

Introduction

Collection, Recollection, Revolution

In 1867 the Petit Trianon at Versailles played host to a display of the personal possessions of Marie-Antoinette. The show was organised as part of the Universal Exhibition but also expressed Empress Eugénie's cult for the martyred queen.¹ The commission charged with tracking down items that had once belonged to the royal family was overwhelmed by the hundreds of donations that came flooding in 'as if by magic from palaces and houses, from shops and cottages' all over France. Fine art appeared alongside a medley of personal, perishable souvenirs: a toy cannon used by the dauphin; a book of fabric samples from the queen's dresses; an ivory cane used by Louis XVI during his imprisonment; a snuffbox snatched from the murdered body of the duc de Brissac. The committee exclaimed that the peregrinations of these wayward objects could have furnished the plots for 'the most exciting, most curious, most poignant, most touching, most comic novels of reality'. For the past seven decades, the pomp and trappings of royalty had been hawked on the open road or hidden away in private storerooms. The coronation robes worn by Louis XVI were tracked down in Rouen, where a shocked Gustave Flaubert learned that they had been unwittingly used by a theatre troupe to lend glamour to their proceedings.² The finely embroidered bedspread in which the terrified queen had wrapped her son during the assault on the Tuileries eventually came to adorn the closet of a landlady in the Palais-Royal.³

The final exhibition united 144 objects with different provenances and chequered trajectories. Eleven were gifts from the empress herself, eager

¹ C. Pincemaille, 'L'impératrice Eugénie et Marie-Antoinette, autour de l'exposition des souvenirs de la reine au Petit Trianon en 1867', *Versalia*, 6 (2003), 124–34.

² M. F. de Lescure, *Les palais de Trianon: histoire-description, catalogue des objets exposés sous les auspices de Sa Majesté l'Impératrice* (Paris: Henri Plon, 1867), pp. 223–4, 226, 231, 245.

³ A. Marx, 'Indiscretions parisiennes – le couvre-pieds d'une reine', *Le Figaro*, 14 April 1867.

2 Introduction: Collection, Recollection, Revolution

to offer her subjects a lesson in historical piety.⁴ But the majority came from private lenders, whether specialist collectors of eighteenth-century objects, like Léopold Double, or keepers of sentimental heirlooms. A black satin slipper that had been plucked from the Tuileries by an army officer on 10 August 1792 was offered by a family of horse breeders.⁵ The secretary for the commission, Mathurin de Lescure, marvelled at the centrifugal forces that had scattered relics from the Bourbons right over France. The spiral of upheaval spanned from the October Days in 1789 to the February Revolution of 1848, encompassing ‘the fall of dynasties, exiles following on from exiles, the necessities of emigration, the vicissitudes in fortunes, the chance auctions which cast to the winds the vestiges of the old regime, ever since the great auction of ’94’. All these factors had precipitated a startling circulation of historic objects, multiplying ‘the owners of these fragments, these portions of royalty, even in the obscurest places’.⁶ The cycle of insurrections that punctuated French politics, exacerbated by urban redevelopment and a booming art market, had furnished a diverse mix of collectors with new opportunities for acquiring, and new ways of accessing, pieces of the past.

Reuniting and exhibiting royal objects in Versailles in 1867 was a deliberate negation of the earlier, cataclysmic, process of dispersal. The liquidation sales of 1793 and 1794 formed a black legend for nineteenth-century collectors, appalled by the loss of French masterpieces abroad. In 1870, baron Charles Davillier recalled the desultory scene:

What a lamentable history – we will endeavour to write it one day – is that of artworks during the period of the Terror. How many masterpieces were destroyed by vandalism; how many were sold for a crust of bread! On 10th August, at the time of the sack of the Tuileries, the royal furniture, the clocks, the most precious art objects were hurled out of the windows. The sumptuous furniture of the château of Versailles, publicly put on sale, was at low prices swapped in exchange for assignats, and became the prey of hawkers, scrap-iron merchants and coppersmiths.⁷

⁴ Other loans included a little marble bust of the queen, a scrapbook of fabric cuttings from her wardrobe, a ring given by Louis XVI to his confessor on the scaffold and a portrait of the Dauphin. A. McQueen, *Empress Eugénie and the arts: politics and visual culture in the nineteenth century* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), p. 193; C. Granger, *L'Empereur et les arts: la liste civile de Napoléon III* (Paris: Ecole des Chartes, 2005), p. 128.

⁵ M. Tourneux, *Marie-Antoinette devant l'histoire: essai bibliographique*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Henri Leclerc, 1901), p. xiv; H. Barbet de Jouy, *Notice des antiquités, objets du moyen-âge, de la Renaissance et des temps modernes, composant le Musée des Souverains* (Paris: Charles de Mourgues frères, 1866), p. 186.

⁶ Lescure, *Les palais*, p. 245.

⁷ C. Davillier, *Le cabinet du duc d'Aumont et les amateurs de son temps* (Paris: Aubry, 1870), p. ix.

The Versailles sales were symbolic terminus of the old regime, and art lovers deplored and documented these events with equal energy: a poster advertising the auction at the Petit Trianon in August 1793 now hangs in the Wallace Collection a few steps away from the *secrétaire* by Jean-Henri Riesener sold that day.⁸ Despite his animus towards Jacobin politics, exhibition organiser Lescure recognised that the Revolution was not simply traumatic, acting to erase monarchical society, but also generative, multiplying the material traces of this society and permitting its imaginative reconstruction. The cultural cleansing carried out by the Jacobins had furnished scavengers with extraordinary opportunities – so much so that Lescure jested that ‘the principles of 1789 must be dear to anyone who possesses a collection’.⁹ A passionate devotee of autographs, Lescure knew well that no sooner had the Bastille fallen in July 1789 than trophy hunters were picking over the site, fishing out charred documents from the fortress’s archives.¹⁰ Simultaneously a critic of 1789 and its indirect beneficiary, Lescure embodied the ambivalence of many nineteenth-century collectors, who idolised the refinement of the old regime and yet who were inescapably children of the Revolution.

The dialectic between political upheaval (revolution), material recuperation (collection) and the development of historical consciousness (recollection) has never been directly addressed, although it was commonplace in nineteenth-century commentary. In 1861 painter and critic Horsin Déon recognised how far the whole nineteenth-century art market was built on a founding act of dispossession:

By ruining families, toppling mansions and châteaux, the excesses of ’93 dispersed into our towns and countryside a multitude of artistic treasures, which were like so many springs which for a long time watered and nurtured this business [in antiques]. Minor amateurs, dealers, second-hand vendors, tireless looked for wandering objects; they formed collections of them that they came to sell in Paris, either informally, or in public sale. ... Among these objects, almost always in a bad condition, the knowledgeable investor occasionally made some discoveries which secured his fortune.¹¹

⁸ Wallace Collection Inv.: F302. For a revisionist study of these sales, see R. Gaillard, ‘Le Garde-Meuble sous la Révolution et l’Empire (1792–1815): une institution royale en contexte républicain puis impérial’, unpublished PhD thesis, École des Chartes (2013).

⁹ Lescure, *Les autographes et le goût des autographes: portraits-caractères-aneccdotés-curiosités* (Paris: Jules Gay, 1865), pp. 9, 38.

¹⁰ T. Stammers, ‘The refuse of the Revolution: autograph collecting in France’ in C. Armenteros, T. Blanning, I. DiVanna, D. Dodds (eds.), *Historicising the French Revolution* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), pp. 39–63.

¹¹ H. Déon, ‘Observations sur la tableaumanie’, *Annuaire des artistes et des amateurs* (Paris: Jules Renouard, 1860–2), vol. II, pp. 317–18.

4 Introduction: Collection, Recollection, Revolution

Just as explicit was radical journalist, Henri Rochefort, who the following year insisted on the fertility of post-revolutionary conditions. ‘From 1810 to 1825’, he reflected, ‘not a day passed which was not marked by the discovery of some new abandoned or buried masterpiece.’ Thanks to the ‘artistic upheaval triggered by the revolution’, which scattered paintings and precious objects in all directions, individual collectors had been able to construct galleries that were now of an ‘almost inestimable value’.¹² Such quotations, which could be easily multiplied, stage but also simplify the connections between the French Revolution and historical consciousness, between the Jacobins’ proscription of the past and the private reclamation of its value. Most seriously, they fail to problematise the figure of the collector, whose opportunities and agenda were transformed in the post-revolutionary period. In this new material context, what should be collected, how it should be acquired and by whom remained intensely controversial. To better understand the triangular relationship between collecting, historical consciousness and the revolutionary politics of heritage, each of these core concepts must be discussed in turn.

Collection

Whether in the formation of state institutions, the construction of national pasts or the origins of academic disciplines, collecting was fundamental to the post-Enlightenment project of ordering the world.¹³ In the nineteenth century, collecting was pursued on an unmatched scale and with unprecedented and systematic ambition. Through its encyclopaedic mission, it summoned up and miniaturised distant times and places; in a time of disturbing instability, it offered a dream of fixity and rootedness; it encouraged forms of individual expression and gave physical shape to dreams of communal belonging. Its taxonomies of peoples and things remain among the most influential and contentious legacies of the nineteenth century, just as its physical embodiment in the museum, the archive and the gallery continue to structure and constrain research today. Contemporaries frequently affirmed that the expansion in both public and private collections was a defining characteristic of the era.¹⁴ To tackle the history of collecting in the nineteenth century is, to a

¹² H. Rochefort, *Les petits mystères de l’hôtel des ventes* (Paris: Dentu, 1862), pp. 46–7.

¹³ For the best general survey of the topic, see A. MacGregor, *Curiosity and enlightenment: collectors and collections from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

¹⁴ According to the *Grand dictionnaire universel du XIX^e siècle* by Larousse: ‘La collection est un des goûts qui sont appelés à caractériser plus spécialement ce siècle’. See E. Bielecki,

considerable extent, to engage with the conceptual grammar of the century itself.¹⁵

Yet it remains striking that the potential and significance of collecting as a practice has been far more readily acknowledged by scholars of the early modern period. From the art galleries of princely patrons to the formation of botanic gardens and cabinets of curiosities, collecting has been revealed as a critical aspect of the courts and academies of Renaissance and Enlightenment Europe.¹⁶ Historians of science have underlined the indispensable role of specimens and artefacts in the production of knowledge, just as they have underscored how the acquisition and circulation of objects created remarkable networks of *savants* from across the globe.¹⁷ As Paula Findlen has demonstrated for Italy, the quality of collections was integral to scholarly self-fashioning and patronage networks, and soon the possession of rare or beautiful objects came to heighten the lustre of patricians and aristocrats too.¹⁸ The very conception of mind, of cognition and of selfhood in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was worked out through the analogy with the properties of material things.¹⁹ Beyond the importance of collecting in forging communal and personal identities, the repositories of objects created in the early modern period exercise an enduring influence on how these eras have been historicised and remembered.²⁰

The excitement of these insights has been only partially extended into the nineteenth century, owing to the impasse of 1789. Drawing on the schema laid down by Foucault, many historians have posited a conjoined political and epistemic break at the close of the eighteenth century, a rupture in which the relations between power, objects and knowledge

The collector in nineteenth-century French literature: representation, identity, knowledge (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2012), p. 1.

- ¹⁵ S. Waterman, 'Collecting the nineteenth century', *Representations*, 90.1 (2005), 98–128.
- ¹⁶ H. Brederkamp, *La nostalgie de l'antique: statues, machines et cabinets de curiosités* (Paris: Diderot, 1996); K. Pomian, *Collectors and curiosities: Paris and Venice, 1500–1800* (Cambridge: Polity, 1990); A. Schnapper, *Le géant, la licorne, la tulipe: collections et collectionneurs dans la France du XVII^e siècle* (Paris: Flammarion, 1988); C. Guichard, *Les amateurs d'art à Paris au XVIII^e siècle* (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2008).
- ¹⁷ On this expanding topic, see recently P. N. Miller, *Pereisc's Mediterranean world* (Harvard University Press, 2015); A. Craciun and S. Schaffer (eds.), *The material cultures of Enlightenment arts and sciences* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).
- ¹⁸ P. Findlen, *Possessing nature: museums, collecting, and scientific culture in early modern Italy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 293–345.
- ¹⁹ S. Silver, *The mind is a collection: case-studies in eighteenth-century thought* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015).
- ²⁰ Findlen, 'Possessing the past: the material world of the Italian renaissance', *The American Historical Review*, 103.1 (1998), 83–114.

6 Introduction: Collection, Recollection, Revolution

were radically redrawn.²¹ *Naturalia* and *artificialia*, once studied as a continuum, were increasingly sundered into distinct fields of inquiry; at the same time, the task of conserving the cultural assets of the people was increasingly entrusted to the state.²² The presumed contrast between corrupt private cabinets and enlightened civic institutions was a central theme in Jacobin discourse: ‘the Museum is not supposed to be a vain assemblage of frivolous luxury objects that serve only to satisfy idle curiosity’, thundered Jacques-Louis David in 1794. ‘What it must be is an imposing school.’²³ For Krzysztof Pomian, private collecting became decoupled from the operations of power after 1789, and as national institutions increasingly took over the function of educating the public, private collectors retreated into a closed domain of pleasure and idiosyncrasy.²⁴ In Dominique Poulot’s formulation, the transformation of the Louvre from palace to museum resulted in the ‘symbolic depersonalisation of collection’: by cleaning artworks of their feudal past, and subjecting them to rational classification, the revolutionaries proclaimed the redundancy of individual proprietors compared to the impersonal history of things. Liberated from their royal, aristocratic or clerical owners, objects could now, with the aid of science, speak for themselves.²⁵ Whilst private collecting of course persisted into the nineteenth century, it was necessarily a residual practice, whose agents lacked intellectual credibility or a coherent public agenda.

This chasm in the historiography has been reinforced theoretically through the writings of Walter Benjamin. For Benjamin, the nineteenth-century collector was imagined as a rebel against nineteenth-century commodity culture and utilitarianism. He associated the collector with the rise of bourgeois domesticity and sealed his transgressions within the bounds of the domestic interior, ‘the place of the refuge of Art’.²⁶ This characterisation was itself derived from nineteenth-century fiction, and literary scholars have perceptively interrogated the characters whose

²¹ E. Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the shaping of knowledge* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 12–22, 167–90; S. Pearce, *On collecting: an investigation into collecting in the European tradition* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 39–56.

²² T. Bennett, *The birth of the museum: history, theory, politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 35–8.

²³ Cited in A. McClellan, ‘The musée du Louvre as revolutionary metaphor during the Terror’, *The Art Bulletin*, 70.2 (1988), 308.

²⁴ Pomian, ‘Collections: une typologie historique’, *Romantisme*, 112 (2001), 18.

²⁵ D. Poulot, ‘Le Louvre imaginaire: essai sur le statut du musée en France, des lumières à la République’, *Historical Reflections*, 17.2 (1991), 191. See also Findlen, *Possessing nature*, pp. 395–6.

²⁶ W. Benjamin, ‘Louis-Philippe or the interior’ in *Charles Baudelaire: a lyric poet in the era of high capitalism*, trans. H. Zohn (London: New Left Books, 1973), pp. 167–8.

eccentricities and compulsions became synonymous with collecting as a whole: the pitiable hero of Honoré de Balzac's *Cousin Pons* (1847), who tried in vain to protect his private museum from the rapacity of his family; the delusional duo of Bouvard and Pécuchet, whose crackpot morass of odd and ends were brilliantly skewered by Flaubert; or the sybaritic Des Esseintes from *À Rebours* (1884), depicted by Joris-Karl Huysmans as a degenerate who spurned society to wallow in a domestic oasis of sensations. The cumulative impression left by such authors is that collecting represents a narcissistic and self-referential hobby, unable to communicate anything beyond personal whims or to transcend the four walls of the gentleman's cabinet.²⁷ Literary scholarship has tended to reproduce the pathology of collectors in the nineteenth-century imaginary and interrogated collecting via representations, rather than social practice.²⁸ This is unfortunate when we consider that these novelists happily indulged in the mania they diagnosed and exoticised in others. Balzac was an incurable collector of historical curios, just as Gautier's novel about collecting, *Le Roi Candaule* (1844), carried echoes of his prefaces written for sales catalogues.²⁹ The finest study of the literature of collecting in France, and perhaps of nineteenth-century collecting in general, Dominique Pety's monograph on the Goncourts, succeeds precisely because it entwines, rather than segments, the brothers' textual, visual and material preoccupations.³⁰

Since collecting is assumed to be a private affair in the nineteenth century, it follows that it has been equated with individualism. Due to this biographical focus, present-day scholarship has fragmented into a mosaic of distinct and often disconnected case studies.³¹ Most agree that the attempt to find holistic psychological or psychoanalytic explanations for collecting have proved a dead end.³² The focus on collectors' temperament, however, has proved enduring, as it resonates with the

²⁷ S. Jouve, *Obsessions et perversions dans la littérature et les demeures à la fin du dix-neuvième siècle* (Paris: Hermann, 1996); E. Apter, *Feminizing the fetish: psychoanalysis and narrative obsession in turn-of-the-century France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 39–64.

²⁸ See J. Watson, *Literature and material culture from Balzac to Proust; the collection and consumption of curiosities* (Cambridge University Press, 1999); A. Green, *Changing France: literature and material culture in the Second Empire* (London: Anthem Press, 2011).

²⁹ C. Rizzo, *Le collectionnisme au XIX^e siècle: Théophile Gautier et les préfaces aux catalogues des ventes aux enchères* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2015).

³⁰ D. Pety, *Les Goncourt et la collection: de l'objet d'art à l'objet d'écrire* (Geneva: Droz, 2003).

³¹ B. Vouilloux, 'Le collectionnisme vu du XIX^e siècle', *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*, 109.2 (2009), 416–17.

³² W. Muensterberger, *Collecting, an unruly passion: psychological perspectives* (Princeton University Press, 1994).

8 Introduction: Collection, Recollection, Revolution

enormous affective weight that nineteenth-century collectors invested in their possessions. Objects were frequently anthropomorphised as trusted companions within collectors' autobiographies. The *ex libris* of playwright and bibliophile Guilbert de Pixérécourt affirmed that a good book was 'a friend that never changes' ('un ami qui ne change jamais').³³ The son of medievalist Paulin Paris described his father's books as 'friends in the midst of which was spent my childhood', each volume containing a 'precious memory, that of the first reading, the charm of initiation, of unexpected finds, of long strides to the discovery of a new world'.³⁴ The intimate ties between the owner and his objects account for the poignant, sometimes lachrymose, scenes of separation that came with the end of a life or, just as tragically, the end of a collection.³⁵ Describing the distressing dispersal of the cabinet of Eugène Piot, Charles Baudelaire commented that for a true art lover, an ensemble of objects 'must appear like a family, and a family of one's choosing'.³⁶ Cherished possessions were an extension of personhood, with owners and their collections bound together in what Pascal Griener has described as a single 'symbolic body': 'a transcendent, irrational, but all powerful self, presiding mysteriously over the gathering of objects'.³⁷ Ludic versions of this myth imputed an animistic energy, even a mysterious volition, to material culture. A staple plot line in Romantic *contes fantastiques*, the belief in the secret agency of things was a truism among nineteenth-century collectors, who liked to speculate that they did not just choose their favourite objects so much as their objects chose them.³⁸

However, a strictly biographical approach risks naively repeating collectors' own sentimental narratives, rather than interrogating them critically; it prevents recognising the commonalities between cohorts of collectors, or the contextual constraints upon their activities; and it fails to consider collecting strategies that transcended the individual (for instance, corporate collecting, or dynastic collecting across generations of the same family). The purely biographical approach prioritises the

³³ P. Lacroix, 'Guilbert de Pixérécourt', *Le bibliophile français*, 2 (1868), vol. IV, 205.

³⁴ *Catalogue des livres anciens et modernes composant la bibliothèque de feu M. Paulin Paris* (Paris: Léon Techener, 1881), p. viii.

³⁵ These farewells replicated the description given in the memoirs of comte Loménie de Brienne of the dying cardinal Mazarin revisiting his artworks for the last time, muttering, 'Il faut donc quitter tout cela!'

³⁶ C. Baudelaire, 'Vente de la collection de M. Eugène Piot' in *Écrits sur l'art*, (ed.) F. Moulinat (Paris: Livre de Poche, 1992), p. 553.

³⁷ P. Griener, 'The collector's art museum as a symbolic body', *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 52 (2007), 197.

³⁸ See P. Castex, *Le conte fantastique en France, de Nodier à Maupassant* (Paris: Librairie José Corti, 1951).

intentions of the creator of a collection at the expense of subsidiary actors (such as dealers, critics, advisers and competitors), as well as its social functions. In a remarkable study of collecting in nineteenth-century Spain, Oscar Vázquez has insisted that the visibility of the collector as an autonomous subject was inseparable from the proliferation of new legal instruments, bureaucratic documents and institutional spaces within the liberal state. In this anti-subjectivist reading, the individualism of the collector was generated by structural factors.³⁹ In common with other accounts indebted to Pierre Bourdieu, Vázquez understands art primarily as a tool of legitimation. Pushed to extremes, this ahistorical presumption can flatten out the differences between types of collecting and struggle to explain why certain kinds of objects conferred social prestige at specific moments in time. Nonetheless, Vázquez's view is an important corrective and calls for us to ask what social and cultural work collections performed for their owners and wider audiences. Far from hidden assets, the collectors' 'refuge' was regularly breached by tourists and photographers, curators and connoisseurs, painters and politicians.⁴⁰ The societal significance of individual collections is thrown into relief by reconstructing the political, moral and aesthetic environment in which they were embedded. Sven Kuhrau's 'social topography' of collectors in Wilhelmine Berlin exemplifies the explanatory potential of uncovering such metropolitan networks.⁴¹

This book will contest the reigning assumption that the French Revolution spelled the eclipse of the private collecting and evacuated it of scholarly or national significance. It will explore instead an alternative periodisation, one that views the Revolution as opening an era in which collecting was reimagined, problematised, mobilised and contested until the end of the nineteenth century. Doing so calls for reuniting the 'poetics' of collecting with a study of it as a material practice, testing the mythic personality of the collector against market conditions, political regimes, institutional formations and the evidence from object-based criticism.⁴² Only in this way can the *politics* of post-revolutionary

³⁹ O. Vázquez, *Inventing the art collection: patrons, markets and the state in nineteenth-century Spain* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania University Press, 2001), pp. 1–29.

⁴⁰ For parallels, see D. Sachko Macleod, 'Mid-Victorian patronage of the arts: F. G. Stephens's "The private collections of England"', *The Burlington Magazine*, 128 (1996), 597–607; U. Müller, 'The amateur and the public sphere: private collectors in Brussels, Antwerp and Ghent through the eyes of European travellers in the long nineteenth century', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 29.3 (2017), 423–38.

⁴¹ S. Kuhrau, *Der Kunstsammler im Kaiserreich. Kunst und Repräsentation in der Berliner Sammlerkultur* (Kiel: Verlag Ludwig, 2005).

⁴² Pety, *Poétique de la collection au XIX^e siècle: du document de l'historien au bibelot de l'esthète* (Presses universitaires de Paris Ouest, 2012).

10 Introduction: Collection, Recollection, Revolution

collecting be reinstated, revealing how the appropriation, exhibition, interpretation and transmission of material culture permitted a clutch of private individuals to make a decisive intervention in French national life. By stressing the public implications of private collecting, this study suggests not only that collecting was differentiated from other (gendered) acts of consumption but that it was embraced as a kind of high-minded cultural work, with important claims upon France's past and its posterity.⁴³ Far from being privatised actors adrift in the nineteenth century, collectors were in the front line of ideological struggles over the shaping of collective memory, the administration of the national heritage, the reform of canons of taste, the morality of the market and public access to, and ownership of, 'symbolic goods'.⁴⁴ All these interventions stemmed directly from the close link between collecting and the dissemination of historical consciousness. To that extent, the modernity of this seemingly outmoded practice was directly correlated to its task of apprehending and re-ordering the effluvia of the past.

Recollection

The age of revolutions, it has been argued, heralded a new conception of historical time, disrupting and reframing the relationships between past, present and future. Put crudely, the past was displaced and exoticised, the future yawned open as an unlimited 'horizon of expectation' and an intense consciousness of the uniqueness of the present epoch was born.⁴⁵ For Richard Terdiman, 1789 plunged the nineteenth century into a profoundly debilitating 'memory crisis', as 'people experienced the insecurity of their culture's involvement with its past, the perturbation of the link of their own inheritance'.⁴⁶ Drawing on counter-revolutionary gloom, Peter Fritzsche has depicted early nineteenth-century thinkers struggling to accept the empty present, split between the rival pull of

⁴³ On collecting versus consumption, see L. Auslander, 'The gendering of consumer practices in nineteenth-century France' in V. De Grazia, E. Furlough (eds.), *The sex of things: gender and consumption in historical perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 86–8; M. Daly Goggin, B. Fowkes Tobin (eds.), *Material women, 1750–1950: consuming desires and collecting practices* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

⁴⁴ Y. Potin, 'Collections et trésors. représentations sociales et politiques de l'accumulation', *Hypothèses*, 7.1 (2004), 13–22.

⁴⁵ For conceptual or intellectual history approaches see R. Koselleck, *Futures past: on the semantics of historical time*, trans. K. Tribe (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985); F. Hartog, *Régimes d'historicité: présentisme et expériences* (Paris: Seuil, 2003), pp. 77–107.

⁴⁶ R. Terdiman, *Present past: modernity and the memory crisis* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 3.