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I wish to express my gratitude for inviting me to give this conference to professor Hermann Fillitz, president of the XXV International Congress for the History of Art, and to my colleagues, members of the Bureau of the Comite International d'histoire de l'art

"I saw the things which have been brought to the King from the new golden land" Albrecht Dürer wrote in his diary on the August 27, 1520: a sun all of gold a whole fathom broad, a moon all of silver of the same size, also two rooms full of the armour of the people there, and all manner of wondrous weapons of theirs, harness and darts, wonderful shields, strange clothing, bedspreads, and all kinds of wonderful objects of various uses, much more beautiful to behold than prodigies. These things were all so precious that they have been valued at one hundred thousand gold florins. All the days of my life I have seen nothing that has gladdened my heart so much as these things, for I saw amongst them wonderful works of art, and I marvelled at the subtle ingenia of men in foreign lands.....

These objects ^{that Dürer described} had been sent to Cortés, shortly after his arrival in Mexico in 1519, by Moctezuma the Aztec emperor. The emperor Ferdinand I, ^{died in 1564} younger brother of Charles the V seems to have been the first European to collect Mexican objects, and his interest in them was inherited by his sons Archduke Karl of Steiermark and Archduke Ferdinand II of Austrian Tyrol who owned the three magnificent examples of featherwork now in the Museum of Ethnology in Vienna.

Admiration for the art of ancient Mexico started in the early sixteenth century. collectionism was initiated shortly after.

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- 1 The Mexican exhibition by Bullock in London 1825, from a painting by the Italian A. Aglio
- 2 Coatlicue, sculpture of the Aztec deity with the skirt of snakes
- 3 The Tizoc Stone with commemorative reliefs of the victories of Tizoc, the Aztec emperor
- 4 Drawing of a pyramid in Huatusco Viejo by the Mexican Castañeda who accompanied the French Dupaix in his travels through Mexico
- 5 Drawing of a pyramid in San Cristobal Teopentec, which no longer exists, by the same artist, whose drawings were first published with Dupaix writings in Antiquities of Mexico
- 6 Anonymous European drawing of the 19th century based on Dupaix. It is the Palace of the Maya city of Palenque
- 6a Drawings of Maya reliefs in the Palace of Palenque by Waldeck
- 6b The same as it is originally
- 7 Drawing by the English Frederick Catherwood of the same Palace of Palenque. He went far beyond his predecessor in capturing the genius loci. Indeed he
- 7a The Palace of Palenque as it is now. almost rivals Piranesi
- 8 Drawing by Catherwood of a Maya stela of Copán, Honduras
- 8a The same as it is originally, dates from the VIII century
- 9 The Maya palace named The Governor in Uxmal, Yucatán
- 10 The same as it is now
- 11 Photograph by the French Desiré Charnay of the Maya building in Chichén Itzá known as The Church.
- 12 The same as it is now
- 13 Portrait of the French Auguste Le Plongeon
- 14 Maya Toltec sculpture named Chac Mool by his discoverer Le Plongeon
- 15 Ruins of a northern Maya site Mayapan in Yucatán; published by Brasseur de Bourbourg
- 16 Ruins of ~~Chichen~~ Sabacche photographed by the Austrian Teobert Maler
- 17 Maya ruins of Chanchen photographed by Maler also
- 18 Photograph by Maudslay of Temple 1 at Tikal, Guatemala
- 19 Another of the monumental temples ^{at Tikal} No. 2 as it is now. Dates from VIII century

- 20 Decoration by Karl Friederich Schinky for Spontini's opera *Fernand Cortez*
- 21 ~~Costume for Montezuma by Frederic~~
The visual image of Montezuma remained surprisingly unchanged. A life size full length portrait of him, accurate in details of costume, had been painted in Mexico probably in the late XVI century and sent to Florence.
- 22 This inspired Karl Lorenz Gindl a Viennese artist who included Montezuma among the portraits he made of the most famous men of all periods. Gindl places Montezuma where every noble savage ought to stand - that is in a romantic concept - out of the doors and in the bosom of nature. In such a guise he may be imagined ~~declaiming Dryden's heroic couplets~~ singing the elegant cavatinas composed by Graun for Frederick the Great or booming the romantic arias of Spontini.
- 23 Replique of the temple of Xochicalco, Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1867
- 24 Mexican pavilion at the International Exhibit in Paris 1889
- 25 Maya house by French architect Charles Garnier
- 26 Palazzo Uffizi by Ludovico Buòti
- 27 Detail of fresco on ceiling Palazzo Uffizi, Florence, Buòti 1588
- 28 Tiepolo - *Amérique* 1753
- 29 Meissel, *Amérique* 1745
- 30 Sketch of an Aztec sculptural sculpture of ~~Quetzalcoatl~~ a rattle snake by
Pingret
- 31 The sculpture Pingret draw
- 32 Drawing by Pingret of a Chac mool, the sculpture discovered by Le Plongeon and named by Pingret 'The Mexican Bacchus'
- 33 A sculpture of a Chac mool
- 34 Altar with skulls by Pingret
- 35 A tzompantli, altar with skulls at Chichén Itzá