

The Treasure of the Berlin State Museums and Its Allied Capture: Remarks and Questions

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Following the disclosure of archives in the former Soviet Union detailing art works taken from Germany at the end of World War II, it is now possible to reconstruct more accurately a history of those objects removed from Germany but never returned. Inconsistencies in the documentary evidence concerning both the location of objects sent West from Berlin and other repositories (particularly in the last few months of the war) and the number of objects returned to Germany indicate that the United States may have been involved in an unofficial policy of claiming as war booty art treasures from the conquered German nation. This article attempts to detail some of those inconsistencies by comparing what is known of the inventories of German museums before the war, the movements of art objects and repositories used during the war, and the inventories of the German museums today, in order to reconstruct some of this missing past.

THE PUBLICATION IN September 1995 of the book *Beautiful Loot*, by Konstantin Akinsha and Grigorii Kozlov, gave us substantial information about the plans and operations of the Soviet Trophies Commission in the Soviet occupation zone of Germany since 1945.¹ The authors hinted as to the whereabouts of large portions of Germany's cultural heritage and, in particular, reported information about the Berlin museum collections found in pertinent documents in the Russian archives.

Those documents serve as an important aid in the task of completing an inventory of German art works.² They make it possible for the officials of the Berlin State Museums to determine accurately what art was destroyed in World War II and to identify missing art work. Although access to these documents remains limited, it is now possible, for the first time since the end of World War II, to determine how many and which holdings from the different repositories of the Berlin State Museums were shipped to the Soviet Union, primarily in 1945 and 1946. Between 1955 and 1987, the Soviet Union returned much of this material seized after the war to East

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Germany (the German Democratic Republic or GDR). The Soviets never called it war booty, but later they referred to the material as “cultural valuables of the GDR that were temporarily kept in the USSR.”³ A comparison of these two complete shipping lists, those from 1945 to 1946 (showing items shipped from Germany to the USSR) and from 1955 to 1987 (showing those parts of the collections that were previously returned to the GDR),⁴ to the inventory of the Berlin State Museums in 1939 and the inventory today allows a definitive determination of which objects are still missing. It therefore can be deduced how many objects remain to be discovered in the former USSR. Any objects that were not brought to the USSR, however, obviously did not fall into Russian hands.

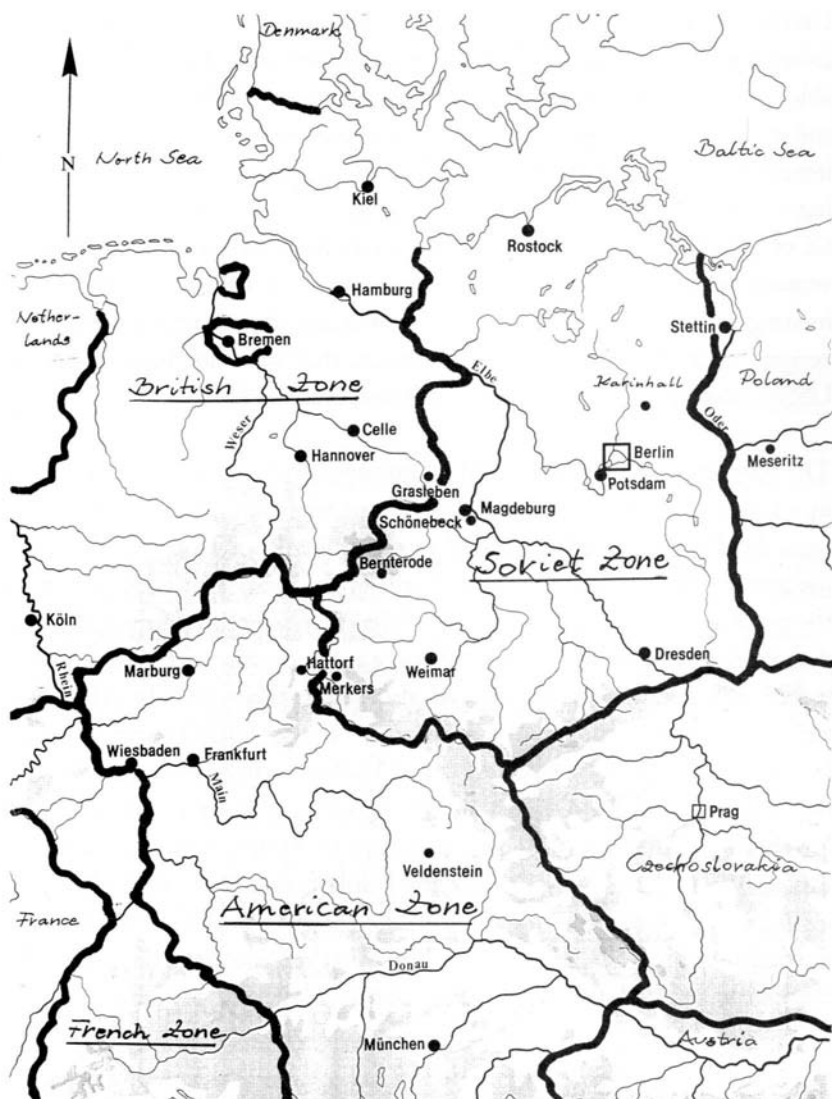
The chapter in *Beautiful Loot* titled “Thuringia: Impressionist Masterpieces in a Cellar”⁵ gives significant details about what happened on March 6, 1945, the day of the Führer’s order⁶ to send all cultural treasures owned by the State of Prussia westward. It also tells of the U.S. Army’s occupation of the potassium mines of Hattorf and Merkers/Kaiseroda during the first days of April 1945 and thereafter. What was the destiny of the treasures of the Berlin State Museums that were shipped to this area? The Allies had agreed at the Yalta Conference (February 4–11, 1945) that Thuringia would be part of the Soviet occupation zone.⁷ However, the region was taken by the U.S. Army and held until the end of June 1945. Early in July 1945, following the withdrawal of American troops to western Germany, a Soviet special commission led by Col. Andrei Belokopitov,⁸ head of the Trophies Brigades of Berlin, came to Merkers. The colonel’s men researched intensively the location of the different German art repositories in that area and the subsequent history of the objects that had been stored there.

1 HITLER’S EVACUATION OF THE BERLIN MUSEUM COLLECTIONS AND THEIR AMERICAN CAPTURE

1.1 COLONEL BELOKOPITOV’S SEARCH FOR A SECRET REPOSITORY

The Russians interrogated numerous individuals in the attempt to learn the location of the German art works hidden toward the end of the War. During the early days of May 1945, Belokopitov interrogated the general director of the Berlin State Museums, Professor Dr. Otto Kümmel,⁹ about what the Berlin museums had sent to the repositories now under American and British control. Belokopitov thus had a list from Professor Kümmel of the material that had been shipped from Berlin to Merkers.¹⁰ At Merkers, in July, the Russians also interrogated Professor Dr. Paul Ortwin Rave,¹¹ who most likely gave them a copy of the reports he had written in April 1945. He was questioned concerning his role as the officer in charge of the evacuation of art works from the Berlin State Museums to Merkers and Hattorf.¹² Lincoln Kirstein and Capt. Robert Posey had questioned Rave on

FIGURE 1.
MAP OF POSTWAR
GERMANY INDICATING
LOCATIONS USED DURING
THE EVACUATION OF
TREASURES FROM BERLIN
STATE MUSEUMS
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April 8, 1945. At that time, Rave gave them all the information he had about the Berlin objects that fell within his responsibility in the Merkers area; surely, he gave the same information to Colonel Belokopitov.

Comparing the information obtained in May from Kümmel and the information learned from Rave's report in July, Belokopitov found serious discrepancies. He became convinced that, unknown to Professor Rave, there was a second undiscovered repository of Berlin museum holdings in the same area. He wanted to find this repository by any means necessary, as he believed the Americans had not yet discovered it. Belokopitov was, however, unable to identify the location of this repository. He later came

to believe that those “lost” works had been stored in the potassium mine at Bernterode in the Harz mountains, another repository used only for art objects of the Prussian Castles and Gardens Administration, including the coffins of Prussian kings Friedrich Wilhelm I and Friedrich II (“the Great”) and the Prussian crown jewels.¹³ During the war, the entire mine had been used by the Germans as an ammunition depot, but during the last moments of the war, in March 1945, art works had been stored there as an emergency measure. Early in July 1945, however, just several hours before the arrival of the Red Army, the mine was blown up by “chance” or deliberately for Bernterode was part of the Soviet occupation zone.¹⁴ Belokopitov was deeply concerned about the possible loss of the art works at Bernterode because he was unaware that the U.S. Monuments, Fine Arts & Archives branch (MFA&A) had already removed the art works early in May 1945.

In *Beautiful Loot*, the lists of Kümmel and of Professor Gall, chief of the Prussian Castles and Gardens Administration,¹⁵ are compared. The lists seem to have been confused and are irreconcilable.¹⁶ Authors Akinsha and Kozlov could not have known that the evacuation lists were top secret in Germany, and the chief of one administration would not have had the lists of another administration. Only the German minister of culture had the complete information. We can conclude that the lists which Colonel Belokopitov received from Kümmel in early May 1945 included all the art evacuated to Merkers. Kümmel’s list showed that more objects were evacuated from Berlin than were placed into Professor Rave’s responsibility. A 1945 German document written by Willy Gottschalk,¹⁷ the importance of which has only recently been recognized, has helped to fill in a missing piece of the puzzle: the whereabouts of the materials.¹⁸ The German transport firm “Frachthenze,” of which Willy Gottschalk was the general manager, was officially responsible for most of the Berlin State Museums’ evacuations from 1944. This document states that Gottschalk brought thirteen trucks, about which Professor Rave was not informed, to Merkers in March of 1945. It was the contents of these trucks for which Colonel Belokopitov was searching.

The potassium mine of Merkers/Kaiseroda held secret underground repositories of the German Reichsbank and the Berlin museums. The village and the mine were occupied by Gen. George S. Patton’s Third U.S. Army on April 4, 1945. An extensive American report of nearly seventy pages, dated from April 26, 1945, but declassified only in 1987, details the whole U.S. Operation Merkers.¹⁹ In this operation, all the Reichsbank and the Berlin museums objects were removed and shipped to the Reichsbank building in Frankfurt on Main. A statement of Dr. Werner Veick,²⁰ a ranking Reichsbank official, in an appendix to the report verifies that one of

these art transports arrived with Mr. Gottschalk and was brought to the Reichsbank repository in the mine.²¹

This is one transfer about which Professor Rave did not know. On March 19, 1945, the Berlin State Museums and German Minister of Culture Bernhard Rust²² had ordered Professor Rave to move with his family from Berlin to Merkers, where he was to be responsible for the museums' mine repository. Rave wrote two reports, dated April 12, 1945 and April 24, 1945, concerning the German and American activities in March and April 1945.²³ In these reports, he refers to a diary that he later used to write articles on his Merkers experience. The manuscripts were never published and subsequently disappeared; the diary itself was destroyed when he burned it on February 22, 1962.²⁴

Some specific handwritten notes and lists support the quantities of material he cites in his two reports as being in his custody at Merkers.²⁵ Rave had a reputation as a meticulous person, so his figures seem trustworthy. However, he himself made a single reservation: some trucks came from Berlin without detailed lists or crate numbers, so he could note only the quantity of crates belonging to the different departments.²⁶ The contents of the different crates were registered on other lists in Berlin to which Rave never had access. This procedure is a method typical of the "top secret" transportation of valuables that is used even today. For Rave, there was one exception. He had received lists containing the artists' names and the inventory numbers of all paintings belonging to the Berlin National Gallery. All those paintings, without crating, were simply sandwiched between blankets and brought to Merkers in a van. Only by giving Rave a complete loading list could control over this haphazard shipment have been maintained. Even so, it was most unusual that Rave was told that a March 27 truckload held, in crate number ÄG (Egyptian Department) Nr. 34, the world famous bust of the Egyptian Queen Nefertiti.²⁷ Thus it becomes an important clue in further analysis of the documents.

According to Rave's papers,²⁸ the holdings of the Berlin State Museums from various departments came into his custody at Merkers. A list of these holdings appears in the Appendix of this essay.²⁹ Those quantities or amounts correspond to the official U.S. document, the so-called "Rave List,"³⁰ with almost no discrepancies. On April 12, 1945, American officers George Stout (MFA&A) and William A. Dunn (Finance Division) had ordered Rave to turn over to them all the lists in his possession and the details of his operation, as well as to relinquish all control of the art for which he was responsible at Merkers and Hattorf.³¹ Oddly enough, the Office of Military Government-U.S. (OMGUS) files prepared with Rave's help at Merkers and housed at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., contain only a single copy of the "Rave List," which is incomplete. The

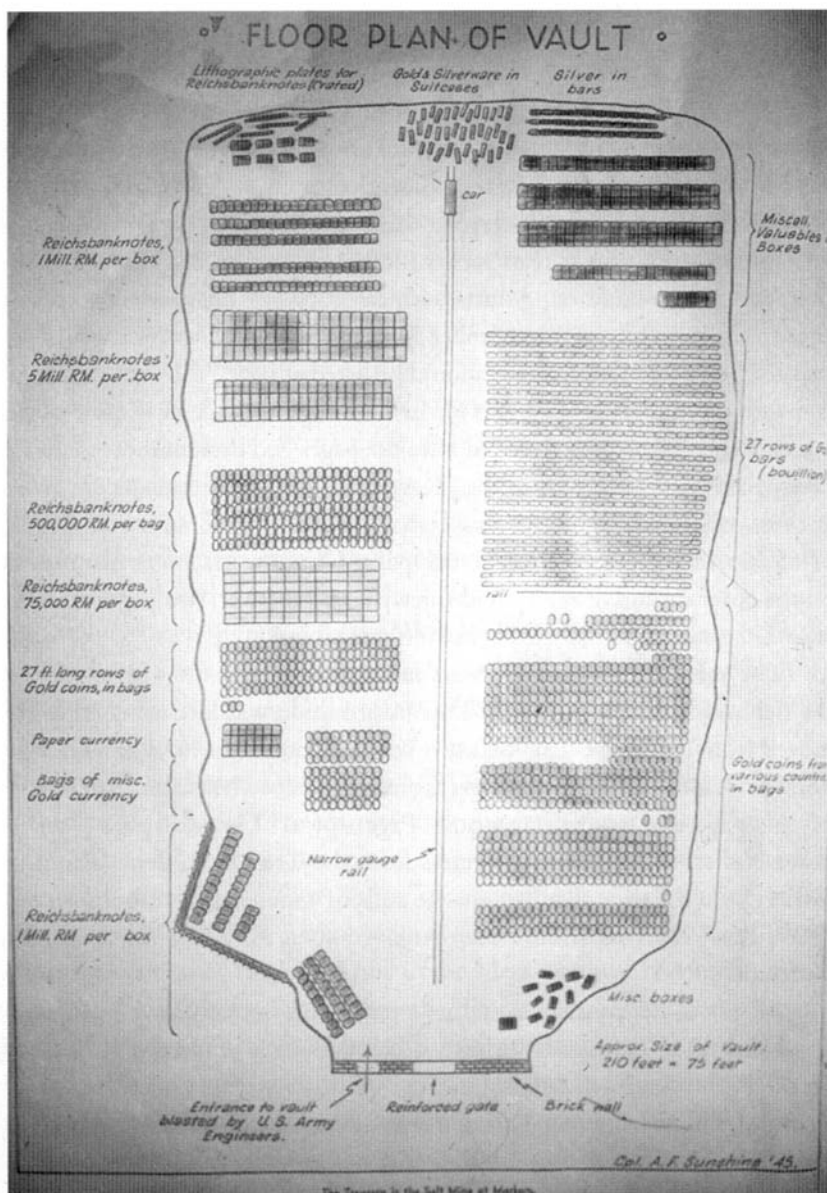


FIGURE 2.
FLOOR PLAN OF THE
REICHSBANK VAULT AT
MERKERS. ART WORKS
WERE STORED IN THE
LOWER RIGHT CORNER
"MISC. BOXES."
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cover of the "Rave List" gives Rave's complete account of the crate numbers at Merkers but, in some cases, lists fewer crates than Rave stated in his private report. The "Rave List" contains only the crate numbers that were known to Rave and does not include the quantity of crates whose numbers were not given to Rave by his superiors or other German officials.

The discrepancies in the number of holdings of the Sculptures Department (Kaiser Friedrich Museum and Deutsches Museum) of the Berlin State Museums are especially remarkable. First, this department should

have shipped 441 crates to Rave's repository in Merkers. Rave had knowledge of only 412 numbered crates, and this number presumably included 7 crates with Early Christian and Byzantine Art, a sub-department of the Sculpture Department. The "Rave List" page numbers are written in the hand of someone other than Rave, apparently that of an American. The numbering format consists of a category number followed by a page number, a style usually found in bureaucratic offices such as the U.S. Finance Division.³² Here, the numbering starts with category "2," but there is no reference to a section or category number "1." The "Rave List" cover page shows that the Sculpture Department should be listed at page "2.4," but that page is missing in the "Rave List" on file in Washington today. It is quite obvious that this section was removed after the pages had been numbered. In all department lists preserved in the "Rave List," the crate numbers are given in three columns. That means that each column should contain a maximum of 60 entries, with 180 entries on each page. Thus, the 412 crates mentioned on the cover should have required three pages. However, two pages seem to have disappeared before the pagination was added.

The second discrepancy occurs in the lists of tapestries belonging to the Schloss Museum in Berlin. This information was also apparently removed from the "Rave List" before it was paginated. The list starts on page number "2.6" with crate numbers from the Schloss Museum. At the top of this page is a typewritten note, "Page 1 of 2." The next page ("2.7"), however, lists the inventory of crates from the Gemälde Galerie (Painting Gallery). So the page that lists the 130 rolls of tapestries mentioned on the "Rave List" cover must have been removed at an early stage by American personnel.

All of these inconsistencies can be traced in Thomas Carr Howe's 1946 book, *Salt Mines and Castles*.³³ Howe, a U.S. MFA&A officer, was in charge of the Berlin State Museums' holdings while they were under the supervision of the U.S. Finance Division at the Reichsbank building, Frankfurt on Main. Most of the art objects stored there had been brought from Merkers to Frankfurt on Main by American troops in mid-April 1945. The first order that Howe received was from Capt. William A. Dunn, the same officer who interrogated Rave at Merkers. Howe was told to make an inventory of all the Berlin State Museums' holdings in the Reichsbank, and he began with the tapestries. When he completed this part of the task, Howe noted several discrepancies. From Howe's book, we know that Captain Dunn must have had a complete inventory of the contents of the crates deposited at the Reichsbank. Howe described Dunn's inventory as "a thick stack of papers."³⁴ Yet Howe recorded more tapestries than were included in Captain Dunn's list. Officer Howe's inventory work was stopped abruptly, when he was sent to Munich to supervise the Göring collection

that had been found in the Berchtesgaden area. Strangely, the Dunn inventory was later completely unknown to the MFA&A officers at the Wiesbaden Central Collecting Point (CCP) where from August 1945 all (or perhaps only a part?) of the Berlin State Museums' property was stored, after having been brought there directly from the Reichsbank, Frankfurt on Main. The MFA&A officers in charge of the Wiesbaden CCP had to make their own inventory by opening all the crates one by one. Dunn had possession of a complete list of the crate contents, and apparently a second list was available in Washington, D.C.³⁵

1.2 THE REORGANIZATION AND REDISTRIBUTION OF THE WORKS IN THE REPOSITORIES

There are many more open questions relating to the fate of the art objects that the Germans brought to Merkers. There are at least two facts that can now be substantiated. First, Rave had considerably more crates in Merkers than the number that came into the custody of the MFA&A on June 22, 1945,³⁶ which were returned to the West Berlin Sculpture Gallery between 1953 and 1958.³⁷ At least 80 crates are missing. Second, Rave had only 37 crates from the Egyptian Department of the Berlin State Museums in his custody at the Merkers repository.³⁸ Yet, some 161 crates (including the "Nefertiti") were transferred to the MFA&A in Frankfurt on Main and returned to West Berlin between 1956 and 1958 from the former Wiesbaden CCP.³⁹ The Nefertiti was not in case "Äg 34," as Rave had been informed, but was in case "Äg 28." Case "Äg 34" was recorded as "half empty" at the Wiesbaden CCP.⁴⁰ The Berlin curators were informed that all of these crates were found by the U.S. Army in the Merkers mine. During his meetings with Professor Rudolf Anthes, the director of the Egyptian Department of the Berlin State Museums from September 1945, Professor Rave insisted that he never had in his possession such a large number of crates from the Egyptian Department.⁴¹ This is also documented by entries in Anthes' diary on November 19 and December 15, 1945.⁴²

As we have seen before, the "Rave List" that was prepared for the "Commanding General, European Theater Operations (ETO)" starts with section "2," not section "1". Another list with section "1" therefore should exist. This "first" list should give the property record of the Berlin State Museums found not in Rave's repository at Merkers but in another repository of the same mine which, as we have seen, was completely unknown to Professor Rave. This list "1" is still missing today. It most probably was part of a "Report on Treasure Located at Kaiseroda Mine Merkers Germany"⁴³ dated April 18, 1945 and signed by B. Bernstein.⁴⁴ "Appendix 2: Tentative and Incomplete Inventory of Crates Contained Works of Art" of Bernstein's report could not be found in the National Archives, Washing-

FIGURE 3.
 RAPHAEL (1483–1520),
*THE MIRACULOUS
 DRAUGHT OF FISHES*.
 GOBELIN TAPESTRY
 (ACCORDING TO THE
 CARTOON OF 1515/16
 EXHIBITED IN THE VICTO-
 RIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM,
 LONDON), SILK AND
 WOOL, 394 × 442 CM,
 KAISER FRIEDRICH-
 MUSEUM, GEMÄL-
 DEGALERIE NO. 1251.
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ton, D.C., and is still missing as of 1997.⁴⁵ Presumably, it refers to art works that officials of the Berlin State Museums had placed in the custody of the German Reichsbank in 1945, which had been shipped to the Reichsbank storage in the Merkers mine.

How was it possible that German museum officers could make use of such top-level governmental evacuation facilities? Their situation was similar to that which existed in Washington, D.C., during the 1930s, when directors of the National Gallery of Art had close personal contacts with President Roosevelt's former treasury secretary, Andrew Mellon, one of America's foremost art collectors, and his successor, Henry Morgenthau.⁴⁶ In the German capital there were also strong personal contacts between the high-ranking officials of the Berlin State Museums and those of the Ministry of Finance and the Deutsche Reichsbank.⁴⁷ At the beginning of World War II, the Reichsbank gave part of its newly built strongroom at the Neue Münze (New Mint) to the Berlin State Museums, which served as their first large (1,050 square meters) bunker. It was used for safe keeping until the end of the war, particularly by the Egyptian and the Antique Departments, which had large storage facilities there.⁴⁸ When the Reichsbank evacuated its own gold and other valuables to Merkers, it surely kept its action top-secret. Professor Rave would not have had more than a general knowledge of such

transports, even if they contained art objects coming from the New Mint or other repositories used by the Reichsbank throughout Berlin.

A handwritten report by Willy Gottschalk, general manager of the “Frachthenze” company, dated August 19, 1945,⁴⁹ states that he had sent forty-five trucks from Berlin to Merkers during March and April 1945. Professor Rave accounted for only thirty-two trucks,⁵⁰ and this is the number officially recorded by the Berlin State Museums as well as to the Allied Kommandatura in Berlin.⁵¹ The appendix to Gottschalk’s document gives data concerning the evacuation of objects from other state agencies, such as the Berlin State Library, the universities of Marburg and Düsseldorf, and the Berlin State Museums, which he supervised between October 1942 and March 1945, before leaving for his family’s home in Saxony at the end of April 1945 to wait for the war’s end. Gottschalk’s document refers to “an announcement which I gave to the Bürgermeister (Mayor) of Niederwürschnitz and to the Landrat (the Landkreis chief administrator) at Stollberg, Saxony, letztmalig am (for the last time on) 9.7.45.”⁵² This means that Gottschalk was interrogated no later than on July 9, 1945. Because of poor travel and communication conditions during the months after the end of the war, it can be assumed that while Gottschalk remained in Saxony, he had no contact with any official of the Berlin State Museums. All the information in the document of August 19, 1945, must be the same as that which Gottschalk gave on July 9 and possibly earlier. Presumably, the interrogation on July 9, 1945, was ordered by Colonel Belokopitov, the Red Army’s Trophy officer in Berlin. The early date of Gottschalk’s document suggests that it is as valid as Professor Rave’s reports of April 12 and April 24, 1945,⁵³ because at that time, so soon after the end of World War II, the Germans would have had no specific reason to camouflage their evacuation operations.

On the other hand, there was at least one other “top-secret” evacuation transport in March 1945, which brought holdings of the Berlin State Museums to the western territories of Germany. Gottschalk was involved, but he served as a minor character. In mid-March 1945, the Berlin Museums had tried to ship a part of their most important treasures, deposited up to the war’s final days in the Flaktowers of the Zoo and Friedrichshain, by barge to the Grasleben salt mine. After the barge was loaded, it was learned in Berlin that there would be no fuel available to transfer the objects from the harbor of Calvörde to Grasleben. The barge, on its way to Calvörde, was stopped near Potsdam and its load was brought to a special train armed with anti-aircraft artillery, which was under the command of Göring’s Luftwaffe. This train left Potsdam about March 26, 1945, bound west for Magdeburg on the Elbe River, where it met up with another armed train of the Luftwaffe, which took over seven railway carriages containing parts of

Berlin's top museum treasures, presumably packed between more than 400 crated master paintings of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum.⁵⁴

The world public was told that these treasures "burned accidentally" during May 1945 in the Friedrichshain bunker in Berlin's Soviet sector shortly after the end of the war.⁵⁵ Until recently, the transport was kept secret and its journey from Magdeburg to its last point of destination was unknown. Could the destination have been Göring's castle "Veldenstein" near Nürnberg? Was this possibly the material referred to in an article of the *New York Times* on May 2, 1945, when the correspondent Gene Currivan wrote: "A little more than two weeks ago Reich Marshal Hermann Goering emptied his Bavarian Castle of the priceless art collection he acquired in recent years, supervised loading it in armored, air-conditioned railroad cars and started south toward the German redoubt area. He left behind parts of the Prussian State Collection, probably as a basis for a future plea for clemency."⁵⁶ This "find" must have fallen into the hands of the U.S. Army on April 21, 1945, when the castle of Veldenstein was captured. Otherwise, this *New York Times* article remains unclear and cannot be understood. The railroad transport, known of by a former German soldier, is not documented in official German and U.S. files even today. So, the whereabouts of this material are unknown, just as the whereabouts of the German-owned art in the Reichsbank depository at the Merkers Mine are also unknown.

It is interesting to note Gottschalk's misuse of the word "Nationalgalerie" (National Gallery) in his handwritten document and appendix of August 19, 1945. Gottschalk attributed to Berlin's National Gallery all the transport goods that he had handled during the Berlin evacuation. However, numerous documents in the Berlin Archives that relate to the specific transports which Gottschalk mentions prove that "Nationalgalerie" was Gottschalk's personal code name for all the departments of the Berlin State Museums. Gottschalk's misuse of the name "Nationalgalerie" was also noted by an eyewitness, a former German airman who was assigned to one of the evacuation shipments. The airman related that a civilian who gave the orders to the soldiers who had unloaded the previously mentioned barge always said, "Be careful, it's material of the Nationalgalerie!"⁵⁷ This shipment apparently contained material from the Berlin Gemäldegalerie (Painting Gallery) and various other departments of the Berlin State Museums, and not exclusively from the "Berlin National Gallery."

In his August document, Gottschalk explicitly mentions the property (and ministerial records?) of German Minister of Culture Bernhard Rust, who was responsible for the Berlin State Museums. This property consisted of "65 crates, in a truck and trailer and a truck with his Persian rugs."⁵⁸ This information can be compared with descriptions from other sources. Professor Rave mentions the same ministerial evacuation in his report of

April 12, 1945; however, he notes seventy-nine crates with "Rust's library."⁵⁹ One must recall that Professor Rave was never officially informed of the contents of the crates which he had to supervise and oversee. He could have acquired such knowledge only from personal communications by informed colleagues. On April 24, 1945, Rave reports that the Americans took into custody the twenty-three rugs of Minister Rust for the art transport to Frankfurt on Main on April 17 but left behind the seventy-nine crates of Rust's library.⁶⁰ In their book, Akinsha and Kozlov quote Soviet documents as showing that the USSR confiscated only forty crates of Rust's library.⁶¹ Therefore, it can be concluded that the Americans not only confiscated Rust's rugs but also between twenty-five crates (according to Gottschalk) and thirty-nine crates (according to Rave) belonging to the former minister. This must have occurred between April 17, 1945, and the end of June 1945, before the Russians took over the Merkers mine area, absorbing it into their occupation zone.

There are no reliable lists of the contents of the minister's crates. Some of the crates may have contained archival material related to the evacuation of art objects as well as other cultural assets from throughout Germany. From the beginning of the war, strict orders had been given that any relocation of this material had to be submitted in detailed list form to the Ministry of Science, Education, and Adult Education ("of Culture," as mentioned before), headed by Minister Rust.⁶² Those lists would be extremely important for the Berlin State Museums, in particular, because they alone would allow a complete inventory of the real losses from the museums during World War II. The lists of the Reichsbank surely would allow identification of those parts of the Berlin State Museums' collections which were brought to the Reichsbank repository at the Merkers mine for safe-keeping in March of 1945. At this time, no complete lists can be found in Germany. It seems possible that those lists can be located in American Archives, as the complete inventories of the German Reichsbank were confiscated by the Americans in April 1945 at Merkers. This property has not yet returned to Germany.⁶³

The properties of the Berlin State Museums held at the Merkers mine were brought to the Reichsbank building in Frankfurt on Main by the Americans in two convoys on April 15 and April 17, 1945. The convoy of April 15 had three ten-ton trucks with fine arts that were shipped together with the Reichsbank gold and other valuables.⁶⁴ Rave did not mention the convoy because he was unaware of it. Of the Reichsbank repository inventories available, the declassified document of the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, dated April 23, 1945, accounts for the Berlin collections held in the Reichsbank building at Frankfurt on Main at the time of the first inspection on April 22 as including 3,838 items.⁶⁵

According to other documents, art objects from other German repositories arrived at Frankfurt on Main shortly thereafter. Therefore, this Allied document accounts exclusively for the Berlin collections from Merkers and Ransbach, another mine near Merkers, where forty-five crates from the Berlin Painting Gallery had initially been stored on March 13, 1945, by Rave.⁶⁶ The number of uncrated paintings belonging to the National Gallery, Berlin, and the number of textiles are identical with the “Rave List.”⁶⁷

However, there are further discrepancies in the number of boxes of prints and drawings (2,091) and the number of crates with other holdings (1,214). In his report of April 12, Rave testified to the existence of 1,384 boxes of the Prints and Drawings Department and none from the Berlin Art Library. In his report of April 24, Rave mentions such boxes from the Art Library and indicates that they were taken out of the mine by the Americans.⁶⁸ The 1,387 boxes of the Department of Prints and Drawings and 740 boxes of the Art Library containing around 67,000 sheets of the graphics collection came back to the Berlin Museums via the Wiesbaden CCP. All together this was 700 boxes more than what Rave had in his possession at Merkers. Furthermore, this substantiates the fact that another repository existed at Merkers about which Rave did not know, and this can be no other than the Reichsbank storage room in the mine. In total, Professor Rave held in his repositories 983 crates, including 45 crates with about 500 paintings of the Painting Gallery in the Hattorf/Ransbach mine. Comparing this account with the U.S. documents, at least 231 crates (1,214 – 983 = 231) and 740 boxes of the Art Library, as previously mentioned, had been in Merkers in April 1945 but not in the custody of Professor Rave.

2 THE ALLIES’ REPARATION POLICY AND ITS POSSIBLE SECRET INSTITUTION

All the art found and confiscated by the U.S. Army in the Merkers mine came primarily into the custody of the U.S. Treasury Department’s Finance Division.⁶⁹ As late as June 22, 1945, parts of the Berlin State Museums’ collections which had been confiscated in April 1945 were transferred with a receipt “from the custody of Capt. W.A. Dunn, Finance Division, U.S. Group CC, to the Custody of Major Mason Hammond, Reparation, Deliveries & Restitution Division, U.S. Group CC.”⁷⁰ One may note that the MFA&A branch was part of this division.

Several facts support the assumption that major parts of the Berlin museum collections were selectively placed into a cultural pool. First, Belokopitov played out his suspicious hunch and searched for the second repository. Second, the original “Rave List” had pages missing and resulted in an altered list. Third, the final or tampered lists can not be reconciled with the crate contents. Fourth, Willy Gottschalk’s statement of the number of truck loads which he transported during evacuation shipments is not



FIGURE 4.
CHAPEL CROSS OF THE
TREASURE OF THE BASEL
CATHEDRAL (SECOND
QUARTER OF THE
FOURTEENTH CENTURY).
SILVER, PART GOLD, WITH
CLEAR ENAMEL.
KUNSTGEWERBEMUSEUM
BERLIN NO. K3861.
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ZU BERLIN, PREUßISCHER
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consistent with the number recorded elsewhere. Fifth, the Luftwaffe armed train disappeared with the Berlin museums' holdings, and sixth, the transfer of the art objects to the MFA&A from the U.S. Finance Division was very late.

The placement of these important parts of the Berlin collections into this special pool occurred, most probably, under the responsibility of the U.S. Treasury Department's Finance Division in preparation for a so-called policy of "restitution-in-kind" that the Allies had planned since 1943.⁷¹ These initial Allied plans were, in the event of Germany's unconditional surrender, to take art and other cultural objects of highest quality from

German museums and collections as reparations for the damaged and lost cultural property of those countries that had been occupied by the Germans during World War II.⁷²

It is obvious that only a part of the Berlin collections which were shipped in mid-April 1945 by U.S. Forces from Merkers to Frankfurt on Main finally came into the Wiesbaden CCP in August 1945.⁷³ It is assumed by this author that there was, in truth, a “reparation pool,” just as some Allied documents seem to demonstrate⁷⁴ and that it was created at that early time. The best objects were selectively withdrawn from all the collections in custody and placed in this property pool, surely as a top-secret operation. It can be assumed that U.S. target-forces (“T-forces”), special units assigned to implement reparation and restitution policies, were gathering intelligence throughout all of Germany as well as in the Berlin areas during March to June 1945.

Such a plan would have been facilitated by the postwar chaos in Germany. In an interview with Akinsha and Kozlov, Colonel Belokopitov described the Berlin Zoo area during the month of May as:

The Zoo was overcrowded with people of all possible nations. All the liberated displaced persons had organized a camp there. Their tents were everywhere—ecstasy, drinking, sex. Some soldiers, probably Americans, organized trade there. God knows, what was going on. You could count the days that remained until the Americans would take over the territory. American journalists were running around the tower. They, and of course American intelligence, knew that the Pergamon Altar was inside. They probably believed that all these treasures would be left for them. What to do?⁷⁵

Lending further support to the theory of the presence of “target-forces,” documentation suggests that the Baltimore 175th Infantry Regiment, a national guard unit, appeared in different places “simultaneously.” On April 30, at the same time that the unit was “liberating” seven tons of Hohenzollern royal family silverware near Lenzen on the east side of the Elbe River, it was also capturing a rocket facility.⁷⁶ Therefore, special T-forces came either before or after the American infantry to carry out special missions, such as the targeting of a vital weapons facility and the confiscation of valuables. A report by Soviet Marshall Zhukov, recorded in official diplomatic papers during the Berlin (Potsdam) Conference, complains to Stalin about the removal of entire factories, laboratories, equipment and goods, in addition to the removal of all technical personnel, engineers, and scientists along with their families.⁷⁷

To cover the mentioned discrepancies in the already documented property lists, the “target-forces” tampered with the lists and scrambled to other

German repositories to make up the difference with other material. For example, let us return to the eighty additional crates that had belonged to the Berlin Sculpture Gallery, the documentation of which had been removed from the "Rave List" by the Americans.⁷⁸ Apparently to fill this gap, the Americans sent a convoy to the Graslleben salt mine near Helmstedt, which was to be part of the British occupation zone of Germany, and took over all the crates of the Berlin Sculpture Gallery which had been stored there. Those twenty-two crates with art objects were again taken into the custody of Capt. W. A. Dunn on May 14, 1945, at the Reichsbank, Frankfurt on Main.⁷⁹ It is documented that the Americans pulled out many more crates from Graslleben and other mines which at that time were also under their control. Perhaps the motive for these movements was to fill in the missing material of altered lists or to cover up for the previously documented material which the Americans had confiscated. This theory seems to be the only explanation for all the alterations and discrepancies in the German and Allied documents dated 1945 and 1946 which related to the holdings of the Berlin State Museums.

If one accepts this theory, the disappearance of so many museum valuables and their continued absence up until today could only have been arranged by a special "U.S. Reparation Unit" in cooperation with some Berlin museum officials who had the complete lists of the holdings of all departments and knew of their whereabouts. There were two complete files of those lists of prewar museum inventories and their evacuation sites: one at the General Director's Office of the Berlin State Museums and the other in the ministry offices of Bernhard Rust.⁸⁰ The Rust file most probably fell into U.S. hands at the Merkers mine. All the specific documents in the two master files that could give relevant information had to be removed, changed, or destroyed. In Berlin, this happened within weeks after the capture of the city by the Red Army.

The motive of the Berlin Museums' officials surely was the knowledge that the Russians would take large amounts of war reparations from the museums. It is interesting to note that one of the master files is said to have burned in the basement of the Berlin Museums' Island during the last days of fighting.⁸¹ The only way to keep the holdings of the Berlin State Museums as Germany's property seemed to be cooperation with the Americans, who were thought to be the best choice at the time. In the summer of 1945, nearly all Berlin museum curators feared that the Russians would ask the Americans to return to Berlin all the capital's art, library, and archival material so that it could then be taken by the Russian Trophy Commission and shipped to the USSR. At the Potsdam Conference, July 17 to August 2, 1945, Stalin did indeed ask for the return of this material.⁸² Driven by this fear, the Berlin Museums officials cooperated with the Americans.

FIGURE 5.
 BUDDHA MAÑJUS,
 EASTERN JAVA, CA. 1280
 A.D. STONE, 109 × 84 ×
 60 CM. MUSEUM FÜR
 INDISCHE KUNST, BERLIN.
 © STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU
 BERLIN, PREUßISCHER
 KULTURBESITZ



The Allies, after Germany's unconditional surrender in May 1945, confiscated and took into custody all art objects they could find in Germany, both German and foreign-owned,⁸³ so as to establish control and to determine whether some of this material might be German war booty. There were many specific lists and protocols concerning the types and quantity of those valuables confiscated in Germany. The Allies, counting and evaluating the items, made a great number of lists at that time. Those lists, primarily ones relating to fine arts, libraries and archives, are still mostly considered classified in the archives of the United States, Great Britain, and the former Soviet Union. Missing are the files which were generated primarily by the finance divisions of these respective countries that were part of the military government.⁸⁴ The finance divisions were entirely responsible for all the confiscated German art until the final fate of the items was decided at higher government levels.⁸⁵

Until Germany's reunification in 1990, it was impossible for political reasons to exchange property lists in a divided Berlin. However, it is now possible to make a complete inventory of the Berlin State Museums, item

by item, and thereby to pinpoint what has actually been missing since 1945. The inventory process has begun in all of the seventeen departments of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz (The Berlin State Museums, Prussian Heritage Foundation) and now holds a position of high-level priority. The first publications documenting the missing objects have now appeared.⁸⁶ After this inventory is complete, possibly in the year 2000, all the objects missing since World War II will be published and documented for use by international police and for scrutiny by the international public. It will be difficult for those objects which were taken from the Berlin State Museums to be sold on the black market, grey market, or criminal underground market.

One preliminary conclusion can be drawn from the current identification work and research concerning the present location of the missing objects. It seems that fewer irreplaceable items (assigned to Category I) were destroyed during the war than was previously believed. However, these irreplaceable valuables from many departments of the Berlin State Museums have not yet been returned to Berlin and presumably are located in different countries and different places.

The following sections suggest some of the Category I properties previously listed as missing or destroyed. We can now conclude that some survived the destruction of the war and can even determine their current location.

3 OBJECTS NOT RETURNED TO GERMANY

3.1 ANTIQUE COLLECTION

This department held a world-famous collection of antique glass, valued in 1962 (according to an official statement) at 22.4 million Deutsch Marks, surpassing by far the appraised value of the Pergamon Altar. This material is said to have been lost in two explosions in the Friedrichshain Flaktower bunker between May 5 and May 18, 1945, after the Red Army captured Berlin on May 2. The Russians said that they found no remnants of the antique glass in the ashes of the Friedrichshain bunker.

Professor Robert Zahn, a scholar of classical archaeology, wrote a complete inventory of 2,800 pieces of that collection, and this inventory still exists in Berlin. According to source documents, there is some indication that the collection survived and is somewhere in the Western Hemisphere. Zahn's archaeological library, which specialized in antique glass and jewelry of the ancient world, was shipped to the Schönebeck mine near Magdeburg, west of the Elbe River, in March 1945. This priceless reference collection vanished after the mine and its contents were turned over from American, and later British control, to the Soviet military government in July 1945. It is interesting to note that Willy Gottschalk, when called in the

autumn of 1946 to Schönebeck to transport the repository's contents back to the Berlin State Museums and other Berlin agencies, was ordered by the Russian Kommandatura not to touch the Zahn library in the mine and that it was placed off limits to him. Gottschalk's letters document that the Russian Kommandatura also informed him that the Americans had formally requested seizure of Dr. Zahn's manuscripts because they believed that the documents included an inventory of the antique glass collection in the New York Metropolitan Museum.⁸⁷ At that time, the Metropolitan claimed that Dr. Zahn had compiled an inventory of its antique glass collection in the 1930s and that they had no copy of the inventory list or the work that Dr. Zahn had done for them.

According to documents now on hand, this was simply not true. There is no evidence that Dr. Zahn made an inventory for New York's Metropolitan Museum. Was the Metropolitan actually looking for the inventories of the Berlin antique glass collection which is said to have been destroyed in the Friedrichshain Flaktower in May 1945? This entire scenario continues to remain a strange and inexplicable mystery. It is even more odd as the East Germans later published the story that the library was on a barge that sank in the Elbe River. Why did they do so—contrary to the better evidence? This author himself has knowledge otherwise as, in 1992 while visiting a Moscow antiquarian bookstore, he purchased a book from Dr. Zahn's library.

Crate "A 66" contained the largest selection of gold and jewelry from the Antique Collection. This crate was opened at the British Art Repository, Schloss Celle in 1947, and it was found that 162 pieces of gold were missing. Possibly, these losses did not happen in the British Art Repository but occurred before the crate arrived there on January 23, 1946. What happened between the time of its departure from Berlin in April 1945 and this date can not be reconstructed. To this very day, no item of this missing gold has ever been offered on the world's art market.⁸⁸

One of the most famous collections of the Antiques department is the Hildesheimer Silver Find—a complete set of silver banquet service from the time of Caesar Augustus found outside the Roman borders in Germany. Most of the collection was returned to Berlin via the Schloss Celle except for the most important piece, a large silver bowl known as the "Krater."⁸⁹ This item is still missing. One document in Berlin states that the Krater had been stored at the Flaktower Zoo and was taken by the Russians, while another document maintains that the bowl was stored in the New Mint strongroom at the Reichsbank.

3.2 PAINTING GALLERY

A cross-section of 434 pieces of European fine art paintings of the thirteenth to eighteenth centuries, many in large canvas format, are said to have



FIGURE 6.
RITUAL VESSEL, CHINA,
SHANG DYNASTY,
ERLIGANG PERIOD, CA.
FIFTEENTH CENTURY B.C.
BRONZE, HEIGHT: 31.7 CM.
© STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU
BERLIN, PREUßISCHER
KULTURBESITZ

been destroyed in the Friedrichshain bunker fire. However, there are significant clues which indicate that all the paintings were evacuated to the area west of the Elbe River with the help of a military train in March 1945.⁹⁰

Other extremely valuable properties of the Painting Gallery are nine Gobelin tapestries of gold, silver, and wool which were produced in Brussels between 1517–1520 based on original sketches by Raphael (figure 3). The Gobelins were purchased in England in 1844. Some former owners include English monarchs Henry VIII (1500–1550) and Charles I (1625–1649). Those tapestries are also said to have been burned at the Friedrichshain Flaktower, but a number of rolled Gobelins were transported by the military train together with the paintings.⁹¹

3.3 MUSEUM OF APPLIED ARTS (SCHLOßMUSEUM)

A large quantity of prominent pieces of European applied art from the Medieval Age to the twentieth century is still missing, including the chapel cross of the treasure of Basel Cathedral (figure 4). One other piece, an ivory elephant tusk incorporated into silver decoration, part of the so-called Lüneburger Ratssilber collection, was also evacuated to western Germany and is still missing. All the other parts of the Lüneburger Ratssilber collection were returned to Berlin via Merkers and the Wiesbaden CCP.

3.4 MUSEUM FOR THE ART OF INDIA

Two hundred eighty-eight art works of the greatest importance originating from the subcontinent of India and Southeast Asia, including sixty of the finest Indian stone sculptures (figure 5), are missing. The missing lot includes some 1,350 objects of the world famous “Turfan” Collection.

3.5 MUSEUM OF EAST ASIATIC ART

The collection of this museum received its world importance from its former director, Otto Kummel.⁹² Only 10 percent of its holdings prior to World War II are now available in Berlin. Kummel was not only the director of the Museum of East Asiatic Art but also director-in-general of the Berlin State Museums. It was he who, even at the beginning of 1945, tried to convince the other directors to evacuate their collections to the West. Therefore, it is not plausible to conclude that he left 90 percent of the collection back in Berlin in the direct path of the Russians.

3.6 ETHNOLOGY MUSEUM

Most of the missing objects were the most valuable and irreplaceable in the collection of the Department of American Archaeology of the Berlin State Museums. Some of them had not been published or written about before the war. The collection included several capes constructed of bright bird feathers, mosaics with turquoise incorporated in mask form, and the unparalleled Aztec sundial of serpentine stone with a relief of the God of the Sun, known as the famous “Humboldt Stone” or “Humboldt Sundial” (figure 7). A crate containing the entire gold collection has also been missing from the India Department since 1945.

3.7 PRE- AND EARLY HISTORY MUSEUM

Before the outbreak of World War II, this museum classified about 3,500 archaeological finds as irreplaceable. More than 1,500 objects of precious metal in this category were packed in three crates and sealed. The three crates were seized by the Russians in the Flaktower Zoo and flown to Moscow in June 1945.⁹³ Crate number MVF 1 held the Treasure of Troy,

now kept in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow, with some 259 pieces from this collection.⁹⁴ The other objects from those three crates, representing more than 80 percent of the crate contents, remain in Russian secrecy. Among all the irreplaceable objects from the archaeological finds are important documents of European prehistory, of which only 33 percent of the material has been returned to Berlin.⁹⁵

3.8 SCULPTURE GALLERY

The collections of this gallery came from the famous collections of the former Kaiser Friedrich Museum and the Deutsches Museum. These collections represented an excellent cross section of European sculptures from the ninth to the nineteenth centuries, as well as representative furnishings of the same time period. The most important pieces are still missing today. Time after time, we are told that they were lost in the explosion at the Friedrichshain Flaktower. Indeed, this department did suffer losses in that catastrophe, and many pieces damaged by fire were returned to the GDR from the USSR in 1958. However, another part of these collections must have been shipped to the Merkers mine in March 1945 where it disappeared from the relevant lists and in reality.⁹⁶

The objects mentioned above only give the particulars of some outstanding examples of property owned by the Berlin State Museums and missing since 1945. Some Berlin curators today mistakenly or erroneously maintain that all the items lost during the war were actually destroyed. However, this author has attempted to show that this is highly unlikely.

4 CONCLUSION

During World War II the Germans had confiscated many art objects, paintings, and furniture as well as libraries and archives. In western Europe, this confiscation was restricted to private collections, especially those which were owned by Jews. Publicly owned collections, museums, and church property were generally protected by an effective military “Kunstschutz,” a German special unit, like the Allied MFA&A, that had first been established during World War I and consisted of renowned art historians, archaeologists, librarians, and archivists.⁹⁷ In the occupied countries of Eastern Europe, however, the Germans established a completely opposite policy concerning cultural heritage. Many private and publicly owned collections, museum holdings, libraries, and archives were seized and shipped to Germany.⁹⁸

In the final days of 1939, the Polish government in exile had already compiled details of these expropriations and losses. Its “Bureau for the Revindication of Cultural Losses” later also prepared plans for restitution and reparations upon the conclusion of the war.⁹⁹ At the close of 1941 and in early 1942, one of the Polish art experts, Dr. Charles Estreicher, visited

FIGURE 7.
HUMBOLDT SUNDIAL,
MEXICO, AZTEC, MID-
FOURTEENTH CENTURY
A.D. GREEN STONE DISK
WITH RELIEF OF AZTEC
SUN GOD TONATIUH.
PURCHASED BY
ALEXANDER VON
HUMBOLDT AND BROUGHT
TO BERLIN. MUSEUM FÜR
VÖLKERUNDE, BERLIN
CATALOGUE IV CA 245. ©
STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU
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the United States where he met many of his American colleagues, in particular Francis Henry Taylor of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and president of the American Association of Art Museum Directors. Estreicher's visit was very influential in the formation of a special committee of the American Council of Learned Societies.¹⁰⁰ During another stay in the United States at the close of 1942 and in early 1943, Estreicher submitted a report to several scientific organizations entitled "The Destruction and Plunder by the Germans of Works of Art and the Necessary Cultural Revindication Resulting from It."¹⁰¹ The Poles had prepared a draft proposal of a peace treaty with Germany that listed a large quantity of German museum collections which should be taken as cultural compensation for Polish losses during the war. The annex of this draft specifically listed the collections of the Berlin State Museums and the Dresden State Museums. According to this list, the Berlin Kaiser Friedrich Museum would give "all objects save for the German school: paintings" and the Sculpture Gallery "all save the German school: bronzes and sculpture." Large parts of the Egyptian and Antique departments, the Schloßmuseum and the world famous "16th century Brussels tapestry series executed after the cartoons by Raphael, Apostolic Story" are also mentioned.¹⁰² What decisions the Allies had prepared on this topic for the armistice were never made public, but the Polish Bureau of the Revindication of Cultural Losses in London later sent a note stating that "the demands put forth in

1941 are not negotiable on the international arena. The Allies are ready to grant us far-reaching cultural reparations but are not inclined to remove from Germany entire museums and library collections found in Berlin, Dresden and Wrocław.”¹⁰³

On December 8, 1942, U.S. Chief Justice Harlan F. Stone, “ex officio” chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, proposed to President Roosevelt the establishment of an “American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in Europe.” This would later become the so-called “Roberts Commission.”¹⁰⁴ In an annex to this letter, Stone proposed close cooperation with the British and (in a second letter, dated December 24, 1942) the USSR in order to be prepared after the armistice with Germany for reparation and “restitution in kind.”

The American, British and Russian Committees for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments should urge that the Armistice terms include the restitution of public property appropriated by the Axis Powers. Where it is not possible to restore such property, either because it has been destroyed or cannot be found, restitution in kind should be made by the Axis Powers to the countries from which the property has been taken. In such cases, the Subcommittees of Experts should recommend to the American, British and Russian National Committees a list of equivalent works of art or historic documents which should be transferred to the invaded countries from Axis museums or from the private collections of Axis leaders.¹⁰⁵

On June 23rd, 1943 the establishment of the “Roberts-Commission” was approved by President Roosevelt and officially it was installed on August 20th, 1943.¹⁰⁶

About the same time similar plans were developed in the Soviet Union. On June 12, 1943, Igor Grabar, an extremely influential art historian in the USSR and a member of the prestigious Académie of Sciences, proposed the establishment of a committee to list all objects that should be taken from German collections after the war for “restitution in kind.”¹⁰⁷ This proposal coincides completely with that of Chief Justice Stone to President Roosevelt on December 8, 1942:

Because the matter of collecting equivalents in certain cases in compensation for artworks removed or destroyed by the GFO (German-fascist occupiers) was settled positively by the ESC (Extraordinary State Commission) of the CPC (Council of People’s Commissars) of the USSR, I think it is a timely measure to establish now a special

Division of the ESC to make up a list of objects in the museum collections of Germany, Austria, Italy, Hungary, Romania, and Finland that could be named as eventual equivalents. Business trips abroad wouldn't be necessary for the conduct of this work because complete sets of the catalogues of all European museums are in the libraries of some Soviet art historians, and their own notes contain complete information about these museums.¹⁰⁸

Six months earlier, possibly in connection with Charles Estreicher's visit, the American Council of Learned Societies had decided to establish "The Committee of the American Council of Learned Societies on the Protection of Cultural Treasures in War Areas" at its annual meeting on January 29, 1943. William Bell Dinsmoor, Professor of Archaeology at Columbia University, was named chairman of the committee; Charles Rufus Morey,¹⁰⁹ vice chairman; and Sumner M. Crosby and Rensselaer W. Lee, executive secretaries. The work of the committee was carried out by research assistants, draftsmen, and volunteer assistants for both Europe and the Far East. Including the workers classified as volunteer assistants, eighty-seven individuals participated in the activities of the committee.¹¹⁰

In the months following Germany's unconditional surrender on May 7–9, 1945, an intensive discussion arose, especially in the United States, as to whether art, which was the undisputed property of museums and private individuals in the "Axis Powers," including Germany, should be taken for the purpose of war reparations. Beginning in 1943, the Inter-Allied "European Advisory Commission" (EAC) had also prepared such plans.¹¹¹ This discussion peaked when, on November 6, 1945, a strict order came from Washington for the director of the Wiesbaden CCP, Capt. Walter Ings Farmer, to pack immediately in bulk some 202 Old Master paintings owned by the Berlin State Museums and stored in the Wiesbaden facility and to prepare this shipment to the United States "for safekeeping."

Is it merely a coincidence that exactly six months after Germany's defeat this order was given directing that objects of German museums should be taken for "restitution in kind" according to the plans prepared by the EAC before the war's end? Up to that time the EAC reparation plans had not been approved, but the plan clearly was put into effect. The taking of objects for "reparation" from Germany's cultural heritage seemed to begin. At that moment in November 1945, all the MFA&A officers, who met with Walter Farmer at Wiesbaden CCP on November 7, 1945, were convinced that this order from Washington really did not mean "safekeeping" but was the first step for the taking of German art as war booty for American museums. So nearly all the MFA&A officers protested by signing the famous "Wiesbaden Manifesto," which was initiated by Walter Farmer. In their protest they wrote:



FIGURE 8.
HUMBOLDT AXE. MEXICO,
OLMEC. 900–600 B.C.
AXE OF GREEN STONE
AND RELIEF WITH
UNDECIPHERED HIERO-
GLYPHS. PURCHASED BY
ALEXANDER VON
HUMBOLDT AND BROUGHT
TO BERLIN. MUSEUM FÜR
VÖLKERKUNDE, BERLIN
CATALOGUE IV CA 4034.
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We wish to state that from our own knowledge, no historical grievance will rankle so long, or be the cause of so much justified bitterness, as the removal, for any reason, of a part of the heritage of any nation, even if that heritage may be interpreted as a prize of war. . . .¹¹²

Nevertheless, all these 202 paintings were shipped to the United States in November and December 1945. They all finally returned to Germany in 1948 and 1949. Even as late as July 8, 1946, the question of restitution-in-kind, which clearly meant the taking of German-owned art as compensation for war losses, remained on the agenda of the Allied Control Council in Germany. There was a recommendation that this material should be taken from five categories of German art¹¹³:

- (1) works of art by the masters of painting, engraving, and sculpture;
- (2) important works of masters of applied art, and outstanding examples of national art;
- (3) historical relics;
- (4) manuscripts and rare books;
- (5) objects of importance to the history of sciences.

This restitution-in-kind policy was prepared by all the Allies in detailed account even before the war's end, as well as after. However, it never became official. The Allies never could agree on the definition of such a policy. After all, it is strikingly obvious to this author that most of the "cultural targets," such as objects that had been listed before the end of the war by all sides, disappeared immediately into various "pools." These various restitution pools have remained secret until this day. The questionable disappearance and fate of what are, in many cases, the most unusual, the most valuable, and the irreplaceable works have remained a complete mystery. But who holds the keys to the treasure houses filled to the brim at the end of and after World War II?

APPENDIX:
BERLIN STATE
MUSEUMS
DEPARTMENT
LIST
(EVACUATIONS
TO MERKERS,
1945)

Department	Symbol	Count
1) Egyptian	Äg	37 crates
2) Antique	ANT	91 crates
3) Sculpture	SK	441 crates (including 7 crates from the Early Christian and Byzantine Department)
4) Islamic	IA	38 crates 10 rolls of rugs
5) Schloss Museum	SM	122 crates 2 baskets 25 packages 130 rolls of rugs
6) Painting Gallery	GG	97 crates (Merkers) 45 crates (Ransbach)
7) National Gallery	NG	393 paintings (not packed)
8) Copper Engraving Gallery	KK	41 crates 1384 maps
9) Pre- and Early History	MVF	6 crates
10) Ethnographic Department	MV	
East Asian Art	OAK	5 crates
Africa	AFR	57 crates
Eurasian	EUR	3 crates
Indian (Turfan)	TU	22 crates
South Seas	MVS	10 crates
11) Arsenal ("Zeughaus")	FL	37 crates

NOTES

1. See Konstantin Akinsha and Grigorii Kozlov, *Beautiful Loot* (Random House, New York 1995), for discussion of the plans and operation of the Soviet Trophies Commission in the Soviet occupation zone of Germany from 1945 and later.
2. See Konstantin Akinscha, Grigorii Koslow, and Clemens Toussaint, *Operation Beutekunst* 9–11 (Nürnberg 1995) (in German) (listing material in the different Russian archives).
3. Akinsha and Kozlov, *supra* note 1 at 192.
4. Dokumente zur Aussenpolitik der Regierung der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Band VIII, 504–507 (1961). Part of this protocol was a complete listing of certain pieces returned to the GDR. Those lists giving an exact accounting are not available and are considered missing in the now open GDR files of the German *Bundesarchiv* [National archive].
5. Akinsha and Kozlov, *supra* note 1 at 139–43.
6. Klaus Goldmann and Wolfgang Schneider, *Das Gold des Priamos* 54 (1995) (photo of document). See also Klaus Goldmann, *The Trojan Treasures in Berlin: The Disappear-*

ance and Search for the Objects after World War II, in *The Spoils of War: World War II and its Aftermath: The Loss, Reappearance, and Recovery of Cultural Property* 200–203 (Elizabeth Simpson ed., Harry N. Abrams, New York 1997).

7. Foreign Relations of the United States; Diplomatic Papers: The Conferences at Malta and Yalta 1945 (1955).

8. Akinsha and Kozlov, *supra* note 1, at 261–62, describe Col. Andrei Belokopitov as: “Lieutenant colonel/colonel, head of the trophy brigade active in Meseritz and Berlin. His brigade discovered the collection of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Posen stored in an underground shelter near Hohenwalde (actually, near Meseritz, east of the Oder River—author’s note), the first important depository in German territory to be cleaned out by the Arts Committee brigades. Later he removed art works from the Zoo Flakturm in Berlin and sent the Trojan gold and paintings from German private collections to Moscow. In civilian life, (he was) manager of the Moscow Art Theater (MKhAT).”

9. Otto Kümmel (1874–1952) first came to the Berlin State Museums system in 1906 as an assistant in the Ethnographic Department, where he specialized in East Asian Art. In 1924, he was appointed director of the newly founded department of East Asian Art and in 1933 became the general director of the Berlin State Museums. He held this position until his dismissal by the Allies in July 1945. Kümmel was a world-renowned specialist in classical Chinese and Japanese art.

10. Akinsha and Kozlov, *supra* note 1, at 141. “Andrei Belokopitov was convinced there was another shelter somewhere. Otto Kümmel, the director of the Berlin State Museums, had given him a list of objects evacuated from Berlin, and it included many that weren’t on Rave’s list of artworks removed by the Allies.”

11. Paul Ortwin Rave (1893–1962) was an art historian. A protégé of Ludwig Justi, the famous director of the Berlin National Gallery, Rave first became a staff member of this museum in 1922. He was appointed curator in 1934 and became the first postwar director of the National Gallery in 1945. After 1949, he published the notable work *Kunstdiktatur im Dritten Reich*, in which he refers to his own bad experiences with the Nazi art dictatorship.

12. Irene Kühnel-Kunze, *Bergung-Evakuierung-Rückführung. Die Berliner Museen in den Jahren 1939–1959* 33–37 (Mann, Berlin 1984). See also the reports of Paul Ortwin Rave in *Die Bergung von Kunstwerken der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin im Kalibergwerk Kaiseroda zu Merkers* (The Safe Storage of the Artworks of the Berlin State Museums in the Potassium Mine Kaiseroda at Merkers), Part 1, April 12, 1945, and Part 2, April 24, 1945. These documents can be found in the Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, V.4.3.1. GA-DOK 375.

13. Lynn H. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe’s Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War* 338–39 (Knopf, New York 1994).

14. *Geschichte des VEB Kaliwerk “Karl Marx” Sollstedt* 83 (Herausgegeben von der Betriebsparteioorganisation der SED und von der Werkleitung 1970).

15. Ernst Gall (1888–1958) was an art historian and, during World War II, held the position of director of the Prussian Castles and Gardens Administration, responsible for the safekeeping of the coffins of the Prussian kings, the Prussian crown jewels, and art works in Bernterode.

16. Akinsha and Kozlov, *supra* note 1 at 141–42. “The mine was on fire when the committee arrived. The village was shrouded in black smoke, and the ground shook as explosion followed explosion deep underground. It was impossible to get near the entrance to the mine.”
17. Willy Gottschalk, general manager of the freight transport company “Henze AG” during World War II and in the years after the war, was the civilian in charge of evacuation of the Prussian State Museums as well as the Prussian State Library, Academy of Sciences, etc.
18. Gottschalk Report, Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.2. GA-LN 79.
19. *See* Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force, G-4 Division: Report covering the discovery, removal, transport and storage of gold, silver, platinum and currency, fine art treasures and German patent records from salt mines in the Merkers and Heringen area to the Frankfurt area in Germany. National Archives, Washington D.C., Record Group RG 331, Records of Allied Operational and Occupation Headquarters, World War II, SHAEF, G-5, Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Section, Subject File, MFA&A Reports, AMG 290. *See also* Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.2. GA-LN 79.
20. Werner Veick (born 1890) was treasury cashier for the German Reichsbank, Berlin, and was captured by American forces at the Merkers mine.
21. *See supra* note 19: statement of Dr. Werner Veick, Merkers, Germany on April 10, 1945, Appendix IV, at 4. “In the meantime, Thoms, who was very anxious to leave, arrived with a Mr. Gottschalk, who was in charge of the transportation of the paintings and the art treasures of Reimer. I was in charge of the truck to bring the art treasures from Berlin. A concern by the name of Hinze brought the art treasures here.” Albert Thoms was in charge of the Precious Metals Department of the German Reichsbank. Otto Reimer was chief cashier of the Currency Department of the German Reichsbank. For Willy Gottschalk, *see supra* note 17.
22. Bernhard Rust (1883–1945) was German and Prussian Minister of Culture (Science, Education and Adult Education) from 1934 until his death in 1945.
23. *See supra* note 12.
24. Rave’s Diaries, Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.
25. “Persönliche Aufzeichnungen P.O. Rave über die Auslagerung in den Bergwerken Grube Ransbach, Grube Kaiseroda,” Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.1. GA-DOK-370.
26. *See* Rave Report, *supra* note 12, Part I, at 4. “Die von Restaurator Tschirch von der National-Galerie beigegebene Liste mit den Namen der Kunstwerke ist die einzige die ich erhielt; die anderen führen nur die Nummern der Kisten an oder geben nur die Anzahl der Gepäckstücke.”
27. *Id.* “Ägypten: 1 Kiste Nr. 34 mit der Nefretete. . . .”
28. *See supra* notes 12 and 25.
29. This list mentions only the departments that evacuated part of their collections to Rave’s art repository in Merkers.

30. See "List of the Commanding General, European Theater Operation, Record of Property in Custody, Key to Check List, Loading and Unloading, Art Works of the Municipal Museums of Berlin in Kaiseroda Salt Works at Merkers." Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.1. GA-DOK-305. See also National Archives, Washington, D.C., File OMGUS, Box 74, MFA&A (Microfiche in German Bundesarchiv, Koblenz).
31. See Rave Report, *supra* note 12, Part II, at 2. "Zugleich stellten sich mir zwei Herren vor, die Loutenents Stout und Dunn, denen die Überführung der Kunstwerke nach Frankfurt aufgetragen war. Auf Grund der in meinen Händen befindlichen Geleitslisten der einzelnen Transporte wurden nunmehr neue Listen nach besonderem Schema aufgestellt, die für jede Abteilung der Museen die Bergungsstücke nach Nummern geordnet aufzählten, die der Nationalgalerie alphabetisch nach Künstlernamen."
32. See *supra* note 30.
33. Thomas Carr Howe Jr., *Salt Mines and Castles* (Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis and New York 1946).
34. *Id.* at 48–53.
35. Walter Ings Farmer, *The Safekeepers, A Memoir of the Arts at the End of World War II* 131 (unpublished manuscript, as told to Ruth K. Meyer, July 1994, Cincinnati, Ohio, USA). "In his book Howe says that he and Lamont Moore 'spent an evening together studying a list of the pictures stored at Wiesbaden. He typed out a tentative selection.' What list did they study? My staff had not yet opened all the crates while doing their conservation inspections so an itemized crate list simply did not exist."
36. See Headquarters US Group CC, Finance Division. Subject: Receipt for Arts Objects Transferred from the Custody of Capt. W. A. Dunn, Finance Division, US Group CC, to the Custody of Major Mason Hammond, Reparation, Deliveries & Restitution Division, US Group CC this 22nd day of June 1945. Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.1. GA-DOK 286. See also National Archives, Washington D.C. File OMGUS, Box 160, MFA&A (Microfiche in German Bundesarchiv, Koblenz).
37. See *supra* notes 12, 25, and 30.
38. *Id.*
39. See *supra* note 36 at 1–2. "Ägyptische Abteilung: 113 wooden boxes, contents unknown . . . 40 metal boxes, contents unknown . . . 8 large wooden crates, contents unknown."
40. Klaus Goldmann and Günter Wermusch, *Vernichtet, Verschollen, Vermarktet: Kunstschätze im Visier von Politik und Geschäft* 91 (MUT-Verlag, Asendorf 1992).
41. Rudolf Anthes (1896–1985) joined the scientific staff of the Berlin Egyptian Department in 1929. From 1945 to 1950, he served as the director of the department.
42. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, Archiv.
43. See National Archives, Record Group 331, SHAEF G-5, Financial Branch; for a copy, see Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.1. GA-LN 79.
44. Bernard Bernstein, a graduate of Columbia Law School, headed the Finance Di-

vision in occupied Germany, Finance and Property Control Office, G-5, Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces and was in charge of the capture of all gold, foreign currency, and art treasures to be found in German repositories. See Nicholas, *supra* note 13 at 333–36.

45. Letter of National Archives (Archives II Textual Reference Branch) of March 11, 1997, to the author.

46. See Philip Kopper, *America's National Gallery of Art: A Gift to the Nation* (Harry N. Abrams, New York 1991).

47. Kühnel-Kunze, *supra* note 12 at 18.

48. *Id.* at 20–25.

49. Gottschalk Report, *supra* note 18. “Wintershall A.G. Werk Kaiseroda, Merkers/Thüringen Schachtanlage II/III, ca. 45 Lastzüge bezw. Omnibusse wertvollster, Gemälde ec. der Nationalgalerie Berlin eingelagert.”

50. Rave Report, *supra* note 12, Part I.

51. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Dokumentation der Verluste, Band IV, Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte 15–16 (1996).

52. Gottschalk Report, *supra* note 18.

53. Rave Report, *supra* note 12, Parts I and II.

54. Letter to Klaus Goldmann from the eyewitness, a former German airman, July 12, 1992.

55. Kühnel-Kunze, *supra* note 12 at 61.

56. *New York Times*, May 2, 1945, at 4, col. 7 (copy in Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.2. GA-LN 76).

57. See Letter to Goldmann, *supra* note 54. Personal interviews of the former airman with the author, 1992–1994.

58. See Gottschalk Report, *supra* note 18.

59. Rave Report, *supra* note 12, Part I. “Am 24. März kam ein Lastzug mit 79 Bücherkisten der Bibliothek Rust. . . .”

60. Rave Report, *supra* note 12, Part II. “Bei Dunkelwerden war alles eingeladen, . . . die 23 Rustschen Teppiche, nicht aber sein Koffer und die 79 Kisten seiner Privatbibliothek. . . .”

61. See Akinsha and Kozlov, *supra* note 1 at 141.

62. See *supra* note 51 at 11.

63. Letter of Deutsche Bundesbank, November 5, 1985: “Da wir nicht im Besitze des Archivs der Deutschen Reichsbank sind, können wir Ihnen weitergehende Auskünfte leider nicht geben. Wir stellen anheim, über die Botschaft der Vereinigten Staaten in Bonn weitere Auskünfte über den Verbleib von Akten in US-Besitz einzuholen.” Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.1. GA-DOK 437.

64. See *supra* note 19, at 10: “15 April 1945: 12. (a) Convoy completed loading of gold and currency at 0745, including three truckloads of fine arts which were available, since all 10-ton trucks were overloaded approximately 10%.”

65. The Berlin collections are listed as follows:

Paintings, uncrated	393
Boxes of prints & drawings	2,091
Cases of miscellaneous objects, including some paintings	1,214
Textiles	140
TOTAL	3,838

See document, Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force, G-5 Internal Affairs Branch, Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives, 23 April 1945. Subject: Storage of Works of Art at Frankfurt. National Archives, Washington, D.C. Record Group 331, SHAEF, G-5 Monuments Fine Arts and Archives Sect AMG 220 Correspondence Frankfurt. Copy in Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.2. GA-LN 79.

66. See Rave Report, *supra* note 12, Part I. "... konnten die 45 Kisten der Gemäldegalerie am anderen Morgen, Dienstag 13. März, in dem etwa 2 km von Hattorf entfernten Schacht Ransbach eingefahren und in einem der Staatsbibliothek zugewiesenen Stollen gestapelt werden. ..."

67. See Rave List, *supra* note 29, Cover.

68. See Rave Report, *supra* note 12, Part II. "Am Sonntag 15. April begann man damit, einen Teil des Bergungsgutes mit beiden Schächten aus der Grube herauszufahren, und zwar die Mappenkästen [boxes] des Kupferstichkabinetts und der Staatl. Kunstbibliothek. ..."

69. See *supra* note 44.

70. See *supra* note 30, Cover.

71. Michael J. Kurtz, *Nazi Contraband: American Policy on the Return of European Cultural Treasures, 1945–1955* 84–99 (Garland, New York 1985); Klaus Goldmann, *Patrimoine, Oeuvres d'art et prises de guerre: 1945–1995*, in *Encyclopaedia Universalis* 272–75 (Paris 1996); *Archäologisches Nachrichtenblatt*, Band 1, 219–24 (especially at 220) (Berlin 1996).

72. Memorandum on Principles for the Restitution of Works of Art, Books, Archives, and other Cultural Property, Washington, October 11, 1944, in *Foreign Relations of the United States—Diplomatic Papers 1944*, Vol. II, 1041–44.

73. See document, Movement of works of art. Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.1. GA-DOK 315 (National Archives, Washington, D.C., OMGUS Box 74, MFA&A).

74. Correspondence between Headquarters U.S. Group CC and Control Commission for Germany (British Element), between November 8, 1945, and November 30, 1945: "With reference to recommendations contained in the attached memorandum of 8 November, General Clay has stated that he is not in agreement with the return of the art objects captured by SHAEF now in American possession to the British at this time. He states that the art objects now in American possession were captured by the American Army; that those art objects which were captured by the 21st Army Group (British) were retained by the British and none of them turned in to the common SHAEF pool. He, therefore, intends to retain possession of all art objects now in the hands of the American Army, sending such of those as he sees fit to America for safekeeping. (signed) O.P. Echols, Major General, U.S. Army, Assistant Deputy Military Gover-

- nor." National Archives RG 260, OMGUS Decimal File 1945/46, Box 9, AG 007 (copy in Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.2. GA-LN 67).
75. See Akinsha and Kozlov, *supra* note 1 at 79.
76. News clippings from two unknown U.S. newspapers, March 28, 1946, in private Berlin mayoral files (copy in Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.2. GA-LN 17).
77. Document No. 951, The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference) 1945, Vol. I, 906–12 (Government Printing Office, Washington 1960).
78. See *supra* notes 12, 25, and 30.
79. See Shipment List of Lt. Lamont Moore received on May 14, 1945 by Capt. Wm. Dunn. (copy in Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.2. GA-LN 160).
80. See *supra* note 51.
81. Kühnel-Kunze, *supra* note 12 at 44.
82. Cay Friemuth, *Die geraubte Kunst* 70 (Westermann, Braunschweig 1989).
83. U.S. Military Law 52, Blocking and Control of Property.
84. For the United States, see *supra* note 44; for the British, see Friemuth, *supra* note 82, at 189; for the Soviets, see Akinsha and Kozlov, *supra* note 1 at 19–29.
85. Document No. 964, *supra* note 77 at 923–25.
86. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Dokumentation der Verluste, Band I, Gemäldegalerie (1995), Band IV-Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte (1996). Volumes II and III (Nationalgalerie and Skulpturengalerie) are not yet published. The manuscripts for thirteen other departments of the Berlin State Museums are in progress.
87. See Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz No. V.4.3.2. GA-LN 1.
88. Lothar Pretzell, *Das Kunstgutlager Schloß Celle 1945 bis 1958* 64–66 (Pohl-Druckerei und Verlagsanstalt, Celle 1958). See also Adolf Greifenhagen, Goldschmuck aus dem Berliner Antiquarium, in *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 1961, 81–130.
89. Ulrich Gehrig, *Hildesheimer Silberfund in der Antikenabteilung Berlin* (Gebr. Mann, Berlin 1967).
90. Cf. *supra* note 54 and accompanying text. Letters from the restorer Tschirch, who was responsible for the paintings, to his wife in April 1945 indicate that the room in the Flatktower Friedrichshain where the paintings were deposited was empty. See Günter Wermusch, *Tatumstände unbekannt: Kunstraub unter den Augen der Alliierten* 166–74 (Westermann, Braunschweig 1991).
91. Statement of the eyewitness (*supra* note 54) to the author in 1993.
92. See *supra* note 9.
93. See Klaus Goldmann, *Schliemanns Gold and die Schätze Alteuropas aus dem Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte* (von Zabern, Mainz 1993).

94. See *Der Schatz aus Troja, Schliemann und der Mythos des Priamos-Goldes*, Katalogbuch Ausstellung in Moskau 1996/97 (Belser-Verlag, Stuttgart and Zürich 1996).
95. See *supra* note 51.
96. Cf. discussion *supra* note 30.
97. Paul A. Methuen, *Normandy Diary* xxi (R. Hale, London 1952).
98. Lynn H. Nicholas, World War II and the Displacement of Art and Cultural Property, in Simpson, *supra* note 6 at 39–45.
99. Wojciech Kowalski, *Liquidation of the Effects of World War II in the Area of Culture* 7 (Institute of Culture, Warsaw 1994).
100. *Id.* at 19. “An indirect result of Charles Estreicher’s visit to the United States was the establishment of the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Treasures in War Areas, set up by the American Council of Learned Societies. It devoted itself to drawing up detailed maps of the distribution of historic objects and museums in the territories of the countries of Europe, found in the territory of the area of operations of the American Army.” *Id.* at 50.
101. *Id.* at 44.
102. *Id.* at 42. Compare *supra* section 3.2, Painting Gallery.
103. *Id.* at 32.
104. Interest of the United States in Measures for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas, in *Foreign Relations of the United States*, Diplomatic Papers 1943, Vol. I, 469–70.
105. *Id.* at 471–72. Cf. Lynn Nicholas, *supra* note 13, at 212.
106. *Id.* at 475–80.
107. Akinscha and Koslow, *supra* note 2 at 13.
108. Akinsha and Kozlov, *supra* note 1 at 21–22.
109. Professor Charles Rufus Morey, head of the Department of Art and Archaeology of Princeton University.
110. Leslie I. Poste, *The Development of U.S. Protection of Libraries and Archives in Europe during World War II* 80 (U.S. Army Civil Affairs School, Fort Gordon, Georgia, 1958, rev. ed. 1964).
111. See Kurtz, *supra* note 71 at 75 *ff.*
112. See Walter I. Farmer, Custody and Controversy at the Wiesbaden Collecting Point, in Simpson, *supra* note 6 at 131–34.
113. Kurtz, *supra* note 71 at 149–51. “This July 8, 1946 U.S. counter-proposal was designed to meet French demands for compliance with the Allied Control Council decision to issue instruction on restitution-in-kind and at the same time, limit the program. General Harper presented this paper on July 9 and plainly told his colleagues the United States would consider claims only for items of great rarity and would decide each case on its own merits.” From the Minutes of the Sixty-Third Coordinating Committee of the Allied Control Council, Germany (CORC) meeting, 8 July 1946, File CORC/M46 (50–67), Records of the Allied Control Council, Germany, 1941–1950, RG 43.