A comparative study of professional association
in the museum sectors of Britain and Japan

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Abstract

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This thesis is the result of an international comparative study of the formation of the professional associations of museum workers in Britain and Japan. Museums associations were part of the infrastructure that contributed to the development of museums, including the professionalisation of museum workers. Comparative study reveals the unique characteristics of each organisation and how its structure, management, objectives and achievements differ as a result.

In Britain, the Museums Association was formed at York in 1889. It is the oldest museum association in the world. The Museum Work Promotion Association, the predecessor of the Japanese Association of Museums, was established at Tokyo in 1928. The Association was modelled on preceding foreign museums associations, including the British one. The formative processes of these two associations capture the intentions and scope of these organisations, characteristics which become a legacy for the future.

The formation processes of organisations can be described as interactions between diverse actors. The intentions of the individuals who led the associational movements greatly influenced these processes, and the characteristics of the associations that were produced particularly reflected these. The occupational careers of the founding members of each association were directly related to their motivations in supporting the associational movement. By focusing on the differences between the careers of these individuals in Britain and Japan, this thesis explores the features of the historical trajectory of each association.

In the conclusion, the thesis elucidates what the differences between these Associations and their histories might mean. The unique history of an association can represent the characteristics of museum history across a country more broadly. Therefore, it can provide an illuminating perspective on the dynamism of museum history.
Acknowledgements

I dedicate this thesis to my late father, Minoru Oki (1946-2012), who always provided generous support to me. It is very regretful that I could not present this to him in his lifetime.

Because of his unexpected death in August 2012, I had to return to Japan before completing my PhD work in the UK. I continued it in Japan while assisting in the family business which my father had owned and managed. It has been a really tough period for me. However, in such a difficult situation, the staff and colleagues of the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, have always been supportive of me. Acknowledgements and gratitude are due to all of them.

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Chapter 1

Introduction: aim, objectives, methods and structure

Aim and objectives of the thesis

This thesis concerns the dynamics of museum development and draws upon the reciprocal analytical possibilities offered by an international comparative study of museum histories in contrasting nations. The focus is on the developing dynamic spheres which embrace various relationships between diverse actors, including individuals and institutions. Of particular interest to this study is a focus on the development of the cooperative systems of self-management found in the formation of museums associations. By viewing the two museum communities, this thesis seeks to isolate some of the social, cultural and political determinants of the making of these two museum infrastructures: the Museums Association, established in 1889 in Britain, and the Museum Work Promotion Association (Hakubutsukan-Jigyo-Sokushin-Kai; 博物館事業促進会), established in 1928 in Japan. The latter is the predecessor of the present Japanese Association of Museums (Nihon-Hakubustukan-Kyokai; 日本博物館協会). Those determinants were affected by circumstances surrounding the individuals engaged in museum development. “Individualism” is a key term in this study for revealing the intricate formative processes of museum communities. Individual aspirations had a decisive impact on the movement. This thesis will focus on this
interaction between individualism and the structures which are deployed in the activities of the museums associations.

The aims and research questions of this study are as follows.

**Aim:**

The aim of this thesis is to compare processes of association in the museum communities of Britain and Japan in order to understand the impact of different actors (government, the voluntary sector, academics, industry and museum workers) on the characteristics, actions and orientation (individualism, intervention, professionalisation, standards, promotion and dissemination of museums, etc.) of the museum association each produced.

**Research questions and objectives:**

- How did professional associations come into being in Britain and Japan?
- Who were the actors and what shaped their actions?
- How important was individualism to the success of each organisation?
- How did the members’ individual aspirations interface with the collective activities of the associations?
- How were the characteristics of each association shaped by the differing cultures into which they were born? What were the particular political, cultural and social aspects of each associational movement?
- What were the components of the professionalisation process in each
country?

- How were personal and professional social aspirations achieved in the management of the associations?
- What do these associational movements tell us about the functional and political conceptualisation of museum in the period?
- Finally, are the legacies still present in the Japanese and British museum communities that derived from the different histories of the associations?

Why focus on museums associations?

This study is motivated by the outcomes of recent historical studies of museums. These studies have used innovative methods to elucidate the intricate processes of museum development which could not be exposed by more traditional approaches. A turning point in the writing of such histories occurred around 1990, when Foucauldian theory began to be adopted in museums studies. Works following Foucault emphasised the discontinuity of history and revealed the effects of social and political regulation, which have varied across the ages, on the meanings of museums (e.g. Hooper-Greenhill 1992, Bennett 1995, Duncan 1995). An eminent achievement of this methodological shift is the exposure of the social and political power of museums, and the consequent effects of this power.
Further methodological innovation has occurred since 2000. These complemented Foucauldian perspectives by focusing on the dynamic interactions of historical actors. Christopher Whitehead, for example, expressed such interactions as activities of metaphorical “cartography” (Whitehead 2007, Whitehead 2009, Whitehead 2011). His work implies that the meanings of and made by museums have been made through the boundary skimming work of the diverse actors involved in the institutions, and suggests that cooperative activities, which are not always amicable, developed variedly in different times and regions.

Some recent studies have proposed new perspectives from which to reveal these variable interactions. One of these is the history of local museums, which have illuminated the diverse interactions of museum actors in local spheres. Samuel Alberti, for example, who studied the history of the Manchester Museum, explained that his research objective was to explore “an intermediary level of control, examining the various individuals and institutions at a local level in provincial England and their audience constituencies” (Alberti 2009: 191). Focusing on the “local level” can provide the possibility of depicting scenes in the development of museum communities which cannot be understood through examining only the history of national level institutions.

In this thesis, the museum associations are lens through which to view the interactions between actors involved in museum communities. Museums
associations are disputed arenas where museum workers’ intentions come together, and sometimes collide, and are places where we can see dynamic interactions between diverse actors. Associational activity is a path through which individual aspirations can be achieved. This is true not only of curators but also of other professionals. In Britain, for example, professional associations multiplied throughout the nineteenth century, and in so doing indicate the formation of the “professional middle class” (Millerson 1964, Savage 1992). The Museums Association in Britain came into being as a part of this movement, which also held aspirations of museum staff who wished to consolidate their social positions as professionals. Thus, in the formational activities of the associations we can see the dynamic interactions of personal intentions which were socially and politically motivated. Because of the official, organisational and political stances of museums associations, it is also possible to use them to reveal the social and political meanings of museums in any given period.

**Why adopt an international comparative approach?**

When conducting research focusing on the diverse interactions of actors, it can be highly illuminating to take a comparative approach, because these interactions vary across time and space. In fact, comparative studies of local museum history in Britain have recently bloomed (Knell 2000, Hill 2005, Alberti 2001, Alberti
2002, Kraft, Alberti 2003, Snape 2010). An international comparative study at this level of resolution has not, however, been fully developed in this field, as yet. The methodological possibilities, though, have been indicated in a few recent works. Peter Aronsson, for instance, who has conducted international comparative research on Scandinavian and Mediterranean national museums proposed two objectives of this kind of study: generalization, and the exposure of variations in the historical trajectories of museums (Aronsson 2010: 48-49).

Aronsson, in his study, was undertaking macro-level observations of different museum systems and developments. My aim has been to achieve, in an international comparison, that level of historical resolution achieved by scholars who have completed national or biographical studies of museums and associational movements.

In this study, the museum communities in both the UK and Japan are set up as the objects for comparison, because these countries share topographical, political and economic affinities. These insular countries have pursued similar historical trajectories, of imperial sovereignty and colonialism, for instance, and this has fundamentally affected the process of modernisation in both countries. With respect to their museum histories, they have also significant possibilities for reciprocal comparison. In Japan, museums were spread across the country as part of the governmental initiatives on the national policy of Westernisation, which had been in operation since the late nineteenth century. Since the middle of the
eighteenth century, through missions to Europe and the United States and the government’s participation in international expositions, the concept of the museum was introduced to Japan, and in 1872 the first national museum was erected in Tokyo. In the process, museums in Britain were viewed as a model on which to base Japanese museums. In fact, the plan of national museums in Japan was based upon that of the British Museum.

The development of museum infrastructures in Japan was also affected by existing foreign examples. The first museums association in the world, was the Museums Association, in Britain, but the Japanese Museum Work Promotion Association can also be understood as being in this first wave of museum associations. Gentaro TANAHASHI (棚橋源太郎), who was a main advocate of the formation of the Japanese association, noted that the further development of museums in foreign countries could be attributed partly to the vigorous activities of museum associations. This fact lay behind his proposal to form an association (Tanahashi and Miyamoto 1962: 80). He directed special attention to the British and American associations, as he considered them to be distinguished examples (Tanahashi 1950: 51). However, the processes of their development in the UK and Japan were completely different. Their developments were driven by the founders’ motivations, which each reflected the different circumstances surrounding them. By focusing upon the differences this thesis will elucidate the dynamism of the museum development processes in which individual social
intentions interact in complicated ways. This also argues against a view that such movements are in any detailed sense universal.

**The structure of the thesis**

This thesis is composed of nine chapters including this introduction, Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, the research context is examined in detail. In particular, it explains the methodological framework of this study. The theories which are introduced in this chapter suggest significant angles for study and analysis. Chapter 3 is devoted to an examination of the situation of British museums in the late nineteenth century. Why did the Museums Association arise during this period? The reasons are revealed using contemporary primary sources, from which we can directly conceive the awareness that museum workers at the time had of the issues facing them. Chapter 4 focuses on the initial membership of the Museums Association. The question of who did or did not participate in the movement provides an interesting insight into the character and status of the association. Chapter 5 is devoted to a specific analysis of the individuals who engaged in the early Association. Their personal careers were related to their motivations to form such an organisation. This chapter describes the occupational experiences that caused their professional aspirations to develop. Chapter 6 examines the early activities of the Museums Association. What issues affecting museums and their staff were discussed? What were the administrative problems of the
Association? Each of these questions is used to further clarify the character of the MA. Chapters 7 and 8 are devoted to the Japanese association. Firstly, Chapter 7 reviews the historical background to the formation of the Museum Work Promotion Association. The unique museum culture of Japan, so different from the British, is explained, and how this historical context led to the formation is clarified. Finally, Chapter 9 concludes the thesis by reflecting on how the different histories of the British and Japanese associations can be used to reveal the dynamic nature of museum history.

In this thesis, the material will be presented in a largely chronological order with each case study. This is mainly because this work focuses on the processes of formation of the associations and how individual intentions were intertwined through these processes. Chronological description can vividly express the serial changes in the characteristics of the associations. This approach better fits the aim of this work than a more thematic study based around itemizing the organisational factors of each association.
Chapter 2

Context for the research: the methodological framework for the international comparative approach

Studies of learned societies and associations

The research interest of this study has been shared by not a few pieces of research in the field of history and sociology of science. They have been cast in various ways, as social history, sociology and cultural histories, which lead ultimately to Science Studies as an interdisciplinary field like museum studies. The emerge from debates concerning the importance of the social in science, which when introduced in the 1970s challenged historians of science who were most interested in the history of ideas, and who treated these ideas abstractly. They tested the boundaries and the relationship between science and culture, asking whether science is culture, or science is in culture, or whether the two are completely different things (Barnes 1974, Barnes and Shapin 1979).

In those attempts, focusing on learned societies and association has been one of approaches to analyse the relationship between science, culture and society. Morris Berman, for instance, focused on the Royal Institution and re-examined its social context (Berman 1972). And, Arnold Thackray analysed the social and cultural contexts surrounding learned societies in a particular province:
Manchester (Tharcray 1974). In terms of new understanding of learned societies and professional groups, they were certainly pioneering works which really inserted the socio-political viewpoint into understanding why people come together around particular interests. The works fundamentally altered the way we look at learned societies. They privileged culture and society in their interpretation of what was going on, making us understand that participants were not just interested in the subject and in knowledge development. There are also important works that the organisations were analysed from the perspective of studies of networks. David Elliston Allen undertook numerous studies of networks in the natural sciences in Britain, across the whole span of time from the seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries. He focused on particularly on the botanical clubs and networks which were very popular in the nineteenth century, and described the scientific movement as social and cultural phenomenon (Allen 1976, 1985, 1987, 1993).

After 1970s, the studies of learned societies and associations adopted the social and cultural perspective have contributed to a body of work which elucidate the social and cultural significance of associational actions in science world (Inkster 1977, Shapin 1972 and 1991, Shapin and Barnes 1977). Especially, Jack B. Morrell’s works focused on individualism in the associational movements and analysed their social contexts (Morrell 1971). In his works, the centrality of individualism in British culture was exemplified by his case studies about the
British Association for the Advancement of Science (Morrell 1984, Morrell and Tharcray 1981). More recently, the social history angle has been much developed in the studies. Simon Knell’s work on the culture of English geology, for instance, gave the first modern history of the philosophical societies, and explaining their museums and objects socio-politically and anthropologically (Knell 2000).

**Prosopographical approach**

In the course of the studies, methodological attempts also have been made. One of them is an adoption of a prosopographical approach. For examining the relationship between individualism and an associational movement, the approach is an effective method of investigation. Prosopography is a collective biographical approach. It can reveal social and political contexts of organisations and systems in the society by collecting individual information of the members. This approach was proposed originally for ancient and medieval history, especially for Romans and Byzantines (Stone 1971). But, it can be applied to the modern age. In the 1970s, the approach came to be adopted to analyse the modern scientific community in the UK (cf. Shapin and Thackray 1974). It means the approach can be applicable to the museum community. It will elucidate political purposes and social mobility which lay behind the associational movement of the museum persons. Through this prosopographical approach, the interactions
between individualism and the structure in the associational organisations can be analysed.

More recent works in museum studies also have indicated the significance of biographies as a research material. Biographies are a valuable resource for revealing the dynamics of a museum’s life.

[Biography] offers a way of understanding the relationships between people and between people and things, and of plotting the development of museums and things. It can help us to conceptualise an understanding of museums, not as producers of knowledge about a knowable world which is simply transmitted to an audience, but as arenas where relationships produce narratives of various sorts. (Hill 2012: 3)

This is applicable to the relationship between a social organisation, including a museums association, and the career biographies of its founders.

This study takes over these attempts of social and cultural analysis, and adds a new perspective on the body of work by setting a new object of analysis: museum association, and adopting a new approach: international comparative approach. This study examines formation process of different countries’ museum association by the prosopographical approach: who did participate in the
processes? and why did they come together in it?

Although the prosopography is an appropriate approach for my research, it does have its limitations. Specifically, there are the pragmatic constraints on producing biographies of collections of people caused mainly by quantitative biases of available records concerning the membership of the associations. There are many more biographies of the handful over very active members than there are of the ordinary members who, to a great extent, remain relatively quiet participants in the associations. Inevitably, then, this thesis is focused on a few key individuals rather than the wider membership in part because of the limitations of the historical record.

These limitations are not a critical problem for my work; simply a constraint on what can be understood from prosopographic study alone. My research, however, also focuses on institutions, such as the museums where the curators were employed, as their form and operation also exerted an influence over the formation of these associations. This multi-faceted approach to these associations permits me both to triangulate my data and reveal the complex and interwoven processes of their formation.
Museum association as an arena of interactions between actors

This study sets museum associations as the objects of comparison. A museums association is a main actor within the networks of relationships around a museum. In the UK, the history of the Museums Association was chronologically described by Geoffrey Lewis (Lewis 1989), but there are hardly any attempts to examine it intensively from the viewpoint of social and cultural contexts. It is same situation in the field of Japanese museum studies. The history of Japanese museum association has hardly been focused intensively in any studies. However, focusing on the histories can provided beneficial insights on development processes of museums in each country.

We can see museum association as an arena where the intricate interactions between the multiple actors arise. The formation and activities of a museum association can be described as an aggregation of the interactions. The interaction of multiple actors relating to museums has been usefully visualised by Christopher Whitehead. He compares museum practice with cartography: the activity of mapping (Whitehead 2007, Whitehead 2009, Whitehead 2011). Inspired by the sociological works of Thomas F. Gieryn (Gieryn 1999), he insists that museum practice can be understood using the concept of a map in which some territories are bounded. In a museum, knowledge and disciplines are spatially bounded and positioned, as on a map. This is more than just a metaphor:
this cartography is a tangible practice which takes place in every museum. In fact, through collecting and making exhibitions, curators make concrete maps in their museums: “the museum is a multi-dimensional and multimedia map of the cultural world (and natural world, in the instance of history museums) as produced by curators, with all of the cultural politics which this construction entails” (Whitehead 2009: 48).

But a curator is just one of the agents of museum practice. In museums, knowledge and disciplines are constructed through the interplay of multiple institutions, communities and actors, but their parameters are not explicitly 'agreed upon' or fixed and their practices and content do not cohere into the kind of global systems of knowledge which their status as ostensibly established, autonomous entities would suggest (Alberti 2009: 51).

The cartographic act of museum building is a cooperative work of diverse and sometimes incohesive actors. The relationship between them, however, is not stable but variable. Whitehead indicates the permeability of boundaries within a museum, and boundary work is a continuous practice which repeats, reforms and reinforces demarcations. Thus, cartography can be an effective conception for analysing the dynamics of museum practice. This perspective can be applied to
activities of museum associations, and especially the museum workers’ professionalisation which is a prominent purpose of the associations can be described as such a cartographical process.

**Professionalisation as boundary work in museums**

Boundary work in museums results in the creation of demarcations of knowledge and disciplines in the academic sphere; for instance, Whitehead examines the process of differentiation between archaeology and art history, and Samuel Alberti, focusing on the history of the Manchester Museum, describes the transitions which occurred in the positioning of anthropology in the museum (Alberti 2009, Alberti 2006). In the social and political spheres, boundary work can construct identities related to social class. In particular, professionalisation is an important outcome of work in museums. The dichotomy between professionals and the public, including amateur practitioners and the wider public, is one of the most useful figurations for understanding the relationships of actors in museums. In museums, there are tensions between professionals and publics because the institution is a medium which connects them and through which both of them try to create their identities (see Knell 2011). Of course, for professionals, museums are their workplaces and the sites where their research outcomes are presented. However, the public also creates their identities thorough museums. For instance, a Constructivist analysis of learning processes in museums can
illustrate the autonomous and independent approach members of the audience have towards interpreting the representations offered by museums. These representations, then, cannot be seen simply as objects of edification collected, interpreted and offered by professionals (e.g. Hein 1998). Additionally, museum volunteers position themselves as amateurs intentionally and strategically, and try to create their own identities differing from those of the professionals who have restricted their activities spatially and temporally (Meyer 2008). The boundary work which demarcates the lands between professionals and the public, including amateurs, is a prominent cartographical act in museums. The boundaries have been negotiated throughout the development processes of museums. The emergence of the dichotomy between professionals and publics in museums has been paralleled with the development of professionalisation in museums. Professionalisation, which is a result of boundary work in museums, is also an important indicator of the historical phases of museum development (Zolberg 1981).

Professionalisation in European museums emerged in the course of the nineteenth century. During that time, the museum came to be a prominent institution for the creation of scientific knowledge, including technology and medicine. This phenomenon, which can be seen not only in Britain but also in other European countries, is described by John Pickstone as the emergence of “museological science” (Pickstone 1994). He insists that, after the French Revolution, the
erection of modern scientific institutions, such as museums, hospitals and professional teaching institutions, split the new socio-cognitive type of science into “analytical/comparative” or “museological/diagnostic.” Scientific institutions enabled the fine-grained analysis of objects, and this became the new scientific fashion. While in France, the Revolution was the trigger of such a scientific movement, in Britain, its entrepreneurs were the industrial bourgeoisies. Making their class identities was related to the practice of “museological science” for which they provided incentives and resources (Pickstone 1994: 127). And the emergence of this scientific movement, linked to the erection of modern scientific institutions, entailed the appearance of a new profession: the “professor-curator”. These individuals differentiated themselves from prior practitioners, whom they considered “amateurs” and “dilettantes”, by engaging in more sophisticated examinations of collections.

**The contingent nature of the museum development process**

In the course of the nineteenth century, professionalisation in British museums proceeded, but not equally, uniformly and concurrently everywhere in Britain. The nature and degree of the process varied locally. The development history of local museums, including the professionalisation process, is variable as a consequence of differing local contexts. The social and political characters of towns affected the directions in which local museums developed (Hill 2005).
Besides the institutional setting, the role of key individuals was a decisive factor in the process. Their characters and ideas were strongly reflected in museum practices such as collecting and arrangement (Alberti 2009, see also Kraft and Alberti 2003).

The perspective of localism can shed light on a dimension of the museum development process which cannot be seen through the historical analysis of eminent national museums (Hill 2005). Museums develop through diverse trajectories which invest the institutions with certain characteristics. They have been paralleled with the diverse ways in which local collections develop, and contribute to the civic identity of the town. We can see “the local contingencies of provincial collections” in local museum histories (Alberti 2002). Robert Snape, for instance, focuses on the positions of industrial collections in municipal museums in turn of the twentieth-century Britain, and reveals that such collections were treated in differing manners which reflected the local cultural and political contexts:

The establishment of industrial collections in municipal museums depended … on range of local factors which included the approach of local councils, the nature of local curatorial practice, the enthusiasm of employers and the availability of funding. In combination these factors could provide a strong basis for the development of an industrial
collection (Snape 2010: 23).

With respect to professionalisation in museums, the processes were also made diverse by local factors. Alberti explains this contingent nature by focusing on the practices in late Victorian Yorkshire. In late nineteenth century Britain, paid museum practitioners differentiated themselves from “amateurs” and “dilettantes” through the authorization of a new scientific discipline, symbolized by the style of Thomas Henry Huxley (see Huxley 1896), and rational museum practice which was, for instance, lauded by William Flower as “the new museum idea” (see Flower 1893).\footnote{This idea is explained in detail in Chapter 3.} However, Alberti indicates that, despite such efforts, amateurs still took an important role in achieving the scientific purposes of museums, especially as field workers of the ecological projects which emerged as a new research approach in the period. In fact, in late Victorian Yorkshire, professional practices and identities in museums could be constructed with amateur’s support: “Professionalization should not be treated as a historiographical meta-narrative: the construction of professional identities was a historically and geographically contingent endeavour” (Alberti 2001, see also Meyer 2005). Those contingencies might be attributable to the condition of the relationship between museum actors which has been referred to above. The contingent character of museum development has been constructed through networks: regional people and organizations with specific social and political interests variedly influenced the
The contingent nature of the development process of museums, generated in the actor-networks around them, is an important consideration in studies of museum history. Recent studies focusing on local contingencies, some of which have been cited above, provide significant perspectives and insights to examine museum history. Especially, comparison studies of local museum histories in Britain effectively demonstrate this diversity (e.g. Hill 2005). International contingencies, however, might also have the potential to provide an important perspective through which to debate and analyse museum history (see Meyer 2009), but international comparison studies have hardly been carried out. As introduced in the previous chapter, Peter Aronsson’s work is a pioneering one which demonstrates the methodological possibilities for highlighting commonalities and specificities in the diverse trajectories of museum history. Aronsson has focused on groups of countries which have geographical closeness and similar cultural origins: the Mediterranean and Scandinavian countries. Although such affinities can make comparative work more persuasive, geographical and cultural dissimilarity may also have an impact on the productivity of a comparative approach. In post-modern and post-colonial studies, the relationships between
countries which had previously been considered totally culturally different—“occidental” and “oriental”, for instance—has been re-examined and discursively reconstructed (see Said 1978). Therefore, a comparison of geographically and culturally detached countries also has the potential to be an extremely useful perspective.

Britain and Japan are concomitantly akin and different. In spite of their geographical remoteness, we can see some social, political and cultural commonalities between them. In particular, political commonality might be attributable to the modernization policy of the Japanese government at the turn of the twentieth century, which sought to catch up with advanced Western countries. In regard to museums, the notion was introduced to Japan through the missions which were sent to inspect European countries and America by the government in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The introduction and subsequent diffusion of the concept can be considered as part of the modernization policy of the government, with Britain as one of the advanced nations to be emulated. In fact, the British Museum was regarded as a model when the erection of a Japanese national museum was being planned around 1920 (Shiina 1988: 178).²

In spite of such imitative beginnings, the development processes of museums in Japan has since differed interestingly from that in Britain. By comparing the two nations, light can be shed upon the differing and contingent circumstances in

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² This context is focused upon much more closely in Chapter 7.
Adding a concrete perspective can make the comparative approach much more persuasive. Professional associations of museum practitioners can provide just such a perspective. Professionalisation, which has already been discussed above, is a prominent result of boundary working in museums, and is a demonstration of the contingent nature of museum development process. A professional association is a prominent actor closely related to that process. This is exemplified by the emergence of some curators' groups in 1970s Britain, such as the Geological Curators’ Group (established in 1974) and the Biology Curators' Group (in 1975), the appearance of which reflected their dissatisfaction with the circumstances surrounding them. Preceding the emergence of such organizations, in Britain the first association of museum professionals was formed in 1889. Forty years later, a museum association emerged in Japan. That formation was implemented by referring to the successful activities of foreign associations, especially the British and American ones. This thesis indicates how an international comparison study focusing on professional museums associations, might add a new perspective and insight with which to debate the dynamics of museum development.
The “path dependence” of museum histories

When examining the history of an organisation, the path through which it has developed can provide significant information as to its historical and present states. Even if organisations share common features, including mission and structure, they can follow different historical trajectories. A cause of these differences can be explained using the theory of “path dependence.” This theory of a social system is simply translated by Robert Putnam: “where you can get to depends on where you're coming from, and some destinations you simply cannot get to from here”, and subsequently he insists that “Path dependence can produce durable differences in performance between two societies, even when the formal institutions, resources, relative prices, and individual preferences in the two are similar” (Putnam and Leonardi et al. 1993: 179). The concept was originally invented as an economic theory, which accounted for the economic inflexibility caused by increasing returns to scale: the benefits of producing and using a specific product grow in proportion to the extent of its diffusion. This means that once a product establishes a certain range of distribution, that same product is reproduced repeatedly because of economical convenience, even if there is another product which is better quality At the early stage, which product is adopted is determined contingently rather than rationally. Such economic inflexibility and contingency have been explained with “path dependence” (see Arthur 1994). This mechanism, however, can also be applied to political and
social institutions (e.g. Putnam and Leonardi et al. 1993, Pierson 2000, Pierson 2004, Mahoney 2000). As in economic activities, the process of institutional change, which can bring totally different outcomes to institutions even if originally they are similar, is influenced by the path which they have been following: “the path dependence characterizes specifically those historical sequence in which contingent events set into motion institutional patterns or event chains that have deterministic properties” (Mahoney 2000: 507-508). How the institution has formed is decisive for its characteristics. Therefore, an analysis of the formation processes of museums associations has the potential to elucidate the causes of their different natures and activities. In the following chapters, the development paths of British and Japanese associations are described, and the interactions of the actors on these paths are illuminated.
Chapter 3

Background to the formation of the Museums Association in Britain

The period of museum reconstruction

The Museums Association was formed in the late nineteenth century, a time of transition for museum history in Britain. Wittlin (1970) positions the period from the middle of the nineteenth century to the outbreak of war in 1914 as the first period of museum reconstruction in Europe and the United States. She points to four influences which became conspicuous during this period:

- a trend towards specialization
- the effects of a series of international expositions on museums
- the rise of the United States in museum matters to a position of prominence;
- and developing concerns regarding the presentation of materials for the benefit of a growing public (Wittlin 1970: 121)

These issues, as we will see in this chapter, also affected the development of British museums.
In Britain, museums multiplied in the early nineteenth century, especially during the 1820s. This multiplication centred around a burgeoning community of learned societies which interested in the natural sciences, and reaping social and political outcomes from their activities (Knell 1996; 2000; 2007). In time, these museums found themselves in a changed world, many facing financial difficulties and in a chaotic condition (Knell 1996; Knell 2000: 284-302). The museum reform soon became a topic of discussion in academic and political spheres. Professor W. Stanley Jevons, the political economist and logician, writing in 1883, observed, “In the English language, at least, there is apparently not a single treatise analysing the purposes and kinds of Museums, or describing systematically the modes of arrangement” (Jevons 1883: 53). A decade later this had completely changed as Flower (1893: 22) noted that “anyone acquainted with the numerous succession of essays, addresses, lectures, and papers which constitute the museum literature of the last thirty years, must recognise the gradual development of the conception that the museum of the future is to have for its complete ideal”. The rapid development of this museum literature shows that museum matters rapidly had become an important subject of discussion. It also suggests that a community of practice was forming, where museums were discussed. It was out of this debate that the Museums Association of Great Britain emerged. In this chapter, I draw upon contemporary sources – statements of the museum practitioners and interested parties present at the time – to explore the nature of this debate as an indication of the values and concerns that
underpinned the formation of the first professional museum association in the world.

The disordered state of museums in Britain

Contemporary statements by museum practitioners, comparing the situation in Britain with that on the Continent and in the United States, suggests that disorder in British museums was frequently apparent. Dawkins described the condition in his address to the annual meeting of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society in 1876:

From my experience of those abroad, I turn to those of our own country with feelings of envy and regret. Here a museum is frequently a large sort of advertising bazaar, or a receptacle for miscellaneous curiosities unfitted for a private house, or it is composed of an accumulation of objects valuable in themselves but valuable for all practical purposes, because they are crowded together, or stowed away for want of room. They are generally undermanned, starved for want of funds, largely dependent on casual benevolence, or a burden on the scant resources of the various societies. On the Continent, in America, and in Australia, they are as rule well officered, well arranged, and not dependent on private resources for their sustenance. That our museums should be allowed to be
such a striking contrast to those of our neighbours and kinsmen is a most singular oversight in the richest and, as we sometimes fancy ourselves to be, the most practical people in the world. (Dawkins 1876: 129)

This opinion was shared among many museum practitioners at that time. The information regarding the excellent museums on the Continent raised awareness of the museum problems in the UK. For instance, natural history museums in Germany were more frequently utilised as institutions for instruction than they were in Britain; they were attached to clear educational purposes (Anon. 1871a, 1871b). In the late nineteenth century, English museums fell behind the other countries, not only Germany, such that criticism became widespread (e.g. Anon. 1885):

The majority of them throughout England present such examples of helpless misdirection and incapacity as could not be paralleled elsewhere in Europe. (Anon. 1871c: 35)

These opinions need, however, to be read in the light of contemporary thought. These were the opinions of practitioners who sought reform and who needed to construct an ‘Other’ against which to rebel. They sought funding and a change of attitude. They wished the shame the authorities into action (see Wittlin 1970; Knell 2000; 2007). These were established strategies used in the pursuit of
reform in Britain. However, it is known that there were genuine concerns about the disordered situation in museums which came to particular prominence in the UK during this period.

The disorder of provincial museums

Disorder was especially conspicuous in provincial museums. Many such institutions had originated in local learned societies, which depended upon membership fees, patronage and voluntarism. A curatorial profession had been developing here since the 1820s but it was not widely distributed, or bound by professional standards:

It looks as if local genius had set his wit to work in order to prove how much time and money might be most effectually expended with the least profit to a knowledge of the natural history, or any history, of the neighbourhood; and indeed for exemplifications of the solution of this knotty point we have too commonly only to appeal to the museum of the place. (Anon. 1871c: 35-36).

They are highly organised and valuable if the parts are duly subordinated to each other and brought into a living relationship; they are lowly organised and comparatively worthless if they remain as mere
assemblages of units placed side by side without organic connection and without a common life. Unfortunately in this country the provincial museums mostly belong to this latter class. (Dawkins 1877a: 78)

While museums had been at the centre of burgeoning scientific communities in cities like York and Manchester earlier in the century, the museum had later proliferated in a culture of amateurism. Thus many could not be regarded as profitable institutions for preserving local collections and promoting the study of natural sciences: “It must be obvious to any scientific person visiting the provincial museums of this country, how inefficient they are for the purpose of preserving Geological and Natural History collections, which are being formed more or less throughout the land.” (F. G. S. 1871: 367). These problems were a legacy of older collections that began life in the philosophical societies and were inherited into a new age: “the study of the sciences of natural history is rather retarded than advanced, and the prevailing ignorance maintained and confirmed” (East Kent Natural History Society 1877: 7). Those dealing with this inheritance had little knowledge of the world from which it had come, its original purposes, or that many of these collections had once been at the cutting edge of science (Knell 1996).
Defects in management of national museums

National museums were not immune from these difficulties and became the subject of assault in the press. The management systems of these institutions were discussed intensively in this period. In those discussions, the ideal management system was sought. The most prominent defect of the management system of the British Museum at that time, for example, was the constitution of its trustees, as they included men without any scientific knowledge or any competence or relevant experience relating to managing a museum, and especially for managing the natural history collections:

the repeated complaints as to the conservation and inactivity of the trustees are not without ground. The fact that some of these trustees, to the number of nine, are irresponsible and irremovable family trustees, and that the remainder consist, for the most part, of the great officers and dignitaries of the State… sufficiently shows that it must be an inert body. (Jevons 1883: 74)

The trustees were regarded as interfering, rather than aiding, the scientific management of the organisation. This problem came to a head in the 1870s when a proposition was made to place the commission of the South Kensington Museum under the direct control of the trustees of the British Museum. This
proposition generated much discussion which more generally considered the management of the national museums (Anon. 1873a; 1873b).

The indifference of the British Museum Trustees to some of the best interests of Science in their own museum has been denounced again and again by commissions and committees, who report and report, but make no impression on a corporation of fifty trustees. That alone is a reason why they should not be allowed meddle with South Kensington… It lies in the individual responsibility of a Minister and the energetic executive management which have raised in a few years the South Kensington Museum into an institution of which the nation has greatest reason to be proud; which has made it the centre of the chief intellectual activity of the country, which has utilised its resources for the teaching of hundreds of thousands of our teeming populations. The British Museum have done none of these things; they have given no trouble; they have borne snubbing admirably when they have moved, which has not been often.

(Anon. 1873b: 2)

The management of the natural history collections in the British Museum was seen as being especially problematic. This might be reflected in the establishment of the new Natural History Museum in South Kensington. Although the transition of the collection and the erection of a new building had been decided in 1860, the
museum only opened in 1881. For much of the century there had been complaints about the management of the natural history collections in the British Museum, including their funding, staffing, the treatment of staff, its place in scientific advance, its management, its characteristics and so on.

They have come to the conclusion that the removal of the Natural History Collections to another building will be a good opportunity for effecting a radical change in their administration, either to men of science or to the public. It must be recollected that the British Museum was originally instituted as a great public library, to which the collections of art and science were considered merely as appendages… it will be easily imagined, therefore, that under this system everything is sacrificed to the Library… The general level of the zoological and botanical collections in the British Museum is undoubtedly far below what it ought to be. The finest specimens in nearly every department of natural history fall into the hands of amateurs because the National Collection is so badly supplied with funds for purchases of this kind. No dealer would think of offering a new butterfly or a new hummingbird to the British Museum… Again, the staff of officers in the Natural History Departments is inadequate in point of numbers. Their salaries likewise are much below those of other branches of the Civil Service, and quite insufficient for the duties expected of them. Hence it follows that there is little temptation for young
men of ability and education to accept such a career. These deficiencies might have been remedied long ago if the trustees had been content to give up their patronage. But the right of presentation to all places in the British Museum is vested by statute in the three principal trustees, and the Government, naturally enough, declines to increase the value of appointments over which they have no sort of control. (Anon. 1876: 521)

Many of these complaints arose from the dominance of the library, which affected institutional vision, and the inadequacy of funding and staffing the natural history collections:

The real difficulty in the present situation is that the control of the whole museum is in the hands of the principal librarian, who naturally enough prefers the interests of the library to that of the natural history. He is glad enough to get rid of the beasts and birds, but when you ask him to give up, even temporarily, a portion of the books it is quite another question. Very few of the trustees who are nominally his masters care anything for natural history, so that from that quarter no intervention can be looked for in favour of the scheme we have put forward. (Anon. 1880: 237)

The inadequacy of this museum, particularly when compared to the world-class institutions in Paris, meant that discussions became the subject of government
interest. How to govern the national museum was one of the matters regarding
museums in the late nineteenth century. In that discussion, the duty of the
government to manage national museums for the purpose of education and
science was to be recognised, for instance, necessity for appointment of the
ministry of education and science was proposed (see Anon. 1874a)

In the late nineteenth century British museums, both local and national, had
organizational problems. The cause: museum governance “had its origins in quite
an accidental way, and that no well-defined and intelligent system has been
followed in the establishment of those institutions meant for public instruction.”
(Anon. 1874b: 397)

**Attempts to provide systematic and rational management**

As a result of this dismal state of affairs, reform was proposed. The fundamental
requirement of reform was the systematic and rational management and
arrangement of museums and collections. The most conspicuous problem was the
disorder generated by the congested state of collections. The distraction caused
by the haphazard multiplicity of objects was seen to denude the scientific and
educational value of museums. “Two of the great evils of museums” were
“crowding and distraction” (Wallace 1869: 250); it was felt that “The evil effect
of multiplicity of objects” (Jevons 1883: 60) should be eradicated from local museums especially.

Systematic and rational management meant sensible selection both in acquisition and exhibition: “One of the greatest evils of most local museums is thus got rid of”. It was a choice between “the giving of offence by refusing donations, or being forced to occupy much valuable space with such as are utterly for popular exhibition” (Wallace 1869: 248). Simple and intelligible exhibition plans were requested to raise the educational value of displays. Henry Higgins, the first director of the Museums Association, pointed to the “law of parsimony”, or financial caution, as a fundamental principle of museum management (Higgins 1884). He insisted that insufficient funds “might be better spent in making the order more intelligible and more instructive; and much of this good work might often be done without spending a pound” (Higgins 1884: 190).

Jevons (1883) asserted that the consistency of an exhibition was vital but that so often it was wanting:

It does not seem, however, to have occurred to the creators and managers of Museums, that so far as education is aimed at, a certain unity of effect is essential. There may be many specimens exhibited, but they ought to
have that degree of relation that they may conduce to the same general mental impression. (Jevons 1883: 56)

He continued:

I venture to submit that on psychological and educational grounds the arrangement of diverse collections in a long series of continuous galleries, worst exemplified at South Kensington, but also unfortunately to be found in the older galleries of the British Museum, is a complete mistake. Every collection ought to form a definite congruous whole, which can be visited, studied, and remembered with a certain unity of impression. (Jevons 1883: 61)

Besides tackling the fundamental principles of acquisition and exhibition, the practical skills of curators were also being gradually advanced at this time, including labelling, taxidermy, maceration, and preparation (e.g. Flower 1876abc; Miall 1877). New provision to support exhibitions, such as guidebooks and catalogues, were also developed and introduced during this period.
Rediscovering the local

The systematisation and rationalisation of provincial museums in this period directed particular attention to the development of local collections. These collections, which represented peculiar examples of things from their own districts, were to be separated from more general collections representing systematic universal knowledge. These two elements were understood as having an important and useful relationship: “To instruct ourselves and the rising generation, by means of local museums, in the elements of natural history generally, and in the local examples of it particularly, is obviously both practicable and desirable.” (Anon. 1871c: 36)

The ascendancy of local collections in provincial museums came to be widely recognised. It was proposed that these museums focus primarily on items and specimens from the surrounding area, and that these collections be used for educational purposes. Schools, colleges, and other educational establishments were explicitly highlighted as potential audiences. It was also suggested that museums make and share casts of objects with wider importance, so that their educative value could be shared (Dawkins 1877c: 137-138).

The committee appointed by the British Association for the Advancement of Science for the purpose of preparing a report on provincial museums, focused on
the relationship between provincial museums and their localities. “It is here that provincial museums should take up the work, and should find their legitimate and most useful sphere. Every provincial museum ought, in the first place, to be a *fully illustrated monograph of its own district.*” (BAAS 1888: 126). This was the view of ‘competent authorities’ and ‘curators of many of the leading museums’, and a course of action that required a professional response that risk “the destruction of rare and perishable objects” (BAAS 1877: 123, 128).

This approach also seemed to respond to Higgins’ call for parsimony too: Frederick William Rudler suggested that such restrictions placed on the collection would help to deal with the lack of resources experienced by local museums (Rudler 1877: 140). The formation of such local collections, which were assembled and preserved in a systematic way, a “business-like system”, were regarded as a duty of local societies.

The formation and preservation of local collections ought not to depend upon impulse, or the chance enthusiasm of individuals, but should be the result of a generally recognised business-like system; and it should be interest of the various local societies to provide competent curators. It should also be the duty of these societies to preserve for the museum of the district the collections which have been formed, by local geologists or collectors, and not to permit them to be scattered or added to those in the
British Museum and to that in Jermyn Street, where they may be said to become buried, and where the geological collections are already of an unmanageable size. (F.G.S. 1871: 367)

Rationalisation of the management of national museums

The rationalisation of the management of national museums was also sought. The problem of inappropriate trustees, discussed above, could – so Jevons insisted – draw upon other models:

in the manner of a college, by a neutral and mixed board of men of science and of business. Such a council or board will retain in their own hands most questions relating to finance, the structure of the Museum, and what does not touch the professional and scientific work of the curator (Jevons 1883: 72-73).

He stressed that this system had two advantageous aims: to secure fair appointments and to guarantee the freedom of curators. (Jevons 1883: 73). His words imply the increasing professionalization of the curatorial role. But in the case of the British Museum such thinking also required reflection on the role of the museum itself. In that discussion, the relationship and balance between the
scientific research and public education was crucial. Indeed, it seems to have become a political issue:

I have always looked upon the British Museum as the National Museum, and pre-eminently the Museum of the people, and, as such, the arrangement and labelling of the specimens should be of the most simple and instructive nature: nor is such an object opposed to, but perfectly coincident with, the highest interests of science... The view that science, or rather scientific men, should have a monopoly of the benefits to be derived from this Institution is astoundingly selfish and narrow-minded. If such are the views of the Trustees, the British Museum had better be closed to the public. (S.P.G. 1873: 103)

This reveals a tension was emerging between what was right for the public and what were the needs of science. But just as there were many proponents of public education, there was also those who felt the need to defend science, in case things went too far in that direction:

The general question whether a public institution of the sort is best governed by a public official or by a body of Trustees, may very likely admit of much discussion, but the decision should not be prejudiced by totally ignoring the noble work which has been and is being done by the
Museum. … I must protest against the notion … that the scientific value and work of a national museum is to be measured by the number of millions of persons who saunter through the galleries. No doubt the utility of a museum in affording popular instruction and elevated amusement to large masses of people is very considerable, but this popular work is altogether of a different order from strictly scientific object of collecting together all the products of intellect and of Nature… But in NATURE, which has so powerfully advocated the necessity of promoting original research in this country, I should expect, more than anywhere else, to find a due appreciation of the noble work which is being carried by the British Museum trustees, and by the staff of eminent scientific and literary men who are employed under their direction in promoting almost every branch of literature and science… and if scientific men do not make adequate use of it, that is their fault and not that of the trustees. (Jevons 1873: 26-27)

A central issue for those conceptualising the museum, whether provincial or national, was how to support both of these purposes: scientific study and public education. This needed resolution. William Flower, Director of the British Museum (Natural History) in South Kensington, believed it required a “new museum idea”.
The proposition of a “new museum idea”

Flower proposed his “new museum idea in 1889. He insisted that the efficiency of a museum could be raised by the separation of its two main functions: the advancement of scientific study and the education of the public. This bipartite museum, as Bazin (1967: 263) referred to it, had been much discussed in relation to the organisation of the art museums, and particularly the National Gallery in London, in the middle years of the century. Its aim was the separation of spaces (and experiences) for connoisseurs from those of the public. This concept was, however, first introduced in the British Museum (Natural History). For Flower, the origin of this idea could be traced back to an address, by the British Museum’s Keeper of Zoology, John Edward Gray, given at the thirty-fourth meeting of the BAAS in 1864. In that address, Gray pointed out the two functions of museums: “1st, the diffusion of instruction and rational amusement among the mass of the people; and 2nd, to afford the scientific student every possible means of examining and studying the specimens of which the museum consists”. Failure to do this, he said, had been at the heart of museum ineffectiveness:

Now, it appears to me that, in the desire to combine this these two objects, which are essentially distinct, the first object, namely the general instruction of the people, had been to a great extent lost sight of and sacrificed to the second, without any corresponding advantage to the latter,
because the system itself has been thoroughly erroneous… In the futile attempt to combine these two purposes in one consecutive arrangement, the modern museum entirely fails in both particulars. It is only to be compared to a large store or a city warehouse, in which every specimen that can be collected is arranged in its proper case and on its proper shelf, so that it may be found when wanted; but the uninformed mind derives little instruction from the contemplation of its stores, while the student of nature requires a far more careful examination of them than is possible under such a system of arrangement to derive any advantage; the visitor needs to be as well informed with relation to the system on which it is based as the curator himself; and consequently the general visitor perceives little else than chaos of specimens, of which the bulk of those placed in close proximity are so nearly alike that he can scarcely perceive any difference between them, even supporting them to be placed on a level with the eye, while the greater number of those which are above or below this level are utterly unintelligible (Gray 1864: 76).

The “new museum idea” was new not in its invention (as it had long been discussed) but in its application, sought to resolve a very apparent tension through an act of division.
Such, then, is the primary principle which ought to underlie the arrangement of all museums—the distinct separation of the two objects for which collection are made; the publicly exhibited collection being never a store-room or magazine, but only such as the ordinary visitor can understand and profit by, and the collection of students being so arranged as to afford every facility for examination and research. (Flower 1889: 18)

According to Flower (1893), the proportion of these functions was different for national museums and provincial museums. He indicated that “it is only in national museums that the fulfilment of both functions in fairly equal proportions can be expected” (Flower 1893: 30), and recommended that the provincial museum should focus on the purpose of public education: “Here it will be the duty of the curator to develop the side of the museum which is educational and attractive to the general visitor and to all who with to obtain that knowledge which is the ambition of many cultivated persons to acquire without becoming specialists or experts” (Flower 1893: 33). There was more than a hint of elitism in Flower’s words; most provincial cities possessed museums which had a proud history of research, some of which proved to be of international significance (see Knell 2000).
Albert C. L. G. Gunther speaking at the fifteenth meeting of the BAAS in 1880 had seen the museum scene rather differently, locating three audiences: the general public, the student and the professional scientist:

The purposes for which museums are formed are threefold; —(1) To diffuse instruction among, and other rational amusement to, the mass of the people; (2) to aid in the elementary study of biology; and (3) to supply the professed student of biology or the specialist with as complete materials for his scientific researches as can be obtained, and to preserve for future generations the material on which those researches have been based.

He then went on to observe that the country’s museums were rather more complex than Flower would state; that a division between national and provincial was not recognising a much more diverse and overlapping community of museums:

Although every museum has, as it were, a physiognomy of its own, differing from the others in the degree in which it fulfils one, or two, or all three of those objects, we may divide museums into three classes, viz.: — (1) National, (2) Provincial, and (3) strictly Educational museums — a mode of division which may give to those of this assembly who are not
biologists an idea of what we mean by the term “species”. The three kinds
pass into each other, and there may be hybrids between them. (Gunther
1880: 592)

The “new museum idea” was one of the signs which showed a desire to
reconfigure museums in Britain and a recognition that the museum as a public
institution was yet to be perfected. But the arguments went beyond the discussion
of the operation of the museum itself. Inevitably it considered the
interrelationships between them – the whole system of museums. In particular,
the hierarchical and legal relationships between national and provincial museums
had become an important issue. Since the establishment of the Circulation
Department in the South Kensington Museum in 1855, loan exhibits to provincial
museums and schools had become an important aspect of museum provision. The
fourth report of the Royal Commission on Scientific Instruction and the
Advancement of Science, proposed a “System of Inspection of Provincial
Museums” for “reporting on their condition, and on the extent to which they are
usefully employed, and whether conditions of the Loan or Grant from the
Department of Science and Art have been fulfilled” (Royal Commission on
Scientific Instruction and the Advancement of Science 1874: 24). It was a
suggestion that pointed to the arising necessity for a State system of museums
governance.
The effectiveness of museums as truly modern public scientific institutions was tested by the diffusion and growing acceptance of the theory of evolution (e.g. Herdman 1887). Darwin’s theory of natural selection theory remained contentious (e.g. Flower 1889: 20-24) but also raised new questions about how a museum could represent it in exhibition, believing that collections were too deficient in the necessary materials (e.g. Higgins 1884: 198-201). This debate was indicative of the ways in which scientific development itself was affecting the way museums carried out their duties and developed their skills:

Natural History Museums are still in what may be called their Pre-Darwinian condition, and must undergo great change before they can be regarded as abreast of modern science. I have no doubt that as a result of the rapid advances which are being made in biology, the Museum will, in the near future, become evolved into a much more perfect instrument for teaching natural science to the masses than we can even imagine just now; but still it may be of some use to the founders and Curators of future Museums if I make the attempt to show what I think should be the constitution and arrangement of a Museum such as would adequately represent the state of our knowledge of organic nature as the present date.(Herdman 1887: 185-186)
Scientists were repeatedly having to renegotiate the place of the museum, object and collection in their conception of the natural world and of science itself. It is in the nature of science that this thinking is affected by ideas of progress, change and even revolution:

I think the time is approaching when a great change will be made in the arrangement of Museums of Natural History, and have therefore thrown out these observations as suggestions, by which it appears to me that their usefulness may be greatly extended. (Gray 1864: 78)

The “new museum idea” was a concrete result of attempts at reform made by and for museums in the late nineteenth century. It produced four characteristic aspects, which can still be regarded as fundamental to the principles of modern museums: the establishment of an educational function; the birth of the “public” museum; the appearance and conceptualisation of “visitors”; and necessity of professionalisation. In the following sections, each of these fundamentals will be discussed in detail.

**The establishment of the educational function**

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the educational function of museums came to be regarded as a primary justification for their existence. Indeed, the
utility of museums was often to be measured largely in terms of their educational value. This resulted from political reform which slowly embraced the idea of an educated populas. The *Elementary Education Act 1870* established an educational system in England and Wales that would educate children between the ages of 5 and 13. Museum professionals saw this as an excellent opportunity for museums, for “employing the scientific knowledge they possess in promoting the study of nature in a very simple and easy manner” (Page 1882: 386). Revealing a level of opportunism common in museums today, they imaged “School Museums”, as special spaces for meeting these new educational needs:

we see no reason why museums themselves should not be occasionally converted into schoolrooms where teachers could bring their zoological, geological and other natural science classes, and fine well-arranged material for illustrating their lessons. (E. H. 1877: 276)

The outcome of School Museums was considered a scientific “advance which is being made all along the line in the objective teaching of natural science” (Gladstone 1884: 384). Natural history museums were at the heart of this transformation of purpose: “In late-nineteenth century England, the teaching of science in particular became strongly associated with museums rather than laboratories…Museums were a core element in the Victoria learning environment” (Arnold 2006: 175-176). It was, however, inevitable that museums would
encounter difficulties in realising this potential. These were historically underfunded institutions: “there is a lamentable deficiency in the apparatus for this and for the whole system of objective-lessons”. Again comparisons were made with the Continent (Carpenter 1884: 220).

As well as seeing a role, possessing collections and locating space, museum workers also needed to consider the particular methods of education and learning in museums that were to be used. “Objective teaching” and “objective-lessons” were commonly referred to. The purpose of such teaching methods was to cultivate the faculty of observation “which is the least trained, under our present system of education” (Murray1904: 259). On this point, Stanley Jevons was particularly outspoken:

The Museum represents that real instruction, that knowledge of things as they are which is obtained by the glance of the eye, and the touch of the fingers. The time ought to have arrived when the senseless verbal teaching formerly, and perhaps even yet, predominant in schools should be abandoned. (Jevons 1883: 64)

Yet it was also appreciated that those who structured teaching for the ear were probably best able to devise or oversee these new objective lessons:
Just as lectures teach principally through the ear, so museums teach through the medium of the eye; and those who have had most experience in oral teaching will probably be best qualified to assist in the oversight of an educational museum. (Rudler 1877: 140)

The museum both complemented school education but, moreover, became a force for reform, a new technology: “[a] museum has now become a recognised and necessary instrument of research; it plays an important part in university and technical instruction, and it should be adopted as an aid in elementary and secondary education” (Murray 1904: 260). Indeed, the activity of forming a museum of one’s own, including the processes of acquisition and exhibition, was itself regarded as a useful form of learning. In 1881, a guidebook was published which aimed “to point out the vast amount of pleasure and information which boys may obtain by forming a museum” (Housman 1881: vii). This demonstrated that while the concept of “museum education” as something museum-led was being formed, there was also recognition that the visitor was also in control of the learning experience. That museums required students to be active learners: “A museum is the easiest means of self-instruction. It is one of the surest means of producing enlightenment and of raising the people above the depressing influence of dull and common-place surroundings” (Murray 1904: 269). However, this did mean that the educational outcome depended upon the ability and enthusiasm of each visitor:
But it is somewhat otherwise with public Museums, because the advantage which an individual gets from the visit may vary from nil up to something extremely great. The degree of instruction derived is quite incapable of statistical determination. Not only is there great difference in degree, but there is vast difference also in the kind of benefit derived. (Jevons 1883: 53)

The role and nature of the visitor thus became an important issue, which in turn gave greater emphasis to the public in conceptions of the public museum.

**The birth of “public” museum**

Related to the educational purpose of museums mentioned above, the management of museums and collections gradually emerged as a public duty which the state and municipalities should perform: “For my own part I can conceive of few nobler aims than that of raising for one’s town a permanent public institution of an intellectual character” (A.R. 1877: 286). After the *Museums Act 1845*, and particularly in the late Victorian period, museums previously managed by local societies with their private resources made the transition to rate-supported museums, paid for through local taxation.
Many of museums now belonging to the public and supported by the rates were originated by local societies. In some of these cases the societies still render valuable assistance, but there is sometimes a disposition to eliminate this element as trenching on the donation of the regular officers; and sometimes the societies, feeling that they are no longer responsible for the maintenance of the museum, lose interest in it. Only about a dozen of the rate-supported museums report that they are receiving any assistance from local societies. (BAAS 1887: 126-127)

In the 1880s, the subscription and donation which local societies used to support their activities was no longer be regarded as an appropriate and sufficient method of producing the funds to manage museums. The museum was now very much a public institution:

It is the old, old story with regard to subscription to Museums. Their day is over. The clique and the coteries for which they have existed for so many years will not support them, and the larger public who would appreciate them cannot afford the subscription (Greenwood 1888: 107).

The development of municipal corporations and the establishment of acts regarding museums affected the way in which this financial crisis ended. From the middle of the nineteenth century, a series of laws relating to museums was
formulated (see Chambers and Fovargue 1899). The first, the *Museums Act 1845*, permitted local councils to levy a tax at a rate of one half penny in the pound to cover the cost of managing museums. However, this *Act* could not promote the rapid development of municipal museums. In the first five years after the *Act* was passed, only six towns opened museums (Lewis 1984: 27). Then, with the *Public Libraries and Museums Act 1855*, a one-penny rate was introduced for the purpose of maintaining libraries and museums. In the 1880s, the rate-supported museum was regarded as the most rational and desirable method of operation a museum could employ: “it is only the rate-supported Museums which are doing really useful work. Museums supported by subscriptions and voluntary donations are in a state of decrepitude and decay” (Greenwood 1888: viii). Thus it is clear that municipal corporations, being regarded as perpetual and stable, were seen as a suitable agent to support local museums:

The one vital principal which surrounds corporations is that they are gifted with perpetual life… A corporation has, in fact, been compared to a stream which maintains its identity throughout all the continuous changing of its parts… This is the main reason why no private enterprise can possibly do for Museums, Free Libraries, and Education what the Corporation can do, and it is on this rests the plea for Municipal Museums, Free Libraries, and Universities, which shall be the property of the
citizens, administered by their own elected representatives, and forming an integral part of their local life. (Greenwood 1888: 19)

On the other hand, the problems of the rate-supported system were also clear. For example, in the case where a municipality had a free library with a museum, the rate was almost entirely devoted the former, and the museum could not gain sufficient resources: “although provincial communities were at present legally able to tax themselves to the extent of 1d. in the pound for the purpose of establishing museums and libraries, in Birmingham all this money went to the free library, and they had therefore no means of establishing an industrial museum” (Anon. 1877 :228).

Inevitably this produced debate concerning the public value of museums in order to justify the expenditure of public money. One justification was the stress which museums were placing on education for the public good. Museums, and the collections which they were managing, were also regarded as a public property and part of a shared cultural wealth:

It is surely only just and fair that the funds necessary for making them efficient should be provided out of the public purse since they are for the public weal, as is the case in all other countries except our own” (Dawkins 1887b: 137).
Besides its educational purpose, social reform also supported the perception of museums as part of municipal public duty and its service to the populace: “From its conceptual beginnings, Henry Coles’ idea for a new museum was focused on an explicit didacticism. And from the 1860s, it became internationally recognised and imitated, precisely in terms of its concern with practical and even “moral” education” (Arnold 2006: 175). This trend also connected with the concept of “citizenship”, of increasing importance to social reformers at that time: “There can scarcely be a more pressing matter of importance at the present time than that of infusing into the minds of the people a high sense of the duties and privileges of citizenship” (Greenwood 1888: 19-20). Museums were a concrete measure for promoting rational recreation amongst the working classes: “Natural history pursuits are in themselves one of the forms of higher education, and one that is especially adapted for the culture of the lower, sometimes falsely termed the working classes—as if the higher classes worked neither with head nor hand” (Dawkins 1877b: 98). In a letter to Nature, William Watts wrote:

The professor cannot over-estimate the value of museums, as every lover of natural history cannot be a collector; but every one in full possession of his faculties can observe so far as he has the power of seeing, and if he cannot examine the wide field of nature for facts he will at least examine
the proofs of them in the museums … A few personal observations may serve to show the difficulties under which the so-called working classes have to labour in the pursuit of knowledge. (Watts 1877: 162)

This concern for the working classes produced calls for Sunday opening (Greenwood 1888: 196-219). The museum was now conceived as publicly owned and funded, and for the public. It was now, conceptually, very different from the institution that appeared in great numbers at the beginning of the century.

The appearance of “visitors”

It has already been indicated above how significant visitors became in museum management and governance during this period. Visitors had several roles within museums: they were targets for education and enlightenment, they were proprietors, and they were, as ratepayers, a source of revenue. This produced increasing attention being paid to visitors, which is demonstrated by attempts to define and understand nature and characteristics of the museum. Higgins divided them into three categories:

Visitors to Museums may for convenience be assigned to one or other of three classes—Students, Observers, Loungers.
I. To the class of students I should assign all who come with a definite purpose of improving their knowledge of natural productions.

II. Visitors who are not conscious of any purpose beyond a wish to see the Museum, but who fix their attention with more or less intelligence on the objects displayed, may be regarded as observers.

III. It is hardly necessary to characterize the loungers—they form only a small contingent; but with them must, I suppose, be placed the children, as not belonging to a former class, yet deserving to be studied and encouraged. (Higgins 1884: 186)

Thereafter he estimated the visitors to his own museum: “1,000 visitors to the Liverpool Museum may include—Students, from 10 to 20; observers, 780; loungers, including children, 200” (Higgins 1884: 186). He claimed that museums should pay more attention to the “loungers”, as the group most in need of conversion to purposeful museum visiting. In particular, he expressed the importance of indirect influence – that is, the ways in which aspects of museums not explicitly designed to be educational, affect the experiences and learning of the visitors.

I do not speak of the free lectures and the open reading room, because the crowds who attend them are already well on their way towards
self-education. It is of indirect agencies that we are becoming conscious how great may be their influence for good. (Higgins 1884: 184)

To men with more or less of a cultivated interests in science, the teaching of a museum may be said to be direct. It is with its indirect influence upon the mass of visitors that we are now more particularly concerned. The details which make up the friendly relations of a public Museum towards the community at large are multitudinous. (Higgins 1884: 187)

How to attract and instruct indifferent visitors became a prominent issue. In 1887, John George Wood, a popular writer on natural history, pointed out the dullness of museums: “Full of interest to the expert, there is no concealing the fact that to the general public a museum, of whatever nature, is most intolerably dull, as I know by personal experience” (Wood 1887: 384) and “I have long thought that in the management of our museums we have too much ignored the wants of the general public” (Wood 1887: 385). His division of museums into three classes echoes a division discussed above concerning the new museum idea:

The first ought to be devoted entirely to purely scientific purposes, and to be secured from interruptions by outsiders, who should be considered as the profanum vulgus, and treated as such. Then there should be a second class of museum intended for those who are trying to learn the rudiments
of science, and may in due time be promoted into the select band of regular students. Lastly, and quite as important as the two others, there should be a museum intended for the general public, and teaching them in spite of themselves. (Wood 1887: 385-386)

However, Wood insisted that in England there was no museum of the third class: a museum for the general public: “such museums should be pre-eminently attractive” to them (Wood 1887: 392). By the end of the nineteenth century, the visitor as a member of the general public was a prominent and powerful figure: a consequence, in part, of the changing socio-political environment, and the managerial alterations which museums had undergone in the preceding years.

An awareness of the need to professionalise

The last aspect of the museum reform movement during this period is professionalisation. Firstly, competent curators were regarded as key to the improvement of museums: “What a museum really depends upon for its success and usefulness is not its building, not its cases, not even its specimens, but its curator. He and his staff are the life and soul of the institution, upon whom its whole value depends; and yet in many—I may say most—of our museums they are the last to be thought of” (Flower 1889: 11). The requirements of this
curatorial role needed to be discussed, but professionalization also rose from a desire for proper public recognition of curation as intellectual profession.

but what I mean is—and I am sure you will one and all agree with me when I say it—you are not properly appreciated by the public, and the importance and difficulties of your position are by no means sufficiently understood… Skill, manual dexterity and good taste are also most valuable. He must, in addition, if he is to be a success in his vocation, possess various moral qualifications not found in every professional man—punctuality, habits of business, conciliatory manners, and, above all, indomitable and conscientious industry in the discharge of the small and somewhat monotonous routine duties which constitute so large at part of a curator’s life. Such being the requirements of the profession, let us see what are the inducements offered to men to take it up as a means of livelihood. (Flower 1893: 27-28)

it is in the interest of that great question, the advantage of the museum as a means of educating, cultivating, and elevating mankind, that I am speaking, an advance that can only be effectively made when the curatorship of a museum is looked upon as an honourable and desirable profession for men of high intellectual acquirements. (Flower 1893: 28)
Curators were seen to have unique competences distinct from professionals in the other academic disciplines.

A specialist, though an indispensable cultivator of science, is a very bad museum curator. A curator should be like a newspaper editor, a man of general knowledge and culture. Unlike an editor, he should belong to no party, but be possessed of catholic sympathies in science and art; ready to accept and use the assistance of specialists, in a way that will subordinate all departments to one harmonious general plan. Further, he should possess an experimental knowledge of the routine duties of a museum, such as can only be obtained by a training or apprenticeship in a well-organised museum. (J.P. 1877: 183)

Furthermore, the specific skills which curators should acquire, including labelling, maceration and preparation, were also discussed (e.g. Flower 1876abc). The significance of taxidermy was especially stressed at this time, and there were calls for more appreciation to be given to taxidermists (Miall 1877). The mutual cooperation of curators was seen to be the most efficient method for improving museums which gave rise to the proposition of forming a museum conference, in the journal *Nature*, in 1877.
it may not be an inopportune time to suggest to those who have the management of these institutions the desirability of their mutual co-operation in order to develop them to their fullest extent. The great progress which has been made during the past few years in the establishment of museums in the various provincial towns of this country is highly creditable to those who have assisted in the movement, and the influence which they might have, if properly utilised and developed, on the education and intellectual progression of the people, gives them a forcible claim to national and individual support. (E.H. 1877: 276)

No class of institutions existing could be made mutually more helpful than museums. (J.P. 1877: 183)

Through the formation of such a conference, it was believed it would be possible to establish common rules which all British museums could share:

the idea of a conference of museum keepers, out of which a permanent union among museum officers might result. I am of opinion that this idea is an excellent one, and that administration of the museum of all countries would gain a great deal if an opportunity to museum officers were offered to interchange their opinions and to communicate to each other their different practical experiences. Perhaps some arrangement and rules
might generally be accepted, as, *e.g.*, to labelling specimens, exchanging duplicates, publishing annual reports in a journal *ad hoc*, &c. (Mayer 1877: 227)

These anticipations were influenced by the success of the Library Association, founded in 1877: “The success which has attended the Library Association gives every reason to believe that the formation of a similar association of museum officials would lead to equally good results” (Howarth 1880: 492). And concrete merits of the formation were to be indicated:

Apart from the benefits to be derived from an interchange of ideas and results of experience, which, considering the varied nature of museums and the many practical questions involved in their successful management, could not fail to be considerable, there are many things affecting provincial museums generally that would be greatly advanced by united action. One of these, the distribution of the British Museum duplicates, I should like to refer to. (Howarth 1880: 492).

Additionally it was proposed that such an association should produce a journal or record of proceedings:
A monthly or quarterly publication would form an excellent means of communication for the exchange of duplicates, the distribution to suitable quarters of the productions of foreign countries for purposes of investigation, for the record of improvements in manipulation or exhibition, and for the results of experience in various directions (Holmes 1880: 10).

The proposition of forming the association was accepted, but a few objections were raised. “Academicus” pointed out “The multiplication of conferences threatens to become a nuisance, and special conferences for every grades, class, and description of humanity will soon be proposed by fussy idlers,” and asserted that “Conferences are not required, but proper salaries for the curator, who should be educated and capable men; were such men secured by adequate salaries they would soon make the museums in their charge very different from what they now are” (Academicus 1880: 492). However, such objections were few, and quickly condemned (Paton 1880b & Allen 1880). Finally, a preliminary meeting, called by invitation of the Council of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society to consider the formation of a museum association, was held in York in 1888. The UK Museums Association was formed in the following year, 1889.

In the late nineteenth century museums were found wanting in Britain, and museum practitioners responded to the situation for formulating solutions to
common museum problems. They also strengthened the role of museums in society in the context of social reform and education. In this circumstance, it might be inevitable that professionalisation would emerge. The formation of the Museums Association can be regarded as a prominent proof of the emergence. In the successive three chapters, the organisation is focused and its characteristics are examined.
Chapter 4
The Museums Association and its initial membership

In chapter 3, the contexts for the development of the Museums Association were discussed. Britain was then undergoing a period of change which resulted in professional, social and educational aspiration. With this aspiration came a sense of unfulfilled potential and new opportunity. This chapter examines how the Museums Association was formed paying particular attention to the characteristics of the initial membership as these determined the vision for the new association and its early development. In order to discuss these developments, it is first necessary to discuss the nature of professional association more generally.

Associational movements and the individual

Associational organizations have been, and are, one of the main research subjects of sociology (Tocqueville 1848, Durkheim 1893, Weber 1910, Millerson 1964, Sato 1994 etc.). To organise associations is a social behaviour that entails a specific aim, whether the members are conscious of it or not. Such aims include the furtherance of specific study, the promotion of occupational status, investing members with prestige, and so on. In most organizations, such aims are explicitly prescribed, but also produce implicit effects and consequences. The relationship
between explicit aims and consequences are interwoven and highly complex: establishing social identity is thus an aim but is also a result of associational activities. The development of the professional class identity, including that of the curator, is closely related to such activities. Associative action is a collective means to heighten the social status of the occupations supported by the association, and which make up its membership. Associational organisations are complicated social devices, intertwining collective aims with diverse members’ intentions. This dichotomy of individualism and collectivism is a fundamental orientation of human behaviour. But individuals and collective entities are not totally separate; they are functionally interrelated and can be integrated purposefully (see Kim 1994). The reconciliation between individual intentions, including aspirations towards social status, and organizational orientation is crucial to deciding the success of the organization.

Controlling membership is a means of coordinating between individual participants and the collective entity. The membership is a decisive factor which shapes the organisation. Expanding or restricting the membership is a useful tool for controlling organizational orientation. For example, the strict restriction of membership can raise the social status which an individual member would be granted. However, membership control is not a simple task; it entails various difficulties. Variation amongst potential members is a primary obstacle to collective action. This is a particular issue for the museum community, which
includes diverse discipline backgrounds and interests, such as history, archaeology, art and science, and many different occupational roles, such as directors, curators, preparators, conservators, educators and so on. For a museum association, the construction of an inclusive membership is a major obstacle. Indeed, expanding the membership was a principal issue in the early period of the Museums Association in Britain. As I will examine in detail later, the dominance of natural history professions and the low representation of art museums in the early association was recognised by its members themselves. Later, the derivation of sub-domain associations in the British museum community, such as the Geological Curators Group (founded in 1974) and the Biological Curator's Group (in 1975), would evidence the continuing issue of diverse membership within the museum community. This later movement was backed by disaffected curators, who felt their opinions were not being reflected in the Museums Association itself (Doughty 1981). The question of how to reconcile individualism and collectivism is a useful perspective to use to illuminate the complicated dynamics of museum development processes and one that will be investigated here.

As has already been stated, the reasons for the formation of associations are usually complex, and involve internal and external factors and pressures. However, founders' personalities, which are closely linked with their social circumstances, often make decisive impressions on the formation process (see
Millerson 1964). Their social and cultural contexts frequently motivate their organisational activities. Therefore, analysing members of associations can be one of the methodological steps in the study of an organisation. In Britain, some outstanding learned societies have been examined with such a methodology: for example, the X Club (Desmond 2001), the Society of Antiquaries of London (Pearce 2007, MacGregor 2007b, Hingley 2007), and the Geological Society of London (Knell 2009, Torrens 2009). Such studies have adopted socially inclusive ways to elucidate the developmental processes of the organizations. The complex social attributions of the members affect the orientation of the organisation: religion, politics, gender, geographical limit and so on.

**Incentives for professionalisation in late nineteenth-century Britain**

The Museums Association, the first professional association of museum practitioners in the world, was formed in 1889 at York. The first proposal to form such an association appeared in Nature, and the call was repeated several times before the Association was finally formally ratified. The formation was considered to be a concrete solution to resolve the disordered state of museums in Britain. In the later nineteenth century, the backwardness of British museums, compared to the Continent and America, became apparent, and the responses of criticism and complaint were made manifest by scientists and social reformers.
As detailed in the previous chapter, the rationalization of museums came to be a pressing issue.

The emergence of such critical movements in the late nineteenth century, which finally resulted in the formation of the Association, occurred parallel to the establishment of a new scientific community in Britain. At the turn of the twentieth century, a new scientific framework emerged, reflecting the establishment of laboratory-based practice (Pickstone 1994, Pickstone 2000). The establishment of modern biology, symbolized by the adoption of Darwinism, especially reflected this fashion. Scientists appeared who were different from old-fashioned savants and dilettante museum practitioners, and they strenuously promoted the rationalization of museums in order to fulfil their academic demands. William H. Flower, for instance, who was a key figure of the early Association and elected its fourth president, was an academic colleague and an important supporter of Thomas. H. Huxley (see Cornish 1904, Lydekker 1906). The relationship between museums and universities as the main site of the new science was an important factor influencing professionalisation in museums. Indeed, in the period, the close engagement of museums with regional universities and colleges was encouraged: “it was very encouraging to all engaged in Museum work to see the great importance attached to Museums in connection with the University teaching” (Museums Association, 1891: 4). Later in Europe, at the turn of the twentieth-century, the worth of museums as sites of
research had weakened, and laboratories and universities grew dominant (Pickstone 2000). However, this relationship was not simple or homogeneous, but complicated and variable locally; not “a phoenix-like rise of the laboratory from the ashes of the museums” (Kraft and Alberti 2003: 206). The emergence of a new scientific framework provided a strong impetus towards museum professionalisation. Scientists who belonged to the new scientific tradition became leaders of the museum reform movement, including such scientists as William Henry Flower.

Meanwhile, the field-based science of geology developed innovative methods and progressed as a discipline over the course of the nineteenth century. The national Geological Survey, conducted by Henry Thomas De la Beche in 1835, gave some impulse to its evolution, modernizing geological research practice and organisation (see Knell 2000, 2007). William Boyd Dawkins, a protagonist in the formation of the Museums Association, joined the Survey early in his academic career (1862-1869). Field-based scientists within the new tradition, such as Boyd Dawkins, also emerged in the later half of the nineteenth century. Social relationships were important: Boyd Dawkins also had a personal connection with Huxley, who recommended him as a curator of the Manchester Museum in 1869 (Tweedale and Procter 1992). Boyd Dawkins is a representative of the new scientific tradition, of the professional geologists who differed so much from their gentlemanly forebears. The emergence of a professional class, including
these scientists, can be regarded as characteristic of social change in this period (Savage 1992, Scott 1991, see also Fyfe 1996, Fyfe 1998). The formation of professional associations can also be regarded as a strategy for consolidating their identities: the Library Association, for instance, was established in 1877.

The establishment of museums as media in this period also contributed to professionalisation. Since the seventeenth-century, visual entertainment had developed in Europe, from theatrical techniques to the cabinet of curiosities (MacGregor 2007a). In Britain during the nineteenth-century, the visual mass media organised by entertainment industries prevailed as part of popular culture, and the “exhibition industry” was one facet of this (Altick 1978). At the same time, science became a part of the cultural consumption of the public (Fyfe and Lightman 2007). Natural history museums in this period can thus be regarded as a part of the visual entertainment provided for the general populace (O’Connor 2007). However, by the turn of the twentieth century, museums were

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3 Natural history has always changed its precise meaning, reflecting the historical contexts in which it has been practiced. Sociological studies of natural history have revealed such social constructive aspects of it, seeing: “natural history as the product of conglomerates of people, natural objects, institutions, collections, finances, all linked by a range of practices of different kinds” (Jardin and Secord et al. 1996: 8).
developing a stronger and more structured educational purpose (Altick 1978: 509). Museums, now fully repositioned as public services managed by local authorities, increasingly came to be considered as significant educational instruments. This thinking resulted in the further proliferation of rate-supported museums (see Greenwood 1888). Indeed, by the end of the nineteenth century, museums were subject to new media devices that aimed to improve their educational effectiveness. These were presented energetically at annual conferences of the Museums Association in its early years, and included discussion of labelling, structuring of information, cases, lectures and schooling cabinets.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the establishment of museums as public media meant gave new consideration to the museum audience. The audience, the public, were not only educated and edified in or by museums, they were intentionally and strategically applying the opportunities offered by visiting museums to their daily lives (Hill 2005, Alberti 2007). This period saw the beginning of visitor research in museums (e.g. Higgins 1884). The audience began to be viewed as a significant actor in museum management, producing figures to be analysed by museum professionals. The division between professionals and the public, so evident in the structure of the modern museum, was established in the late nineteenth century. It doubtless entailed some of the thinking present in Flower’s new museum idea discussed in the previous chapter.
The architectural plan below, showing a clear separation between curators and the public, for instance, was proposed for the rational management of museums (Figure 4.1.).

Figure 4.1. Architectural boundaries between curators and public in museum (Huxley [1868] 1896: 127)

By the turn of the twentieth-century, the construction of the new scientific community, the members of which drove forward the reform of museums, together with the recognition that museums were important educational media, significantly accelerated the scientific rationalization of museums and the professionalisation of museum practitioners. Together these factors, set in the context described in the last chapter, would finally result in the formation of the Museums Association.
The initial membership of the Museums Association

The Museums Association might be seen as fundamentally reflecting the status aspirations of museums workers. The rise of professionalisation in nineteenth-century Britain applies not only to the museum community but also to other occupations, such as architects, pharmacists, engineers, actuaries, accountants, surveyors and librarians. It is demonstrated by the successive formations of professional associations over the course of the century (Millerson 1964, Gourvish 1988). In Britain, the professional middle class was formed in this period. Professions created their identities by constructing their own cultural assets (Savage 1992). One of these was their associational organisation. Founding associations was seen as the most efficient solution to establishing occupational standards and status. The development of such associations reflected the social circumstances surrounding each profession. The characteristics of these social contexts can be understood by studying the personal careers of founding members. The development process of the Museums Association proceeded in a way that often reflected personal inclinations which had been constructed in the course of individual careers in museums.

In the provincial museum community, local knowledge is a crucial requirement for professionals because it is necessary for constructing local collections. In the nineteenth century especially, the formation of local collections was
recommended for the rational management of provincial museums (see chapter 3). Reconciling the universalism of general systems of knowledge and localism, which was so central to the provincial museum, was an issue that arose in the course of the professionalisation of the museum workforce. Professional associations usually promote the diffusion of universal knowledge and skills. The matter of localism was, therefore, a controversial issue in the discussions of the early Museums Association: how should diversity represented by multiple localities be represented and balanced with the universality inherent in many museum activities? This dichotomy of locality/universality parallels, and is not unrelated to, the previously discussed relationship between individualism and collectivism.

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4 For example, Henry Maurice Platnauer, who was a founding member of the Museums Association, mentioned in his presidential address at the annual conference of the Association at Brighton in 1911, that 'I have found ... that the local museum man is generally anxious to tell you - with complacency, if not with pride - that his collections are purely local. This principle is quite wrong' (Platnauer 1911: 8). In response to this statement, Charles Madeley, who also was a founding member of the Association, added his opinion in his presidential address at the Swansea Conference in 1914: “In the case of a museum maintained by a local natural history or antiquarian society, the local principle not only may be a possible right one, I venture to say that it is often the only right one ... But for a Municipal Museum, a museum maintained out of public funds, such a limitation of its scope cannot, I think, be reasonably upheld” (Madeley 1914: 43). It is noteworthy, that these provincial men did not share a conception of the division of labour with Flower at the British Museum (Natural History) (see chapter 3).
The founding members of the Museums Association were called to York in 1888. They participated in the meeting in response to letters from the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, which had been sent to “24 Museums selected from amongst the best known in England” (Museums Association 1890: 2). York’s central location in the UK and position on the north-south rail network made it a logical place for a national meeting. Many years earlier the BAAS had been formed at this museum. In the case of the Museums Association, this gathering is regarded as preliminary meeting prior to the official inaugural meeting of the following year, but the main participants in the meetings overlap. From the perspective of understanding how such an organisation came into being, we can regard the participants in the 1888 meeting as the founding members of the association (table 4. 1.). It is the study of this group that best reveals the social facets of the early organization.
Table 4.1. Attendances of the preliminary meeting in York on 3rd May 1888, and the classes of their museums which were ranked in the report of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (1887)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Attendance</th>
<th>Museum</th>
<th>Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Samuel William North</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Croser Hey</td>
<td>Museum of Yorkshire Philosophical Society</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Maurice Platnauer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas John Moore</td>
<td>Free Public Museum, Liverpool</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles George Virgo</td>
<td>Queen’s Park Museum and Art Gallery, Manchester</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butler Wood</td>
<td>Free Public Library and Museum, Bradford</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Waller Midgley</td>
<td>Chadwick Museum, Bolton</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elijah Howarth</td>
<td>Public Museum, Sheffield</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Madeley</td>
<td>Warrington Museum</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wesley Carr</td>
<td>Free Natural History Museum, Nottingham</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Cameron</td>
<td>Borough Museum, Sunderland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The generation of pioneers

The comparative aim of this thesis requires that certain conditions of the initial membership of the British association should be emphasised. Firstly, from the outset the British organisation was made up of working museum practitioners. These were later termed “the generation of pioneers” (Anon. 1938: 115). They shared an enthusiasm for the reform of museums and strived to see them managed and arranged according to scientific principles. They also strived to develop the
museum as an instrument of educational and social reform. Their advanced works were presented in the early publications of the Association, such as the Report of proceedings, with the papers read at the annual general meeting of the Museums Association and the Museums Journal. The founding membership all – except the Public Museum in Bradford – were ranked in the first class in a report published in 1887 by the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS 1887). This ranking was a measure of the achievement of contemporary practitioners in these museums.

However, the distinction between these museums and their predecessors is not only a result of this new enthusiasm for museum reform, it also reflected the changed occupational status of the museum employee. The occupational conditions of museum professionals changed gradually during this period. New employment patterns appeared; local authorities came to employ museum staff.

While professional provincial curators of status can be traced back to the model

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5 In the report, the BAAS presented the statistics of museums in Britain, including the list of provincial museums. The data was collected using questionnaire surveys, and the BAAS arranged the museums into four classes, taking into the consideration the area of the room, the size and the character of the collections, the annual cost, the staff, and the number of the visitors.

The Public Museum in Bradford was ranked in the second class in the report. This was mainly because the museum had a spatial limitation. The museum shared the building with the public library and did not have sufficient exhibition space. This problem was solved at 1915 when the museum’s own building was opened.
of John Phillips in York in the 1820s, most of these early curators occupied poorly-funded custodial roles, acting as servants to the membership (see Knell 2000: 92-111). More prevalent were honorary or voluntary workers who had other primary jobs, from which they made a living, or who were gentlemen and thus had a private source of income and were not required to work. In the learned societies, curatorial roles were funded from membership fees or indirectly, as in the case of Phillips, through the patronage of prominent members for whom the museum and society were personal projects. As local government services the situation was entirely different, museum workers were now employees, however poorly they were paid. Thus the pursuit of status also became associated with levels of pay, or rather the general inadequacy of museum pay.

Thomas John Moore (1824-1892), for instance, had been employed by the 13th Earl of Derby to keep his private menagerie and natural history collections in Liverpool. However, in 1852 he transferred to the town council's employment as a result of the opening of the new public museum based on collections bequeathed by the Earl (National Museums Liverpool 2010: 4-13). Elijah Howarth (1854-1938) in Sheffield, William Waller Midgley (1843-1925) in Bolton, and Charles Madely (1849-1920) in Warrington were also all typical employees of municipal corporations. The founding members did, however, also include museum practitioners who were employed by local learned societies, such as Henry Maurice Platnauer (1857-1937), the Museum Keeper of the
Yorkshire Philosophical Society, and voluntary and honorary workers for the society's museum, such as Samuel William North (1825-1894), Vice-President of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, and William Croser Hey (1853-1909), Curator of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society.

The creation of museum positions paid out of public funds appears to have been an important motivation to promote the professionalisation of museum practitioners. The fact that they belonged to “public” museums had an influence on their professional identities, and how critically they looked at themselves and their role. This sometimes resulted in the development of personal and occupational philosophies. Charles Madeley, for instance, posed a “Theory of a Municipal Museum” in his presidential address at the Swansea Conference of the Museums Association in 1914 (Madeley 1914: 37).

A natural history bias

The early association had a definite bias in its membership: most of the pioneers were originally natural historians (Lewis 1989: 11). Most of the papers which were read in the early annual meetings of the Association were presented by specialists in this field.\(^6\) This bias appeared primarily because the formation of the Association exploited the mature and established networks of natural history.

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\(^6\) This point is examined more closely in Chapter 6.
Indeed, as detailed in the previous chapter, the proposition to form a museum association was first raised in the natural history journal, *Nature*:

I hope this question [about the formation of the association] will now be taken up heartily and energetically by all interested; and while I would beg that you may give space for the suggestions which others may wish to make through the medium of Nature, I shall be glad to enter into correspondence with those who may address me privately. (Paton 1880a: 442)

The leadership of natural history museums in processes of professionalisation can also later be found in the case of the American Association of Museums:

This imbalance likely represents the fact that administrators from natural history museums were the first to organize the profession, creating the Museums Association in the United Kingdom in 1889 and the American Association of Museums of 1906. This is not to say that administrators from art and history museums were slow to professionalize; rather, there were simply more natural history museums than any other type of museum during this period, and the scientists in their employ came from a tradition of publishing that gave them a distinct advantage in disseminating their ideas about museums to a wider audience. (Genoways
Knell has written that “Until the 1920s, the natural sciences dominated museum provision in Britain, and museums played an important part in the development of an understanding of this country’s natural history” (Knell 1996: 29). That ascendency might be rooted in the development of local natural history societies and their networks throughout the eighteenth century (Allen 1976, 1986, 2001). It is very clear from its early membership that the “museum community”, whose existence was demonstrated symbolically by the formation of the Museums Association, was determined by the presence of existing and formalised communities in the natural sciences studies.

**A northern association**

All museums to which the participants belonged (with the possible except of Nottingham) were located in northern England. The geographical limitations of the early membership was observed by Geoffrey Lewis, who pointed out that, despite of the existence of a protagonist in Scotland - James Paton, a curator of the Kelvingrove Museum, Glasgow - the members of the inaugural meeting were restricted to English museums (Lewis 1989: 7). It is noteworthy that this was not the case with the formation of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, for which York acted as a central meeting point for protagonists in
Edinburgh and London (Morrell 1984). In the case of the Museums Association, the geographical locations of the early membership were not only far more restricted than those that led to the formation of BAAS in York in 1831, it was also more restricted than Lewis indicated. Its members were all from the north of England. The geographical proximity of the cities, where the participants of the 1888 meeting came from, is conspicuous. Although Lewis could not find the decisive reason for the restriction, the place where the meeting was held is likely to have influenced it. The formation of BAAS exploited the north-south road network. The formation of the Museums Association reflected a membership situated along the east-west railway mainline. It brought together individuals who were already connected through natural history networks, individuals who were already known to each other. Sheffield’s Howarth, for instance, had been chief assistant of the Liverpool Museum from 1871 to 1876, engaged there mainly in the art exhibitions. Similarly, Butler Wood (1854-1934) worked for the Bradford Library as sub-librarian to Charles George Virgo who had later moved to Manchester. They were both members of the Bradford Historical and Antiquarian Society.

York was at the heart of many of these networks at this time. Many learned societies and field clubs were formed here during this period. Particularly noteworthy is the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union which was organised in 1861 to bring together members from local societies. The organisation published a
monthly journal from 1864: *The Naturalist*. In the journal, the cooperation of the various local natural history groups was articulated as the mission of the new publication:

The *Naturalist* may be the means of binding them still more firmly together, and making them better known to each other and to their brethren in more distant parts of the country, and of increasing their zeal and love for natural science (Anon. 1865: 2).

It is also worth noting that Yorkshire Philosophical Society had also been not just the venue for the formation of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, for many years this association was run by officers of the society. This natural history focus in the voluntary networks also explain the mix of amateurs and professionals in the initial membership.

**Professionals and amateurs**

The status of these early member both as natural historians and museum practitioners included both professionals and amateurs. Thomas John Moore, for example, was a professional. Moore was a zoologist and a member of the Zoological Society of London. He began his career as a member of staff of the Society, working for its zoo. It was through the Society that he became
acquainted with the thirteenth Earl of Derby, who appointed him as the assistant caretaker for his private menagerie in Liverpool, before his later move to become curator at that city’s museum (National Museums Liverpool 2010, Forrest 1919). Although he was a zoologist, his primary inclination was to be a museum practitioner: “His work was mainly practical and his literary contributions rather scanty” (Forrest 1919: 1).

John Wesley Carr (1862-1939) was Professor of Natural History at the University College of Nottingham, where he took the charge of the Nottingham University College Natural Sciences Museum between 1888 and 1931. He was a professor but yet engaged in everyday work of the museum. He collected geological materials, which he personally arranged in displays in the museum (Turner 2000). Henry Maurice Platnauer also had a scientific career. He was born in London in 1857 and educated at the City of London School and at the London University. His major interest was mineralogy and he worked in the British Museum (Natural History) for eight years before moving to York. He was appointed as Museum Keeper of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society and from here he was to play a prominent role in the early organisation of the Museums Association (Anon. 1940, Pyrah 1988), and in so doing continuing a proud tradition in the society of participating in national affairs. He was motivated by “the aims of improving the status of the post of salaried Museum Keeper, as well as strengthening the position of museums in the country” (Pyrah 1988: 107).
These men can be regarded as professional scientists, but the initial membership also included scientists best understood as belonging to the amateur tradition.

The chairman of the 1888 meeting was Samuel William North, the Vice-President of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society. He was born in Birstwith, North Yorkshire, in 1825, educated at the York School of Medicine. His primary occupation was as a surgeon, having been appointed as the first Medical Officer of Health by the York Corporation in the 1873. He achieved an outstanding career as a medical man in Yorkshire, holding the post of the president in the York Medical Society and the Yorkshire Association of Medical Officers of Health (T. 1894, Anon. 1894). On the other hand, he was also a natural scientist, and worked for the Yorkshire Philosophical Society as an honorary curator of ethnography collections and conchology: “He was ever ready to aid the Society by his advice and labours in the arrangement of the collections, especially in those of Geology and Conchology” (Anon. 1895a: xvi). He was also a collector, and his conchology collection was bequeathed to the Society. The collection was “not a very large one, but valuable from the fact that the specimens are all localized and in exceptionally fine condition” (Anon. 1895b: xiii).

William Croser Hey (1853-1909) participated in the 1888 meeting as a curator of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society. He was not, however, a professional scientist, and he originally belonged to the clergy. His father was an Archdeacon
in York and Hey returned from his first curacy at Guisborough in 1879 to succeed him. He also worked for the Yorkshire Philosophical Society as an honorary curator of conchology, insects and crustacea. He was a habitual stroller, often looking for specimens in the Yorkshire countryside. Besides his contribution to the Society, he took part in the Yorkshire Naturalists’ Union from its foundation. He took a prominent role in the Union as a president of the conchological section, and contributed considerable notes to *the Naturalist*, all of which show his energetic activities in the region (T.S. 1909). His career is typical of traditional amateur collectors who made up such a large proportion of the early Association’s membership.

Henry Hugh Higgins (1814-1893), although he did not participate in the 1888 meeting, was an eminent member of the early Association and its first president. He was a chaplain in Liverpool and had worked voluntarily with Higgins for the museum of the Earl of Derby. His main job there was the care of the invertebrate collection (National Museums Liverpool 2010: 18).

North, Hey and Higgins worked for society museums but their positions were honorary and without a salary. Their primary jobs, surgeon and clergymen, were typical of occupations and professions from which many amateur collectors came. They can be regarded as traditional museum practitioners. These men contrasted with the professionals salaried by local authorities, such as Howarth, Madeley
and Wood, a group that increased in number in the late the nineteenth century, gradually replacing the amateurs in the affairs of the Association. The professionalisation of the museum world proceeded through the complicated interactions between such amateurs and professionals though it is worth noting that many of these museum amateurs were professionals in other fields. This is an important point; these amateurs were not powerless individuals. The relationships between these groups were influenced by the local conditions, each reflecting the unique connections that existed between the amateur and professional in each region (see Alberti 2001).

In such a community possessing such diverse levels of involvement, the formation of the Association might have had no little impact on processes of professionalisation. However, whilst the members of the 1888 meeting included both “traditional” and “pioneer” generations of museum workers, the early activities were anchored mainly by the latter who had more intense aspirations regarding their occupational status. It is also true that “traditional” members may have had a more limited impact because they were more elderly; North died in 1892, Higgins in 1893, and Hey in 1909. The main protagonists for organizing the Association, those who posted the suggestions in Nature, were the professional salaried practitioners: Elijah Howarth and James Paton (1843-1921), superintendent of the Glasgow museums. Additionally, the administration and publishing activities of the early Association were managed mainly by Howarth
and Platnauer. The natural scientist members of the 1888 meeting were all paid museum practitioners.

**Curatorship and librarianship**

In addition to the dominant naturalists, another representative group can be found amongst the founding members: librarians. Many of these men were also innovators and reformers in libraries at this time. Charles George Virgo, for example, contrived the modern system of lending cards in libraries. This is referred to in James Duff Brown's *Manual of Library Economy* (1903) and the utility of the system and his ingenuity were widely admired (Brown 1903: 395).

In fact, librarianship and curatorship were often combined in this period. Virgo, who had been a librarian at the Bradford Library, moved to Manchester in 1884 to take a position at Queen's Park Museum. Butler Wood and Charles Madeley were also librarians employed by the corporations, combining this role with their duties to manage public museums. Madeley, who was the Association’s president from 1913-14 gained a position of status yet “By inclination and training he was more of a Librarian than a Curator” (Howarth 1920: 191). Museums and libraries shared not only their staff but also frequently their buildings. Bradford's Art Gallery and Museum was, for example, established in one room in the Central Library in 1879. Most corporations managed both institutions together through a
“Library and Museum Committee”. This was related to the fact that the both public institutions were regulated by the same legislation.

Museums in this period also shared the same missions as libraries: education and social reform, and the same issues were discussed in both communities (see Greenwood 1888, Greenwood 1891), such as Sunday opening for the promotion of rational recreation. The competences required by museum curators and librarians also overlapped. Classification and arrangement skills were regarded as one of the most essential requirements for both professions. Such skills were needed for curators to rescue their museums from disorder, and the scientific classification of books was already established. The introduction of the open access system in public libraries at the end of the century raised the need for rational arrangement further (Black 1996: 204). Cataloguing was also a shared competence needed by curators and librarians. Butler Wood is a prime example of the similarities between the professions: he achieved excellence in both the library and the museum in Bradford (see Wood 1892).

The professionalisation of librarians also acted as a model for curators: the professional association of librarians, the Library Association, had been formed in 1877. That association’s main objective was “to unite all persons engaged or interested in library work, for the purpose of promoting the best possible administration of existing libraries, and formation of new ones where desirable. It
shall also aim at the encouragement of bibliographical research” (Minto 1932: 164-165). Its early activities were certainly successful, especially in terms of the spread of “public” libraries. The promotion of the Public Libraries Acts was a main task of the early association. As a result of their work, adoptions of the Acts increased rapidly: the number of institutions holding to the Acts were 46 in 1869, 194 in 1889, and 570 in 1909. The system of professional qualification for librarians was also introduced swiftly. The first professional examinations were held at London and Nottingham in 1885 (see Minto 1932, Munford 1968; 1951, Kelly 1977). This is in marked contrast to the Museums Association, which, though the issue of training curators had been repeatedly discussed, only launched its diploma system as late as 1932.

The success of the Library Association had a huge impact on the pioneers of the curatorial profession. Elijah Howarth initially attempted to widen the membership of the Library Association to include museum occupations as a further form of allegiance between the professions. He attended the annual meeting of the Library Association in 1884 and brought forward this idea: “it is desirable to enlarge the scope of the Association so as to include the curators of museums and art-galleries” (Transactions and Proceedings of the Library Association of the United Kingdom at their Seventh Annual Meeting, 1884: 137). Some attendees accepted this suggestion sympathetically, but further consideration was left to a committee. At the next annual meeting of the LA the
matter was discussed by the Council once again. However, no definite recommendation was made, and further consideration was requested again. After that, discussions of this matter and the decision that was finally made cannot be found in the publications of the LA, but the enlargement of the membership to include museum curators was certainly not realised. However, the formation of the Museums Association was nonetheless motivated by an existing entity sharing similar aims. It is related also to the fact that the founding members of the Museums Association included outstanding librarians such as Butler Wood, an active member of the Library Association, elected to its governing council in 1895 (see Duckett 1995).

**Museums and the government**

Museums, as well as libraries, were legislated in the course of the nineteenth century in Britain, dramatically changing the relationships between museums and the government at both a local and national level. Museums became incorporated in the administrative structure of the local authorities, becoming public institutions owned by the taxpayer. Additionally, national educational policy also affected museums in this period. The Education Act 1870, for example, was a strong impulse to promote the educational use of museums, as has already been discussed.
The changing political circumstances surrounding museums is also reflected in the members of the 1888 meeting. Robert Cameron (1825-1913), for example, pursued a political career, which was unusual amongst the founding members. Although he was an honorary curator of the Sunderland Museum, most of his life was devoted to politics. Cameron held positions successively on the Sunderland Board of Guardians and the Sunderland of School Board, and was then elected a member of Sunderland Town Council in 1876. He became Alderman in 1894. In Sunderland, he also served as a chairman of the Library and Museum Committee. Eventually he was elected as a Liberal Party Member of Parliament for the Houghton le Spring Division of Durham in 1895 and he kept the seat until his death in 1913 (Anon. 1901: 22, Howarth 1913). His main political interest was education, and he left contributions in the House of Commons regarding educational issues.\(^7\)

Elijah Howarth also constructed a relationship with the central government throughout his career. He became a member of the Advisory Council of the Board of Education from 1912 to 1920 (Anon. 1939). He emphasized the importance of cooperation with this government agency at the Conference of

\(^7\) Cameron’s political influence was seen as a resource for the early Association, its members lobbying him for political support. For example, in the Council meeting of the Museums Association at 21st July 1896, the members decided to ask Cameron to put a question in the House of Commons as to the distribution of the “Challenger” report for securing the prevalence to museums.
representatives of provincial museums, held to discuss the relation of museums to education in Sheffield in 1918:

I hope that we shall receive from the representatives of the Board of Education some lead or guide as to the most helpful methods of extending our work, and we might hear from them what is being done in the various schools under the control of the Board. ... I hope now we will get some information from the Board itself which may enable us to do better than we have done in the past (Howarth 1918: 7-8).

His commitment to the educational policy nationally and locally, was an eminent achievement of his career. Cameron and Howarth were both proponents of the educational potential of museums throughout their careers (see Cameron 1890, Howarth 1918). Their political aspirations were intertwined with their motivations in regard to the activities of the Museums Association. Associational work is a channel through which social mobility is achieved. Therefore, the political aspirations of the members is highly liked to be implicitly or explicitly linked to their associational work. Moreover, the occupational professionalisation process was related closely to the government, who regulated and proceeded it through measures such as legislation.
As discussed above, the backgrounds of the founding members varied widely, but common features can be found. Their careers show that the formation process of the Museums Association was interwoven with the interactions between diverse actors crossing different social and political domains: the scientific community, local authorities, central government and the librarians’ community. The members participated in the organisation with their peculiar and unique social contexts, which engendered individual aspirations for the movement. The associational process can be regarded as a path through which these diverse aspirations were collected and reconciled by the setting of common aims and objectives. However, the trajectory of development for the Museums Association was not quite so simple. The process also included contingent factors and events: for instance, establishing personal connections and the rejection of Howarth’s proposition to the Library Association. In the next chapter, this complicated formation process will be examined by much more closely focusing on the individuals who led the associational movement.
Chapter 5

The influence of individuals on
the formation of the Museums Association

Tensions in the formation process of the Museums Association

Certain tensions existed within the early association, a result of the different orientations of the individuals and institutions which comprised its membership. There were two main axes of tension – that between the local and the national, and that between the disciplines of natural history and art. These tensions produced long-lasting problems and obstacles to the early activities and development of the Association. At first, the initiatives of provincial museums and natural historians led the institution, with national museums and art galleries less active members, if they were members at all. The non-representative nature of the membership, especially the absence of members from art museums, was repeatedly highlighted within the proceedings of the Association.

The tensions can be shown in the discussions of the inaugural meeting of 1889, hosted by the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, and including a rather more diverse group of attendees than the meeting of the year before (see Table 5.1). Significantly, no staff from the national museums in London were present. The *Evening Press* reported the meeting in detail, including the content of a letter
received by Henry M. Platnauer, Museum Keeper of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, from William H. Flower, Director of the British Museum (Natural History), London, and President Elect of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, read out during the discussion. In the letter, Flower showed his approval of the establishment of the Association, and simultaneously requested that “they would not confine it to representatives of provincial museums, but would let their friends in London have the benefits as well as assisting, if possible, the objects of the organisation.”

In his response to this letter, Platnauer explained why they had not asked the London museums to attend for two reasons; “(1) we were afraid of being too ambitious at the outset; & (2) we felt we were scarcely in a position to ask the metropolitan museums to join us.” While he took a very humble attitude towards Flower, it was a fact that the formation of the Association was propelled by the enthusiasm and issues of those involved in provincial museums movement. It was indeed the case that the social aspirations of the professional middle class in local towns was strongly reflected by the movement, and hence, humility as an explanation for the absence of London museums might not be the whole story.

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8 Evening Press, York (21st June 1889).
9 A letter from Platnauer, H. M. to Flower, W. H. (22nd June 1889), NHMA.
In the meeting, John Phillips¹⁰, Honorary Secretary of the Scarborough Philosophical Society, explained reported the view of the Council of his Society that “it would not be desirable to embrace art galleries in the institution.”¹¹ Robert Cameron, Honorary Curator of the Sunderland Museum, however, observed that it was the general situation that “in many towns the art gallery and the museum were practically united.”¹² He suggested, therefore, that the exclusion of art galleries from the proposed organisation would not be advisable. Discussion on this issue was carried over into later meetings, and cropped up repeatedly in subsequent years.

These tensions and debates can be best understood by investigating the individual members of the early Association using surviving primary sources. Aside from their personal views, it is important to understand that they joined this organisation as representatives of the towns and cities in which their museums were located; towns and cities which, in Victorian Britain, held different political outlooks. The various industries, businesses and services around which the cities had grown engendered unique class structures and urban problems, and this in turn characterised the unique stance of each local authority (see Briggs 1963).

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¹⁰ Not to be confused with his famous namesake, John Phillips (1800-1874), former curator of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society Museum and later Oxford Professor.
This diversity also affected the spheres of public science and culture. The legal and political systems for managing municipal museums in Britain, which developed throughout the nineteenth century and which were discussed in chapter 3, were also affected by these socio-political circumstances. Museums had as a result come to be regarded as educational and recreational institutions for the public, and especially for the working classes. The same contextual dependency is true for the formation of the Museums Association. This dynamic associational movement of museum professionals can be approached through an examination of these social situations, and this perspective returns to the individual representatives and their career paths as the developed in the closing decades of the nineteenth century.
Table 5.1. Attendees of the inaugural meeting of the Museums Association in York on the 20th June 1889 (cf. Museums Association 1890: 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Attendance</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Name of Attendance</th>
<th>City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S. W. North</td>
<td>York</td>
<td>E. Howarth</td>
<td>Sheffield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. C. Hey</td>
<td></td>
<td>B. Wood</td>
<td>Bradford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. M. Platnauer</td>
<td></td>
<td>J. W. Carr</td>
<td>Nottingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Alderman) H. Turner</td>
<td>Stockport</td>
<td>H. H. Higgins</td>
<td>Liverpool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Tym</td>
<td></td>
<td>B. Lomax</td>
<td>Brighton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. J. Jeorge</td>
<td>Northampton</td>
<td>J. H. Phillips</td>
<td>Scarborough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Cameron</td>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>J. M. E. Bowley</td>
<td>Sunderland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. W. Midgley</td>
<td>Bolton</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Yorkshire Philosophical Society’s parentage of the Museums Association

The Yorkshire Philosophical Society hosted both the 1888 and 1889 meetings. Table 5.1 shows that individuals from the north of England also dominated the second of these meetings. As observed in the previous chapter, this society in York, had also hosted the founding of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in 1831 (Howard 197: 6). These associations shared some similarities in organisational nature, and in the reasons behind their origins. The background of the formation of the British Association for the Advancement
of Science has been examined, focusing on the motivations of its founders (eg. Foote 1951, Orange 1971, Orange 1972, Cannon 1978). Some of its advocates were the scientific “declinists” who lamented the retrograded situation of British science compared to the Continent: especially France and Germany where national initiatives for the promotion of science were much stronger. Their criticism was directed not only at governmental policy, but also at the Royal Society. This influenced another organizational characteristic of the British Association: its provincialism. York was selected as the place for its formation, and its remoteness from London reflects a contrast to the metropolitan institution of the Royal Society. The diffusion of scientific knowledge and skills across various provinces, and the promotion of cooperation between local scientific institutions were regarded as significant measures to advance British science.\footnote{In studies regarding the history of the BAAS, the relationship between individualism and the structure in the advancement of British science has frequently been mentioned. The local scientific institutions had been sustained by local voluntarism and individualism which depended greatly on local conditions. It can be shown that “individualism was the chief leitmotiv” of the British style of science (Morrell 1971: 192). The nature of the BAAS was also affected by this inclination. How the structural regulation for the development of the science was to be reconciled with personal initiatives and aspirations was a prominent issue for its management committee (Cannon 1978, Morrell 1971).} This provincial nature of the British Association was also related to the fact that the early British Association was an itinerant body without any fixed base points (Orange 1971).
The competitive intention was much less emphasised in the Museums Association, but provincialism still characterised both institutions in their early stages. Both were also, in their early periods, peripatetic organisations without permanent offices. The members of the Museums Association themselves recognised this similarity, and Henry H. Higgins, representative of the Liverpool Museum, cited the British Association for the Advancement of Science as an ideal antecedent to be imitated: “The British Association themselves, when they assembled, met with the greatest possible difficulty, the great men who formed that body meeting with much obstruction and little encouragement. And if the British Association struggled through difficulties, so might the body which they now proposed to form; if the British Association found success in the end so might they.”

Three members of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society presented themselves in both the preliminary and inaugural meetings of the Museums Association:
Samuel W. North, Vice President, William C. Hey, Honorary Curator, and Henry M. Platnauer, Museum Keeper. North presided over the both meetings as chair.
As observed in the previous chapter, North and Hey were not professional scientists but great contributors to the Society. Medical men and the clergy, like North and Hey, regularly took vital positions in learned societies not only in York but also in other cities across the country. They were typical examples of

14 Evening Press, York (21st June 1889).
the people traditionally involved in local scientific activities in an amateur fashion.\textsuperscript{15}

In contrast to North and Hey, who were voluntary participants representing the York society, Henry Platnauer was a paid member of staff, and thus pursuing a professional career centred on the museum. He made most of the practical arrangements for the meetings, under instruction from the Council of the Society. Moreover, although North and Hey hardly took part in the Museum Association’s activity after attending the founding meeting, Platnauer committed himself to the organisation during the early years of its development. He served as a joint secretary for the Association from 1889 to 1897, and undertook the role of editor of the early publications of the Association. Eventually he was elected as the president for the year 1911.\textsuperscript{16}

This contrast between these men can be explained by focusing on differences in their situations within the Society. It is, however – and as was previously noted, an obvious fact that North and Hey were disadvantaged by age; North died in 1894 and Hey in 1909. However, the critical point here is not the impediments

\textsuperscript{15} That they were ‘amateurs’ does not mean that they were inferior scientists and less conducive to scientific organisations. In fact, Willmot, who intensely criticised the unsuccessful history of the Society, quoted Hey in the list of men who “have tried in the past to bring order out of chaos, often in an atmosphere of indifference and frustration” (Willmot 1953: 146).

\textsuperscript{16} ‘H. M. Platnauer’ (Obituary) in Museums Journal, 39, 1940: 482.
possessed by these two men but rather the very evident professional aspirations that made Platnauer so active in the Association.

**Professional autonomy of the museum keepers in the York society**

Platnauer was born in London in 1857, and educated at the City of London School and London University. He was originally a mineralogist, and was appointed as a second-class assistant in the Department of Mineralogy of the Natural History Museum, London, in 1880. He resigned the position in 1884, and moved to York, where he had been appointed as Museum Keeper in the Yorkshire Philosophical Society. He kept this position in the Society until 1904. Such an occupational situation, however, was often less than desirable, especially for a scientist, and this not only applies to Platnauer but also to other Keepers of the Society. The problem of defining the Keeper’s status and role recurred until the transition of the Museums to the York Corporation in 1961 (cf. Pyrah 1988 and Rubinstein 2009). The causes of their frustrations can be distilled down to two main points: their salaries and professional freedom.

The first Museum Keeper of the Society was John Phillips, appointed in 1825. He was a geologist, and his uncle, William Smith, was known as “Father of the English Geology”. Phillips achieved an outstanding scientific reputation as a result of his pioneering geological work while Keeper of the Society, a post he
kept until 1840. An affable young man, he maintained an excellent relationship with the Society, and was highly respected by the membership having put the society on the map as a scientific organisation as a treatise he published in 1829, *Illustrations of the Geology of Yorkshire: The Yorkshire Coast*. In his first paid position, his situation was far better than that his peers but he would soon outgrow its limitations, and particularly the mundane demands of practical curation (Knell 2000; Morrell 2005). Several times he stated to the Council his dissatisfaction. He proposed some requests to a sub-committee appointed by the Council to consider “the best manner of providing for the scientific care of the Collections”. He recommended that they should either appoint unpaid curators from among the membership or employ a salaried curator. He emphasized that the two approaches should not be combined and, if a salaried curator were appointed, that “his direction and responsibility should be unfettered by other nominal or complimentary (called Honorary) appointed.”¹⁷ Eventually, he advised that the first scheme, the appointment of honorary curators, was more desirable because of the financial deficiency of the Society (cf. Pyrah 1989: 48-49, Rubinstein 2009: 16-17; 32-33). The Society’s financial problems remained unsolved until the transition of the Museum to the local authority. As a result, the remuneration given to the Keepers was not always appropriate for their duties. Financial vulnerability was not unique to the Yorkshire Society, but a universal issue for learned societies across Britain, and particularly those

¹⁷ YPSCM, 4th January 1841. This part also is cited in Pyrah (1988: 49).
burdened with museums (Knell 2000). It was a leading factor in the transition of museums to local authorities in the latter half of the nineteenth century. However, another issue proved equally problematic for these paid museum keepers: the control of their “direction and responsibilities” by their employer, the Council, and other members, especially honorary curators.

The duties of the Museum Keeper in the Yorkshire Philosophical Society were stipulated in writing in 1881. While it was stated that the “Keeper shall have the general charge of the Museums and Library under the control of the Council”, it also regulated his behaviour and activities in the Museum. When the Keeper managed the collection, he was “under the order of the Honorary Curators and must undertake no work and make no change except in obedience to their instructions in their respective departments.” His own personal collecting activity was confined as well; “it is not desirable that he should collect either in his private capacity or for others than the Yorkshire Philosophical Society during the time he is their officer.” Additionally, he was permitted to have his holiday only “at a times convenient to the interests of the Society.” 18 These regulations severally restricted the freedoms of the Keeper and would appear to undermine the many attractions of the job. The Keeper was little more than a servant to the membership.

18 YPSCM, 31st October 1881.
The Keeper previous to Platnauer, Walter Keeping, resigned the position partly because of disagreements with other members of the Society. Although his resignation was caused most directly by illness, his father stated that there had been some “unpleasantness” between his son and the Society’s members. He explained that this had occurred on the account of “the sad state of his health”, and tried to gain the members’ sympathies. However, there are indications that the excessive control of his activities by the membership was another decisive factor that made him leave the position. Keeping had already established a career as geologist before taking the position in York, having worked at the Woodwardian Museum in Cambridge and at the University College of Wales in Aberystwyth. Such experiences may have prevented him from obediently taking instructions from less professional or scientific curators.

Of course, the stipulations of the Keeper’s duties applied also to Platnauer. Moreover, the rules, which were presented by the Council to Platnauer when his appointment was confirmed, differed slightly from those written down in 1881. His role as the Keeper became even more circumscribed with the addition of a new clause stating that “[t]he Keeper shall not undertake any systematic work (either Lectures or Classes) apart from the work of the Society.”

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20 YPSCM, 3rd December 1883.
situation, his relationship with other members of the Society was much more amenable than that of his predecessor. This can be demonstrated by the fact that he was elected as vice-president after his resignation of the Keeper’s position in 1904. However, professional autonomy remained a vital issue for him. At the end of 1894, he proposed to the Council that the length of his holiday be extended from one month to two months a year, in return for a reduction of £50 from his annual salary. Rubinstein asserts that “his inability to go regularly into the field as a working geologist” chafed him (Rubinstein 2009: 43). He received a salary of £200 per year at this time, which was almost equal to the average remuneration of a municipal museum’s curator at the time. The size of the reduction that he proposed, thus accounted for a quarter of his whole salary, and indicates how vital scientific freedom was for him. George F. Willmot, a Keeper of the Society in the mid-twentieth century, and a radical critic of the irrational management of the organisation and the undesirable working conditions of the Keepers, explained that “Planauer’s enthusiastic response to Mr. Howarth of Sheffield’s suggestion of a Museums Association was due to a desire to raise the status of the museum curator” (Willmot 1953: 144).

One motivation behind the establishment of the Museums Association was professional circumstances of museum staff at the time: both their conditions of service and their isolation. In a report adopted by the Council of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society after the preliminary meeting of 1888, which was
circulated to provincial museums, the necessity of mutual assistance between curators was emphasised for resolving “the isolation of Museums”, something which was “a serious check to their progress and development.” The report stressed that “systematic and organized co-operation” would be “highly advantageous to all connected with the working of Museums.” The proposed association was supposed by its advocates to be advantageous not only to the development of provincial museums, but also to the advancement of their own professional status as museum staff. Platnauer also shared these professional aspirations, reflecting his occupational situation in a voluntary organisation that could not grant him sufficient remuneration and professional autonomy.

**Developing municipal museums and their educational purposes**

Sheffield Public Museum was opened in 1875 in Weston Park. The proposal of establishing a public museum was submitted by the Free Library Committee to the Town Council in 1870. The proposing report emphasized the “educational advantage” of the institution, and indicated “the desirability of providing for the young innocent and improving pleasures to compete with the vicious and frivolous enjoyments which are only too freely provided wherever there is a large and prosperous population.” These educational and welfare objectives were

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21 YPSCM, 31st August 1888.
22 SLAMCM, 4th October 1870.
later clearly stated in the congratulatory address of John F. Roebuck, the Mayor, at the opening of the Museum in September 1875. He especially stressed the significance of disciplining the working class by allowing them to visit the museum and see the exhibitions in an institution where one can cultivate the mind, a place which “makes the body more kind, more gentle, more civilized and more tractable.”

Industrialisation made Sheffield one of the principal towns of the steel industry in the late eighteenth century, and had experienced rapid population growth and urbanisation (Hey 2005). A vital political issue, was how the town to make the citizen “a better member of the community”. The enlightenment of the working classes in the town was anticipated to be a main objective of the new institution. This anticipation was shared generally among the local corporations that established municipal museums across the country in this period.

This political purpose was more evident in the municipal museums than in those which were managed by local learned societies; the philosophical societies in particular had their own political agenda (Knell 2007). However, most of the municipal museums retained close relationships with these societies. Indeed, municipal museums and their collections frequently had their roots in these

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voluntary organisations. The collection possessed by the Sheffield Public Museum, for example, was formed around that presented by the Sheffield Literary and Philosophical Society, and the Society retained a certain influence over it and the committee which took charge of the museum. The most eminent member of the Society, Henry C. Sorby, took a number of opportunities to state his opinions regarding the management of the museum. He was also involved with the selection of Howarth as its curator.\textsuperscript{25} This intertwined relationship is not unique to the Sheffield case. Local voluntary associations, including literary and philosophical societies, natural field clubs and art societies, frequently expressed their preferences and opinions to the municipal museums. Museums were not isolated in society, but situated in an intricate local network of diverse actors. Indeed, the Sheffield Free Libraries Committee had appointed a sub-committee to communicate with “the Literary and Philosophical Society and other local bodies” regarding the establishment of a Public Museum. The Sub-Committee had meetings with deputations not only from the Literary and Philosophical Society, but also from the Field Naturalists’ Society and the Cutlers’ Company, a trade guild of metalworkers.\textsuperscript{26} Besides various bodies of this type, museum staff also had to communicate with individuals, especially those who donated collections and funds to their institution. A curator’s duties extended far beyond the internal processes of the museum itself.

\textsuperscript{25} SLAMCM, 8th November 1875.
\textsuperscript{26} SLAMCM, 15th November and 27th December 1870.
The desire to be acknowledged as a scientific profession

In 1874, prior to Elijah Howarth, Charles Callaway had been appointed curator of Sheffield Public Museum, but he held the position for less than a year. The reason given for his resignation was illness, but it can be speculated that his conditions of employment were unsatisfactory and that these caused him to give it up. His resignation was accepted by the Committee, but he was nonetheless instructed to label the specimens presented by the Sheffield Literary and Philosophical Society before leaving the museum. In response to this request, Callaway explained his inability to complete the work by sending a letter to the Committee. He insisted that, in addition to his health problems, he had not been granted sufficient time to complete this task because of "the other necessary Museum work." Moreover, he indicated that there had been "many disturbing causes" which had made him "very unfit for active duty."\(^{27}\) Callaway’s apology was accepted by Henry Sorby, as a representative of the society; Sorby appreciated Callaway’s work in the Museum.\(^{28}\) However, this sequence of events shows that Callaway found his situation in the Museum frustrating. His active scientific career after leaving Sheffield reveals that his health problems were not

\(^{27}\) A letter from Callaway, C. to the chairman of the Free Libraries and Museum Committee (26th October 1875), entered in SLAMCM, 26th October 1875.  
\(^{28}\) A letter from Sorby, H. C. to Callaway, C. (25 October 1875), entered in SLAMCM, 26th October 1875
particularly serious and rather suggests that his working conditions or the nature of the work may have been the real cause of his resignation.\(^{29}\)

Howarth was appointed to replace Callaway. He was born in Liverpool in 1853 and educated at the University of Cambridge. Before taking the position of curator in Sheffield, he was an assistant curator at the Liverpool Museum from 1871 to 1875. In Liverpool, he assisted in particular with the art exhibitions which contributed to the origin of the Walker Art Gallery, though he was originally a meteorologist and also took charge of scientific collections; “His two main interests in life were art and science”\(^{30}\) and “he was always keenly interested in art gallery work.”\(^{31}\) This is demonstrated by his activities not only at Liverpool but also at Sheffield. Plural interests and multidisciplinary curators were not exceptional at this time. This is because the museum business was not fully academically professionalised. Additionally, academic disciplines themselves were not distinctly specialised and differentiated as they are today (Cf. Whitehead 2009). Howarth contributed hugely to many sections of the Sheffield Public Museum, including natural history, industry, art and archaeology.

\(^{29}\) See ‘Charles Callaway’ (Obituary) in *Geological Magazine* (Decade VI), 2, 1915: 525-528.


He was appointed as the curator of the Sheffield Public Museum at the end of 1875. At the time, the Museum was “in a much more unsettled condition” because his predecessor had departed before completing sufficient arrangements. The early development and success of the Museum was mainly achieved by Howarth. These included the receipt of the Bateman Collection of antiquities in 1877, the opening of the Observatory in 1880, and the establishment of the Mappin Art Gallery in 1887.

He was a museum innovator and in a report to the Committee in 1877 he offered a number of suggestions as to the “future development” of the institution. His report stressed the potential educational value of the institution, and proposed rational and systematic arrangements for achieving it. This included explicit distinctions between the sections in the museum: the Industrial and Technological Section, the Natural History Section and the Archaeological and Ethnological Section. Based on such topical separation, he presented minutely detailed exhibition plans for each section. In developing these plans, he took regional characteristics into careful account. For instance, he anticipated that “the great bulk of the visitors to the Museum are of the industrial class”, and therefore

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32 A letter from Callaway, C. to the chairman of the Free Libraries and Museum Committee (26th October 1875), entered in SLAMCM, 26th October 1875.
33 The report is entered in SLAMCM, 26 February 1878.
emphasised “the importance and usefulness of an industrial department of the Museum.” His aim was that the Museum should “take its place as an institution for special education and general instruction.” Howarth also insisted that the proposed plan would lessen “the danger of crowding the building with undesirable specimens” and be “the most economical and useful way of expending the Museum funds.” The report shows that he adequately comprehended the defects of provincial museums at the time and the possible solutions to their troubles.

Despite his enthusiasm, his working conditions were no better than those of his predecessor. The difficulty of his situation can be intimated from his petitions to the Free Libraries and Museum Committee. A good example of this arose with the opening of the Observatory in Weston Park in September 1880. Howarth took charge of it in addition to the museum. The new venture proved very successful, bringing in 3048 visitors on 107 nights during its first year.34 This put a considerable additional burden on Howarth. He appealed to the committee to take into consideration the situation in March 1881. He explained that “the Observatory work being of a special and difficult nature” it took “a good deal of

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time and money" to qualify him to perform it. This request was kindly received, and his salary increased from £200 to £250 in return for the extra duty.\[^{35}\]

Compared to other staff in the public libraries and museums in Sheffield, his salary was not unfavourable. In 1885, Thomas Hurst, the Chief Librarian, earned only £160 per year. Hurst, too, was highly dedicated officer. He had been appointed Chief Librarian in 1873, and kept the position for twenty one years. His work for the Corporation was highly appreciated,\[^{36}\] though his monetary remuneration for the duty was much less than that received by Howarth. By the late nineteenth century, both municipal and learned society museums were generally coping with their financial deficits. This was mainly because the funds generated through the rates. However, these funds were barely sufficient, and by the end of the century, some corporations enacted local acts to authorise a higher levy. In these circumstances, Howarth’s situation does not look quite so undesirable, at least in respect of his salary. However, his frustration can also be attributed to other reasons. Like Platnauer in York, Howarth was not satisfied with his professional status. The low appreciation and understanding of his work in the museum caused him continuous distress. Prior to his petition regarding the Observatory work, he had explained to the Committee his duties for the museum

\[^{35}\] A letter from Howarth, E. to the Free Libraries and Museum Committee, 29 March 1881, entered in SLAMCM, 16th March 1881.

\[^{36}\] ‘Thomas Hurst’ (Obituary) in Library, S1-6 (1), 1894: 189-190.
and requested that they recognise his work properly, because he was afraid that
“various members of the Town Council are under the impression that I am not
always found at the Museum at the time of its opening and during the day I am
neglecting my duties.” To remove their suspicions, in a letter to the Committee
he stressed the aspects of his work which could not be confined to the opening
times of the museum, and highlighted his successful achievements in the
institution. He also indicated the difficulty of evaluating his work without
scientific knowledge.

None but scientific persons, having knowledge of the condition of the
specimens when I took charge of the Museum, and who can compare their
quantity and unsuitable nature for Museum purposes then with the better
and more numerous specimen now, and the progress made in naming and
arranging them, can understand the amount of work the Museum
represents.

Promoting the professional status of curators was a main motivation for
Howarth’s activity in the early Museums Association. He was a Secretary of the
Association from 1891 to 1909, at first jointly with Platnauer. He also served as

37 A letter from Howarth, E. to the Free Libraries and Museum Committee (19th
October 1880), entered in SLAMCM, 19th October 1880.
38 A letter from Howarth, E. to the Free Libraries and Museum Committee (19th
October 1880), entered in SLAMCM, 19th October 1880.
an editor of the *Museums Journal* from its first publication in 1901. Howarth was eventually appointed President for the year 1912. His interests regarding museums, including their educational value, their scientific and rational arrangements and the professional status of curators, were explicitly reflected in the activities of the early Association.

**The affinity between museums and libraries**

As mentioned above, the interdisciplinary character of Howarth as a curator was not unique in the nineteenth century. The close relationship between libraries and museums was also a notable fact of the time. These organisations were united under the same local government departments and the same legislation permitted local government to fund them. The affinity between museums and libraries can also be observed in the careers of the initial members of the Museums Association. Charles G. Virgo, Butler Wood and Charles Madeley, who attended the preliminary meeting in 1888, were originally librarians rather than curators. Despite this, Wood and Madeley contributed to the early Association, although Virgo did not actively join in with the organisation. Therefore, mutual work and the cooperation between these organisations was encouraged by their shared objectives of education and social reform. Whitworth Wallis, curator of the

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39 Howarth described Madeley as “[b]y inclination and training he was more of a Librarian than a Curator” in his obituary (Howarth 1920).
Birmingham Corporation Art Galleries and Museum, whose first displays was opened in a room of the Free Library in 1867, stressed the significance of the relationship: “The unity of the purpose of the two appears to be essential to the perfect action of each, and one may almost be tempted to say that the one without the other is only half complete” (Wallis 1888: 6), and “to a very great extent, one of them - the Museum - to carry out its proper functions, is to a great measure dependent upon the other-the library” (Wallis 1888: 6).

As in Birmingham, in Bradford the art gallery opened on the top floor of the Central Public Library in May 1879. At first, the exhibition was planned as a temporary one consisting of loan collections from the South Kensington Museum, local learned societies such as the Bradford Philosophical Society, and local persons, but its success encouraged the Free Libraries Committee to propose “the formation of a permanent Museum and Art Gallery” in August 1879. It was Virgo, the Chief Librarian from 1871 to 1884, who was instructed “to take all necessary steps” to deliver it. He was another innovator, introducing new practices into libraries including his widely adopted method of card lending and his system of movable bookcases; and his advanced practices were generally admired (cf. Brown 1903: 395-396). He left this position to become a curator at the Queen’s Park Museum, Manchester. The reasons for his departure are unknown, but Nowell implies that there was discordance in his workplace because of his...
personality (Nowell 1972: 12-13). As already mentioned above, discordance between the museum or library staff and their management committees was prevalent in local authorities.

In Bradford, Virgo took charge of not only the libraries but also the museum. Having been active in setting the museum up, he was in 1879 then instructed to “undertake the supervision and arrangement of the Museum and Gallery” once it was open. The position, however, was described as “temporary.” The committee does not appear to have had a positive attitude towards the museum. This can be inferred from the fact that at first they requested that George Wallis, Museum Keeper of the South Kensington Museum, organise the exhibition. But the request was declined, and the committee instructed Virgo to assist with the work temporarily. This was partly because the exhibition was planned for only a limited period at first, but it was certainly a fact that museum work was thought of as a task which should be undertaken by a full-time and permanent staff.

After Virgo left in 1884, Butler Wood, Assistant Librarian, was promoted to the post of Chief Librarian and Secretary at a salary of £150 per year. At the same time, H. L. Davies, Assistant Librarian, was also promoted to become Curator of the Art Museum at a salary of £100 per year. However, Davies died just one

41 BLAGMCM, 17th March 1879.
42 BLAGMCM, 17th November 1884.
year later, and as a consequence Wood came to “have entire charge of the whole of the Central and Branch Libraries and Art Museum” in Bradford. Both the libraries and museums in Bradford remained under his directorship until 1925, when he resigned the position. As Virgo’s assistant, Wood had also proven himself an innovative librarian. Throughout his career, he achieved huge increases in books and borrowers (cf. Duckett 1995). A notable trial that he conducted in his early career was the Sunday opening of the Central Library.

His efforts in this trial reflected the nature of the town. Industrialisation brought about a change of social structure in Bradford. During the first half of the nineteenth century, Bradford became a main centre of textile manufacture in Britain. The rapid population growth engendered class antagonism, which was not reduced until the 1850s. Such social situations strongly influenced the scientific, cultural and educational conditions of Bradford (Morrell 1985). Educational opportunities for the enlightenment of the lower middle and working classes were especially emphasised. In comparison to the situation in York, the Bradford Literature and Philosophical Society was greatly affected by class hostility and religious sectarianism, which gave the Mechanics’ Institution a much more active role in public education (Ibid.: 22). Wood, the son of a bookseller, was educated in the Mechanics’ Institution. His efforts on the Sunday

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43 BLAGMCM, 1st February 1886.
opening of the Library can be regarded as a part of the same movement for social reform. Indeed, Sunday opening was a particularly controversial issue.

This issue was common to most of local authorities that managed public libraries and museums. In Sheffield, the topic was discussed when the Public museum was opened. John A. Roebuck, the Mayor, insisted that “Sunday is the very day on which it ought to be opened” to provide rational recreation for the working class. Nevertheless, it was decided that the museum would remain closed on Sundays. In Bradford, the discussion was much fiercer. A lobbying group, the Bradford Free Library Sunday-Opening Society, was formed and made repeated petitions to the Free Library Committee. This movement was met by persistent religious opposition based on Sabbatarianism. Through discussion, the Free Library Committee decided on the Christmas Day opening of the Central Library in 1884, and then resolved, at the end of 1886, to allow Sunday opening. In Bradford, the countrywide objective of social reform might well have been more highly emphasised because “ecclesiastically and politically Bradford was a cockpit of conflict” (Morrell 1985: 5). The Bradford Free Library Committee held a meeting before the opening of the exhibition in 1879 with representatives from the Church Institute, the Mechanics’ Institute, the Philosophical Society, the

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45 BLAGMCM, 24th November 1884
Grammar School, the Art Society and the Technical Society.\textsuperscript{46} These local bodies’ views were reflected in the management of the museum in Bradford, indicating the wide and diverse networks in which museums were embroiled.

The development of museums and the expansion of the library service in Bradford were primarily sustained by Wood. The establishment of the museum’s collection was largely due to his efforts. The first exhibition of the museum in 1879 was made up of collections lent by local learned societies and individuals including the Bradford Philosophical Society. Additionally, the South Kensington Museum also loaned cases containing art works and specimens of ancient tapestry for the exhibition. In addition to borrowing collections, the Committee was keen to purchase artworks, since such purchases permitted the formation of the permanent collection of the museum. Wood frequently visited London with members of the Committee to select art works for the exhibitions in his museum. After the departure of Virgo, the borrowing and purchase of collections came under the responsibility of Wood. He was involved with most of the concrete negotiations and correspondence. Eventually, his efforts led to the provision of a separate building dedicated only to the museum.

In his article on the art collection published in 1891, Wood evaluated his own museum in the Central Library, noting that “Notwithstanding the drawbacks

\textsuperscript{46} BLAGMCM, 25th March 1879
incident to its awkward position, the Art Gallery has had fairly successful career” (Wood 1891a: 299-300). He stressed especially the successful achievement of the enlightenment of the working classes during the first ten years of the institution:

It is pleasant to know that a decided change for the better is observable in the working classes as regards their appreciation of art… It is manifested in an intelligent appreciation of good pictures, and an ability to discern technical qualities which ten or twelve years ago they would have been incapable of understanding… The influence of art is being shown not merely in the galleries of the rich; it is be seen, too, in the homes of the common people, and is being manifested in a direction where it had long been sorely needed-namely, in the improved quality of artistic work displayed in the textile productions of the locality. (Wood 1891b: 344)

At the same time, Wood indicated some obstacles to its further development. These included “the want of a suitable building for art gallery purpose.” He indicated that the situation was unfavourable compared to neighbouring towns like Leeds and Nottingham where buildings had been especially provided for the purpose of displaying art (Wood 1891a). The problem was solved by the erection of a dedicated building in Lister Park. Cartwright Hall was opened in 1904 as a separate art gallery. Wood was also heavily involved in the establishment of this venue.
Efforts to secure aid for the provincial museums from the
government and national museums

Elijah Howarth in Sheffield shared Wood’s enthusiasm for the development of the collection. The formation of a collection was the most important task for curators who served embryonic public museums. Whitworth Wallis, Curator of the Birmingham Art Galleries and Museum, criticised a reliance on loan collections, and insisted that it was the duty of museum committees and curators to establish permanent collections.

…it is too much fashion in providing Museums to start by a loan collection and continue the same, the committee often making no effort of their own to obtain permanent collections, with the result that provincial museums are often obliged to accept loans of indifferent quality, or to allow the rooms to remain empty. This is highly detrimental to the interests of the art workmen of the town, because bad art is worse than no art at all. (Wallis 1888: 8)

However, in the development process of the provincial collections, the aid of national museums and the central government was certainly vital. The loan collections from the South Kensington Museum occupied a particular place in the
initial exhibitions at both Sheffield and Bradford public museums. In the case of Bradford, George Wallis, Keeper of the South Kensington Museum, visited Bradford and inspected the Art Gallery to confirm whether the collection loaned from his museum was arranged satisfactorily before its opening. In addition to the loan collections, subsidies from the Government also supported the formation of collections in the provincial museums. The Science and Art Department managed the Grant-in-Aid scheme for supporting the purchase of scientific and art specimens by provincial museums, which covered up to half the cost of each purchase opportunity. The public museums in Sheffield and Bradford both applied for this scheme.

This aid, of course, was not only available for these two local authorities but also to all other public museums. Therefore, the significance of the support from London and the relationship with the national institutions was widely recognized among the people associated with provincial museums. Indeed, the Bradford Free Library Committee received a circular letter from the Free Libraries and Art Gallery Committee of Birmingham in 1882 which proposed that they lobby for an extension to the scheme. The letter requested the Bradford Committee to agree with their proposition and to appoint representatives to form part of the deputation to the Lord President of the Privy Council. The aim was to urge upon

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47 BLAGMCM, 23rd & 24th April 1879.
48 BLAGMCM, 6th February 1882.
the Government the necessity of the some types of aid to the provincial museums:

1) a special grant to the Science and Art Department for developing and maintaining loan collections and their circulation, 2) gifts or loans from the national museums and collections to provincial museums, 3) the distribution of specimens purchased by the Government, and 4) the transition of the whole of the national art collections into the control of a department of the Government for its effective use. The Bradford Free Library Committee assented.

Prior to this, a conference was held in Birmingham in 1877 to bring the claims before the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851. The claims also aimed to promote support for provincial museums from the Commission, the Government and the national museums. The Birmingham Free Libraries and Art Gallery Committee stressed in a circular of 1882 the necessity of “further united action on the part of the corporations and local authorities throughout the country, who have Museums and Galleries” for their success on securing the aid. 49

As this circular indicated, opportunities for coordination and cooperation among the provincial museums had existed before the formation of the Museums Association. However, the efforts led by the Birmingham Free Libraries and Art Gallery Committee focused exclusively on the measures for securing aid to their

49 A circular letter from the Free Libraries and Art Galleries Committee of the Birmingham Corporation, entered in BLAGMCM, 6th February 1882.
own museums. It was a form of lobbying activity that differed considerably from
the issues the brought together an association of museum professionals. In fact,
the Committee insisted on a union of the corporations which managed museums,
but not of the staff. The actions, therefore, did not include the professional
aspirations of curators. Curators, then, had to pursue a different course.\textsuperscript{50}

It is difficult to understand the reasons why Birmingham Museum and Art
Gallery did not join the Museums Association until 1916, despite the
Corporation’s leading position in promoting the union of local authorities which
managed provincial museums, and which it had supported since the 1870s. It was
probably partly influenced by the initial dominance of natural historians in the
early Museums Association membership, because the main interest of Whitworth
Wallis was art.

Of course, the curators as well as the committee members recognised the
significance of the aid from the Government and national museums, because
negotiations with these institutions largely involved them. Therefore, the
Museums Association, as one of its founding objectives, aimed to ensure that the

\textsuperscript{50} However, the Museums Association founded in 1889 included as its members
representatives from museum committees of local authorities. In regard to this,
Lewis indicates a disparity from the envisaged vision of the original proponents
of the association, such as Elijah Howarth and James Paton, Curator of the
Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in Glasgow (Lewis 1989: 7).
aid continued: “Concerted action for securing Government publications and also specimens, on loan or otherwise.”

The role of professional associations in supporting provincial institutions

Butler Wood likely understood the significance of associational movements, because of his own experience in library associations. As mentioned above, he was originally a librarian and his main interest was literature, especially the Brontë sisters who were born in Thornton near Bradford. Reflecting this background, he was more active in library associations than the Museums Association. He became a member of both the Library Association in 1885 and the Northern Counties Library Association in 1901.

Wood was involved in the governance of the Library Association as a Council member for a long period and presented papers in its publications. At the conference of the Library Association in 1893 in Aberdeen, Wood presented a paper regarding village libraries in Yorkshire, and stressed the Association’s duty to support them; “it appears to me that the Library Association has a splendid opportunity of doing something in the direction of assisting those libraries”

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51 Minutes of the Museums Association’s meeting held in 1889, in Museums Association (1890: 7).
The Northern Counties Library Association was established as a regional organisation, reflecting dissatisfaction with the Library Association “as being too London-based, too elite, too absorbed in historical bibliography and too influenced by historic institutions” (Duckett 1995: 16). Wood became a member of this organisation at the first meeting in 1901 and was appointed as president in 1904. Through these activities in the associations, he would have known of the significance of an associational movement, especially as an aid to regional institutions with insufficient resources.

Wood resigned his position at Bradford in 1925. Until that time, all the libraries and museums, including the Bolling Museum which opened in 1915, had been under his direction. After his resignation, the duties were separated, and a Director of the Art Gallery and Museum and a Chief Librarian were individually appointed. Wood contributed significantly to the development of the Bradford libraries and museums around the turn of the century. His career in Bradford is a typical example of the affinity between public libraries and museums at the time. They were based on the same social purposes and administrated jointly in most local authorities. This suggests that professional aspirations might also be shared between local librarians and curators.
The professional aspirations of local curators and the complicated origins of their professionalism

In 1902, the annual conference of the Museums Association was held in Bradford. Butler Wood read a paper there and had a discussion with the members attending the conference, including Henry Platnauer and Elijah Howarth, about the character and scope of the Cartwright Hall Museum, which was to open to the public in the near future. The argument was vigorous with many remarks from the attendees. Howarth indicated their common view about the desirable nature of the museum; “they did not want a young British Museum in Bradford, and in their talk about local collections nearly every speaker overlooked the fact that there was another – and from the local point of view equally important side – the side which illustrated the history of the locality itself” (Wood 1902: 60). The establishment of a unique museum reflecting the locality, instead of a universal museum like the British Museum, was a shared objective of the local curators. The principle members of the Museums Association, including Platnauer, Howarth and Wood, were innovative practitioners contributing to the development of museums at a local level. And their practices were motivated largely by the educational value for the community, and in reaction to the changes in social structure caused by industrialisation. Municipal museums erected in the nineteenth century were intended to be institutions for the enlightenment of the working classes.
The innovators pursued the rational and scientific management of museums as a method for achieving their educational and welfare objectives. Platnauer, for example, defined a museum as “a place in which educational use is made of space” in his presidential address of the Museums Association’s annual conference in 1911, and then insisted on the necessity of a systematic “utilization of space” (Platnauer 1911: 6). Two years later, Howarth also stressed the educational function of museums in his presidential address (Howarth 1913). Howarth, moreover, held a special conference of members of the Museums Association and representatives from provincial museums to discuss “the relation of Museums to Education, and the formation of Local War Museums” at Sheffield in 1917 (Howarth 1918). Throughout his career, the educational value of museums continued to be of greatest concern.

Their associational activities also entailed the desire to be appropriately recognised, especially from a scientific viewpoint. Securing their professionalautonomies was a vital issue for curators and museum staff, whether in the museums of learned societies or municipalities. Such professional aspirations were key motivations for establishing their own association. Howarth explained the relationship between museums and curators, and indicated a need to acknowledge them as unique professionals, in his presidential address to the Association in 1913.
It sounds self-evident to say that the position of the museums and that of the curator are inseparable… Be the collections never so good, they can only derive their museum value from the curator, for the curator is the museum, and the two components are so intertwined in amity that the museum never resents his absorbent domination… The highest university distinction would not necessarily mark the best man to take charge of the work of a museum, yet the very range and complicated nature of his work, which in a sense stand apart from that of all other professions, makes it necessary that there should be a standard of qualifications that can be specially associated with the profession of a curator. (Howarth 1913: 43-44)

However, their careers also show the fact that professionalism had diverse and complicated origins. In most municipal museums, a curator took a responsibility for the exhibitions across plural subjects, including natural history, art, archaeology and industry. It reflected the less distinct separation of academic disciplines. In addition to such a multidisciplinary nature, the affinity between librarianship and curatorship was also characteristic of the municipal institutions at the time. Provincial museums developed along unique paths throughout the nineteenth century. The path depended on the locality including the existence of local bodies which were involved in the scientific, cultural and educational
activities in local level. It also depended upon the professional status and aspiration of keepers and curators, which were diverse provincially. The Museums Association could not be inclusive of all their demands, as the main interest of the organisation was largely in natural history subjects. However, the grass-roots nature of the association is evident when the careers of the initial members are explored.

**Honorary curators and visiting curators: the system of staffing in early public museums**

Within this grass-roots movement of local museum workers who desired the consolidation of their own professional status, ambiguous professionalism came to be recognised as a problem that needed to be solved. The concept of professional competence was constructed gradually, and with it came a recognition of the significance of the employment of full-time staff in museums. In these early public museums, honorary curators and visiting curators contributed considerably to the operation of the institution. This was particularly true in those museums which had a strong relationship with local philosophical and natural history societies, as we have already seen. Honorary curators were very common. As they were usually Society members, they often had a much stronger influence over the management of their museum than a full-time paid curator. North, Hey and Cameron were all honorary curators.
Similarly, the poorer local museums which could not afford to employ sufficient staff also benefitted from the involvement of professionals from national institutions. In Bradford, perhaps the largest northern town not to establish a museum in the 1820s or 1830s, the Public Museum had insufficient material and human resources for some time after its opening in 1879. The Museum’s shortage of space in the Public Library constrained its activities. It also suffered from understaffing as we have seen. Many early public museums shared the same situation. In the case of the Bradford Museum, this staff deficit was compensated for by the assistance of professionals from outside the organisation. The failed attempt of the Free Library Committee of Bradford to appoint George Wallis to organise the first exhibition, is a prime example. Wallis was the first person to describe himself as an “artist-teacher” and his educational theory was dominant in Britain. He was a pioneer of art and design education, and he engaged expertly with display work for educational purposes (Daichendt 2011). It was his rejection of the Committee’s request that forced them to turn to Virgo. Wallis did, however, engage with the first exhibition of the Museum as a supervisor and stated that the Committee would need to fund an officer who would be sent from South Kensington to take charge of the exhibition.\footnote{Bradford Libraries Art Galleries and Museums Committee Minutes (24th April 1879), WYAS.} Although it cannot be confirmed whether the officer was actually sent or not, the remark attests to the shortage of

\footnote{Bradford Libraries Art Galleries and Museums Committee Minutes (24th April 1879), WYAS.}
manpower and the reliance upon external resources for managing the Bradford Museum.

As in the Bradford case, local public museums usually depended upon external human resources in their early periods, especially for organising their first displays. In Nottingham, the Natural History Museum was established in 1867, but was not opened to the public until 1872. During the preliminary period, its collections were acquired and arranged. In the process, aid from outside the Museum was utilised. In 1869, the minerals were arranged by Frederick W. Rudler, curator of the Geological Survey’s Museum of Practical Geology, London, and in 1870 the collection of fossils was named and systematically arranged by Robert Etheridge, a palaeontologist of the Geological Survey. In the same manner, the insect collection was submitted for arrangement to Charles O. Waterhouse, an assistant keeper of the British Museum. In this way, the national museums had a significant role in aiding local public museums which began to appear across the country.

Systems of mutual assistance were assumed to be crucial in supporting the development of local museums. The Museums Association set up two committees at the first annual general meeting at Liverpool in 1889. One of them was the committee for considering a system to secure the help of specialists for museum curators. The committee’s report submitted in the next year indicated the
importance of a system to “give the curator an opportunity of knowing who could help him most efficiently” (Museums Association 1891: 127). It demonstrates that curators commonly recognised the significance of support from outside their own museums. As described in the Bradford and Nottingham cases, the aid from metropolitan specialists was an especially important factor which impelled the development of public museums at a local level.

**Full-time curators: the “custodians” of museums**

In the early public museums, what might now be understood as professional work, including collections management and exhibition arrangement, was often dealt with by part-time volunteers and outside specialists. In contrast to them, museum workers who were employed full-time were regarded as kinds of custodian rather than professionals. The Warrington Museum, which was opened in 1848, was amongst the first public museums established under the *Museums Act* in Britain. It recruited a curator the year it opened. The advertisement shows the roles and characteristics of the position:

> Wanted a RESIDENT CURATOR for this Institution. He must be a person of good education and address, and competent to prepare, with taste and skill, and to keep preservation specimens in every department of Natural History. He will be required also to act as a Librarian, and to have
the general care and management of the Museums and Library, to which his whole time must be devoted.

He will be required to reside on the premises, where he will live rent-free, and will have coals and gas found him, and a Salary of Fifty Guineas a Year.

A married man without children will be preferred.

Warrington, 9th August, 1848

The competence concerning natural history collections was fundamental, but the position needed more than that. He had to reside on the museum premises – and thus be a night guard - and absolute fidelity to the organisation was required. He had to devote “his whole time” to the work. The restriction of autonomy was a prominent problem for full-time museum workers, who aspired to the establishment of their own professional position. The case of the Warrington Museum also indicates that the advertised position was not specialised in a particular discipline. It was required that he manage all types of natural history collections. The position was filled by James Cooper, a former handloom weaver self-educated in natural history. He held the position from 1848 until 1874, although he had to take temporary leave from 1852 because of domestic reasons and ill health. During his leave, two curators were appointed, but neither of them kept the position for long. One of them was Henry J. Bellars, later the curator of

53 WPLA&LSC
the Leicester Museum. However, he resigned after less than one year of service as he found the accommodation unsuitable (Andrews 1969, Leigh 1998). It was not unusual for a curator to change his workplace frequently. The work environment was generally at fault.\textsuperscript{54}

In the Warrington Museum, the honorary curators for respective scientific disciplines were also appointed in the same year that the resident curator was appointed. In its opening year, three departments were established in the Museum: General Literature, Natural History and Art & Science. Honorary curators were assigned to each department. One of the honorary curators of the Natural History department was Philip P. Carpenter, who cared for the mollusc collection. He was a Presbyterian minister and an ardent social reformer. He also had an interest in natural history throughout his lifetime, and contributed to some museums as a voluntary supporter. He contributed as a conchologist to museums not only in England but also in the United States, including the Bristol Museum, the British Museum and the Smithsonian Institution, as well as the Warrington Museum. He also submitted reports to the meetings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. He started as an amateur scientist, but achieved distinction and he had considerable influence on the operation of the Warrington Museums. Its educational programme in particular was improved following his

\textsuperscript{54} This unsatisfactory condition of curators was not rare, especially in the case of local learned societies’ museums (see Knell 2000: Chapter 5).
advise. It can be suggested that the honorary curators – men like Carpenter – often realised the “Modern idea” concerning natural history in their systematic scientific lectures and classes, and the provision of type collections in the Museums (Leigh 1998: 3). Compared to the resident Curator, they were academic specialists.

The growth of the professionalism of curators

As the job advertisement of the Warrington Museums demonstrates, a utilitarian person might have been preferred as a full-time employee of the museum rather than an academic professional. The duties were more extensive than those of unpaid honorary staff, who were supposed to have charge of more specialised academic matters. The situation in which miscellaneous duties were assigned might have been stressful for those trying to establish their professional autonomy, and social and academic status.

On the other hand, “comprehensiveness” was also an essential point that highlights the uniqueness of the job. The notion that a curator was not just a scholar grew gradually in consequence of the expansion of public museums. In Nature in 1877, James Paton, who would became the first curator of the

55 In 1852, the Museum set examinations in weekly classes of zoology and physiology for pupils under the influence of Carpenter (Leigh 1998: 4).
Kelvingrove Museum in Glasgow, posted his ideas about museum reform including the requirements for a good curator. He compared a good curator to a newspaper editor who was not just a specialist. A curator should be “a man of general knowledge and culture,” and “ready to accept and use the assistance of specialists.” This was necessary to “subordinate all departments to one harmonious general plan.” (J. P. 1877) According to Paton, a curator was to acquire the comprehensive knowledge and vision necessary for the management of his museum, differentiating the job from that of the academic specialists.

Another perspective on the professionalism of the curator can be derived from the case of Warrington Museum. The resident curatorial position included not only for museum work but also library work. This also demonstrated the generalist character of the custodian. This combination is a perspective from which the professionalisation of curators can be examined. In the course of the formulation of museum workers’ professionalism, the common ground between curators and librarians was important, and differentiated museum workers from academic scholars. The attendees of the preliminary meeting for organising the Museums Association also included librarians. One of them was Charles Madeley, who was appointed as curator of the Warrington Museum in 1874, as a successor to Cooper. The Museum shared the same building with the Public Library, and the staff performed across the boundary between the Museum and the Library.
Madeley also supervised both services. Sharing a building and staffs between a museum and a library was not unusual at the time.

Madeley laid his emphasis on the library rather than the museum. This was partly because of the influence of his predecessor, Cooper, who was originally interested in natural history, and unfamiliar with library work. When Madeley took over, the condition of the library was poor. In contrast to Cooper, Madeley’s vocation was as a librarian rather than a curator. Before arriving at Warrington, Madeley had been an assistant librarian in his native town, Derby, and in Birmingham (Dunlop 1920). In Warrington, Madeley dramatically reformed the library and constructed a systematic administration. Cataloguing was one of his great attainments in Warrington. On his arrival, there was no modern catalogue in the library. This defect was remedied by him. He printed a catalogue recording the books added to the library every year. The arrangement of books in the annual catalogue was highly systematic, to make it easier for borrowers to find a book. The systematic classification of books was an indispensable prerequisite for the rational management of a library (Tiernan 1997).\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{56} Madeley contributed to the town not only as librarian and curator but also as innovator of technical education. His achievement in the town is explained in the comment that “his laurels were really won as an educationalist” (Warrington County Borough Council: Library Department 1947).
However, it was needed not only for the library, but it was applicable also to the management of the museum. Madeley was appointed as president of the Museums Association in 1914, and in his address at the annual meeting in Swansea he stressed the importance of “classification.” He agreed with the opinion that the ideal museum should be “a miniature or synopsis of the universe – the true Microcosm”, but he also emphasised the differences between them:

There is this great and essential difference: that in the museums things are arranged, that is to say, classified, and therefore intelligible, whilst in the world outside they are not. (Madeley 1914: 39)

The intellectual classification of things was a decisive element in the making of the modern museum. This is why the role of a librarian could be combined with that of a museum curator. Duties of both jobs required the same competences regarding the classification of a collection. It was assumed that the categorical classification based on modern scientific knowledge would make a preferable arrangement in a museum. Elijah Howarth, Curator of the Sheffield Public Museum, who was one of the main figures leading the early movement of the Museums Association, made a report at 1877 for the Free Libraries and Museum Committee of Sheffield, suggesting the further development of the museum.
It is very important that these separate sections should be kept entirely distinct, and as far as possible confined to separate rooms. Each section would have its own class of students, and the objects ought therefore to have such space devoted to them as will permit of them being arranged in such manner as to show their scientific and educational uses. Where objects not related to each other are mixed together, it only serves to confuse the mind and very much reduce their educational value.\(^{57}\)

Howarth insisted that a museum had to make rigid sections of collections and retain the borders to avoid confusion. For him, it was a vital part of enhancing the scientific and educational value of a museum. The pioneers of modern scientific and educational museums at the time, including Madeley and Howarth, shared this opinion on the importance of classification in their museums. This meant that curators needed creditable competence to realise it. Such common understandings regarding the prerequisites for curators signified the beginning of the professionalisation of the curator.

The emphasis on the competence of classifying collections is conducive to the concept that a curator was regarded as a “cartographic actor” in a museum.\(^{58}\)

\(^{57}\) Report of Howarth to the Free Libraries and Museum Committee of Sheffield at 1877, recorded in SLAMCM.

\(^{58}\) As I have already discussed in a previous chapter, the conception of “museums cartography” was developed by Whitehead (2007, 2009, 2011).
Curators were required to make boundaries between sections of each category. The scientific and educational value of museums depended a great deal on the creation and maintenance of reasonable boundaries. To draw the boundaries, curators required general knowledge covering plural academic disciplines, and creative visions which could construct a total plan for a museum. In the development of local public museums in Britain, full-time museum workers, including curators, discussed their own uniqueness which distinguished them from academicians. They became aware that they were not specialists and had to possess more comprehensive knowledge to realise desirable arrangements in their museums. In fact, a curator at the time usually had to administer wide-ranging collections, from natural history to art, and make exhibitions for each collection.59

The grass-roots movement for the establishment of the professionalism of the curator

The process of the establishment of the professional identity of museum curators was closely linked with the movement of the Museums Association. The early

59 In fact, Elijah Howarth was appointed as the curator of the Public Museum of Sheffield in 1876, and then in 1887 he was ordered to also take the curatorship of new art gallery of the town, the Mappin Art Gallery. His vocational career, including his experience as an assistant in the Art Gallery in Liverpool, enabled him to take the combined post.
members held a strong conviction about the need to professionalise the role of the curator. Their aspirations were caused by their unsatisfactory workplace situations, which often confined their professional autonomy. The remediation of the situation, and the raising of the position of curator from simple custodian to professional, was a motivation of the associative movement.

This professional aspiration was shared by the local curators who led the early activities of the Association. Some of their personal careers can demonstrate the contexts which generated their desires, and which drove the development of the Association. The movement was supported by local curators who wished to establish their professional and social status. It was a kind of grass-roots campaign, developed by the curators confronting the actual problems in local museums. The campaign entailed a discussion of their professionalism as a corollary. In the pursuit of professionalisation, the comprehensiveness of their function and the importance of their cartographic acts in museum came under focus. This grass-roots nature was very much in contrast to the process of the establishment of the Japanese Association of Museums, which will be examined in Chapters 7 and 8.
Chapter 6
Debating and negotiating change in the early years of the Museums Association

Locating a mission

Before considering the comparative Japanese case, in this chapter the activities of the UK Museums Association in its early years will be examined. As will be seen, these activities reflected both the aspirations of the members and the organisational characteristics of the Association. Thus, for this examination two questions are important: what topics were discussed at the Association’s annual conferences? And, how was the Association managed and administered?

The Association had been established to promote mutual cooperation between museum workers who desired and expected the conditions of their institutions to improve (E. H. 1877). Indeed, its focus and purpose were discussed from the beginning. In the preliminary meeting of 1888, for example, the objects of the Association were discussed and the following activities were deemed especially important (Museums Association 1890: 4):
• Interchange of duplicate specimens.
• Concerted action for securing Government publications.
• The issuing of a journal by the Association, and the collecting of original papers.
• The indexing of the general contents of museums.
• The inter-communication of ideas on practical subjects, especially the question of arrangement and classification.

Those who attended the meeting resolved to canvass the staff in English provincial museums with a view to supporting the following proposal:

I.—That a Museum Association be formed.
II.—That this Association consist of Curators and those engaged in the active work of Museums, and also of representatives of the Committees or Councils of management of such Museums.
III.—That the Association publish a volume of practical papers, and if possible, of original scientific contributions, and also hold periodical Meetings, at least once a year in different towns. (Museums Association 1890: 5)

At the meeting in the following year, 1889, the following subjects was selected as the Association’s concerns.
1. — Means of interchange of duplicate and surplus specimens.

2. — Means of securing models, casts, and reproductions.

3. — Scheme for a general supply of labels, illustrations, and information.

4. — Uniform plan of arranging Natural History collections.

5. — Scheme for securing the services of specialists.


7. — The indexing of the general contents of Museums.

8. — The promotion of Museum lectures to working men.


10. — Concerted action for securing Government publications and also specimens, on loan or otherwise.

11. — The issue of a Journal by the Association and the collecting of scattered original papers in the said Journal if found possible. (Museums Association 1890: 7)

The Association was growing a list of interests and concerns, as the list of participants grew. These points were discussed intensively in the early days of the Association. Of these, the publication of a journal was regarded as the most significant objective of the organisation. The form and purpose of this journal was already taking shape:
It is quite evident that something more is necessary than an annual discussion of Museum topics, and an annual publication of proceedings; and it is highly desirable that some method should be adopted for making known Museum wants, for providing a channel for exchange, for disseminating new ideas of Museum arrangement, and in fact, furnishing a regular means of intercommunication throughout the Kingdom. This could probably most efficiently be done by the publication of a Museum Journal at regular and not too distant intervals, and this Journal should be open to the reception of all matters bearing on Museum work. (Museums Association 1890: 9)

However, it was more than a decade before the first Museums Journal was published in 1901. In the intervening period the proceedings of the general meetings were published annually beginning with the first meeting in Liverpool in 1890. These documents are critical primary resources for understanding the early activities of the Association. This chapter is divided into two halves, which consider two different but relates forums in which members of the Association attempted change. The first reports on, and examines, the papers presented at the annual general meetings (AGMs), the second is concerned with the more coordinated, and often behind the scenes, work of the various business meetings.
Debating change at the annual conferences

In every AGM, the participants read papers on museum matters. Unsurprisingly from what has already been discussed regarding the problems, concerns and ambitions of the founders, much effort was put the rationalisation and systemisation of museum management.

The educational function of museums

Burgeoning interest in the educational value of museums was also reflected in the early activities of the museum:

I look upon a museum as an important and valuable instrument of instruction—instruction which is directed to and assimilated by the eye. I would, therefore, not sanction the use of the term “Teaching Museum,” as differing from an ordinary museum, for I consider that all museums have an education function. (Weiss 1892: 25)

In the early papers, the relationship between schools or elementary education and museums was of particular interest. In the first AGM, for example, John Chard, assistant at the Liverpool Museum, reported on the institution’s practice of
“circulating museum cabinets for schools” (Chard 1890). He indicated the significance of the programme:

Now that the value of the study of Natural History, as a branch of mental training, is beginning to be understood, we may fairly hope that some of the most interesting departments in Zoology will attract many young minds, and that these Circulating Collections may contribute towards fixing accurate ideas of Natural History. (Chard 1890: 58)

The practical educational programmes of museums, such as evening lectures and demonstrations, were also reported at these meetings (e.g. Paden 1890 and Rudler 1891) and disseminated through accounts of the meetings.

The legislation of museums: ratepayers and museums

The passing of the Museums and Gymnasium Act 1891 made museum legislation a topical subject. At the second AGM, Howarth indicated the advantages of the act, but also the need for action and a role for the Association:

These powers all tend in the direction of facilitating the establishment of museums; but there is much yet required to free them from the harassing legislative trammels that hinder their progress, and it would, I think, quite
come within the scope of the Museums Association to draft a Bill dealing with the whole of the requirements of museums. (Howarth 1891: 124)

The following year, the council of the Association resolved to appoint a committee “to confer with the Library Association for the purpose of taking steps to improve Library and Museum Legislation, if thought desirable.” In that year, a further act was passed, the Public Libraries Law 1892, which had implications for both organisations. Howarth provided an explanation at the AGM that year, criticising it for empowering the voter to decide on the limit of the rate levied for the establishment and management of museums:

It is almost impossible, in the face of other legislation relating to municipal and county government, to imagine why it should be necessary to take vote of the ratepayers before a Museum or Library can be establishment. No such unwieldy and unsatisfactory process is necessary if a town wishes to establish baths or gymnasium, or to acquire a park, or do any other reasonable thing conductive to the well-being of the people. (Howarth 1892: 91)

Additionally, he discussed the relationship between ratepayers and museums as follows:
there is nothing the people more willingly support than institutions which contribute to their intellectual enjoyment and moral improvement, such as Art Galleries, Libraries, Museums &c.; and with Town and County Councils and other governing bodies elected directly by the ratepayers, it would be only reasonable to leave to these corporate bodies the power to carry out the legitimate requirements of the people with regard to Libraries and Museums, without any question of limitation of rate or special vote. Besides, the principle of leaving these matters in the hands of corporate bodies has long since been conceded by Parliament. There are probably more than a score of towns that have obtained Parliamentary sanction to levy rates beyond a penny in the pound for Museum and Library purposes. In most cases this power has been obtained because the penny rate was found to be insufficient, though in one, at least, it was obtained without any such experienced need. (Howarth 1892: 91)

Central to the discussion of legislation of museums was the limit of the rate. It brought to the foreground the relationship between ratepayers and museums, a topic picked up in a paper by H. Mullen entitled “Museums and Ratepayers” presented at the fifth AGM in Dublin. He criticized the limitation of the rates stipulated by the act and drew a powerful relationship to law and order:
These limitations are surely crippling! While large sums of money are annually exacted from ratepayers for the repression and punishment of crime, an expenditure for an agency that not alone educationally but socially elevates the people is narrowly watched and restricted. This is clearly impolitic, for it is an undoubted aphorism that “the lower the Museum and Library rate, the higher will be the Police rate,” and *vice versa*… Ratepayers are apt to forget that museums are for their own and children’s good, and that they alone have the power to supply the means of raising to a higher state (no matter how complete already) the attractive, the instructive and the elevating influences of these institutions. (Mullen 1895: 183)

It was argued that the role of the museum as a municipal service to society should be acknowledged, for they had not only an educational function, but also assisted in far wider social improvements. This argument was particularly well developed in discussions of the relationship between museums and the working classes.

*The working classes*

At the third AGM in 1892, Henry H. Higgins of the Liverpool Museum pointed to the necessity of undertaking visitor studies in order to understand the needs and
responses of the different classes who visited the museum. Attracting visitors in sufficient numbers was central to proving the social worth of museums:

The population of a large town is divided into various classes, each of which has its own habits and modes of life, and between them exists a good deal of the spirit of Oriental caste. It follows that they must be studied separately. Now, we are supposed to be bidding for visitors from all these classes, and to give us a chance of success, their tastes and distastes must be taken into account. We have, by our arrangement of one kind or another, to turn their indifference into good-will; and perhaps, though present prospects are not encouraging, it may not be quite so hard as we imagine to make a favourable impression. (Higgins 1892: 39)

Since these new museums, and the Association in particular, were run by members of the middle classes, the most difficult of these class issues to tackle was how to approach the working classes and what tailored programmes might be developed for them. Richard Paden, assistant at the Liverpool Museum, reported on their practice of “winter evening lectures” arguing that these could help focus the visitor’s attention:

With a view of encouraging this class of visitors as much as possible, and also with the intention of assisting them to concentrate their thoughts
upon special parts of the collection, instead of rambling aimlessly through
the Museum, short popular Lectures on selected specimens were given
each Monday evening during the winter month. (Paden 1890: 95)

The merits of late and Sunday opening were also much debated at these AGMs;
how to make museums attractive to the public, especially the working classes,
was a crucial issue (e.g. Cameron 1890 and White 1893).

*The professionalisation of curators*

As Higgins indicated in his first president’s address, one of the objectives of the
formation of the Association was to raise the status and competence of curators
as a profession. He was not alone in believing it was the professional rather than
the collection that was most important to the success of the museum:

What, however, is meant by success in museum work? If, renouncing the
conventional, we regard museum work in its intrinsic character, success
therein is the teaching of truth, whatever form it may take, as
communicated through lessons from objects.

It may be one of the most encouraging features of our fellowship, should
this Association tend to confirm our conviction that the soul of the
Museum is the Curator, and the kindred spirits that work with him.
Were a Museum ever so extensive, the living elements, and not the specimens, must determine its real value to the community. (Higgins 1890: 19)

Members were conscious that they were at an early stage in the professionalisation of the curator. James Paton reflected eloquently on the implications of this at the fifth AGM, imagining the consequences of professional elevation:

As Museum Curators we have the advantages and the drawbacks also belonging to a new profession. We are without a history, without traditions, almost without experience: we have no pride of ancestry; and, as yet, we have a rather undefined social position and public recognition. We have to be the beginners and the moulders of the experience, history, and status of our profession; and, that being so, it is our duty to recognise not only great opportunities, but also the heavy responsibilities we owe to our successors. The absence of hidebound tradition, of hard beaten and deeply rutted paths, offer us a great opportunity of striking out in new directions, of evolving new ideas, and of laying the foundations of an important and expanding profession on a broad and liberal basis. To some extent it is in our power so to shape the career of museum officials as to attract to its ranks the brightest and most active intellects, to make its
positions an object of ambition among the scholarly men of the rising generation. (Paton 1895: 95)

Here he observed the consequences of a diverse membership; that there was perhaps two rather than one profession:

The museum officials of the present day may be divided into two great classes: the specialists, who belongs to the great public and national museums; and the provincial curator, who has to be everything and to do everything in his own much-embracing institution

He suggested that these men should be trained separately (Paton 1895: 97).

**Disciplinary inclusion**

As is clear from the topics reviewed above, the AGMs of the Association were a place for the discussion of contemporary issues. What is perhaps not apparent is that almost all this discussion revolved around the discipline of natural history. At the first AGM, Dawkins had divided museums into three categories – natural history museums, archaeological and ethnological museums, and art museums and galleries (Dawkins 1890: 40) – but these other areas of the profession remained severely underrepresented in the membership and consequently in the
Association’s early discussions. However, at the third AGM, a number of papers were presented that mainly on art museums (Hicks 1892, Horsfall 1892, Wood 1892). Paton saw this as signalling “a clear indication that the Association did not, as was sometimes asserted, neglect Art.” Platnauer, too, thought these papers redefined the scope of the Association as they helped “to remove a wide-spread but mistaken impression that this Association was indifferent to Art, and exclusively devoted to Natural Science.” Despite these claims, natural history continued to dominate the interests of members throughout the first decade of the Association.

**International exchange**

While early activities of the Association reflected matters affecting British museums in the late nineteenth century, its establishment as a national organisation meant it was well placed for international engagement. Being the first such association, it may have appealed to those workers overseas who shared British concerns. It was, however, also seeking knowledge regard best practice and it seemed logical to engage with expertise overseas. Consequently, in the early AGMs, papers were invited from workers in foreign countries, amongst

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60 The comment of J. Paton to the paper of T. C. Horsfall in the third annual general meeting (Museums Association 1892: 63).

61 The comment of H. M. Platnauer to the paper of Butler Wood in the third annual general meeting (Museums Association 1892: 70).
which was a paper by George Brown Goode, one of the Smithsonian Institution’s
great innovators (Goode 1895). Britain still possessed an empire, and its
relationship with the USA reflected a bias in British international relationships
that originated in an era of empire and which continue to persist to the present
day. It was perhaps unsurprising to members, then, that colonial museums were
sometimes topics of discussion at AGMs. Francis A. Bather, of the British
Museum (Natural History), for example, discussed the merits of the “Imperial
relations of the Colonial Museum” and insisted that the Association should
facilitate such relationships (Bather 1895). This internationalising trend, and a
British mind set that still incorporated imperial possessions and British
dominions, encouraged the Association, at its eight AGM, to alter its rules and
delete the requirement that the membership should be restricted to UK museums.
This shows that the Association was already performing not just as a forum but as
a unit that itself could have influence. How was it that this peripatetic
organisation able to achieve this?

Managing change at the early Association

Initially, the Association was organisationally weak. The failure to establish the
journal, so central to its objectives, is an indication of this. An important task for
the new Association was, then, to establish an organisational framework in which
the individualism of museums and curators could be reconciled with the
organisation’s more universal aims and activities. The early development stages of the organisation can be used to show the dynamic interaction between individualism and structure that occurred prior to the establishment of a more rigid organisational framework. This interaction reflected the social and political circumstances of the time. If the topics discussed so far reflect the public discussion of the Association at its AGMs, what follows – which often confronts the same issues – is drawn from the minutes of the business meetings of the Association between 1889, the foundation year, and 1918, the end of the First World War. These minutes indicate how the organisation was managing change. In this first thirty year period, the Association gradually consolidated its role and position as the professional association of museum workers, although some administrative problems, which derived from its formation processes, continued to persist beyond 1918.

**Decision-making and investigative structures**

The Association’s decision-making was conducted in a number of different business meetings, including the General Meeting, the Council’s meeting, and the meetings of sub-committees. The General Meeting was held at the Annual Conference, and in the Association’s Rules approved at the first Annual Conference in Liverpool it was prescribed that “All new rules, and all resolutions affecting existing ones, to be submitted to the Annual General Meeting.” The
Council had the duty to manage organisational affairs. Subjects that would be discussed at the General Meetings were ordinarily proposed and examined by the Council in advance. The Council initially consisted of a President, Secretaries, a Treasurer, and eight ordinary members, but this membership would be revised several times during the first thirty years, producing an increase in the prescribed number of members.

In the early period, subcommittees were organised within the Association. These were divided into two types, dependent upon their aims. The first were committees organised to examine special issues. The Liverpool meeting, for example, established two committees, one to consider a scheme for engaging the services of specialists, the other to consider the question of labelling (Museums Association 1890: 12). The reports of both of these committees were printed in the proceedings of the second and third AGMs. The first committee proposed a concrete scheme for mutual cooperation regarding the identification and taxonomic arrangement of specimens.

Any museum curator desirous of having a collection named or arranged should communicate with the Secretary of the Committee, who would give him the name of some specialist or specialists able and willing to undertake the work, and would also state the price for the performance of the work. (Museums Association 1892: 139)
The second committee, having collected information and opinions regarding practices at several museums, proposed a standard method of labelling. What is central to these actions is a belief that mutual cooperation between museums and curators, especially where financial and human resources were insufficient, was a primary purpose of the Association. These committees implicitly indicated this and it was recognised as being fundamental to the purposes of the Association (see, for example, Rudler 1889).

The further committee of this type, for obtaining information regarding provincial museums, was established in 1898 along the lines of a paper read at the annual conference by Herbert Bolton, curator of the Bristol Museum. This called for the accumulation of “common knowledge” about the provincial museums in order to improve them (Bolton 1898). The compilation of such information would eventually be embodied in a “Museums Directory”. This project would become a main focus of the Association in the first decade of the twentieth century.

The second type of subcommittee was organised for managing the business affairs of the Association. At the founding meeting, in 1889, a committee was proposed for “the government of the Association.” It can be regarded as the predecessor of the Council because it was dismissed with the Council’s formation
at the first annual meeting in 1890. However, this committee did meet four times before the first annual conference and it was able to set up some basic agreements. Another business committee was proposed and organised at the AGM in Brighton in 1899: the Executive Committee. It consisted of the President, Secretaries (or Secretary and Editor), Treasurer, and two other members of the Council. The members were appointed by the Council and were required “to deal with any matters that may arise between the Annual Meetings.”

The segregation of duties between the Council and the Executive Committee was not, however, definitively clear, but after 1899 the basic decision-making procedure was clarified as consisting of three steps: the Executive Committee’s meeting, the Council's meeting and the General Meeting. Consequently, topics of discussion were shared across these meetings, and unsurprisingly were concerned with the general circumstances of museums and the characteristics of the Association. Besides such bodies for dealing with general business matters, a special committee was also set up in 1909 for managing the editorial work of the monthly journal of the Association. A local committee was also organised annually by the persons of the town where the annual conference was to be held, to manage local affairs regarding the conference. Again, this probably owed

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62 In fact, the segregation was discussed at the business meeting. On the 8th July 1918, for instance, the Council resolved that “in future the president shall be elected only by the Council and not by the Executive Committee” (recoded in the minutes of the Council’s meeting in 8/7/1918).
something to the model of the similarly peripatetic BAAS. The establishment, operation and changing characteristics of the management system of the Association, including setting up some committees, shows organisational development and indicates changes in the relationship between individualism and structure.\footnote{63}

**Focus of the business meetings**

In the minutes of these meetings, particular subjects frequently recur. They can be assigned to six categories of interest:

\footnote{63 The minutes of the General Meeting were printed in the *Report of Proceedings* (1890-1900) and the *Museums Journal*. The National Archives and the offices of the Association in London are restoring the minutes records of the Council’s and the Executive Committee’s meetings. When concrete contents of the business meetings are referred to here, the date (day/month/year) and the initial of the meetings (G: General meeting, C: Council’s meeting and E: Executive Committee’s meeting) are appended. And in the case of indicating the contents of the General meeting, the corresponding volume number and pages of the *Report of Proceedings* or the *Museums Journal* (MJ) are also appended.}
1. The preparation of the Annual Conference. This included the decisions concerning place, programme, and the invitation list for the annual dinner. The election of a place was a very important task because the Association was peripatetic and this was an important means of expanding the membership and having local political impact. The special subjects discussed at the annual conferences were selected by the Executive Committee and approved by Council.

2. The election of the officers. The social and political backgrounds of the people who undertook a main role in managing the early Association are a decisive factor in the characteristic make-up and progress of the organisation.

3. The Rules of the Association. The Rules were resolved at the first annual meeting in Liverpool, 1890, and were revised several times. These changes can be understood as reflecting the changing situation of the Association. The clauses regarding the membership and the organisational structure were often altered.

4. Publications. Publication is regarded as a central activity of voluntary associations for promoting communication between the members. This is certainly true of the Museums Association. The matter of publications was frequently discussed in its business meetings. The early meetings of the Executive Committee around 1900 devoted their time to intensive discussion on the matter of issuing the Museums Journal. As indicated
above, the editing of the *Museum Directory* was also a major project in the first thirty years.

5. Financial matters. Management of the funds of the Association was a main duty for the Council and the Executive Committee. The ordinary account settlement was resolved in these meetings. Additionally, investment activity was also carried out, reflecting the accumulation of funds. For example, a portion of money was assigned to invest in some public funds, including Sheffield Corporation stock (invested in 1905), the India stock (in 1913) and the war loan (in 1915). Financial matters were related to the discussion of the Association's legal registration. The preferred legal position of the Association was considered around 1905 (14/8/1906 E; 14/4/1907E).

6. Correspondence with other organisations. The interaction between the Association and other institutions can be verified through the records of the meetings, in which letters from other organisations are often cited. Communications with other organizations show us the character of the Association at the time.

Besides the six main subjects above which were discussed regularly, occasional special issues were also proposed in the meetings. Through a more specific examination of these, the following section illuminates some characteristics of the early Association.
Broadening and extending the membership

The dominance of natural history subjects compared to other fields, especially art, was carried over into the contents of the business meetings but the officers of the Association themselves were aware of this imbalance, and they made efforts to remedy it. When the appointment of the Vice-Presidents was discussed in the Council meeting of the 5th & 6th July 1892, it was advised that at least one of them should be a “Director of more important Art museum or Art Gallery” (5&6/7/1892C). It was, however, a fact that most of the Presidents as well as Vice-Presidents during the first thirty years of the Association were not art professionals. In the General meeting of 1917, Thomas Sheppard, the first curator of the Hull Museum, indicated that “for many years the Museums Association has been trying to court the art side of museum work, and for the first time we have an art curator, pure and simple, as our President” (1917G [MJ, 17:28]). In 1917, Edward Rimbault Dibdin presided over the Association: he was a curator of the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. In fact, prior to his appointment, some individuals familiar with art museums had taken on the role of the President. For instance, Elijah Howarth devoted himself to art museum activities in Liverpool and Sheffield, but he could not be seen as “pure and simple” an art curator because his original field was astronomy. James Paton also contributed the
development of art galleries in Glasgow, but his career was mainly dedicated to industrial collections, especially in its early stage.

The imbalance was reflected not only in the officers’ characteristics, but also in the subjects which were discussed at the annual conferences, subjects that were determined at the business meetings. In the Council meeting of the 16th July 1908, “the best method of arranging & exhibiting Mammalia” was chosen as the special subject for the conference. It was purely a natural history topic, but a proviso indicating the necessity of inviting discussions relating to art museums and picture galleries was deliberately added (16/7/1908C). The efforts of officers to overcome this problem were only partially successful. In the General Annual Meeting in 1911, Henry M. Platnauer, Keeper of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, pointed out that “The things which seemed to him remarkable in the proceeding was the way the art men had come forward.” He consistently recognised and supported the Association’s efforts, stating that:

there never had been a year in which the Council of the Association had not made strong efforts to rope in the art people. It was a mere accident that determined fact that the men who founded the Association were mostly connected with natural history (1911G [MJ, 11: 40-41]).
However, such “mere accident” was still a decisive factor which directed the development of the organization.  

Platnauer believed, at the 1911 conference, that the officers had “realised their dream” and overcome the exclusion of art men. However, even after this year, the inferiority of art as a subject at the conference continued. At the Executive Committee’s meeting on the 19th February 1914, attention was called to “the fact that art subjects as well as science subjects must be treated in relation to the work of Museum & Art Galleries”. On the 9th January 1918, the Executive committee made a resolution regarding the Annual conference topics that “as far as possible the papers should deal with art topics” (9/1/1918E).

These records show that the Museums Association consistently struggled with this membership problem during its first thirty years. The bias repeatedly affected thinking in the business meetings, such as promoting the distribution of the publications of the Geological Survey and “Challenger” reports to provincial museums was regarded as an important issue which the Council should address. In fact, the Council tried to work on the Government by asking Robert Cameron, M. P., to put a question regarding this issue in the House of Commons.

64 The “path dependence” theory can be used to evidence that such an “accidental factor” can be decisive for directing the subsequent development of an organisation (eg. Mahoney 2000).
Cameron was one of founders of the Association and had held important posts on the Library and Museum Committee of Sunderland.

Of course, of fields of study were also discussed at these meetings. For example, the formation of a “Central Bureau for Archaeological Photographs”, which had been proposed and brought before the Association by the Congress of Archaeology Societies, was discussed in the Council’s and the Executive Committee’s meetings (8/7/1912C; 18/3/1912E). However, despite such interactions, the fact that the natural history interests among the members surpassed those of other fields cannot be denied, taking into consideration the subjects of papers which were read at the annual conference as well as the central topics of the business meetings.

This bias, and its consequences for the Associations identity and performances, may have prevented the extension of the membership. In fact, “means of inducing museums which are not yet members of the Association to join the same” were considered in the General Annual Meeting and the Executive Committee's meeting in 1918. By the time of a later meeting that year, on 14 October, they located some concrete strategies, such as the “inclusion of Science, Technical and Art Teachers; approaching Libraries to subscribe to Journal; printing of notice for display in Museums.” At this same meeting, the Secretary was instructed “to approach Colonial & American museums, Public Schools with Museums and
various Societies with the object of enrolling them as members” (14/10/1918E). The membership problem was a significant issue which the early Association struggled with.

**Provincialism**

Provincialism was also a characteristic of the early Museums Association. A main motivation for forming the Museums Association was to reform provincial museums in Britain, which had been criticised for their inferiority to those of the Continent and America. Therefore, provision of support to the provincial museums was a central aim of the Association’s activities. Thus, the management of the Association certainly reflected these provincial aspirations. This can be seen in the initial membership, the majority of whom were the staff of provincial museums. At the meetings of 1888 and 1889, no one from the national museums had attended. The location of the conference was changed annually to encourage the development of museums in various regions. Charles Madeley submitted a draft of the new Rules in 1905, in which was stated that “in order to promote a better knowledge of Museums, the Association shall meet in a different town each succeeding year.” The new Rules, approved in the General meeting two years later, indicated only “the place of meeting to be changed each year”, but the perambulatory character of the organisation certainly reflected its inherent provincialism. Officers gave particular consideration to the place of the annual
conference even in the early years, a committee’s meeting on the 17th June 1890, for example, resolving for the 1891 conference that the: “Next place of meeting be in the south of England.” This was a direct response the northern bias amongst the founders.

Discussion of specialist knowledge, detailed above, was again a topic of particular concern to provincial museums and perhaps of little interest to the larger institutions. As already mentioned, in 1890, at the first annual conference, the Sub-Committee on “the question of a systematic scheme for securing the services of specialists for Provincial Museum” was appointed, for structuring a framework for helping local curators without specialist knowledge to name specimens. Additionally, a similar system was considered later, and called “Expert References”. In the Executive Committee on the 31st of October 1912, the Committee resolved to establish an assistive system, operated by members with expert knowledge of special subjects free of charge, and that a list of such experts was to be printed in the Museums Journal (31/10/1912E). Specialists were invited to act as expert referees in voluntary cooperation with the system (1913G [MJ, 13: 65]).

The promotion of governmental support to the provincial museums was also an issue for the early Association. This support was mainly carried out through the national museums, and therefore the relationship between provincial museums
and national museums was frequently discussed, and became the special subject
for the 1906 annual conference (10/2/1905E). The circulation of collections from
the national museums to provincial museums, for instance, was valued highly by
the Association as a concrete method for supporting provincial museums, and the
enrichment of such a scheme was strongly recommended. The circulation scheme
had been started by the South Kensington Museum in the 1850s and its successor,
the Victoria and Albert Museum, took it over. Additionally, the Association
recommended that the National Gallery should also undertake such a scheme, and
give art loans to provincial museums, following the example of the V&A (1911G

The Association, aiming for the development of provincial museums, also carried
out other advocacy activities. The pressures the Association put on the
Government will be discussed more minutely in a following section, but we can
see an exposure of provincialism in the discussion regarding the closure of
national museums during the First World War. On the 10th February 1916, for
example, a deputation consisting of representatives from the National
Art-Collection Fund, the Museums Association and the Imperial Arts League had
a meeting with the Prime Minister, Herbert H. Asquith, protesting the closure of
national museums, which had been recommended by the Retrenchment
Committee for economising national expenditure. Most of the representatives
other than those from the Museums Association insisted on the educational,
recreational and academic value of the national museums during the wartime. However, the representatives from the Museums Association, including Edward Rimbault Dibdin, the President, emphasised the value of the provincial museums for their educational, scientific and recreational activities in explicit connection with the war. This was because the Retrenchment Committee had also suggested that the municipal museums should follow the national museums and close. Dibdin pointed out that “In London, the fact that they are national has perhaps prevented appreciation of their local possibilities. In the provinces, where our means and opportunities are less, we have been able to make more progress” (MJ, 16: 328). The stress on the “local possibilities” of museums might be seen to symbolically reflect the provincialism of the Association. Regarding this, the Prime Minister replied that the Retrenchment Committee did not deal, they could not deal, with the provincial museums which have been spoken of, except by way of setting them up an example and giving them an object lesson. I am very glad to hear what had been said by the gentlemen who come here from the municipalities upon that point, but they are not directly affected by the decision of the Government, and it rests with the local authorities to say whether or not they will follow suit (MJ, 16: 336).
In this discussion, the nature of the Association as an interest group for provincial museums in Britain can be clearly seen.

**Internationalism**

The Association also had international interactions with foreign museums from its earliest period. For example, in the Council meeting on the 5th July 1889, a letter from the Bergen Museum, Norway, was read, indicating that they were unable to accept the invitation to host the annual meeting there (5/7/1898C). The Museum was invited to hold the annual conference again in 1904, but that offer was also rejected (23/10/1902E). An overseas conference was also suggested for Paris in 1915. However, this plan could not be realised because of the outbreak of war. In the first thirty years of the Museums Association, many plans for holding the conference in a foreign country were suggested but none of them came off. But frequent interactions with foreign museums can be confirmed in the contents of the business meetings. The sphere of the Association's activities was not confined to Britain. Having opened the membership to foreigners in 1897, the Executive Committee’s meeting on the 12th February 1901, proposed overseas assistants for editing the *Museums Journal* to cover activity in foreign countries, including Germany, America, Australia and New Zealand (12/2/1901E).
When we consider the international nature of the Museums Association, the connection with colonial museums becomes an important issue in regard to the management of the Association. The construction of a support system for the colonial museums, for instance, was discussed in the business meetings. At the 1916 annual conference, the Association received a letter from Private Henry D. Skinner, suggesting a scheme for supporting national museums in the British dominions by sending to them a series of duplicates from the British Isles. He suggested that the collections which would be loaned or gifted under the scheme should illustrate the development of civilisation in Britain. Through the utilisation of such collections, the Association would aim to promote the solidarity of colonies with, and within, the Empire (MJ, 16: 53-54). The Museums Association valued his scheme, and passed circulations to the curators and directors of the principal colonial museums, asking for their opinions on Skinner’s proposition (8/10/1916E). Moreover the Association made efforts to obtain the collection to send to the colonial museums agreed within the proposal. Thus the Association had multiple aspects, reflecting provincialism, internationalism and colonialism, from its earliest time. These characteristics did not necessarily contradict each other. Such characteristics of the Association were also more than a little affected by the personalities of its members.
Leadership and association

The management of the early Association was sustained by the initiative of a few particularly driven individuals, most notably Elijah Howarth, Curator of the Sheffield Museums, and Henry M. Platnauer, Keeper of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society Museum. There are scarcely any business meetings in this early period in which they did not participate. Platnauer and Howarth were both appointed as a Secretary, in 1889 and 1892 respectively. Howarth held the post until 1909, and consequently the business meetings were sometimes held at Sheffield. Another Sheffield participant who was involved in the early management of the Association was William H. Brittain, Alderman of the city. He served the Association as Treasurer until 1909. The fact that the Association decided to put its funds into the Sheffield Corporation Stocks in 1905 perhaps shows his strong influence over its financial management. Through the vigorous activity of Howarth and Brittain the Association gained a special connection with Sheffield and this, too, enhanced the provincial aspect of the Association.

However, national museums personnel were also involved, particularly William H. Flower, Director of the Natural History Museum in London and an eminent museum reformer at the end of the nineteenth century, who had advocated the necessity of forming a cooperative structure for curators. He presided over the fourth annual conference of the Museums Association in 1893. However, it was
too late in his career for him to be an active manager or leader of the Association. He died in 1899 and the Council sent a representative to his funeral to express their exceptional respects to him (4/7/1899C) but he had rarely attended any of its business meetings.

Other national museum personnel who had a stronger commitment to the management of the Association were William E. Hoyle and Francis A. Bather. Hoyle was appointed firstly as Keeper of the Manchester Museum, and then in 1899 he accepted the Challenger Office in Edinburgh. His museum career was an established and prestigious one, shown when he was appointed as the first director of the National Museum of Wales in 1907 (Lowe 1926). In contrast to Hoyle, Bather was much more a national museum man. He entered the Geological Department of the British Museum (Natural History) straight from Oxford University in 1887, and was appointed as an Assistant Keeper in 1902. He retained a position at the museum until his retirement in 1928 (W.E.S. et. al. 1934; W. D. L., 1934). Both were regular attendees at the business meetings of the Association, and took roles as officers. The fact that Bather’s study in the Natural History Museum was used for the Executive Committee's meetings from 1909 to 1912 shows his significant role in the management of the Association. Bather and Hoyle were both appointed in 1909 as the first members of the Editorial Committee set up to assist the editor of the *Museums Journal* (1909G [MJ, 9: 62]). Indeed, they contributed as greatly to administration of the
Association as did the people with ties to provincial museums but their different backgrounds as museum workers influenced their position and opinions regarding the work of the Association. This sometimes produced tensions. In the discussion concerning local war museums at the AGM in 1917, for example, Howarth criticised the stances of Hoyle and Bather on the issue:

Dr. Hoyle is at the national museum. There are things in connection with local museums that do not occur to his mind. It is the same with Dr. Bather. They speak in the abstract and from an academic point of view. This matter is of such extreme gravity and universal historical value that it ought to be done in a thoroughly representative national way. There are in this country 200 museums or more. Let us try if we cannot make a suggestion one way or the other and come to some agreement to-day. Then let us have another meeting. (MJ, 17: 25.)

Howarth here shows a deep cultural tension between provincial and national museum staff that would persist at Museum Association AGMs until the Association decided to abandon debate at these meetings in the late twentieth century.

The development of structure entails a giving over of control of personal initiatives and desires to the ideals of an organisation. In the case of the Museums
Association, an organisational turning point happened around 1910. In the AGM of 1909, the retirements of Howarth from the position of Secretary and Brittain from that of Treasurer were announced. They had sustained the Association throughout its early years. Their retirements seem to indicate an alternation of generations in the Association’s management. Howarth signalled this himself: “in the interests of the Association it was better new blood should come in and the office get into more energetic hands” (MJ, 9: 60-61). In addition to the changes of the officers, some arrangements for the improvement of the structure for administrating the Association were implemented around 1910. The post of Assistant Secretary was set up in 1904 and Robert Newstead, the first curator of the Chester Museum, was its first appointee. The Editorial Committee was also formed in 1909 to confer with and assist the Editor. The new arrangement of the structure meant the segregation and dispersion of the duties of the main officers throughout the management of the Association. Around the same time, the legal position of the Association was also considered, including the appointment of trustees and the registration of their organisation referring to related acts. This was mainly because they needed a proper structure for managing their funds. The structural development of the Association entailed the gradual weakening of the strong personal initiatives of specific individuals. Therefore, we can see much more dynamic interactions between individualism and structure in the Museums Association at its early stage, before the framework was rigidly established.
**Relationship with other organisations**

The attributes of an organisation are affected by other organisations as well as by individuals. The records regarding the interactions between the Museums Association and other organisations can be used to show some characteristics of the Association. For example, the Association’s great interest in education can be demonstrated by its communications with the Workers’ Educational Association (WEA). The Museums Association decided to be a subscriber to the WEA, as they agreed with the organisation’s aims (2/12/1907E; 13/7/1908C). Platnauer was requested to attend the annual conference of the WEA as a delegate of the Museums Association (29/9/1908E). Moreover, at the Executive Committee’s meeting on the 14th October 1918, a letter from the Committee for the Furtherance of University Education in the South West was read, inviting the Museums Association to appoint a representative to serve on the committee.

The Museums Association had connections with various associations other than educational ones. Two associations were outstanding among these: the Library Association (LA) and the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS). The former was involved partly in the genesis of the Museums Association. It will be recalled that Howarth, a main advocate of the Association, first tried to extend the membership of the LA to cover museums in Britain, in 1884. The enlargement of the membership to include museum curators was
certainly not realised. This failure became a direct cause of the formation of the curators’ own association in 1889.

The interaction with the LA continued after the formation of the Museums Association. Such interactions were kept alive by the efforts of Howarth. As the Secretary, he arranged the interchange of delegates to each of their annual conferences. Howarth himself attended the annual conference of the LA in 1899 as the representative of the Museums Association. The fact that Samuel Smith, of the Public Libraries of Sheffield, was appointed as delegate to the Museums Association in 1900 also implies the significant role of Howarth in sustaining the interactions of the organisations, and the close relationship between the Museums Association and Sheffield (9/7/1900C). Samuel Smith also supplied his collections of newspaper cuttings regarding museums and similar institutions to the Museum Association in 1905 (11/7/1905C). Besides the efforts of the Sheffield men, the overlap in the membership between the Museums Association and the LA in this period demonstrate the close relationship that existed between them. In particular, Butler Wood, Curator and Librarian at Bradford, and Charles Madeley, Curator and Librarian at Warrington, who were founding members of the Museums Association, held important positions in both organisations.

Such interaction was kept alive in order to achieve some common aims. The main shared aim was the improvement of legislation regarding libraries and museums.
Since the latter part of the nineteenth century, legislation had been developing, but it was not satisfactory in the eyes of the concerned parties. The rate-capping on the levy which paid for the administration costs of libraries and museums was especially criticised as a cause of the insufficient financial condition of municipal libraries and museums during this period (1892G, *Report of Proceedings*, 1892, p.8). Regarding the issue of the distribution of the publications of the Geological survey, an attempt was made by the Council of the Museums Association to secure the cooperation of the LA for obtaining the maps and publications of the Geological Survey (23/7/1896C).

Another association, which had a special connection with the Museums Association, was the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS). Although interesting analogies can be drawn between the Museums Association and the BAAS in regard to their formation processes as observed in the previous chapter, the exact communications between the Museums Association and the BAAS during the formation process of the Museums Association cannot be verified. However, the just before the formation of that Association, a committee of the BAAS published a report upon provincial museums in the United Kingdom, and this shows that interests were shared with the founding members of the Museums Association. The frequent communications between them began to appear in the records of the business meetings of the Museums Association, after they became a corresponding society.
affiliated to the British Association in 1914. The Museums Association annually sent their representative to a Conference of Delegates of Corresponding Societies of the BAAS, and the contents of discussions there were reported in the *Museums Journal*.

The LA and the BAAS both shared organisational interests and characteristics with the Museums Association. The communications between them affected the management of the Museums Association. Besides the LA and the BAAS, various voluntary organisations had connections with the Museums Association in its first thirty years. Such relationships were not always successful and friendly. For instance, it was decided to discontinue the subscription to the Workers’ Educational Association in the Executive Committee's meeting at 1910 (4/6/1910E). Another example is the series of communications with the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty. In 1913, the Museums Association asked the Trust if they could become one of the bodies authorised to nominate a member of the Trust's Council, but the request was declined the next year (9/10/1913E; 19/2/1914 E). These communications with other organisations demonstrate certain characteristics of the Museums Association at the time in terms of its positioning – and thus the positioning of the emerging profession – in society.
Politics and the Association

The Museums Association communicated with governmental organisations as well as voluntary ones. The relationships with the governmental institutions, including the national museums, show the political stance of the Association. The Association had a good relationship with them from its earliest period. In 1897, the Association sent letters to the Trustees of the British Museum and the Science and Art Department asking that they assure the attendance of their staff at the meeting of the Association (6/7/1897C). This request was accepted willingly by the Trustees of the British Museum (5/7/1898C). The Board of Education, which had been reorganised from the Science and Art Department in 1899, also had good relationship with the Association. In 1902, the Association received a letter from the Board expressing their willingness to cooperate (16/7/1902C). The Association had frequent communication with the Board, because the Board was the governmental department held responsible for national museums such as the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Science Museum. In 1913, the Board allocated a room of the Victoria and Albert Museum to the Association for use as a place for the Executive Committee to meet (14/7/1913E). During the First World War, the Board of Education and the director of the Victoria and Albert Museum provided auspices to the Association for organising its annual conferences in London (14/1/1915E). These facts demonstrate the good relationship between the Association and governmental institutions.
However, the Association was also an organisation which put pressure on the Government and local authorities. Its lobbying activities during its first three decades can be divided into three main categories: the improvement of legislation, the promotion of governmental aid to provincial museums, and the issue of the levy rate supporting these institutions.

The Association was convinced that development of museums in Britain should be guaranteed by proper legislation. In 1907, for instance, the Association recommended that steps be taken to extend the provisions of the *Museums and Gymnasium Act, 1891*, to Scotland (2/12/1907E). The Association also advanced an opinion regarding the *National Gallery Bill, 1916*. They insisted that any pictures not required for the National Collections could be absorbed by provincial and colonial galleries and that the claims of such institutions should be seriously considered (9/5/1917E). This request also demonstrates the organisation’s role as an interest group for provincial museums. Moreover, regarding the *Education Bill, 1918*, the Association sent a letter to the president of the Board of Education advocating the educational value of museums. In the letter, the fact that museums had been contributing considerably to school education was indicated, and the Association insisted that special attention should be drawn in the Bill to the educational potential of museums, and to the financial and other aids needed to
realise these possibilities (9/1/1918E). The improvement of legislation was regarded as a concrete action which needed to be taken to develop museums.

More direct aid for the provincial museums from the governmental institutions was also encouraged by the Association. It valued the circulating collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and recommended the enhancement of this scheme (eg. 1897G, *Report of Proceedings*, 1897: 13). Additionally, the Association moved for increasing the grant given by the government to aid in the purchase of scientific objects for provincial museums. Especially after 1910, when the Board of Education stared to consider the advisability of continuing assistance towards the purchase of scientific objects, the Association began to place intense pressure on the Board of Education, including sending a deputation and submitting a report. Eventually, the Board sent out circulars stating that the grants would be renewed upon conditions which had been recommended by the Association. This was “a matter for congratulation” for the young MA (1914G[MJ, 14: 64]). Many of its lobby activities during this period can be considered very successful.

The third problem upon which the Association took action as a lobby organisation regarded the rate levied on provincial museums. In 1912 and 1913, the Association conducted their own inquiry about the rates and taxes paid by provincial museums, considering “the possibility either of avoiding the levy of
rates or of providing for their payment for funds other than those now at the disposal of such institutions” (1912G [MJ, 12: 51]; 31/10/1912E; 14/7/1913C).

The investigation revealed that the local authorities of Birmingham and Plymouth were planning exceptional rating actions for their museums, and the Association protested at this. Their protest was to lead to concessions from Birmingham and Plymouth, who came to an arrangement with regard to the payment of rates (14/7/1913E). However, Birmingham was later to be criticised by the Association because they tried to levy income-tax from their art galleries (8/10/1916E; 1916G [MJ, 16: 59]; 9/51917E). Moreover, regarding the rates given to museums, the Association delivered its opinion to the central government as well as local authorities. For instance, in 1918, it sent a letter to the Chancellor of Exchequer, insisting that “the Luxury Tax of Works of Art and Antiquities, proposed in the Budget now before parliament, should be remitted” (23/5/1918E; 8/7/1918E).

The Association made special efforts to improve the financial conditions of provincial museums. The protests regarding tax were a part of the strategy to achieve this aim. The activities indicated above demonstrate an organisational aspect of the Association as an organisation which was able to pressure the government and act as an interest organisation for museums, especially provincial ones.
The politics of the Association became more visible during wartime. The outbreak of the First World War compelled the Association to create an emergency management system. The annual conferences, for instance, were curtailed because travel in the country was restricted. Special measures also were taken regarding the elections of the Association's officers. Despite such circumstances, the Association actively continued their work. This included practical support for museums in Britain. An example of such work regards the supply of glass jars. The outbreak of the War led to cessation of their importation from Germany. Therefore, the Association made efforts to establish their own supply routes from British manufactures to the museums (1915G, MJ, 15, p. 61; 13/1/1916E; 4/5/1916E; 1917G, MJ, 17, p. 26).

The War was the best chance so far for the Association to prove the value of museums. At the annual conference in 1915, a special discussion on the relationship between museums and the War was set up, and there Bather pointed out that “What each one of us must realise is that we are passing through a time when all our institutions are brought to a severe test of their usefulness” (MJ, 15, p. 73). The Association was very cooperative in raising public awareness about the War. This stance was demonstrated by their communications with the Central
Committee for National Patriotic Organisations and the Local War Museums Association.

On the other hand, the Association was not always amenable to the Government's decisions regarding museums during wartime. When the Board of Education proposed a suspension of the exchanges of the loan collections provided by the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Association accepted the suggestion reluctantly with a special request that “in the interests of Industrial Art Education, the Loan Collections from the Victoria & Albert Museum to provincial museums should be resumed at the earliest possible moment” (12/5/1915E; 14/10/1918E). And, as already indicated, the Association adopted a clear opposing position against the suggestion to close museums during the War. Regarding this problem, the Secretary conducted his own inquiry, surveying the opinions of provincial museums and local authorities which closed their museums (9/5/1917E). In 1918, the proposal to seize the British Museum and the Natural History Museum for use by the Air Board and other Government departments was also strongly protested by the Association (9/1/1918E).

These actions demonstrated that a certain level of political autonomy for the Association was assured even during the wartime. Such autonomy can be confirmed in the Association's attitude to the enemy country: Germany. They delivered their opinion regarding the collections looted by the Germans in the
War to the Prime Minister in 1918, stating that “all objects taken by the Germans from Museums and other collections in invaded Countries be returned and that, failing this, the Germans should be called upon to replace them by similar specimens of equivalent value” (14/10/1918E). On the other hand, the membership of the German museums in the Association was secured even during the War. The Council of the Association discussed the position of their German members, but they decided that no action was to be taken towards them (10/7/1916C).

The Association’s political autonomy can also be demonstrated by its relationship to the sovereign. On the occasion of the death of the King Edward VII in 1910, the Museums Association inserted a tribute article to the king in the Museums Journal. And they sent a letter to King George V, showing their condolence and loyalty, along with a copy of the journal (4/6/1910E). However, strong commitment to the sovereign cannot be found in the Museums Association’s own private records. It can be inferred that the autonomy of the Museums Association not only from the government but also from the sovereign was considerably assured.

The early activities of the UK Museum Association were reflected the circumstances surrounding museums in Britain. The purpose was highly practical for assisting especially provincial museums. The concrete contents of the
activities corresponded with the expected roles of the museums in the society at the time. The roles had been examined consciously by the leading members of the Association. On the other hand, the records of the management meetings reveal that the Association had its own organisational problems. Some of them, including the incompleteness of the membership, were long-standing and distressed the members. The struggling efforts of the Association against them indicate the fact that the start of the organisation was not entirely favourable. However, its activities reflected directly the aspiration of actual museum workers, and the organisational autonomy was assured considerably from the early stage. On the other hand, in Japan, the museum association was stared in the totally different setting. In the following chapters, we will consider the background contexts and formation processes of the Japanese association, and highlight the differences between them.
Chapter 7

Historical background to the formation of the
Museum Work Promotion Association in Japan

The concept of the museum was introduced to Japan from the middle of the
eighteenth century onwards, through missions to Europe and the U.S., and
through the government’s participation in international expositions. But it was
the late nineteenth century that really saw the beginnings of Japanese museum
development. The origin of the first national museum of Japan is generally
considered as the exhibition which was held by the government in 1872. The
building of museums was a national policy during this period, inspired by
influences from the West. Museums rapidly and effectively spread across Japan.
That success was known in England at that time:

It will thus be seen that the introduction of museums and similar
establishments was a happy move on the part of the Japanese Government;
they are heartily appreciated by the people, and their educating influence
is immense. With the exception of the newspaper press no Western
institution has been so rapidly or so successfully acclimatised in Japan
(Anon. 1881: 563).
The introduction and diffusion of “Western-style museums” was controlled and supported by the government during this period (Ito 1978: 89-101). That it was a government initiative is, perhaps, the most characteristic aspect of museum development in Japan, and this tendency, to some extent, continues up to the present day.

In the early stages, museums were one of the imitations of Western culture that marked the process of national modernisation in Japan. Nevertheless, these institutions must also be understood as existing within the unique context of Japan, and those present between 1880 to the 1930 museum be understood as reflecting the Japanese social and political circumstances of that time. Like the Museums Association in Britain, the formation of the Museum Work Promotion Association in Tokyo in 1928, the predecessor of the present-day Japanese Association of Museums, can be used to understand and reflect those changing contexts that made museums an important social topic. The museum community itself was formed in a way that reflected aspects of the national establishment, such as the relationship between museums and the pre-war monarchy. In this chapter, the historical background to the formation of the Association is explored.
The collecting and exhibition culture of the Edo era: before the introduction of the Western museum

The Museum Work Promotion Association was, in its formative context, totally different from that of the Museums Association in Britain and reflects the differing developmental histories of museums in these countries. Prior to the introduction of the Western museum, a culture of collecting and display had already existed. This culture was analogous to that which in Britain gave birth to the public museum. In Britain, in second half of the nineteenth century, collections and museums originally privately owned by amateur collectors and learned societies were transferred to public ownership. In Japan, too, a similar collecting culture had existed amongst amateurs and savants and flourished, particularly in the Edo era (1603-1867). It was nurtured by an interest in “Hozogaku (本草学)”, a form of oriental herbalism originally introduced from China. Hozogaku required the investigation of herbs for medical use, which resulted in herbalists energetically constructing their own collections. An example of this practice is Kenkado KIMURA (木村蒹葭堂: 1736-1802) one of the most renowned collectors in Japan. He was not simply a herbalist, but also an intellectual with wide-ranging interests in material culture, including calligraphic works and paintings, antiquities, books, maps, minerals and zoological and botanical specimens. His connoisseurship and fine collection attracted
intellectuals from across Japan, including physicians, herbalists, authors, painters, composers of Chinese poems and feudal lords. His diary shows that he and his collection formed the central hub of an intellectual network. His collection room was regarded as a “salon” for social interaction between intellectuals (Nakamura 2000).

The collection of Kenkadao Kimura was extraordinary, but his networking through collections was not. In the Edo era, herbalists across the country organised meetings where they would show their collections and exchange information about them. These meetings were called “Honzou-e (本草会),” “Yakuhin-e (薬品会)” or “Bussan-e (物産会).” In addition to scholars, amateurs participated in these meetings and placed their collections on show. The origin of the meetings goes back to the mid-eighteenth century when the herbalists organised the first meetings in Kyoto and Edo. One of these was hosted by Ransui TAMURA (田村藍水)\(^{65}\) in 1757 at Yushima (湯島) in Edo (江戸).\(^{66}\) It was the first “Yakuhin-e” in Tokyo and these meetings were held annually until 1760. They were organized by Gennai HIRAGA (平賀源内),\(^{67}\) one of the most remarkable intellectuals in the sciences and arts during the Edo era. He published catalogues of the collections exhibited in the meetings, which indicate that the

\(^{65}\) Ransui TAMURA (1718-1776) was physician and herbalist, born in Edo.

\(^{66}\) The former name of Tokyo.

\(^{67}\) Hiraga GENNAI (1728-1780) was born in Sanuki province (讃岐) and studied the herbalism under Ransui TAMURA.
participants came from across Japan. The early “Yakuhin-e” were for purely scientific purposes, where herbalists identified specimens and discussed their names and authenticity. They were not open to the public, and membership was restricted. However, as time passed, the nature of the meeting gradually changed, opening up to public viewing and including other curiosities (Ueno 1989ab and Yajima 2010).

In parallel with the fashion for Honzo-gaku, visual shows became a popular recreation in the Edo era, especially from the late eighteenth century onwards. One of the origins of this culture of display was the exhibition of treasures by Buddhist temples, “Kaichyo (開帳)”. This involved the periodic display of objects that were usually concealed. Another form of display to emerge at this time was “Misemono-goya (見世物小屋),” which means show-booth. Shows became commercial businesses with contents including handiworks, animals, acrobats, freaks and so on (Kawazoe 2000). These different cultures of display influenced each other, and the exhibition of herbalists came to provide some recreation for the public.

In the Edo period, Western Studies (Ran-gaku, 藝術) also developed. Although at the time the government restricted international interaction, scientific knowledge and technology nevertheless found its way into Japan. Phillip Franz von Siebold, for example, a German physician, arrived in Japan in 1823 and
opened his private school, “Narutaki-Jyuku (鳴滝塾)”, the following year. Here, he instructed Japanese physicians and scholars in Western medicine and natural science. Botany was one of his main subjects, and he taught Western botanical knowledge, which was very different from the herbalism known to the Japanese. A distinctive feature of Western botany, for example, was Linnaean taxonomy. Nearly half a century earlier, in 1775, Carl Peter Thunberg, the Swedish botanist and physician, had arrived in Japan. A leading disciple of Carl von Linnaeus, he was engaged in fieldwork to obtain botanical specimens in Japan for the completion of the Linnaean project. Although he only stayed for one year, he too tried to disseminate Western botanical knowledge to the Japanese. His botanical achievement in Japan was summed up in Flora Japonica published in 1784, which laid the foundations of Japanese botany. However, such modern botany did not completely displace the tradition of Japanese herbalism, and even those scholars who learned Western botany did not always depart from its paradigm (Nishimura 1999ab).

The shift to modern Western science did not happen in Japan until the foundation of the Meiji government (明治政府), which drove forward the modernisation of the country after the transition from feudalism. Although the Japanese science of natural history, Honzo-gaku, and Western botany were both accompanied by collecting cultures, they were based on fundamentally different scientific paradigms. According to Nishimura (1999b: 561-639), Western botany was a
project principally designed to establish a system by which all plants could be
classified in an orderly manner as a foundation for knowledge. It sought, through
the application of Linnaean systematics, to gain a rational understanding, and
control of, nature. The traditional Japanese science of natural history did not
aspire to establish such a system. It adopted a utilitarian classification system that
could be used for selecting beneficial plants for medical purposes. It was
pragmatic rather than rational. Japanese herbalists focused on analysing
individual specimens rather than constructing an overarching system. Japanese
practice did not necessarily require that instrument of systematic classification,
the museum. There was also no need for the museum’s permanence.

In Britain, a particular set of social conditions contributed to the formation of
museums, such as a respect for rationalism, the Enlightenment, the rise of the
bourgeoisie, a social fashion for the natural sciences, and so on. The rise of the
middle classes, as a result of the industrial revolution and the commercial
enterprises exploiting the British Empire, was decisive. As discussed in previous
chapters, it was this class which developed a culture of show, and which aspired
to personal and civic social improvement (see Knell 2000). As the nineteenth
century progressed, and the British population became increasingly urbanised,
there was increasing interest in deploying the museum as an instrument of
education for the working classes. In contrast, in Japan, such social contexts did
not arise. Here, industrialisation and modernisation were promoted as part of a
government project; they did not result from the spirit of individualism and enterprise, fostered by the British government’s reluctance to fund state initiatives. It meant the actors who voluntarily constituted the museum movement in Britain were absent in Japan. The museum was most likely to arrive in Japan through outside influence from the West, and as part of a government initiative. The fact that the introduction was conducted under the initiative of the government defined the path of the subsequent development of museums in Japan. In the course of this development, a professional association facilitating the development of museums was also formed. It was constructed in reference to the examples in Western countries, including the Museums Association in Britain. However, the process through which the organisation was formed and its characteristics were totally different.

The introduction of the concept of the “museum” into Japan

The concept of the museum was introduced firstly through the dispatch of governmental embassies to Western countries. Visits to overseas museums by Japanese nationals were recorded in the diaries of the Japanese Embassy, *Manengannen-Kenbei-Shisetsu* (万延元年遣米施設), to the United States in 1860, 68

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68 This was not a situation unique to museums, but the modern educational enterprise, including libraries, shared the same situation. The absence of the tense relationship between the bourgeoisie and the working class characterised the development process of the educational enterprise in Japan (Usui 1971 pp.8-9).
which was dispatched by the *Edo* feudal government for ratifying the Treaty of Amity and Commerce. The members of the mission visited the Patent Office and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. Their experience was significant because after that, the existence of museums in Western society became known in Japan. Although the Patent Office was not a museum in the strictest sense, it had an exhibition space for displaying wide-ranging objects related to patents. The main category of objects was the collection of machines and models, but it also possessed and displayed specimens of natural history, including stuffed animals. The Office held some qualities of a “museum”. In the Smithsonian Institution, which was established in 1846, members of the Japanese mission observed diverse collections encompassing the natural history collection, the science and technology collection, and the ethnological collection assembled from abroad. The Institution had established by that time the character of a comprehensive museum, and become a foremost centre for research (Shiina 1988, Takarabe 1999).

In Japan, the new *Meiji Government* (明治政府) was established following the restoration of the imperial rule in 1868. This was a period of transition in Japanese history. It marked the beginning of modernisation and importation of Western culture. After the mission in 1860, the military government and the succeeding Meiji government both repeatedly sent missions to the United States and Europe. Students sent overseas by the government and feudal domains also
took an important role in absorbing Western science, technology and culture.

Hisanari MACHIDA (町田久成, 1838-1897) was born at 1838 in the Satsuma domain (薩摩藩), a leading domain in the establishment of the new government. He came from a military family influential in the area, and after the establishment of the new government in 1868 he assumed important posts in its bureaucratic organisation. His achievements in government were prominent in the cultural administration including museum policy (Kadota 1997, Ishiyama 1997, Inoue 2010). He was a member of the 1865 mission sent by the Satsuma domain to England to train young bureaucrats. They stayed in London and studied at University College. During their time there, Machida broadened his knowledge of Western culture, including museums, and he participated in the International Exposition of 1867 in Paris, at which the Edo feudal government, the Saga domain (佐賀藩) and the Satsuma domain each presented exhibitions. In this period, international expositions were very significant opportunities for Japan to absorb advanced knowledge and technology.

After returning to Japan in 1867, Machida advanced two suggestions to the new government regarding the foundation of a museum. In 1871, he suggested the erection of a building named “Syūko-kan (集古館)” for preserving cultural heritage.69 At the time, the new government policy to establish Shinto (神道) as

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the national religion had produced an anti-Buddhist movement which led to the
destruction of Buddhist antiquities. At the time holding a position in the
government office for educational administration, Machida made strenuous
efforts to prevent this loss and it was for this purpose that he suggested the
“Syūko-kan”. In making his suggestion, he noted the existence of museums in
Western countries and their utilisation in the study of cultural heritage.

Two years after the first suggestion, Machida again submitted a proposal for the
erection of a museum. It was entitled “Regarding the foundation of a great
museum (大博物館創設ノ建議).”70 In the proposal, he insisted that a museum
should be founded by following the precedents from the West citing the British
Museum and the South Kensington Museum as good examples. Machida
explained that the Japanese museum should have the characteristics of both these
museums: it should acquire comprehensive collections including books, animals,
minerals and antiquities like the British Museum, and its purpose should be
“practical” like the South Kensington Museum.

In the same year, the Japanese government participated in the international
exposition in Vienna, “Weltausstellung 1873 Wien.” It was the first international

70 “Suggestion about the foundation of a great museum 1873” (「大博物館創設
exposition that the Japanese government officially attended and the government had set up an office to prepare the exhibition: *Hakuran-kai-jimukyoku* (博覧会事務局). Machida served in the office, as did Yoshio TANAKA (田中芳男)\(^{71}\) and Tsunetami SANO (佐野常民),\(^{72}\) all of whom were important advocates for the establishment of a museum in Japan. The international exposition proved to be a crucial turning point for Japanese museum development. In fact, the exhibition organised at Yushima, Tokyo, in 1872, for the preliminary showing the collection which would be sent to the international exposition is regarded as the origin of the Japanese national museum.

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\(^{71}\) Yoshio TANAKA (1838-1916) was born into a physician's family in Shinano (信濃). He studied herbalism and then served the Edo government and the Meiji government. In both governments, he was committed to national exhibition projects, including the participations in the international expositions (Sugiyama 2010b).

\(^{72}\) Tsunetami SANO (1823-1902) was a feudal retainer of the Saga domain. He participated in two international expositions at 1867 in Paris and at 1873 in Vienna. The experience made him realise the importance of expositions for the purpose of encouraging industry, and he became an influential promoter of domestic industrial expositions in Japan. He was also famous as the founder of the Japanese Red Cross. This was founded in 1877 based on his knowledge of the International Committee of the Red Cross. He obtained the knowledge at the international exposition at Paris in 1873 (Sugiyama 2010a).
The role of government initiative

The development of museums drew upon a complex of influences: Japanese collecting culture and herbalism, cultural preservation, modernisation, expositions at home and abroad, and foreign missions. Those who had studied abroad, including Machida and Sano, took crucial roles as conveyers and promoters. They imported Western models, including British ones. The international expositions were also crucial because they were opportunities not only for absorbing advanced knowledge and technology from overseas, but also for showing the dignity of their own culture. The collections sent to these expositions were later acquired by the government and they formed the origins of the national museum.

A distinctive feature of the development of museums in Japan, however, was the high level of official control; the museum movement here was connected to national policy from its very beginning. This was also true of the Museum Work Promotion Association (Hakubutsukan Jigyo Sokushin-kai, 博物館事業促進会). This Association was also modelled after the overseas groups, including the Museums Associations in the UK. The founders of the Japanese Association possessed great knowledge of Western museums: the first president of the Association, Narinobu HIRAYAMA (平山成信), for example, was a member of
the delegation sent to Vienna to participate in the international exposition in 1873. Thus in Japan, and in contrast with the British case, museums and the Association emerged not from grass-roots movements but from official action by government.

The national museums: their political purposes

The half-century between the foundation of the first museum and the formation of the Museum Work Promotion Association is the incipient period of the development of museums in Japan. During this period, the museum enterprise was implemented for political purposes. Museums were expected to perform in accordance with a range of governmental objectives and the museums which were established during this period can be categorized into types according to the purpose for which they were intended. Cultural property protection was one of these purposes, as was apparent in Machida’s suggestion of 1871, discussed above. Shortly after that suggestion, the government announced a proclamation, which was called “Koki-kyubutu-hozon-hou (古器旧物保存方)”, to preserve antiquities and historic items. This proclamation is the earliest ordinance concerning cultural properties. The proclamation detailed thirty-one categories of collections to be acquired and preserved, which covered a wide variety of materials including not only the historical, religious and artistic, but also ethnological and natural history materials. The government created a plan for the
construction of comprehensive collections for the purpose of cultural preservation which was inextricably associated with the plan to establish a museum for their storage.

Through the experience of participating in the international expositions, the Japanese government adopted the enterprise of exhibition at home. Tsunetami SANO, the vice-president of the office that prepared for the Vienna exposition, submitted a report to the government detailing the objectives of participation: 1) to present the national wealth of Japan by exhibiting natural and artificial products, 2) to learn about Western culture, products and technology from the exhibitions of foreign countries, then develop Japanese arts and science and disseminate the products from overseas in Japan, 3) to erect a museum and make it the foundation for organising exhibitions in Japan, 4) to enhance domestic manufacturing technology and boost Japanese exports of commodities to foreign countries, 5) investigate the international market and make use of information from international trade. The erection of a museum was a part of his plan for economic development. It was regarded as an important part of the infrastructure for the encouragement of domestic industry by providing a venue for industrial exhibitions. The government regularly held the Domestic Industrial Exhibitions to encourage new industry. The first, which was held in 1877, was modelled after

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the International Exposition in Vienna of 1873.

The ideas to protect cultural property, and encourage domestic industry, were embodied in the establishment of the national museum. As already indicated, the origin of the first national museum in Japan goes back to the exhibition held at Yushima in 1872. The exhibition was named as “Monbu-syo Hakubutsukan (文部省博物館)” and soon it was integrated into the office which was established to prepare the participation in the international exposition at Vienna. After the international exposition, in 1875 the office was reassigned and divided into plural institutions. In the process, there was a quarrel over the ownership of the collections and facilities which had been hold by the office. Consequently, they were divided and assigned to two museums. The one museum was placed under the jurisdiction of the Home Ministry (Naimu-syo; 内務省),\(^{74}\) and the other under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education (Monbu-syo; 文部省).

The former one was named simply as the Museum, “Hakubutsukan (博物館)”. In 1881, the Museum was transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce (Nousyomu-syo; 農商務省). During this period, the role of economic development was more highly prioritised and the National Industrial Exhibitions (Naikokukangyo-hakurankai; 内国勧業博覧会) were closely related to the Museum. It is indicative of this that the building of the Museum provided the

\(^{74}\) Machida became the first director of this museum.
venue of the second National Industrial Exhibition at Ueno, before being handed over to pure museum work. In 1886, the ministry in charge of the Museum changed from the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce to the Ministry of the Imperial Household (Kunai-syo; 宮内省), and as a consequence the character and priorities of the institution shifted. Affairs regarding the industrial exhibitions still remained within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, and the encouragement of industry came to be separated from the Museum. The transition of the Museum was implemented in the context of the establishment of the imperial system and estates, and the government modelled it after the royal museums in foreign countries. In 1889, Ryuichi KUKI (九鬼隆一) made a draft proposal about the plan of the Imperial Museum. In the proposal, he suggested that the collection of natural specimens would be transferred to another museum, and that the reorganised Museum should focus on the research and preservation of the historical and the arts and crafts collections. In the same year, the Law and Detailed Rules about the Imperial Museum were enacted and the Museum was officially renamed and reorganised. In the rules, a duty to preserve, exhibit and research cultural treasures owned by shrines, temples and individuals was described. Four departments were established in the

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75 Ryuichi KUKI (1850-1931), born in Settsu (摂津), was a high level bureaucrat at Meiji era. He was appointed as the director of the Imperial Museum in 1889.
76 The draft plan was documented in Tokyo National Museum (1973a: 249-252)
77 The Law and Detailed Rules were documented in Tokyo National Museum (1973b: 57)
Museum: History (Rekishi-bu; 歴史部), Fine Art (Bijyutu-bu; 美術部), Art Industry (Bijyutsu-kogei-bu; 美術工芸部) and Industry (Kogei-bu; 工芸部). At this point, the Museum shifted its objective drastically from the encouragement of industry to the protection of cultural properties (Tokyo Imperial Museum 1938:5, Ito 1978: 100). The objective of the protection of cultural properties was related to rising nationalism and the establishment of imperialism. In this context, museum policy came to reflect Imperial ideology. This relationship influenced the formation of the Museum Work Promotion Association in 1928.

This national museum, with its objectives of encouragement of industry and the protection of cultural properties was the ancestor of other Japanese national museums. In 1889, when the Museum was reorganised, new national museums were erected at Kyoto and Nara and placed under the control of the Imperial Museum in Tokyo. There is, however, another trajectory in the genealogy of Japanese national museums that occurred in parallel and which was much more focused on their educational role. As already indicated, in 1875, a museum which was under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education was opened as well as the Museum of the Home Ministry. It was named the “Tokyo Museum (東京博物館)”, and then, in 1877, it was renamed “Kyoiku-hakubustukan (教育博物館) which means “educational museum”. A significant advocate of the establishment of the educational museum was Fujimaro TANAKA (田中不二麿),\textsuperscript{78} an officer of the Museum.

\textsuperscript{78} Fujimaro TANAKA (1845-1909) was born into a military family in Owari (尾
Ministry of Education. He insisted on the necessity of institutions with the objective of supporting schools by providing practical work experience. In particular, the promotion of science education was set as a primary purpose, and the museum began to acquire the necessary materials, including science and chemistry apparatuses, books, models, botanical and zoological specimens, and minerals. In the process, David Murray also took an important role (Takarabe 2012a). Murray was an American educationalist who was a foreign advisor hired by the Japanese government to establish a modern educational system. Tanaka also had familiarity with American education system because of his own experience of on-site inspection. They had a close cooperative relationship for the promotion of the new educational administration in Japan, and the museum was one of the results of their efforts (Naka 1967 and Tsuchiya 1962). It was based on educational and museum practices abroad, especially in the United States, and, indeed, Murray returned there temporarily to acquire materials for the new Japanese museum (Takarabe 2005). The new museum would be an important model for the further development of local museums.
The founding of local museums

In response to the museum movement at the national level, local museums also came to be established in the Meiji era. According to Ito (1978: 96), the earliest local museums in Japan can be categorised into four types. The first was for the purpose of encouraging industry, and its origins can be found in the industrial exhibitions at local cities. The second was the educational museum which was modelled after the national museum managed by the Ministry of Education, “Kyoiku-hakubutsukan (教育博物館).” The third was for the protection of cultural properties - largely treasure museums of shrines and temples, which had a tradition of exhibiting precious religious objects. Finally, the fourth type was the botanical garden, which originated in the medical-herb gardens of herbalists. Local museums with different objectives and origins coexisted from the earliest days of museum development, and a number of them corresponded to national museum policies, such as the protection of cultural properties and the encouragement industry.

Many of these early local museums were short lived, and were closed or absorbed into other institutions. Often this was due to economic problems but there was also insufficient public understanding of museums and their usefulness which undermined their effectiveness (Shiina 1988: 56). And as the introduction of
museums was a government project, it was inevitable that the dissemination of knowledge about them was also a political matter and the educational value of museums came to be especially stressed in policies concerned with social education, “Tuzoku-kyoiku (通俗教育).” This was at first an educational enterprise aimed at enlightening parents about the significance of school education. Along with the increase in the school enrolment rate, the aim came to be widened to social education for the public at large, and this was organised as an educational system different to that provided by schools. Museums and libraries became a part of the system and were encouraged by the government. For example, in 1918 the temporary Education Commission, which was organised under the direct control of the Cabinet, submitted a report concerning the reformation of social education (Tsuzoku-kyoiku-ni-kansuru-toshin; 通俗教育に関する答申). In the report, eleven articles were listed, one of which insisted that the development of libraries and museums should be promoted, and that books and collections should be arranged properly in such institutions. Here too, then, at local level, the government – rather than the individual – was the central player in the establishment of a museum system.

**Campaigns for establishing museums in the Taisho era**

The efforts to disseminate museums across Japan were not entirely successful and in the Taisho era (大正時代; 1912-1926) a new museum campaign began.
The campaign was embodied in some proposals in the Imperial Diet which were continually submitted during the period from the end of the First World War in 1918 to the Great Kanto earthquake in 1923 (関東大震災). In the proposals, various types of museum were suggested.

One of them was an art museum. The campaign for the establishment of a national art museum arose in this period. This campaign was linked to the movement of modern art. The necessity of an art museum was insisted upon by artists and art critics who demanded an exhibition space and an educational institution for art. The “Proposal concerning the erection of the imperial art museum (Teikoku-bijyutsukan-ni-kansuru-kengi; 帝国美術館建設ニ関スル建議)” was adopted at the House of Representatives in 1918. In the proposal, the purposes of the imperial art museum were to promote and develop art culture, and to disseminate art education. After some twists and turns, the movement resulted in the erection of the Tokyo Prefectural Art Museum (present Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum) in 1926. The Art Museum hardly had its own art collection, and instead took on the role of providing an exhibition space for the art groups which led the movement that called for the institution’s establishment.

In 1919 two proposals, of which the objective was to strengthen the function of the existing national museum, were submitted to the House of Representatives: “Proposal about completion of the imperial museum
(Teikoku-hakubutsukan-kansei-ni-kansuru-kengian; 帝国博物館完成ニ関スル建議案)” and “Proposal concerning the establishment of the national museum (Kokuritu-hakubutsukan-ni-kansuru-kengian; 国立博物館建設ニ関スル建議案).” Although the authors were different, the aim to enrich museums and promote their work was shared by both proposals. As a consequence of discussion and negotiation, the proposals were put together and the amended proposal, “Proposal concerning the completion of the museum (Hakubutsukan-kansei-ni-kansuru-kengian; 博物館完成ニ関スル建議案)”, was adopted.

The establishment of a science museum also came to be discussed. In this period, the diffusion of scientific knowledge was part of national policy because it could realise the development of domestic industry and the enhancement of national power. In 1921, the “Proposal concerning the diffusion of scientific knowledge (Kagaku-chishiki-fukyu-ni-kansuru-kengi; 科学知識普及ニ関スル建議)” was adopted in the House of Representatives. It sought to diffuse and develop scientific knowledge, to fertilise the cultural life of the public, and to make the nation much more competitive globally. The science museum came to be regarded as a measure for achieving this political purpose. This was followed, the next year, by the “Proposal concerning the establishment of a science museum (Rika-hakubutsukan-kensetsu-ni-kansuru-kengi; 理化博物館建設ニ関スル建議)” which was submitted to the House of Representatives. This proposal insisted
that a science museum was a most popular and practical measure, and that its prompt establishment was necessary for promoting the cultivation of scientific knowledge. The proposal was adopted.

The movement to establish museums was at its peak around 1920. The campaigns were promoted in the Diet through the submission of proposals regarding museums. On the other hand, local capitalists and large landowners came to establish private museums using their own funds. These museums included Okura-Shukokan (大倉集古館, established in 1917), Shimogo-Kyusaikai Syoshukan (下郷救済会鐘秀館, established in 1921) and Yurinkan (有鄰館, established in 1926). The founders of these museums were the initial members of the Museum Work Promotion Association. They undertook museum enterprises as a part of their philanthropic activities.

**The paradigm of museum development in Japan**

Throughout this period of intensive museum establishment, the paradigm of the museum policy had not changed since the period in which the museum concept was introduced. At the Diet in 1919, in the deliberation of the proposal concerning the completion of the imperial museum, Sho NEMOTO (根本正), a member of the House of Representatives, indicated the necessity of the governmental project of the museum.
I think the purpose of this proposal was to encourage the establishment of museums. Japan is different from other countries. In Japan, civilization was progressed by a top-down process. All acts and rules are successful when the government, rather than people, prepares them. I think this is why this proposal insists that the government should promote the establishment. As discussed previously, different types of museum are needed such as local museums, national museums, and world-class museums. Anyway, the encouragement of arts is related to the improvement of the spirit of the nation and the development of crafts. It is really desirable.79

Top-down museum development was a consistent feature of this period, and that was true not only for museum policy. In Japan, the modernisation of the nation was based on the strong initiative of the government, inspired by Western countries. Museum policies were introduced, and developed after the same pattern. Momosuke IHARA (井原百介), a proposer of the establishment of the national museum, explained his idea at the Diet deliberation in 1919. He insisted that the purpose of the museum should be social education and the

79 The first minutes of the committee about “the Proposal about completion of the imperial museum” in the House of Representatives, the forty-first Imperial Diet, 1919 (第41回帝国議会衆議院 帝国博物館完成ニ関スル建議案委員会議録第1回, 1919).
encouragement of industry, and that the new museum should be modelled on the
Deutsches and the British Museums.\textsuperscript{80} Although during this period different
purposes for museums were presented by advocates, they shared many of the
same characteristics: the dependence on the initiative of the government and
references to previous examples in Western countries. This paradigm was
followed in the formation of the Museum Work Promotion Association.

\textbf{The Great Kanto earthquake: the transition to a new phase of
Japanese museum history}

The museum movement around 1920 was interrupted and weakened temporarily
by the occurrence of the Great Kanto earthquake in 1923, which caused much
damage to museums (Shiina 2010). In Tokyo, the national museums suffered
destructive damage. The Tokyo Museum (\textit{Tokyo-Hakubutsukan}; 東京博物館) at
Yushima (湯島), which was under the direct control of the Ministry of Education,
lost most of its buildings and collections in a fire after the earthquake. At the
time, the director of the Museum was Gentaro TANAHASHI (棚橋源太郎), who
became a main advocate for the formation of the Museum Work Promotion
Association. He struggled with the reconstruction of the Museum, especially the

\textsuperscript{80} The second minutes of the committee about “the Proposal about completion of
the imperial museum” in the House of Representatives, the forty-first Imperial
Diet, 1919 (第 41 回帝国議会衆議院 帝国博物館完成ニ関スル議案委員会
議録第 2 回, 1919).
negotiations with the Ministry to secure a budget. He quickly began to collect new materials, which included artefacts of the earthquake disaster. His efforts resulted in the quick reopening in a temporary building only six months after the earthquake. In spite of his success, at the end of 1924 he was replaced as director in consequence of administrative reform in the Ministry. The construction plan for new building of the museum at Ueno also started in the same year. The reorganisation of the Museum was triggered by the earthquake, and in the process the natural history collection of the Tokyo Imperial Museum *(Tokyo-teikoku-hakubutsukan; 東京帝国博物館)* was transferred. It strengthened the institution’s characteristics as a science museum and the Tokyo Museum was renamed the Tokyo Science Museum in 1931 (Shiina 2010: 52-61).

The Tokyo Imperial Museum suffered no more serious damage than the Tokyo Museum as a result of the earthquake. Part of its buildings were destroyed, but its collection did not suffer serious loss. However, a plan to reorganise the Museum was initiated after the earthquake. The transition of the natural history collection to the Tokyo Museum was a part of this plan. In consequence, the Tokyo Imperial Museum was reorganised as a purer art and historical museum. At this time, the assignments of the national museums were definitely ordered: the Tokyo Science Museum (presently the National Museum of Nature and Science, Tokyo) as a science museum and the Tokyo Imperial Museums (presently the Tokyo National Museum) as an art and historical museum (Shiina 2010: 61-77).
As well as national museums, some private museums were destroyed by the earthquake. For example, Okura-shukokan, which is regarded as the first private art museum in Japan, was burned down in a fire. The serious damage to cultural heritage raised public interest in the significance of museums as a measure for the protection of treasures. In Kamakura, where many temples and shrines suffered from the earthquake, for instance, the new museum, the Kamakura Museum of National Treasures （Kamakura-kokuhou-kan; 鎌倉国宝館）, was erected in 1928 by the local authority in order to preserve local cultural property (Shiina 2010: 77-82, Ito 1978: 123).

The destructive earthquake may have interrupted and weakened the museum movement but it triggered the large-scale reorganisation of national museums and revealed the significance of museums for the protection of cultural properties. It was at this turning point in the development of museums in Japan, that the Museum Work Promotion Association was established in 1928. It became the main actor leading the new museum movement.
Chapter 8

The founders of the Museum Work Promotion Association

The formation of the Museum Work Promotion Association and its partnership with the government

The Museum Work Promotion Association (Hakubutsukan-Jigyo-Sokushinkai; 博物館事業促進会), formed in 1928, was three years later renamed the Japanese Association of Museums (Nihon-Hakubutsukan-Kyokai; 日本博物館協会). The new Association aimed to re-energise museum development after the Great Kanto Earthquake and was an idea that first surfaced in a personal dialogue between Gentaro TANAHASHI (棚橋源太郎) and Narinobu HIRAYAMA (平山成信). In that discussion, Tanahashi espoused the significance of such an association and insisted on its necessity: “There is no country where museum work is less developed than Japan. In foreign countries museum associations are very active in the development of museums. I think such an organisation is needed also in Japan” (Tanahashi and Miyamoto 1962: 80). Hirayama readily agreed to his opinion, and prepared a list of names and in doing proposed a list of the prospective founders of the Association. On the 30th March 1928, twenty-two of the founders were summoned to an assembly room of the Japanese Red Cross Society. According to the diary of Naohiko MASAKI (正木直彦), a participant in the meeting, draft regulations were adopted for the organisation, and Hirayama
was appointed its first president. It was also accepted that the president would select the trustees. Masaki noted in his diary that eighty-five people had agreed to become founders, observing that: “the members included many influential figures” (Masaki 1965: 574).

The foundation of the Association begins, like its counterpart in Britain, with individual initiative. In particular, it relied on the private abilities and motivations of Tanahashi and Hirayama. This was a highly efficient and effective starting point for the organisation, which drew of their knowledge of foreign museum circumstances and their personal connections, which resulted from their bureaucratic and professional careers. But it was their strong connection to the government that was particularly decisive in the success of the Association, because it was thus able to obtain the strong official support from its beginning. This close relationship, which makes the Japanese Association so different from the British one, can be explained by the fact that the initial membership included high-level bureaucrats.

This relationship also defined the characteristics of the early Association, making it a political partner of the government when it took measures to promote museums. The government also improved the structure of museum policy around the period when the Association was formed. In 1919, the government amended the regulations of the Ministry of Education, and created a new department, the
Fourth Department (Dai-yon-ka, 第四課), which had jurisdiction over affairs relating to social education, libraries and museums, education for the deaf and mute, special education, young men’s associations, and education societies. Following reform, the department became the Social Education Department (Shakai-kyoiku-ka; 社会教育課) in 1924, and then was raised to bureau status as the Social Education Bureau (Shakai-kyoiku-kyoku; 社会教育局), in 1929. In the Bureau, museum matters came under the jurisdiction of the Department of Adult Education (Seijin-kyoiku-ka; 成人教育課). This showed the Ministry’s intention that museums should be considered part of its social education policy (Ministry of Education 1981).

In this period, the administrative organ for museum matters was structured, and the political system for encouraging museum development prepared. In 1929, the law for the protection of cultural properties was revised and the Law for the Preservation of National Treasures (Kokuho-hozon-hou; 国宝保存法) was enacted. This law widened the range of protected objects, and the role of museums in achieving this purpose was reconfirmed. It also defined the responsibility and authority of the Ministry of Education towards the protection of cultural properties. In the same year, the Ministry also investigated the conditions of museums domestically and overseas. As a result of these investigations, the periodic issue of the The List of Permanent Exhibition
Institutions (Jyochi-kanranshisetu-ichiran; 『常置観覧施設一覧』) was started and The Investigation of the System of Museums in France (Furansu-hakubutsukan-seido-no-chosa; 仏蘭西博物館制度の調査) was published. In this period, in which the political and administrative framework for museum development was generated, the close relationship between the government and the Association was strategically significant, creating propulsive impetus.

The Association was formed through the interactions between the actors related to museum. In this chapter, the characteristics of the early Association are being examined. In that examination, the formation process is focused. Who did participate in the process? This question can provide significant clues toward understanding the characteristics.

81 The List of Permanent Exhibition Institutions (Jyochi-kanranshisetu-ichiran; 『常置観覧施設一覧』) was published in 1929, and from the next year the annual publication of The List of Educational Exhibition Institutions (Kyoikuteki-kanran-shisetsu-ichiran; 『教育的施設一覧』) began. The publications provided the basic information of domestic museums.

82 The Investigation of the System of Museums in France (Furansu-hakubutsukan-seido-no-chosa; 仏蘭西博物館制度の調査) was published by the Ministry of Education in 1929. The purpose of the report was to provide information about the systems of museums in France as a reference for the promotion of domestic museums. Its content consisted of the translation of laws and ordinances related to museums in France. The Ministry had a plan to publish reports about the German, British and American systems of museums subsequent to this French one, but these publications were never realised.
The political aspects of the early Association: its relationship to imperialism

One way the Association’s political characteristics can be examined is from the perspective of imperialism. The accession of the new Emperor, Showa (昭和天皇), in 1926, began a period in which the establishment of new museums was given significant momentum. The erection of a museum was regarded as a measure to celebrate the Emperor’s ascent to the throne. The formation of the Association was also related to this imperial event, and utilised it in its early years to accelerate the museum movement as part of the celebration. In February 1928, Hirayama, who would be made President of the Association in the following month, sent 399 letters encouraging the erection of museums, in celebration of the Emperor’s accession, to numerous organisations both at home and in the colonies. These letters said the museums should meet the demands of the public and that all social classes should enjoy the benefits from the project equally and permanently. The educational and academic value of museums was stressed; that the nature of a museum had changed from “a storehouse of curiosities” to “an institution for education and research which is essential to society.”

83 The letter of Hirayama (February 1928) was documented in Japanese Association of Museums (1964: 42-44).
Borrowing the authority of the Imperial Household was common in projects promoting public works in the era of the Japanese Empire. Celebratory occasions in particular were a great opportunity to develop such projects and this was not the first time they were used to establish museums (Maruko 1964). When the Taisho Emperor (大正天皇) acceded to the throne, for instance, some local authorities began to establish museums. In the Ibaraki Prefecture and the Yamaguchi Prefecture, for example, educational museums were opened in 1917, Osaka City Museum (Shiritsu-Osaka-shimin-hakubutsukan; 市立大阪市民博物館) in 1919, and the Kyoto Botanical Garden for the Imperial Ceremony (Taitenkinen-kyoto-shokubutsuen; 大典記念京都植物園) in 1924, all in celebration. After the accession, the imperial marriage of the prince, who would become the Showa Emperor, also became an opportunity for museum creation. A well-known example was the imperial grant of the Ueno Park and Zoo, which had been run by the Ministry of the Imperial Household, to Tokyo City in 1924 (Tokyo National Museum 1973 pp.407-408). Part of the Park was also granted to the Tokyo Prefecture for the construction of Tokyo Prefectural Art Museum, which opened in 1926.

The enthronement of the Showa Emperor in 1926 simply became the biggest of these opportunities to promote the building of museums. Local authorities, in particular, seized this opportunity. The Kanagawa Prefecture (神奈川県), for
example, positively endorsed the Association’s letter of 1928. The prefecture gave its heads of municipalities and principals of schools a Notice about the Establishment of a Museum for Celebrating the Accession (御大典記念博物館設置に関する件), on the 11th April 1928,\textsuperscript{84} in which the full text of the Association’s letter was cited. The prefecture advised the municipalities to use it as a reference for museum development. Soon after the notification, the prefecture gave out another notice regarding the state ceremony of the accession to its heads of the municipalities: the Notification concerning the Encouragement of Projects for the State Ceremony (御大典記念事業奨奨に関する件), dated 14th April 1928.\textsuperscript{85} In this notification, the concrete projects, which were regarded as most suitable for the ceremony, were listed, and the prefecture recommended that the municipalities implement them. The erection of a children’s museum and a school museum was included in the list. Local authorities other than the Kanagawa Prefecture also responded favourably to the encouragement and museum projects were started in prefectures and municipalities all over the country, including the Akita Prefecture (秋田県), the Kagoshima Prefecture (鹿児島県), Osaka City (大阪市), Okayama City (岡山市), Fukuoka City (福岡市), Yokohama City (横浜市) and Kyoto City (京都市) (Kaneko 2001: 42-43).

\textsuperscript{84} The Notice about Establishment of Museum for Celebrating the Accession (11th April 1928) is documented in Kanagawa Education Centre (1972: 668-670).

\textsuperscript{85} The Notification about Encouragement of Projects for the State Ceremony (14th April 1928) is documented in Kanagawa Education Centre (1972: 671-672.)
Central government was also directly involved in this initiative, the Ministry of Education issuing a notification about it to prefectural governors on the 2nd March 1928 that was similar in content to that received by the Kanagawa Prefecture. It was recommended that an educational institution, including a museum, be erected.

The private sector, too, contributed to the initiative. Influential individuals from the financial and political worlds had responded to the destruction of the Tokyo Imperial Museum by the Great Kanto Earthquake by establishing the Assistance Association for the Restoration of the Imperial Museum in September 1928 (Tokyo National Museum 1973: 456-482).

The formation process of the Association

The Museum Work Promotion Association took a leading role in these developments, in partnership with the central government and local authorities. In order not to lose this big opportunity, the Association organised the campaign effectively and efficiently, in spite of the fact that it had been formed just two years after the enthronement. The Association was clearly a powerful organisation from the beginning. It was very productive and its initial projects, including the museum campaign for the ceremony, were put smoothly into
practice. A good example of the effectiveness of the new organisation was its monthly periodical, *Museum Studies* (*Hakubutsukan-Kenkyu*; 博物館研究), first published in April 1928, just one month after the founders’ meeting. An annual national conference for people concerned with museum work was also rapidly established, with the first meeting being held in May 1929. This conference again showed the close working between the Association and government, with topics for discussion proposed not only by the Association but also by the Ministry of Education.

In 1937, Laurence Vail Coleman, a Director of the American Association of Museums, commended the Japanese Association by stating that the “Far East has a strong association in Japan” (Coleman 1937: 362). The strength came in part from its affiliation to the government and its role in fulfilling the government’s policy intentions.

As mentioned earlier, the founding of the Association had begun with Hirayama’s letters soliciting the participation of individuals who were to be its potential founders. This was in January 1928. A paper explaining the purpose of

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86 Laurence Vail Coleman held the position of director of the American Association of Museums from 1927 to 1958. He was a representative of museologists in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century. The Japanese association considerably used his practices and arguments as a reference.
the proposed Association was attached to the letter and in its opening paragraph stressed the backwardness of Japanese museums compared to European countries and the United States:  

Everybody who has been to European countries or the United States knows that museums are deployed across every country and that they contribute to the promotion of culture through the public’s use of them for education, industry, art and so on. That situation is totally different to Japan, where these institutions are still undeveloped. We cannot help being envious about it. Japan has taken the Western countries as a model for all modern culture. The education system, for instance, has been designed in imitation of the system constructed in the United States. However, exceptionally, the work on museums has been ignored and has not yet moved into action earnestly. I have to say that this is a really abnormal situation in the history of education in our country.

From the outset, then, the Association set about promoting museums as educational and research institutions, following the example of the West:

An urgent necessary for our country is to explain the functions of

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87 The letter of Hirayama (January 1928) and the paper of the purpose of the formation were documented in Japanese Association of Museums (1964: 40-41).
museums and to emphasise their influence on education, research, industry and so on. Through these efforts, we should spread the understanding of museums in both public and private sectors. There is a misleading view that, if a museum is to be established, it must be large-scale, and that the cost of construction must be enormous. First of all, we have to wipe out such a view, and promote the erection and completion of museums throughout the country by giving proper guidance.

The diffusion of knowledge about the functions of museums was stressed as a necessary first step both in the private and public sectors. The Association argued that a museum had social significance regardless of its scale. Small museums, which did not cost a great deal, were regarded as especially ideal.88

Like the paradigm adopted for the museum, the Association itself was formed in reference to foreign museum associations, especially those in Britain and America, and the activities of foreign museum associations were frequently

88 Tanahashi, a main advocate of the formation of the association, developed his theory of the Folk Museum (Kyodo-hakubutsukan; 郷土博物館), which was imagined as a small-scale museum rooted in the community (cf. Tanahashi 1932). His theory was developed in reference to Coleman’s theory of small museum (Coleman 1927).
included in *Museum Studies*. These concrete models certainly contributed to the early achievements of the Association.

The Association was formed as a private organisation, but the huge successes of its earliest stage can be attributed to its close relationship with the central government. Based on this relationship, the Association immediately became an important component of the political system for museum promotion. It meant that the Association was authorised by the government to perform as an auxiliary organisation for promoting the museum policy. This authorised status was of great significance to the progress of its work. Borrowing imperial authority also made it possible for it to build connections with diverse actors other than the government, such as researchers, entrepreneurs, journalists and so on.

The inclusiveness of the initial membership of the Association was remarkable: it included 83 representatives from diverse sectors of society (table 8.1). Twenty-two of these participated in the meeting on the 30th March 1928. The attendees’ names are italicized in the table.\(^7\) The following sections consider in

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\(^7\) Thanahashi, who was an editor of the Journal, collected foreign museum associations’ periodicals including the British one, the *Museums Journal*, in order to acquire foreign information which would be introduced in the Journal (Tanahashi and Miyamoto 1962: 82-83).

\(^8\) The list of names of the eighty three founders is documented by the Japanese Association of Museums (1964: 44-47), but according to Masaki’s diary the people who agreed to become founders numbered eighty five (Masaki 1965: 574).
more detail the characteristics of the different groups involved in the formation of the Association.

Additionally, Mikinosuke MIYAJIMA, a parasitologist, is not listed in the eighty three names, but participated in the founders’ meeting on the 30th of March 1928.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hirayama, Narinobu</strong></td>
<td>Baron</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Masaki, Naohiko</strong></td>
<td>Principal of the Tokyo School of the Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Oshima, Yoshinaga</strong></td>
<td>Director of Imperial Museum, Tokyo</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Awaya, Ken</strong></td>
<td>Vice-minister of the Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tsukamoto, Yasushi</strong></td>
<td>Dr. (Engineering)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Takashima, Heizaburo</strong></td>
<td>(高島平三郎)</td>
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<td><strong>Tsurumi, Sakio</strong></td>
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<td>(蟹見左吉雄)</td>
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<td>(石川千代松)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Takebe, Kinschi</strong></td>
<td>Director of Bureau of General School Affairs, the Ministry of Education</td>
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<td><strong>Tanahashi, Gentaro</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Yamaguchi, Takao</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Wada, Eisaku</strong></td>
<td>Professor, the Tokyo School of the Arts</td>
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<td><strong>Okubo, Toshitake</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Akashi, Takaichiro</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Noma, Yasuo</strong></td>
<td>Former director of the Museums of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Tokyo</td>
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<td><strong>Mikami, Sanji</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Okouchi, Masatoshi</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hori, Satoru</strong></td>
<td>Former director of the Osaka City Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Matsumori, Shintaro</strong></td>
<td>(松森信太)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yokote, Chiyonosuke</strong></td>
<td>Institute of Public Health of Tokyo</td>
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<td><strong>Kuji, Kotaro</strong></td>
<td>Electro-technical Research Institute of Tokyo</td>
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<td><strong>Takamatsu, Toyokichi</strong></td>
<td>(高松豊吉)</td>
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<td><strong>Nishida, Hirotaro</strong></td>
<td>Principal of Kiryu Theological College</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aoyagi, Eiji</strong></td>
<td>Faculty of Engineering, the Tokyo Imperial University</td>
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<td><strong>Wada, Fujio</strong></td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>Miya, Yonekichi</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Akiho, Yasuji</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Watase, Syuzaburo</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hayasaka, Kanamisa</strong></td>
<td>Vice-president of the Museum of Commerce</td>
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</table>
Table 8.1. The names and titles of the founders of the Museum Work Promotion Association (Japanese Association of Museums 1964: 44-47) [continued]

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<td>AKIYAMA, Renzo</td>
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<td>ISHIZAKA, Zenjiro</td>
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<td>HASHIMOTO, Tetsuo</td>
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<td>HAYASHI, Hirotao</td>
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The founders of the Association can be categorised by type, and of these types government dignitaries are conspicuous. Of particular significance is the participation of the administrative vice-minister of the Ministry of Education, Ken AWAYA (粟屋 謙). The presence of this highest of bureaucrats is symbolic of the close relationship between the Association and the Ministry. Besides Awaya, the directors of the Ministry’s Bureaus of General School Affairs and of Religions were also amongst the founders. This cooperative and participative attitude demonstrated the Ministry’s recognition of the need to promote museums as an important component of its educational policy.

In fact, the Association took a role as a consultative body to the Ministry through coordinating the opinions within the museum sector. The Association became an important node of the museum actors’ network. The Association, for instance, hosted the annual Conference of Directors of Museums and Museum-like Facilities (Hakubutsukan-narabini-rujishisetsu- syuninsysha-kyogikai; 博物館並類似施設主任者協議会) annually from 1929.\textsuperscript{91} The Conference provided an opportunity for the Ministry and representatives from public and private museums across the country to

\textsuperscript{91} At the third conference in 1931, the name was changed to the National Museum Conference (Zenkoku-hakubutsukan-taikai; 全國博物館大会). The Conference is still organised annually by the Japanese Association of Museums.
discuss museum matters. At the Conference, some topics for discussion were presented by the Ministry and the Association. In response to the inquiries of the Ministry, the Conference prepared a proposal as to the outcome of the discussion. At the first Conference, the Ministry consulted on “appropriate measures to develop and spread museums in consideration of the actual condition of our country.” The topics for the second and third Conferences were, respectively, about “concrete measures to make museums much more effective educationally in consideration of the present trend for them, ” and “appropriate measures to promote public understanding about museum works.” In the early conferences, the participants exchanged their opinions about desirable approaches to the promotion of museums. The contents were related to the fundamental matters of museum policy. The participants, including the officials of the Ministry, shared a common understanding about the actual condition of Japanese museums: that they were particularly underdeveloped compared to the other research and educational institutions. Hanji OBI (小尾範治), Head of the Social Education Division of the Ministry, stated, when he explained the topic of the first conference, that “although the museum is one of the most important institutions for education, there is no institution more backward than museums in Japan.” He compared the condition of museums with that of libraries. According to Obi, there were more than five thousand libraries in Japan, but no museum worthy of note, other than a few institutions including the Tokyo Imperial Museum and the Tokyo Museum.92 Based on this common understanding about the poor condition of museums, the Association and the Ministry

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92 His explanation was documented in the Minutes of The Conference (the first day) which is printed in Museum Studies (『博物館研究』), 2(7), 1929: 6-7.
cooperatively approached their promotion and enhancement. The Association, soon after its formation, could easily construct a system through which it could get involved with the process of policy making about museum matters. This demonstrates that the Association, from its beginning, had a certain influence over museum policy.

In addition to the government officials in active service, former government officials also participated in the formation of the Association. The ministries to which they had belonged included not only the Ministry of Education, but other ministries relevant to museums, such as the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, and the Ministry of Communications and Transportation. Such connections to multiple ministries reflected the fact that a museum was expected to be an agency not only for education but also for other political purposes, including the development of the regions and the encouragement of industry. Most of the former government officials had constructed successful political careers. Sakio TURUMI (鶴見左吉雄), for instance, was appointed as administrative vice-minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce in 1924. During his career in the Ministry, he held the position of director of the Imperial Commercial Museum of the Ministry (Noshomusho-shoin-chinretsu-kan; 農商務省商品陳列館) for ten years from 1907. He had been involved with the museum enterprise as a part of the policy for the encouragement of industry (Tsurumi 1939). The participation of government officials, active and retired, in the formation of the Association means that the organisation was well-connected to various political departments.

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93 Tsurumi also produced research in Japanese trade history, and he examined the history of exhibition and commercial museums from the viewpoint of their contribution to commercial development in Japan (Tsurumi 1939).
formed as an agency which would follow and accede to the approach to the promotion of museums taken by the government. This can be demonstrated by the fact that the first president of the Association, Narinobu HIRAYAMA (平山成信), was also a former government official with the highest level of career achievement. His career in the government was particularly conspicuous among the participants. It was deeply related to the earliest history of museums in Japan. His career will be examined in detail in a later part of this chapter.

**Educationalists**

The participation of educational authorities and representatives of the industrial section was also especially prominent. Eminent educationalists and principals of higher education institutions can be found in the list of founders. Heizaburou TAKASHIMA (高島平三郎), for instance, was originally a teacher at an elementary school in Hiroshima, and then took successive teaching jobs and posts as a school principal in higher normal schools and universities. In addition to his practical career, he also made academic achievements, especially in child psychology and the theory of home education (Maruyama ed. 1940). The fact that principals of schools related to museums, such as normal and polytechnic schools, were invited to be founders, reflected the intention to promote the utilisation of museums in school education. A museum’s role as a complementary institution to school education was strategically emphasised for insisting on their educational value. In particular, the Tokyo Museum, which was under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, had been a role model on how museums
could support school education. The Museum had organised the exhibition of educational equipment and teaching tools, and provided loan services to schools (National Museum of Nature and Science 1977). Gentaro TANAHASHI (棚橋源太郎), a main advocate of the formation of the Association, was the first director of the Museum, and contributed greatly to the establishment of the system for supporting school education. Tanahashi had a great influence on the early Association, and his leadership of the organisation was derived from his personal career as an educationalist and museum worker, as will examined later in this chapter.

**Representatives from industry**

The representatives from industrial sections of society also are included in the list of the founders of the Association. Significantly, these include presidents of the chambers of commerce of major cities. It can thus be inferred that museums were regarded as important institutions for the encouragement of industry and commerce. In addition, individual entrepreneurs also participated in the early Association. Most of them were well-known collectors of antiquities. However, they were not just dilettantes, but also earnest philanthropists who had taken on various charitable projects. Tomitaro HARA (原富太郎), for instance, was originally an industrialist whose main business was the silk-reeling industry. His family constructed one of the biggest financial groups of the time. Hara was also an outstanding collector of antiquities and a patron of artists. He also built a traditional Japanese landscape garden at Yokohama, the Sankei-en (三渓園), in 1906, in which Japanese cultural and historical buildings were relocated, and which
was open to the public (Fujimoto 2009). Similarly, Heitarou FUJITA (藤田平太郎) was the leader of the financial combine, and a prominent collector in the financial world of Japan at the time. He was also enthusiastic about charitable works, and made donations to educational and medical institutions. Through such works, he made efforts to improve the labour environment of workers (Sato 2009). Industrialists who had conducted cultural and educational enterprises as part of their philanthropy, such as Hara and Fujita, were included the initial members of the Association, because they had a sympathetic understanding of the potential social significance of museums.

Indeed, some of these participants had already established their own museums for the storage and exhibition of their collections. Museum work was part of their philanthropic activities. Their museums can be categorised as part of the oldest group of private museums in Japan. Denpei SHIMOGO (下郷伝平), a local industrialist who managed a silk-reeling company in Omi, established Syoshu-kan (鐘秀館) in 1921 (Shimogo Benefit Society 1929). Zensuke FUJII (藤井善助), whose main business was in the textile and spinning industry, also established Yurin-kan (有鄰館) in 1926 in Kyoto (Kumagawa 1932 and 1939). Although this was after the formation of the Association, Magozaburou OHARA (大原孫三郎), a local industrialist in Kurashiki, opened his art collection to the public in 1930. His museum, the Ohara Museum of Art, is regarded as the first Japanese museum to exhibit a collection of western and modern art (Otsuki 2004).

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94 The museum in which the collection of Fujita was exhibited, the Fujita Art Museum, was opened in 1951.
Around the time the Association was formed, industrialists were establishing museums as philanthropic projects. Most of them assented to the purposes of the Association. The Shimogo Benefit Society (Shimogo-kyosai-kai; 下郷共済会), which managed the Syoshu-kan, for instance, published a pamphlet in 1929, just one year after the formation of the Association, to explain the purpose and progress of the museum (Shimogo Benefit Society 1929). In the pamphlet, the formation of the Association was referred to, and the Society highly valued the fact that, through the activities of the Association, museum work was receiving public attention. The Society published the pamphlet because, in a situation where the promotion of museums was encouraged, the Syoshu-kan provided a good example of a local museum. The achievement of the museum as a local educational institution was emphasised: “Although our museum might not be perfect, it is really gratifying for us that it started its activities as a local museum in advance of other institutions” (pp. 8-9). The initial membership of the Association included the pioneers of private museums in Japan. It had a connection not only to the government but also to the private sector of museums which had just emerged against the background of the growing interest of industrialists in philanthropy (Kawazoe and Yamaoka eds. 1987).

**Scholars**

Scholars also participated in the formation of the Association, and it is conspicuous that their majors covered various disciplines: Arts, Natural Science, Engineering, History,
Law, Economics, and Medicine. It can be claimed that most of these men constructed the foundation of the modern academic disciplines in Japan. There are some similarities between their academic careers. Firstly, most held a professorship at Tokyo Imperial University (Tokyo-teikoku-daigaku; 東京帝国大学). Secondly, many of them had experience of studying abroad in Western countries, where they picked up ideas about academic fields of study and a knowledge of museums. The predecessor of Tokyo Imperial University, the University of Tokyo, was established in 1877 as the first modern university in Japan.

In the first volume of the Association’s monthly journal, for example, Chiyomatsu ISHIKAWA (石川千代松), zoologist and honorary professor at Tokyo Imperial University, contributed a short article introducing the small local museum of Finkenwerder, a fishing village in Northern Germany which had a fine ichthyology collection and exhibition, and stated that this museum had social significance regardless of its size (Ishikawa 1928). In the same volume, Eizo YAHAGI (矢作栄蔵), agricultural economist and honorary professor at Tokyo Imperial University, also contributed a short article discussing the Museum of Hungarian Agriculture, Budapest, and insisted that a similar institution was needed in Japan for the diffusion of agricultural knowledge and the improvement of agriculture in general (Yahagi 1928). From their articles, it can be surmised that they had plentiful knowledge about museums in Western countries, and that this was the basis for the support they gave to the Association.
Some of the scholars were engaged with museum work as a part of their academic careers. For example, Ishikawa was a pioneering zoologist and the first scientist to introduce the theory of evolution to Japan. He held a professorship at the University of Tokyo from 1883, and, remaining in the position, he went study abroad at the University of Freiburg, Germany. After returning to Japan, he became a Curatorial Commissioner (Gkugei-iin; 学芸委員) of the Tokyo Imperial Museum, while still holding an office at Tokyo Imperial University. From 1900, he was head of the Department of Natural Products in the Museum. He contributed to the construction of a zoological collection through exchanges with foreign countries (Yazu 1935 and Tokyo National Museum 1973). In addition to Ishikawa, Yonekichi MIYAKE (三宅米吉), historian and archaeologist, held a curatorial position at the Tokyo Imperial Museum from 1890. When he became a Curatorial Commissioner in 1895, he held a professorship at the Tokyo Higher Normal School (Tokyo-shihan-gakko; 東京師範学校). Then, in 1898 he assumed the position of deputy head of the Department of History in the Museum. After his accession, he held a position responsible for the Department until 1921. One of his academic achievements was to establish archaeology as part of historical research in Japan. His efforts resulted in the formation of the Archaeological Association (考古学会) in 1895, and he assumed the presidency of that Association in 1901 (Otsuka Historical Society 1929). Scholars who had constructed the foundation of modern academic disciplines in Japan, such as Ishikawa and Miyake, frequently assented to, and were crucial players in, the formation and activities of the Association.
Museum workers

A variety of types of museum were represented by museum workers on the list of the founders. This contrasts very much with the British Museums Association, in which the initial members were almost entirely museum workers who were originally natural scientists.

In the case of the Japanese Association, the directors of museums across the country, representing History, Art, Science, Commerce, Health and Medicine, attended. This paralleled the diversity of the participating scholars’ academic disciplines. The museums also included not only national and local authority museums, but also private ones. The directors of the Okura-shuko-kan (大倉集古館) and the Yusyu-kan (遊就館) became founders. The former museum was the first private art museum to exhibit Japanese and Oriental antiques in Japan, and was established in 1917. The latter is a museum established by the Yasukuni Shrine (靖国神社) in 1882. Because the Shrine was founded to commemorate individuals who had died in the service of the Empire, the museum was the most prominent war museum in Japan at the time. These were in addition to the private museums already discussed.95

95 Although they did not have direct connections to museum work, it was characteristic that journalists also participated in the formation of the Association. Such connection might have significance when the Association tried to spread the public understanding of museums.
Hirayama and Tanahashi

Not all members took part in the activities of the Association. Indeed, its success depended on relatively few actors, most notably Hirayama, as President, and Tanahashi, as Managing Director. The early activity of the Association was dependent on his wide knowledge of museums, including those abroad, and his enthusiasm for the promotion of Japanese museums. Their motivation to begin associational activity was different from that of the British founders.

Narinobu HIRAYAMA (平山成信) was born into a family of retainers of the shogunate in 1854. After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, he held successive positions in ministries of the new government, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Finance. In 1891, he was appointed as Chief Secretary of the Cabinet. The position was appointed directly by the Prime Minister and was regarded as the supreme position amongst the governmental bureaucrats (Tokutomi 1930).

As a part of his career in the government, he was involved with the museum enterprise. He was appointed as secretary of a government office organized for the preparation of participation in the international exposition at Vienna in 1873. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the participation is one of the epoch-making events in Japanese museum history. Hirayama went to Europe to attend the exposition, and during his stay
he accompanied Tsunetami SANO (佐野常民), vice-president of the office and the leader of the delegation to Vienna. This relationship with Sano became a determining feature of Hirayama’s subsequent career. Sano’s enthusiasm for the development of museums had an influence on Hirayama, who also became interested in museums. In fact, after the international exposition in Vienna, he became a secretary of the embassy of Japan in Paris, and during his stay he energetically gathered information about French museums (Hirayama 1925, Tanahashi 1929a, and Japanese Red Cross Society 1957).

The relationship with Sano made Hirayama become involved with the Japanese Red Cross Society. During his stay in Europe, Sano was struck by the activity of the International Red Cross. He became a central figure of the group which established the Hakuai-sha (博愛社), the predecessor of the Japanese Red Cross Society, in 1877. Hirayama was appointed the fifth president of the Society in 1920. One of his achievements in the Society was the erection of a museum, the Sekijyuji-sanko-kan (赤十字参考館), which was opened in 1926 to diffuse knowledge about the activities of the Red Cross Society, and public consciousness of sanitation. The establishment and development of the museum were mostly due to Hirayama’s enthusiasm and understanding of museum work. The first director was Gentaro TANAHASHI (棚橋源太郎). His knowledge of and ability in museum work also contributed massively to the development of the museum. Their relationship would become the basis for the formation of the Museum Work Promotion Association.
Tanahashi was born in Mino (美濃) in 1869. He was originally a teacher and started his career when he was appointed to an elementary school in Gifu in 1889. After the appointment, he transferred schools several times, and in 1903 he took a professorship at Tokyo Higher Normal School (Tokyo-koto-shihan-gakko; 東京高等師範學校). After three years, he also came to hold the position of superintendent at the Tokyo Educational Museum affiliated with the School. This was the starting point of his career as a museum worker. However, he was already interested in museums.

During his career as a teacher, he intensively studied the theories of object teaching in science education (Tanahashi 1901, Commemoration Society for Mr. Tanahashi’s Educational Services 1938). He took notice of the usefulness of museums in the context of his interest in this teaching approach. His experience as a school teacher had a great influence on his museum practice. Indeed, in the Tokyo Educational Museum, he radically reformed the exhibition to make it much more fruitful for educators who were engaged with school teaching and home education (Yajima 2010, National Museum of Nature and Science, Tokyo 1977).

In 1909, he was ordered to study pedagogy and investigate museums in Germany by the Ministry of Education. Until his return in 1911, he energetically visited museums in Europe and the United States. The experience would affect his later museum practice in Japan. After returning, he engaged with museum work more enthusiastically, referring to advanced examples in Western countries. He was appointed as the director of the Tokyo Educational Museum in 1914, when the Museum was transferred under the
direct control of the Ministry of Education, a position he held until 1924 (Yajima 2010).

The next year he returned to Europe under the order of the Ministry of Education, which instructed him to investigate the conditions of social education in foreign countries. In addition, he was also ordered by the Japanese Red Cross Society to investigate materials and methods of exhibition which would be useful for a museum of the Society. After returning to Japan, he was involved with the establishment of the Sekiyuji-sanko-kan. It opened in 1926, and its early activities were directed by Tanahashi (Yajima 2012, Sato 1938).

Conclusion

The Japanese Red Cross Society provided a room of the museum for the Association to use as its office, and the Society lent the Association some of the museum’s staff to do the office work. This support from the Society reflected Hirayama’s positive cooperation. With respect to funds, the Mitsubishi and Mitsui financial combines gave subscriptions to the early Association. The officially sanctioned nature of the organisation also determined that it had good funds and resources (Tanahashi and Miyamoto 1962). Funds and resources were sufficient for progress from the beginning.

From this strong basis, the Association was able to be proactive. The motivations of individuals within it were derived from their prior personal careers. As a part of their careers, many had been involved in the national policy for museums. Moreover, many
of them had extensive knowledge about the condition of foreign museums at the time. Their knowledge was not only about museums themselves, but also about the activities of foreign museum associations. Tanahashi especially recognised the significance of these activities for the development of museums, and his idea to form the Japanese Association came from his information about foreign organisations (Tanahashi 1929b, Tanahashi 1950, Tanahashi 1957).

From its beginning, the Association was closely connected with the government, and its activity directly reflected the national policy on museums. The Association was, in some sense, an auxiliary organization of the government. This contrasts with the British case. The Museums Association in Britain was formed reflecting the increasing professional aspirations of museum workers rather than the political intentions of government. Therefore, to raise their social status was a main motive behind the formation of the British Museums Association. But for the Japanese association, this was not regarded as a priority compared to other matters.

The success of the formation of the Museum Work Promotion Association was owed to the efforts of the main advocates: Hirayama and Tanahashi. However, Hirayama died in 1929, the year following the formation. His death was great loss to the Association and, in fact, after his death, the office was transferred from the Sekjyuri-sanko-kan. Because of his death, Tanahashi’s leadership and responsibility to the Association became decisive. Its activities began to directly reflect this ideas (Kawatake 1938, Hattori 2005, Hattori 2008).
The main purposes of the early Association which was set up by Tanahashi were threefold: to enact the Museum Law (*Hakubutsukan-rei*; 博物館令), to investigate the types, sizes and deployment of museums which needed to be established in Japan, and to develop the museums which were already established. Because museums had not become sufficiently widespread across the country, the Association was inclined to prioritise much more the matters regarding a master plan for promoting museums at national level, rather than the matters regarding the practical problems of museum workers. This was probably inevitable, as there were not many museums, and still very few professional museum workers in Japan (Yajima 2012).

However, the Japanese association was not indifferent to the progress of the museum workers’ situation. There is an article by Tanahashi in the first volume of the monthly journal of the Association, *Museum Studies*, which insisted on the necessity of the cultivation of museum workers for the development of Japanese museums (Tanahashi 1928). Tahanashi had an idea that Japanese universities should have a curriculum to train museum workers like some foreign universities did (Tanahashi 1929c). The topic was also discussed briefly at the Conference of Directors of Museums and Museum-like Facilities (*Hakubutsukan-narabini-rujjishisetsu-syuninsysha-kyogikai*; 博物館並類似施設主任者協議会) held by the Association in 1929. In the discussion, a participant offered the opinion that the Ministry of Education should take any measures to train museum workers.
However, although there were propositions about establishment of an institution for training museum workers, the competences which their roles required were not sufficiently discussed (Fukui 2004). Because there was a lack of museum workers, the establishment of an institution for their training was regarded as necessary above all for the further development of museums. This topic was also discussed as one of the political matters for museum development. It was not a self-directed approach to solving practical problems led by actual museum workers.

In contrast to the Museums Association in Britain, which was formed in response to the growing professional aspirations of museum workers, the Museum Work Promotion Association in Japan was organised chiefly as an auxiliary institution to the government which promoted the development of museums. This has been demonstrated by examining the founding members of the Association. In particular, the personal careers of the main advocates were a determining factor in the character of the early Association.
Chapter 9
Conclusion

The aim of this thesis has been to compare the formation processes of associations in different museum communities, in order to describe the interactions of diverse actors within these communities and demonstrate the dynamic nature of museum history. I selected the two targets for comparison from culturally and geographically different parts of the world: the West and the East. It is an undoubted fact that the idea of the museum was introduced from the West to the East. The early “modern” museums in Asian countries, of course including Japan, were erected by imitating the museums in the West. The Western-style museum was a device that could assist the processes of modernisation these countries were undergoing, and show their cultural standards, which were not necessarily lower than those of Western countries. The histories of museum development in Asian countries cannot be analysed without understanding this early relationship with Western society and culture.

However, the development process was not just reproduction of practice in the West. Bourgeoning research about museums in Asian countries, particularly Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, and more recently China, has provided abundant evidence of the cultural and historical uniqueness of museum practices in these countries. Some of their results have been introduced into museum studies in Western countries, including the UK. They have opened up new possibilities for comparative approaches, which can break down linguistic and cultural boundaries. It can broaden further the horizons of
museum studies, which has been particularly influenced by practices in the Anglophone world, due to its origins in Britain. This thesis attempts to contribute to this body of work and provide a new perspective on it.

On the other hand, this thesis also makes a contribution to Japanese museum studies by presenting an innovative approach for describing histories of museums in Japan. It is a fact that in Japan museum studies has a relatively shorter history than in the Anglophone countries such as the UK and US. This means that innovation in methodology has fallen behind. In Japan, most of the historical studies on museums still adopt a chronological approach, which has less potential to reveal the dynamic aspects of museum history. Moreover, attempts at international comparison have hardly been made. This study is an attempt to advance this situation.

Over the last two decades, cultural historical analysis, including the use of prosopographic methods, has been central to the development of the new histories that have emerged in museum studies (Bennett 1995, Knell 2000, Hill 2005, Whitehead 2005, MacLeod 2013 etc.). The studies which adopt such analysis generally have a core feature, which is a belief that, in order to attain sufficient cultural depth, it is necessary for the author to be a native of the country discussed. This has been demonstrated in

96 A number of the works of Shiina (1988, 1989, 2000, 2005, 2010ab, 2014) are pioneering pieces of research on Japanese museum history. He mentioned, in 1988, that “the studies on our country’s museum history are really lagging behind” (Shiina 1988: 11). After the 1990s the progress of the research in this field has been remarkable, but the situation is not still improved enough.
other studies concerned with associational movements, which form a model for this particular study (Berman 1978, Thackray 2003, Shapin 1994). I have attempted to demonstrate that it is possible to transcend what appear to be innate boundaries, and compare two nations that at the outset - situated on opposite sides of the Earth, and possessing unrelated cultural and linguistic traditions - could not be more different. But both are island nations, both were at the time empires and possessed imperial ambition, and both were amongst the earliest nations to establish museum associations. One of the achievements of this study is that these two countries and cultures were studied equally and evenly, through research which penetrated beyond general national characteristics and into the peculiar cultural diversity to be found in the provincial cultures of both countries. It was understood from the outset, that in order to achieve an acceptable research standard, the study of British culture and history needed to reach the high standards established by native researchers. This posed particular challenges but also produced considerable rewards. The result has been the possibility, for the first time - I believe - in a museum studies thesis, to construct a detailed comparative cultural analysis of two very different cultural settings. For the comparison, this thesis focused on museum associations as the concrete object of analysis. Although professions consider such things as professional associations to be universal constructions - and thus the Japanese and British ones as essentially the same - museologists and historians must approach these institutions more subtly in order to understand their unique characteristics and their cultural specificity. Thus for this study comparison was essential, and needed to be done by a single worker who could ensure that the differences between these two institutions was real, rather than the result of two
different approaches.

A museums association is one of the basic infrastructures in promoting the development of museums. It is especially closely related to the professionalisation of museum workers.

To understand better the current dynamics of professionalism in the museum setting, museum workers must also be seen in terms of their past efforts to generate public acceptance of their autonomy as an occupational group. (Teather 1990: 299)

How have these “past efforts” been developed? As this study has observed, the processes were totally different in Britain and in Japan. They developed based on intricate relationships with the diverse actors present in each country. On the other hand, common aspects also can be indicated. One of them was the role of individualism. In both countries, individualism played a strong role in the formation of the associations. Limited numbers of actors in each country was fundamentally important to the success of the institution. However, individualism affected each institution in different ways. In Japan, a culture of top-down social management almost immediately built a direct relationship between the museum association and the government. This is rather closer, as a model, to cultural development in France than it is to the UK. In the UK, individualism was closely associated with free enterprise and operated in culture where the state acted only reluctantly, and where a state infrastructure of education - like the
path to full democracy - was built only slowly. In the case of museums, state intervention reached a peak in the late twentieth century and the early years of the new millennium, but even then was arms-length and limited. Thus, in these early associations, we see that quite fundamental cultural differences were influencing the form of the associations. The Japanese association was able to act directly, its actions and government policy in unison. In the UK, the association could merely seek to influence, proving itself rather more influential on the soft infrastructure - the profession - than on legislation and government support for museums.

The relationship between individualism and associational movements affected the membership of said association. In respect of the demographic of the membership, the associations were in different situations than each other, especially in their early stages. The compositions of the associations were related to how representative they were. The issue about representativeness is directly related to organisational legitimacy. It is always questioned whether a museum association, as an occupational association, reflects properly the opinions of persons involved in museums. Therefore, problems to do with the membership, including its potentially biased condition, are related to the very foundation of an association.

In the UK, the incompleteness of the membership was a long-standing problem which was repeatedly discussed among the early members. The bias was derived from multiple factors that encompassed the cultural and social circumstances surrounding the association. Established networks, for instance, played a significant role in its formation.
The existence of naturalist’s networks was a decisive cultural condition. Consequently, the scientific mentality of the early association resulted in less participation from persons related to art museums and galleries. Additionally, the association was formed on the basis of provincialism, and the movement was sustained strenuously – and voluntarily - by the local museum workers without the serious supports from persons related to national museums. The membership was also limited geographically. One of the reasons of the limitation was the condition of the rail network. The fact that there were calls for a more expansive and inclusive membership at the very beginning of the association proves its biased representativeness.

On the other hand, in Japan, the inclusive membership of the museum association was realised successfully from the beginning. All kinds of biases in the membership were avoided or at least marginalised, and the disciplinally and geographically extensive coverage meant the association was more highly representative. A fundamental factor in its success was that it was authorised by the government. The early erection of museums was directly connected to the government’s mission in Japan, and the connection was a common phenomenon in most Asian countries, where the idea of the museum was originally introduced from outside under the strong initiative of the government. In the process of importation, the importance of museums was accepted as a broad concept, and it was thought that it could attain multiple political purposes, including industrial development and the protection of cultural heritage. Thus the institution was dropped into society, rather than grown from society and then changed to meet contemporary needs. This point is parallel to the formative process of the
association. The Japanese museum association was established as an institutional device for supporting the policy of the government. It was established as an institution incorporated into the political framework, and this context made it possible to construct an inclusive membership effectively and efficiently. However, the inclusiveness did not assure the reflection of actual museum workers’ opinions. Rather, the institution was a part of system through which the government’s intention was conveyed and coordinated. This is very contrastive to the case in the UK. The UK museum association started with a much less inclusive membership than the Japanese one, but the formation was sustained by the museum workers’ aspiration for the establishment of their professional status.

The different complexions in respect to the representativeness of the membership were symbolically reflected in the difference in the expected roles of the association. Of course, both associations were established for the development of museums, but the approaches to be adopted for the purpose differed between the cases. The approaches were constructed under the social and cultural conditions of the countries, and thus the association cannot be regarded as a universal construction, identical for museum development all around the world. We can see the cultural and social uniqueness of their formative processes, and how this has influenced the societal roles of the produced associations.

To establish professional autonomy and public acceptance in society was expected generally as a function of any professional association. For this purpose, associations...
have to construct and manage relationships with other diverse actors in society. In the field of sociology, it has been traditionally insisted that the intermediary groups which exist between a state and individuals have significant roles in society. These groups generally have two purposes. Firstly, they function to provide social bonds for individuals, and enable them to construct desirable relationships with their societies. Secondly, the groups represent the individuals and became a form of specialist government, for the purpose of restricting any oppression meted out by the state. Therefore, it is often claimed that the maturity of a democracy can be measured in terms of the existence of active intermediary groups in society (e.g. Tocqueville 1848 and Durkheim 1893).

Occupational organisations are one of the primary intermediary groups. The performance of a museum association as an intermediary organisation in society was a determining factor in the path of museum development. As this study indicated, the difference of the performances in Britain and Japan can mainly be attributed to each association’s relationship with the government. The British association was a voluntary one, which maintained a certain degree of autonomy from the state. On the other hand, the Japanese association was based on a close relationship with the government, meaning that it had less autonomy than its British counterpart. However, this contrast was not entirely a unique phenomenon generated only in the museum sector, because such intermediary groups have functioned in considerably different way in countries where the modernisation was promoted under the strong initiative of governments. In these countries, a cooperative relationship between the intermediary groups and a
government has been crucial. For instance, as in the case of the Japanese museum association, the sharing of common political missions with a government had a crucial impact for the success of the organisation.

In Japan during the interwar period, many intermediary groups were formed. The Museum Work Promotion Association, established in 1928, was one of these. Focusing on how intermediary groups performed in the modernisation and democratisation process can provide a useful perspective from which to discuss the features of Japanese modernisation. It is a fact that the groups took a significant role in the rapid modernisation and democratisation of the country, but the strong relationship with the government caused a kind of distortion of the organisations (Inoki 2008). This can be demonstrated by the fact that, in spite of its successful organisational start, the Japanese museum association struggled to maintain an independent presence.

This thesis has focused on the formative processes of the associations, but the legacy of the relationships derived from the processes of each organisation influenced their successive developments and still remains important. The Japanese association’s stature as a government affiliate became more remarkable during the war period. In the 1930s, in the context of rising militarism, the Association actively assisted in the enlightenment of citizens in regard to the necessity of national unity in the war effort. In 1934 the Association defined its action plan: “to play a part of the movement for the enlightenment of citizens, and to promote the cultivation of citizens and national unity by explaining national history and exhibiting industrial resources and so on.” (Japanese
Association of Museums 1934 and Kaneko 2001). According to Kaneko, around this period the Association changed its constitution radically. However, the organisation had the potential, from the beginning, to become subservient to national politics, because it existed based on a close relationship with the central government. The submissive nature of the Association also continued after the Second World War. This resulted in the decline of its presence as an organisation promoting museum development. The Association was established as an influential organisation, but it did not maintain its impact sufficiently, and the consequences are still felt today. It is often suggested that the Association has long been in a state of stagnation (Handa 2011). This may be partly because it developed as a bureaucratic organisation without sufficient grass-roots support from actual museum workers.

In recent years in Japan, reflecting the dramatic changes in museum circumstances, the construction and consolidation of networks of museums and curators have been proposed as measures for the further development of museums (Expert Committee for Discussing a Desirable Situation of Future Museums 2007, Oki 2008). Generally, such a function is supposed to be performed by a museums association. However, the Japanese association has not sufficiently served this function. It is often insisted that the Association needs to be reformed for its further progress (Handa 2011). The

97 The Japanese Liaison Council of History and Folk Museums (Zenkoku-rekishi-minzoku-kei-hakubutsukan-kyogikai; 全国歴史民俗系博物館協議会), for instance, was organised in 2011. The establishment was induced directly by the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake, which caused the immense damage to the cultural heritage in the Tohoku area.
Association is thus in a transition phase, and the UK Museums Association might still be referenced as an example which is now playing a more positive role in the development and support of museums. (Expert Committee for Discussing a Desirable Situation of Future Museums 2007).

The current inactivity of the Japanese Museum Association as an intermediary group contrasts with the case in Britain. These varied situations can be examined through the mechanism of path dependence (Putnam 1994, Pierson 2000 and Mahoney 2000 etc.). The paths through which the museum associations have developed are directly related to their present situations. The difference between the paths of the British and Japanese associations is prominent, as discussed in this thesis, and it is emblematic of the difference between the museum histories of both countries more broadly, because a museums association is one of central actors engaged with the processes of museum development. A history of a museums association can show key aspects of the museum development processes of a country. We see legacies of that history in the present museum situation, and we can find out them effectively by adopting the historical comparative approach. It is hoped that, by using such an approach, and under the influence of path dependence theory, this thesis has shown how complex, dynamic and unique museum histories are around the world, and that the example it has provided might encourage others to embark upon similarly boundary-transcending projects.

This thesis especially contributes to our understanding of the processes of professionalisation in museum communities in different parts of the world. The simple
description of professionalisation present particularly in Western writing, which might be typified as a journey from dilettante to expert, can no longer be considered a universal model, or indeed an appropriate one for understanding professionalisation in a country like Britain. This work has succeeded in describing a more complicated and diverse process connected to local socio-cultural phenomena that surround museums and curators in any one time and place. The professional association of museum workers has been the subject of a number of previous historical studies, but these have been constrained in their outlook, often projecting an idea onto a range of different cultural settings and thus failing to reveal those differences in formation processes that are the subject of this thesis.

Additionally, my work can have an impact on our present day understanding of the role of museum associations and provide some suggestions on contemporary thinking and practice as well as the future development of museum professional body. In the present day when there are many challenges for museums, museum associations are often expected to take on a leadership role in order to help the museum community address national and international issues that arise from social change. In Japan, for example, the role of central and local governments in museum development is now weakening and the private sector, whether profit or non-profit, is now occupying a more important place in the policy. This is a major turning point in the development of the sector and one that impacts of the role of the Japanese association; an infrastructure promoting cooperation in a museum community is becoming increasingly essential. This thesis provides historical insights into the future potentiality of the museum association as
such infrastructure because it has been mindful of the specific socio-cultural contexts that shape the performances and contributions of these voluntary associations. The challenging situation facing museums today is shared internationally with other countries’ associations. Therefore, I believe my work has meaning not only in British and Japanese museum communities but it is also of wider interest.

A particularly important socio-cultural phenomenon challenging the present situation is globalization (Günther et al. 2005). It is now much easier for curators to associate with each other across national boundaries. However, for constructing the cooperative relationship, it is necessary for them to deepen their mutual understanding of each other. First of all, the achievements of each museum community, which have been made in particular social and cultural circumstances, should be appreciated appropriately. In other words, the understanding of the practice and culture of museum communities in other countries is necessary for promoting the cooperative movement. My work suggests that universalist approaches to museum development, that might be promoted by an international association, are problematic and may not be very effective. With the progress of globalization, museums are facing the challenge of retaining their regional and national cultural identities; the distinctive traits that arise from a society and are embodied in the shape and performances of these institutions. Social and cultural struggles for differentiation are necessary to enable museum communities to resist the cultural homogenization that comes from globalization. In this context, the museum professional communities are also being forced to reflect on their own origins. This study suggests how this might be done.
These changes to the circumstances surrounding museums at the present time are encouraging curators to rethink their own voluntarism which is a foundation of their professional autonomy. My work has succeeded in explaining the different ways voluntarism emerged in communities of museum professional. The importance of re-examining the paths to professionalization is now growing. I believe the achievements of my work can provide a valuable perspective not only for a more sophisticated interrogation of museum history but also for seeking the future desirable state of the museum professional community.
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