
Reproduced with permission of Palgrave Macmillan. This extract is taken from the author's original manuscript and has not been edited. The definitive, published, version of record is available here: http://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9781137347787.

ResearchSPAce

http://researchspace.bathspa.ac.uk/

This pre-published version is made available in accordance with publisher policies. Please cite only the published version using the reference above.

Your access and use of this document is based on your acceptance of the ResearchSPAce Metadata and Data Policies, as well as applicable law:-

https://researchspace.bathspa.ac.uk/policies.html

Unless you accept the terms of these Policies in full, you do not have permission to download this document.

This cover sheet may not be removed from the document.

Please scroll down to view the document.
Cologne Cathedral as an International Monument

Astrid Swenson

Mer losse d’r Dom en Kölle
denn do jehöt hā hin
Wat soll dā dann woanders
dat hät doch keine Senn

I.

What would Cologne be without its cathedral? Visible for miles across the flatlands, its twin towers direct the visitor’s gaze skywards on arriving in the city. Designated a UNESCO world heritage site in 1996 as ‘an exceptional work of human creative genius’ and ‘a powerful testimony to the strength and persistence’ of Christian belief in Europe, the cathedral is Germany’s most popular building with over six million visitors per year. It also holds an exceptional place in local sentiment. The city’s unofficial hymn ‘Mer losse d’r Dom en Kölle’ (‘We will leave the cathedral in Cologne’) imagines the inhabitants standing ready to defend their cathedral from being taken away. It was composed against the city council’s plans to modernise historic quarters and dislocate inhabitants in the 1970s. A play on the German saying ‘Die Kirche im Dorf lassen’, literally to ‘leave the church in the village’, and figuratively ‘not to be excessive’, the song satirised the council’s hubris by juxtaposing the idea of removing the cathedral to the suggestion of transplanting world famous sites from the Kremlin to the Louvre to Cologne, concluding: ‘it is better if things stay as they are, and we keep our beautiful cathedral’.

The fact that the inhabitants of Cologne can take such pride in their cathedral owes much to the fact that their predecessor ‘did not leave the church in the village’ when constructing the minster. Started in 1248 and finished 632 years later largely according to the
original plans, the enterprise was staggeringly ambitious. Covering 7000 square meters, upon completion in 1880 the cathedral was the world’s tallest building with 156-meter high spires. The church was not left in the village in more literal ways either. While the cathedral’s medieval builders drew inspiration from the most famous French buildings, their nineteenth-century successors looked even further in their dreams to complete the building, whose construction had stopped in 1560, and solicited funding and expertise from Munich to Mexico. In turn the cathedral left the city in many guises. Influencing architectural practice near and far, it reappeared in the stones of Paris’ first neo-gothic church, toured the operatic stage in Madrid, sailed the seas with Moby Dick, and graced the postal stamps of a Caribbean island.

This chapter explores the multitude of transnational connections that shaped the cathedral’s completion together with local and national forces. Understanding how the cathedral was influenced by, and fashioned, international developments is not only interesting for the history of the cathedral, but has a broader significance for re-writing German history, and for moving the history of ‘heritage’ beyond ‘the nation’ as a conceptual framework. Considered ‘without doubt the most important historical church in the German memory landscape’, Cologne Cathedral has long held a special place in the historiography on nationalism and culture. Its completion is often seen to symbolise the shift of German nationalism from a popular movement to a top-down, Prussian-led and xenophobic enterprise. Following Thomas Nipperdey’s work on Cologne Cathedral as ‘National Monument’, anti-French feeling is seen as crucial for the project. Credited with turning the cathedral into a national monument is usually Joseph Görres, who during the Wars of Liberation suggested that the completion of the Gothic masterpiece – the Gothic was then still thought to be quintessentially German – would be ideal to commemorate victory over the French at Leipzig in 1813. It would also offer Germans the opportunity to overcome the
linguistic, territorial, confessional and political divisions of the past. In the 1840s, the cathedral then acquired what Nipperdey called an ‘omnibus role’ in German nationalism. Its ‘Germanness’ appealed broadly, but for conservatives and federalists it also stood for a feudal society, while for liberal nationalists it symbolised the burgeoning age of bourgeois power and national unity. To Catholics it was a reminder of the importance of the Church in German history; for Protestants the Gothic anticipated the beginning of the Reformation’s search for freedom, and to Jews it offered the opportunity to partake in a national project.

Yet this appeal of the cathedral did not outlast the 1840s. When the church was completed in 1880, the temporary alliance had broken down and nationalism had shed its liberal roots, abandoning freedom for unity. Like Germany’s political unification, the cathedral’s completion only became a reality once Prussian might and money was thrown behind it. The Prussian eagle that looked down from the cathedral spires on Kaiser and Volk during the completion celebration perfectly represented the wider Prussification of unification. No longer offering a ‘unifying mystique’, the cathedral symbolised at best ‘the country’s confessional split’ and was at worse ‘a pompous and worrying sign that German megalomania was on the rise’. Even locally, some argue, it had lost its power, as the outright nationalist discourse ruined its value for the city’s catholic population.

This interpretation of Cologne Cathedral as a failed national monument has had far-reaching implications for the wider historiography on nationalism, memory and heritage, not only in Germany. Long after social historians challenged the idea of a German Sonderweg, the idea lives on in many cultural histories. Although there are hardly any studies that systematically look at the cathedral’s reception after 1880, the assumption prevails implicitly that the failure of Cologne Cathedral as a popular national project prepared the top-down and racist development of German understanding of ‘heritage’, nation and Heimat in the twentieth century. This overly deterministic interpretation not only edits out the often more
complicated interactions between local and national emotions;\textsuperscript{24} it also sidelines an important transnational dimension.\textsuperscript{25}

A much more complex picture is revealed when local, national and international interactions are analysed together, over a longer period of time, and integrating political, social, cultural and economic aspects. The chapter draws on material from the Cathedral Archives, to sketch the multidirectional, and multi-layered ways in which the cathedral contributed to Germany not being ‘an island’.\textsuperscript{26} The first part examines how personal networks helped initiate the completion; the second looks at international financial support and the place of the cathedral in cultural diplomacy; the third analyses the broader reception by international audiences beyond the completion in the twentieth century, showing the role given to the cathedral in popular culture, war propaganda and post-war reconciliation. Only by understanding how historical culture developed transnationally, the chapter suggests, is it possible to overcome the dominance of short-term and isolated perspectives.

II.

‘Amidst the noble architectural works which are in progress throughout Europe, the completion of the Cathedral of Cologne must rank pre-eminent’ enthused the \textit{Illustrated London News} six month after completion work began in 1842. Travellers had been riveted for centuries by the unfinished church, but the ‘enthusiasm and ecstasy of the antiquary and the architect when this vast cathedral shall be completed’ would surely be boundless (fig. 1 and 2). ‘Then will Cologne hold within its crescent-walls one of the noblest monuments of the architectural triumphs of Germany, and the most magnificent monuments of Gothic architecture in Europe.’ As the cathedral ‘has been viewed by most of us’, the author deemed it ‘impertinent’ to describe it.\textsuperscript{27} Instead, he relayed information ‘kindly forwarded’ by César

Daly, editor of the *Revue Générale de l’Architectvre* in Paris, on ‘the enthusiastic efforts which are being made, not merely in Germany, but in other countries to ensure the completion of the building’ and concluding with the hope that ‘British wealth’ would join these efforts.28 Neither the French nor the British author negated the importance of the completion for the German nationalist movement. Yet despite the tensioning of Franco-German relations in the early 1840s over the Rhine border, their accounts did not comment on calls for the completion of the cathedral as a bastion against France. Instead, they applauded the movement for national unity. Germans were portrayed as ‘victims of civil discord’ who wanted to ‘build a pillar of the temple consecrated to unity’. Daly moreover suggested: ‘let us forget for a moment national disagreement, and remember that art is a fatherland common to all those who consecrate themselves to beauty’ and ‘that artists form a grand nation within humanity; let us remember that on the borders of the Rhine a monument is being erected that will be the glory of gothic architecture; let us prove our sympathy for this beautiful enterprise’.29 Although such appeals implicitly acknowledged the rise of a nationalist counter-position, they, like hundreds of other articles published over the course of the completion project, are also testament to a culture fervently believing in a common heritage.30

Articles also reminded readers that the cathedral completion project itself was born from intense cultural exchanges.31 More than hatred of the French, it was the attraction Paris exerted on a young Cologne merchant, Sulpiz Boisserée, that started the process which would eventually turn the cathedral into a national monument.32 Born in 1783, Sulpiz’s youth was marked by the upheavals French occupation brought to his city.33 At fifteen he was sent to Hamburg, where he received commercial training as well as entry into the salons of the late Enlightenment. When he returned to Cologne in 1799, he felt trapped in the ‘parochial circumstances of a desolate former imperial city, fallen to the rank of provincial French border town’ and escaped with his brother and a friend to Paris.34 Here, he met with leading
figures of the French art worlds, and like so many of his generation, was converted to ‘German art’ by seeing it for the first time through the confiscated works at the Louvre. After returning to Cologne, he became an enthusiastic guide to German and foreign visitors to the cathedral and won Goethe, Görres, and the young Prussian crown prince for the idea of completion. He also started work on a book to enable the execution. It was a monumental feat – not least because the cathedral’s medieval construction plans had been lost when the cathedral chapter fled from the revolutionary armies in 1794.

Just as France had been important for the initial inception of the project, it was also vital for its realisation. The Darmstadt architect Georg Moller (1784-1852), who like Boisserée had spent his formative years in Paris, came across one half of the main façade plan by accident when a workmen showed him an ancient parchment found in the attic of a Hessian inn. Moller realised that he had recently seen the other half of the plan in a collection of engravings entitled Monuments Français inédits by Nicolas Xavier Willem in Paris. Informed by Moller about the finding, Boisserée, while in Frankfurt with Goethe, mobilised his Parisian circles to find out whether the original still existed. Karl Friedrich Reinhard, a Württemberger who became a peer of France, and Reinhard’s relative, the Hamburg Diplomat Karl Sieveking bought it in Paris and smuggled it to Germany.

To publish the plans, Sulpiz returned again to France in the 1820s. He consulted antiquaries such as the Marquis de Laborde (a ‘fidgety, endearingly genteel man’) on techniques for large-scale engravings. He also showed the original plan at the Académie royale des Beaux-Art, and talked about his passion to leading figures of Paris life. His activities led to much debate about the origins of Gothic art in France and to financial support for his publication. Chateaubriand and the Duke of Rauzan subscribed more enthusiastically than the notoriously stingy King of Prussia, who needed a note from Humboldt asking him to
make a ‘significant subscription’ in order not to lag behind the commitment of the French government.43

Personal international networks, and in particular the Franco-German connections, remained important after Friedrich Wilhelm IV succeeded his father to the Prussian throne and decided to give 50,000 taler a year for the rebuilding. Many of the artists who worked on the construction site had received their training in Paris.44 Tellingly, the Kölner Domblatt, founded to give weekly updates on the cathedral projects as a supplement to the local newspaper, initially issued 5,000 copies in French.45 At the same time the nature of relations expanded, in individual and geographical terms. In part this was due to general developments, such as easier travel and cheaper publishing processes as well as the increasingly formalised network of neogothic and antiquarian societies across Europe, in which many of the cathedral project’s supporters took an active part.46 The polyglot lawyer and catholic politician August Reichensperger (1808-95), who was secretary of the Central Cathedral Building Society and editor of the Kölner Domblatt in particular was a tireless traveller, host and correspondent.47 He developed close ties to the leaders of the gothic revival in Belgium, France and England.48 Through exchanges across the art historical and architectural word, Cologne Cathedral played a major role in developing neogothic architecture internationally, spurning completion projects across Europe, while international developments (from art historical insights, to stylistic preferences, and the use of iron as building material) shaped the construction project on the Rhine. Cologne also had an impact on foreign preservation policies more broadly. Lobbying for funds for the restoration of historic monuments in France, the Inspector of Monuments, Prosper Merimée, and the architect Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc for instance often referred to Cologne as a model to emulate: ‘When Germany undertakes immense works in order to complete Cologne Cathedral (…) doubtless France will not remain less generous (…) in the interest of our national glory.’49 Yet while the cathedral holds an
extraordinarily prominent place in these cultural transfers, the artistic and journalistic exchanges that surround it are representative, rather than exceptional, for the period. More exceptional is the large-scale financial support it received far beyond these circles, as well as its systematic integration into Prussian, and later Imperial German, foreign policy.

III.

While support for the idea of completion had gathered momentum since the Wars of Liberation, money remained the main obstacle to put these plans into reality. In 1821, when the archdiocese of Cologne was re-established, the Prussian state agreed to fund repairs to the cathedral, but the budget did not cover completion, which necessitated 100,000 taler per year. The Prussian government signalled that it would contribute half. The citizenry of Cologne suggested collecting the remaining money through private societies, but Friedrich Wilhelm III was suspicious of all forms of bourgeois associations. His successor, Friedrich Wilhelm IV, finally granted permission in November 1840. Recruitment for the Central Cathedral Building Society (Zentraler Dombau Verein or ZDV) started immediately. A newly founded Domblatt was added as a weekly supplement to the local paper and printed separately for national and international recruitment. The ZDV’s efforts were further facilitated by the Prussian foreign office by granting free national and international postage and distributing the call for contributions via its consular services. When the foundation stone for the completion of the cathedral was laid in September 1842, already 70 so-called ‘aid societies’ existed, doubling during the course of the year. In 1845 ZDV membership reached 10,000 and in 1846, the society could contribute in excess of 86,000 taler.

The overall spread of associative and individual contributions shows that the cathedral project remained to a large extent ‘a Rhineland affair’. Two-thirds of the 153 branch societies
were located in the provinces of Rhineland and Westphalia, though many contributions were also made much further afield. In 1842, individual contributions arrived from several cities in the neighbouring Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg and France, as well as from England, Ireland, Italy, and, to a lesser extent, Switzerland, Denmark, and the Russian Empire. Overseas contributions came from Mexico, Argentina and the United States. Aid societies with formal statutes were formed in Luxemburg, Paris, Rome and Mexico and more transient ones in Liège, Antwerp and Bordeaux.

Some of the largest foreign contribution came from European monarchs – Queen Victoria gave £350 pounds, and the King of Holland 1000 florins – but the greater part of contributions was made by artists, notables and diplomats with lesser means. The vast majority of donations from the Americas came from Germans abroad who responded to the ‘call to all tribes of German tongue to contribute to the completion of Cologne Cathedral.’ In the United Kingdom, where contributions in the inaugural year came from London, Liverpool, Manchester, Oxford, Sheffield and Dublin, the mixture of Germans and British was about equal – prominent names included the architect of the Houses of Parliament Charles Barry, several member of the Bentinck family and the Marquis of Westmoreland, British Envoy to Berlin. The same ration applied to France, especially outside of Paris, where the aid society was explicitly a Hülfsverein der Deutschen – even if lines of nationality were often blurry. The president of the Paris aid society, the Cologne born architect Gau, for instance, had French nationality, while Franz List, who supported the construction through concerts, saw France as his ‘fatherland’ but also called himself a Magyar. Famous émigrés played less of a part in the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxemburg, where contributors were mostly local notables.

The reasons for making contributions and for setting up aid societies were as heterogeneous as the professional, geographical and political background of donors. While
financially the foreign contributions were of little significance for the overall cathedral budget, their provenance tells an interesting story of the simultaneously expansive and partial nature of networks and allegiances. Closest to Cologne, many subscribers to the cathedral project in Belgium supported the reconstruction as it symbolised the importance of Catholicism not only in Germany but also across the region. For the aid society in Liège economic motives were also important. The opening of the first trans-border railway line in Europe substantially increased Cologne’s economic attraction as a hub of trade relations between Prussia and Belgium. Liège’s industrialists and bankers made a large donation to the cathedral in 1844 after visiting Cologne for the inauguration of the train link between Antwerp and Cologne. Like the citizens in Antwerp (whom the ZDV unsuccessfully tried to animate to organise a lasting society) the Liège elites felt, however, that one gesture was enough. They instead turned to building their own neogothic cathedral.

Activities of the society of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, on the other hand, were more strongly tied to political rather than economic developments. A society was founded in December 1842 and counted 235 members two years later, including the mayor, governor, general prosecutor, several councillors, the first vicar apostolic, servants of the Ducal Court, professors and others of high ranks. In recognition, the Luxembourg Coat of Arms was added to the banner of the Central Society for the celebration of 1845, which included Queen Victoria and the Prussian King. But already in 1847 contributions started to diminish. Criticised over the irregularity of its contribution, the aid society replied:

We are aware to which extend any enlightened friend of the arts must be attached to the execution of that great design. It is not merely a German monument, but a sign of the power and the art of many ages of man, in which the entirety of humanity should participate to the glory of itself and the eternally creating Spirit (...) Unfortunately, every enthusiasm dies down, even that which evokes the truly beautiful and
magnificent.

Economic problems of the past years, ‘and the hope for success of the political storms which now blow at us from France’ distracted attention. ‘When the future most at hand threatens war and destruction, it is only granted to a few to engage in the external manifestations of a supreme peace, since the heart closes in on itself and everyone seeks to save himself and his own. When man separates from men, and entire peoples oppose each other in hostility, when then can there exist a sign of a joint effort?’ Membership gradually dropped. Although representatives participated in the celebration of the 600 anniversary in Cologne, activities stopped for a year and were only briefly taken up again in 1850 with much diminished ranks. When the ZDV rejected the aid society’s request to incorporate Luxemburg’s coat of arms into the cathedral (agreed upon in the statutes), the society dissolved in protest. This seemingly trivial matter reveals how much the cathedral project had become a symbol for the small neutral state’s will to affirm its independence against what it perceived to be Prussian plans for annexing smaller neighbours.

The economic and political turmoil of the 1840s also put an end to the ‘German’ aid societies in Rome, Paris and Mexico. The Rome society was almost entirely composed of the German artistic colony in Rome. Founded in April 1842, the society had 36 members, led by the Prussian painter Carl Ludwig Rundt, the genre painter Theodor Weller from Mannheim, and the Nazarene sculptor Wilhelm Theodor Achtermann (1799–1884). United by their artistic medievalism, the society’s members published long poems on the cathedral and designed a beautiful logo of medieval builders. They sent contributions to Cologne until 1847, but because of the political situation in 1848 it became impossible to collect any money. With some of its leading members leaving Rome, the society ceased to exist.

The Germans, who founded the aid society of Mexico, had again a different
background.\textsuperscript{71} Initiated in December 1842 by Friedrich von Gerold (1797-1879), the Prussian Chargé d’affaire,\textsuperscript{72} together with Wilhelm de Drusina, Franz Schneider, E. Benecke, A Hegewisch and Anton Meyer, the Mexican Society soon united 58 members, as well as 39 smaller contributors from across the Mexican Republic, who wished to show with their donation that ‘although far from the fatherland’ they were ‘among its most faithful sons’.\textsuperscript{73} At its heart was a group of rich and powerful German entrepreneurs, who have often been seen as the agents of a nascent German imperialism in Mexico.\textsuperscript{74} The foundation of the cathedral aid society prepared the creation in 1844 of the German Bank (\textit{Caja de Ahorros Alemana / Deutsche Sparcasse}) whose president, vice president and six of the fourteen directors were all founding members of the \textit{Dombauverein}.\textsuperscript{75} At the same time the statutes were designed to make the \textit{Dombauverein} in Mexico, like that in Cologne, an endeavour which would give the Germans scattered across the country a connection among each other as well as with the ‘fatherland’ by ensuring that even the smallest donations were welcome and that donors’ names were published without mention of the sum given.\textsuperscript{76} Yet after the initial prospering, the ZDV Mexican Association too withered away.\textsuperscript{77} Reasons were partly the destructions wrought by war and revolution in Mexico\textsuperscript{78} – Drusina himself was busy housing the peace negotiations between Mexico and the United States in 1848 –\textsuperscript{79} but also because of the ‘great and important events in our fatherland’, which created new duties ‘important to fulfil above all’. Once peace was restored, the ‘widows’ and orphans’ tears for those fallen in the battle for freedom’ had dried, and the ‘creation of a German navy no longer need support’ – then the Germans of Mexico would again contribute to the completion of the ‘patriotic monument’.\textsuperscript{80} The political tension of the 1848s, and the cracks they tore between nationalists and internationalists had, however, the strongest impact on the Paris society, also founded in 1842.\textsuperscript{81} It had a more diverse membership uniting prominent personalities of German origin - such as the painter Franz Xaver Winterhalter patronaged by Louis Philippe,\textsuperscript{82} or the Cologne
born architect Franz Christian Gau (a lifelong believer in the ideas of 1789 who after studies in Paris and work for Napoleon, went to Rome, Palestine, Egypt and Nubia for some years, before settling permanently back in Paris), and the leading German political exiles of the *Vormärz*, who supported the project in view of a democratic and constitutional Germany - in particular the Cologne citizens Jakob Venedey, August Ludwig Rochau and Heinrich Heine from Düsseldorf - and some rentiers and bankers. Given that Germans were the largest minority in Paris, membership (and contributions) were low (as Gau expressed with regret, rich Germans felt estranged from their fatherland, while the vast mass of working Germans were too poor to give). The society disintegrated quicker than the others, falling from 48 members in 1842 to just one in 1845. In part this was due to the transient nature of the expat community, but more important were disagreements about the kind of nation the cathedral should represent. While initially the leaders of the association had embraced the completion as a symbol of freedom that would bring not only unity, but also the democratic traditions of their host country to Germany, the Rhine crisis of 1840 and the failure of the Prussian King to respond to the calls for a constitution polarised the group. Venedey increasingly embraced the cathedral project in order to signal his German allegiance and started to call for the annexation of Alsace. Heine (like Karl Marx with whom he became close friends during these days) started to criticise the nationalist and authoritarian nature of the project, culminating in the famous passage in *Germany, A Winter’s Tale* published in 1844, in which he chastised the ‘poor wretches’ of the Cathedral Society for the ‘vain mistake’ to rebuilt ‘that mighty colossus’ as a bastion to ‘lock the German reason forever’!

The differences in membership and outlook among the aid societies thus reveal that substantially distinct forms of trans- and internationalism governed contributions to the cathedral project. The ‘omnibus function’ (Nipperdey) of the cathedral project survived abroad even less long than it did within the German states, either because of disillusionment
or because other causes took precedence. While many of the German aid societies did not disappear as quickly, 1849 also saw an overall drop in funds, and in the following years the society mainly survived thanks to Colognes industrial classes and, since 1865 through the newly founded Cathedral Construction Lottery.\(^{86}\) This increasingly local bias confirmed the linguistic uses of the ZDV which in its lists had never distinguished between German and non-German members, but between ‘from Cologne’ and ‘auswärtig’ – putting the tiny village of ‘Longerich’ (now a suburb of Cologne) in the same category as ‘London’ and ‘Liverpool’.

Although no foreign aid societies existed after 1850, the ZDV tried to recruit abroad via personal contacts and the Prussian consuls. Especially Friedrich von Gerold, since 1844 Prussian ambassador to the United States, continued his efforts.\(^{87}\) Yet by then, a more informal fundraising campaign yielded better results. The Cologne Männergesangsverein, an amateur male choir that was founded like the ZDV in 1842 to raise money, acquired substantial funds, and considerable acclaim, through concert tours in Belgium, Great Britain and France. Eighty of its members, men of all classes and professions, went on a self-financed tour to London for a month in 1853.\(^{88}\) Organised by the impresario and court librarian John Mitchell, the tour was a great success, leading to an invitation to sing for Queen Victorian and raising more than 3,350 taler. A second tour to the United Kingdom was likewise a great success. In 1855, the choir went to Paris during the universal exhibition, where drawings and large casts of the cathedral were exhibited in the Prussian section,\(^{89}\) before another tour brought them again to the UK the following year.\(^{90}\)

While the Männergesangsverein acquired funding and reputation abroad, the great and good increasingly came to Cologne to see the development of the construction. The Dombaumeister’s visitor book read like the *Who is Who* of international architecture. It recorded frequent visits by European nobility and royalty (with members of the British royal
family coming exceptionally frequently) as well as famous composers like Giuseppe Verdi. The Prussian Monarchy systematically brought foreign officials and heads of states to the city on the occasion of cathedral festivals and state visits. European royals were at the centre of these diplomatic ceremonies in the 1840s – Queen Victoria’s visit in 1845 was particularly publicised across Germany and Britain (she herself only noted in her diary that it was ‘so hot’). From the 1860s, Prussia’s increasingly global ambitions became apparent in the visitors brought to the Rhine. The first Japanese delegation visiting Europe was asked by the Foreign office to stop at Cologne on the way to Berlin and visit the cathedral. The diary entries of the delegations’ members reveal some bafflement at the temple they had been asked to see, but their visit, like later ones by an Ottoman Sultan and the Persian Shah, also show that the use of the cathedral for diplomatic purposes was a two-way process. While the visits allowed Prussia, and later united Germany, to create diplomatic relations outside the spheres of influence dominated by the great imperial powers, they offered the representatives of old civilisations under threat of colonialism an opportunity to establish themselves among the ranks of ‘civilised’ partners.

The Rhinelanders themselves used the diplomatic importance of these visits to comment on the cathedral project in the manner of Montesquieu’s Persian Letters. On the occasion of the Ottoman Sultan’s visit in 1867, for instance, fake serialised diaries appeared in the press that criticised the cathedral project in the tradition of Karl Marx and Heinrich Heine. At yet another level, the travelogues of these visits, whether authentic or forged, became part of an international reading experience. The Times of London thus reprinted an account on Cologne from the Shah’s diaries. News reports, travelogues, panoramas, casts, photography exhibitions, novels and musical compositions created an ever richer cultural representation that turned the building project of a provincial town into a global experience. Some of these wider artistic representations originated from the Rhineland, such as Robert
Schuman’s much performed Rhenish Symphony. Some, such as Herman Melville’s allegorical use of the cathedral in Moby Dick, resulted from personal impressions by foreign visitors. Others, in contrast, were inspired indirectly, by already circulating material. The librettists of a Spanish operetta on the cathedral, performed in Madrid in 1875, drew on legends from medieval Cologne without ever setting foot in the city - probably writing the libretto while in the Philippines.

IV.

Given the close personal contacts, the diplomatic efforts and the cultural adaptations, it is hardly surprising that the festivities celebrating the 1880 completion received so much attention in the international press, that Punch asked in a mock letter from a Newcastle Coal Owner ‘what do the papers mean by announcing “The Opening of Cologne Cathedral” as if it were a startling novelty? I’ve been to Cologne five times within the last five years, and always found the Cathedral open’. The importance of the completion for national and international politics were analysed time and again, but in the British press in particular the development of nationalism was still not perceived in negative terms. Journalists often stressed the potential of reconciliation that the inauguration ceremonies offered to Catholics and Protestants within Germany. They even saw the completion of the cathedral as an important step in the reconciliation between the Pope and the German state, as well as between France and Germany.

In the years following the completion, reporting declined, reflecting the reduction of the activities in Cologne. Yet across Europe, the cathedral remained a subject in learned gatherings, art exhibitions and analyses of politics in Germany. Although attitudes to restoration started to change across Europe, with groups such as the Society for the Protection
of Ancient Buildings advocating conservation rather than fanciful additions, the admiration for the completion project did not diminish.\textsuperscript{105} The positive light in which Cologne Cathedral had been viewed during the last hundred years only changed after the destruction of Louvain Library and Rheims Cathedral by the Germans in 1914. Reacting to the manifesto on the superiority of German culture signed by leading German intellectuals after the outbreak of the First World War, the distinguished architect Thomas Graham Jackson, a pupil of Sir George Gilbert Scott, used Cologne Cathedral to publicly demonstrate the absence of genuine German culture. A weak imitation of Amiens, the cathedral stood out only through its ‘megalomania’. The once admired steeples appeared ‘monstrous’.\textsuperscript{106} Built ‘almost anew to commemorate the victories of 1870’, it was ‘modern Germany made in stone. Imposing in bulk, consistent in design, a triumph for the engineer, it is splendidly null; it looks as if it had never been prayed in, and its stiff tracery recalls nothing so much as a made-up tie’. The completion project now embodied everything that was bad about Prussia and it was used to illustrate fundamental differences between Germany, where institutions were imposed from above, and Britain where ‘for good or for evil, they are chosen by the people themselves’.\textsuperscript{107}

Suggestions were even made in the House of Commons to consider air raids against the building, if Germany did not stop the wanton destruction of monuments in Belgium and France.\textsuperscript{108} In turn, images appeared in the Cologne papers imagining the cathedral in ruins with the caption ‘let every individual help in keeping this horror far from home. Subscribe to the War Loan’.\textsuperscript{109}

After the war, the cathedral, which had remained unscathed, lost its propagandistic power as quickly as it had gained it; in the face of famine and Bolshevism, a British journalist was sure the Germans would even ‘mortgage Cologne Cathedral’ if it improved their situation, while the British occupiers’ concern with the building mostly turned to whether Anglo-German marriages took place within it.\textsuperscript{110} The dense coverage on the cathedral before
and during the First World War was followed by few reports in the interwar years. Where reporting on developments resumed, it lacked the intimacy of a shared world of artistic creation and preservation previously seen, and instead focussed on a new chapter of encounters between allied forces and local inhabitants on the cathedral square during military reviews and armistice days.\footnote{111} As the 1920s advanced, old-style travelogues returned,\footnote{112} and some attention was given to the timid ‘reawakening’ of the ‘German national spirit’ during the 1000-Year-Festival celebrating the incorporation of the Rhineland into Germany.\footnote{113} Yet the extent to which the Cathedral became a ‘focal point of the Rhineland’s resistance to French occupation’ during the festival in 1925, as well as in the celebrations over the French army leaving the Rhineland a year later,\footnote{114} was hardly picked up by the British press. Rather, reports on the 1925 festival emphasized pacifist tendencies, noting that the Mayor of Cologne, Konrad Adenauer, perhaps inspired by the allied armistice celebrations he had witnessed on the cathedral steps in previous years, had used the occasion to suggest that Germany ‘should follow her former enemies in the admirable form in which they honoured their dead and demanded, amidst general approval, that the body of an unknown German soldier should be laid to rest of the banks of the Rhine in the shadow of Cologne Cathedral: “such a memorial”, he said “is finer and more spiritual than a mass of stone or metal. Where could it be placed more fittingly than on the banks of the German Rhine, the great objective of the war?”’\footnote{115} During the Third Reich reporting became even scarcer and less politically analytical.\footnote{116} The cathedral was kept in the British public’s mind through the music of Heine and Schumann,\footnote{117} but there was no notice of the long-awaited inventory of the cathedral compiled by Paul Clemen in 1937 or its wider significance in the attempts to fuse preservationist messages with Nazi ideology and bring them to “the broad strata of the Volk.”\footnote{118}
British attention only properly turned again to Cologne Cathedral following the deliberate attacks of England’s medieval cathedrals by the *Luftwaffe* during the Second World War. In June 1942 the *Illustrated London News* showed under a picture of destroyed Coventry an article on Cologne being spared, juxtaposing an illustration from its 1843 issue (fig. 1) of the unfinished building with one of the city after the bombing with the Cathedral ‘carefully left unscathed by our armada’. It pointed out that ‘the steeples are not over seventy years old (…) Cologne is far later than Canterbury, which the German deliberately bombed as a “reprisal”, for there was a basilica there in 597, and the present Cathedral was begun in 1070.’ Later the same year, *The Times* also explored its archives to reprint the words of the Prussian kings from 1842:

> Your feeling will tell you that it is no common edifice you are about to erect. May this portal of honour never be disgraced by bad faith (…) May this structure never disturb the peace of creeds, nor impede the progress of social order (…) May it prove to most remote generations that Germany is great and mighty by the union of her rulers and her people, and that she has without bloodshed consolidated the peace of the world.  

Many more articles followed to disprove Nazi propaganda of the raids as deliberate attacks against the Cathedral. While this resurrected the WWI assumptions about the cathedral’s lack of culture, debates about retaliatory bombings also helped to crystallise ideas about the sanctity of world heritage. Sydney Cockerell, the friend of William Morris and former director of the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, most eloquently expressed his uneasiness about ‘a tendency in some quarters to speak and write with a sort of indifference of the injury to Cologne Cathedral’. As he put it,

> ... the antiquity of Cologne Cathedral is beside the point. What I wished mainly to say and would now reassert is that fine architecture is part of the common heritage of
humanity, irrespective of frontiers – that is in fact part of the precious civilization that we are striving with all our might to uphold. It is independent of the tyrannies that we are combating, and though we cannot avoid destroying or mutilating it when it has become involved in factory areas and other legitimate targets in enemy territory, we should grieve for the necessity and not be callous about it.122

Any negative views about the Cathedral certainly changed again at the end of the war, when the cathedral standing alone among the rubble of the city become a much photographed symbol for survival.123 The Daily Mail captured the mood of the day with a picture of the cathedral entitled ‘Survivor in Cologne’.124 An American field chaplain celebrating the first service for the troops in the cathedral marked the turn towards a redefinition of the church as a Christian monument beyond confessional or political divides.125 Despite the widespread destruction of the city’s housing stock, support for the immediate repair of the cathedral was strong. While there was much uncertainty about how to deal with secular buildings, ‘Christian themes of sacrifice and renewal’ made the reconstruction of churches appealing to Germans and Western allies.126 But of all destroyed churches, the cathedral was especially appealing because its French roots and past international uses provided unrivalled material for a new narrative of Germany’s place in the Abendland. In 1948 (the 700th anniversary of the foundation, and the centenary of 1848), it offered once again the stage for international diplomacy. Celebrating the restored cathedral as a pan-European place of Christian worship, the festivities were one of the first events in occupied Germany to which international guests were invited and played an important role in reintegrating Germany into the international community who embraced the vision of Cologne Cathedral as an essentially European work of art and as a symbol for the long-standing cultural exchanges that had made Europe.127
V.

The history of Cologne Cathedral reveals how strongly modern historical culture was shaped by interactions across borders. Long before it was put on the UNESCO World Heritage list, the cathedral was perceived as an international monument. Its completion and elevation to national monument were only made possible through a plethora of connections beyond Germany. In turn the cathedral shaped the international development of ‘heritage’ ideas and practices in significant ways, contributing to popular historical culture, inspiring preservation policies, and fostering reflections on European and world heritage throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century.

The nature, reach and number of transnational connections show both change and continuity over time. While the years during which the completion project gathered momentum drew largely on the personal networks created by the revolutionary and Napoleonic period, the completion phase was dominated by the rise of new forms of private societies intertwined with state-sponsored internationalism and diplomacy. Industrialisation, easier travel and cheaper access to cultural representations made a broader participation possible. Transnational networks based on artistic ties, learned interests, trade relations, royal connections, diplomatic relations, military occupation, catholic belief and communist friendships shaped the making and understanding of the cathedral in different ways. Often these networks operated relatively independently from one another (and sometimes they were mutually hostile), though cathedral festivals, world fairs, fundraising concerts and state visits brought them together temporarily. Geographically, core connections remained heavily biased towards neighbouring France, the Benelux region, and Britain, often underpinned by older cultural and economic ties. The fostering of links with Mexico, the US, Japan and the Ottoman Empire through the cathedral completion project, reflected Prussia’s search for a
place in the wider world, but the failure to make financial support truly global also

demonstrated the limits of Prussification. Cultural dissemination on the other hand often

reached more unexpected areas.

From the Napoleonic Wars to the Federal Republic, nationalist visions of the cathedral

coexisted with internationalist ones both in the German-speaking world and beyond. Emphasising transnational links does not change the fact that the completion of the cathedral

was a profoundly nationalist project. Those who felt initially drawn to the cathedral project as

an internationalist project felt marginalised early on and many who continued to embrace

internationalist rhetoric shed it quickly in wartime. At the same time, the transnational lens

highlights the continuous multiplicity of meanings given to the cathedral. Despite the rise of

an aggressive nationalism, international and local feelings were never fully eclipsed. The

suddenness of the turns in national and international emphases (both in Germany and abroad)
could suggest the importance of short-term factors for determining the relationship between
culture and nationalism, especially in the twentieth century. Yet, the long-term analysis of

networks and narratives shows more continuities than discontinuities. Once abandoned ideas

about the cathedral’s nature and seemingly forgotten chapters of its national and international

history were resurrected whenever the political context changed.
Illustrations:

1 I am grateful to Klaus Hardering and Mathias Deml at the Dombauarchiv and to Jan Rüger, Nikolaus Wachsmann and Bianca Gaudenzi for their comments.

2 Bläck Fööss, ‘Mer losse d’r Dom en Kölle’ (1973), repr. in Astrid Reimers, ‘Zwei bekannte Kölner Karnevalslieder,’ Ad marginem 78/79 (2006/2007): 4-5. Translation: ‘We will leave the cathedral in Cologne/ because that is where it belongs/ what should it do elsewhere/ this would not make any sense’.

3 ‘Cologne Cathedral’, whc.unesco.org, accessed 1 August 2014.


5 Reimers, ‘Karnevalslieder’: 3-10.


8 Less peacefully, they also incorporated 500,000 pounds of bronze from confiscated French cannons into the bells. Dombauarchiv Köln (hereafter DBA), ZDV, Tit. IV, 1, Beschaffung von 500 Zentnern Bronze in Form von eroberten französischen Geschützröhren zum Guß der großen Domglocke (1870-1872).


14 See, for example, Hagen Schulze, The Course of German Nationalism: From Frederick the Great to Bismarck, 1763-1867 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 67.


19 Koshar, Monuments to Traces, 54-6.

21 Koshar, *Monuments to Traces*, 56.


28 ‘Completion of Cologne Cathedral’, Supplement to the *Illustrated London News* (ILN), 27 May 1843: 271-2. In turn, the article was treated as a sign for the growing support of the cause in Cologne, *Kölner Domblatt* 1st ser., no 54, 2 July 1843.

The Times of London alone contained more than 250 entries on the cathedral of Cologne since 1803, with over a hundred articles on the completion project from 1842-1880.


Boisserée, ‘Selbstbiographie’, 14-15, 20


Boisserée, Tagebücher I, 674- 92.

Boisserée, Tagebücher I, 683.


43 Boisserée, *Tagebücher II*, Chronic, 3*, 11*-13*.


52 DBA ZDV, Tit. II d, 45 Acta betr. Förderung der Vereinszwecke durch die Königl. Preußischen Konsulate im Ausland; Tit. XIII, 3 Acta betr. In- und ausländische Portofreiheit für die amtliche Korrespondenz, Geldsendungen etc.

53 DBA ZDV Tit II c, 1, Acta betr. Hülfsvereine

54 Hardering, Cortjaens, ‘Aid Societies’: 139-40


56 *Verzeichniss der Mitglieder des Central-Dombau-Vereins zu Köln und der demselben angeschlossenen Hülfs-Vereine so wie denigen Personen, welche durch geringere Gaben zur Förderung des Vereinszwecks beigetragen haben* (Cologne: Mermet, 1842).

57 Hardering and Cortjaens, ‘Aid Societies’, 142 also mention aid societies in London and Livland but these do not appear in the lists in DBA ZDV, Tit II c, 2 Acta betr. Hülfsvereine and no files could be found elsewhere in the DBA.

58 *ILN*, 16 Sept 1848, 176


60 *Kölner Domblatt*, 43, 16 April 1843.

61 Hardering, Cortjaens, ‘Aid Societies’, 149-52; On Antwerp, correspondence in DBA ZDV, Tit II c, 2.

62 Hardering, Cortjaens, ‘Aid Societies’, 149-52

63 Hardering, Cortjaens, ‘Aid Societies’, 149-52

64 *Verzeichniss der Mitglieder des Central-Dombau-Vereins*.


67 DBA ZDV, Tit.II c, 124, Rom; *Kölner Domblatt* 1st ser., no 2, 10 July 1842.
Carl Rund to ZDV, 31 Jan 1843, DBA ZDV, Tit.II c, 124 . nr 74.


Achtermann to ZDV, 7 May 1848, DBA ZDV, Tit.II c, 124.

DBA, ZDV, Tit. II c, 98, Hilfsverein zu Mexiko.

At the suggestion of Alexander von Humboldt he was made Extraordinary Envoy and Minister of the Kingdom of Prussia to the United States of America in 1844, see Enno Eimers: Preussen und die USA 1850 bis 1867. Transatlantische Wechselwirkungen (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2004).

Foundation Call, 4 Dec 1842, DBA ZDV, Tit. II c, 98 Hilfsverein zu Mexiko No 404; ‘Filial-Verein für den Ausbau des Kölner Domes in Mexico, Kölner Domblatt, 43, 16 April 1843.


As a result of the contributors’ affluence, the sum raised in Mexico was the highest outside Germany – for 1842 the ZDV received 1100, 6, 11 Tal, from Mexico. Paris gave 254, 27,4 taler and Rome 134, 22, 2 taler. Kölner Domblatt, 43, 16 April 1843.

Statutes, DBA ZDV, Tit. II c, 98 Hilfsverein zu Mexiko


78 Drusina and Benecke to ZDV, 13 May 1849, DBA ZDV, Tit. II c, 98 Hilfsverein zu Mexiko; ‘Zweiundneuzigstes Protocoll des Central-Dombau-Vereins-Vorstandes’, *Kölner Domblatt*, 53, 5 August 1849.


80 Drusina and Benecke to ZDV, 13 May 1849.


82 Kramp, ‘Akte’: 132-34


84 Kramp, ‘Akte’, 139

85 Qtd. in Kramp, ‘Akte’: 155-61.

86 Hardering, Cortjaens, ‘Aid Societies’, 141.

87 DBA ZDV, Tit. II d, 45 Förderung der Vereinszwecke durch die Königl. Preußischen Konsulate im Ausland (1853 – 1856).

88 DBA ZDV; Tit II d, 26a Act betr. die Bestrebungen des Cölner Männer-Gesangs-Vereins im Interesse des Dombaus, in London.


92 For instance, ‘Her Majesty’s Visit To Germany’, *The Times*, 22 Aug. 1845, 5; *ILN* 30 August 1834, 144; Queen Victoria’s Journals (13 August 1845), http://qvj.chadwyck.com, accessed 1 August 2014. For other visitors see the visitor’s journal kept in the DBA.


96 ‘Diary Of The Shah’, *The Times*, 11 December 1874, 10.

97 See for instance dozens of advertisement for engravings, panoramas and exhibitions available in London along in *The Times*, 1842-1880.


99 Breidenbach, ‘Kölner Dombaumeistersage in einer spanischen Zarzuela’: 183-200


101 *The Times* alone features articles on 18 July 1879, 10; 16 August 1880, 5; August. 1880, 7; 20 August 1880, 3; 1 September 1880, 5; 14 September 1880, 3; 28 September 1880, 5; 30 September 1880, 5; 15 October 1880, 4; 15 October 1880, 7; 16 October 1880, 6; 20 October 1880, 5.

102 ‘Germany’, *The Times*, 7 October 1880, 5.


105 Henry Brewer to Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), undated (February 1883), SPAB Archives, London, Ulm Cathedral files
106 T.G., Jackson, ‘The Triumphs Of German Culture’, *The Times*, 29 December 1914, 7.


109 ‘Late war news. Pushing the German War Loan’, *The Times*, 18 October 1917, 5.

110 ‘German Conditions’, *The Times*, 10 March 1919.


117 ‘The Poetry of Heine’, *The Times*, 7 Mar 1938, 12

118 Paul Clemen, *Der Dom zu Köln* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1938); Karl Einhorn, Brunkhard Meier and Konrad Nonn, ‘Die Denkmalpflege im Volksleben’, *Deutsche Kunst und Denkmalpflege* 36 (1934), 1; Koshar *Germany’s Transient Pasts*, 167-8.

119 *ILN*, 6 June 1942.

120 ‘From The Times of 1842’, *The Times*, 15 Sep 1942, 2.
121 ‘Cologne Raid Exploited’, *The Times*, 1 July 1943, 4.


125 Boecker, ‘Überlebender’: 302.
