Rethinking Provenance Research

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What, in Germany in 2018, is the state of research into the provenance of expropriated cultural property within the context of National Socialist (Nazi) persecution? How have we arrived at this situation? What remains to be done? These three questions determine the structure of this essay, which looks exclusively at public institutions; that is, to the greatest possible extent it steers clear of the realm of private collectors and the art trade, including auction houses and art dealers. The focus here is primarily on the German *Bund* (the national government), *Länder* (states), and *Kommunen* (local authorities), and our thesis concludes that we need to reflect more intensively on the premises, structures, and procedures in these areas. Do we—as art historians and provenance researchers—have at our disposal the research infrastructure that is necessary for us to meet the current and forthcoming challenges? Are we capable of dealing effectively with the contexts of injustice relating to acquisition and translocation processes? Let us begin the discussion with a review of the developments that have—and have not—taken place up to now.

1945 to 2018

The first phase of managing dispossessed property leading up to the founding of the two German states in 1949 can be understood as a process of collecting, recording, and distributing/returning—both at the instigation of the Allies and under Allied supervision and control. It is important to emphasize the element of supervision and control in view of the continuity of former Nazi functionaries in all areas of society, not least in museums, universities, historical monument preservation, and the art trade. When individual attitudes and institutional practices were formally questioned in an assessment, the consequent revision—indeed, a re-vision, or review, of the past—was the result of external pressure and compulsion, and not an effect of internal questioning or self-criticism. What had been codified back in early January 1943 in the interallied declaration issued in London[1]—which declared "invalid" not only looting and confiscation but also acquisitions, purchases, and transactions of any kind conducted in the occupied territories (because the foreign exchange policy in the European states occupied by Germany had facilitated a highly artificial, one-sided favoring of German interests)—was implemented a few weeks after the German surrender. In terms of institutions, this attempt to "undo history" manifested

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itself in the Central Collecting Points (CCPs) in Wiesbaden, Marburg, and Munich and in the Zonal Fine Arts Repository at Celle Castle. The declared rescission of National Socialist looting was accompanied by a three-stage process of war criminal trials, denazification hearings, and reeducation. It should be noted that the re-translocation of cultural assets—often emphasized in current historical examinations of the immediate postwar period—played more of a subordinate role at the time compared with the response to the destruction, annihilation, widespread material shortages, and the thousands upon thousands of displaced people. It should also be noted that the Allied guidelines led to restitution rather than to the uncovering or admission of wrongdoing on the German side.

The second phase regarding the former National Socialist state assets was characterized by the establishment of a fiduciary body in Munich, the Treuhandverwaltung von Kulturgut (TVK; Trustee Administration for Cultural Property, 1952–62), which was responsible for cultural property. The TVK was tasked with consigning a portion of the former Nazi assets to public institutions and transferring responsibility for the remaining inventories of such items to the *Bund* and *Länder* and to the Bundesamt für äussere Restitutionen (BAR), the federal authority established in 1955 in Bad Homburg that was responsible for the return of cultural property to foreign countries. Although the purpose of the TVK and the BAR was, to a certain extent, to continue the work of the CCPs, the opportunities for private individuals to lodge claims for the loss of their property were substantially curtailed as a result of various laws and registration deadlines, as well as sales made from these remaining inventories.[2] Thus, the 1950s were characterized by administrative and bureaucratic procedures. The German authorities' approach was almost entirely lacking in any proactive or even self-critical elements. Rather, it was seen as part of the German policy of "making good" and therefore was a process and policy of coming to terms with the past (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*). As part of this, the National Socialist persecution measures, that is to say discrimination, degradation, dispossession, and death, were subjected to administrative processing—nothing more and nothing less—with the clear aim to reduce the events of the past into a single conclusion and move on (*Schlussstrich*).

By and large, this attempt to break with the past was, in a certain way, achieved, and the third and longest phase was to extend for almost forty years, from the early 1960s to the late 1990s. While as early as the 1950s the art market had embarked on an upward trend that persists to this day, silence or even ignorance prevailed on the subject of the expropriation of cultural property within the context of National Socialist persecution.[3] The issue was treated as if it had been dealt with and all problems had been properly addressed and solved. Because the financial authorities of the *Bund* and *Länder* who were in charge of managing assets needed to consolidate their resources, they had already, in the 1950s, initiated transfers of state property to museums—by which is meant mainly former assets of the Reich authorities and their officials,[4] whereby at best moderate efforts were made to investigate provenance, using the communication channels of the day. They had also begun to dispose of items through sales, to the benefit of the art trade but also the state. The enormous processes of translocation and destruction of people and property

throughout conquered and occupied Europe were of little concern anymore. Throughout the postwar period and until the end of the twentieth century, there was, within the field of art history, little to no sensitivity to, or awareness of, the aforementioned processes as a problem.[5] Neither in the universities nor in the museums or research institutes during the second half of the twentieth century was there seen to be much need to inquire into, identify, or restitute cultural property expropriated within the context of National Socialist persecution—let alone to train people in the necessary skills for this.

As a result, the groundbreaking "Washington Conference Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art"[6] of December 1998 that codified a moral—not a legal—obligation to open relevant records and archival sources and make them accessible to researchers and to readdress unresolved cases and ask for restitution was initially followed by . . . nothing. And then began the fourth phase in Germany, in December 1999, with the joint "Declaration by the Federal Government, Länder, and Communal Representative Bodies on the Discovery and Restitution of Cultural Property Expropriated, in Particular from Jewish Ownership, within the Context of National Socialist Persecution" (*Erklärung der Bundesregierung, der Länder und der kommunalen Spitzenverbände zur Auffindung und zur Rückgabe NS-verfolgungsbedingt entzogenen Kulturgutes, insbesondere aus jüdischem Besitz*),[7] which was approved by parliament. This was followed in 2001 by the *Handreichung,* or guide to the implementation of the declaration.[8] This guide (revised for the first time in 2007 and currently under revision again) refers in large part to source material of the art protection officers of the Western Allies. Although widely used and employed, it must itself be treated today as historical evidence—another indicator of the dynamics in the field. Provenance research, however (imposed, once again, from outside of Germany), got under way very slowly, if at all—so slowly, in fact, that the progress assessment made in 2008 by Bernd Neumann, the federal commissioner for culture and media, was damning. At this point, because ten years had elapsed without any substantial efforts or firm consequences and conclusions, Neumann launched a support program for institutions conserving cultural property, whereby they could apply for research funding from an organization he set up, the Arbeitsstelle für Provenienzforschung in Berlin. This turning point, through which the German federal government for the first time acknowledged its shared responsibility for the conduct of the state under National Socialism and during the postwar period, brought the fourth phase to a close.

Only over the last ten years—and lent substantial impetus by the discovery of artworks in Schwabing, Munich, in 2012/13—has provenance research on cultural heritage seized by the Nazis become a real factor, achieving an importance that can no longer be ignored. No art museum in any sizable city (other than those focusing exclusively on contemporary art) can today afford to continue to turn a blind eye to provenance research. We live and work in a highly dynamic environment distinguished not least by an exponentially increasing number of publications; a rapidly expanding membership of the provenance research working group Arbeitskreis Provenienzforschung e. V. (which until 2008 had no more than a niche existence but has a total of 263 members today, including

59 foreign members from France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, and the United States);[9] repeated increases in federal funding, allocated since 2015 by the Deutsches Zentrum Kulturgutverluste (German Lost Art Foundation); a growing demand among students for the teaching of provenance research skills; the creation of junior professorships in provenance research, the evaluation of cultural assets, and digital provenance at a number of universities (Bonn, Hamburg, Munich, Berlin); a dedicated interdisciplinary master's program at Universität Würzburg called Sammlungen—Provenienz—Kulturelles Erbe (Collections—provenance—cultural heritage); regular workshops, conferences, conventions, and symposia attracting international participants; no fewer than three research associations within the German federal states (Hesse, Bavaria, Lower Saxony); various "initial check" or "initial research" models (for example, in Brandenburg and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern);[10] and substantial social and politico-cultural interest in the subject.

The Status Quo in 2018

Provenance research is now—and significantly, only now—booming. Visible at present for the very first time are tentative signs of what could turn out to be a proactive (rather than, as during the first four phases, reactive) form of provenance research. In contrast with the seven decades that have elapsed since the end of the war—a period that could, without a shadow of doubt, be characterized as much by passivity, suppression, turning a blind eye, denial, and tabooing as by the pursuit of profit, redefinition, appropriation, and integration—it is now possible to discern the outline of the opportunities for provenance research and restitution that theoretically exist for the humanities in general and provenance research in particular, but also of the size of the task that needs to be accomplished.

Taking stock of the major structural changes of the last decade—including the rapid growth of funding and the founding of organizations—reveals a picture that is, to say the very least, mixed. If we ask not cultural politicians but our specialist colleagues, we find not a spirit of optimism but one of stagnation, wherein there is a loss of motivation and a feeling of being misunderstood or not taken seriously. There are a number of reasons why the higher funding levels and manifest increase in effort have not succeeded in bringing about any real improvement in the field. A fundamental question that needs to be asked is whether it makes sense in such a complex and demanding field of research to work within the framework of projects restricted to durations of just one, two, or three years. Moreover, there is still a lack of overall coordination or management of provenance research and dissemination of its results. There are no uniform standards for the processing of information for publication or, in the case of databases, its long-term storage and accessibility.

The reconstruction and comprehension of historical changes of ownership or even, simply, translocation processes of cultural property require a vast range of information to be taken into account, thereby crossing over the lines between all the established humanities disciplines: art history; corporate, military, or commercial and economic history; legal history; institutional and organizational history; and contemporary, political,

and social history. This list includes many more disciplines, including ethnology, archaeology, and cultural anthropology, as soon as we leave the comparatively narrow confines of the context of Nazi persecution and engage, for example, with the global debate over colonial-era displacements and appropriations.

Because each individual artifact has taken its own path through time and space—whether short, long, direct, interrupted, or circuitous—object-related research, which undoubtedly lies at the heart of the work undertaken by museums in particular, presents a great challenge. While such research is certainly possible, it demands excellent infrastructural resources, extensive experience, plentiful staff, good access to resources, and staying power. If, however, one of Germany's largest museums considers a period of 274 years to be realistic just for the art-historical processing, in the form of a collection catalog, of seven thousand paintings dating from before 1800,[11] how is the incomparably larger challenge of checking the provenance of works to be met within a two-year project? It is worth noting that what is meant here by "art-historical processing" is really no more and no less than the documentation, recording, classification, and, where appropriate, attribution of the works in keeping with the latest research—*not* provenance research, and *not* the search for previous owners. If we then take into account how much more difficult it is to research graphic works—and, in particular, prints—than unique oil paintings, what kind of time frame would be needed for a collection—to quote another example from Munich—of four hundred thousand sheets?[12] And what implications does this have for the many smaller historico-cultural collections, some of whose holdings have not yet even been inventoried?

It is clear that without robust basic (art historical) data and a secure object identification, provenance research into cultural property dispossessed within the context of Nazi persecution cannot even begin, let alone be brought to a successful conclusion. Difficult enough when we are dealing with conspicuous individual items and one-off pieces, this effort becomes highly complex in the case of artists who deliberately produced identical copies of successful, sought-after works. An example of this is Rudolf von Alt (1812–1905), who often generated meticulously detailed copies of his watercolors that can hardly be distinguished from one another.[13] And the problems are significantly greater outside the realm of fine art, in the broader field of cultural property, which also includes categories of objects such as photographs, books, manuscripts, documents, furniture, weaponry, carpets, automobiles, crockery, cutlery, and so on, each facing its own set of problems. This means that, in addition to museums of all kinds with different funding structures, other institutions that conserve cultural property (such as archives, libraries, universities, academies, palaces, and castles) also come into the picture.

It is therefore stating the obvious to point out that the funding made available up to now is not remotely adequate for the task at hand, which was set out in the "Washington Principles" and included, among other things, the facilitation of the identification of art confiscated by the Nazis that had not been restituted, the publicizing of such art, and the establishment of a central registry of information. Given the scope of the task, insufficient funding is not the only obstacle. There is a need for strategic decisions, truly

concerted efforts, to plan for the future—in short, a vision. This holds true for the situation in Germany, in Europe, and globally. At present, while the humanities are exceedingly well aware of entangled histories (*histoires croisées*), there is still no smart or radical model to chart the path for a new understanding of the category of provenance. This is also a new task insofar as it necessitates teamwork—or at least cooperation—in an unprecedented way. The nationwide research requirement in Germany alone cannot even be reliably estimated. If it takes a team of researchers in the double figures a total of four years to work through the 1,566 items in a single private collection,[14] what order of magnitude are we looking at for all the relevant cultural assets in the possession of the German federation, states, and municipal authorities?

There are other reasons why project funding alone is not a viable instrument. The current situation suffers from the fact that throughout the length and breadth of the country, the objects physically present are taken as the starting point. The work is admittedly easier when the objects are inventoried, and easier still when at least the latest previous owner is known. But even then, to successively rule out the myriad possibilities and postulate a *single* path as plausible or even to be able to prove it beyond doubt—ideally without any gaps from the moment the item left the artist's studio—remains a highly demanding task. For this, sources are required that, as a rule, are held outside the museum or institutional collections. But while official correspondence and bureaucratic procedures can generally be consulted in municipal or state archives, business records or other documents of the art trade, the trade in antiquities, the (antiquarian) book trade, or the business of numismatics and antiques are still, in very many cases, inaccessible.[15] The reason this is so problematic is that it is precisely here, within these often inaccessible documents—and often *only* here—that the decisive information about origins, way stations, whereabouts of the works, and an abundance of other relevant information is stored;[16] indeed, it is this information that is essential for an investigation of the provenance, movements, and circumstances of an object's translocation or change of owner.

Yet what cultural property–conserving institution—be it a museum, a library, or an archive—draws from this the conclusion that it should investigate the art-market archives in its local area or region, acquire them, and make them available to researchers in an appropriate form and on a permanent basis? Which institutions have at their disposal the staff and the know-how to be able to develop productive research infrastructures? Who does the basic research, and where does the funding come from? The few larger, long-term research initiatives, such as the Dresden-based Daphne project, react to external impulses—in this case the cultural property claims of the descendants of the House of Wettin—and are not primarily the product of a proactive stance. In principle, action has been determined up to now not by curiosity or the desire for an open and unbiased analysis but by reacting to demands. An additional factor is that projects relating to individual collections are often not networked with one another.

Ideally, information would be exchanged between projects, and research initiatives would be mutually informed. Unfortunately, this is not the case, even at the local

and regional level. Therefore, it does not come as a surprise that transnational—or transatlantic—efforts are even less known to each other. This concerns not even content but rather the sheer knowledge of the existence of (provenance) research projects. The Munich- and Lucerne-based art dealer Julius Böhler (1883–1966) sold European paintings to numerous American museums, but when it comes to these acquisitions, almost none of the American museum staff are aware of the vast holdings on Böhler at the Bavarian Economic Archive, or the photo archive that is also preserved in Munich.[17] There is no central registry or information office to look these things up. Especially with regard to the international dimension of provenance research questions, there is an appalling lack of information and research data management.

While the number of such projects is steadily increasing, as is evident from the funding statistics of the Deutsches Zentrum Kulturgutverluste,[18] the opportunity to (comparatively) evaluate and analyze the produced or acquired data—in other words, to realize the obvious added value, for example, in terms of the expropriation of assets by the state or the market-economy dynamics—is going to waste. One might even say that the real work begins only after project completion; but for an evaluation of this kind, there are no staff available and no long-term structures in place.

The present day is characterized by solo protagonists who, in order to be able to meet the research challenges, forge alliances on either an isolated or a regional basis. It is significant that the networking of these activities occurs within the private framework of a registered association (*eingetragener Verein*); namely, the Arbeitskreis Provenienzforschung e. V., but not, or barely at all, at the level of the ministries or the bodies responsible for promoting research. To give a concrete example: Where, today, can one look up which German museums hold works acquired by, for example, Maria Almas-Dietrich (1892–1971), Kurt Walter Bachstitz (1882–1949), Walther Bernt (1900–1980), Wolfgang Gurlitt (1888–1965), or other art dealers and intermediaries who collaborated in different ways with National Socialist party circles or committed paintings to Hitler's special art commission, Sonderauftrag Linz? Such a database or search machine is a pipe dream, and yet it would advance research by providing facts that furnish circumstantial evidence and allow conclusions to be drawn, avoiding unnecessary work and duplication.

Far more attention needs to be paid to these framework conditions and the specific genesis of provenance research in Germany because they are part and parcel of the current set of problems. The institutions that look after cultural property are expected to meet multiple needs and requirements on the one hand, while also being chronically underfinanced on the other. Research—and provenance research in particular—is clearly regarded as a kind of luxury rather than as a standard or core task. Nothing demonstrates this more clearly than the fact that the number of permanent positions in provenance research at the 6,350-plus German museums reaches only about thirty-five, some of them half-time. Even if this were narrowed down to those institutions whose collections contain items dating from before 1945, and even if the human resources faced a multifold increase, not even then would every institution be employing the appropriate specialists.

As of 2018, European museums outnumber experienced provenance researchers by at least one hundred to one, as many European countries have no provenance researchers at all.

There is another reason why the questions concerning research infrastructures are far from trivial. From the point of view of Dutch, British, Italian, or American provenance researchers, whether museums in Germany have begun to inspect their own collections is irrelevant if the results of this collections-based research are not, or not fully, communicated to the outside world and consequently allow no observations to be made by foreign researchers.

The funding of research projects is typically geared toward institutional or private collections, but the concentration of one researcher on a collection X in museum Y in city Z will in most cases not yield encompassing results. This is not due to the large scale of the collections; this is because new solutions rely on comparison with results at other institutions. If, for example, a museum in New Zealand or Florida believes itself to own an object with dubious or fragmented provenance that points to an obscure German art dealer or agent, the provenance may be traced only if numerous museums have published their acquisitions and sources in such a way that all information about this dealer is accessible from abroad. More often than not, this information exists but remains siloed, unavailable, and inaccessible.

This very area of "groundwork and network" in the form of (online) publications and databases or even digitized auction catalogs, which facilitate efficient checking routines, is therefore of key importance to solving cases and problems, whether in Finland, Australia, the Netherlands, or the Cayman Islands, because the problem of Holocaust-era confiscated assets is a global one and the search for assets is a universal task—at least as universal as capitalism.

In the face of this major challenge, we need empowerment by machines—institutional databases that permit open-ended research questions. If you invest in a sole researcher for two years to check a collection, the likely result is a research report, maybe published in a journal or maybe not published at all. But if you invest a comparable amount of money to let researchers build a database and publish it, then you provide hundreds or thousands of museums with the ability to ask questions and find answers.[19] Instruments of this very kind, generally recognized as essential, are long-term tasks that furthermore *have* to be performed both during and after the completion of a project—not least because the inexorable development dynamic of the digital revolution calls, after just a few years, for data migration and the adoption of new standards and also for processes of supplementing and linking between projects and data sets, which will enable the correcting of inaccurate data, classifications, and attributions.

In addition to the temporal restrictions on research—in other words, the project setup itself (which is determined by funding policy)—there is also a recent tendency toward setting geographic priorities. What is meant here is a kind of spatial thinking. Because, ideally, all the German museums should be researching their own collections,

an idea exists that the "white patches on the map" of Germany need to be eradicated by siting projects in those areas.[20] This assumption can be seen as a tribute to the federal nature of the German republic, but from the point of view of research, the "watering can" approach is nevertheless wrong at the present time. This approach overlooks the fact that research cannot occur additively; rather, it is bound up with structural prerequisites. If neither the skills nor the sources are available at the periphery, where is the research to start? What is it to build on or connect with?

Contrary to the aforementioned current trend in the allocation of research funding, the experience of recent years has demonstrated that it is precisely outcome-impartial, collection-independent, or collection-spanning fundamental research—research that is being undertaken for its own sake, without a specific aim other than the ambition to uncover information—that delivers the initial evidence or points of reference that enable (decentralized) in situ provenance research in the first place. Key examples are the consecutive projects on Adolf Weinmüller (1886–1958), a Nazi art dealer in Munich and Vienna, that in turn were referenced in at least thirteen other research projects throughout Germany.[21]

Notwithstanding the best of intentions, a small institution would very soon reach its limits if it had to research the provenance of its collection independently. This situation can be unblocked only by targeted funding and the creation of central databases, namely, through the establishment of robust research infrastructures, including—in addition to the digitized art trade archives and collections of annotated auction catalogs—various licensed, subscription-based (art trade and archive) databases, catalogs of works, and (international) art trade journals.[22] As early as 2012, Christian Welzbacher clearly recognized this: "Only the bundling of resources and capacities—or to put it another way, an end to the currently promoted academic short-windedness—will result in research of a subject such as 'plunder and restitution' being researched in the necessary depth, that is to say independently of academic fashion and political differences, and guided instead by scientific imperatives."[23] And yet there is no evidence of such an approach being adopted at present.

The current situation is unsatisfactory in another respect as well. Following its "pictorial turn," "spatial turn," "performative turn," and "iconic turn," and after "global art history" and "world art history," traditional art history has suddenly acquired a grubby little sibling who has rapidly attracted a lot of attention. As a result, the apparent success story of provenance research in Germany is simultaneously a story of loss and alienation. The reproaches and misunderstandings extend from the 33rd Congress of German Art Historians in Mainz in 2015—at which provenance research was declared superfluous both as a course of study and as an academic interest, on the basis that research of this type has been conducted by art history since time immemorial—to the accusation in spring 2017 that provenance research is "neopositivist," "focused on small details," "not innovative," "methodologically unthinking," and, therefore, "no more than a flash in the pan."[24] From this perspective, the successes, recognition, and even

international respect that provenance research has acquired seem totally unjustified. Although a generational conflict is at play here, behind it is, without question, a kind of identity crisis within the venerable discipline of art history, which has to this day failed to grasp that the opening up of the category of "provenance" is merely a broadening out, an increase in the multidimensionality of the artifact. All too often, there is a fear that by tracing the history of an item's origins, we risk pushing the classical considerations of style, design, form, composition, iconography, and so on into the background, eclipsing them with a focus on historical changes of ownership. This fear is hyped by the media and exploited for shock value.

In fact, the very opposite is the case. The object-oriented discipline—and it is precisely this focus on the object that has always distinguished art history among the humanities—is losing none of its relevance. Rather, it is undergoing an expansion, a completely organic enlargement that facilitates the links to many more traditional topics and fields of inquiry: from object identity and cataloging to validated attributions, from the history and politics of collections to the history of taste, and from the history of the art trade and collecting to the history of art history. Pure contemplation of an artwork's immanent qualities remains, of course, an option, but to anyone looking for a starting point for contextualization or the development of a narrative—say, within the context of educational projects in museums—the provenance of the concrete object offers a wealth of material and is capable of exposing "dramas of global power dynamics, military conquest, massive movements of wealth from one continent to another, and the tragedies of racism."[25]

Thus, the importance of the concrete artifact grows not smaller but greater. In addition to its material properties, unique aesthetic configuration, and specific artistic expression and interpretation, a work's previous whereabouts, former owners, and different physical states also come into focus as additional "entities" of the object. Put simply, the item becomes even "richer" thanks to a gain in expressiveness. Moreover, this occurs due to new information gleaned from the object itself and its own existence. It is this new awareness of the qualities and properties of the biography of an object that challenges the traditional self-conception of the discipline of art history and the range and scope of its remit, not least because individual or collective attributions of meaning and emotional ties or faith practices also need to be analyzed.[26]

By contrast, the present situation is distinguished by an almost mechanistic understanding of provenance research as a kind of imposed duty that, in many institutions and contexts, may be seen as inevitable but nevertheless remains unfavored. Seen from this point of view, provenance research represents neither an opportunity nor an option or opening. It entails no vision of a suitably well-thought-out or reflective handling of cultural heritage. It is simply one more problem to deal with. While problems can generally be solved, all too often they are merely managed. The status quo is characterized not by cutting-edge research and excellence but by a state of incrustation that is crumbling here and there. The mainstream is in control, and the reactionary attitude outlined above is one of the most defining legacies of the past.

To some extent, this is even true of the university sector, for, although no general infrastructures for provenance research have yet been established (or are required to be established), teaching and research could at least be given an exploratory orientation to become a laboratory of investigative research and fundamental self-reflection. Yet when universities are asking questions—Is collecting a fundamental anthropological need? Does the art-historical interpretation of objects play any role whatsoever anymore in provenance research? Must the legal aspect be taken into account in the definition of "cultural property"? Can the art market also be analyzed in terms of Bruno Latour's actor-network theory?—there seems to be an almost unbridgeable distance from what needs to be done at the grassroots level; that is, in the collections of unknown origin and in our engagement with archival material. Naturally, these questions are important and meaningful. They have to be asked and, in due course, answered. However, at the same time they reveal a wary attitude to, separation from, or even lack of understanding of the categories "provenance" and "translocation" and the research challenges that need to be overcome. As we perceive it, at any rate there is a tendency among universities—with the exception of the Technische Universität Berlin[27]—to perpetuate the traditional art-historical patterns of thought and inquiry rather than to think in terms of new categories and dimensions in the spirit of Leonhard Weidinger's objection: "If the museums did their work properly, then the law firms would have nothing to do."[28] With regard to universities, the least that should be demanded is that the greatest possible number of interested students be given the best possible training in order to achieve the prospect of "accountability in a globalized world and a culturally diverse society," in large part because "provenance research has to be more than a historical science of restitution."[29] At present, however, the opportunities for a new form of cultural property research into the biographies of objects and the "political and epistemic conditions of power that led to the displacing of these objects"[30] are quite clearly being overlooked or perhaps are not wanted at all.

What Needs to Be Done?

Those primarily responsible for the relatively widespread attitude toward provenance research described above are the scientific, cultural, and, most importantly, finance politicians in the *Länder* and federal ministries, for it is they who lay down the working conditions—or not. And it is they who make available the funding for staff, projects, investment, and long-term structures—or not. Their job, as it is now and as it should be, is to ensure that those responsible in the museums and cultural institutions are in a position to move to a proactive stance. What does this mean in concrete terms? We will limit ourselves to four points.

From the perspective of basic research, it should be noted to start with that working on individual objects—the current practice in museums as well as in the art trade—is neither effective nor expedient because this information, gathered in many different locations at considerable outlay in time and effort, is not networked or correlated from

place to place. It is confined to its institutional or organizational silos as congealed knowledge that is neither able nor intended to flow.

Thus, first of all, we need more research into not only the transfer and translocation processes, trading routes, networks, coteries, socioeconomic conditions, power relationships, and hegemonic structures but also the perpetrators and victims. We need first-rate, impartial, contextual, and basic research that can be accessed on a permanent basis and with minimum outlay. If we do not investigate institutional and organizational objectives, sales, distribution and transportation channels (the history of the art trade and of storage depots), and the biographies of curators and private collectors, then research into the provenance of individual objects will remain a patchwork, piecemeal process. We must also direct our critical, intellectual curiosity toward the formation *and* the destruction of collections—presence as well as absence. Above all, this calls for a truly massive expansion of research infrastructures. Only then will we be in a position to network activities and results and dovetail the collections-based research with the basic and contextual research.

Second, we need criteria—at last—for the evaluation of provenance research: "What is good provenance research? Is it good if it results in the restitution of an item? Or if it furnishes arguments that prevent restitution in the face of demands for the return of an object?"[31] It is precisely because of the commercial pressure due to rising prices in the international art market, with vested interests threatening to distort the course of the investigations, that open and unbiased research is so essential. It is not the results of the research and the discovery of evidence that need to be judged but rather the quality of that research: How carefully and with what degree of precision was it carried out? How plausible is the reconstruction? In order to be able to assess this, both the resulting facts and the fruitless investigations (the "nil return" or negative outcomes) should be painstakingly documented. The latest knowledge in the field of professional quality management should be taken into account in the development of these criteria. Research diagnostics of this kind are a precondition for us to be able to evaluate research approaches, methods, avenues, and results in a comparative manner. Only then will we be able to assess, for example, how effectively the investment, in the form of funding, is being employed.

Third, provenance research should neither stop at the national boundaries nor confine itself to discourse in the mother tongue. Even a study of the postwar period up to 1949 involves engaging with German, Russian, French, British, and American sources, to say nothing of research into Nazi-occupied Europe or colonial-era processes. While the language of most of the original sources is German, the language of academia—and often of the descendants of those entitled to claims—is English. Anyone who believes it possible to communicate results in German alone in this field, which attracts much international attention, is mistaken. However, a fair knowledge or reading comprehension of German is indispensable, since, with regard to Nazi looting, this is the language of the perpetrators. The German-American program called PREP is indeed based on the idea of encounter and exchange across languages, institutions, and fields of expertise.[32]

Moreover, another factor in favor of this openness is not only the trading of art across borders, going as far back as the early modern period, but also global capitalism, which has created a global art market in which cultural property expropriated within the context of National Socialist persecution has been and, in the foreseeable future, will continue to be circulated.

Fourth, it is not yet possible to discern, even in outline, how the opportunities, possibilities, and difficulties or perhaps even dangers presented by the digital humanities will correlate with provenance research or what synergies can be generated there. If the enormous transformation that has occurred over the last twenty years in our world of humanities, encompassing basic and more sophisticated working methods, is going to continue, it is high time that we adopted a proactive approach to the shaping of our field. This involves driving forward—in a committed, systematic way—the development of powerful data storage, preparation, analysis, and visualization tools for use in provenance research. And we need the best minds in art history and other disciplines to give this their attention.

Against this background, the conclusion is simple: we urgently need stronger pooling, centralization, and much more fundamental research as well as substantially improved facilities and international networking. Despite its name, the Deutsches Zentrum Kulturgutverluste in Magdeburg, a funding but avowedly nonresearching organization, cannot be, and does not seem to be interested in being, the coordinating center for these needs. But the substantive issues requiring attention need to be dealt with in a focused, unified way with coordinated resources, skills, and national as well as international infrastructures. Only then can we move from a reactive stance to a proactive one: to self-possessed action. Because for decades the modus operandi was *reacting*—to guidelines or accusations—and because for decades the course of events was dictated by convenience and red tape, it is now time for a turning point where we, impartially and without bitterness yet in a committed and purposeful manner, set our own research challenges on the basis of what we know, or can justifiably surmise, today. The aim must be, and must remain, to ensure the greatest possible volume of validated information. To this extent, we need to rethink provenance research and set a fundamentally new course.

Again: Where Do We Go from Here?

In order to reframe these considerations, we, the authors, would like to conclude by again stressing the urgency of a recalibration of the understanding of the concept and the category of "provenance." While the current concern—as demonstrated—has a political and moral origin that is intricately linked to the Washington conference in 1998 and thus on Nazi-looted art, the ramifications are much larger for all disciplines that focus on objects. In this context, art history can certainly play a central role if it dares to transcend established categories and classifications and shape alliances with, for example, historians, anthropologists, or archaeologists. Reviewing some of the current research challenges—from the legacy of global colonial property transfer to socialist and communist

appropriation of aristocratic and bourgeois collections, or from swift and expedient confiscation of all movable assets by occupation regimes to the vicissitudes of dispossessions of cultural heritage on an unprecedented scale—suppressed memories and unresolved conflicts haunt the classroom and the museum alike.

Simplified notions of return, restitution, or compensation/indemnification (*Wiedergutmachung*) no longer function and are being increasingly challenged. While individual fates should not be neglected, we cannot ascertain the unknown fates of anonymous persons and objects if we do not gain a much better understanding of the larger contexts of dispossession. Consequently, instead of focusing on single items and cases, we are now forced to look upon the history of transactions and translocations like a biologist looking at an anthill to track the movements of every single ant carrying heavy swag through the hill's complex tunnel system, whether an hour, a month, or a century ago.

If we conceive the examination of this anthill as a global task, if we want to keep track of the appearing, disappearing, and reappearing of cultural objects, then we need efficient new strategies for the gathering, management, and development of information and a very fast, transparent (work)flow of data. Especially for international exchange and cooperation, it is not only important that data remain visible and migratable but also that their origin or source remain recognizable—since also every piece of information has a provenance! We need clear identifiers, indexing, and metadata as well as flexible structures and systems to link them (e.g., Linked Open Data).

In doing so, we might avoid generating data waste for the future, and we might prevent researchers from having to serve as criminal investigators who must dig into archival data garbage to reassemble individual fragments and trace data paths to identify the source and the original compiler. Due to information mismanagement of the last seventy years, this antiquarian reconstruction of what was—or could have been—known about an object is still rather common.

By far the greatest necessity arising from the current state of affairs is, first, a permanent cooperation with experts from the fields of information and data management in order to build reliable scientific information infrastructures according to the foundational FAIR principles (Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reusability),[33] and, second, strong coordination, which is indispensable to structure the individual processes and to bundle and monitor the data. For this purpose, research centers with special core competencies have to be established, which, above all, take international trends into account.

Furthermore, the size of the task (and the various challenges it entails) means that solo researchers are no longer as central as they used to be. While individual provenance researchers are certainly indispensable for their exclusive access to information and special knowledge of the provenance of a collection, cooperation across all kinds of borders is key. In this regard, it is most unfortunate that the overwhelming majority of all provenance researchers in Germany are hired on a temporary basis, for either twelve or maybe twenty-four months. It is very difficult to develop sustainable ways of contribut-

ing and exchanging expert knowledge within such a time frame. Consequently, even the definition of (good) research (impact) itself needs to be amended.

These new perspectives and conceptual reconfigurations of our work as researchers should be seen in conjunction with other processes and developments, such as the empirical evidence provided by the Google Books Ngram Viewer that shows the rather slow increase of the word "provenance" in English literature over the course of the twentieth century (or "Provenienz" in German literature), and the incredibly steeply rising curve that the term "provenance research" / "Provenienzforschung" has taken over recent decades.[34]

The conclusion is obvious: This dimension goes beyond art—the term "cultural heritage" does not even provide a broad enough sweep, as similar issues arise for researchers in, say, natural history. Violent histories of extraction are universal and global, and inevitably necessitate new thinking across disciplines.[35] Accordingly, relationships and emotional ties—between people and objects, or between institutions and objects, and so forth—and narratives, such as curatorial ones, need to be taken into account in an unprecedented way.[36]

While indebted to the professional standards in the humanities (from source criticism to consistency of argumentation, and so forth), the authors sense the need for a new reflection on the larger sociopolitical framework of these endeavors. This certainly requires a much stronger interaction with media and the public, since the pertinent questions of coming to terms with the past (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*)—and the asymmetrical power relations that shaped this past—cannot be confined to the ivory tower. The current situation also necessitates new thinking on behalf of administrations on all levels, and on behalf of stakeholders, lobbyists, and foundations. Provenance research, by definition, challenges the status quo. Since research of this nature takes place in concrete institutional settings and according to the rules of global capitalism, the effort is also—and must be—again by definition, a political effort.

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Notes An earlier version of this article appeared as Christian Fuhrmeister, "Provenienzforschung neu denken," in "Spuren suchen: Provenienzforschung in Weimar," ed. Franziska Bomski, Hellmut Th. Seemann, and Thorsten Valk, special issue, *Jahrbuch der Klassik Stiftung Weimar* (2018): 17–32, and is reproduced with permission. The current text was translated from the German by Richard George Elliott. This essay was written within the context of the work area "Provenienzforschung / Werte von Kulturgütern" (Provenance Research / Value of Cultural Assets) at the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte in Munich. We would like to express our gratitude to Stephan Klingen for our ongoing collaboration and for his critical reading of this text.

1. "Inter-Allied Declaration against Acts of Dispossession Committed in Territories under Enemy Occupation or Control (with Covering Statement by His Majesty's Government in the

United Kingdom and Explanatory Memorandum Issued by the Parties to the Declaration)," London, 5 January 1943: "His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have today joined with sixteen other Governments of the United Nations, and with the French National Committee, in making a formal Declaration of their determination to combat and defeat the plundering by the enemy Powers of the territories which have been overrun or brought under enemy control. The systematic spoliation of occupied or controlled territory has followed immediately upon each fresh aggression. This has taken every sort of form, from open looting to the most cunningly camouflaged financial penetration, and it has extended to every sort of property—from works of art to stocks of commodities, from bullion and bank-notes to stocks and shares in business and financial undertakings. But the object is always the same—to seize everything of value that can be put to the aggressors' profit and then to bring the whole economy of the subjugated countries under control so that they must slave to enrich and strengthen their oppressors. [. . .] Accordingly, the Governments making this Declaration and the French National Committee reserve all their rights to declare invalid any transfers of, or dealings with, property, rights and interests of any description whatsoever which are, or have been, situated in the territories which have come under the occupation or control, direct or indirect, of the Governments with which they are at war, or which belong, or have belonged to persons (including juridical persons) resident in such territories. This warning applies whether such transfers of dealings have taken the form of open looting or plunder, or of transactions apparently legal in form, even when they purport to be voluntarily effected." For the full text of the declaration, see http://www.lootedartcommission.com/inter-allied-declaration.

2. A few examples of the West German restitution laws include the Entschädigungsgesetz / Bundesergänzungsgesetz of 1953, the Bundesentschädigungsgesetz of 1956, and the Bundesrückerstattungsgesetz of 1957.

3. See Christian Fuhrmeister, "Warum man Lügen glaubt: Kunstgeschichte und Kunsthandel 1945–2016," in *Markt und Macht: Der Kunsthandel im "Dritten Reich,"* ed. Uwe Fleckner, Thomas W. Gaehtgens, and Christian Huemer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 401–24.

4. See Andrea Bambi, "Überweisungen aus Staatsbesitz: Genese und Status eines Projekts zur Provenienzforschung und Sammlungsgeschichte an den Bayerischen Staatsgemäldesammlungen in München," *Provenienz & Forschung,* no. 1 (2017): 48–52; and "Überweisungen aus Staatsbesitz," in *Forschungsverbund Provenienzforschung Bayern: Tätigkeitsbericht 2015/2016,* ed. Alfred Grimm on behalf of the Forschungsverbund Provenienzforschung Bayern (Munich: Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, 2016), 20–23.

5. In accordance with many German individuals, professionals did not usually confront the collective silence since the past was over and behind them. The Jewish historian Joseph Wulf wrote book after book on Nazi crimes in various fields, including *Die bildenden Künste im Dritten Reich: Eine Dokumentation* (Gütersloh: Rowohlt, 1963), but he remained unheard and committed suicide in 1974. See Nicolas Berg, "Joseph Wulf: A Forgotten Outsider among Holocaust Scholars," in *Holocaust Historiography in Context: Emergence, Challenges, Polemics and Achievements,* ed. David Bankier and Dan Michman (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2008), 167–206; and Klaus Kempter, *Joseph Wulf: Ein Historikerschicksal in Deutschland* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012).

6. U.S. Department of State, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, "Washington Conference Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art," released in connection with the Washington Conference on Holocaust Era Assets, Washington, D.C., 3 December 1998, https://www.state.gov/p/eur/rt/hlcst/270431.htm.

7. See the declaration on the web page of the German Lost Art Foundation, https://www.kulturgutverluste.de/Webs/EN/Foundation/Basic-principles/Common-Declaration/Index.html.

8. See *Handreichung zur Umsetzung der "Erklärung der Bundesregierung, der Länder und der kommunalen Spitzenverbände zur Auffindung und zur Rückgabe NS-verfolgungsbedingt entzogenen Kulturgutes, insbesondere aus jüdischem Besitz,"* 7th rev. ed. (Bonn: Der Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur und

Medien, 2007), https://www.kulturgutverluste.de/Webs/DE/Recherche/Handreichung/Index.html; and Sheila Heidt, *Restitutionsbegehren bei NS-Raubkunst—Praxisleitfaden zur "Handreichung zur Umsetzung der 'Erklärung der Bundesregierung, der Länder und der kommunalen Spitzenverbände zur Auffindung und zur Rückgabe NS-verfolgungsbedingt entzogenen Kulturgutes, insbesondere aus jüdischem Besitz'"* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2017). See review of Heidt, *Restitutionsbegehren bei NS-Raubkunst,* by Henning Kahmann in *Kunstchronik* 70, no. 12 (2017): 624–28.

9. See https://arbeitskreis-provenienzforschung.org.

10. "Initial check" means that an experienced researcher visits a large number of museums and cultural institutions and performs a first assessment of its institutional and collection history, probing inventories in order to determine the amount of further research needed. See German Lost Art Foundation, "'Initial check' project introduced in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern," 9 March 2017, https://www.kulturgutverluste.de/Content/02_Aktuelles/EN/News/2017/March/17-03-09_Erstcheck-Mecklenburg-Vorpommern-Mitteilungen.html. See also, for example, Iris Berndt, "Provenienzforschung in Brandenburg: Erstcheck in Stadt- und Regionalmuseen," *Museumsblätter: Mitteilungen des Museumsverbandes Brandenburg,* no. 23 (2013): 14–16, http://www.museumsverband-brandenburg.de/?id=21.

11. Martin Schawe, "Bestandskataloge der Bayerischen Staatsgemäldesammlungen," in *Corpus–Inventar–Katalog: Beispiele für Forschung und Dokumentation zur materiellen Überlieferung der Künste,* ed. Wolfgang Augustyn (Munich: Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, 2015), 131–47, here 142: "This leaves 7,000. If one takes as a basis the three-and-a-half years required to complete the catalog *Cologne and Northwest Germany,* with its 179 paintings (by inventory number), the staff consisting of a full-time art historian in the form of a Thyssen scholarship holder and two permanent employees (an art historian and a restorer) with an estimated time allocation of 50 per cent each alongside their regular, everyday work, this results in a time requirement of 137 years (and consequently 274 person-years) to work through all the paintings, and a correspondingly shorter period in the event of several teams working concurrently."

12. See Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, http://www.sgsm.eu/.

13. See Meike Hopp, "'Weiss gar nicht, wo sie alle hingerathen sind': Der Münchner Bestand der Werke Rudolf von Alts und die 'Sammlung Bormann'; Eine Herausforderung für die Provenienzforschung," in *Rudolf von Alt: "…genial, lebhaft, natürlich und wahr"; Der Münchner Bestand und seine Provenienz,* ed. Andreas Strobl (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2015), 146–90.

14. According to the report on the work of the task force responsible for processing the Schwabing (Munich) artwork find, the fifteen members of the Gurlitt task force were periodically assisted between 2013 and 2015 by approximately thirty additional external colleagues; see *Bericht über die Arbeit der Taskforce Schwabinger Kunstfund 2013–2015,* prepared by Ingeborg Berggreen-Merkel (Berlin: Taskforce Schwabinger Kunstfund, 2016), 16, http://www.taskforce-kunstfund.de/fileadmin/_downloads/Bericht_TFK_9-2-2016_Druckfassung.pdf. See Monika Grütters, federal minister for culture and the media, interview by Ulrich Kühn, *NDR Kultur,* Norddeutscher Rundfunk, 2 November 2017, http://www.ndr.de/kultur/Monika-Gruetters-ueber-die-Gurlitt-Ausstellung,journal1056.html.

15. The reasons for the inaccessibility of these documents vary. The archives of important traders often remain in family possession for generations, are handled discreetly due to their economic relevance, or are only available on request either from the dealers themselves or via private parties. Moreover, it can be assumed that the archives of many smaller companies—especially those of Jewish companies that were gradually forced out of the market by anti-Semitic legislation from 1935—did not survive the war.

16. See Johannes Gramlich, "Reflections on Provenance Research: Values–Politics–Art Markets," *Journal for Art Market Studies* 2 (2017): 12, http://dx.doi.org/10.23690/jams.v1i2.15: "Even though sources for both national and international art markets are limited, some archives from important dealers are preserved and have been made accessible to researchers. Of particular relevance in these documents is the fact that art dealers made considerable efforts to trace the activity of rivals, partners, potential clients,

acclaimed experts and the movements of notable art works. The importance of these archival estates therefore by far exceeds their original purpose."

17. For the estate at the Bayerisches Wirtschaftsarchiv der IHK München (Bavarian Economic Archive at the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Munich), see https://www.bwa.findbuch.net/php/main.php?ar_id=3254&be_kurz=4620303433#4620303433, and for the Photo Archive at the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, see https://www.zikg.eu/projekte/projekte-zi/erwerbung-des-fotoarchivs-der-kunsthandlung-julius-boehler.

18. For the funding statistics, see https://www.kulturgutverluste.de/Webs/EN/ResearchFunding/ProjectStatistics/Index.html.

19. For examples of databases that are available to researchers abroad and allow for successful open-ended research, see the database of Galerie Heinemann in Munich, Deutsches Kunstarchiv, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, http://heinemann.gnm.de; details of the annotated catalogs of the Weinmüller auction house in Munich and Vienna, Deutsches Zentrum Kulturgutverluste, http://www.lostart.de/Content/051_ProvenienzRaubkunst/_Zusatzinformationen/quelle_6162.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=4; the databases of items relating to the Central Collecting Point in Munich, Deutsches Historisches Museum, http://www.dhm.de/datenbank/ccp/dhm_ccp.php?seite=9; Sonderauftrag Linz (the special commission charged with collecting art for the planned museum in Linz and other museums in National Socialist Germany), Deutsches Historisches Museum, https://www.dhm.de/datenbank/linzdb/; the search requests and found-object reports of the Lost Art Foundation Database, Deutsches Zentrum Kulturgutverluste, http://www.lostart.de/Webs/EN/Datenbank/Index.html; and the "German Sales" collection of digitized auction catalogs, initially from the period 1930–45, later supplemented by the years 1901–29, Arthistoricum.net, https://www.arthistoricum.net/en/subjects/thematic-portals/german-sales/.

20. See "Projektstatistiken," Deutsches Zentrum Kulturgutverluste, https://www.kulturgutverluste.de/Webs/DE/Forschungsfoerderung/Projektstatistiken/Index.html.

21. To see these projects, enter "Weinmüller" in the Lost Art Foundation's "project finder" search: https://www.kulturgutverluste.de/Webs/EN/ResearchFunding/ProjectFinder/Index.html.

22. See Christian Fuhrmeister, "Hans Posse im Kontext: Forschungsstrategische Anmerkungen aus dem Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte," in *Kennerschaft zwischen Macht und Moral: Annäherungen an Hans Posse (1879–1942)*, ed. Gilbert Lupfer and Thomas Rudert (Cologne: Böhlau, 2015), 13–15.

23. Christian Welzbacher, "Kunstschutz, Kunstraub, Restitution: Neue Forschungen zur Geschichte und Nachgeschichte des Nationalsozialismus," *H-Soz-Kult*, 13 December 2012, http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/index.asp?id=1296&view= pdf&pn=forum&type=forschungsberichte. See also Frank Möbus, "What We Have But What We Need: The Estimated Collapse of Provenance Research Concerning Nazi-Looted Cultural Objects," in *"The West" Versus "The East" or the United Europe? The Different Conceptions of Provenance Research, Documentation and Identification of Looted Cultural Assets and the Possibilities of International Cooperation in Europe and Worldwide,* ed. Mečislav Borák. Proceedings of an international academic conference held in Poděbrady on 8–9 October 2013 (Prague: Documentation Centre for Property Transfers of Cultural Assets of WWII Victims, 2014), 150.

24. Such were the comments made by the speakers and from the floor during the closing discussion of the event "Institutions for Art History: The Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte at 70," held in Munich on 17 March 2017 (program: http://www.zikg.eu/veranstaltungen/ 2017/zi70). Regarding the relation between art history and provenance research, see Valentine von Fellenberg and Harald Schoen, "Externe Impulse und interne Imperative: Zur Bedeutung von Provenienzforschung und Kulturgutschutz in Deutschland für die Kunstgeschichte," *Kunstchronik* 69, no. 7 (2016): 322–27.

25. Anne Higonnet, "Afterword: The Social Life of Provenance," in *Provenance: An Alternate History of Art,* ed. Gail Feigenbaum and Inge Reist (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2013), 197.

26. Here we would simply refer to the essay by Andreas Gestrich and Daniel Wildmann, "Objects and Emotions: Loss and Acquisition of Jewish Property," *German Historical Institute London Bulletin* 34, no. 1 (2012): 4–7, https://www.perspectivia.net/publikationen/ghi-bulletin/2012-34-1; and a conference of the Max Planck Research Group, "Objects in the Contact Zone: The Cross-Cultural Lives of Things," at the Kunsthistorisches Institut, Florence, 21–22 October 2016, with the title "What Do Contentious Objects Want? Political, Epistemic and Artistic Cultures of Return." See Sophie Schasiepen's review, "Was wollen umstrittene 'Objekte'?," *Progress: Magazin der österreichischen Hochschülerinnenschaft,* 29 November 2016, https://www.progress-online.at/artikel/was-wollen-umstrittene-%E2%80%9Aobjekte%E2%80%99. "Material Feelings: Population Displacement and Property Transfer in Modern Europe and Beyond," a workshop held in Leipzig on 24–25 May 2018, inquired about the "emotional impact that losing and acquiring [. . .] belongings had on individuals and societies"; for the full call for papers, see *H-Soz-Kult,* 24 November 2017, www.hsozkult.de/event/id/termine-35796.

27. See the varied activities of Bénédicte Savoy in particular, Institut für Kunstwissenschaft und Historische Urbanistik, web page for the research cluster Translocations: Historical Enquiries into the Displacement of Cultural Assets, https://www.kuk.tu-berlin.de/menue/research/einzelne_forschungsprojekte/translocations/parameter/en/.

28. Leonhard Weidinger, a provenance researcher working on behalf of the Austrian Kommission für Provenienzforschung (Commission for Provenance Research), has made repeated public pronouncements to this effect—the first time during a discussion at the Viertes Hannoversches Symposium (9–11 May 2011). He has, however, never published this assessment (email to authors, 10 September 2018).

29. Bernhard Gissibl, "Raubkunst, die nächste Debatte," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* 24 April 2017, 15.

30. Gissibl, "Raubkunst, die nächste Debatte," 15.

31. Christian Fuhrmeister, review of *NS-Raubgut in Museen, Bibliotheken und Archiven,* by Regine Dehnel, ed., *ArtHist.net,* 22 February 2014, https://arthist.net/reviews/7027.

32. See http://provenance.si.edu/jsp/prep.aspx and https://www.smb.museum/museen-und-einrichtungen/zentralarchiv/forschung/provenienzforschung-am-zentralarchiv/deutsch-amerikanisches-austauschprogramm-zur-provenienzforschung-fuer-museen-prep-2017-2019.html. See also call for the 2019 program, https://www.hsozkult.de/grant/id/stipendien-16777.

33. Mark D. Wilkinson et al., "The FAIR Guiding Principles for Scientific Data Management and Stewardship," *Scientific Data* 3, no. 160018 (2016), https://doi.org/10.1038/sdata.2016.18.

34. For the Ngram graph for "provenance," see https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=provenance&year_start=1900&year_end=2008&corpus=15&smoothing=5&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2Cprovenance%3B%2Cc0. For "provenance research," see https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=provenance+research&year_start=1900&year_end=2008&corpus=15&smoothing=5&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2Cprovenance%20research%3B%2Cc0. For "Provenienz" in the German corpus, see https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=Provenienz&year_start=1900&year_end=2008&corpus=20&smoothing=5&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2CProvenienz%3B%2Cc0. And for "Provenienzforschung," see https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=Provenienzforschung&year_start=1900&year_end=2008&corpus=20&smoothing=5&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2CProvenienzforschung%3B%2Cc0.

35. See Felicity Bodenstein, Damiana Otoiu, and Eva-Maria Troelenberg, eds., *Contested Holdings: Public and Private Collections in Political, Epistemic and Artistic Processes of Return* (New York: Berghahn Books, forthcoming).

36. A good example is the exhibition *Museum of Untold Stories,* which featured stories by staff members on objects in the collections at the Japanisches Palais, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, 26 May–26 August 2018; see https://www.skd.museum/en/exhibitions/museum-of-untold-stories/.