

# “Unclaimed” Artworks Entrusted to French Museums after World War II

## The Case of Near Eastern Art and Antiquities

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### Abstract

Between 1949 and 1953, about 2,100 “unclaimed” artworks returned to France from Germany after World War II were selected by museum professionals and labeled MNR (Musées nationaux récupération). About half of the works are paintings, while thirty percent are decorative arts, and the remaining pieces are drawings, sculptures, folk art, Asian art, and antiquities. This paper presents the so-called AOR (Antiquités orientales récupération), 31 objects entrusted to the care of the Département des Antiquités orientales, Musée du Louvre, which at the time included both pre-Islamic and Islamic

objects. Research carried out by the *Mission Mattéoli* (1997–2000) determined that only two, maybe three, artworks are proven to have been looted by the *Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg* during the Nazi occupation of France. The rest of the AOR items were purchases made by German individuals and museums, confirming that the MNR corpus does not equate in its entirety to art plundered from Jewish collections. The study of this portion of the works is an opportunity to shed light on the Near Eastern art and antiquities market in Paris during the war.

## Introduction

[1] All transfers of ownership of cultural property that occurred in France during the German occupation were considered null and void after World War II in accordance with the Inter-Allied “Declaration against Acts of Dispossession Committed in Territories under Enemy Occupation or Control”, issued in London on 5 January 1943<sup>1</sup>. It is thought that some 100,000 paintings, drawings, sculptures, and antiquities were either looted by the German or Vichy services or sold under duress in France between 1940 and 1945<sup>2</sup>. The *Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg* (ERR), in charge of the seizure of Jewish art collections, processed them through the Jeu de Paume in the Tuileries Gardens in Paris. In November 1944, the *Commission de récupération artistique* (CRA) was created to carry out research on these artworks. Between 1945 and 1949, some 61,000 items discovered mainly in Germany and Austria, but also in Czechoslovakia and Poland, were repatriated to France. Recoveries were also made in France in buildings occupied by the ERR, at the Germany Embassy, and in a freight train stopped in Aulnay. During the summer of 1946, an exhibition of some of the masterpieces was held at the Orangerie in the Tuileries<sup>3</sup>.

[2] The claims filed by the rightful owners or their heirs with the *Office des biens et intérêt privés* (Department for Private Goods and Interests, abbreviated OBIP in French), which concerned cultural property, were transmitted to the CRA. A “List of Property Looted in France” during the war, known as the *Répertoire des biens spoliés*, was published in 1947 by the Central Office for Restitutions in eight volumes and supplements<sup>4</sup>. In order to disseminate information about “orphaned” objects, copies were sent to museums and galleries, located mostly in France, Germany, and Austria but also in the United States. Between 1945 and 1950, 45,441 objects were reclaimed by their rightful owners. Most of the remaining works were sold at auctions by the *Domaines* (the Administration of the Estates), whereas a portion was entrusted to the care of the French *Musées nationaux* while they awaited ownership claims.

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<sup>1</sup> “This declaration was transposed into French legislation in an ordinance promulgated on 12 November 1943 by the French National Committee”. Isabelle Le Masne de Chermont and Laurence Sigal-Klagsbald, eds., *À qui appartenaient ces tableaux ? : La politique française de recherche de provenance, de garde et de restitution des œuvres d’art pillées durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale = Looking for Owners: French Policy for Provenance Research, Restitution and Custody of Art Stolen in France during World War Two*, exh. cat., Paris 2008, 25.

<sup>2</sup> The last source consulted for the figures cited here is the report to the French minister of culture by David Zivie, referring to previous official reports: “*Des traces subsistent dans des registres [...]*”. *Biens culturels spoliés pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale: une ambition pour rechercher, retrouver, restituer et expliquer*, 26 July 2018, 15-16; available online at [Rapport de David Zivie, « Des traces subsistent dans des registres... » Biens culturels spoliés pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale : une ambition pou...](#). The estimation of 100,000, based on the claims, is disputed; see Johanna Linsler, “Lumière sur les ‘MNR’? Les œuvres d’art spoliées, les musées de France et la Mission Mattéoli: les limites de l’historiographie officielle”, in: *Yod. Revue des études hébraïques et juives* 21 (2018), DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/yod.2607> (all websites cited in these notes were accessed 3 February 2020).

<sup>3</sup> *Les Chefs-d’œuvre des collections privées françaises retrouvées en Allemagne par la Commission de récupération artistique et les services alliés*, exh. cat., Paris 1946.

<sup>4</sup> The volumes are available on the website of the Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, <http://www2.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/mnr/MnR-rbs.htm#D>.

[3] About 2,100 artworks were selected between 1949 and 1953 by museum professionals within the framework of the *Commissions de choix des œuvres d'art* (Selection Committees for Works of Art)<sup>5</sup> because of their artistic quality; they constitute what is called the MNR, the French acronym for *Musées nationaux récupération* (National Museums Recuperation)<sup>6</sup>. About half of the works are paintings, about thirty percent are works of decorative arts, and the remaining pieces are drawings, sculptures, folk art, Asian art, Islamic art, and Near Eastern, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman antiquities.

[4] The MNR items are listed in an online database named after Rose Valland (1898–1980) to pay tribute to the curatorial assistant assigned to the Jeu de Paume during the Occupation<sup>7</sup>. Valland secretly took notes about the artworks looted by the Nazis before their shipment to Germany and contributed to many restitutions after 1945 by providing information to the Allies on the possible hiding places used by the Nazis (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Edith Standen and Rose Valland (right) with art to be restituted to France, May 1946. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Archives of American Art, James J. Rorimer papers, 1921–1982, bulk 1943–1950 (photo: Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Archives of American Art)

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<sup>5</sup> With the decree of 30 September 1949 on the end of the CRA, two commissions were set up to select the most interesting pieces: one for artworks and one for books and manuscripts. A five-year exhibition (1949–1954) was mounted at the Musée national du Château de Compiègne to enable possible rights holders to identify their property.

<sup>6</sup> In fact, the acronym MNR designates only the paintings, while the other categories use different initials.

<sup>7</sup> Ministère de la Culture, “POP: la plateforme ouverte du patrimoine”: “Rose Valland (MNR–Jeu de Paume)”, at <http://www2.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/mnr/MnR-pres.htm> (previous URL) resp. (new URL) <https://www.pop.culture.gouv.fr/search/list?base=%5B%22Rose%20Valland%20%28MNR-Jeu%20de%20Paume%29%22%5D>.

According to the research carried out by the *Mission Mattéoli* (1997–2000), the composition of the MNR is the following: 10 percent of the artworks were looted, 65 percent were purchased on the art market, and 25 percent have an incomplete or unknown provenance. Despite the list's publication, the erroneous idea that the MNR included *only* works of *looted* art still prevails<sup>8</sup>.

[5] The general public is especially conscious of the investigations related to the fate of paintings during the Nazi era but is less aware of the destiny of ancient and non-Western art. This paper presents what little we know to date about what happened during World War II to the objects later picked by the Selection Committee for the Département des Antiquités orientales<sup>9</sup> at the Musée du Louvre and labeled AOR (Antiquités orientales récupération) (see the [appendix](#) to this article for a catalog of the 31 objects referred to as AOR)<sup>10</sup>.

## What are the Antiquités orientales récupération (AOR)?

[6] In 1945, the collection of the Département des Antiquités orientales of the Louvre included both pre-Islamic and Islamic objects; the latter group was transferred to the Département des Arts de l'Islam, formed in 2003. Therefore, the Antiquités orientales récupération (AOR)<sup>11</sup> allocations—corresponding to 31 items from an area that reaches as far west as Spain and as far east as India—include works beyond the time of the Arab conquest in the seventh century AD. Even if part of the corpus exceeds the scope of this publication, it seems important to deal with all the objects because their dealers handled both antiquities and later objects.

[7] The curator who acted as a representative of the Département des Antiquités orientales for the Selection Committee was Jean David-Weill (1878–1972). At that time, he was still a fairly new member of this department. Before the war, he worked as an assistant curator in the Département des Arts asiatiques, which was in charge of the Islamic collection at that time. In 1939, because of his Jewish origin, he endured the laws of the régime de Vichy and had to hide in the south of France, with the help of Jacques Jaujard<sup>12</sup>, director of the Musées nationaux. After

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<sup>8</sup> Julie-Marthe Cohen, Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek and Ruth Jolanda Weinberger, *Handbook on Judaica Provenance Research: Ceremonial Objects*, New York 2018, 158, <https://www.lbi.org/media/documents/Judaica-Handbook-2.20.2018.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> This department covers an area stretching from North Africa to Central Asia and from the Black Sea to the Arabian peninsula. Throughout this text we use the designation “Near East” to refer to the translation of the department's name, Department of Near Eastern antiquities, while fully aware of this colonialist terminology. The term “oriental” appears later in this paper because it was used by dealers to designate the arts of Asia and Northern Africa, but scholars consider it outdated today.

<sup>10</sup> A preliminary report was published by the authors under the title: “Les œuvres AOR confiées aux départements des Antiquités orientales et des Arts de l'Islam”, in: *Grande Galerie. Le Journal du Louvre. La Recherche au musée du Louvre*, Hors-Série no. 5 (2020), 18-21.

<sup>11</sup> The acronyms AOR and OAR (Département des Objets d'art) are often confused. The Near Eastern items, mostly carpets, held in the Département des Objets d'art are not included in the present study.

<sup>12</sup> For a brief biography, see Sophie Makariou, “Jean David-Weill”, in: *Les Arts de l'Islam au musée du Louvre*, Paris 2012, 31; Sophie Makariou, “Jean David-Weill”, in: François Pouillon, ed., *Dictionnaire des orientalistes de langue française*, Paris 2008, 263-265.

the war, in 1945, the Département des Arts asiatiques was dissolved; the objects from China, Japan, and Korea were moved to the Musée Guimet, whereas the Islamic collection was established as a section of the Département des Antiquités orientales. David-Weill's nomination to the Selection Committee is perhaps linked to his personal history, but he was also keen on helping museums outside of Paris. He chose mostly Islamic items to send on long-term loan to regional museums, such as the Musée des Beaux-Arts – Bernard d'Agesci de Niort, the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Limoges, and even the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Algiers, under French rule until 1962. This transfer to other museums could be explained by two facts: there was hardly any room in the Musée du Louvre to exhibit these artworks, and exhibiting the MNR items was statutory. Lending them to regional museums thus addressed two questions: how to enhance the regional museums and how to comply with the MNR rules.

[8] During the 1990s, international awareness of the need to progress in the search for looted assets led to the drafting of the Washington Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art, which included the development of provenance research and the harmonization of national restitution procedures. Most of the data published here are the results of research initiated by the French task force called the *Mission Mattéoli* (1997–2000)<sup>13</sup> and pursued in particular within the working group on the MNR<sup>14</sup>. Research carried out by the *Mission Mattéoli* determined that only two, maybe three, AOR objects are proved to have been looted by the ERR during the Nazi occupation of France. This number corresponds to the same percentage of looted works of art mentioned above for the MNR in general (10 percent). The rest of the objects were purchases by German individuals and museums, confirming that the entire MNR corpus does not equate to art plundered from Jewish collections—although we don't know how the dealers obtained them; these questions are still under study.

## Unclaimed looted Near Eastern art

[9] Antiquities represent only a small portion of the Nazi cultural plunder of European Jewish collections and have received less attention than other categories of art. Near Eastern art and antiquities made up only a low percentage of the looted collections in the Paris area during the

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<sup>13</sup> Chantal Orgogozo, until 2009 the Louvre's chief curator in charge of research about the antiques, was assisted by Anne Dunn-Vaturi and Nathalie Michel in 1999–2000. In addition to the AOR, they researched the 8 "ER" for the Département des Antiquités égyptiennes and the 14 "AGRR" for the Département des Antiquités grecques, étrusques et romaines.

<sup>14</sup> For the report, as well as the composition of the steering committee and the working group, including authors François Bridey and Gwenaëlle Fellingier, see *Rapport du groupe de travail sur les provenances d'œuvres récupérées après la seconde guerre mondiale – March 2017*, [https://medias.vie-publique.fr/data\\_storage\\_s3/rapport/pdf/174000602.pdf](https://medias.vie-publique.fr/data_storage_s3/rapport/pdf/174000602.pdf).

German occupation<sup>15</sup>. Our knowledge of the scope of the antiquities looted by the ERR is hampered by the use of imprecise terminology in naming objects and the lack of attention to this corpus<sup>16</sup>. It seems that none of the art historians working for the ERR were specialists in ancient art, which they cataloged with the means at hand in occupied Paris.

[10] Most of the artworks from the well-known collections were restituted after the war. On the other hand, items seized by the *Dienststelle Westen* in the context of the *Möbel-Aktion* (literally, “furniture operation”), which were transferred to the ERR and inventoried as “MA”, lost the identity of their owners, complicating their restitution<sup>17</sup>. Due to the extent of the recoveries and the complexity of the research, a large quantity of items remained orphaned when the CRA ended. Three “unclaimed” items were entrusted to the care of the Département des Antiquités orientales. One case was solved in 2008; the owner(s) of the other two have not yet been identified.

[11] Thanks to the research conducted at the time by the *Mission Mattéoli*, a bookbinding from a Hadith compendium was restituted in 2008 to the heirs of the previous owner, Frederick Unger (formerly Friedrich or Fritz)<sup>18</sup>. A typo in the ERR number, “V 45” instead of “U [for Unger] 45”, on the postwar list had prevented the identification of the Hadith cover’s owner. Unger, born in 1891, owned several textile firms in Austria before the war. In 1938, he tried to find refuge in Paris with his family and sent his collection of paintings there. After a short stay in Switzerland, he settled first in Chantilly, then in Aurillac with his wife and their two daughters. He requested

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<sup>15</sup> Searches in “Cultural Plunder by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg: Database of Art Objects at the Jeu de Paume” (hereafter, ERR database; [https://www.errproject.org/jeudepaume/card\\_advanced\\_search.php](https://www.errproject.org/jeudepaume/card_advanced_search.php)) allow identification of the collectors of pre-Islamic (Jacques Bacri, Gabrielle Philippson Benard le Pontois, Alexandrine de Rothschild) and Islamic artworks (Leo Meyer, Arthur Weil-Picard, Berthe Propper, Esther Van Cleef, David Calmann-Levy, Frederick Unger, Jacques Stern, Libermann, Rothschilds, Baron Cassel Van Doorn, Seligmann Brothers, Georges Merzbach). The collections of David David-Weill, Alphonse Kann, and Levy de Benzion comprised both categories. For a list arranged in order of quantitative importance of Islamic artworks in a given collection, see the paper by Inês Fialho Brandão, “The E.R.R. Database and the Recreation of Nazi-Looted Islamic Art Collections in Paris”, given at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon on 16 February 2019, available on Youtube, “Conferência Collecting: modus operandi, 1900–1950”, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPn35BdUtek>, slide 2, at around 2:15.

<sup>16</sup> Anne Dunn-Vaturi, “Provenance Research and Attribution Knowledge of Ancient Middle Eastern Art”, in: *History of Knowledge*, blog hosted by the German Historical Institute in Washington, DC, December 8, 2021, <https://historyofknowledge.net/2021/12/08/provenance-research-ancient-middle-eastern-art/>.

<sup>17</sup> The *Möbel-Aktion Asiatisches* (MA-ASI) covered a wide range of objects from Syria to India, dating from the fourth millennium BC to the 19th century AD. There are 147 MA-ASI records in the ERR database, but sometimes more than one item is listed under an inventory number. Carpets (MA-T) correspond to the largest category for Islamic art. Other divisions, such as weapons (MA-WA, MA-Ex) and metal (MA-MET), also contain pieces from the Near East.

<sup>18</sup> See “Binding of collection of ‘hadīth’”, in: Ministère de la Culture, “POP: la plateforme ouverte du patrimoine”, <https://www.pop.culture.gouv.fr/notice/mnr/AOR00U45>.

French citizenship in 1938, while offering two paintings to the Musée du Louvre<sup>19</sup>. After the rejection of his request, he and his family emigrated to the United States. His collection was seized by *Möbel-Aktion* agents and entered the ERR in 1942. The binding was inventoried in August 1942 with the number 45 and the letter U<sup>20</sup>. At the end of the same year, it found its way to Germany, then into the mines of Altaussee, with other paintings from the same collection. It arrived at the Munich Central Collecting Point on 26 June 1945 and was repatriated to France in June 1946<sup>21</sup>. When Unger came to the Jeu de Paume to identify items from his collection for restitution, the cover hadn't yet arrived from Munich, and he had forgotten to list it in his claims, so it fell through the cracks.

[12] The second "unclaimed" AOR is a marble sculpture of a male head, accessioned as "ancien fonds" in 1987 under the number AO 29407 and identified as the artwork AOR 10<sup>22</sup> as a result of archival research conducted in the late 1990s. It is a fragment of a sculpture representing a draped female(?) figure, reused on the opposite side as a male bearded bust in high relief (Figs. 2a, 2b)<sup>23</sup>. Intended to decorate a funerary niche, this portrait is characteristic of a type of sculpture attested in Cyrenaica (present Libya) during the Roman period, between the first century BC and the third century AD<sup>24</sup>. The hair with large curls and the short beard, however, date this portrait more precisely to the first half of the second century AD. Although this portrait shows a certain individualization of the features, the almond-shaped eyes, the prominent cheekbones, and the thick nose are frequently observed in this type of monuments. Carved in marble, this bust was not polished, like all the portraits related to this production, and would have been enhanced with pigments. The figure is wearing a tunic, visible on the shoulders<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> A still life by Pieter Claez (RF 1939 11) and a painting today attributed to Francesco Trevisani figuring the king Darius's family in front of Alexander the Great (RF 1939 12). The gift was accepted by decree of 21 May 1939, but since citizenship was denied, compensation was paid to descendants in 2009 (See "Vanity to musical instruments, with the five senses", in: Ministère de la Culture, "POP: la plateforme ouverte du patrimoine", <https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010063551>).

<sup>20</sup> "Frederic Unger – Paris, France", ERR database, [https://www.errproject.org/jeudepaume/card\\_view.php?CardId=15604](https://www.errproject.org/jeudepaume/card_view.php?CardId=15604).

<sup>21</sup> Bundesarchiv, Koblenz, B323/650, MCCC Restitution Card File, Munich no. 1085/25; see "Database on the 'Munich Central Collecting Point'", hosted by Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin, [https://www.dhm.de/datenbank/ccp/dhm\\_ccp.php?seite=11](https://www.dhm.de/datenbank/ccp/dhm_ccp.php?seite=11).

<sup>22</sup> "Head of a bearded man", in: Ministère de la Culture, "POP: la plateforme ouverte du patrimoine", <https://www.pop.culture.gouv.fr/notice/mnr/AOR00010>. Since its identification, the sculpture has been deaccessioned from the Antiquités orientales inventory (AO) and reassigned the number AOR 10.

<sup>23</sup> Ludovic Laugier, *Les sculptures grecques de l'époque impériale. Les collections du musée du Louvre*, Paris 2021, 323-324, cat. 272.

<sup>24</sup> Elisabeth Rosenbaum, *A Catalogue of Cyrenaican Portrait Sculpture*, London 1960, 13-28; Lidiano Bacchielli, "Il ritratto funerario in Cirenaica: produzione urbana e produzione della chora a confronto", in: *Giornata Lincea sulla archeologia cirenaica, Rome, 3 November 1987*, Rome 1990.

<sup>25</sup> Two other busts, one male, the other female, are held in the collection of the Département des Antiquités grecques, étrusques et romaines, musée du Louvre: see Kate de Kersauson, *Catalogue des portraits romains*, vol. 2, Paris 1996, nos. 72 and 92; Laugier (2021).



Figs. 2a, 2b. Funerary bust of a man, Cyrenaica (present Libya), first half of the second century AD, marble; on the back is a sculpture of a draped female figure (fragment), reused for the execution of the bust. Musée du Louvre, Paris, AOR 10 (photographs © Musée du Louvre, dist. RMN-GP / Philippe Fuzeau)

[13] The sculpture was seen in Derna (Libya) in 1909, but the provenance of this object between the early 20th century and its confiscation by the ERR is still under investigation.<sup>26</sup> The artwork is mentioned under the name “Marmor-Büste” in a list of crates containing objects from France inventoried as “Unbekannt” (unknown), a category used when the ERR did not identify the owner<sup>27</sup> or did not wish to display the name of the owner<sup>28</sup>. It belongs to a lot with the number UNB 25, including two other stone heads, a bronze head, and a pedestal for a statue. According to Rose Valland, these items were packed and crated for Kurt von Behr, head of the ERR<sup>29</sup>. The head appears again on an undated list of objects packed at the Louvre by the Pusey-Beaumont-Crassier Company for their shipment to Germany<sup>30</sup>. After the war, the head was repatriated to France by train from Buxheim, via Munich. It reached Paris on 4 March 1946, in a box numbered 44bis, which also contained ceramic objects from the Sèvres Manufactory<sup>31</sup>. Proposed and accepted at

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<sup>26</sup> Morgan Belzic, “Les sculptures funéraires de Cyrénaïque” (PhD diss., Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris, 2022), vol. 1.2, 770-780, vol. 3, D.275, vol. 4, 95.

<sup>27</sup> In April 1942, a report to Alfred Rosenberg about the ERR by Robert Scholz and Hermann von Ingram “claimed that the seizure operations were being performed in conditions of chaos” (Le Masne de Chermont and Sigal-Klagsbald [2008], 12).

<sup>28</sup> Ministère de l’Europe et des Affaires étrangères, Centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve (hereafter, MEAE), MEAE/209SUP99, “Abschlussbericht französischer Sammlungen”.

<sup>29</sup> ERR database, “(Unbekannt/UNB) -Unk.”, Kiste Unb 25, [https://www.errproject.org/jeudepaume/card\\_view.php?CardId=54081](https://www.errproject.org/jeudepaume/card_view.php?CardId=54081).

<sup>30</sup> MEAE/209SUP103, “Notebook Pusey-Beaumont-Crassier”.

<sup>31</sup> MEAE/209SUP428 P 81, Buxheim file, shipment 4 March 1946, and MEAE/209SUP521 P218, second unpacking notebook for Buxheim shipment.



the Fifth Selection Committee on 25 October 1950<sup>32</sup>, the head arrived at the Louvre on 21 November 1950<sup>33</sup>. It was assigned to the Département des Antiquités orientales by order of the Minister of Education on 13 August 1951<sup>34</sup>.

[14] Only one carpet is part of the AOR<sup>35</sup>, while a number of carpets labeled Oriental were consigned to the custodianship of the Département des Objets d'art, following decisions of the Selection Committees. It is not clear why this one was chosen by Jean David-Weill, especially since this carpet cannot be considered very relevant given the museum's scope of historical objects. Indeed, this silk carpet (AOR 19934/2), once labeled as Panderma and considered to be of Turkish origin, was probably made in Kirman less than a decade before World War II. Even if made of silk, it is not an artwork of historical importance, such as those chosen by the other curators of the museum. Nevertheless, it is the third AOR item, most probably resulting from a spoliation, whose previous owner was unknown after the war. It was found in the monastery at Buxheim, one of the largest art caches set up by the ERR in Bavaria, where most of the carpets and tapestries confiscated in France were sent. As noted above, carpets are the largest category of Islamic art plundered by the *Möbel-Aktion*, complicating the chances of finding their rightful owners.

[15] The three other textiles chosen by David-Weill are more important from historic and artistic points of view. They include a so-called Persian sash, or silk belt, of the 18th century (AOR 819/2) and two fragments of Medieval textiles from the western Islamic world, one probably dating to the 15th century from Sicily or Spain (AOR 1941/104, Fig. 3), the other originating from the Nasrid kingdom of the 14th century (AOR 1941/102, Fig. 4). The latter was stolen from the museum in 1973 while being displayed in a frame on the landing of one of the stairways. Purchased in Paris in 1941 by the city of Düsseldorf for the Kunstgewerbemuseum, the two textiles have a common history, which is discussed below.

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<sup>32</sup> The number 1 is inscribed on the sculpture in red pencil within a rectangular frame, corresponding to the number of the Selection Committee ; see MEAE/209SUP300, Preparatory table for the Fifth Selection Committee, and Archives nationales de France, Paris, fonds des Archives des Musées nationaux, cote 20150044/99-20150044/100 (ancienne cote Z 15), Report for the Sixth Selection Committee.

<sup>33</sup> Service des Musées de France/sous-direction des collections, Récupération file (receipt).

<sup>34</sup> MEAE/209SUP525 P222.

<sup>35</sup> See Ministère de la Culture, "POP: la plateforme ouverte du patrimoine", <https://www.pop.culture.gouv.fr/notice/mnr/OAI00009>.



Fig. 3. Fragment of textile with lions, Spain or Sicily, 14th or 15th century, silk damask. Musée du Louvre, Paris, AOR 1941/104 (photograph © Musée du Louvre, dist. RMN-GP / Raphaël Chipault / Benjamin Soligny)

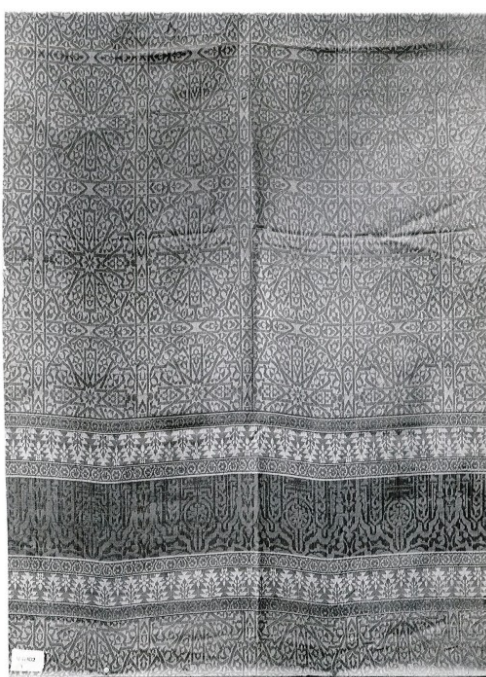


Fig. 4. Fragment of textile with geometrical design, Spain, mid-14th century, silk lampas. Musée du Louvre, Paris, AOR 1941/102 (until 1973, since then missing) (photograph © Musée du Louvre / Department of Islamic Arts archives / unknown photographer)

## Purchases by German museums and dealers in Paris

[16] Several German museums were regular clients on the Paris art market before the war and during the occupation, taking advantage of the overvalued exchange rate of the *Reichsmark*<sup>36</sup>. After the war, research was undertaken regarding acquisitions from the occupied countries made by German museums and elites. A list of these transactions was compiled by the Allied countries' Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives program on the basis of files and interrogations of employees of the Schenker company, which was in charge of transporting works of art<sup>37</sup>. Simultaneously, German museums and individuals had to declare the works they had purchased on the French market and retribute them. AOR items came back from two museums, in Düsseldorf and Hamburg, and from one dealer in Munich.

[17] Museums in the Rhineland are strongly represented in the MNR corpus<sup>38</sup>. After the war, the city of Düsseldorf, located in the British occupation zone, followed the usual procedure of declaring objects from France. About a hundred artworks are listed in French claim no. 740 to the British authorities, dated 19 February 1947<sup>39</sup>. The artworks were inventoried in Schloss Adolfsburg, Oberhundem, and then in the repository of Schloss Dyck, and were repatriated later by two convoys from Düsseldorf on 22 September 1948<sup>40</sup>. Nineteen AORs correspond to purchases by the city of Düsseldorf for its Kunstgewerbemuseum<sup>41</sup>.

[18] Yervant, known as Edouard, Hindamian<sup>42</sup> (1871 or 1877–1958), a Parisian art dealer active from the first decades of the 20th century, is one of the Düsseldorf sources. He opened his first shop at 34 rue Richer, before moving to 14 rue des Pyramides, where he was still settled in the 1940s. In 1924 he asked for and obtained French nationality<sup>43</sup>. From 1912, he had regularly sold items to museums, including the Musée du Louvre and the Musée des Arts Décoratifs; in that year he offered to lend some textiles for display alongside Persian miniatures at the great exhibition

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<sup>36</sup> See Mattes Lammert, "The Antiquities Trade during the German Occupation of France, 1940–1944", *RIHA Journal* 0290, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11588/riha.2022.2.92784>, in this special issue.

<sup>37</sup> MEAE/209SUP297 C8, "Liste des acquisitions faites par les musées et galeries allemandes pendant l'occupation de la France" (dossier Schenker).

<sup>38</sup> Isabelle Le Masne de Chermont and Didier Schulmann, *Le pillage de l'art en France pendant l'occupation et la situation des 2000 œuvres confiées aux Musées nationaux*, Paris 2000, appendix 2, 83.

<sup>39</sup> MEAE/209SUP233, Correspondence between the director of the OBIP, Paris, and the chief of the Central Bureau for Restitutions, Berlin, May 1947, and "Authority for release", 9 July 1948; MEAE/209SUP276 B121, "Mission française de restitution en zone britannique", claim 740, BR no. 502.

<sup>40</sup> MEAE/209SUP430, Dossiers des premier et deuxième convois en provenance de Düsseldorf Schenker & Co., "Verlade-Anzeige Nr. A.VIII/5525".

<sup>41</sup> Le Masne de Chermont and Schulmann (2000), 83. (However, with data mixed up between "OA" and "Ant").

<sup>42</sup> His name is sometimes spelled Hindamien.

<sup>43</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française*, 26 June 1924; in this state gazette his date of birth is given as 1871.

organized in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs<sup>44</sup>. During World War II, he had some German clients; he is cited in the reports of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS)' Art Looting Intelligence Unit (ALIU), but he does not seem to have appeared before the *Commission d'Épuration* (Purge Commission), the French authority that investigated the behavior of the business elite and judged the impact and importance of their collaboration with German authorities.

[19] Three pieces of metalwork sold by Hindamian in Paris in 1941 to Düsseldorf are now in the Louvre: two Iranian basins from the 14th century (AOR 1941/92-94, AOR 1941/93), having respectively cost 4,000 and 5,000 francs, and a Mamluk candlestick (AOR 1941/96; Fig. 5), having cost 40,000 francs. They were sent to Düsseldorf at the request of Adolf Wüster, the cultural attaché at the German Embassy in Paris during the war who played a key role in plundering operations. Their provenance could be as diverse as the sources of any Parisian dealer between the two World Wars; beyond the fact that they transited through dubious wartime channels, nothing is yet known of their former history.



Fig. 5. Candlestick bearing the name of the Mamluk Sultan Hajj II, Egypt or Syria, 1389, copper alloy inlaid with silver. Musée du Louvre, Paris, AOR 1941/96 (photograph © Musée du Louvre, dist. RMN-GP / Hughes Dubois)

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<sup>44</sup> On Hindamian at the beginning of the century, see *Purs Décors, Arts de l'islam, regards du XIXe siècle*, exh. cat., Paris 2007, 315; on the 1912 exhibition, see, among others, Charlotte Maury, ed., *Le goût de l'Orient, Georges Marteau collectionneur*, exh. cat., Paris 2019, 78-82.

[20] Another Paris art dealer involved in the trade of antiquities was Kalebjian Frères<sup>45</sup>. The Kalebjian brothers, like several other Armenian art dealers<sup>46</sup>, were well established and active in Paris and in Cairo decades before the war<sup>47</sup>. They opened their antique shop at 12 rue de la Paix in 1905. From then on, they regularly sold to museums, including the Louvre, where they were also listed among its donors<sup>48</sup>. Their life and the history of the firm in the first decades of the century are known from a 1926 anthropological survey on Armenians in France that one of the three brothers answered<sup>49</sup>. We only know the names of two of them, Hagop and Garbis, perhaps because of the early death of the third<sup>50</sup>. Their grandfather was a money changer in Kayseri, Anatolia, a city their father had left to settle in Istanbul, where he married the daughter of a painter. The brothers were raised in the Ottoman capital and worked in the Ottoman Posts before leaving for Paris at the very beginning of the 20th century, where they asked for French nationality. They began to sell medals before turning to Egyptian antiquities and gradually diversified their sources of income by including furniture, jewels, and other categories of objects. Neither of them had a male child, so they planned to include in their business their nephew, probably named Nichan<sup>51</sup>.

[21] In 1941, the city of Düsseldorf purchased for its Kunstgewerbemuseum from Kalebjian Frères the three textiles mentioned above (Figs. 3, 4), along with a number of metalworks, such as a Mamluk basin bearing the name of an amir of the sultan al-Malik al-Nasir (Egypt or Syria, first half of the 14th century), now on long-term loan to the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Niort (AOR

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<sup>45</sup> Their name is also spelled Kalebdjian or Calepdian.

<sup>46</sup> See Lammert, in this special issue (as n36). On Armenian dealers, see also Jessica Hallett and Maida Chavak, “The Gift of Antiquity: Armenian Art Dealers and Their Networks”, in: *The Rise of Islamic Art, 1869–1939*, eds. Carla Paulino et al., exh. cat., Lisbon 2019, 55-66. The authors cite Hagop and Garbis Kalebjian among the “importers” type of dealers alongside the Indjoudjian brothers, as opposed to the wealthy and educated ones such as Dikran Kelekian or Calouste Gulbenkian (p. 64).

<sup>47</sup> For example, in 1902, they sold a bowl from the Fustat excavations to the Département des Objets d’art (OA 5872), where the Islamic objects were then kept.

<sup>48</sup> The Kalebjian brothers offered a small sculpture of Osiris in 1930 to the Département des Antiquités égyptiennes (E 13951); see Archives nationales de France, fonds des Archives des Musées nationaux, cote 20150157/41 (ancienne cote 1BB41), Procès-verbal du Comité consultatif des Musées nationaux, séance du 8 mai 1930, 179. The catalog *Les donateurs du Louvre*, Paris 1989, 240, mentions their gift in 1913 to the Islamic section of the Département des Objets d’art, but the inventory and acquisition files indicate that it was in fact a private sale.

<sup>49</sup> Paul Descamps, *La formation sociale des Arméniens*, Paris 1926, 86-89.

<sup>50</sup> The Dumbarton Oaks database, for example, only mentions two brothers: “Kalebdjian Frères”, <https://www.doaks.org/resources/bliss-tyler-correspondence/annotations/kalebdjian-freres>.

<sup>51</sup> The collection of a certain Nichan Kalebjian was sold in New York in 1969: *Egyptian, Western Asiatic, Greek, Etruscan, Roman Antiquities, and Other Works of Art: From the Collection of the Late Nichan Kalebjian*, Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, 24 May 1969. Given that the brothers may have been at least 20 or 25 years old in 1902, either Nichan is the third brother who lived a very long life (89 years) or he is the nephew they mentioned in the publication of 1926, who kept the business and collection while emigrating to the United States.

1941/106), and a Mamluk box decorated with figures of the zodiac, now on long-term loan to the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Limoges (AOR 1941/107).

[22] During World War II, it seems that only Garbis was active. Or at least, only he was suspected after 1945 of collaborating with German authorities. When summoned to appear before the Purge Commission<sup>52</sup>, he related that his family had been suspected by the Gestapo of being of foreign origin and that he had to go to the police office every day. He also used as a defense the fact that he only sold “oriental” art and nothing of French culture to German museums and collectors. He said that he was called to explain to German officers in Paris the Egyptian political situation. He explained that he hid the contents of several Jewish estates, whose owners were killed while in deportation<sup>53</sup>. The question whether Kalebjian acted as an intermediary to sell objects on behalf of these families or just stored them is still unanswered.

[23] The most important part of the AOR kept in the Département des Arts de l’Islam is a group of paintings on paper. Out of the ten that are now in the Musée du Louvre, nine are detached folios of illustrated manuscripts, and among them, six come from the same manuscript, a *Book of the Wonders of Creation* by Qazwini (AOR 4239 to AOR 4244; Fig. 6).



Fig. 6. A giant fish of the Caspian Sea (page from *Book of the Wonders of Creation* by Qazwini), Iran, probably Shiraz, 16th century, ink, colors and gold on paper. Musée du Louvre, Paris, AOR 4243 (photograph © Musée du Louvre, dist. RMN-GP / Mathieu Rabeau)

<sup>52</sup> Archives nationales de France, dossier F/12/9630/file Garbis Kalebjdian.

<sup>53</sup> Barbara Schröter, *Stoff für Tausend und Ein Jahr. Die Textilsammlung des Generalbauinspektors für die Reichshauptstadt (GBI) Albert Speer*, Norderstedt 2013, 218-219.

These six pages were part of the Octave Homberg collection before the war. Homberg (1876–1941), a diplomat and financial administrator, was the son of another great collector and former curator of the French National Library, also named Octave (1844–1907). After the son's death, his estate was sold at an auction in Paris in March 1942. Among the lots are listed six miniatures from the same manuscript, which the art dealer Charles Ratton acquired for 6,500 francs and then sold to the city of Düsseldorf<sup>54</sup>.

[24] Homberg seems not to have been considered Jewish, although the family was of Jewish origin. They lived in Le Havre in the 18th century and converted to Catholicism in 1785, as they were the only Jewish family in the city. But Octave did not know that fact and considered himself a Catholic<sup>55</sup>. There is, therefore, no reason to think that the sale of his estate after his death had anything to do with a forced sale. The presence of artworks from his collection among the AOR is only due to the fact that they were sold in France during the Occupation by a merchant, Charles Ratton, whose close relationship with the German antique chasers was notorious.

[25] Ratton, indeed, was cited by the Purge Commission for collaboration. Even though researchers have studied his case in detail, a part of his business during the war remains in darkness<sup>56</sup>. Alongside the six manuscript pages, Ratton sold some miniatures: two of them are pages from a 16th-century manuscript, probably from Qazwin, of the famous Iranian epic *Shahnameh*. The first one represents an episode of the life of Kay Khosrow (AOR 4235); the second shows Sindukht peeping at Zal and Rudابه (AOR 4245). A third painting comes from an Indian album and shows the portrait of a lady signed by the painter Balchand (AOR 4236). The last one is a calligraphic page from a Qur'an from Egypt or Syria dated to the 14th century (AOR 4237)<sup>57</sup>. The whole lot was chosen by Jean David-Weill in 1949 to be sent as a long-term loan to Algiers. Nine of them (one painting seems to have been forgotten) were kept there from 1951 to 1962, when they were returned to the Musée du Louvre.

[26] At least two items repatriated from Düsseldorf, chosen by David-Weill and listed in the French official order that assigned them to the Département des Antiquités orientales, probably never reached the Musée du Louvre. The first one is a basin, sold to the city of Düsseldorf by Hindamian. It is described as a Fars basin, similar to the example nowadays on loan in Niort (AOR 1941/92-94). But only the latter, with two accession numbers, joined the Louvre collection. Another item is also quite puzzling: a fragment of a fountain spout sold to the city of Düsseldorf by D. Kellermann, whose address was then 13 square de Port-Royal. The German number ascribed

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<sup>54</sup> On the fate of these six miniatures from the *Book of the Wonders of Creation* (musée du Louvre, AOR A 4239-4244), see the entry in: Ministère de la Culture, "POP: la plateforme ouverte du patrimoine", <https://www.pop.culture.gouv.fr/notice/mnr/AORA4242>.

<sup>55</sup> See Anne Mézin and Pierre de Boissieu, "L'intégration d'une famille ashkénaze dans la France du XVIIIe siècle : les Homberg du Havre", in: *Archives Juives* 34 (2001–2002), 95-108.

<sup>56</sup> Philippe Dagen, *Charles Ratton, L'invention des arts "primitifs"*, exh. cat., Paris 2013, 28-30.

<sup>57</sup> The page currently labeled AOR 4237 may in fact be a piece reportedly missing from the bequest of Jean Sauvaget in 1946. Research is being conducted to determine whether the page ever reached the museum.

is 1942/58<sup>58</sup>. This small bronze cannot be identified in the collection of the Louvre today, and no photographs of the object seem to exist. According to the German description, it is a hollow bronze, in the shape of the head of a feline, probably a lion.<sup>59</sup> Bronze fountain spouts are generally ascribed to the western Islamic world from the 10th century to the 12th, even if the 1946 list indicates an Anatolian or Iranian origin.

[27] After the war, fragments of ancient lead sarcophagi (AOR 7-9; Figs. 7a-7e) were the subject of a French restitution claim to the British authorities because they were bought from Parisian dealer Joseph Enkiri<sup>60</sup> by the city of Hamburg, located in the British occupation zone<sup>61</sup>. The tradition of burying the deceased in an ornate lead coffin originated in the Levant during the Roman period, from the middle of the first century AD. The production of lead coffins in the workshops of Tyre, Sidon, Beirut, and Jerusalem was maintained until the middle of the fourth century AD<sup>62</sup>. The panels were cast in a single open mold of clay or possibly sand in two plaques about 0.5 cm thick: one for the tank, whose sides were folded and then welded together, and one for the lid. Even though there are enough panels to reconstruct one coffin—a lid, two long panels, and two ends—the AOR fragments, in fact, most probably belong to different coffins from the same production in Tyre between the second and third centuries AD. The lid (AOR 7, Fig. 7a) is decorated on the long sides with laurel bands framing a network of ivy and vines forming diamonds and triangles in which rosettes are inscribed. The two long side panels (AOR 8, Figs. 7b-c) combine, in an architectural framework articulated by small columns with Corinthian capitals, patterns of kantharoi, dolphins, female sphinxes, and Medusa masks. Finally, the two end panels (AOR 9, Figs. 7d-e), respectively, have rosettes forming a cross with eight branches and an aedicula with four columns and a pediment decorated with kantharoi<sup>63</sup>.

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<sup>58</sup> See the entry in: Ministère de la Culture, “POP: la plateforme ouverte du patrimoine”, “Fragment de fontaine (?)”, <https://www.pop.culture.gouv.fr/notice/mnr/AOR04258>.

<sup>59</sup> National Archives and Records Administration (hereafter, NARA), Washington, DC, RG260 Ardelia Hall Collection, Box 465, Nazi Art Shipments.

<sup>60</sup> In a list of “Purchases from France”, his last name has been miswritten “Enriki”: MEAE/209SUP404.

<sup>61</sup> The National Archives of the UK (TNA), London, FO 1036/672, Hansestadt Hamburg: French Claims 1-2500, Claim file 1877.

<sup>62</sup> Nicolas Bel, “Les sarcophages de plomb”, in: Nicolas Bel et al., *L’Orient romain et byzantin au Louvre*, Paris 2012, 343-345; Blair Fowlkes-Childs and Michael Seymour, *The World between Empires: Art and Identity in the Ancient Middle East*, exh. cat., The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 2019, 112-113, cat. 84.

<sup>63</sup> Noël Duval and Anne-Marie Bertin, “Les sarcophages en plomb syriens au musée du Louvre”, in: *Revue Archéologique*, Nouvelle Série, Fasc. 1 (1974), 43-82: 78-82; the fragments were not identified in this study as coming from the Récupération artistique and were cataloged under their old inventory numbers (AO 24445 for the lid and AO 24445 A to D for the panels), which had been assigned to them in the 1980s.





Figs. 7a-7e. Lid, long sides, and end sides of coffins, Phoenicia, Tyre (present Lebanon), AD 2nd–3rd centuries, lead. Musée du Louvre, Paris, AOR 7 (lid), AOR 8A-B (long sides), AOR 9C-D (end sides) (photographs © Musée du Louvre, dist. RMN-GP / Philippe Fuzeau)

These panels, intended for the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, were delivered to Hamburg in March 1943<sup>64</sup>. They were repatriated with the first shipment from Hamburg to the CRA in Paris on 22 October 1948. The fragments, proposed to the First Selection Committee on 27 October 1949 (when the German number 1943/2 appeared for the first time in the documentation) and retained at the Second Selection Committee on 17 November 1949, were assigned to the French Musées nationaux in 1951.

[28] Joseph Enkiri (1881–1948) was a bank employee<sup>65</sup> who apparently took over the business of his brother Jean-Pierre Enkiri (1879–1935), an expert dealer and collector of antiquities, after the

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<sup>64</sup> The reason for this assignment to the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe could be explained by the presence of another lead sarcophagus in the collections of this museum since 1917 (personal communication, Dr. Frank Hildebrandt, 2019). At least two casts of details from panels AOR 8 and 9 remain in Hamburg: 1943.2a (dolphin) and 1943.2b (crater).

<sup>65</sup> In his 1926 naturalization file, he is listed as an “attaché” to the Société Générale: Archives nationales de France, Décrets de naturalisation de l’année 1926 (avril à juin), Décret de naturalisations du 29 juin 1926, “Enkiri, Joseph”, [https://www.siv.archives-nationales.culture.gouv.fr/siv/UD/FRAN\\_IR\\_057661/c1cnv8t4cini--qsurszw7vy4](https://www.siv.archives-nationales.culture.gouv.fr/siv/UD/FRAN_IR_057661/c1cnv8t4cini--qsurszw7vy4).

latter's passing<sup>66</sup>. Jean-Pierre was established as a dealer of ancient art on the same block (197 blvd St Germain) as his brother worked (46 rue de Grenelle) and officiated as an expert for auction sales at the Hôtel Drouot. The wording used on the Application for the Restitution of Property from Germany to the French Government<sup>67</sup>—"Sale [...] forced by the German occupation authorities"—raises the question about the nature of the sale to the Hamburg museum. After the war, this antiquarian didn't appear in the lists of dealers who traded with the Germans<sup>68</sup>. Research is currently being conducted to find out what happened to the Enkiri collection during the war. Far Eastern items from that collection were sold by Joseph's widow at the Hôtel Drouot on 27 April 1949. As to the question of the provenance of the lead panels before the war, the Enkiri brothers may have obtained them directly from the Eastern Mediterranean region, as the panels had Syrian origins, or they acquired them on the Parisian market, where they operated as experts from the 1910s to the 1930s.

[29] The six objects AOR 1 to 6 share the same wartime path. They belong mostly to a group of bronze pieces from the Luristan region, a western Iranian province, and date to the beginning of the first millennium BC. Five bronzes correspond to the typical Luristan Iron Age production: a rectangular open-work plaque ornamented with confronted felines (AOR 1; Fig. 8a); a rectangular open-work pinhead representing a mouflon-man taming felines (AOR 3; Fig. 8b); and finials in the shape of roaring confronted felines, whose function is not determined (AOR 2, AOR 5, AOR 6; Figs. 9a-9c). The outlier is a handle in the shape of a goatfish (AOR 4; Fig. 10), attributed to the Luristan region but dated to the Parthian period, circa the first and second centuries AD.

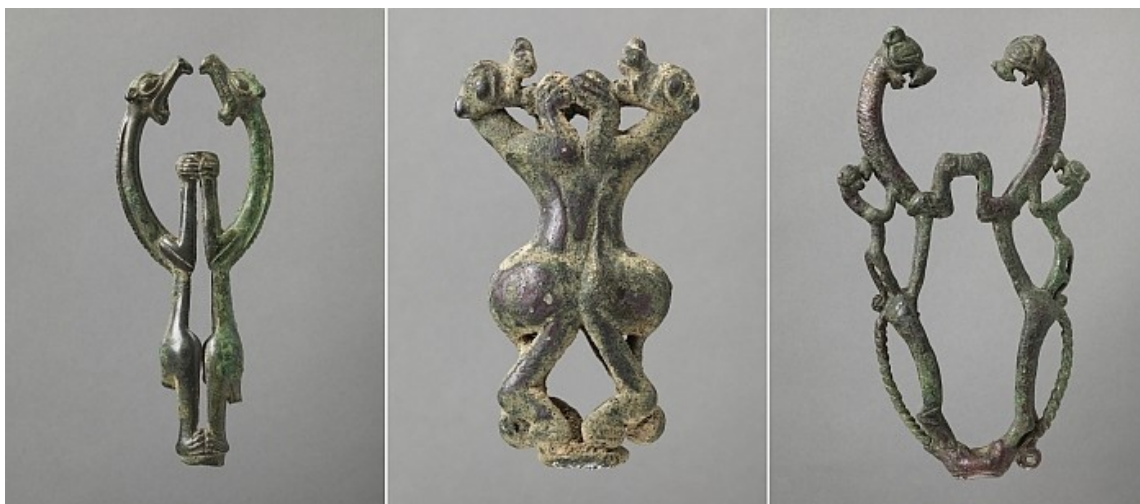


Figs. 8a, 8b. Plaque with two confronted felines (*left*) and pinhead with a "master of animals" (*right*), Luristan (Iran), beginning of the first millennium BC, bronze. Musée du Louvre, Paris, AOR 1 and AOR 3 (photographs © Musée du Louvre, dist. RMN-GP / Philippe Fuzeau)

<sup>66</sup> He notably sold a marble Aphrodite head from the collection of his brother to Henri de Montherlant in 1941; invoice reproduced in the auction catalog of Artcurial, *Archéologie & Arts d'Orient. Don't la collection Henry de Montherlant*, Paris, 7 November 2017, lot 5, <https://www.artcurial.com/sites/default/files/2017-10/3303.pdf>.

<sup>67</sup> TNA, FO 1036/672, Hansestadt Hamburg: French Claims 1-2500, Claim file 1877.

<sup>68</sup> MEAE/209SUP107 A34, "Liste des antiquaires français ayant vendu des œuvres d'art aux occupants".



Figs. 9a-9c. Finials with two confronted felines, Luristan (Iran), beginning of the first millennium BC, bronze. Musée du Louvre, Paris, AOR 2, AOR 5 and AOR 6 (left to right) (photograph © Musée du Louvre, dist. RMN-GP / Philippe Fuzeau)



Fig. 10. Handle in the shape of a goatfish, Iran, Parthian empire, 1st–2nd centuries AD, bronze. Musée du Louvre, Paris, AOR 4 (photograph © Musée du Louvre, dist. RMN-GP / Philippe Fuzeau)

[30] Breaking into the art market in the 1920s and 1930s and coming from clandestine excavations or commercial excavations authorized by Iranian legislation, Luristan bronzes fascinated a whole prewar generation of collectors and dealers who were passionate about these inventive and enigmatic pieces. The craze for this type of object led to the fabrication of many forgeries as early as the 1930s and 1940s, resulting in a corruption of our knowledge of genuinely ancient Luristan bronzes<sup>69</sup>. With the exception of a few pieces appearing at the end of the 19th

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<sup>69</sup> The question of the authenticity of the AOR Luristan bronzes will not be addressed here. For the connection between illicit digging, the expectations of the antiques market, and the development of forgeries in the case of the Luristan bronzes, see Oscar W. Muscarella, *Bronze and Iron: Ancient Near Eastern Artifacts in The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York 1988, 119 n2; Oscar W. Muscarella, *The Lie Became Great: The Forgery of Ancient Near Eastern Cultures*, Groningen 2000, esp. 81-119 with more complete references.

century and others entering in the early 1930s (following André Godard's excavations in the region), the collection of Luristan bronzes in the Musée du Louvre in the mid-1940s was limited. This probably explains why these AOR bronzes were chosen during the Selection Committees for the Musée du Louvre by Jean David-Weill, son of the collector David David-Weill (1871–1952), who himself had an important collection of Luristan bronzes<sup>70</sup>.

[31] During the war (exact date unknown), the AOR bronzes were acquired in France by the German art dealer Walter Bornheim (1888–1971)<sup>71</sup>. The ALIU, established by the Allies in late 1944, was tasked with the interrogation of enemy persons suspected of participating in art looting activities; Officer Theodore Rousseau wrote the report about Bornheim<sup>72</sup>. Established in Cologne, then Munich (Galerie für Alte Kunst), Bornheim, while remaining an independent merchant, played the role of an agent and adviser to Göring for the constitution of his personal collection from 1938. Bornheim regularly visited Paris from April 1941 to July 1944 and did the great majority of his business at the Grand Hôtel, known today as the InterContinental Paris le Grand. During the war, Bornheim stored many works of art at the Dresdner Bank in Tegernsee, Bavaria, and the six Iranian bronzes are listed there as “6 petits bronzes Grec, Luristan (de Garabed, Paris)”<sup>73</sup>. We can identify Garabed as Arthur Garabed Kevorkian (born ca. 1891), an art dealer installed in London by 1923 and active in the art business until the mid-1960s<sup>74</sup>. He was part of an influential group of Armenian dealers and collectors, including his half-brother Hagop (1872–1962) and his brother Carnig Kevorkian (1887–1964), who specialized in Oriental antiquities and Islamic art and were based in New York and Paris, respectively. After the war, the works stored by Bornheim in Tegernsee were identified and transferred on 15 May 1946 to the Central Collecting Point in Munich, where the “property cards” indicate “bought in France by Bornheim” and “unknown owner”<sup>75</sup>. These cards also indicate that the objects were sent to Paris on 25 September 1947. Offered at the First Selection Committee on 27 October 1949, the objects were

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<sup>70</sup> A great patron and collector with eclectic tastes, David David-Weill formed an important collection of Luristan bronzes between 1928 and 1939. This collection was sold by his heirs at a public auction in Paris in 1972; the same year, 27 Luristan bronzes were donated to the Musée du Louvre by his two sons, Jean and Pierre David-Weill; see Pierre Amiet, *Les bronzes du Luristan. Collection David David-Weill*, Paris 1976.

<sup>71</sup> The lot is described as “6 kleine Luristan-Bronzen, auf Sockel montiert” in a list compiled by Walter Bornheim on 2 December 1947 of objects acquired in France during the war: MEAE/209SUP218 B7.

<sup>72</sup> National Archives of the United States, College Park, RG 239, M1782/roll 1, Art Looting Investigation Unit (ALIU), Theodore Rousseau, APO 413 US Army Detailed Interrogation Report No. 11, Subject: Walter Bornheim, 15 September 1945, 2.

<sup>73</sup> MEAE/209SUP255, Bornheim report, appendix 4: “Liste des objets déposés par Walter Bornheim à la Dresdner Bank, Tegernsee”; Bornheim also purchased a statuette of Isis in 1941 (now entrusted to the care of the Département des antiquités égyptiennes at the Louvre, ER 1) from A. Garabed (Letterhead: A. Garabed Fine Art Dealer, Kingsbury House, 15-17 King Street, St James' Square, Pall Mall Deposit, 8-9 Carlton Street, London SW1).

<sup>74</sup> Elizabeth Angelicoussis, *Reconstructing the Lansdowne Collection of Classical Marbles*, Munich 2017, 103.

<sup>75</sup> NARA, RG 260, Ardelia Hall Collection, 30160 / Tegernsee 27/7 [AOR 1 and 3], 27/14 [AOR 2, 5, 6], 27/26 [AOR 4]; see also photographs at NARA, NWDNS-260-MP-30160/7, 14 and 26.

selected during the Second Selection Committee on 17 November 1949<sup>76</sup>. They were assigned to the Département des Antiquités orientales on 16 May 1951.

## Conclusion

[32] Most of the objects presented in this article are not uniquely identifiable works of art. Without individual markings, such as a collector's label or inscription, the prior ownership of these works is very difficult to determine, presenting a special challenge for provenance research. However, by publishing them here, we hope to facilitate future identification, notably of the two remaining looted pieces, the sculpture UNB 25 and the silk carpet AOR 19934/2.

[33] Ninety percent of the AOR were purchases on the Parisian art market. Research since the *Mission Mattéoli* sheds light on the role and lives of dealers active during the German occupation, notably the Armenian network<sup>77</sup>. This allows us to update the records of the dealers Joseph Enkiri and Arthur Garabed Kevorkian, contributing in the long term to the documentation of the art market and to projects such as the "Répertoire des acteurs du marché de l'art en France sous l'Occupation (RAMA)".<sup>78</sup> Moreover, expanded criteria now apply to the classification of property as looted property: sales that may have been forced or made under duress are thoroughly scrutinized.

[34] Following recommendations of the *Mission Mattéoli*, the Commission for the Compensation of Victims of Spoliations (*Commission pour l'indemnisation des victimes de spoliations intervenues du fait des législations antisémites en vigueur pendant l'Occupation*, abbreviated CIVS in French) and the Foundation for the Memory of the Shoah (*Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah*) were established in 1999 and in 2000, respectively. Continuous efforts to reveal the history of the AOR are coupled with a mission to document acquisitions by French museums during the Nazi era, supported by a new task force launched by the French government in April 2019 and directed by David Zivie (*Mission de recherche et de restitution des biens culturels spoliés 1933–1945*).

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We would like to thank the editors and anonymous reviewers whose recommendations have contributed to improve our essay. We are very grateful to the members of the *Mission de recherche et de restitution des biens culturels spoliés 1933–1945* (Secrétariat général du Ministère de la Culture) for their help and in particular to Muriel de Bastier and Alain Prévet. At the Louvre, we would like to thank Sophie Marmois (Service du récolement), Caroline Biro (Département des Antiquités égyptiennes), Ludovic Laugier and Christine Walter (Département des Antiquités grecques, étrusques, et romaines), Anne-Lise Guigues (Département des Antiquités orientales), as

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<sup>76</sup> MEAE/209SUP475 R39.

<sup>77</sup> See Lammert, in this special issue (as n36).

<sup>78</sup> A project of the Institut national d'histoire de l'art (INHA), Paris, see <https://www.inha.fr/fr/recherche/le-departement-des-etudes-et-de-la-recherche/domaines-de-recherche/histoire-des-collections-histoire-des-institutions-artistiques-et-culturelles-economie-de-l-art/repertoire-des-acteurs-du-marche-de-l-art-en-france-sous-l-occupation-rama.html>.

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