

From the idea of a Copernican museum in Rome to the foundation of the Astronomical and Copernican Museum: 1873-1882

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The celebrations of the fourth centenary of Copernicus' birth held in Rome in 1873 at La Sapienza University gave rise to the idea of a permanent museum dedicated to the famous Polish astronomer. Despite the great interest that the initiative awakened from the very beginning, many years passed before a definitive location for the Museum was identified, which was associated with the Observatory of the Collegio Romano, then with the Astronomical Observatory of Rome in Monte Mario. The original collection of Copernican mirabilia was soon expanded by Artur Wolynski, the curator, and Pietro Tacchini, the director, with scientific material deriving mainly from Italian astronomical observatories. The Museum has thus become a complete compendium of astronomical instruments of a wide range of eras, ancient books and archival documents, which exhibit the evolution of astronomical knowledge from its beginnings to the present day.

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