruction of the lordly castles and the memory of the heroic battles of the 14th and 15th centuries began. Legendary Swiss hero William Tell is an example of the fight for liberty and self-determination. According to legend, in the 14th century, when Switzerland was oppressed by the Habsburgs, William Tell refused to bow to the tyrannical Austrian governor Gessler. Tell was made to shoot an arrow through an apple that was placed on his son's head as a form of punishment. Tell killed Gessler after passing the test, which set off a rebellion that resulted in the creation of the Swiss Confederation.

[213] During his stay in Zurich from October 1778 to April 1779, Johann Heinrich Füssli was commissioned to paint *The Rütli Oath* for the city hall. This theme - the secret oath of the founders of

two drafts and an oil study, discovered shortly before the exhibition, were also on display. This was a painting on the back of a cut canvas depicting an incomplete female figure. Thus, the exhibition allowed an unprecedented artistic comparison of these between paintings that preceded the famous work *The Rutly Oath*[214].

Ill. 10 Johann Heinrich, *The Rütli Oath*, 1780-1781, oil on canvas, Kunsthaus Zürich

In this section, the curators decided to display various types of artifacts to explore the theme of emblems. These included stained glass windows, pieces of jewelry, and medals depicting myths. Alongside these, architectural drawings of municipalities were also exhibited to highlight architecture, which became the central art form in the depiction of republican power[215].

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the state to defend ancient civic freedoms and virtues oppressed by aristocratic authorities - follows the common thread of the many frescoes in mediaeval town halls, such as in the municipality of Sienna. Report - 2nd meeting of the European Organising committee for the 21st Council of Europe art exhibition on *Emblems of Liberty – Images of the republic in 16th-20th century art* (Bern, 19/20 March 1990), 19 April 1990, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, DECS/EXPO (90) 3 CH https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809d8019

[214] *Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, p. XXIII-XXIV, pp. 124.127.

[215] The town halls were decorated with sculptures and frescoes representing virtues and historical or biblical figures, reminding officials to act for the common good with fairness and justice, avoiding corruption. The example showed in the exhibition is the Basel City Hall, in which we find the cycle by Hans Holbein the Younger, depicting *exempla virtutis* from the Bible and ancient history. Another emblematic example mentioned by the catalogue, but not showed in the exhibition, is *The Allegory of Good Government* painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti, which reflects the importance of the judiciary for the Republic of Siena. This shows how the legitimisation of the freedom of the republic no longer derived from ancient virtues, but from a new relationship with national history. Fröschl T., *Hotel de Ville et palaisgouvernementaux. L'architecture comme principal moyen d'autoreprésentation des républiques en Europe et en Amérique du Nord du XVI au XX siècle*, *Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de*

The second wing of the museum opens with the Republic of Venice[216], on display through major paintings of the city, celebrating its republic, through portraits of doges, processions and celebrations, and the personification of the city itself. Veronese excelled at portraying the Republic of Venice as an elegant noblewoman of his time. The curators showcased a piece depicting Venice alongside the two pillars of the Venetian state: freedom, symbolised by Hercules, and the sea, represented by Neptune[217]. Additionally, portraits of doges and notable Venetians were exhibited to honor Venice rather than individual figures. Essential to the celebration of the Serenissima were its elaborate official ceremonies, reflecting the intricate internal hierarchies. The depiction of official ceremonies reached its peak in Guardi's works executed on models inspired by Canaletto.

Ill. 11 Paolo Caliari (Il Veronese), *Venice with Hercules and Neptune*, 1570-1575, oil on canvas, Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest

la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, pp. 11-27.

[216] The Republic of Venice remained independent until 1797, when the Treaty of Campoformio dissolved it and ceded its territories to Austria. Venice was one of the most powerful Italian republics, preserving its independence from dominant foreign powers well into modern times. Moreover, Venice held a crucial position in Europe, thriving through trade with the Levant during the Crusades and playing a key role in conflicts against the Ottoman Empire. Its government was a complex system, with the Doge at the top, elected for life by the Maggior Consiglio (consisting of the nobles who decided on legislation and foreign policy) but with limited powers controlled by other governing bodies, including the Senate (consisting of around three hundred members), the Council of Ten (set up to deal with emergencies, responsible for security). While day-to-day politics was managed by the College. It was a closed and conservative system based on mutual control to ensure stability and concentration of power until 1797, when the republic fell.
De Capitani F., Venise, *Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, pp. 263-264.

[217] Caliari Paolo (Veronese), *Venice with Hercules and Neptune*, 1570-1575, oil on canvas, Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, inv. 105. Other central artworks we can find in this gallery are Tintoretto, *Madonna con Bambino e quattro senatori*, Huile sur toile, 1553 and Francesco Guardi, *Le Doge remercie le Grand Conseil*. Huile sur toile.

The exhibition continues with other republic covered by the exhibition, the Netherlands[218]. The exhibition emphasises the importance of the capital, Amsterdam, where the bourgeoisie became the ruling class, overtaking the nobility in political decisions. This was in fact one of the privileged subjects of Flemish art of the republican period, which began to depict scenes from everyday life, often reflecting society and its ideals[219]. The culmination of the celebratory art of the republic can be found in the Amsterdam Town Hall, represented in the exhibition through drawings and prints. It is an exemplary monument for how architecture and the iconographic programme combine with republican ideals, the bourgeoisie and its institutions[220].

This section also has two interesting focuses into two small galleries at the end of the two wings, the one dedicated to "Freedom as Danger - Freedom in Danger" and the one dedicated to "The Symbols of Freedom". The latter presents the iconography of the republic and freedom from Antiquity to the present day through coins, medals and engravings to see the evolution of the representation of freedom[221]. Once the symbols of freedom have been defined, the other room delves into the theme of freedom, both as an endangered ideal and as a negative ideal. In fact, it is only since the 18th century that freedom has been understood in a positive sense, since during the first centuries of the modern era, freedom could only be conceived as submission to a higher order. Any other notion of freedom meant putting the divided order in period, leading to riots and the deterioration of the political and social environment. A

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[218] Initially composed of autonomous cities within the Holy Roman Empire, faced conflict in the 16th century as the rigid absolutism of the Spanish Habsburgs clashed with the Calvinist ideals of freedom. This led to struggles for independence, culminating in the Union of Utrecht in 1579. After the Union of Utrecht in 1579, a monarchical organisation prevailed until it changed into a republic with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, when the separation from the Empire was final. The political situation was very complex and was managed by the States General in agreement with the province of Holland and the numerous hegemonic cities. A bit like the Alps for Switzerland, for the Netherlands the sea played an important role, leading to a prestigious economic development.

[219] De Capitani F., *Les Pays-Bas*, *Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, pp. 221-223.

[220] The town hall is inspired by examples of national history, ancient traditions and the Old Testament, and testifies, like its Helvetic equivalents, to the importance attached to the legitimisation of the state. Artists such as Rembrandt, Bol, Lievens and Flinck collaborated on the decoration of this building, which has been described as the 8th wonder of the world since the 17th century.

[221] Emblems of Roman origin is evoked since the Renaissance, such as the Phrygian cap and fasces. After the French Revolution, new symbols appeared, including the female allegory, a symbol present to this day.

symbolic piece of this gallery is *The project for the monument to the paysans war*, a gravure, by Albrecht Dürer. Although the monument was never realised, Dürer's engraving illustrates the turbulent struggles of the period and the formidable power of the ideas that led to the Peasants' War[222].

The exhibition concludes in a circular way with a focus on Switzerland, in particular the republic of Bern[223], which exemplifies the diverse ways republican identity was represented. Notably, the *Fountain of Justice* depicts judges as subordinate to justice and *the Allegory of Bern* by Joseph Werner represented the city personification. This focus on Bern is particularly insightful, as its development parallels the Italian republics' transitions from feudalism to broader rule and reflects Dutch art influences. The Dutch impact is evident in the Great Council Chamber's iconographic program, which integrates *exempla virtutis* with allegories and national history. In addition, the burgomaster's throne and investiture ceremonies echo Venetian republic, while the portraits of councils and assemblies are inspired by Dutch models[224].

3.2.2 Second section - Musée des Beaux Arts

1. The Alps, cradle of freedom
   - Caspar Wolf, painter of the Alps
   - Landscapes and paysans
   - Haller and Rousseau: discovering nature
   - The Romantic Alps
2. At the dawn of revolutions
   - Visions and symbols
   - Antiquity and civic virtues

[222] The Peasants' War (1524-1525) was a major uprising in the Holy Roman Empire, driven by discontent among peasants over feudal oppression and economic hardships. The peasants asked for social, economic, and religious reforms. However, the conflict was ultimately suppressed, but it highlighted the deep-seated issues of inequality and injustice in the feudal system.

[223] In the Middle Ages, Bern acquired a large territory, becoming a rival to the Habsburgs, Burgundy and Savoy. Later in early modern times it became the most important city-state north of the Alps. Later in early modern times it became the most important city-state north of the Alps.

[224] De Capitani F., *République de Berne*, *Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, pp. 339-340.

Images of society

3. The time of revolutions

   The American revolution

   The French Revolution

   The revolution in Geneva

   Enlightenment and darkness

4. People and people

   1830: a new boom

   1848: Europe at a crossroads

   Freedom and misery

   Breaking with the 20th century: the Russian revolution

   And today?

5. Long live the Republic

   The United States of America

   The French Republics

   The Swiss Confederation

6. The battle of images

   Hogarth

   The Revolution

   The Regeneration

   1848 in Germany

   Daumier

Ill. 12 Picture of the exhibition *Emblémes de la liberté. L'image de la République dans l'art,* at Museum of Fine Arts, Bern

The second section, on show at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, opens with the Alps, a landscape and identity element for Switzerland, which became a symbol of freedom. In the 17th century, mountains were seen as frightening symbols of human imperfection, reflecting a disorder that man had to resolve by following the divine plan. Later, this fear did not disappear but was transformed into a desire to discover nature and a human challenge. The myth of the Alps and Swiss freedom was born, as a symbol of a simple and free society in contrast to the conservative and decadent civilisation of the monarchy and the courts[225]. Thus, the Alps contributed to building the new national identity during the years of the Revolution and at the beginning of the 19th century. The painter who devoted his career to depicting the Alps was the Swiss landscape artist Casper Wolf. He travelled in France, Belgium and Germany, mainly depicting landscapes in a pre-Romantic taste in search of the sublime. His landscapes show a conflicting relationship between infinitely large nature and infinitely small man[226]. Wolf's landscapes are displayed in a corridor on panels with a dynamic surface, in contrast to the opposite wall of the corridor, which is linear. On this linear wall, we find the eighty works presented side by side in three straight rows, titled *Costumes populaires* by Joseph Reinhart.

The next section shows society before the American and French revolutions through portraits and depictions of moments in the everyday life of noble families, as we can see in the works of the Venetian artist Pietro Longhi. The work that par excellence represents the moments before the French revolution is *Oath of the Horatii* by Jacques Louis David, also central to the above exposition. As far as the French Revolution is concerned, a representative work in the exhibition is the model of the Bastille made by Pierre-François Palloy, a rare piece even though many were made at first. While, regarding the American Revolution, we find the portraits of Boston-based

[225] The 1719 novel Robinson Crusoe represents this new relationship with nature, giving rise to the idea that the real danger is not nature, but corrupt civilisation. The idea of unspoilt nature symbolising a perfect society was derived from the ancient ideal of the Golden Age, celebrated by Virgil and Ovid. The Alps became a subject of philosophical and scientific interest for thinkers such as Rousseau and Haller, as they represented a wild landscape where, at the same time, an idealised society lived in harmony with nature.

[226] The painter's relationship with the scientific movement through the intermediary of the naturalist Jakob Samuel Wyttenbach, with whom he took part in numerous expeditions in the company of the Bernese publisher Abraham Wagner, is interesting. De Capitani F., *Les Alpes, berceau de la liberté*, *Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, pp. 381-383.

artist John Singleton Copley. The curators chose to display the model of the Bastille in the center of the hall, not far from a reproduction of the Statue of Liberty, directly comparing the two revolutions[227].

Ill. 13 Picture of the exhibition *Emblémes de la liberté. L'image de la République dans l'art,* at Museum of Fine Arts, Bern

Ill. 14 Picture of the exhibition *Emblémes de la liberté. L'image de la République dans l'art,* at Museum of Fine Arts, Bern

The United States was the first state founded according to modern philosophical principles. Subsequently, the French Revolution caused a total break

[227] During this period, the perception of republican models underwent a significant shift. The Netherlands and the Swiss Confederation, once admired for their republican ideals, were increasingly viewed as outdated and less relevant. In their place, England rose to prominence as the new republican model, achieving political stability through the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the establishment of parliamentary control. De Capitani F., *Les temps des révolutions, Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, pp. 477-482.

with a traditional way of thinking, with the institutions of absolute monarchy and feudal hierarchies[228]. In his essay on revolutions in the catalogue, Capitani emphasizes the profound impact that the revolutions and political upheavals of the late 18th and 19th centuries had on present-day political institutions[229]. This reflection is particularly significant, as exhibitions should help us contemplate both past and our contemporary world to recognize the bridge connecting the past to the present.

From an artistic point of view, this section features neoclassical artworks depicting Enlightenment values of self-determination and reason, alongside works in a romantic style. During this period, in fact, there is also a fascination with the sublime and the depths of human thought. These pre-romantic moods are well represented by the Swiss artist Johann Heinrich Füssli and the Englishman William Blake[230]. The central work in this section is Delacroix's *La Grece sur les ruines de Missolonghi*. The Greek war of independence, fought against the Ottoman Empire from 1821 onwards, shocked European public opinion due to the massacre of the inhabitants of the island of Chios (1822) and the fierce resistance of the city of Missolonghi (1825-1826)[231]. Greece personified in a young woman in national costume who becomes a symbol of freedom and western culture assailed by barbarism. Delacroix will resort to this expedient again in his famous Liberty Leading the People of 1830[232].

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[228] From this moment on, political structures established by divine will were suppressed to establish a human society based on reason and universal human rights. However, if for the supporters of the revolution the republic was the prerequisite for a new and free society, for its opponents it was the image of anarchy and terror. Indeed, Revolutions lead to social transformations and a new concept of the social contract. Rapid population growth, industrialisation and economic development marked European societies. The feeling of nationalism invaded all politics in the 19th century, which was seen as a consequence of the ideals of fraternity, although the hatred between peoples that followed was not conceived by the Enlightenment.

[229] De Capitani F., *A l'aube des révolutions, Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, pp. 443-445.

[230] He is credited with a series of engravings in the four books of poetry dedicated to the continents. The overall tone of the book dedicated to Europe is decidedly pessimistic and views revolution not as a bearer of freedom, but as a destructive force that heralds the final judgment. Indeed, the revolution was followed by widespread disillusionment, as a society of free and equal men was not realised, but new hierarchies were created.

[231] The episode became even more tragic as after the fall of the latter, its last defenders preferred to commit suicide. In France, a campaign for intervention on the side of the Greeks was carried out against liberal opposition. Delacroix's work aimed precisely at raising public awareness for direct intervention.

[232] Gamboni D., *La Grèce sur les ruines de Missolonghi, Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, pp. 530-531.

This section attempts to hold together works of neoclassical and romantic taste. The work that par excellence reflects the romantic taste is Goya's Giant, representing the embodiment of Spain against the Napoleonic invader. In 1963, Nigel Glendinning supported this interpretation because Juan Bautista Arriaza's patriotic poem, *La profecía de los Pirineos*, prophesises a Pyrenean giant defeating Napoleon's troop[233].

Ill. 15 Eugène Delacroix, *Greece on the ruins of Missolonghi*, 1826, oil on canvas, Museum of Fine Arts, Bordeaux

Ill. 16 Francisco Goya, *The Giant*, 1828, oil on canvas, Prado Museum, Madrid

[233] Held J.,, *Le Colosse, Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, pp. 527-528.

The next section “Les peuples et le peoples” focuses on social movements claiming new rights, which Europe had been experiencing since 1830[234]. The socialist and communist movements claimed the rights of the working world and in 1848 the *Communist Manifesto* was published in which the phantom that roamed Europe was mentioned: communism. The curators attempted to portray this tumultuous period through works depicting the social movements created in many countries on the continent, in Germany, Russia, Switzerland, Poland, Hungary etc[235]. This section concludes by looking at the present through contemporary art artists who ask the question of what freedom is. After the First World War, new republics emerged such as Czechoslovakia, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland. Germany, Austria and Hungary also became republics, while the Russian Empire became the Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, later the Soviet Union. Interesting is the work *Freedom* by Erik Bulatov, a Russian artist who tries to reflect on the theme of freedom by looking at the work that has been an emblem of freedom for centuries, namely Delacroix's *Liberté guidant le peuple*, combined with pop art and Soviet propaganda slogans. From the photos of the exhibition, we notice that the artwork is displayed alongside a selection of posters and pop art pieces that explore the same theme of freedom. This arrangement is particularly interesting as it enables visitors to compare different approaches to the topic.

[234] The reformers of society, taking up the ideals of the Revolution, called for changes not only in political institutions, but also in the principles of private property and claimed the right to a society in which everyone has an equal chance. The socialists claimed the universal character of the movement, rejecting the prevailing nationalism of the period, as well as the forms of government of the bourgeois republic and constitutional monarchy. The anarchists were even more radical, as free society could only exist on the condition of the annihilation of the state. European states united to fight these ideas, and the culmination was the struggle against the revolutionary regime in Paris, the Commune of 1871, which had repercussions throughout Europe. The fight for fairness continued through the liberal economic order and socialists established themselves in most central and western European parliaments. The strike became an economic weapon to fight the liberal order on its own ground.

[235] De Capitani F., *Les peoples et le peuple, Emblèmes de la liberté: l’image de la république dans l’art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d’histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, pp. 535-537.

Ill. 17 Erik Bulatov, *Liberté*, 1990, oil on canvas, Museum of Fine Arts, Bern

Ill. 18 Picture of the exhibition *Emblémes de la liberté. L'image de la République dans l'art,* at Museum of Fine Arts, Bern

In the same gallery, the theme of freedom is also addressed by the Swiss artist Hugo Schuhmacher, who in his 1971 work entitled *Liberté*, depicts a black woman bound and gagged with the Swiss flag, which is no longer a symbol of freedom, but of oppression. Schumacher criticises Switzerland's complicity with international powers in the oppression of the Third World. Therefore, the work illustrates how a change of perspective can turn a symbol of freedom into a symbol of oppression, and therefore denounces the hypocrisy and manipulation of national symbols[236].

[236] Landert M., *Liberté*, *Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, pp. 569-570.

Ill. 19 Picture of the exhibition *Emblémes de la liberté. L'image de la République dans l'art,* at Museum of Fine Arts, Bern

The following section, "Vive la République," celebrates three major republics: the American, the French, and the Swiss Confederation[237]. From a museographic perspective, this hall is characterized by a dynamic display, as we can see from the floor plans. Section eleven is a large open space divided into three segments by panels radiating from the center of the room like rays. This arrangement is particularly interesting because it also facilitates a comparison between the artworks on display from the three republics. In this gallery, republican and democratic values were expressed through symbols, town hall decorations, and political festivities, with the image of the republic becoming a symbol of freedom, also reflected in the fine arts. The centerpiece of this section is *14 July*, one of Van Gogh's earliest Impressionist artworks, painted in 1886 shortly after he left Antwerp to join his brother Théo in Paris. The painting vividly captures the celebration of the storming of the Bastille, with the French tricolour as the dominant figure, symbolizing the spirit of republicanism. This work aligns with the tradition established by Manet and Monet in their depictions of

[237] In the 19th century, very few republics managed to survive alongside monarchies. Switzerland returned to a federalist republican order in 1803, adopting a constitution that balanced centralism and federalism. France followed with the establishment of the Second Republic after the February Revolution, while Denmark, the Netherlands, and Sweden modernized their constitutional monarchies, inspired by England's 1832 reform. However, republican movements in Germany were suppressed by the Prussian army, and France's Second Republic was replaced by Napoleon III's Second Empire, eventually evolving into the Third Republic. De Capitani F., *Vive la Rèpublique, Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, pp. 573-576.

the Peace Day on 30 June 1878, where flags and lively atmospheres take center stage[238].

The exhibition concludes with the section "La lute des images", a topic already analysed in the previous exhibition, namely the political caricature that originated in England in the 18th century. The title of the section is very evocative, because during the Peasants' War, the independence of the Netherlands and the English Revolution, images became a real weapon of this fight. For this focus, the curators selected a range of international caricature artists, including the English artist William Hogarth, the French artist Honoré Daumier and the Swiss Martin Disteli[239].

Reviews

In quantitative terms, this exhibition was visited by 20,000 visitors, a remarkable number for an exhibition in Bern, which proved its success[240]. Regarding the scientific project, once again, we are faced with a very complex exhibition, the aim of which is to analyse a theme, namely the representation of the republic and the emblems of liberty, that has spanned the centuries and is still a topical issue today. The complexity can be seen in the very structure of the exhibition, which is made up of many sections and subsections, which attempt to encompass a very broad geographical and historical panorama. Art historian Chantal Georgel, chief conservator at the Musée Orsay in Paris, wrote a commentary on the exhibition. The historian describes the subject as "topical and yet new"[241], as it brings a new dimension to the study of the representation of the republic by looking at Claude Nicolet's idea of the republican and its figurative representation by Maurice Agulhon, who, however, was not paid tribute by the

[238] Bühlmann R., *Le 14 Juillet*, *Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, pp. 607-608.

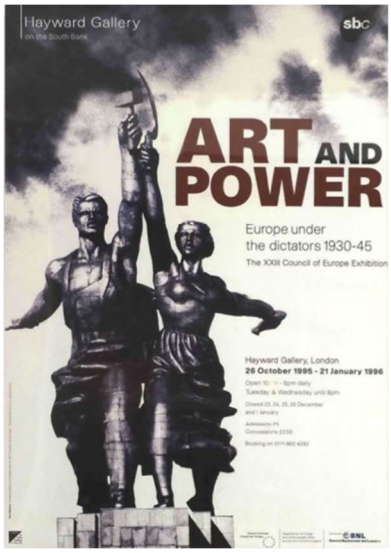
[239] De Capitani F., La lute des images: la caricature à l'époque des rèvolutions*, Emblèmes de la liberté: l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991, pp. 645-646.

[240] Middleton-Lajudie E., Evaluation of Council of Europe Art Exhibition Series, 1st February 2002, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, pp. 7-8.

[241] Georgel C., *Emblèmes de la liberté, l'image de la République dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle. Publication dirigée par Dario Gamboni et Georg Germann en collaboration avec François de Capitani. Catalogue d'une exposition au Musée d'histoire et Musée des Beaux-Arts de Berne. 1er juin-15 septembre 1991. Ed. Staempfli et Cie, 1991*, "Revue de l'Art", vol. 99, 1993, p. 86. https://www.persee.fr/doc/rvart_0035-1326_1993_num_99_1_348099_t1_0086_0000_005

curators[242]. In addition, Chantal Georgel points out that the subject matter is very broad, since the republics taken into consideration are not only those that are identified with democracy, such as the American and French republics, but also all those that are aristocratic or oligarchic, since they are governed by people elected by vote[243]. She notes the exhibition's ambitious aim, namely to bring to light a system of relationships between art, politics, history and theory. While both exhibition and catalogue succeed in fulfilling these ambitious objectives to some extent, the historian finds that the section dedicated to the Alps, "the cradle of freedom", is the most evocative, "the closest to realising the intellectual bet on which the enterprise was based[244]".

3.3 *Art and Power, Europe under the dictators 1930-1945*. London, Barcelona, and Berlin, 1995-96.



Ill. 20 Poster exhibition of *Art and Power. Europe under dictators 1930-1945*

[242] Historian Claude Nicolet dedicated his research to the idea of republicanism based on its fundamental values, such as active citizenship, popular sovereignty and the importance of democratic institutions. Maurice Agulhon, a French historian, analysed the depiction of the republican ideal, symbols and images, such as Marianne, the emblem of the French Republic. cfr. Nicolet, Claude. *L'idée républicaine en France: 1789-1924*. Paris: Gallimard, 1995. Agulhon, Maurice. Marianne au combat: l'imagerie et la symbolique républicaines de 1789 à 1880, Paris: Flammarion, 1979.

[243] Georgel C., *Emblèmes de la liberté, l'image de la République dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle. Publication dirigée par Dario Gamboni et Georg Germann en collaboration avec François de Capitani. Catalogue d'une exposition au Musée d'histoire et Musée des Beaux-Arts de Berne. 1er juin-15 septembre 1991. Ed. Staempfli et Cie, 1991*, "Revue de l'Art", vol. 99, 1993, p. 86. https://www.persee.fr/doc/rvart_0035-1326_1993_num_99_1_348099_t1_0086_0000_005

[244] Ibid.

> One paradox is clear: the point at which art becomes a weapon is the very moment when it loses its power. But the converse is also true: when power tries to enlist art for its own purposes, it runs the risk of curtailing other basic freedoms. In this battle there can be no winners, only losers and victims; and being a loser is probably the more convivial fate. Like all ideals, complete artistic autonomy is impossible, but it is a symbol which should be cherished[245].

David Elliot's words sum up well the theme of the exhibition organised under the auspices of the Council of Europe under the title of the exhibition is *Art and Power. Europe under the dictators1930-45*. To fully understand the 23rd exhibition, *Art and power. Europe under the dictators 1930 - 45*, it is crucial to place it within a broader exhibition discourse. After World War II, totalitarian art became a taboo subject, neglected by both academic research and public exhibitions. For instance, architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner once remarked that even a single word about Nazi architecture was one too many, reflecting the period's aversion to revisiting the dark past of Europe[246]. By the mid-1980s, some exhibitions on the so-called "art of power" were held in Germany, but the idea of displaying works by Nazi artists alongside those who fought for freedom was met with sharp criticism. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War, art created under totalitarian regimes was reevaluated, seeking to overcome the heavy judgments attached to these works. Against this backdrop, the 23rd exhibition of the Council of Europe was created, as an attempt to highlight not only the official works that glorified state power but also the unofficial art of protest and exile. It wanted to reveal the differences and similarities between the extremes of art and power. Two earlier exhibitions that stand out as precursors to this one are *Trends in the 1920s* organised in the western part of Berlin under the auspices of the Council of Art in 1977 [247], and *Western Art. Contemporary Art Since 1939* shown in Cologne in 1981. The former focused on the cultural richness of the Weimar

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[245] Elliot D., *The Battle of Art*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996* (Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995), p. 35.

[246] Ades D., Benton T., Elliot D., Boyd Whyte I., Selectors' *Introduction*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996*. Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995, p. 16.

[247] Report on the meeting of the Group of Consultants on Council of Europe Art Exhibitions, 56th Session (24th meeting as a Steering Committee, 20-23 June 1989, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CDCC(89)23, p. 9, https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809adf7b

Republic and the convergence of avant-garde movements in Berlin[248], while the latter showcased the evolution of Western art since 1939, reflecting political and cultural shifts[249]. However, neither exhibition was accessible to those beyond the Berlin Wall. After the end of Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall, the reunification of the country created an opportunity to finally showcase these works for all the citizens of Germany[250]. At the same time as the Council of Europe exhibition, *Moskva-Berlin 1900-1950* took place, exhibited in the two cities in 1995-1996, with a comparative approach of the two totalitarianisms. This testifies to the new sensitivity that was being created towards the subject, which was no longer taboo, but was now a historically researched event.

As discussed earlier, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Council of Europe organised a series of art exhibitions examining the relationship between society, politics and art. The exhibition *Art and Power* was a key component of this initiative. The exhibition's theme took shape in 1988 during a meeting of museum directors, where it was decided to explore the art of Europe between the Great Depression and the Potsdam Conference, an era marked by both dictatorship and the fight for freedom. Unusually, this exhibition was not proposed by a Member State; instead, it was the Council of Europe's Art Exhibition Advisor, Professor Klaus Gallwitz, who suggested to the British government to host it, given the UK's role in resisting totalitarianism during this period. Later, the project was entrusted to the Hayward Gallery in London.

The exhibition, which opened in 1995 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, focused on one of the most complex periods of the 20th century – from 1930 to 1945 – when art became a powerful tool of propaganda. It tackled a

[248] Berlin was the center of modernity at that time, where it was the site of important paintings, architecture, decorative arts and the birth of abstraction and surrealism. The exhibition housed the works of Malevich, Kandinsky and Mondrian, the apocalyptic visions of Dix, the centrality of the Bauhaus (founded in Weimar by Gropius in 1919), the aesthetics of the industrial cities of the future by Garnier and Perret and the surrealism of Chirico, Miró and Magritte.

[249] Bringing together major works by contemporary artists such as Jackson Pollock, Andy Warhol, and Damien Hirst, it shows how contemporary art has challenged traditional conventions and explored new media and techniques.

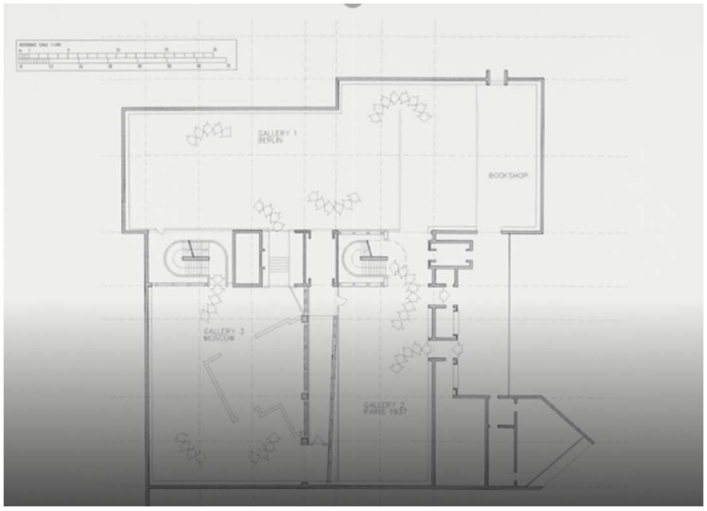
[250] Gallwitz K., *Preface*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996*. Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995, p. 9.

divisive theme in European history by comparing the regimes and their relationship with art. The exhibition was introduced by an event to highlight the tensions that Europe was going through, namely the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1937, where the art of many states was publicly displayed. A notable section was devoted to the Spanish pavilion, a symbol of resistance to Franco's dictatorship. Subsequently visitors were directly immersed in the art developed in Hitler's Germany (1933-45), Stalin's USSR (1930-1953) and Mussolini's Italy (1922-45). These sections provided a comprehensive view of art under the three regimes, with a focus on architecture, painting, sculpture, film, and photography[251]. The curators recognised the challenge of fully representing the visual arts of these countries in a single exhibition. Therefore, they chose to focus on the capital cities – Rome, Moscow, and Berlin – centers from which power radiated.

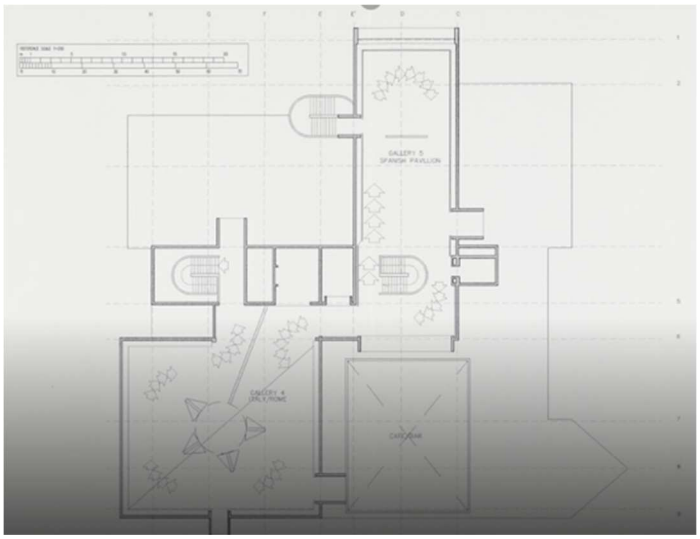
The exhibition was first held at the Hayward Gallery in London, as we can see in the plans below, then at the Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin and the Centre de Cultura Contemporània in Barcelona, which expressed their interest in collaborating with the 23rd Council of Europe exhibition. It is the second touring exhibition of the series, as the only precedent is the exhibition *From Viking to Crusader: The Scandinavians and Europe, 800-1200* which took place in Berlin, Copenhagen and Paris in 1992-1993. This participation is consistent with the theme, as the Spanish, German dictatorship is at the heart of this exhibition, which was presented in 1996[252].

[251] Furthermore, the exhibition also tries to explore the film and photographic arts developed before or during dictatorships. A masterful example is the pre-Stalinist Soviet cinema of the 1920s (the films of Hisenstein and Pudovin and Turin, who made a documentary on the construction of the Turkestan-Siberian railway). Furthermore, many regimes realised the potential of film and photography to promote their ideals.

[252] Corby B., Snowman N., Meyric Hughes H., *Acknowledgments*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barcelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996* (Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995).



Ill. 21 Floor planimetry of Hayward Gallery for *Art and Power* exhibition



Ill. 22 Floor planimetry of Hayward Gallery for *Art and Power* exhibition

The exhibition catalogue demonstrates the enormous scholarly work resulting from a collaboration with leading art historians and the historian Eric Hobsbawm, mentioned in the first chapter. Hobsbawm provides a masterful analysis of the art featured in the London exhibition and identifies three primary demands that power typically places on art[253]. The first demand is the celebration of power's triumphs through public art – such as arches, columns, and other monumental structures –

[253] Hobsbawn E., *Foreword*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996* (Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995), p. 11-15.

drawing on traditions from ancient Rome. The second demand is for art to act as a stage for power's ceremonies and processions, turning power into a spectacle performed for the public in grand avenues and monumental stadiums specifically designed for these events[254]. In this context, Hobsbawm notes: "States that present themselves as show-politics reveal their own impermanence. If the theatre-state is to endure, the show must go on. In the end, it did not. The curtain is down and will not be raised again [255]." The third function of art is to promote and reinforce the regime's ideals through education and propaganda.

The exhibition aims to explore various themes throughout its display to reveal the multifaceted nature of the dictatorial decades in Europe. A central theme of the exhibition is the complex relationship between authoritarian regimes and the modernist art revolution. It has always been argued that the avant-gardes spoke mainly to an intellectual elite. In contrast, authoritarian governments are populist and aim to appeal to the general public. As a result, they prefer art that is more understandable to the masses, which tends to be more realistic and figurative. The exhibition investigates also this question, partly confirming this theory and showing how for some regimes the situation was actually more multifaceted[256]. Indeed, each regime had a unique approach to modernism, as we will see in the following sections. Another theme that

[254] The Victor Emmanuel monument is an example of this, as are the stadiums custom-built for the expression of mass emotions, including patriotism and sport. Hitler understood the power of mass celebrations, in fact he spoke at the Berlin Sports Palace and discovered the political potential of the Olympic Games (1936). In Germany, the venue for rallies was the Zappelinfeld in Nuremberg designed by Albert Speer, in Rome, the fascist arena was the 15th century balcony of the Palazzo Venezia, where he gave the famous speech, broadcast in piazzas all over Italy, for the general mobilisation for the Ethiopian campaign. Whyte highlights in his essay about the German May Day celebrations held in Berlin on 1st May 1936 and the deliberate use of the Olympics, used to celebrate Nazi and Aryan ideals, embodied in the athlete.

[255] Hobsbawn E., *Foreword*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996* (Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995), p. 11-15.

[256] The Nazis openly rejected avant-garde art, labelling modernism in the Weimar Republic as 'cultural Bolshevism' and posing it as a threat to traditional values. In contrast, the early Soviet leadership, under Anatoly Lunacharsky, tolerated avant-garde art as long as it was not openly hostile to the revolution. However, this openness changed dramatically with Stalin, who imposed socialist realism as a state-approved artistic style. Mussolini's regime was more favourable to modernism, partly due to the influence of his mistress, Margherita Sarfatti, who was active in the contemporary Italian art scene. Under Mussolini, the regime supported Futurist artists and rationalist architects, reflecting a unique openness to modernist tendencies, absent in other dictatorships, as the exhibition shows.

emerges between the galleries is the relationship between dictatorship and national history, mythologised and reinterpreted in their favour. In fact, each dictatorship invoked a specific historical period, positioning itself as the descendant of a golden age that was reborn under their rule[257]. In conclusion, the exhibition aimed to move beyond the simplistic dichotomy of good versus bad art, revealing the ambiguities and nuances that exist between state-sanctioned and protest art. David Elliott, in the exhibition's catalogue, discussed this complexity, noting how some neoclassical and realist artists in Germany were not official representatives of the regime, challenging the assumption that all realist art was inherently Nazis[258]. In the postwar period, such art had been unfairly associated with fascism, while abstract art came to symbolize Western democracy.

Regarding the organisation, the development of the exhibition's theme and its planning required the collaboration of a European organizing committee and culminated in an international symposium at the Courtauld Institute of Art in January 1994. This event was made possible through the support of the Council of Europe, the Open Society Fund, and British embassies from participating European countries, provided a platform for in-depth discussions[259]. Following the symposium, the core team that realised the exhibition was composed of six academics and professionals[260]. A pivotal role was played by Robert Anderson and David Wilson, UK representatives in the Council of Europe Advisory Group, as well as the current and former directors of the British Museum. Joanna Drew, former Director of Exhibitions and Art at the

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[257] For Italian fascism the reference point was ancient Rome, for Hitler's Germany a combination of racially pure barbarians from the Teutonic forests and medieval chivalry, for Franco's Spain it was the era of Catholic rulers who drove out the unbelievers and resisted Lutero. The case of the Soviet Union is peculiar, because the government could not appeal directly to the Tsars, since the Revolution had driven them out, but Stalin appealed to that past as leverage against the Germans.

[258] Elliot D., *A Life-and-Death Struggle*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996* (Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995), p. 270-276.

[259] Ibid.

[260] Professor Dawn Ades of the Art History and Theory Department, University of Essex; Professor Tim Benton. Dean of the Faculty of Humanities of the Open University; Dr lain Boyd Whyte, Director of the Centre for Architectural History and Theory at the University of Edinburgh; David Elliott, Director of the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford to devise the exhibition; Lutz Becker, whose special responsibility has been the film element of this exhibition; Simonetta Fraquelli a specialist on the history of twentieth-centurv Italian art.

Arts Council and Hayward Gallery, initiated the project with art critic David Sylvester and curator Nicholas Serota, before a formal curatorial team was appointed. In addition, Architect Mark Fisher was responsible for the exhibition museography[261]. A national committee, composed of members from the Exhibitions Department of the South Bank Center (SBC) was formed together with the team of the Arts Council of Great Britain, which was responsible for the exhibitions *The Romantic Movement* (London, 1959) and *The Age of Neo-Classicism* (London, 1972), transferred to the SBC (South Bank Center). It is interesting to notice that the director of the Department of the Exhibitions of the SBC was Henry Meyric Hughes, who was a co-curator of the last exhibition *Desire for Freedom* (Berlin, Tallinn, Milan, Cracow, 2012-2014) [262].

Funding for the exhibition came from the Council of Europe and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of Great Britain, with additional support from the Arts Council of England's International Initiatives Fund and sponsorship from Banca Nazionale del Lavoro S.p.A. Additionally, the international network of embassies and cultural institutes contributed providing with in-kind services to help bring the exhibition. Notably, the German Embassy significantly contributed to the preparation of the catalogue, and the Goethe-Institut also provided crucial support for the project.[263].

This exhibition exemplifies robust international cooperation, with key support from the Italian, Spanish, and French Embassies, as well as their respective cultural institutes in London. The embassies and cultural representatives of the forty-three member states of the European Cultural Convention also lent their support. The exhibition boasted an international loan network that includes the United States, Great Britain, Russia, Germany, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands. Notably, the Ministries of Culture and national authorities play a crucial role in the loan of artworks, which can

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[261] Corby B., Snowman N., Meyric Hughes H., *Acknowledgments*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996* (Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995), p. 7.
[262] Corby B., Snowman N., Meyric Hughes H., *Acknowledgments*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996* (Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995).
[263] Ibid.

facilitate or complicate the complex procedures of loans artworks abroad. Furthermore, this exhibition was the first to receive art loans from Russia, featuring 153 pieces out of a total of 475 artworks. This achievement occurred during a crucial period of geopolitical changes, with some Eastern European countries ratifying European Cultural Convention in 1990 and Russia joining in 1991[264].

3.3.1 Universal exhibition of Paris in 1937 and the Spanish Pavilion

Ill. 23 First room of *Art and Power* exhibition in 1995 at Hayward Gallery in London

The first gallery of the exhibition is dedicated to the Universal Exhibition in Paris, the last major international exhibition before the Second World War, part of a series of international exhibitions that had begun in London in 1851. These events were prestigious occasions for participating countries to celebrate their economic, technical and cultural progress, becoming an expression of coexistence between nations rather than conflict[265]. About this exhibition, political scientist Joseph Ney said

[264] *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996* (Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995), pp. 344-351.

[265]The Trocadéro square was dominated by the Peace Tower designed by Bazin and Laprade, modelled on Trajan's Column, transforming a symbol of military victory into an emblem of peace. This exhibition has also gone down in history for the exceptionally large number of pavilions present, thirty-eight in total. This type of exhibition model with national pavilions was a recent innovation since 1867. The 1937 exhibition was held at the Trocadéro, with a structure spanning the Pont d'Iéna and incorporating the Eiffel Tower at its centre. Within its seven-and-a-half-kilometer circumference, including the Grand Palais, there were almost three hundred palaces and pavilions. Ades D., Paris 1937: *Art and Power of Nations*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona,*

that “the best modern buildings in the exhibition were little more than three-dimensional propaganda, emphasising more the complex relationship between power and art”[266]. Indeed, the World Exhibition of 1937 was marked by the German and Soviet pavilions, which faced each other through their majestic monumentality. The architect Albert Speer, author of the German pavilion, created a monolithic building with numerous historical references, from the classical temple to a medieval church. Dominating the entire space was the eagle, symbol of Nazi power, which faced Vera Mukhina's colossal steel-clad statue, *Industrial Worker and Collective Farm Girl*, placed on the building designed by Boris Iofan[267].Walter Benjamin, speaking of the Paris Exhibition of 1937 said: “The alienation of humanity has reached such a degree that it can experience its own destruction as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order[268]."

Ill. 24 International regatta on the Seine, Paris, 13t June 1937, showing the Soviet, German and Italian pavilions, Photograph, Archive of Modern Conflict, London

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Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996, Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995.

[266] Ney J., *Reflections on the architecture about the Exhibition 1937*, “Cahier d’Art”, n. 8-9, 1960, p. 248.

[267] These figures are no longer allegories of virtue, but the representation of young heroes, the Russian people supporting the new order created by the revolution. The monumental statues represent a working man and woman, a very different image of the woman in Nazi German society, who was the mother of young Aryans.
Fiss K., *The German Pavilion*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996,* Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995, p. 108

[268] Benjamin W*., The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction, 1936,* in *Illuminations* edited by Hannah Arendt, London 1970, p. 244.

The first section of the 23rd exhibition is characterised by a strong contrast between the first and second hall, as the first gallery is dedicated to the works of the regimes, while the second to the republican Spanish pavilion. Moreover, the contrast is accentuated by the stark differences in lighting. The first gallery uses strong, focused lights against black panels, creating a dramatic, intense atmosphere. In contrast, the second gallery features softer, diffused lighting with white panels, transitioning the space from a dark, somber mood to a brighter, more uplifting environment, as depicted in images Ill.23 and Ill.25.

In the first gallery of the exhibition, three emblematic works reflect the aesthetic of 20th-century totalitarian regimes: Vera Mukhina's *the Industrial Worker and Collective Farm Girl*; Kurt Schmidt-Ehmen's *Eagle and swastika* and Aleksandr Samokhvalov's *Kirov*, representing the Sports Parade of 1935. These artworks provide a penetrating insight into the artistic strategies used by totalitarian regimes to promote their ideologies[269]. Furthermore, the end of the room is dominated by Jose Maria Sert's colossal-sized canvas, *St Teresa Offers to our Lord the Spanish Martyrs* of 1936. The latter work was realised by Franco-supporting painter José María Sert and displayed in the Vatican Pavilion, where twelve artists from different countries were invited to create altarpieces for the chapel[270].

Ill. 25 Second room *Art and Power* exhibition at Hayward Gallery in London

[269] Hilton T., *They Were Only Obeying Orders*, "The Independent", 29 October 1995, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/they-were-only-obeying-orders-1580033.html
[270] Ibid.

The second gallery, dedicated to the Spanish pavilion, emphasises its international value, as it represented a republican anti-fascist symbol and an international example of resistance against regimes. Prominent among the works in the 1937 Pavilion was Picasso's *Guernica*, one of the examples of monumental works becoming a propaganda tool for both the regimes and the resistance. *Guernica* was not borrowed for display at the Hayward Gallery, but a giant photograph of its initial appearance in the Spanish Pavilion was exhibited. The exhibition emphasises the centrality of resistance propaganda in the Spanish Pavilion, where it was decided not to exhibit the country's economic and technical progress. The exhibition dedicated a focus on propaganda works created by Republican artists, who used photography and photomontage to spread their ideals against regimes [271]. Moreover, it was the occasion to showcase the works of Alberto Sanchez Perez, an artist who is discussed in greater detail in the catalogue, helping to introduce a lesser-known artist to the public[272].

3.3.2 Soviet art under the dictatorship of Stalin

Ill. 26 Gallery dedicated to art of the dictatorship of Stalin, at the Hayward Gallery in London, 1995

[271] Daniel M., *Spain: Culture at War*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996,* Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995, p. 63.

[272] Trueba Z. A., Alberto Sánchez: An Artist at the Crossroads, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996,* Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995, pp. 111-114.

The curators chose to display books, paintings, sculptures, and propaganda posters to provide a comprehensive view of the Soviet communist regime. This includes portraits of Stalin, paintings celebrating the achievements of communism, and the life of the proletariat. One of the most famous works on display, which highlights Russia's technological and engineering advancements, is *The Construction of the Dnepr Dam* by Yuri Pimenov from 1933. This piece represents one of the Soviet Union's most ambitious and symbolic projects, a large dam on the Dnepr River.

Ill. 27 Gallery dedicated to art of the dictatorship of Stalin, at the Hayward Gallery in London, 1995

Another major engineering project crucial to the development of the Soviet Union was the Moscow Metro, likely the largest artistic endeavor undertaken during Stalin's regime[273]. Additionally, the curators focused on another artistic genre central to the regime's politics: portraits of Stalin. Among the many portraits exhibited, a notable example is Fedor Shurpin's *The Morning of the Fatherland* from 1949, where the leader is depicted in an idyllic landscape, symbolizing his guidance towards a better future, and the official portrait by Isaak Brodsky from 1933. The figure of Stalin is also central in the propaganda posters featured in the exhibition, such as Victor Deni

[273] The Moscow Metro stations, which were originally supposed to be designed by Constructivists, became luxurious spaces adorned with marble, malachite, and grand decorations. Hobsbawm described it as a collective luxury experience, offering a moment of luxury to men and women deprived of individual luxury. Hobsbawn E., *Foreword*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996* (Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995), p. 11-15.

and Nikolai Dolgorukov's *Our Army and Country are Strengthened with the Spirit of Stalin!*

3.3.3 German art under the dictatorship of Hitler

Ill. 28 Gallery dedicated to art of the dictatorship of Hitler, at the hayward Gallery in London, 1995

In the following gallery, we can notice a change in the display. The panels are white, in contrast with the darker arrangement of the previous hall. Additionally, a new element is the series of pictures of monumental architecture and statues displayed at the top of the wall, which immerses the visitor in the historical context. This gallery tries to highlight this harsh struggle between dominant and "degenerate" art, as well as the artists who were forced to change their artistic language to survive within the nation[274]. The artworks promoted by the regime reflected themes of racial purity, physical strength and traditional German values, illustrating the regime's control over

[274] From 1933, the Führer's Council formalised the regime's cultural policy with a manifesto entitled *What German Artists Expect from the New Government*, which listed the characteristics of official art and warned that art lacking these characteristics would be destroyed and that museum officials who exhibited such works would be fired. From this moment on, many were dismissed and taken to concentration camps on charges of "cultural Bolshevism", "degeneration" and "cosmopolitanism". Starting in 1933, regional museums hosted exhibitions under the name *Schreckenskammern der Kunst* (Chambers of Horrors of Art) or *Skandalausstellungen* (Scandalous Exhibitions), precursors of the 1937 *Entartete Kunst* (Degenerate Art). In 1937, an exhibition of "degenerate" art and another of officially approved art were set up in Berlin. Additionally, the government intervened in the art sector through a law of 1935, according to which only artists affiliated to the Reich Chamber of Artists could continue to exercise their trade. The same restrictions had been applied in 1933 in the Soviet Union, where membership of the Artists Union of the USSR was the only way to work legally. Elliott D., *A Life-and-Death Struggle*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996,* Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995, p. 270-276.

all forms of artistic expression. For instance, Hubert Lanzinger's *The Flag Bearer* portrays Hitler as a medieval knight bearing a flag with the fascist symbol. This piece exemplifies the regime's artistic strategy of invoking historical imagery to foster a sense of continuity and legitimacy for its rule. The curators' choice of this artwork is significant because it truly represents the heart of the Nazi dictatorship with the portrait of Hitler and the symbol. It was also an artwork that belonged to the Führer and was displayed in Munich at the Braune Haus, the headquarters of the National Socialist Party, where it was hung above the desk of the minister and architect Albert Speer. The importance of this piece is also highlighted by its history after the fall of the Reich, when an American soldier shot the painting, which was then transferred to the USA as a war trophy and is now preserved in Washington D.C., in the German War Art Collection at the U.S. Army Center of Military History. Through such works, the regime sought to glorify its ideology and reinforce its control over cultural and artistic production. Art was also a means to promote a certain ideal of beauty and Aryan race, the basis of Nazi ideology. This is evident in the works of sculptor Arno Breker and painter Ivo Saliger, who exalted the figure of the Aryan mother through neoclassical forms and references to Greek and classical myths. An emblematic example at the exhibition was the *Aryan idyll, Diana resting* realised by Saliger and now in a private collection. This neoclassical monumentalism extended beyond sculpture and painting into architecture, which was strongly influenced by classical forms. Examples include the Pantheon, which inspired various Soviet projects such as the monument to the *Heroes of the Great Patriotic War* and Speer's grandiose project for a Great Hall designed to accommodate 180,000 people, whose model is on display[275].

This gallery devotes space not only to works approved by the regime, but also to those considered degenerate artists, members of Asso (Association of German Revolutionary Visual Artists), sponsored by the Communist Party. In the hall, we find the work *Anschluss - Alice in Wonderland* by Oskar Kokoschka[276], in which political

[275] Similarly, monumental state buildings were planned for Nuremberg and Berlin, where the emphasis was on mass gatherings, with the leader as the central figures, fostering a sense of collective strength and suppressing individuality. In addition, Speer was to be in charge of a grand plan for the reconstruction of the New Berlin by looking at the model of imperial Rome.

[276] Oskar Kokoschka, an Austrian painter who fled to Prague in the mid 1930s, then to London, where he became a prominent member of the Artists' International Association (AIA) and the Free German League of Culture. His Self-Portrait as a Degenerate Artist (1937) had him included among the artists

and fairytale themes are mixed. The work is a strong criticism against the appeasement approach adopted by the Allied Forces towards Adolf Hitler's invasion policy[277].

Ill. 29 Oskar Kokoschka, Anschluss – Alice in Wonderland, 1938, oil on canvas, Leopold Museum, Vienna

It is interesting the debate that arose during the planning of this London exhibition regarding the display of art created during Hitler's dictatorship. In addition to the debate about the arrangement of official and protest art on the same view, mentioned above, a further issue arose. Hitler, before coming to power and establishing a dictatorship, tried to enter the art academy, although he failed, so the curators wondered whether it was appropriate to exhibit Hitler's signature art as well. Moreover, the largest store of the Führer's paintings is in Great Britain at Longleat, the collection of the Marquis of Bath's fascist father. However, the works were not exhibited, and this became the subject of criticism by Tim Hilton in the "Independent" newspaper, who argued that the Art and Power exhibition should have been much more controversial, trying to expose the historical truth instead of prioritising public relations[278].

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in the Munich Degenerate Art Exhibition, as well as in the response exhibition organised by the émigrés with the help of Oto Bihalji-Merin at the New Burlington Galleries in London in July 1938. Kokoschka began to cultivate a satirical register by looking to the oft-cited models of Gillray, Rowlandson and Goya.

[277] The painting was created in 1938, the year of the Anschluss, to which the title refers, the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany. In the centre is depicted the British foreign minister Neville Chamberlain, a soldier of the Third Reich and a bishop. They are actually personifications of England, Nazi Germany and France, but also three social classes - civil society, the military and the clergy - who are blamed for the ruin of Europe. On the right, we see Alice, inspired by the protagonist of Lewis Carroll's novel *Alice in Wonderland*, and the personification of truth and Austria, burning behind her.

[278] Hilton T., *They were only obeying orders*, "Independent", 29 October 1995. https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/they-were-only-obeying-orders-1580033.html

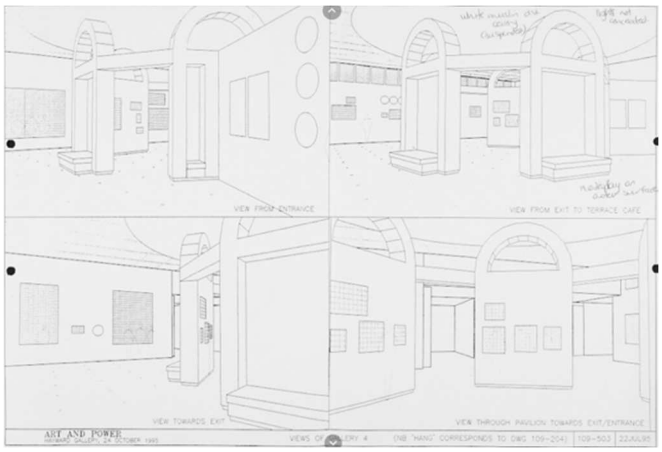
3.3.4 Italian art under the dictatorship of Mussolini

Ill. 30 Gallery dedicated to art of the dictatorship of Mussolini, at the hayward Gallery in London, 1995

This section highlighted how Mussolini's regime used art to promote and consolidate its totalitarian ideology in even contradictory ways, reflected in the exhibition itself, creating a sense of confusion in the visitor, as the critic Lyttelton claims[279]. The exhibition gallery is divided by a central white space characterized by classic geometric forms such as the full arch. This central space serves to create additional surfaces for continuing the exhibition, but it also generates a sense of confusion and division. Additionally, one wall of the room is covered with images related to the dictatorship, with paintings and artworks hung on it, creating a visual confusion for the visitor, who cannot easily distinguish between the wall and the images. Moreover, futurist paintings, neoclassical statues, and works from the Novecento movement are displayed arbitrarily without a clear organisation, resulting in a sense of disorientation. This lack of clarity created by the curators is a direct reflection of the cultural policy of the fascist regime, which, unlike other regimes, never defined a priority style but instead supported various movements in different ways[280].

[279] Lyttelton A., *Art and Power. London and Barcelona*, "The Burlington Magazine", vol. 138, no. 1116, 1996.

[280] Indeed, Mussolini never defined a fascist style, but the Minister of National Education, Giuseppe Bottai, argued that Fascist art should look to the past as a model, which should not be imitated, but reinterpreted with modern sensitivity, maintaining the characteristics of order, solidity and clarity. According to Bottai, the government should not impose a preferred style but provide a framework



Ill. 31 Gallery dedicated to art of the dictatorship of Mussolini, at the Hayward Gallery in London, 1995

The period 1930 to 1945 creates problems in the Italian section, as it did not allow the curators to clarify the relationship of Fascism with Futurism and the Novecento movement. Indeed, in the 1920s, the period preceding the chosen one, the Novecento movement, sponsored by Margherita Sarfatti, came close to representing the official style of the regime in the visual arts. A leading figure in the Novecento movement was Mario Sironi, who managed to create a new version of classicism, more informal and simplified, to mediate between tradition and modernity[281]. This was very clear in his works exhibited in London, including the preparatory cartoon for the mosaic *L'Italia corporativa*. The curators also devoted space to the other allies of fascism, the Futurists, extolling the fascination with war, speed, physical strength and mechanical development. Later, the interest in engines was replaced with a fascination for *Aeropittura*, to which a *manifesto* was dedicated in 1929. An example on display was *Nose-Diving on the City* by Tullio Crali, realised in 1939.

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referring to the Federation of Intellectual Unions (changed to Confederation of Professionals and Artists in 1931). Indeed, every artist had to have the fascist party membership card and be registered with the union to participate in performances organised by the regime. Fraquelli, *All Roads Lead to Rome*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996,* Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995, p. 131.

[281] This return to order in art is also visible in the sculpture of Arturo Martini, both of whom are exhibited in the exhibition. Sironi, influenced by the model of the Mexican Diego Rivera, became a promoter of mural painting and mosaic decoration on a large scale. It was he himself who wrote the *Manifesto della Pittura Murale*, published in 1933 and signed together with Carlo Carrà, Massimo Campigli and Achille Funi, who were also members of the Novecento movement.

Ill. 32 Tullio Crali, *Nose-Diving on the City*, 1939. Private Collection, Milan

The exhibition also showcases the same stylistic dialectic in architecture, through models and photographs. Among the modernists supported by the regime were also the rationalist architects, who wanted to move away from the past as demonstrated by photomontage entitled *Panel of Horrors* and *Casa del Fascio*, built in Como by Giuseppe Terragni and inaugurated in 1936[282]. They collaborated with the architect who expressed the Fascist style par excellence, Marcello Piacentini, responsible for the urban interventions in Brescia and at the university city and EUR in Rome[283]. Moreover, the curators also tried to bring film art to the exhibition, through photos and posters, as it became central to the propaganda of the fascist regime, which understood the intrinsic power of film images and their easy transmission[284]. The curators seek to apply a comparative approach between the different regimes, identifying the

[282] Rationalist archiecs held an exhibition at the Bardi Gallery in Rome in 1931, which was visited by Mussolini himself. It was an architecture that wanted to move away from the past as demonstrated by Bardi's photomontage entitled *Panel of Horrors* in which examples of eclectic classicism were contrasted with the works of 1937 architects. Rationalism entered full dialogue with the regime in the *Casa del Fascio*, built in Como by Giuseppe Terragni and inaugurated in 1936. The structure is characterised by linearity and transparency, using large windows and a strict geometric grid to represent the principles of the fascist movement. Piacentini collaborated with Rationalist and Modernist architects and took inspiration from them to create a language that integrated contemporary elements with the tradition to create a distinct Fascist aesthetic. Benton T., *Speaking without adjectives*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996,* Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995, p. 38-41.

[283] Benton T., *Rome reclaims its empire*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996,* Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995, p. 120-129.

[284] Italian cinema began to enjoy some success with Neorealism, becoming famous abroad in 1945 with Roberto Rossellini's *Roma città aperta*. In 1932, the newsreel LUCE switched to sound production. Two years later, the Ministry of Popular Culture established the General Directorate of Cinematography. In 1937 Cinecittà was founded in Rome as the largest film studio complex in Europe.

influences between the various regimes in the field of the arts. For example, the photomontage used by the Russian artist El Lissitzky in the 1929 *Exhibition of the Press* influenced artists from other nations, including the Italians Sironi and Terragni, as seen in the 1932 Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution. Just as Soviet films inspired the work of Fascist director Alessandro Blasetti.[285].

Ill. 33 "Cinema is the strongest weapon": Mussolini lays the foundation stone of Instituto LUCE Roma 1937

3.3.5 Reviews

The exhibition featured over 500 objects, among them posters, painting, sculpture, murals, photographs and representations of public architecture and 87 artists and architects were represented[286]. *Art and Power* exhibition was attended by 86,888 people (40,000 people visited the exhibition in Barcelona, which was the second most visited exhibition in the city's history[287]) and many divided reviews were published. Reviews and critics on this exhibition pointed out the difficulty about displaying art of dictatorships between 1930 and 1945, above all, six years after the end of the Cold War.

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[285] Becker L., *Black shirts and white telephones*, *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996,* Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995, p.137-139.

[286] Among them, Salvador Dali, Lucio Fontana, Paul Klee, Oskar Kokoschka, El Lissitzky, Joan Miro, Pablo Picasso, Kazimir Malevich and Vladimir Tatlin, as well as state-approved or patronised artists including Italian sculptors Arturo Martini and Mario Sironi.

[287] Middleton-Lajudie E., Evaluation of Council of Europe Art Exhibition Series, 1st February 2002, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, pp. 7-8.

In “The Independent”, Tim Hilton described the exhibition as “horrifying”, noting how it conveys the tyranny and inhumanity of the 1930s, despite the fact that artistic creativity managed to endure even under dictatorial regimes. However, Hilton argued that some works should be included, such as Picasso's *The Dream and Lie of Franco* (1937). Indeed, this exhibition could be an opportunity to examine Picasso's political and religious feelings and his friendly attitude towards Stalin's regime in more depth. At the same time, Hilton credits the exhibition with enhancing the reputation of many secondary artists, such as Alberto Sánchez Pérez, exhibited alongside masters like Dalí, Miró, González[288].

Adrian Lyttelton, in his review for the “Burlington Magazine”, marked that the exhibition “[...] certainly succeeds in creating a feeling of oppression[289]”, effectively conveying the oppressive environment in which artists worked under dictatorships. However, Lyttelton argues that the exhibition does not delve enough into the relationship of Fascism with the artistic movement of Futurism and Novecento. In addition, he makes other three main criticisms: first, he describes the Nazi section as "tame" and notes that the regime's populism is underrepresented. Second, he points out the lack of systematic visual comparisons, which could have better highlighted the similarities and contrasts between the art of the three regimes. Lastly, he criticizes the catalogue for its shortcomings, despite its engaging content—it lacks a bibliography, a complete list of illustrations, and provides incomplete biographical details. For example, the biography of the Jewish artist Felix Nussbaum, born in Austria, who fled to Italy, was later imprisoned in a Belgian concentration camp, and eventually perished at Auschwitz, is missing[290].

In “The Spectator”, John Spurling writes an overall positive review of the exhibition, grasping its contemporary relevance and urgency. He asserts that “Fifty years after the crushing of Fascism/Nazism and barely six since the collapse of the

[288]Hilton T., *They Were Only Obeying Orders*, “The Independent”, 29 October 1995, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/they-were-only-obeying-orders-1580033.html
[289] Lyttelton A., *Art and Power. London and Barcelona*, “The Burlington Magazine”, vol. 138, no. 1116, 1996.
[290] Ibid.

Soviet empire, we cannot be at all confident that all ghosts are laid, all monsters scotched.[291]"

In a review of "The Spectator", Gavin Stamp writes a positive review of the exhibition, claiming that "[…] this exhibition is stuffed with fascinating material: some of it dreadful but much of an impressive quality.[292]", but points out that the exhibition fails to address some uncomfortable realities. In fact, the curators gloss over the importance of Italian modernist architecture of the 1920s and 1930s, such as the *Casa del Fascio* in Como. In the Nazi Germany section, the curators prioritise unofficial art and do not adequately show Speer's Project for the New Berlin or the revolutionary motorway network. Finally, the monumental classicism of Soviet Russia continued long after the exhibition's misleading end date of 1945 is not adequately explained. However, a very strong criticism was addressed to the organisers, because, according to Stamp, they had not yet overcome the prejudices on modernism (even though some Bauhaus-trained architects planned concentration camps) and that Classical architecture - along with realistic painting and figurative sculpture – could be also reactionary[293].

In "the Forum: Council of Europe", Denis Durand de Bousingen gives credit to the curators in the creation of the exhibition path, divided into sections. However, he criticises the juxtaposition of dictatorial and non-dictatorial art without explanation, including the works which were rejected as "degenerate" or "antisocialist.[294]"

In conclusion, a common opinion that we find in many reviews of this exhibition is that it enabled a change in the perspective of the arts and their relationship to politics. Indeed, the enormous scientific project that simultaneously brought together professionals from different countries allowed an advancement in the historiography of the period of the various dictatorships and specifically in the relationship with the visual, performing and architectural arts. The enormous historiographical contribution

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[291] Spurting J., *Hayward Gallery: Identity Problem on the Brutal Character of the South Bank Gallery*, "The Spectator", 4 November 1995, p. 55.
http://spprd.insec.netcopy.thompsonjames.co.uk/article/4th-november-1995/55/hayward-gallery

[292] Stamp G., *Exhibitions: Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45* (Hayward Gallery, *till 21 January 1996) Sins of Omission*, "The Spectator", 11 November 1995, p. 60.
https://archive.spectator.co.uk/article/11th-november-1995/60/exhibitions

[293] Ibid.

[294] Durand de Bousingen D., *Arts of Tyranny*, "Forum: Council of Europe", March, 1996, p 34-37, https://rm.coe.int/09000016806fb494

is emphasised in Griffin, who dedicates his critique to the catalogue, an illustrated collection of academic essays, is not a mere accompaniment to the exhibits, but stands out for its homogeneity and the novelty it brings. Indeed, it overcomes the idea that fascist and Nazi art are anti-modern and that communism is intrinsically linked only to brutal propaganda. Griffin concludes his critique masterfully by linking the exhibition's theme to the contemporary. He observes that while in the exhibition the relationship between art and power is represented by the totalitarianisms of the past, today we can observe a similar relationship in the form of "unbridled individualism, unfettered technocracy and unrestrained corporate power", which, although it does not result in genocide, does result in biocide[295].

Conclusion

These exhibitions can be considered a significant example of cultural diplomacy, resulting from the organisation and cooperation among the different National Delegations of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, as well as from the intensive scientific work carried out by international art historians and curators.

We can identify two main outcomes: the first concerns the art-historical influence linked to the scientific project, while the second relates to the promotion of international cooperation.

In terms of historical impact, the exhibitions have fostered significant advancements in art historical research, by providing a new understanding of European history and culture. Celebrations of historical anniversaries, traditionally national in character, have turned into occasions to celebrate European unity. This is evident in the bicentenary of the French Revolution, in the 700th anniversary of the Confederation and in the 800th anniversary of the foundation of the federal city of Bern. Moreover, the dramatic events of the Second World War and the dictatorships are not considered limits to the European historical narrative, but moments of cohesion and resistance against the tragedy of regimes and war. The importance of the scientific project is underlined by the catalogues, which represent valuable research resources and document the work of the experts involved. Furthermore, another lasting effect of the

[295] Roger Griffin, *Totalitarian Art and the Nemesis of Modernity*, "Oxford Art Journal", vol. 19, no. 2, 1996, https://www.jstor.org/stable/1360741

exhibitions is the creation of museum departments and conservation institutes, as in the case of Florence, Istanbul and Lisbon[296].

The second significant aspect of the exhibitions concerns the important international dialogue between Member States, museum experts and international cultural institutions. As the Council of Europe Art Exhibitions Coordinator Mardell states, one important aspect of the project is that it pools together knowledge from international experts[297]. Meeting documents and exhibition catalogues attest to the enormous commitment of professionals from across Europe and around the world. In addition, in the 1990s, we observe an effort to involve Eastern European countries in art exhibitions in order to foster a greater integration of these new members of the Council of Europe. Subsequently, these signatory countries on their turn hosted Council of Europe exhibitions, becoming active players in their organisation. Moreover, the success of these exhibitions is evidenced by numerous Member States and museums that offered to host them, often resulting in traveling exhibitions across many European capitals. This certainly amplified the impact on European citizens, who had the opportunity to visit them. Although it is difficult to measure their direct influence on individual citizens, but thanks to the involvement of several experts, there was a significant influence in the academic world.

Interesting was the decision to organise art exhibitions by the Council of Europe, an intergovernmental organisation, mainly focused on policy guidelines for Member States involving academics, governmental experts and specialists. In this context, exhibitions were an efficient tool to open up the institution to a broader public. Subsequently, other international organisations recognised the potential of art exhibitions and art itself in conveying messages and promoting intercultural dialogue. For example, the European Union created the Museum of European History, and the European Parliament created its own collection. A similar case is UNESCO, which promotes the values of peace, intercultural dialogue and education through art

[296] Mardell D., *50 years of the Council of Europe art exhibitions. 50 ans d'expositions d'art du Conseil de l'Europe*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publ., 2004.
[297] Steering Committee for Culture, 3rd Meeting of the Bureau, Art Exhibitions of the Council of Europe by David Mardell Special Adviser, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, 15-16 March 2004, CDCULT-BU(2004)25. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809290d7

exhibitions organised by the different National Delegations. The UNESCO building itself is a museum, housing and displaying its collection to the public.

However, we can identify some limitations both in the research and in the exhibitions themselves. Regarding the exhibitions, the second chapter pinpoints some limits, which we will not repeat here. In general, it is noted that the exhibitions were hosted by the largest Western European countries, creating an unequal distribution of them. Concerning the limitation in the research, as mentioned in the introduction, the scarce literature on the exhibitions organised by the Council of Europe, along with gaps in the archival documents of museums and the archive of the Council of Europe have made the research challenging. The greatest difficulty was obtaining information regarding the curatorial choices, which were not included in the catalogues. Another significant limitation lies in measuring the actual impact that exhibitions had on their audiences. There is no concrete data to determine whether, or to what extent, these exhibitions influenced visitors' perceptions of Europe and democracy, nor whether the impact was positive or negative. Perceptions can differ greatly across various groups – adults, children, individuals with disabilities, and people from diverse cultural backgrounds – each of whom may experience and interpret exhibitions in vastly different ways.

In future studies, it might be useful to question the relevance of re-organising exhibitions of this type, which ended in 2012, to address contemporary issues that have a direct link to art and society, in order to stimulate the interest of younger generations. In this context, it would be interesting to conduct interviews with visitors to collect first-hand accounts and better understand the impact of the exhibition. Based on the 2016 recommendations, new art exhibitions should emphasise the role of culture in upholding human rights and engage Europeans through contemporary issues such as sustainability and climate change. The upcoming exhibitions should avoid overemphasis on national cultures, and ensure inclusivity across culturally diverse cities, encouraging the organisation of events in less-served cities. Furthermore, future studies should consider the three organisational scenarios hypothesised by the 2016 recommendations: the Council of Europe could act as the active organiser of an exhibition; exhibitions could be proposed by Member States or cultural institutions;

alternatively, the Secretary General could lend his patronage to selected events according to specific criteria.

In conclusion, we can state that exhibitions based on a scientific project are never meaningless, but always convey a message that triggers meaningful reflections on the present based on the study of the past. Haskell stated that the ephemeral nature of exhibitions can radically alter our perception of historical narratives. In this case, we can affirm that the Council of Europe recognised the power of art exhibitions as a tool to promote democratic values and freedom, fostering a transnational perspective on European history and moving beyond the idea of history as an exclusively national heritage.

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Annex 1: List of the Art Exhibitions of the Council of Europe

1st Exhibition 1954-1955

Humanist Europe, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, 16 December-28 February 1955

Catalogue: *L'Europe humaniste, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Bruxelles, 1954-1954*. Bruxelles : La Connaissance, 1954.

Other languages: Dutch

2nd Exhibition 1955

The Triumph of Mannerism from Michelangelo to El Greco, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2 July-16 October 1955

Catalogue: *Le triomphe du maniérisme européen : de Michel-Ange au Gréco, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1955*. Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 1955.

Other languages: Dutch

3rd Exhibition 1956-1957

The 17th century in Europe – Realism, Classicism and Baroque, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome, 1 December 1956–31 January 1957

Catalogue: *Le XVIIe siècle européen réalisme, classicisme, baroque, Palazzo delle esposizioni, Rome, 1956-1957*. De Luca, 1956.

Other languages: Italian

4th Exhibition 1958

The Age of Rococo, the Residenz, Munich, 15 June–15 September 1958

Catalogue: *The Age of Rococo: Art and Culture of the Eighteenth Century*, the Residenz, Munich, 1958. Munich: Hermann Rinn, 1958.

Other languages: French, German.

5th Exhibition 1959

The Romantic Movement, The Tate Gallery and the Arts Council Gallery, London, 10 Jury–27 September 1959.

Catalogue: *The Romantic Movement, the Tate Gallery and the Arts Council Gallery, London, 1959*. London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1959.

6th Exhibition 1960-1961

Sources of the 20th century: The Arts in Europe 1884 – 1914, Musée National d'art Moderne, Paris, 4 November 1960–23 January 1961.

Catalogue: *The Sources of the XXth Century: The Arts in Europe from 1884 to 1914, Musée National d'art Moderne, Paris, 1960-1961*. Paris: Musée National d'art Moderne, 1960.

Other languages: French

7th Exhibition 1961

Romanesque Art, the National Palace of Montjuic of Barcelona, Barcelona and the Cathedral of Saint-Jacques, Santiago de Compostela, 10 July–10 October 1961

Catalogue: Exh. cat. *L'art roman, Palacio Nacional de Montjuic, Barcelona/ Catedral de Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela, 1961*. Barcelona: Conservatoire des Arts du Livre de Barcelone, 1961. Spanish : *El Arte románico* Leaflet.

Other languages: Spanish

8th Exhibition 1962

European Art around 1400, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, 7 May–21 July 1962.

Catalogue: *L'art européen vers 1400, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Wien, 1962*. Vienne: Kunsthistorisches Museum, 1962. German: *Europäische Kunst um 1400*

Other languages: German

9th Exhibition 1964

Byzantine Art, Zappeion Exhibition Hall, Athens, 1 April-15 June 1964.

Catalogue: Exh. cat. *Byzantine art, a European art, Zappeion Exhibition Hall, Athens, 1964*. Athens: Zappeion Megaron, 1964.

Other languages: French, Greek.

10th Exhibition 1965

Charlemagne – His Life and Work, Aix-la-Chapelle, Aachen, 26 June–19 September 1965.

Catalogue: Exh. cat. *Charlemagne: œuvre, rayonnement et survivances, Aix-la-Chapelle, Aachen, 1965*. Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1965.
Other languages: German

11th Exhibition 1966

Queen Christina of Sweden, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, 29 June–16 October 1966.
Catalogue: *Christina, Queen of Sweden, a Personality in European Civilisation, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, 1966*. Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1966.
Other languages: French, Swedish, German.

12th Exhibition 1968

Gothic Art, Louvre Museum, Paris, 2 April–1 July 1968.
Catalogue: *L'Europe Gothique, XIIe XIVe siècles, Musée du Louvre, Paris, 1968*. Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1968.

13th Exhibition 1970

The Order of St John in Malta, The Palace, the Museums of St. John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta, 2 April–1 July 1970.
Catalogue: Exh. cat. *The Order of St. John in Malta, the Palace, the Museum of St. John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta, 1970*. Valletta: St. Paul's Press, 1970.

14th Exhibition 1972

The Age of Neo-Classicism, Royal Academy and Victoria & Albert Museum, London, 9 September–19 November 1972.
Catalogue: *The Age of Neo-Classicism, Royal Academy and Victoria & Albert Museum, London, 1972*. London: The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1972.
Other languages: French

15th Exhibition 1977

Trends in the 1920s, New National Gallery/ Academy of Arts/ Orangery of Charlottenburg Palace, Berlin, 14 August–16 October 1977.

Catalogue: *Trends of the Twenties, New National Gallery/ Academy of Arts/ the Orangery of Charlottenburg Palace, Berlin, 1977.* Berlin: D. Reimer, 1977.
Other languages: French and German

16th Exhibition 1980

Florence and Tuscany under the Medici, Forte di Belvedere/ Palazzo Medici Riccardi/ Orsanmichele/ Biblioteca Medica Laurenziana/ Istituto e Museo di Storia Della Scienza/ Palazzo Vecchio/ Palazzo Strozzi Florence, 15 March – 28 September 1980.
Catalogue: Exh. cat. *Firenze e la Toscana Dei Medici Nell'Europa de Cinquecento: Il Potere e lo Spazio; La Scena del principe, Forte di Belvedere/ Palazzo Medici Riccardi, Firenze, 1980.* Florence: Edizioni Medicee s.r.l., 1980.
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17th Exhibition 1983

Portuguese Discoveries and Renaissance Europe, Mosteiro de Madre de Deus/ Casa dos Bicos/ Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga/ Torre de Belém/ Mosteiro dos Jerónimos, Lisbon, May-October 1983.
Catalogue: *Os Descobrimentos Portugueses e a Europa Do Renascimento: XVII Exposição Europeia de Arte, Ciência e Cultura, Casa Dos Bicos. A Dinastia de Avis e a Europa: "O Homem e a Hora São Um Só"*. Lisboa: Presidência do Conselho de Ministros, 1983.
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Antecedentes Medievais Dos Descobrimentos: "É a Voz Da Terra Ansiando Pelo Mar". Lisboa: Presidência do Conselho de Ministros, 1983.

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18th Exhibition 1983

Anatolian Civilizations, St. Irene / Topkapi Palace Museum, Istanbul, 22 May–30 October 1983.

Catalogues:

Exh. cat. *The Anatolian Civilisations*, *St. Irene / Topkapi Palace Museum, Istanbul, 1983, 1 Prehistoric, Hittite, Early Iron Age.* Istanbul: Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 1983.

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19th Exhibition 1988

Christian IV and Europe, Frederiksbourg Castle/ Kronbourg Castle/ Rosernberg Castle/ Royal museums of Fine Arts/ Department of Prints and Drawings/ National Museums/ Royal Arsenal Museums/ Round Tower/ Koldinghus Castle/ Aarhus Art Museum, Denmark, 30 March–25 September 1988.

Catalogue: *Christian IV and Europe, Denmark, 1988*. Copenhagen: Foundation for Christian IV, 1988. Danish: *Christian IV og Europa*

Other languages: Danish

20th Exhibition 1989

The French Revolution and Europe, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 19 March–26 June 1989.

Catalogue:

La Révolution Française et l'Europe : 1789-1799, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 1989, 1 Introduction générale ; l'Europe à la veille de la Révolution. Paris : Ed. De la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1989.

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21st Exhibition 1991

Emblems of liberty – the image of the Republic in Art Historical Museum Bern/Museum of Fine Arts, Bern, 1 June–15 September 1991.

Catalogue: *Emblèmes de la liberté : l'image de la république dans l'art du XVIe au XXe siècle, Musée d'histoire de Berne et Musée des beaux-arts de Berne, Berne, 1991*. Berne: Stæmpfli, 1991.

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22nd Exhibition 1992-1993

From Viking to Crusader – Scandinavia and Europe 800 – 1200, Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais Paris, 2 April–12 July 1992; Altes Museum, Berlin, 1 September-15 November 1992; Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, 12 December 1992-14 March 1993)

Catalogue: Exh. cat. *From Viking to Crusader: The Scandinavians and Europe, 800-1200, Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris/Altes Museum, Berlin/Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, 1992-1993*. Copenhagen: Nordic Council of Ministers, 1992.

Other languages: French, Danish, German

23rd Exhibition 1995-1996

Art and Power, Europe under the Dictators 1930 – 45, Hayward Gallery, London, 26 October 1995-21 January 1996; Centre de Cultura Contemporánea de Barcelona, Barcelona, 26 February-6 may 1996; Deutsches Historiches Museums, Berlin, 7 June-20 August 1996.

Catalogue: *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45, London, Hayward Gallery/ Barclelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona/ Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, 1995-1996*. Stuttgart: Oktagon-Verl, 1995.

24th Exhibition 1996-1997

The Dream of Happiness – the Art of Historicism in Europe, Künstlerhaus /Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna, 13 September 1996–6 January 1997.

Catalogue: Exh. cat. *Wandel & Beharrung: Aspekte zum Leben im Zeitalter des Historismus in Österreich, Künstlerhaus/ Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Wien, 1996-1997*. Wien: Die Kulturdokumentation, Das Archiv, 1996.

25th Exhibition 1998-2000

Gods and Heroes of the Bronze Age, National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen, 19 December 1998-5 April 1999; Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn, 7 May-8 August 1999; Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 28 September-9 January 2000; National Archaeological Museum, Athens, 11 February-7 May 2000.

Catalogues: *Gods and Heroes of the Bronze Age: Europe at the Time of Ulysses, National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen/ Kunst- Und Ausstellungshalle Der*

Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn/ Galeries Nationales Du Grand Palais, Paris/ National Archaeological Museum, Athens, 1998-2000. London: Thames and Hudson, 1999.

Other languages: French, Danish, German, Greek

26th Exhibition 1998-1999

War and Peace in Europe (Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, Münster; Kulturgeschichtliches Museum / Kunsthalle Dominikanerkirche Osnabrück, 25 October 1998–17 January 1999)

Catalogues: *1648 - Krieg Und Frieden in Europa, Westfälischen Landesmuseum Für Kunst Und Kulturgeschichte, Münster/ Kulturgeschichtlichen Museum, Osnabrück. 1998-1999, 1. Politik, Religion, Recht Und Gesellschaft*. München: Bruckmann, 1998.

———. *1648 - Krieg Und Frieden in Europa, Westfälischen Landesmuseum Für Kunst Und Kulturgeschichte, Münster/ Kulturgeschichtlichen Museum, Osnabrück. 1998-1999, 2. Kunst Und Kultur*. München: Bruckmann, 1998.

———. *1648 - Krieg Und Frieden in Europa, Westfälischen Landesmuseum Für Kunst Und Kulturgeschichte, Münster/ Kulturgeschichtlichen Museum, Osnabrück. 1998-1999, 3. Ausstellungskatalog*. München: Bruckmann, 1998.

1648 - Krieg Und Frieden in Europa, Westfälischen Landesmuseum Für Kunst Und Kulturgeschichte, Münster/ Kulturgeschichtlichen Museum, Osnabrück. 1998- 1999, 4. CD-ROM Für PC: 400 Kunstwerke, 56 Meisterwerke in Höchster Auflösung, 1998.

Other languages: English: *1648: War and Peace in Europe*

27th Exhibition Part1 2001

Otto the Great, Magdeburg and Europe, Kulturhistorischen Museum Magdeburg, Magdeburg, 27 August–2 December 2001.

Catalogue: *Otto Der Große: Magdeburg Und Europa, Kulturhistorischen Museum Magdeburg, Magdeburg, 2001, 1. Essays*. Mainz: Von Zabern, 2001.

———. *Otto Der Große: Magdeburg Und Europa, Kulturhistorischen Museum Magdeburg, Magdeburg, 2001, 2. Katalog*. Mainz: Von Zabern, 2001.

———. *Otto Der Große: Magdeburg Und Europa, Kulturhistorischen Museum Magdeburg, Magdeburg, 2001, 3. Ottonische Neuanfänge : Symposion Zur Ausstellung "Otto Der Große, Magdeburg Und Europa."* Mainz: Von Zabern, 2001.

27th Exhibition Part 2 2001-2002

The Centre of Europe around 1000 A.D., National Museum, Budapest, 20 August-26 November 2000; National Museum, Krakow, 20 December 2000-25 March 2001; Gropiusbau, Berlin, 13 May-19 August 2001; Reiss- Museum, Mannheim, 7 October 2001–27 January 2002; Riding School of Prague Castle, Prague, 3 March-2 June 2002; National Museum, Bratislava, 7 July-29 September, 2002.

Catalogue: *Europe's Centre around AD 1000, National Museum, Budapest/ National Museum, Krakow/ Gropiusbau, Berlin/ Reiss-Museum, Mannheim/ Riding School of Prague Castle, Prague/ National Museum, Bratislava, 2001-2002, 1. Contributions to History, Art and Archaeology*. Stuttgart: Theiss, 2000.

———. *Europe's Centre around AD 1000, National Museum, Budapest/ National Museum, Krakow/ Gropiusbau, Berlin/ Reiss-Museum, Mannheim/ Riding School of Prague Castle, Prague/ National Museum, Bratislava, 2001-2002, 2. Catalogue*. Stuttgart: Theiss, 2000.

Other languages: German, Hungarian, Czech.

28th Exhibition 2006-2007

Universal Leonardo "The Mind of Leonardo. The Universal Genius at Work" Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, 28 March 2016-7 January 2007

"Leonardo da Vinci: Experience, Experiment and Design" Victoria & Albert Museum, London, 14 September 2006 -7 January 2007

"Leonardo and Oxford: Discovering the World of Leonardo in Oxford's collections" at Christ Church Picture Gallery/ Ashmolean Museum/ Magdalen College/ Museum of the History of Science/ University of Oxford Botanic Garden, Oxford, 9 August-5 November 2006

"Leonardo: The Madonna of the Carnation" Alte Pinakothek, Munich, 15 September - 03 December 2006 "The Treatise on Painting: Manuscripts and Editions between the

16th and 19th century" Biblioteca Trivulziana, Sala del Tesoro, Milan, 1 November-31 Dec 2006

Catalogues:

- Exh. cat. *The Mind of Leonardo: The Universal Genius at Work, Galleria Degli Uffizi, Florence, 2006-2007*. Florence: Giunti, 2006.

Other language: Italian and Japonese (A reduced version of the exhibition was held at the National Museum in Tokyo, 20 March- 17 June, 2007)

- Exh. cat. *Leonardo Da Vinci: Experience, Experiment and Design, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, 2006-2007*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.

- Exh. cat. *La mente di Leonard: al tempo della "Battaglia di Anghiari," Biblioteca Trivulziana, Sala del Tesoro, Milan, 2006*. Firenze: Giunti, 2006.

- Exh. cat. *Leonardo da Vinci: Die Madonna mit der Nelke, Alte Pinakothek, München, 2006*. München: Schirmer/ Mosel, 2006.

Project Website: "Universal Leonardo: Leonardo Da Vinci." http://www.universalleonardo.org/index.php

29th Exhibition 2006

The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation 962-1806, A two-part exhibition in Kulturhistorisches Museum Magdeburg, Magdeburg; Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin, 28 August-10 December 2006.

Catalogue: *Heiliges Römisches Reich Deutscher Nation, 962-1806, Kulturhistorisches Museum Magdeburg, Magdeburg/ Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin, 2006*. Dresden: Sandstein, 2006.

Other languages: English short guide: *The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation 962 to 1806 - from Otto the Great to the Close and Middle Ages.*

30th Exhibition 2012-2014

The Desire for Freedom. Art in Europe since 1945, Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin, 17 October 2012-10 February 2013; Palazzo Reale, Milan, 15 March- 2 June 2013; KUMU, Tallinn, 28 June-3 November 2013; Museum of Contemporary Art, Krakow, 18 October 2013-26 January 2014.

Catalogues

- Exh. cat. *The Desire for Freedom: Art in Europe since 1945, Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin/ Palazzo Reale, Milan/ KUMU, Tallinn/ Museum of Contemporary Art, Cracow, 2012-2014*. Berlin: DHM, 2013.

Other language: German, Italian

- Exh. cat. *Potrzeba wolności: sztuka europejska po 1945 roku, MOCAK, Krakow, 2013*. Kraków: MOCAK Muzeum Sztuki Współczesnej, 2013.

- Exh. cat. *Critique and Crisis: Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité Reconsidered, Collegium Hungaricum Berlin, Berlin*, *2012-2015*. Berlin: Revolver, 2015.

Annex 2: *Hors Série Exhibitions* until 1997

1960s-1970s: Exhibitions organised with the city of Strasbourg

1) 1968: *Art in Europe around 1918*

2) 1969: *The Russian Ballets of Serge de Diaghilev: 1909-1929*

3) 1970: *Art around 1925-1930*

Artefacts: Mainly paintings, as well as sculptures and photography, and some set design.

Participating countries (second exhibition): Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and USA.

1975: *Love & Marriage: Aspects of fold life in Europe*, Belgium.

Artefacts: The description of traditions, traditional objects and costumes and some photographs.

The traditions of the following countries were represented: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Rumania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, West Germany and Yugoslavia.

1987: *Space in European Art*, Tokyo.

Artefacts: Mainly painting and sculpture, some drawing and some more contemporary artworks.

Countries: Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, the Holy See, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States.

1987: *Exhibition-dialogue on contemporary art in Europe,* Lisbon.

Artefacts: contemporary painting and sculpture, some drawing and installation work.

Countries: Austria, Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and Sweden. The exhibition travelled to ten different European countries.

1987: *Eighties: the painters of Europe in the 1980s*, touring exhibition.

Artefacts: contemporary paintings.

Countries: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the USSR.

1989: *Seven contemporary soviet painters*, France.

Artefacts: contemporary paintings.

Countries: The main participant was the USSR, but the exhibition was sponsored by the Council of Europe and the City of Strasbourg.

1994-5: *The art of devotion in the late Middle Ages in Europe*, Amsterdam.

Artefacts: religious paintings, sculptures and objects.

Countries: the lenders were Belgium, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

1997: *Rudolf II & Prague*

Artefacts: Paintings and sculptures, objects and furniture, costumes, scientific instruments, and some coins and maps.

Countries: Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Reference: Evaluation of Council of Europe Art Exhibition Series, Elina Middleton-Lajudie, February 2002.

Annex 3: Abbreviations/Acronyms

CCC Council for Cultural Co-operation

CDCC Steering Committee for Cultural Co-operation

CDCPP Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape

CDCULT Steering Committee for Culture

CDPATE Steering Committee for Cultural Heritage

CIHA International Committee of the History of Art

CoE Council of Europe

DECS Directorate of Education and of Cultural and Scientific Affairs

EOC European Organizing Committee of the Art Exhibitions

EU European Union

Annex 4: Administrative Overview

1950 Committee of Cultural Experts

1952 Julian Kuypers proposed organizing a series of exhibitions on European art

1954 1st exhibition and the European Cultural Convention opened

1956 Cultural Fund was created

1961 Committee of Cultural Experts became Council for Cultural Co-operation (CCC)

1962 Principles for organizing the Art Exhibitions

Ad hoc working party on fine arts (Paris 13th and 14th March 1962) : General Principles governing future European exhibitions;Ad hoc working party on fine arts (Paris 13th and 14th March 1962) : General Principles governing future European exhibitions, [CCC/GT/Art(62)8rev]. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=0900001680725d9f

1976 Council for Cultural Co-operation (CCC) became Steering Committee for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC)

1978 First guidelines for organising European Art Exhibitions

Guidelines for the organisation of European Art Exhibitions, 28 February 1978, Strasbourg, archives of the Council of Europe, DECS/DC(78)10. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809a0f2f

1988 Guidelines for organising the Art Exhibitions set up

Council for Cultural Co-operation, "Guidelines for the Organisation of Council of Europe Art Exhibitions," 1988, 3–4, DECS/EXPO (88) 1-rev, Council of Europe https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809c6a1c

2002 the CDCC was dissolved, and its responsibilities were taken over by the Steering Committee for Culture (CDCULT), which became one of the four committees within the new structure of cultural cooperation.

2002 Evaluation of the art exhibition series

Steering Committee for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC) became Steering Committee for Culture (CDCULT)

2003 Exhibition review paper by David Mardell

Art exhibions of the Council of Europe, 3rd meeting of the Bureau, Strasbourg, 15-16 March 2004, CDCULT-BU(2004)25.
https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016809290d7

2004 Publication of *50 Years of the Council of Europe Art Exhibitions*

2011 Steering Committee for Culture (CDCULT) became Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP)

2015 Discussion on the revised concept

Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape, "9th Meeting of the Bureau (Strasbourg, 23-24 November 2015), Rethinking Council of Europe Art Exhibitions: Towards a Revised Concept," November 11, 2015, sec. I, CDCPP-Bu (2015) 26.
https://rm.coe.int/1680641c8c

2016: Discussion on the revised concept

Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) - CDCPP(2016)9 - Item 5.1 on the agenda – Council of Europe Art Exhibitions toward a new concept and initiative: "we, the others" - For information and action, 23 May 2016, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CDCPP (2016)9.
https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016806a4886

Annex 5: Recommendations on the reorientation of Council of Europe Art Exhibitions

The Consultants adopted these recommendations in Florence in 2000.
Exhibitions in the Council of Europe series should in future be oriented to themes which

• concern art and society rather than purely art-historical exhibitions,

• contribute more closely to understanding art in modern times and demonstrate the fact that art was much more "international" than probably any other sphere of human expression during the twentieth century,

• directly involve the more recent and the smaller member countries and lead to exhibitions which can be staged also in these countries.

Purposes of the Council of Europe series:

- increasing knowledge by introducing new ideas and new presentations of works of art; they have a catalytic effect on research and scholarship; often are at the origin of restoration work and, through their catalogues, establish milestones along the road of the history of art;
- they stimulate interaction and co-operation among specialists and involve museums and collections in joint studies and presentations across the whole of Europe and often beyond;
- they contribute to the standing and the renewal of the perception of museum collections besides often having a stimulating effect on the art market;
- they provide tremendous incentive to innovation in museography and museum scenography;
- for contemporary artists, they represent the greatest stimulus possible to creative work.

Regarding the institutional collaboration, the exhibitions should stimulate closer collaboration between museum professionals and institutions to enable them

• to devise exhibitions on a joint theme by a number of museums throughout Europe,

• to create a network of institutions collaborating on exhibitions devoted to Europe-oriented themes.

Regarding Council of Europe support

- The sums of money made available for this activity by the Council of Europe (Cultural Fund and the annual voluntary contributions from member States), modest as they are in relation to the cost of researching and mounting a large-scale exhibition, can nevertheless be a determining factor in the execution and sitting of a project.
- The Consultants Group consequently recommend that the current financing measures, as set out in the "Guidelines for the Organisation of Council of Europe Art Exhibitions" (DECS/EXPO (88) 1 + addendum), be modified.
- Funds, to be carefully assessed by the Group, could be provided by priority to help the more recent and smaller member States participate more directly in the exhibition's activity, for example by covering the cost of essential research, contributing to equipping venues to receive exhibitions, assisting the publication of catalogues, contributing to participation in symposia linked to Council of Europe sponsored exhibitions.
- No change in the decision-making process is suggested.
- To preserve the distinctiveness of the Council of Europe exhibitions, the Consultants were not in favour of granting the auspices to a large number of exhibitions. They were inclined to suggest the CDCC limit the granting of Council of Europe auspices in principle to one deserving exhibition each year the quality of which having been duly assessed by the Group.

Consultants suggested the following themes to develop in the next exhibitions.

• Polish Baroque
• The Hansa
• Pre-renaissance in the north
• The age of Enlightenment (in East Europe)
• Painting in the 'grand Siècle'

- History painting
- Portraiture
- The first decade of the 20th century
- Art in a divided Europe (the cold war period)
- European myths and symbols
- Landscapes
- Historic figures (Peter the Great, Catherine the Great, Marie-Thérèse, Napoleon...)
- 'Revolutionary' Artists (Leonardo as an example, Van Eyck, Dürer...)
- A series of "Europe and...", for example Europe and the Arabs, Europe and Islam, Europe and India, or the Far East... or even America.

Reference: Art exhibions of the Council of Europe, 3rd meeting of the Bureau, Strasbourg, 15-16 March 2004, CDCULT-BU(2004)25.

Annex 6: Experts' suggestions for relevant projects that could be associated to the "We, the Others" initiative

1. *New Narrative for Europe*: This is an on-going European commission project with a fundamental ambition similar to the discussions held by the expert group and also tackling questions related to 'otherness'. As part of this project, BOZAR has developed two complementary projects:

- *Imagine Europe* – In Search of New Narratives: a series of 12 labs with artists and young people to share their visions on Europe at BOZAR until end September 2016. https://www.bozar.be/en/calendar/imagine-europe
- *Next Generation Please*: a Bozar pilot project gathering artists and Belgian to discuss and re-define Europe with policymakers. The 12 schools will open their exhibition at BOZAR in May 2016.
  https://www.bozar.be/en/next-generation-please

2. *Europe Europe*: An exhibition displaying young European artists in alternative arts spaces. The exhibitions were initially developed by Hans Ulrich obrist at the Astrup Fearnley Museum in Oslo in 2014. It was planned to be in Brussels, Lyon and possibly Moscow in 2017, but there are not concrete evidence indicating that it took palce as planned. https://www.afmuseet.no/en/exhibitions/europe-europe/

3. *Journées de Bruxelles* – Octobre 2016: A 3-days forum on Europe with top European leaders discussing the future of Europe.

4. *Art in Europe* 1945–1968. Facing the Future: joint exhibition project of BOZAR, Pushkin Museum, and ZKM in 2016–2017.
https://www.bozar.be/en/calendar/facing-future

5. Relevant follow-up initiatives to the 30th Council of Europe Art Exhibition "Desire for Freedom. Art in Europe since 1945" (Berlin, Tallinn, Milan, Cracow, 2012-2014) to be identified with the support of the curators of the exhibition. One project was

“Free to Create – Create to be Free” digital exhibition. This intiative was launched to mark the 70th anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). The "Free to Create - Create to be Free" exhibition was conceived in consultation with the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage, and Landscape (CDCPP). It aims to highlight the importance of artistic freedom and its role in upholding human rights and democracy. This digital exhibition was launched later, in June 2021, and is accessible online, providing a platform for artists from various Council of Europe member states to showcase their work.
https://www.freetocreate.art

6. *Back to the Sandbox: Art and Radical Pedagogy*: The project explores the intersection of art, democracy, and education. It includes exhibitions, research, workshops, digital application developments. The exhibition was curated by Jaroslav Andel and displayed contemporary artworks that question the role of education and emphasize creativity as an essential societal component. The exhibition traveled in Europe and USA, encouraging contributions and further developments at each venue. The first venue was the Reykjavik Art Museum in Iceland which hosted the project from January to April 2016.
https://listasafnreykjavikur.is/en/exhibitions/back-sandbox-art-and-radical-pedagogy

7. Exhibition projects and symposia on art and philosophy that are based on the European humanist tradition (e.g. curated by French philosopher Bruno Latour – Iconoclash 2002, Making Things Public 2005, Reset Modernity! 2016) as well as a continuing exhibition series on philosophers and the arts (e.g. Foucault 2002, Baudrillard 2004) at ZKM.
http://www.bruno-latour.fr/fr/node/668

8. *Transdiciplinary Serendipity Research Program*: The project, initiated by the Agosto Foundation, aims at creating transdisciplinary communities on local and international levels. This programme is focued on the transformative power of education in public spaces, emphasizing civic dimensions. The “vs. Interpretation”

project began in 2014 to promote artistic projects and research, providing spaces for experimentation across disciplines.
https://agosto-foundation.org/transdisciplinary-serendipity-research-program

Reference: Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) - CDCPP(2016)9 - Item 5.1 on the agenda – Council of Europe Art Exhibitions toward a new concept and initiative: “we, the others” - For information and action, 23 May 2016, Strasbourg, Archives of the Council of Europe, CDCPP (2016)9. https://search.coe.int/archives?i=09000016806a4886