

The State Hall

The State Hall of the Austrian National Library is one of the most beautiful historic libraries in the world.

Emperor Charles VI (1685–1740) commissioned the construction of this jewel of secular Baroque architecture for his Court Library. The Hall was designed by famous Court architect **Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach** (1665–1723) and was built between 1723 and 1726 by his son Joseph Emanuel (1693–1742). Court painter **Daniel Gran** (1694–1757) completed the ceiling frescoes by 1730. After serious construction damage **Franz Anton Maulbertsch** (1724–1796) restored them in 1769.

At 77.7m long, 14.2m wide and 19.6m high, the State Hall takes up the whole front of Josefsplatz. The frescoes in the entrance wing show wordly and military themes, whereas in the rear “peace wing”, which is adjacent to the Hofburg and was originally used as entrance wing by the Emperor, allegorical depictions of heaven and peace can be seen. The fresco in the 30m-high dome illustrates the apotheosis of Charles VI, his glorification and deification as Emperor, commissioner of the Court Library and sponsor of the arts and sciences. Court scholar **Conrad Adolph von Albrecht** (1682–1751) created the ruling family’s Baroque programme for the decorative frescoes.

The larger-than-life marble statue in the oval-shaped centre of the State Hall represents Emperor Charles VI as “Hercules Musarum”. It dates back to 1735 and was allegedly crafted by Imperial Court sculptor **Antonio Corradini** (1668–1752). The other marble statues depict Austrian and Spanish Habsburgs and were cre-

ated by the brothers **Peter** (1660–1714), **Paul** (1648–1708) and **Dominik Strudel** (1667–1715); For more information please refer to the back of this information sheet.

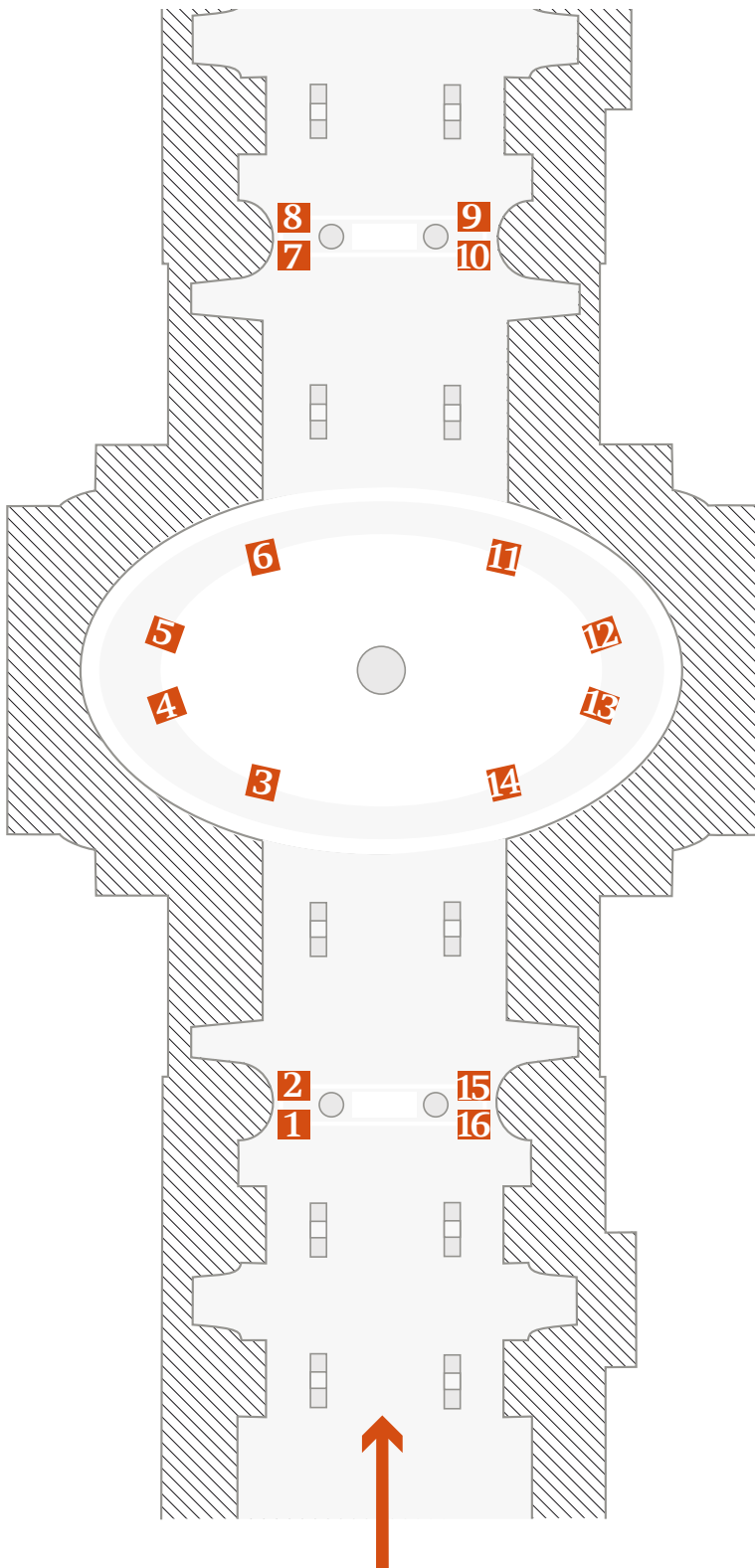
Together with the Baroque globes by **Vincenzo Coronelli** (1650–1718) in the centre of the hall and the walnut bookcases, the marble statues paint an authentic picture of the Baroque universal library of the 18th century.

Today the State Hall is home to around 200,000 books from 1501 to 1850, among them the majority of the 15,000 volumes of **Prince Eugene of Savoy’s** (1663–1736) collection. These are located in the middle oval. In cooperation with Google, the Austrian National Library is digitizing this historic and copyright-free collection. All hitherto-digitized books are available in the library’s online catalogue at www.onb.ac.at.

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The Statues in the State Hall



- 1 Emperor Ferdinand III
(†1657)
- 2 Leopold Wilhelm, Archduke of Austria
(†1662)
- 3 King Ferdinand IV
(†1654)
- 4 Rudolph III, Duke of Austria
(†1307)
- 5 King Philip II of Spain
(†1598)
- 6 Meinhard II, Count of Gorizia and Tyrol
(†1295)
- 7 Charles II, Archduke of Austria
(†1590)
- 8 Don Juan de Austria
(†1578)
- 9 King Charles III of Spain
(Emperor Charles VI; †1740)
- 10 Rudolf IV the Founder, Duke of Austria
(†1365)
- 11 Albert VII, Archduke of Austria
(†1621)
- 12 Maximilian III, Archduke of Austria
(†1618)
- 13 King Ferdinand V
(†1516)
- 14 Sigismund the Rich, Duke of Austria
(†1496)
- 15 King Charles II of Spain
(†1700)
- 16 King Albert II
(†1439)