

President Ilves noted that the founders of the museum did not want to preserve Estonian culture as a token of former times, as an exposition. Instead, the museum was seen as having a role in reflecting the future of the nation. “The Estonian National Museum grew out of a desire to develop our national culture,” said President Toomas Hendrik Ilves today in the University of Tartu at the ceremony marking the 100th anniversary of the Estonian National Museum. “This idea grew along with our national consciousness and intellectuals, and progressed from the establishment of our own museum to the establishment of our state.”

According to the Estonian Head of State, during the last century, the museum has become a memorial to its founders, and more generally to the independent consciousness and existence of the Estonian nation.

“The collection of our spiritual and material heritage resulted in the understanding that Estonia’s own culture is old and valuable,” said President Ilves. “This wealth supported our consciousness. Our language and culture grew from being an indicator of social affiliation to being the foundation of Estonian identity.”

“During the last century, the Estonian National Museum has become one of the most firm cornerstones of our independence, and was the source of support in even the most difficult times.”

President Ilves noted that the founders of the museum did not want to preserve Estonian culture as a token of former times, as an exposition. Instead, the museum was seen as having a role in reflecting the future of the nation. He said that the founders were helped by the belief that Estonians only have a future as progressive cultured people. “A proper museum is a source for the creation of culture, a modern scientific center, a bridge between yesterday and tomorrow,” stressed the Head of State.

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