AHST 2331-001 **(21414)**
Understanding Art
Dr. Charissa N. Terranova
Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:30-12:45
ATC 1.102

Tuesday March 22

Panoramas: Virtual Reality as Propaganda

# Quiz Time

Notebooks down, Pencils up

Last class we spoke about Modernism, especially two movements within that period called Impressionism and Naturalism. In no less than three complete sentences (It will probably require more) explain what the modern condition is and how it influenced art styles like these. You may want to mention industrialization, trains, and other technological hallmarks of the modern era.

- Modernity – 16th-18th centuries; ages of discovery, exploration, empire, colonization, codification of nation-state, scientific revolution, democratic revolutions

- Modernization – 18th-19th centuries; age of industrialization, the instrumentalization of modernity

- Modernism – 20th century-ongoing; commentaries on and creative expressions in art and design about modernity and modernization
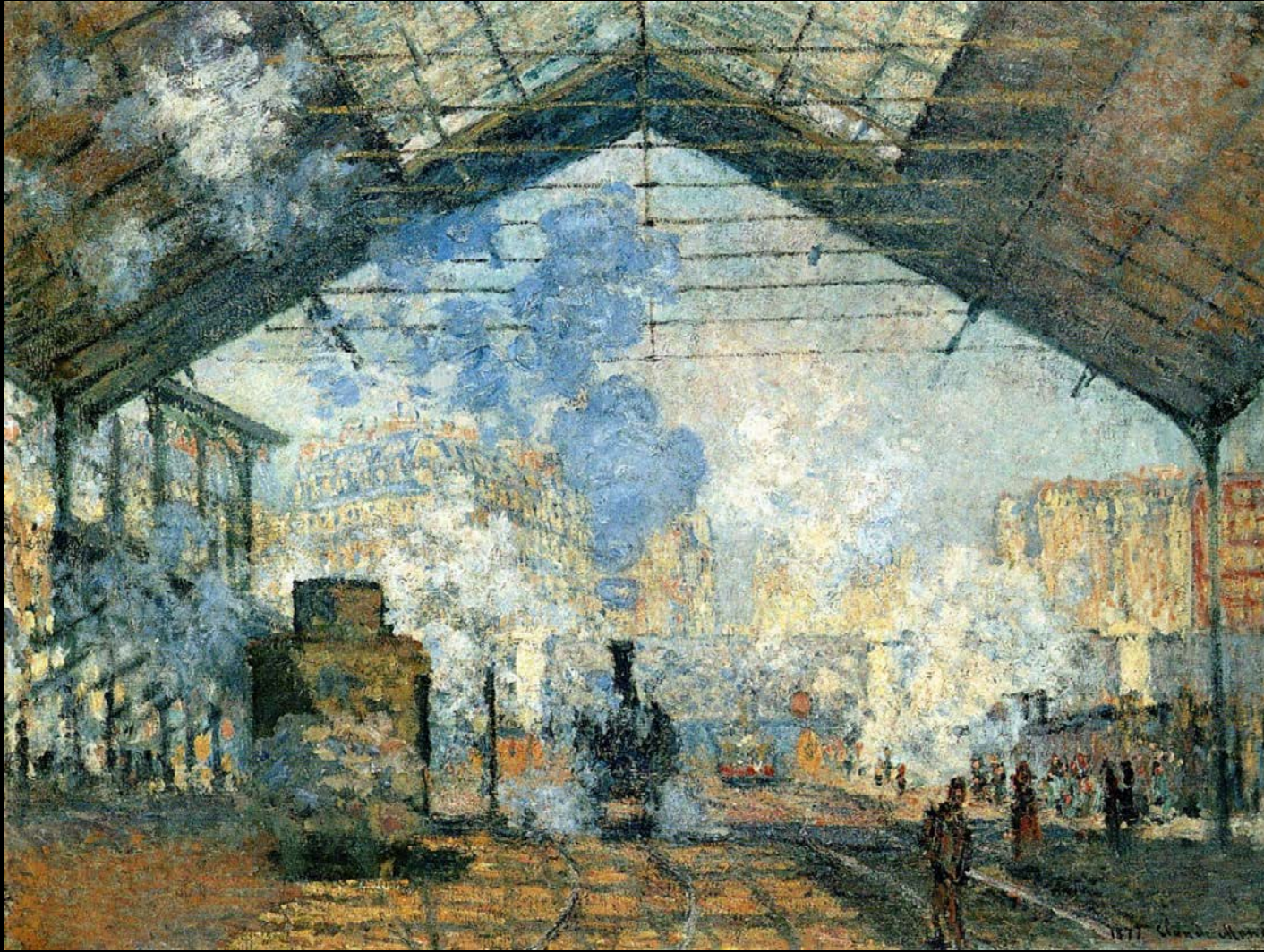
All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses, his real conditions of life, and his relations to his kind.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, preamble to the Communist Manifesto, 1848
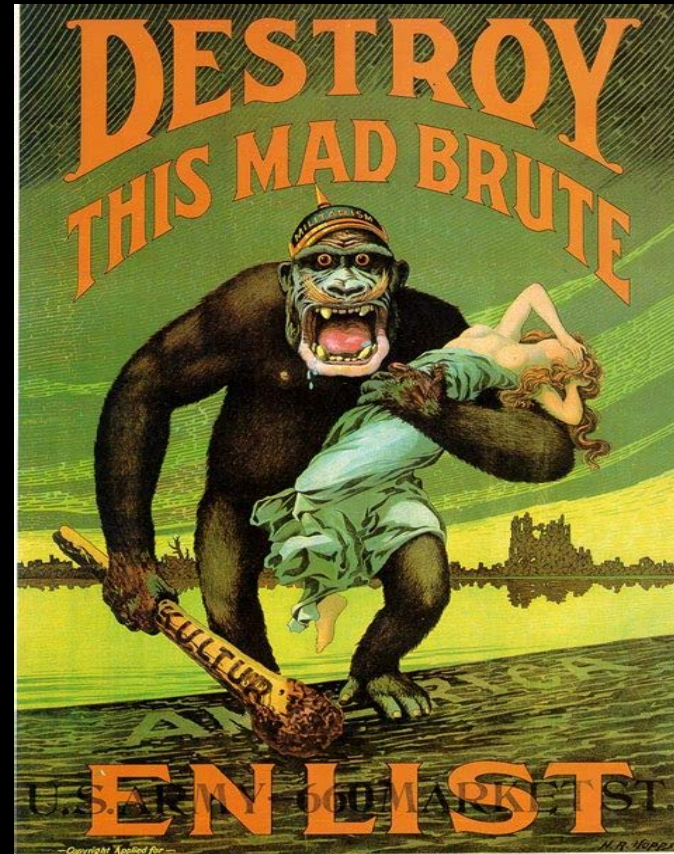
PROPAGANDA

prɑpəˈgændə

Latin Origin- Propagare. To propagate, To extend or increase.

1. R.C. Church. Usually with the. (a) More fully Congregation of (the) Propaganda. A committee of Cardinals responsible for foreign missions, founded in 1622 by Pope Gregory XV (officially known since 1967 as the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples); (b) (more fully College of (the) Propaganda) a college established in Rome in 1627 by Pope Urban VIII for the training of missionaries. Now hist.

2. An organization, scheme, or movement for the propagation of a particular doctrine, practice, etc.

3. The systematic dissemination of information, esp. in a biased or misleading way, in order to promote a political cause or point of view. Also: information disseminated in this way; the means or media by which such ideas are disseminated.

http://www.oed.com.libproxy.utdallas.edu/view/Entry/152605?rskey=NZL6YA&result=1#eid

How is propaganda a response to and part of the modern condition?
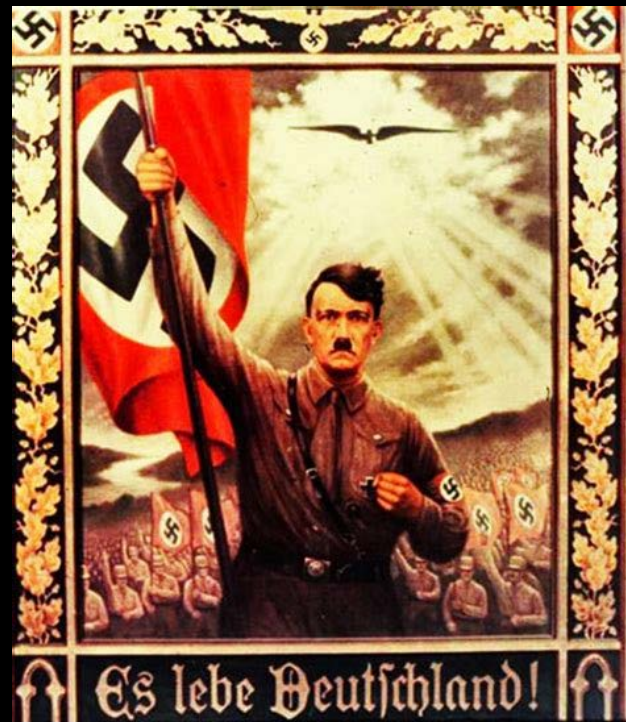
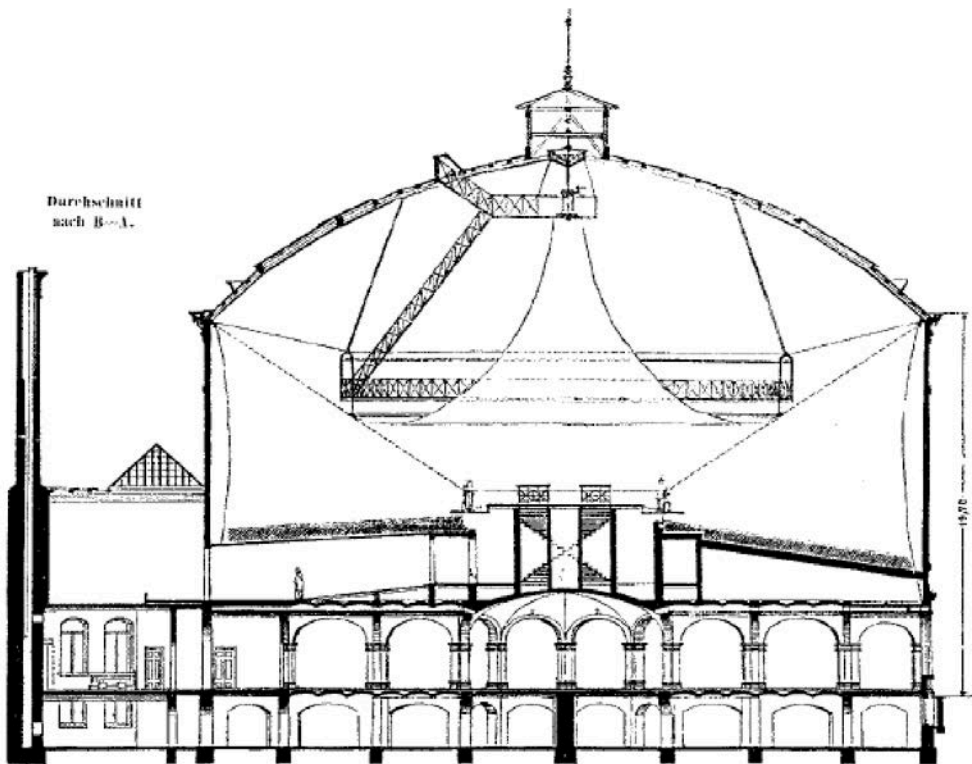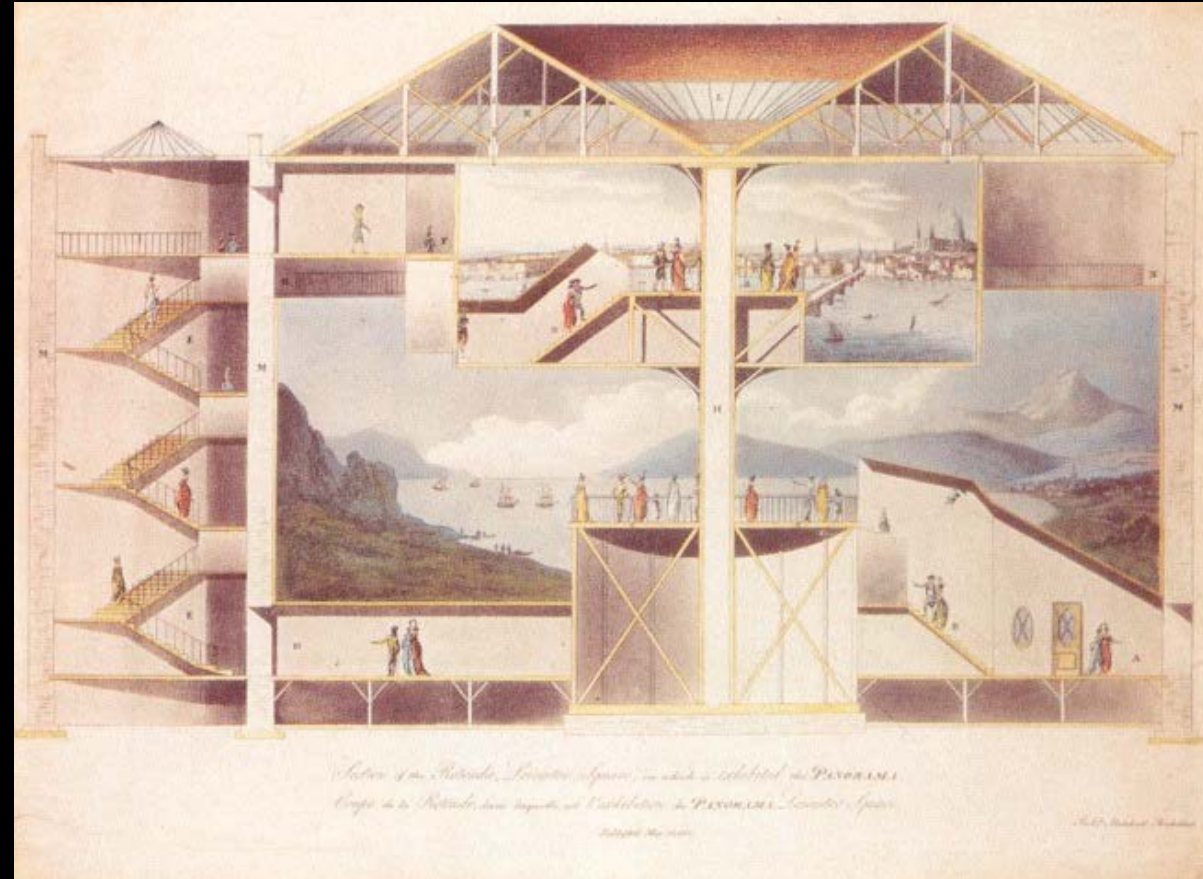# Panoramas as Immersive Experiences
Panoramas and VR

Figure 3.7 Rotunda of the Sedan panorama. Cross-section, design: Ende and Böckmann. In *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, December 26, 1883, p. 613.

Robert Barker, Rotunda at Leicester Square, London, 1793

The panorama as proto-cinematic architecture creating an immersive experience of virtual reality.

Panorama

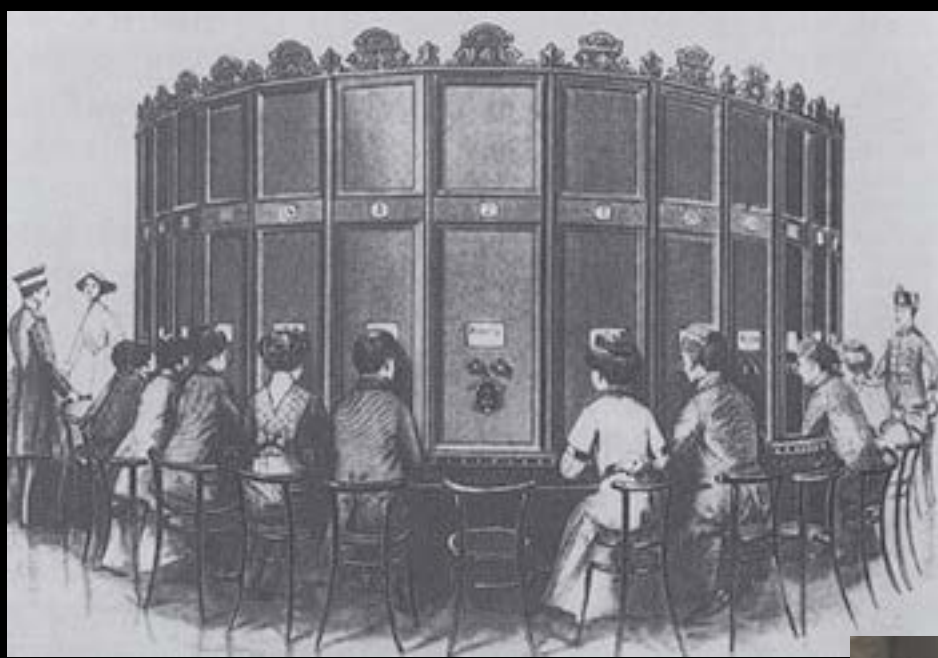Robert Barker, Rotunda at Leicester Square, London, 1793
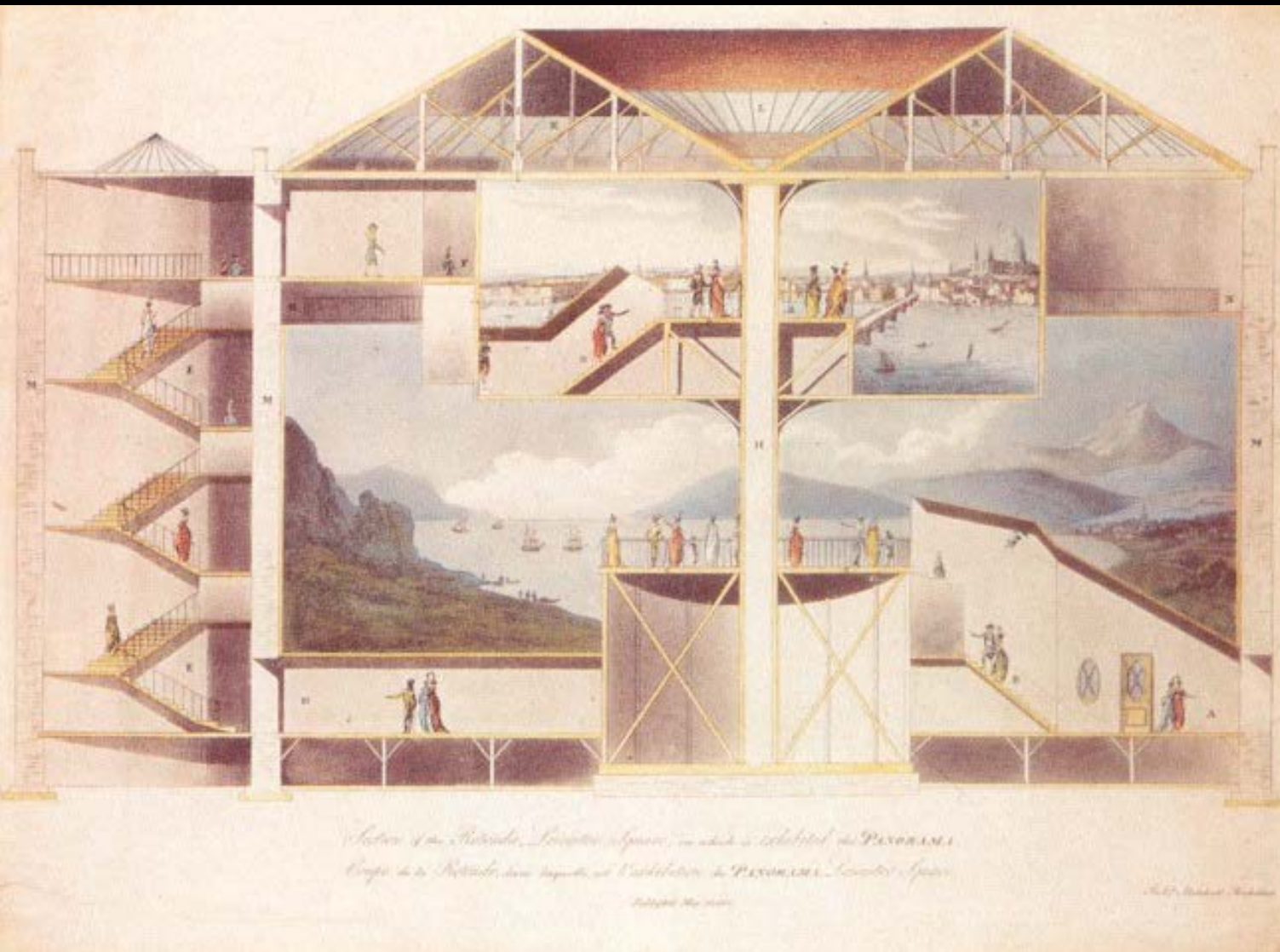
The exterior of a Panorama building

The term "panorama" was coined by the Irish painter Robert Barker in 1792 to describe his paintings of Edinburgh, Scotland shown on a cylindrical surface, which he soon was exhibiting in London as "The Panorama".

pænəˈræmə

1.
 a. A picture of a landscape or other scene, either arranged on the inside of a cylindrical surface, to be viewed from a central position (also called cyclorama), or unrolled or unfolded and made to pass before the spectator, so as to show the various parts in succession. Hence, more generally: any pictorial representation of a panoramic view.
 b. A continuously passing scene; a mental vision in which a series of images passes before the mind's eye.
2. A complete and comprehensive survey or presentation of a subject.
3. An unbroken view of the whole region surrounding an observer.

Left: View of Edinburgh from original panorama

Above: An advertisement for the Panorama, Leicester Square, London: showing the battle of Trafalgar. Colored engraving by Lane, after Barker, 1806

The Kaiserpanorama, from 1883, was situated in Berlin. This attraction featured a moving carousel where the spectators looked at several panoramas of foreign cities through peepholes. Inventor August Fuhrmann commissioned photographers and painters from around the world and established a collection of about 125,000 panoramas.

The Kaiserpanorama is a type of of stereoscopic entertainment medium used chiefly in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It was a precursor to film. It would normally have around 25 wooden stations, each with a pair of viewing lenses. Inside the device there would be a rotating mechanism showing numerous stereoscopic images on rear-illuminated glass, giving a 3D effect.

AUGUST FUHRMANN IN BERLIN.

Selbsteinkassirendes Wandelpanorama.

Blatt I.

Fig. 2. Schnitt x-x.

Fig. 1.

Zu der Patentschrift

№ 52946.

PHOTOGR. DRUCK DER REICHSDRUCKEREI.

August Fuhrmann, The Kaiser-Panorama, 1889

From German Patent (D52946-1889) for a 12 seat coin operated stereoscopic viewing device:

This apparatus is constructed entirely of metal, has a precision spring driven movement, which is wound every two hours. There are 8 places available with achromatic glasses. Money insertion shows 24 from 32 transparent glass stereos and then closes the glasses when the last picture has been viewed. Any form of lighting on the inside. The money falls into the iron base, which is provided with safety lock.

Anton von Werner (and 13 other painters), Panorama of The Battle of Sedan, Berlin 1883

PRUSSIA
[1525-1947]

- Prussia was a historically prominent German state originating in 1525
- The area known as Prussia was inhabited in early times by West Slavic tribes, ancestors of the modern Poles, in the West, and Baltic tribes, closely related to Lithuanians, in the East. Sometime after the seventh century, the area was invaded and settled by pagan German tribes, later known as Prussians.
- A major event in German history was the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War in 1871, making Germany a world power. It was during this war that, in 1870, Prussian Prime Minister Otto von Bismarck orchestrated the unification of the German states.
- The German Empire was established under Prussian leadership with Bismarck as Chancellor.
- After Germany's defeat in World War II, West Prussia and East Prussia were divided by Poland and the Soviet Union.
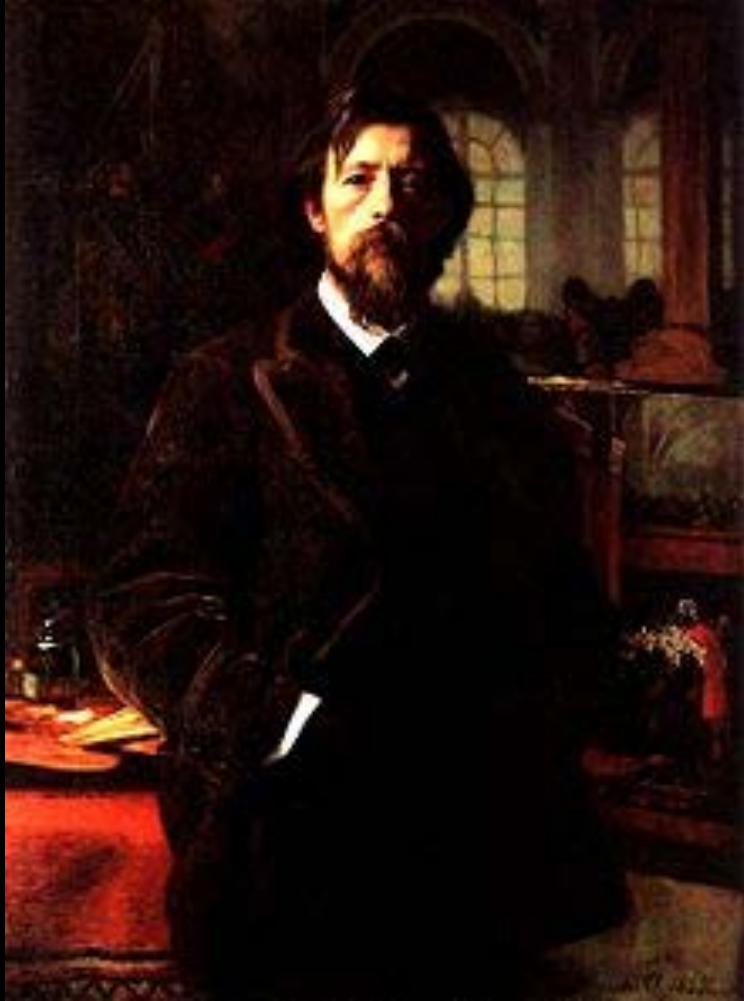
Anton von Werner (1843-1915) was one of the most respected historical painters of his time. The Franco-Prussian War (1870) in which he participated as a war painter became his crucial experience.

- He was born into a family of officers.
- Apprenticed as a decorative painter in 1857 and from 1860 onwards studied painting at the Prussian Academy of Arts in Berlin
- Upon recommendation of the grand duchess of Baden, he attended the victorious final phase of the Franco-German war as an observer.
- His impressions from that time influenced his subsequent artwork greatly.
- In 1871 Anton von Werner was invited by Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm to witness the formation of the empire, which he subsequently turned into the subject of his most famous painting Proclamation of the Kaiser at Versailles.

Anton von Werner, Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm with the corpse of General Abel Douay, Weißenburg on 4 August 1870, 1889

Anton von Werner, Amor, 1872

Anton von Werner, Crowning of Wilhelm I to Emperor of Germany, in Versailles, aka Proclamation of the Kaiser at Versailles, 1882; second version for the Berlin Ruhmeshalle or Hall of Fame; destroyed in WWII

The Berlin Ruhmeshalle or Hall of Fame was a permanent exhibition from 1891 to 1945 that celebrated the Prussian state and its monarchy, especially its kings and military leaders.

Detail of Werner's Proclamation of the Kaiser at Versailles, 1882

Werner rejected all naturalist and impressionistic trends in art categorically.

'Uniformknopfrealismus' 'uniform button realism'

Anton von Werner, Discussion of a War Strategy in Versailles, 1900

Anton von Werner (and 13 other painters), The Battle of Sedan, Berlin 1883

THE UNIFICATION OF GERMANY
1815–1871

- Prussia, 1815–1866
- Annexed by Prussia, 1866
- Joined Prussia in forming the North German Confederation, 1867
- Joined with Prussia to form the German Empire, 1871
- Alsace-Lorraine ceded to German Empire by France, 1871
- German Confederation, 1815–1866
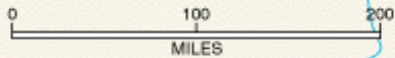
The Battle of Sedan

The Battle of Sedan was fought during the Franco-Prussian War September 1-2, 1870. It resulted in the capture of Emperor Napolean III and large numbers of his troops and for all intents and purposes decided the war in favor of Prussia and its allies, though fighting continued under a new French government. It was the most decisive battle of the war. The battle resulted in the capture of Napoleon III and his entire army and decided the war for Prussia. A new French republic continued to fight after the capture and exile of Napoleon III. The French had 17,000 casualties and 21,000 captured and the surrender gave the Germans 83,000 more. The German suffered only 9,000 killed and wounded. The high French casualties were due to the German artillery.
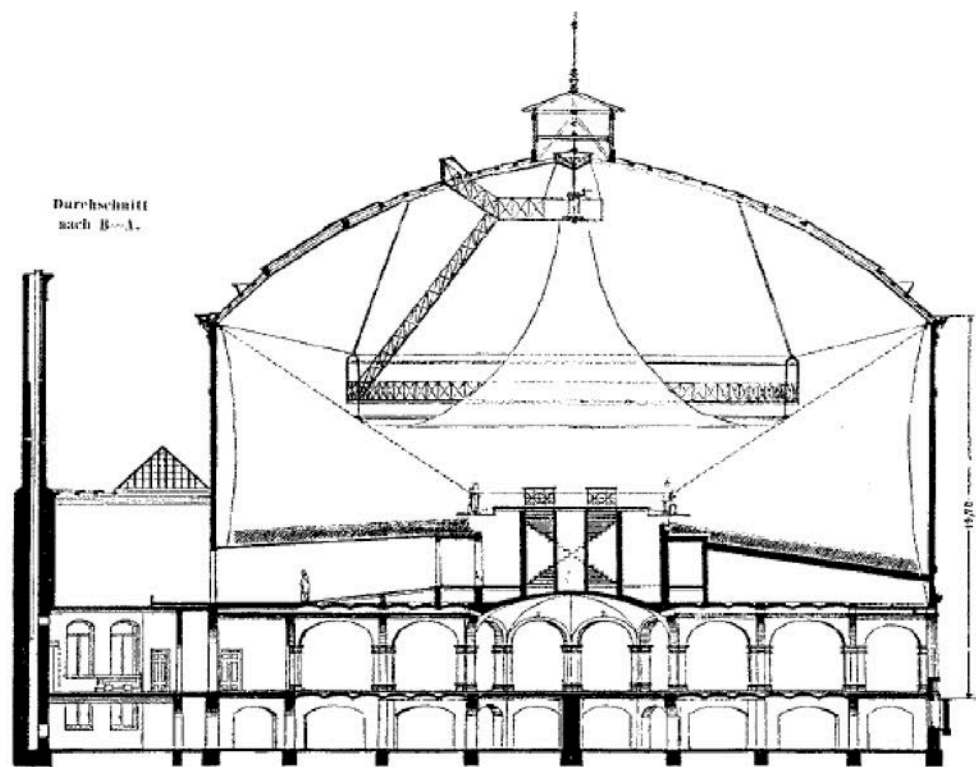
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Rm1vhNSJOo

Figure 3.7 Rotunda of the Sedan panorama. Cross-section, design: Ende and Böckmann. In *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, December 26, 1883, p. 613.
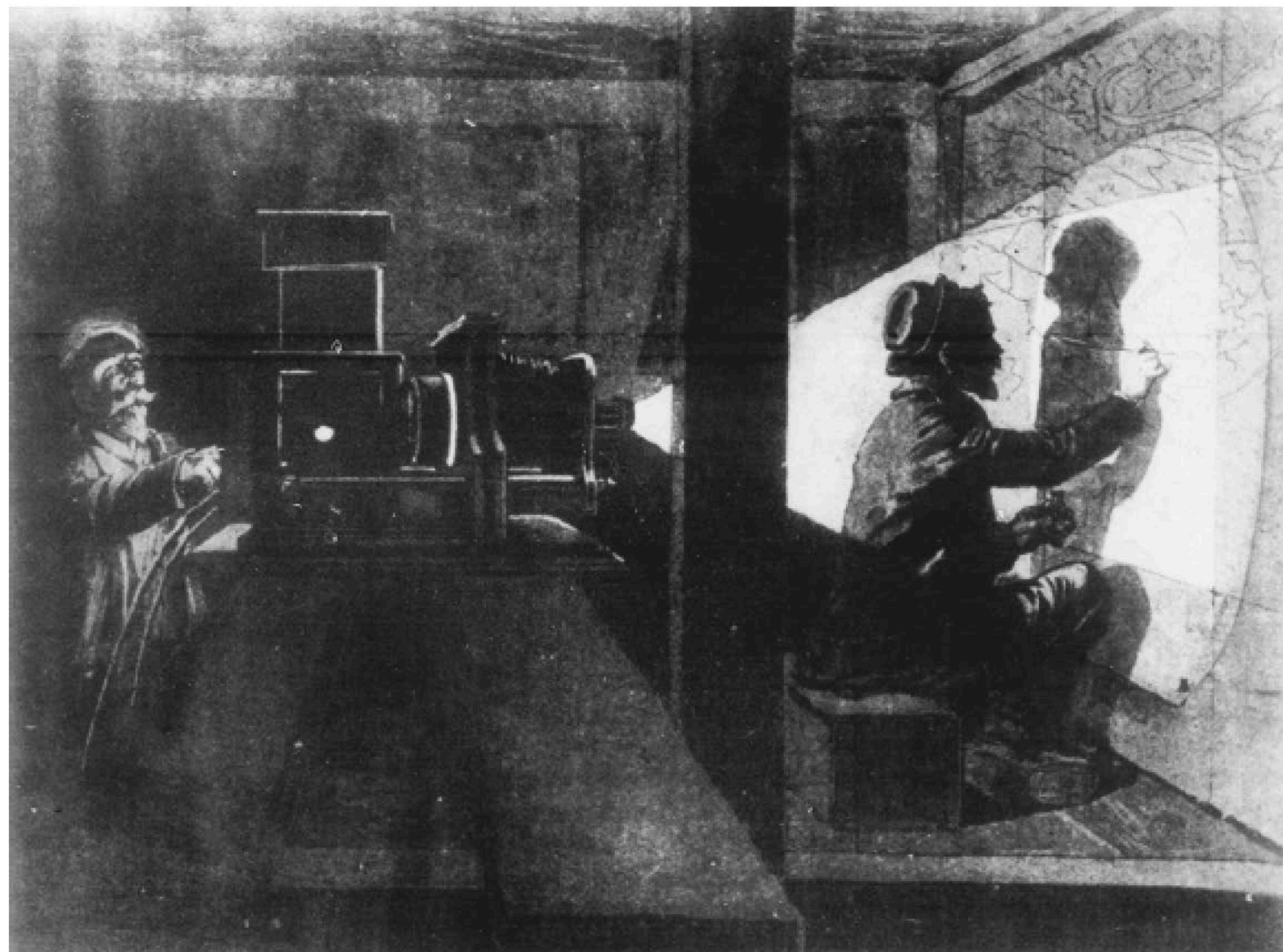

Figure 3.6 Projection of a photographic plate is used to create the 1:10 outline of the panorama of Madagascar, 1900. By kind permission of Silvia Bordini.

The Sedan Panorama of 1883 was a fusion of art and science, based on the optical and physiological principles of Hermann von Helmholtz. It was the most expensive image of the time measured more than 7000 square feet, and brought the Battle of Sedan to the Alexanderplatz in Berlin.

After the Franco-Prussian 1870/71 the "dark side" of the panorama saw its greatest popularity. Millions of visitors came to Berlin to see the zenith of illusive techniques, the Sedan Panorama of 1883. It was a fusion of art and science, based on the optical and physiological principles of Hermann von Helmholtz. It was the most expensive image of the time measured more than 7000 square feet, and brought the Battle of Sedan to the Alexanderplatz in Berlin.

The *Neue Preußische Zeitung* wrote: "At first the visitor is frozen... then he's afraid of the horses and feels compelled to draw back. The air seems to be filled with swirled-up dust... Trumpets bray and drums thunder."

With calculated precision, both the 360-degree image and the 3D interior concentrated the attention and hooked the observer. The image was not experienced as a self-contained object; indeed it negated the idea of a closed work of art, appearing instead as reality - everything was image. The technique was so effective that even in the 1980s, authoritarian societies like North Korea, China or Iraq, used the panorama as an instrument of nationalistic propaganda.
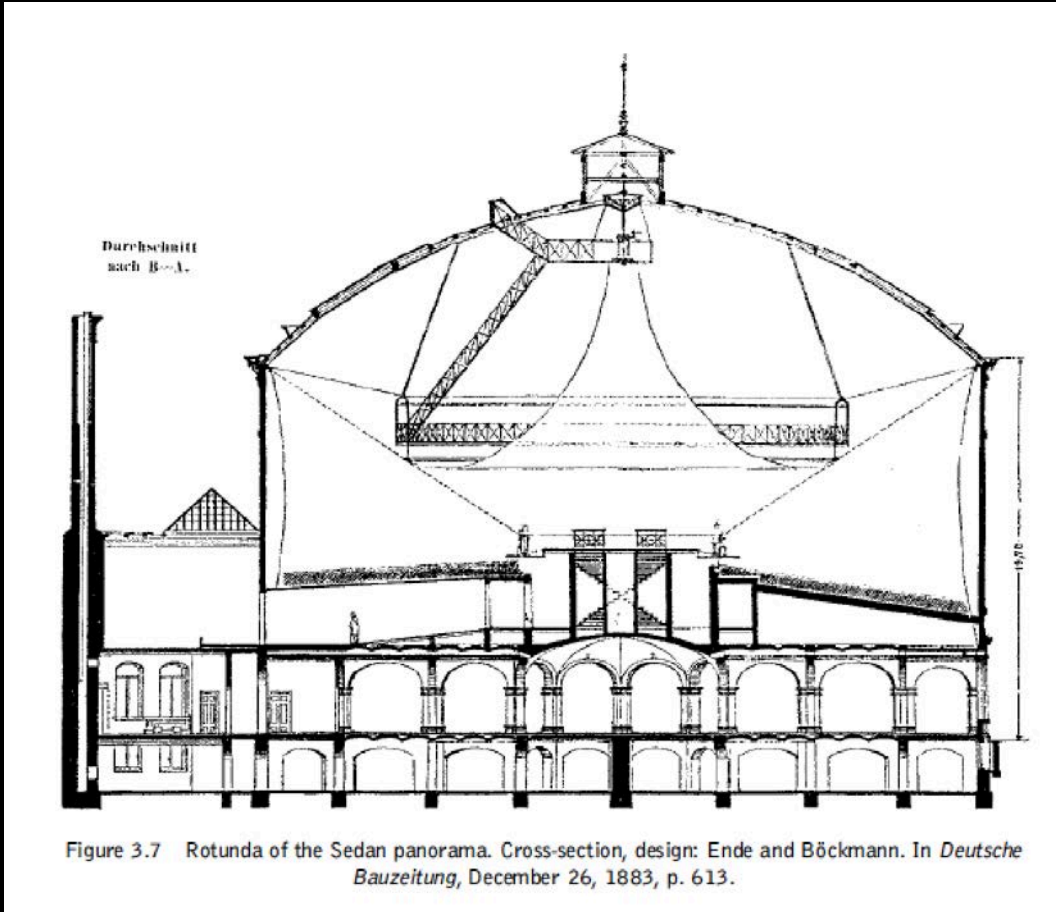

Figure 3.7 Rotunda of the Sedan panorama. Cross-section, design: Ende and Böckmann. In *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, December 26, 1883, p. 613.

http://www.alfakom.se/specks/1900ca-berlin-hs.htm

Hermann von Helmholtz (1821–1894) was a German physician and physicist. He emphasized experience as important for the formation of perception. He identified the "unconscious inference," describing an involuntary, pre-rational and reflex-like mechanism which is part of the formation of visual impressions. His thinking is based on the fact that the information available from the retina and other sensory organs is not sufficient to reconstruct the world. Size, distance, and other properties need to be inferred from uncertain cues, which in turn have to be learned by experience. Based on this experience, the brain draws unconscious inferences about what a sensation means. In other words, perception is a kind of bet about what's really out there.

HOW DO SCIENCE AND ART SHAPE THE WAY WE THINK? IS SCIENCE IN SERVICE OF PURE HUMAN EXPERIENCE? WAR PROPAGANDA? BOTH?

The intention was that this specific historic moment, the defeat of the ''traditional enemy'' and the ''birth of the Kaiserreich,'' should be indelibly etched on the collective memory of the public by this monumental work, which left the impression that one had been there oneself. **This was the essence of official state interest in the panorama**. The effect produced by the vast immersive image space was linked with that of the dioramas, which functioned as portraits of military commanders, and were complemented by the genre paintings in the restaurant. The message had differentiated facets: The panorama was suggestive and gripping; the dioramas in their darkened rooms exuded an aura of reverence; and the simple pictures of soldiers in peacetime operated on a lighter, burlesque level. The latter, which were artistically undemanding, fulfilled an important function in the overall effect, for in recollection, the panorama and dioramas stood out even more effectively against these sentimental genre paintings.

-- Oliver Grau, *Virtual Art: From Illusion to Immersion,*

WAR PROPAGANDA

VIRTUAL REALITY   ENTERTAINMENT

JINGOISM/PATRIOTISM

What is the role of war propaganda in contemporary American cinema?