

Collaborative Provenance Research in Swiss Public Collections from the Kingdom of Benin

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1. Executive Summary

Eight Swiss museums have come together under the leadership of the Museum Rietberg in Zurich to investigate the provenance of their holdings from the historical Kingdom of Benin in Nigeria. The aim of the Swiss Benin Initiative (BIS) is to shed light on the contexts of acquisition in the colonial past and to understand Switzerland's role in the trade of looted art works from Benin City. Whilst at

the time of writing, no restitution claims have been presented to Switzerland, it is a matter of concern to participating museums to instigate research and address the problematic issues of looted Benin heritage in Swiss museums. Exchange and dialogue with Nigeria are at the forefront of this project, and this report is intended to provide a basis for dialogue with partners in Nigeria on the future of these collections.

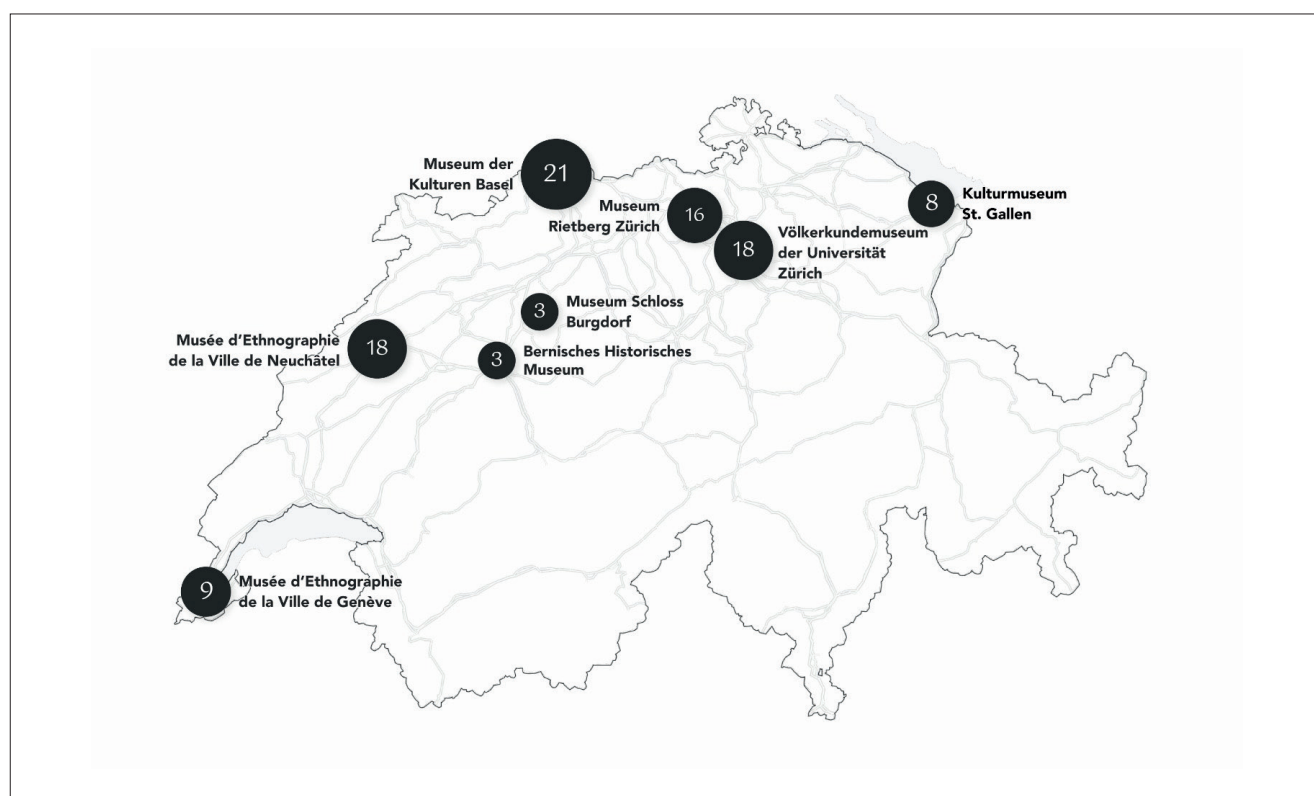


Figure 1 Number of Benin objects in participating museums

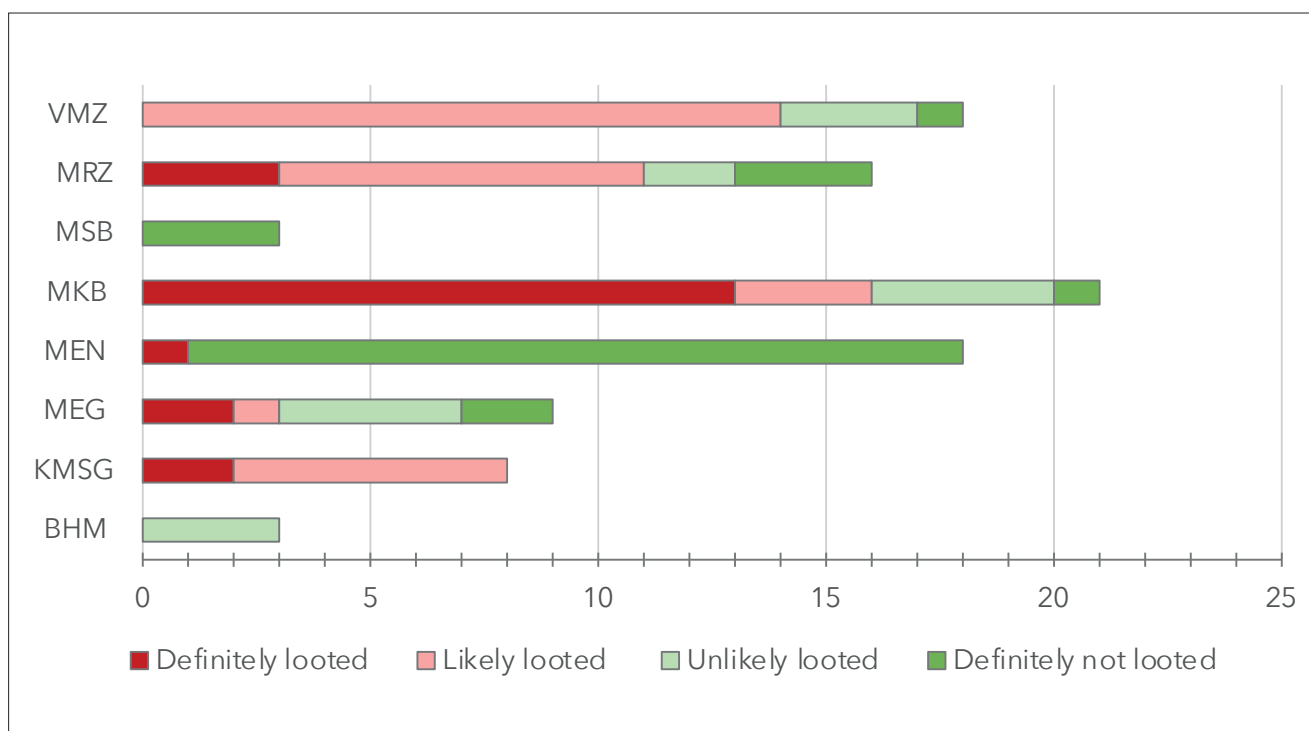


Figure 2 Distribution of the four categories across the participating museums

The Kingdom of Benin in what is current-day Nigeria had a long history of exchange and trade with the Global North from the 15th century onwards. This was especially the case with the Portuguese, with whom they traded metals, pepper and slaves. The kingdom, ruled by the powerful monarchy, was at its most powerful under the reign of Oba Ewuare the Great in the 15th century and declined, losing power in the 1800s. The British, seeking to control and expand colonial territory, led an invasion of Benin City in 1897. British troops launched an assault on its capital, Benin City, during which the Royal Palace was plundered and burned to the ground. An estimated 10,000 objects made of brass, ivory and wood were looted from Benin City¹. These so-called “Benin Bronzes” subsequently passed through the hands of art dealers into private and public collections around the world. Today there are some 100 items in Swiss public museums that originate from the Kingdom of Benin.

Swiss actors, motivated by socio-economic, scientific and religious interests, were active in the colonial enterprise. This was despite

Switzerland not formally administrating colonies. The Benin collections came into Swiss museums between 1899 and 2022, over the course of a long period of acquisition, be it through private collectors, the international market, or later in time, via the Swiss art market. The objects’ histories refer to numerous changes of ownership and reflect the long history of trading art works from the Kingdom of Benin.

The BIS is a research initiative, undertaken by eight Swiss public museums that have come together as an informal, non-binding network. The research presented here was undertaken between June 2021 and July 2022 with the support of the Federal Office of Culture (FOC). The main research aim of the BIS was to reconstruct the biographies of objects and their sales routes from both Swiss and Nigerian perspectives, in order to establish which objects in the BIS collections were looted in 1897. This was done in co-production with colleagues in Nigeria in order to widen the understanding of the objects and their significance in the context of Benin. This involved conducting archival research, interviews and oral histories in Nigeria and in Europe.

¹ Hicks, *The Brutish Museums*.

The participating museums are as follows with the respective number of objects from Benin:

- Museum der Kulturen Basel (MKB)
21 objects
- Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich (VMZ)
18 objects
- Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel (MEN)
18 objects
- Museum Rietberg Zürich (MRZ)
16 objects
- Musée d'ethnographie de Genève (MEG)
9 objects
- Kulturmuseum St. Gallen (KMSG)
8 objects
- Bernisches Historisches Museum (BHM)
3 objects
- Museum Schloss Burgdorf (MSB)
3 objects

While the BIS collections represent a near exhaustive list of all Benin objects in Swiss public museums, it does not consider objects

held in private museums and collections in Switzerland. Compared to other international museums, the Benin collections in Swiss museums are modest and range from 3 to 21 objects in each museum. In total there are 96 objects. The research team has established the following four categories in order to group the Benin objects in Swiss public museums:

1. Objects looted in 1897
21 objects
2. Objects likely to have been looted in 1897
32 objects
3. Objects unlikely to have been looted in 1897
16 objects
4. Objects not looted in 1897
27 objects

The results suggest that just over half of the objects were either looted (22%) or likely to have been looted (34%), with the remaining either unlikely to have been looted (16%) or not looted (28%). Figure 2 shows how these are distributed across the participating museums.

2. Research Setup

2.1 Research Team

The BIS project is led by Dr. Michaela Oberhofer, curator of Africa and Oceania, and Esther Tisa Francini, head of archives and provenance research, both at the Museum Rietberg. They are collaborating with the Africa curators in the participating museums, Samuel Bachmann (BHM), Floriane Morin (MEG), Dr. Alexis Malefakis (VMZ), Dr. Julien Glauser (MEN), Ursula Regehr (MKB) and Anja Soldat (KMSG). The research was undertaken by Dr. Alice Hertzog, an anthropologist based in Zürich, and Dr. Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe, a historian based in Benin City. The project was also supported by Sarah Oechslin during her internship at the Museum Rietberg.

2.2 Standards and Ethics

The aim of the BIS is to conduct collaborative provenance research. The project aims at an integrated historiography, building on provenance findings to discuss the future of the collection.²

The BIS draws on ethical guidelines established by ICOM, notably provision 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3. These state that museums should promote the sharing of knowledge, documentation and collections with museums and cultural organisations in the countries

and communities of origin, that they should be prepared to initiate dialogue for the return of cultural property to a country or people of origin, and that museums should, if legally free to do so, take prompt and responsible steps to cooperate for the return of objects that have been acquired through violent actions during colonial time or through violation of international and national conventions.

The BIS adopts the standards on post-colonial provenance research developed by the German Museums Association in 2021 and the guidelines on provenance research on colonial collections elaborated by the Swiss Museums Association in 2022. It equally draws on the charter of Porto Novo, Xogbonu, Ájáshé that seeks to defend methods and ethics of participatory and inclusive research by recognizing the situated, plural and equal value of the epistemologies involved.

2.3 Project Co-development with Nigerian Partners

During the Covid pandemic, exchanges between the participating curators and researchers in Switzerland and Nigeria took place in regular digital meetings. In September 2021, Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe travelled to Switzerland visiting the participating museums, examining the objects and meeting with the curators. This resulted in a workshop, held at the Museum Rietberg, where the research team identified research gaps, open questions and relevant stakeholders in Nigeria. Having returned to Nigeria, Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe researched the various objects held in the BIS collections, conducting expert

² Weber-Sinn and Ivanov, "Collaborative Provenance Research – About the (Im)Possibility of Smashing Colonial Frameworks."

interviews with palace and guild members as well as local academics.

Six months later, in March 2022, Michaela Oberhofer and Alice Hertzog travelled to Nigeria in order to learn more about Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe's research on the BIS collections in Nigeria, and to engage with relevant stakeholders in Lagos and Benin City. One of the main objectives of this trip was to establish working relationships with key actors in regard to the Benin artworks. This includes not only the national level, notably Prof. Dr. Abba Isa Tijani, General Director of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM), but also traditional governance structures, notably the Palace of Oba Ewuare II in Benin City who granted the delegation an audience.

The team met with museum staff at the National Museum in Lagos and in Benin City, visiting both the permanent collections and storage facilities, and exchanging knowledge with museum curators. The trip also provided the opportunity to meet with members of the artisan guilds still actively producing bronze and wood artworks in Benin City, as well as local collectors, patrons, and art historians in Benin City. These interactions all provided important insights into objects currently held in the BIS collections.

Whilst in Benin City, the delegation hosted a workshop at the University of Benin, inviting a range of stakeholders, including academics, local experts, and representatives of the palace. This was an opportunity to both present and gather feedback on the BIS research initiative, but also afforded those present the chance to debate wider topics concerning Benin art production over the course of the twentieth century. Workshop participants were particularly keen to embed Benin's art history within African and global art history, to widen the current focus on bronzes to include ivory and wood production, and to produce knowledge on art production and the art market in the later colonial and post-colonial period.

2.4 Transparency and Knowledge Sharing

The BIS project has sought to maintain high levels of transparency throughout the project. Open communication and building trust with Nigerian partners were a priority from the very beginning. The sharing of knowledge about the BIS collections is considered a prerequisite for building a new relational ethic with partners in Nigeria. At the launch of the project the Swiss press were briefed, and the Nigerian embassy informed. The general public has also been updated on developments in the project via social media. The project has received regular press coverage in all the Swiss regions. A review of this coverage is presented in annex 10.8.

For the sake of transparency, it was particularly important to make information about the BIS project digitally accessible to all. Almost all BIS museums have uploaded information about their Benin objects online and update it regularly. In addition, information about the BIS, with a full review of all of the objects, is centralised on the project homepage, which is hosted on the website of the Museum Rietberg.³ Here the list of the objects and available provenances were rapidly made available in German, English and French, sharing early and mid-term results. The website also provided updates on the development of the project, ongoing activities, events and media coverage.

Over the course of the first year of the project, two films were produced, one a short trailer presenting an overview of the project, and the second, a longer twenty-minute documentary, produced by the Museum Rietberg in the context of the exhibition *Pathways of Art* (2022-2023).⁴

The project has been presented in the form of several publications and exhibitions, listed in the annex 10. These include the annual report and bi-monthly newsletter of the Museum Rietberg, an article in the exhibition catalogue of *Pathways of Art*, book reviews, and two conference papers, one that will be published in an edited volume and another in a working

3 *Benin Initiative Schweiz - Museum Rietberg.*

4 *Pathways of Art - Museum Rietberg.*

paper series. An overview of the project will be published as research proceedings in a 2023 special edition of the French journal “Cahiers d’études africaines”.

Finally, since early 2021 the BIS has been presented in different external speaking events- from research conferences to public symposiums and teaching workshops. This has been an opportunity to gather feedback from peers and share mid-term results not only with the general public but also within museum and research communities. A full list of publications, research outputs and talking engagements can be found in the annex 10.

2.5 Research Methods

a. Research Networks

The BIS is one of many ongoing initiatives researching Benin artefacts held in collections in the Global North. Dr. Alice Hertzog and Dr. Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe established partnerships with a range of Nigerian and Western academics also collaborating with museums on the topics of provenance and return, consolidating knowledge and establishing synergies between various ongoing projects. We also drew on expertise from the authors of three reports published in 2021 on the provenance of the Benin collections at the National Museum of World Cultures in the Netherlands (Lidchi, Schmidt & Hans, 2021), at the Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum in Cologne (Bedorf, 2021) and at the University of Oxford’s collections (Hicks, 2021). We engaged with researchers from several similar research initiatives, including the network Devolving Restitution in the UK and the research programme ReTours in France, the Benin Dialogue Group and the project Digital Benin, presented further below.

b. Object Analysis

The analysis of the objects themselves was a core part of the research. In September 2021 Dr. Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe and Dr. Alice Hertzog, along with the museum curators, examined all of the objects. This enabled them to compare the objects in terms of iconography, materiality, density, casting,

skill and dating. They also checked inventory numbers or marking from previous owners or collectors and signs such as burn marks, cracks or breakages that could have resulted from the objects being damaged during the 1897 military attack.

c. Interviews

In Nigeria we interviewed a range of actors, we spoke with local and national governance members, palace members, guild members, contemporary artists, local experts and academics, bronze casters and wood carvers. These interviews enabled us to document the significance of the BIS collections for local actors; at times these interviews were necessary even to establish the most basic data, for example what an object was and how it would have been used. We were also able to establish more precise dating of the objects and the original names of certain objects.

To better understand the circulation of the objects once they arrived in Europe, we also gathered opinions and insights from a wide range of actors in Europe; these include museum professionals, experts from galleries and auction houses, journalists, independent researchers, academics, archivists and the descendants of traders and collectors. These exchanges have varied from informal conversations to formal structured interviews and were conducted either in person, over the phone or online. The full list of contact persons and experts can be found in the annex 8.3.

d. Online Databases

Over the course of the project we consulted databases of Benin Sales in the Artkhade database, as well as the database of objects, sales and biographies established by Guy von Rijn, also known as the African Heritage Documentation & Research Centre. Another resource was the Ross Archive of African Images at the University of Yale. Several other initiatives are digitalising and rendering accessible knowledge on the trade and circulations of Benin artefacts. This includes for example the digitization of the archives of traders and dealers of Benin objects, such as William Ockeford Oldman Archive, held by the Te Papa Tongarewa

Museum whose stock books were transcribed in collaboration with the Smithsonian. The same museum in Wellington also holds the correspondence of the trader William Downing Webster, which is already digitalized.⁵

The online database of the German Contact Point for Collections from Colonial Contexts, launched in June 2021, presents an overview of the Benin objects that are held in German museums. The information and the pictures in this database are updated regularly - at time of writing the database listed 1228 objects held in fifteen museums in Germany. It is possible to search the database by museum, object type, material or provenance (person). There is an overlap with provenance in the BIS collections, with several dealers or collectors connected to Switzerland who were also operating in Germany.

Finally, the platform Digital Benin launched in November 2022, publishing online the listing of 124 museums in 20 countries holding royal treasures from Benin City, including the objects from the BIS collections which are deemed to have either been looted in 1897 or produced up until the 1930s. This online database will be an important tool for further research into the collections, enabling us to identify Benin objects with similar provenance.

e. Archival Material

The report draws on findings from the archives of the participating museums of the BIS project. The structure and content of the archival material in each museum differs. However, across the museums we consulted old inventory cards, inventory books, correspondence, annual reports and the current museum database. The amount of documentation available varied considerably both between the museums and from object to object. Given the circulation of objects between Swiss museums, it was not uncommon that archives in one museum shed light on an object held in another museum.

⁵ Over the course of the research we were contacted by the Te Papa Tongarewa Museum with regards to the Webster stock books and through our research network were able to explore solutions for the forthcoming digitization of these documents.

We also consulted archives in London, Paris, Berlin or Dresden in museums where objects from the BIS collections were previously held. Of interest were also the archives of exhibitions featuring Benin artefacts, including *Les Bronzes du Benin* at the Musée du Trocadéro in Paris in 1932 and *Die Kunst aus Schwarz-Afrika* at the Kunsthhaus in Zurich in 1970. We consulted the private papers of dealers such as Paul Guillaume, Louis Carré or Pierre Matisse who are known to have traded Benin artefacts, the notes of auctioneers, as well as the stock-books of traders such as W. O. Oldman and W. D. Webster, and illustrated catalogues of the collections of Pitt-Rivers. We also worked with the Maritime Archives Association to research individuals involved in the shipping industry. A complete list of the archives consulted is presented in the annex 8.1.

f. Auction Sales Catalogues

The BIS collections arrived in Switzerland primarily through European collectors who mainly acquired goods on the western art market. We placed particular emphasis on this during our research. We produced a dataset of sales of Benin objects, sourcing and documenting auction sales catalogues. This then enabled us to check the listings against the BIS collections. We compared the description of the object with photos, illustrations or measurements when available. Copies of catalogues of early London sales were provided by colleagues, notably the art expert Tim Teuton and scholar Felicity Bodenstein. These were then completed with additional catalogues identified in bibliographies,⁶ that we sourced in specialist libraries in the US, the UK, France and Germany. This new dataset adopts the structure employed by St-Raymond & Vaudry 2020 in their open source database⁷ that lists all interwar Parisian auction sales whose catalogues include "African", "pre-Columbian", "Oceanian", "n*****" or "primitive" artefacts. From this list we also identified and

⁶ For example, Dark, *The Art of Benin: A Catalogue of an Exhibition of the A.W.F. Fuller and Chicago Natural History Museum Collections of Antiquities from Benin, Nigeria*.

⁷ Saint-Raymond and Vaudry, *"The Vanishing Paths of African Artefacts."*

included sales with Benin listings. The dataset we designed was produced with the BIS collections in mind, including only sales that could have corresponded to an object in the Swiss collections - it currently lists 112 sales from 1897 to 1990 and is in no way exhaustive. The database is also presented in the annex 9.

g. Press Archives and Press Reviews

Press archives were consulted in Switzerland⁸ and the UK⁹ mainly to identify actors involved in sales. We also consulted the Nigerian press archive held in the British Museum in order to identify further information regarding Nigerian art trade in the colonial period. In addition we conducted a running press review on the topic of the Benin artefacts and ongoing developments concerning restitution of Benin artwork both in Western press and in Nigerian national and local press.

h. Family Histories

Genealogy websites provide centralized access to historical databases, including census material, army records, birth, marriage and death certificates. Often these websites also enable crowd sourcing, with family members uploading documents, family trees and photos. This was of particular use in tracing the descendants of members of the 1897 military attack. We used the services provided by findmypast.co.uk and ancestry.co.uk. We also used the UK probate service¹⁰ to search for probate records and order the wills of actors we had identified. This service is an important resource for identifying the heirs and estates not only of those present in 1897 but also of descendants of dealers and collectors of Benin objects in the UK. The genealogist Christine Cocks was of particular assistance in researching the family histories of various actors in the UK. We also used Social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn enabled us to trace the descendants of collectors, conducting interviews with the descendants of dealers and collectors.

⁸ e-newspapers-archives.ch

⁹ <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

¹⁰ <https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/>

3. Results

Over the course of the project, new objects have been identified, whilst others have been discarded. Six objects have been removed from the list because they are not deemed to have originated from Benin. These include two Owo objects (BHM E/1884.333.0001 & MRZ RAF 622), one Yoruba head (MRZ RAF 695), a tobacco pipe made in Cameroun (BHM E/1920.326.0178) and two arm-rings (MRZ 2006.126 & MRZ 2006.127). However, in the meantime, these have been replaced by six additional objects from the collections that were newly added to museum collections or that had previously not been identified as Benin objects. These are a figure of an Oba (MRZ 2022.3), a commemorative head of the queen mother (MRZ 2021.423), a commemorative head (MKB III 19522), a sword (VMZ 13169), an arm-ring (VMZ 08886) and a shield (VMZ 13158). Further object types have also been identified that we intend to include in a second stage of the project, these include photographic archives and objects designed as teaching material, such as plaster casts of relief plaques.

3.1 Material and Object Types

The term “Benin Bronzes” is at times misleading, firstly because many of the objects are made instead of copper or metal alloy, but also because objects were produced in other materials. Most of the objects in the BIS collections (82%) are made of metal alloys. Of the remaining objects, eleven items are made of ivory, three of wood, two of terracotta and one shield of vegetal materials.

The items also reflect the various typologies of objects found in Benin collections in museums worldwide (Figure 3). Many of the objects were used in spiritual contexts and were part of ancestral altars and commemorative practices in Benin City. This includes sixteen commemorative heads of kings, chiefs (Uhunmwu-Elao) and queen mothers (Uhunmwu elao ọghe ly’ọba), some of which are older, and others more recent productions. There are also seven carved ivory tusks (Aken’ni Elao), two cockerels (Ọkporhu), eight altar bells (Ẹroro) and some of the seven staffs. In total, there are ten relief plaques (Ama) from the 16th/17th century, which are considered important visual archives of Benin’s history. Eight hip masks (Uhunmwu-Ẹkuẹ), eight bracelets (Ẹgba) or armcuffs (Ikoro) and four pendants can be assigned to the prestigious attributes of the hierarchical Benin society. There are also four leopard figures (Ẹkpen). Amongst the less represented objects, there are a sword (Ebẹn), a wooden seat-board (Agba), a carved ivory stand, a carved ivory flute (Akohẹn/Okọ) and shield (Asa). There are also a large number of cast metal figures (eighteen) many of which were produced in the 1960s.

3.2 Acquisition Timeline

Switzerland, unlike museums in the UK or in Germany, acquired its Benin collections over a long time range, from first acquisitions in 1899, two years after the military campaign, to modern objects that only entered the MRZ inventory in 2022. The MKB was the only Swiss museum that acquired objects in the years immediately after the military expedition (9% of

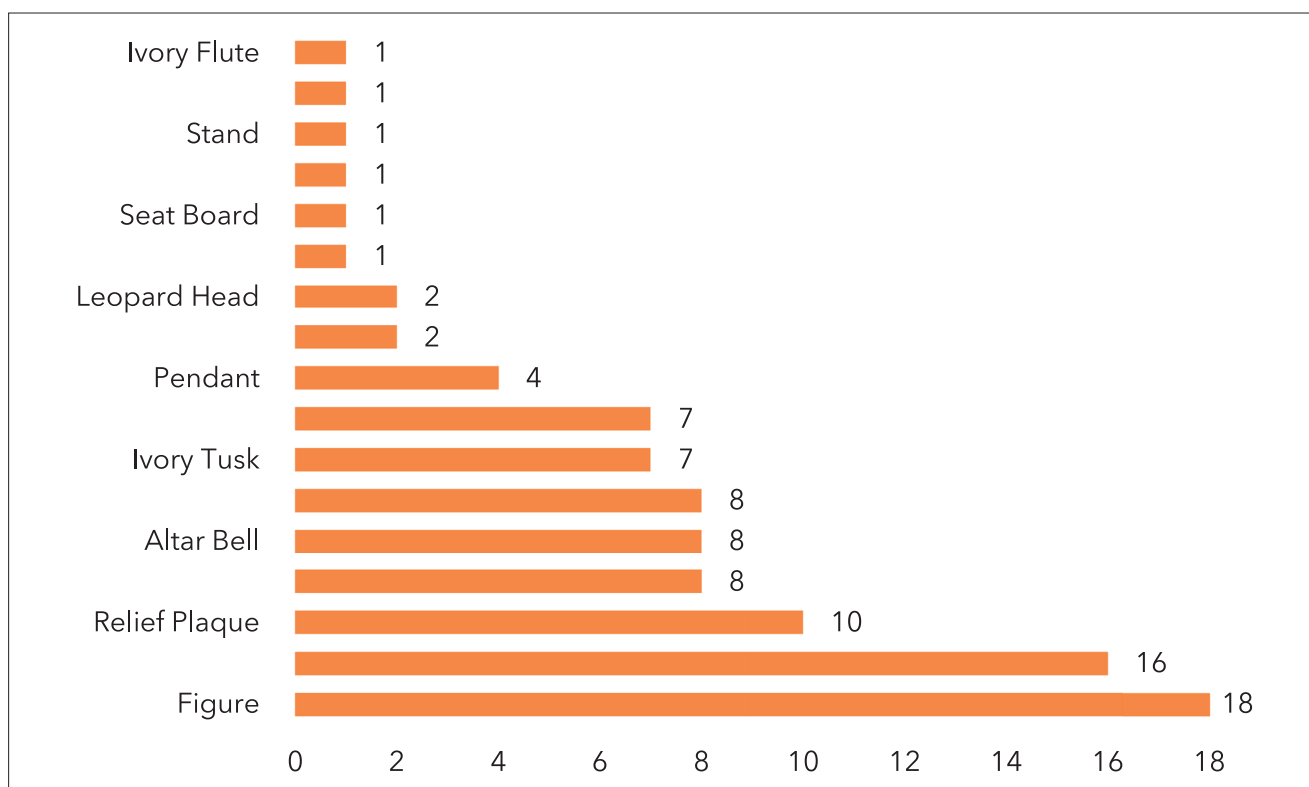


Figure 3 Object types in the BIS collections

the BIS collections). The remaining acquisitions occurred in the colonial period (47%) as during the post-colonial period (42%).¹¹

Figure 4 highlights three acquisition peaks. First come the early acquisitions by MKB immediately after 1897, then a large number of acquisitions in 1940 and 1941 (23 objects) due to the resale of the Africa collection of Han Coray following his bankruptcy and the seizure of his collection by the Schweizerische Volksbank, and finally the last peak in 1963 due to the purchase of 17 modern objects by the then director of the MEN, Jean Gabus from the dealer Peter Rufus Osunde during a visit to Nigeria. The latest purchase of a knowingly looted object occurred in 2011, when the MRZ purchased a hip mask (2011.9). At the time of the sale its provenance and association with 1897 were considered a mark of authenticity.¹² The objects in the BIS collections took a range

of routes before reaching Switzerland. A quarter were purchased directly in Nigeria - and one of them was purchased directly from a Nigerian dealer in Switzerland. We know for sure that at least 18% passed through the UK (although this figure is probably much higher), and 11% through Germany, with 5% also having transited through the French art market. One object passed through the US and Canada, two through the Netherlands and one possibly through Belgium. However, for 36% of the objects we still don't know how they got to Switzerland. In these cases, we were only able to trace back to the Swiss collector or dealer who provided the object to the museum in question.

3.3 Actors and Agency

A large number of actors are listed in the provenances of the objects. We have identified in total 71 people. However, even after the intensive research for the project, there are still many gaps in provenance, as well as actors whom we have not been able to identify. The majority of the actors identified are only connected to one or two objects (87%), this

¹¹ The exact moment of acquisition remains unknown for two objects (VMZ 08886 & VMZ 13158).

¹² Oberhofer and Tisa Francini, "Traces of Colonial Injustice: Collaborative Provenance Research on Artworks from the Kingdom of Benin."

shows just how fractured the acquisition of the BIS collections was, as museums acquired their collections in a piecemeal fashion. It also makes provenance research more time consuming, as each object has its own path, as opposed to cohorts of objects that could be researched together. One third of the actors identified were based in Switzerland, the remaining coming from Europe, America and Africa. This highlights how Swiss museums and collectors were entangled within the global art market acquiring their holdings mainly through international collectors and dealers.

When looking closely at the 71 identified actors involved in the circulation of the BIS collections certain profiles become apparent. Most actors are art dealers (39 %) or collectors (24 %). Then follow academics (7%), museum professionals (6%) and armed forces (4%). For the remaining fifth of the actors identified, more research is required to establish their trade and status.

The individuals identified are for the vast majority men (83%). However they only include four Nigerians, three of them male traders. Two are anonymous, listed as "trader" and "Benin

Chief in Lagos." Another is Peter Rufus Osunde, a professor of art at the School of Art Design and Printing at the Yaba College of Technology; he was also a unionist, artist and art dealer and sold 17 objects to Jean Gabus in Lagos in 1963. Of these 17 objects, one art work, a statue of Beni Akazouawa II (63.16.15) is identified as having been produced by the Chief Inneh of the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) and leader of the Benin Art Society. This is the only case among all of the BIS objects where the exact identity of the person who produced the object is known.

The scarcity of data we have on Nigerian individuals in the provenance reflects the absence of African individuals in European archival material. Western collectors and travellers were not interested in the names of the creators or guilds of the works, nor in the identity of the users or dealers of the objects. It remains almost impossible today to locate the people behind terms such as "Benin Chief" or "trader." In our research, it was therefore a major concern to list, where possible, the Benin guild that would have produced the object and the names of the Oba who would have owned the object by descent. For example we have

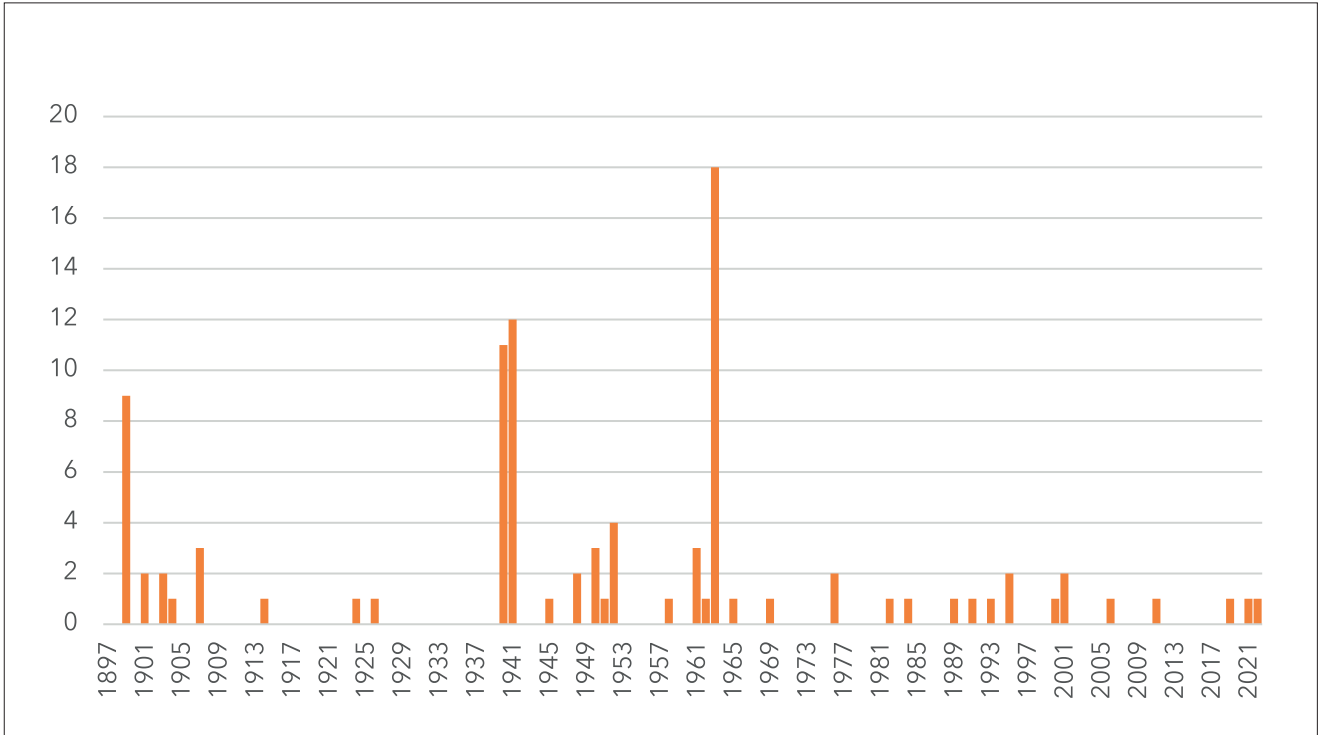


Figure 4 BIS Acquisition timeline

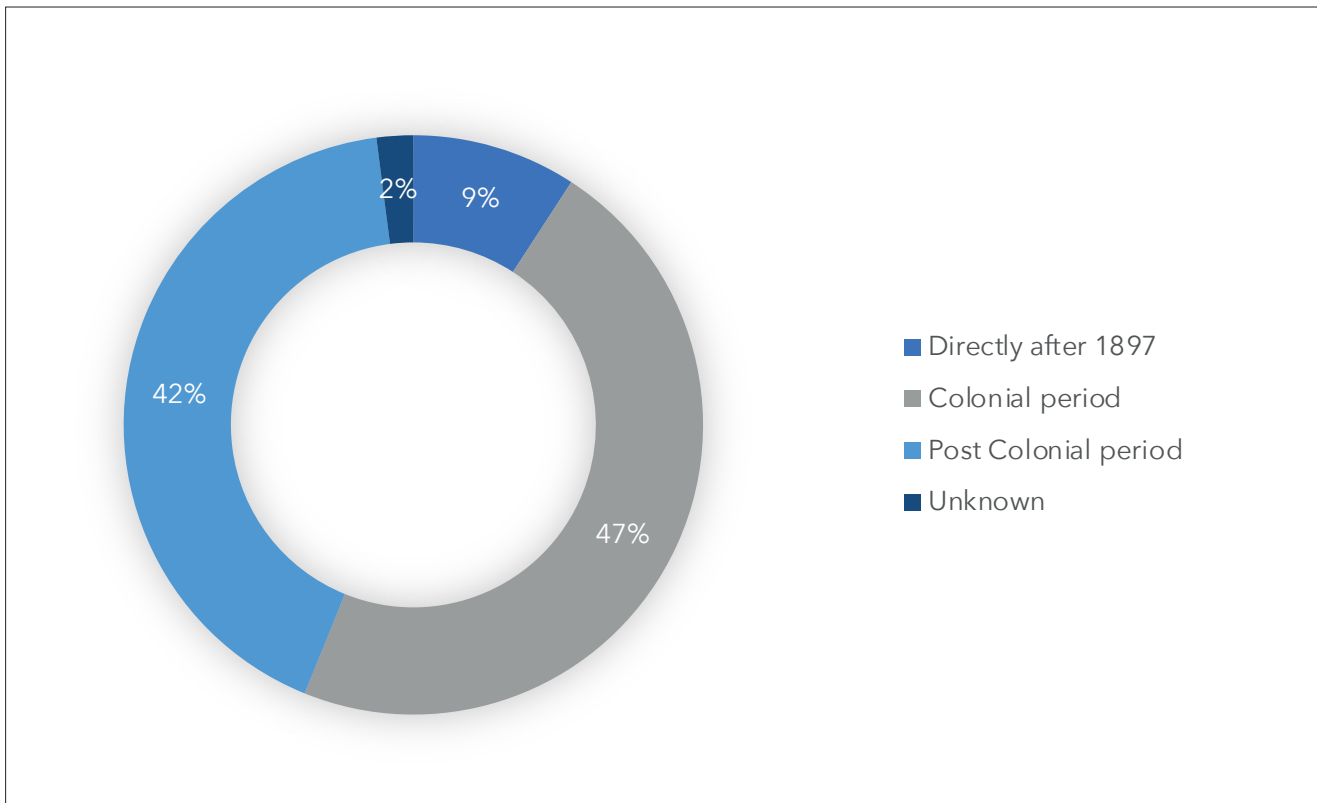


Figure 5 Moments of acquisitions of the collections

extrapolated that the objects were produced by the corresponding guilds, be it the Bronzecasting Guild (Igun Eronmwon), the Oba's sword bearers (Emada, sing. Omada), or the Royal Ivory-sculptors Guild (Igbesanmwan).

Women make up 17% of the actors involved in the BIS collections. When they feature in the provenance of the objects, they are most likely to be named alongside their spouses, for example the dealers Paul and Maria Wyss, gallery owners Pierre & Suzanne V rit  or collectors Ernst and Annemarie Vischer-Wadler. When named alone, women are often female heirs, such as Florence Ellen Davey who inherited an ivory tusk or Sybille Zemitis who received a hip-mask from her father, and Annie Wolff-Knize who inherited her deceased husband's collection. Only two women are listed as individual traders, Eva Cutter in London, who is nonetheless associated with her renowned partner W. D. Webster, and Sofia Podgorska in Geneva, a relatively unknown antiques dealer, originally from Poland. One woman, Elisabeth Zink-Niehus, is named as a female collector. The listed provenances of

the BIS collections conceal the involvement of the prominent Swiss art anthropologist Elsy Leuzinger (1910-2010) who worked first as a young curator at the V lkerkundemuseum der Universit t Z rich, where she documented the Benin collection of Han Coray. From 1956 to 1972, she was director of the Museum Rietberg and worked on the exhibition "Die Kunst aus Schwarz-Afrika" in 1970 featuring Benin objects from private and public collections.¹³

As regards the provenance of the BIS collections, the significant role played by two duos is clearly visible. The first is composed of Han Coray (1880-1974), the Swiss collector whose collections were seized by the Schweizerische Volksbank in 1931, and Prof. Hans J. Wehrli (1871-1941), an anthropologist who became the first director of the VMZ (1909-1941). In 1940 Prof. Wehrli succeeded in acquiring a large part of Han Coray's collection

¹³ The scarcity of women involved in the acquisition of the BIS collections is in stark contrast to the current make-up of the BIS project. It is led by two women and implemented by two female researchers. In the participating museums, women make up half of the directors (MRZ, MKB, MEG, VMZ) and four of the seven curators.

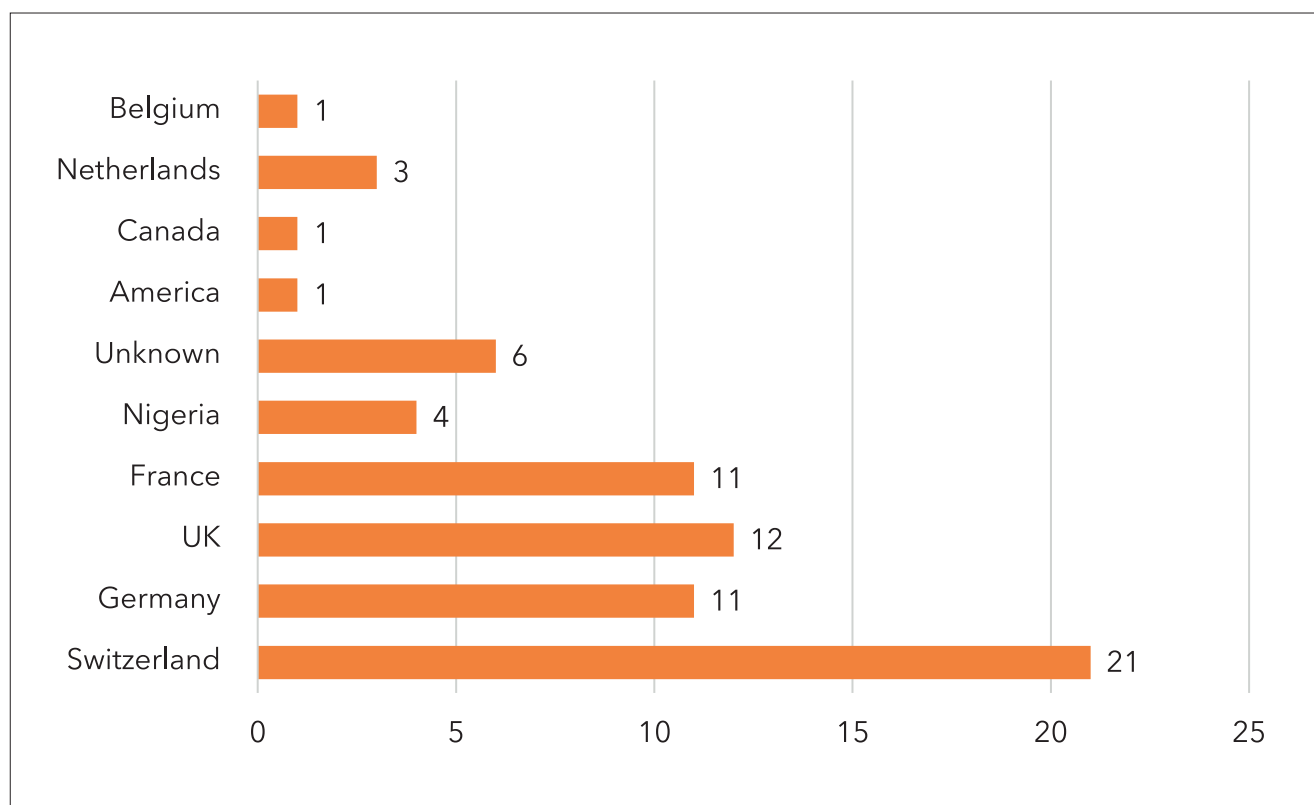


Figure 6 Location of identified provenance actors

of African objects, with the help of his longstanding scientific assistant Elsy Leuzinger (1910-2010); these were then sold on to various Swiss museums and private collectors.¹⁴ Coray's former collection included 30 Benin objects that are currently held at the MRZ, VMZ and KMSG. The second duo is composed of Jean Gabus (1908-1992) and Peter Rufus Osunde, from whom he purchased 17 objects in Lagos in 1963 (also mentioned above). Other notable actors include William D. Webster (linked to 13 objects), Johan Gustav Umlauff (4 objects) and Eduard von der Heydt (4).

¹⁴ On Han Coray see Schlothauer, "Han Coray (1880-1974) – Lehrer, Autor, Schuldirektor, Sammler, Mäzen, Galerist, Buchhändler, Hotelier"; Schäfer, "Die Afrika-Sammlung von Han Coray im HVM St. Gallen"; Peraldi et al., "Die Afrika-Sammlung von Han Coray in Schweizer Museen – Ein Überblick"; Oberhofer and Tisa Francini, "Han Coray zwischen Dada und Afrika. Ein Leben für die Kunst"; Malefakis, "Das Schicksal der Sammlung Han Coray und das Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich"; Koella, *Die Leben des Han Coray*; Iselin and Laade, *Die Polyvalenz des "Primitiven"*; Szalay, *Afrikanische Kunst aus der Sammlung Han Coray, 1916-1928*; Herbert, *Die unwahrscheinliche Geschichte des Han Coray*.

Of the remaining actors, several clusters can be identified. The first is the involvement of gallery owners and art dealers in the UK (Berkeley Gallery, Eva Cutter, Kenneth John Hewett), in Switzerland (Sofia Podgorska, Emil Storrer, Ernest Winizki, Paul & Maria Wyss), in Germany (Hans Meyer, Arthur Speyer II, Gustav Umlauff), in France (Ernst Ascher, La Reine Margot, Galerie Carrefour (couple Vérité), Paul Guillaume, Charles Ratton, The Brummer Gallery, Friedrich Wolff-Knize) and to a lesser extent in the Netherlands (Gallery Menist, Leod & Mia Van Bussel), Canada (Jacques Germain) and Belgium (Edgar Beer). A second group emerges of private collectors including for example Han Coray, Paul Eluard, Ernst Heinrich, Eduard von der Heydt, Alphonse Kann, Hans Lachmann Mosse, Hans W. Kopp, Baron Maurice de Rothschild, Ernst and Annemarie Vischer-Wadler and Elisabeth Zink-Nieuhaus. A third group is made up of the heirs of these collectors (Hans Coray, Ellen Davey, Sybille Heinrich, Annie Wolff-Knize). A further group of individuals are either directly (Sir Ralph Moor, George Neville, Admiral Harry Rawson)

or indirectly (William John Davey) linked to the British Army, whilst a small cluster of men (Consul Eduard Schmidt, Fritz Real, and August Lindt) played a diplomatic role in Nigeria. A final group involved Swiss museum professionals who played a direct role in purchasing objects for their collections or for their personal use (Prof. Hans J. Wehrli, Jean Gabus, René Gardi).

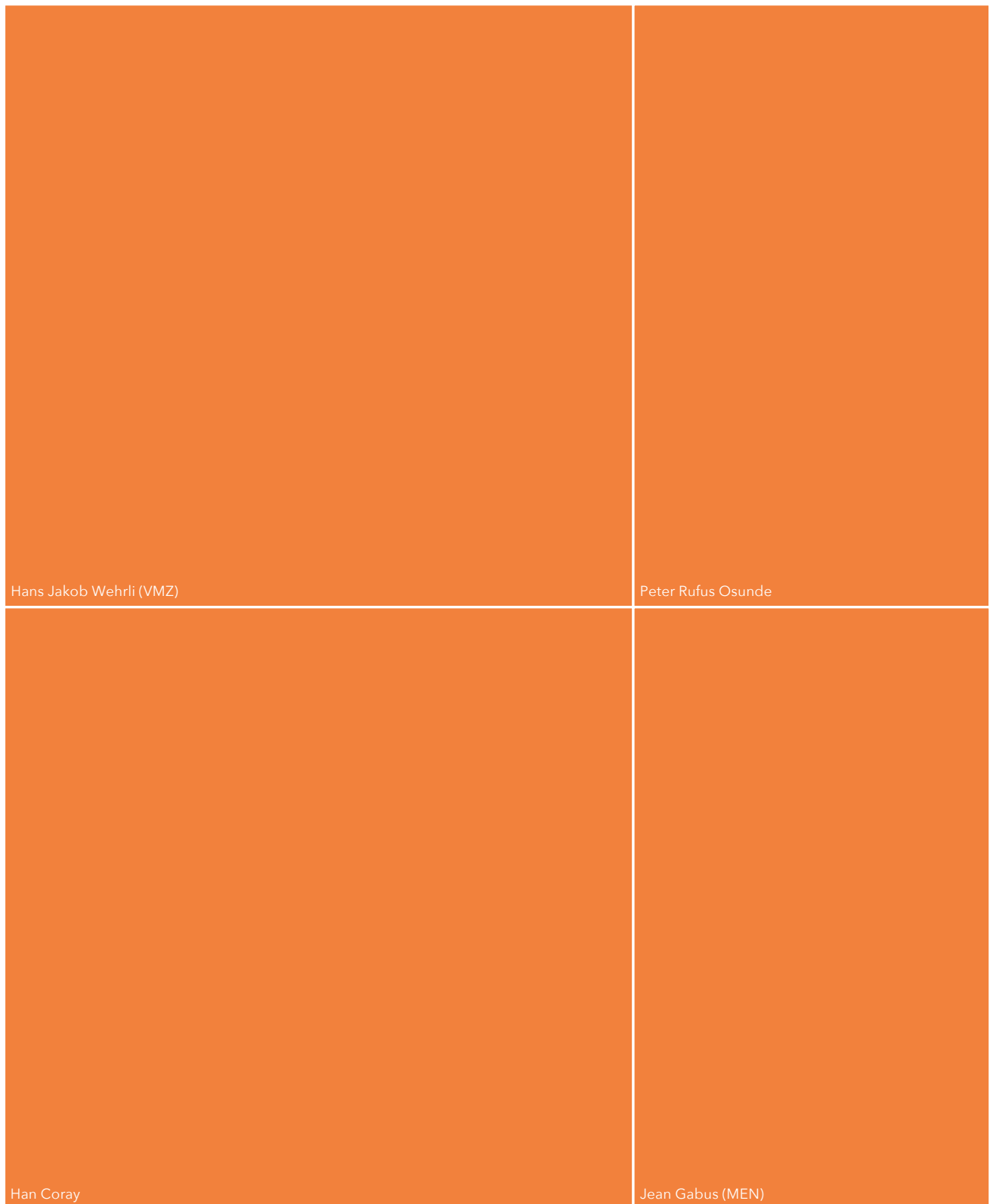


Figure 7 Tree map of provenance actors, each cell proportionate to the number of objects associated with the person

William D. Webster						Johann Friederich Gustav Umlauff		
Eduard von der Heydt	William Ohly	Arthur Speyer II	F.W. Reichert	La Reine Margot	Ernst Ascher	Rolf Schenk		
	Ulrike Schenk	Baron Maurice de Rothschild	Sofia Podgorska	Ernst F. Rohrer	René Gardi	Elisabeth Zink-Niehus	Emil Storrer	Ernst Winizki
		Jacques Germain	Susanne Vérité	Paul Eluard	Charles Ratton	Paul Guillaume	Gallery Menist	Frank Paulig
Hans Ernst Barth	Hans W. Kopp		Consul Eduard Schmidt	Eckart von Sydow	Hans Meyer	Ernst Heinrich	Gotthelf Kuhn	Unknown trader Globus
		Fritz Real						
	Paul Wyss	Leod & Mia Van Busse!	Ludwig Glenk Firma	Sir Ralph Moor	Whitaker	Davey Family	Ellen Davey	Arnold Ridyard
Ernst Vischer-Wadler	Maria Wyss	Leod & Mia Van Busse!	Erwin Stiefel	Caspar A. V. Blad	George William Neville	Sybille Heinrich	G. Berthoud	August R Lindt
		Edgar Beer	O. Lindenmann	Leopold Rüttimeyer	Kenneth John Hewett	Chief Inneh	Annie Wolff-Knize	Hans Lachmann Mosse
Eva Cutter	Hans Coray	Pierre Vérité	Franz H. Rolle	Annemarie Vischer-Wadler	Admiral Harry Rawson	Friedrich Wolff-Knize	Alphonse Kann	Brummer Brothers

3.4 The BIS Collection in Regard to 1897

a. Typology

In response to the primary research question regarding whether the objects in the BIS collections were looted in 1897, we have categorized the objects in the BIS collections into the four following categories:

1. Objects looted in 1897
2. Objects likely to have been looted in 1897
3. Objects unlikely to have been looted in 1897
4. Objects not looted in 1897

As such, the categories present a spectrum from objects that on the one end were definitely looted in 1897 (cat. 1) to objects that on the other end were definitely not (cat. 4). For cat. 1 and cat. 4 there are reliable sources that allow us to confidently make this claim.

For objects in categories 2 and 3 we have fewer sources and less evidence. Objects in both of these categories lack early provenance data. However, objects in cat. 2 are representative

of Benin Court Art produced before 1897, whereas those in cat. 3 appear to have been produced at a later date, and are therefore unlikely to have been looted.

It is important to note here that Royal Benin court art was not commodified prior to the 1897 expedition. There was no art market in altar objects such as commemorative heads or ivory tusks, nor any circulation of the plaques documented before 1897. These objects were incommensurable for the court and ownership would not have been transferred. A handful of decorative ivory objects did circulate as gifts prior to 1897, however none of the BIS objects are representative of these gifts.

To summarize, objects in cat. 1 have a strong paper trail leading back to the period of the military attack or the immediate aftermath. Objects in cat. 2 provide little written evidence, but are representative of royal court art predating 1897. Objects in cat. 3 also have a weak paper trail, but appear to have been produced after 1897. Objects in cat. 4 were definitely produced after 1897, most often in the later colonial period or after independence.

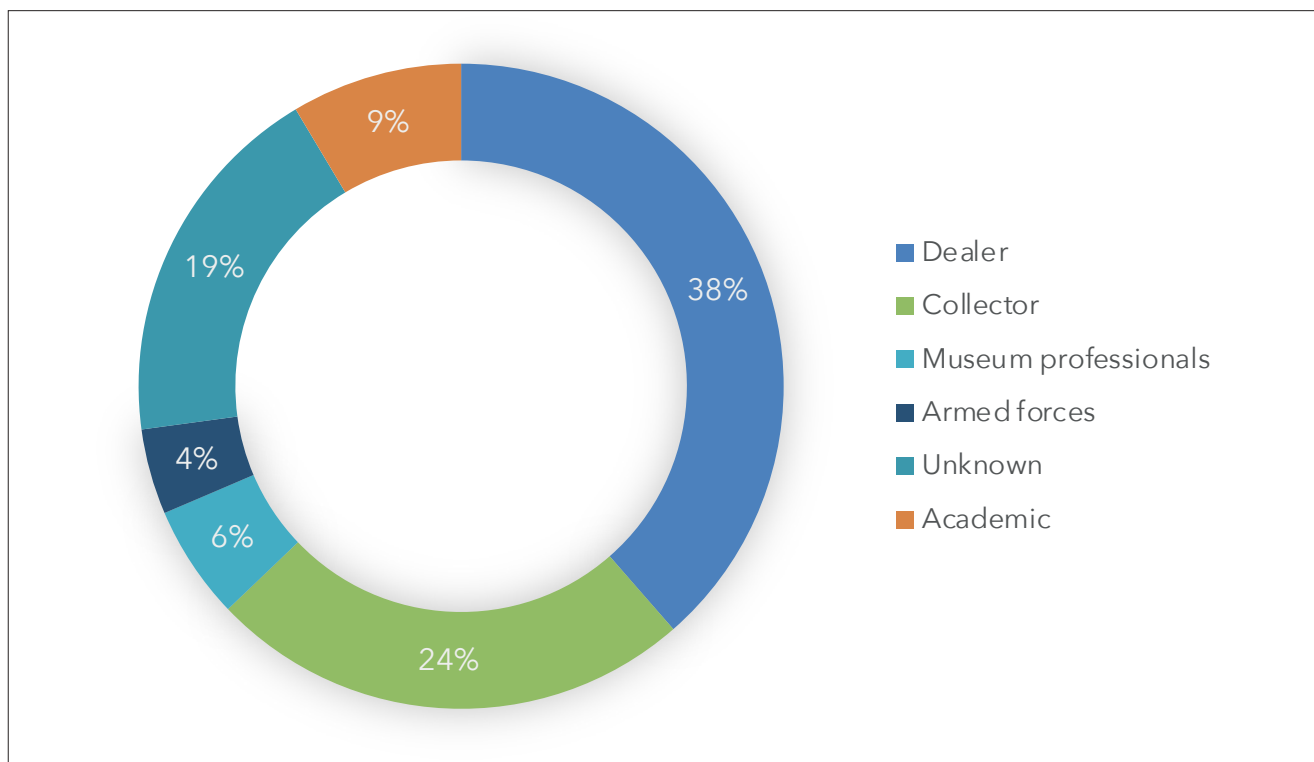


Figure 8 Occupation of identified actors

b. Evidence Base

We relied on a wide evidence base in order to allocate the objects to one of these four categories. This included museum archival material: for example a number of museum invoices of the objects also clearly list 1897 as the provenance; however, this not always to be taken at face-value, given that '1897' was used to indicate the authenticity of the object and increase the value of the object. We also relied on actor analysis and the profile of identified dealers and collections – questioning whether they had previously been involved in trading loot or were directly involved in the military expedition. We also sought to establish if they had been identified with other looted Benin objects in museums outside Switzerland.

Some of the objects presented forensic traces from the military expedition, for example, burn marks from the fire that ensued after the attack or fractures that could have occurred during the attack. Certain materials had also been dated – for example terracotta, whilst others such as the metal alloy were more difficult to test. At times the objects were also marked with inventory numbers from previous owners, providing evidence of earlier provenance.

We built up evidence for each object based on iconography, technique and quality of casting. This enabled us to assess which objects were court art and which objects were most likely to have been produced after 1897. We did this by comparison with objects held in international collections whose provenance and connection to 1897 had been previously established.

Our hypotheses were submitted to external reviewers in order to triangulate our findings – testing the validity of results by drawing upon expert opinions from different sources. These included a team of experts, notably Barbara Plankensteiner and Imogen Coulson from Digital Benin, but also Patrick Oronsaye, an Edo historian and independent expert in the history of Benin art from Nigeria. We were also able to discuss the individual objects with guild members in Benin City, as well as members of the royal family.

c. Category One - Objects looted in 1897

There are currently 21 objects in this category, making up just over a fifth of the BIS collections. These items are predominantly from the MKB (13) – with other objects currently held in the MRZ (3), MEG (2), MEN (1) and KMSG (2).

A first group of eight objects (III 1033 - III 1041) arrived at MKB shortly after the British military attack of 1897. The Annual Report in 1899 clearly states that these are objects looted from Benin: "The acquisitions made in the past year, as in the case of almost all ethnographic collections across the world, were definitely influenced by the recent events in Benin. As you will remember, the destruction of the city of Benin by the British revealed a multitude of artefacts of exceptional merit, at least as far as N**** standards go. The spoils of the Benin war were thrown on to the market this year, and we believed it was our duty to salvage at least a few samples from this culture that has now disappeared for good."¹⁵

All of these objects were purchased from William Downing Webster, the principal trader of Benin objects in the years following the 1897 expedition. Webster purchased objects in auction houses but also travelled around Britain to acquire objects from former soldiers and officers who participated directly in the looting of Benin City. He is the principal source of looted objects from the military expedition for prestigious collectors and museums worldwide, including Berlin, Leipzig, Vienna and Stuttgart. The objects sold by Webster in the years following 1897 are all most certainly looted.

The MKB went on to purchase another two objects from Webster in 1901 (III 1190 & III 1191) and then three objects from Johann Friedrich Gustav Umlauff (III 1038, III 1935 & III 6694) another renowned dealer of looted Benin objects respectively in 1904 and 1926. At the MRZ one object can be traced back to Webster (2011.9), another (RAF 608) to Admiral Harry Rawson who led the expedition and a third (RAF 607) to the manager of the Elder Dempster

15 MKB Jahresbericht 1899.

steamship company that in 1897 transported officers and material from Liverpool to Nigeria. The one object at the MEN linked to the expedition was acquired by the firm Heinrich Bey & Co in Nigeria immediately after the expedition (MEN 52.1.1). The two MEG objects in this category (MEG ETHAF 020501 & MEG ETHAF 021934) can also both be traced back to Webster. Two objects at the KMSG include one that was listed as part of the official loot of the British Foreign Affairs office (VK C3173) and another that has been traced back to Consul Eduard Schmidt (VK C 3172) who acquired loot in the aftermath of the military expedition.

d. Category Two - Objects likely to have been looted in 1897

This is the category with the highest number of objects: 32. They represent almost all of the VMZ collection (14), half of the MRZ collection (8) and three quarters of the KMSG collection (6). There are also objects at the MKB (3) and at the MEG (1) that we consider likely to have been looted.

They have been identified as such by experts in the field, both in Europe and Nigeria. We therefore consider them, despite a lack of paper evidence, as likely to have been looted in 1897. If we were to reverse the burden of evidence, there is also no proof that any of these objects were acquired with the consent of the original owners¹⁶.

The large majority of the objects in this category are the former property of Han Coray, the Swiss art collector.¹⁷ Upon his bankruptcy in 1931, his art collection was seized by the Schweizerische Volksbank, before being sold off to various museums. In the participating museums within the BIS project there are 26 Benin objects from his collection in three different museums, all of which, our research has concluded, are likely to have been looted in 1897. This includes 14 objects from the VMZ collection in this category, the six remaining objects from the KMSG collection and five objects at the MRZ.

¹⁶ On the burden of evidence see Sarr and Savoy, "Rapport sur la restitution du patrimoine culturel africain. Vers une nouvelle éthique relationnelle."

¹⁷ On Han Coray see note 14.

There is no documented provenance as to where Han Coray purchased these objects, apart from one object in the MRZ (RAF 605) that we know he acquired via the Paris based art dealer Paul Guillaume. Another Han Coray object at the KMSG (VK C 3172) was acquired via an intermediary from the Berlin Ethnographic Museum and, given its paper trail, is to be found in category one. However, despite a lack of written documents, stylistically these objects have all been identified as Benin court art by the historian Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe and Edo art historian Patrick Oronsaye. Furthermore, apart from the military expedition in 1897, there is no other explanation as to how they could have left Nigeria and entered the European art market.

In this category there are another seven objects that are not from the Han Coray collection. These are currently held at the MRZ (3), the MKB (2) the VMZ (1) and the MEG (1). We also consider, on the basis of object analysis, style and iconography that it is highly likely that these objects were produced before 1897. These include two objects at MRZ that were donated by the prominent art collector Eduard von der Heydt (RAF 601, RAF 603) and another (2006.123) from the collection of art dealers Paul and Maria Wyss. In the MKB collection there are three objects: III 4048, purchased in 1948 from the dealer Edgar Beer from Brussels and III 4438, purchased in 1914 from O. Lindenmann from Lörrach, and III 26675 bequeathed to the museum in 1995 by Ernst and Annemarie Vischer-Wadler that also match the criteria for this category. There is a final object at the MEG (ETHMU 027421) from the private collection of the Baron Maurice de Rothschild.

e. Category Three - Objects unlikely to have been looted in 1897

This is a small category, representing only 16 items, which are distributed as follows MKB (4), MEG (4), BHM (3), VMZ (3) and MRZ (2).

This is the category with the highest level of uncertainty. These objects do not have a clear paper trail that enables us to identify them as looted art. They are also not emblematic of Benin Royal court art. In some cases, the

casting is rudimentary and the iconography, proportions and style are more typical of objects produced post-1897. The Benin historian Patrick Oronsaye has suggested that the objects in this category were produced pre-1897 by neighboring communities or vassal states in the style of Benin art and gifted to the Oba. This would be one hypothesis as to why they are of poorer quality. However, it is also likely that they were produced after the military expedition, in the late 19th century and early 20th century, when guilds, no longer under the patronage of the Oba, sought to replicate the court art in response to a high demand in the market for Benin artefacts. However, for all of the objects in this category, there is also no evidence that they were definitely not looted, hence the remaining uncertainty.

At the MKB this includes three objects (III 2592, III 2593 & III 2594) that were acquired by the museum in 1907, having been purchased by Hans Ernst Barth from a "Benin Chief" in Lagos. Another (III 6311) is a bracelet that is not in the style of Benin court art.

In 1950 the MEG purchases two items from the Reine Margot gallery in Paris (MEG ETHAF 022818, MEG ETHAF 022819), then another object (MEG ETHMU 022819) the same year from the Gallery Carrefour and a final object from a Geneva antiques dealer just after Nigerian independence in 1963 (MEG ETHAF 031761). All four objects appear to have been produced post-1897 and are unlikely to have been looted by British forces.

All three Benin items from the BHM have also been allocated to this category (E/1903.326.0004, E/1903.326.0005, E/1995.325.0389). Due to their design and the quality of the casting they appear to have been produced post 1897. This also applies to three items from the VMZ (08886, 10340 & 13158).

Finally, there are two items at the MRZ that enter into this category, but slightly differ from the items above, and are harder to categorize. The first is a terracotta head (RAF 624) that was purchased by the museum from Emil Storrer in 1961, the year after Nigerian independence. Emil Storrer was a Swiss art dealer who regularly

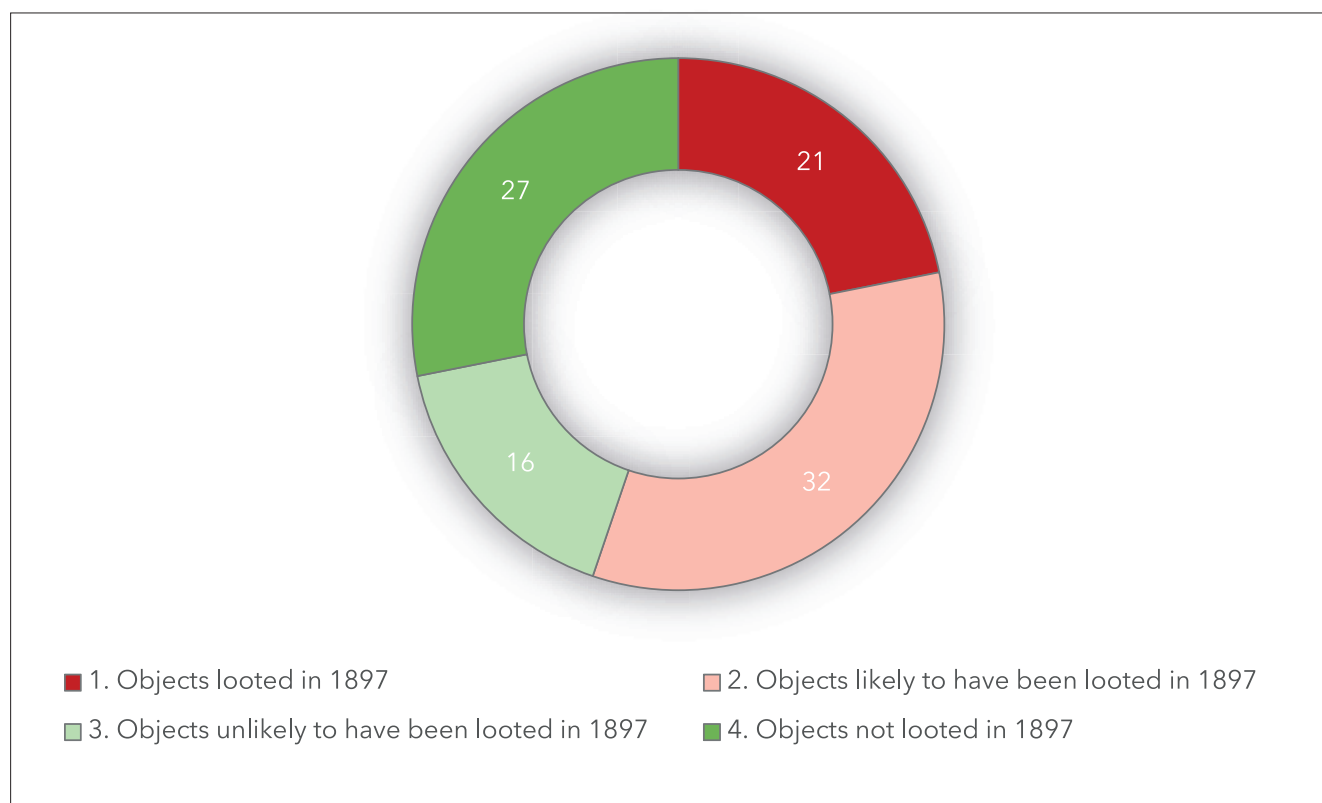


Figure 9 Number of objects in each category

travelled to West Africa and purchased objects on site, selling them on to private collectors and Western museums. The object has undergone thermoluminescence analysis and has been dated to 15th – 18th century AD. Such terracotta heads were also excavated in Benin City after 1897. It is therefore possible that this object was unearthed post 1897. The second object (RAF 606) is also perplexing. It is a small ivory triad that was sold in 1965, so post-independence, by a Nigerian art dealer to a Swiss buyer for Globus, a Zurich department store. It has been dated approximately to the 16th or 17th century. We do not know how the Nigerian art dealer acquired it. Was it preserved from the looting and later commercialized? There is a possibility, although unlikely, that it was plundered in 1897 and then circulated within the Nigerian collectors and the market, before being exported to Switzerland in the 1960s. At this period of early independence, it is probable that this antiquity would have been illegally exported¹⁸ out of the country.

f. Category Four - Objects not looted in 1897

This category is made up of 27 items, distributed as follows MEN (17), MRZ (3), MSB (3), MEG (2), MKB (1) and VMZ (1). With regard to the items in this category, there is certitude that they were not looted in 1897 – all of these objects were definitely produced in the late twentieth century, the majority after independence.

This category features the seventeen objects purchased by Jean Gabus in Nigeria in 1963 (MEN 63.16.1- 17) from the artist Peter Rufus Osunde. At the time Jean Gabus was director of the MEN, and at the time of the sale, the dealers claimed that they were antiques that pre-dated 1897. The dealers' affirmations raised doubts in Jean Gabus, who seemed to want to believe in the antiquity of the collection. However it became quickly apparent that this was not the case, and the objects had most likely been

produced around the same time he purchased them. These doubts were confirmed first by the National Museum in Lagos, whose experts state that these pieces were "not antiquities" and then back in Switzerland by a "spectral analysis" to determine the composition of the alloys, in comparison with the relief plate that predated the 1897 Benin City sack (MEN 52.1.1).

Again, there is one object at the MRZ which is slightly harder to categorize. The terracotta leopard head was acquired in 1936-1937 in Benin City by Eckart von Sydow (RAF 623). While we are certain this object was acquired in the 1930s, we do not know when it was produced. The other two objects are easier to categorize, as they are twentieth century productions, one having been acquired by a Swiss diplomat in the period between 1966-1970 in Nigeria (2021.423), and another a modern cast, that entered the museum collection around 2020 (2022.3).

At the MSB¹⁹ all three objects were acquired by private collectors, again in the post-colonial period in the 1970s and 1980s and were produced in the latter half of the 20th century. The MEG purchased an object in 1951 (MEG EHMU 027421) from the Berkeley Gallery that is clearly an example of neo-Benin art from the first half of the twentieth century. It also acquired an object in 1965 (ETHAF 032616) that had been collected from by the curator G. Berthoud during his fieldwork in Lagos, Nigeria. There is one object at the VMZ (13169), purchased post-independence in 1969 that was definitely produced in the 20th century, and another at the MKB (III 19522) that was acquired in the mid-seventies and is also a more recent production.

¹⁸ On the illicit traffic of antiquities in Nigeria see Ojedokun, "Trafficking in Nigerian Cultural Antiquities"; Shyllon, "Looting and Illicit Traffic in Antiquities in Africa"; Akinade, "Illicit Traffic in Cultural Property in Nigeria"; Shyllon, "One Hundred Years of Looting of Nigerian Art Treasures 1897-1996."

¹⁹ At the time the Museum Schloss Burgdorf was still called the *Ethnologische Sammlung im Museum für Völkerkunde Burgdorf*.

4. Three Case Studies

The BIS research process is presented here through three case studies. The selected objects showcase the nature of provenance research on colonial collections, and the many questions that remain open. The case studies include a bronze cockerel from the collection of the MEG (ETHAF 022867), a bronze plaque from the KMSG (VK C 3173) and an ivory tusk currently held at the MRZ (RAF 607).

Here below we discuss the process by which we attempted to fill in provenance gaps and produce a finer picture of how these objects arrived in Swiss museums. We present the findings as they emerged over the course of the year-long project rather than in retrospect. The intention here is to portray the collaborative nature of this research which ranged from unpublished archives in Aotearoa New Zealand to interviews with experts in Paris to contacts via Facebook in Argentina.

4.1 The Multiple Whitakers Behind a Vérité Sale

MEG – ETHAF 022867

20th century, possibly produced by the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon); [...] ; collection Whitaker (identity uncertain), possibly by descent to Thomas Whitaker Clayton (Ireland, 1874-1949) (?); until 1950 Gallery Carrefour (Pierre and Suzanne Vérité), Paris; July 1950 purchased by the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

Cockerels, or Okukor in Edo, are a familiar figure in Benin Royal Court art and are placed on ancestral shrines to commemorate the Iyoba, the queen mother in Benin, representing the animals that would have been sacrificed during rituals to honor royal ancestors. Within the royal court the expression, “the cock that sings the loudest” was used to designate the Oba’s oldest wife. However, the cock at the MEG is not particularly finely cast, and unlikely to have originated from the Royal Court. Its rudimentary casting is apparent when compared to the other cock in the BIS collections, held at the BHM (III 1037). Speaking to descendants of the casters in Benin City and to local experts, there is a shared opinion that this object is a production from the late 19th century or early 20th century and not representative of the objects looted in 1897.²⁰

The cock was acquired by the MEG in 1950 from the Carrefour Gallery, founded by Pierre and Suzanne Vérité in Paris in 1931 at the moment of the “Exposition Coloniale”. On the invoice it is noted that the object previously belonged to the “Whitaker” collection. The gallery is now run under the new name “Galerie Kanaga” by Stephane Mangin, who confirmed that the Vérités had left little documentation behind. We also spoke with Victor Teodorescu the Christies expert of the Vérité sale in 2017 in Paris, who was unable to provide further insight regarding the provenance, but agreed that the cock was not representative of Benin Royal Court Art. Other actors from the ‘tribal-art’ market

²⁰ Interviews with Phil Omodamwen and Patrick Oronsaye.

confirmed that the Vérités traded in both high and low-end objects, and like many art dealers of the time, were not always forthcoming in the provenance of their objects.²¹

Unable to trace any information further back via the Vérité, we then sought to identify possible Whitaker collections. We checked the name Whitaker against known lists of members of the military expedition – with no success. This included investigating more closely five possible leads. The first was Richard Whitaker, founder of the Whitaker museum in 1902²², then Harold Whitaker, who had donated a collection to the University of Leeds²³. Another Whitaker, Frank Whitaker, a composer, was listed as a donator to the British Museum and a fourth was the Anglo-American artist Frederic Whitaker. None appeared to be connected to a Benin collection. So we turned to a fifth lead, a military family, the Whitaker baronets, notable Sir Albert Edward (1860-1945) who was not active in Benin but was in other conflicts in the late 19th century. We identified archives in Nottinghamshire that held his personal correspondence, and remaining family members who still run the estate.

However, in the meantime, Felicity Bodenstein, one of the principal investigators of Digital Benin, was able to share her research findings with us. She had identified a Whitaker, Mrs. T. Whitaker Clayton listed in the provenance of the Benin collection at the National Museum of Ireland. Interesting to note that the Whitaker we had maybe been looking for was a woman, not a man, as our internal biases had led us to believe.

Reaching out to the curator at the National Museum of Ireland, Bernard Gihooly, we learnt that they had received a donation from Mrs.

21 One anonymous source suggested that the Vérités might have invented 'Whitaker' as a prior provenance because it sounded English, and would therefore be associated with 1897.

22 We are grateful to the curator Teri Booth who worked through the inventory, enabling us to rule out that the object came from the collection

23 The librarian Qona Wright of the University Library consulted the documentation. It seemed unlikely this was the right Whitaker, as his collection was made up of atlases, road-books and maps.

T. Whitaker Clayton prior to 1948, including three pairs of carved wooden canoe paddles (AE:1948.31-36). The archives at the National Museum of Ireland include correspondence between Mrs. Whitaker and staff member Mr. Lucas who upon coming across the item in 1948 reached out to her, requesting additional provenance information, "There is no record or correspondence dealing with them (the objects) and I would be very grateful if you could throw any light on the matter. Are the objects to be presented to the museum, what is their history – by whom, when and where were they collected? It would greatly facilitate me if you can supply answers to these questions."²⁴ It would appear this curator was asking the same questions regarding the provenance of the Benin Bronzes seventy years ago – and received the unsatisfactory answer that "they were given to my husband years ago, for which now I have no room"²⁵

Finally, in the last month of the project, we spoke with Dan Hicks, of the Pitt-Rivers museum, who checked the name Whitaker against the database of the museum. It appeared several times, one was Jessam William Whitaker, a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, another J. Whitaker, who ran an antiques shop on Bridge Street in Cambridge. The genealogist Christine Cocks was able to identify J. Whitaker as living at 68 Bridge Street Cambridge with his sons, a wood and stone carver. However another one of his sons, Frank Richard Whitaker (1877-1945) was an antiques dealer. It is therefore also a possibility that the cockerel in Geneva was sold by this family to the Vérités, who then sold it to the MEG.

The vérité, the truth behind this object continues to elude us. Two leads, the Whitaker family who donated to the National Museum of Ireland, and the Whitaker family trading in antiques in Cambridge could be potential sources of this object, but this is only circumstantial evidence. Further links to Nigeria are difficult to establish. However, given the expertise gathered in Benin City, it

24 Correspondance National Museum of Ireland – Mr. Lucas, 17th June 1948.

25 Correspondance National Museum of Ireland – Mrs Whitaker Clayton, June 25th 1948.

appears that this object was produced during the colonial era. As such, we have concluded that it is unlikely to have been looted in 1897.

4.2 Global Networks: Japan, Nigeria, Argentina, Germany, and Switzerland

KMSG VK C 3173

16th / 17th century, commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; 1897-1898 British Foreign Office (Plaque No.191); 1898, dealer Casper Andreas Valdemar Blad (?); 1898-1928, Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden (Reg.No.: 16058); 1928 Arthur Speyer II Berlin; until 1931 Han Coray (Reg.No.: BP 3); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich; since 1940 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen, previously Historisches und Völkerkundemuseum St. Gallen.

This object is a plaque, or 'Ama' in Edo terms. The pictorial relief plates made of brass were attached to the columns of the palace complex and showed the world view of Benin as a unity of religious, political and natural order. The plate depicts a dignitary with an Eben sword who belonged to the palace society at the Benin City court.

It was acquired by the KMSG in 1940, as were the other Benin objects in the KMSG collection. At the start of this project, the provenance of this object was already quite established as it originated from the collection of the Swiss collector Han Coray.

Following the death of his wealthy first wife, Han Coray went bankrupt and his art collection was seized in 1931 by the Schweizerische Volksbank – today Credit Suisse. The bank then delegated to Prof. Wehrli at the VMZ the task of documenting his collection, which was undertaken by Elsy Leuzinger – at that time a

young curator at the VMZ²⁶. The objects of the collection were then sold to various museums and private collectors, including this plaque, which along with seven other objects was sold to the KMSG for the sum of 1200 Fr.

Within the Han Coray collection it is listed at BP3 – Bronze Plaque 3. In 2012 Andreas Schlothauer²⁷ noted an additional inventory number on the back of the plaque (Reg. No. 16058). Using this number he was able to trace it back to the Museum für Völkerkunde in Dresden. The museum in Dresden had purchased the plaque in 1898 from a certain dealer named "Blad". The author established that the plaque had been acquired through a swap in 1928 by the art dealer Arthur Speyer II, who in all likelihood then sold the object on to Han Coray²⁸.

Arthur Speyer II is a figure who also appears as an intermediary in the provenance of a plaque currently held at the MEN (52.1.1). In the case of the MEN plaque, Speyer purchased the object from the Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin in 1923 at a moment of hyperinflation when museums needed to generate funds by selling so-called duplicates, and most likely sold it on to the German publisher Hans Lachmann Mosse.²⁹

But coming back to the plaque at the KMSG our main question remained: where did the museum in Dresden purchase the plaque from? The archive notes "Blad" as the source. Here we partnered with the British genealogist Christine

26 See Malefakis, "Das Schicksal der Sammlung Han Coray und das Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich." & Oberhofer and Tisa Francini, "Han Coray zwischen Dada und Afrika. Ein Leben für die Kunst."

27 See Schlothauer, "Gefunden - St. Galler Benin-Platte Ehemals Dresden."

28 In the archives of the French art dealer Louis Carré at the Quai Branly Museum, (QUAIBR75_00000208: Archives Privées: Fond Louis Carré Photographies d'Objets_DA001299) there is a photo of the plaque KMSG VK C 3173. This time in a black wooden frame with the inscription Han Coray on the back.

29 On Speyer see Schindlbeck, "Gefunden und verloren"; Kaehr, "Une Dynastie de Collectionneurs Sur plus d'un Siècle : Les Speyer."; Schultz, "Arthur Speyer - Drei Generationen Sammler und Händler."

Cocks, who was able to identify one possible Blad who could have been involved in the sale: a Mr. Caspar Andreas Valdemar Blad.

Caspar Andreas Valdemar Blad was born in 1860 in Denmark, and died in 1940 in Guernsey. He was married to Annie Gurtrude Grigor, herself born in Japan, the daughter of the manager of HSBC in Japan. Together they raised eleven children, living in the foreign trading port of Yokohama in Japan, and in England, Switzerland and Denmark.

Caspar Blad worked as a broker between Yokohama and southern England. And we know the family were staying in the south of England, shortly after 1897, for the birth of one of their sons. Later press cuttings also indicated that the family had a fine collection of Japanese art works, but at this point we were unable to establish a connection with Africa, or with the Benin Bronzes.

On one genealogy website there is a photograph of the Blad family, sitting on the steps in front of a house, Blad in a top hat and moustache, surrounded by his wife and children. One visitor to the website, a Martin Garcia Blad had "liked" the photo. We reached out to him over facebook and it turned out he was great-grandson of Valdemar Blad, in his twenties and living in Argentina, where his grandmother had emigrated to. After speaking with us, he agreed to go and speak to his grandmother, Caspar Blad's daughter, to see what he could find out.

He reported back, with family archives, but also an important anecdote from his grandmother: when she was a child she was terrified of the staircase in the family home in Guernsey, because the walls were lined with African masks. This would suggest that Caspar Blad also collected African art. It must be noted that other members of the family were not convinced of Caspar Blad's involvement in the sale of the plaque to Dresden, preferring to focus on his Japanese art collection instead.

In the meantime, Julie Hudson, the Africa curator at the British Museum, was able to share with us a significant finding. She had identified the plaque from KMSG on a list held within the British Museum entitled "The Fate of the

Benin Plaques" drawn up by Charles Hercules Read³⁰. On this list the plaque number 191 is listed as having been sold to Dresden, and in the archives the associated photo shows the plaque currently in St. Gallen. This is a list of plaques that made up part of the official loot that was shipped by Ralph Moor, commissioner of the Niger Coast Protectorate to the Foreign Office in London, arriving in July 1897. This included 315 plaques that went on loan from the Foreign Office to the British Museum. The British Museum was then mandated to organize the sale of roughly one third of the collection to private dealers and museums, including Dresden. The sale had a minimum purchase of five objects.

We then also reached out to the museum in Dresden, notably the curator Sylvia Dolz to establish if there were any further archives concerning Blad. None were found. However we could establish that Dresden had purchased five other plaques through the British Museum, all of which involved a Mr. Blad.

The list "The Fate of the Benin Plaques" of Read clearly identifies that the plaque in St. Gallen is part of loot officially plundered from Benin City in 1897 by the British Government. Its sale to Dresden was justified in order to off-set costs of the military expedition. It is still uncertain how Mr. Blad was involved, and if indeed, this was Mr. Caspar Andreas Valdemar Blad. It is possible that Caspar Blad was an intermediary, an international broker who was able to coordinate the sale between the British Museum and the museum in Dresden.

The link established to the British Museum allows us to clearly state that this object was looted during the 1897 attack. The additional provenance results also display a series of transactions of looted Benin heritage from the British Museum, via the intermediary Blad to the museum in Dresden, art dealer Speyer, Swiss collector Han Coray, and then via a Swiss bank to the VMZ before finally being sold on to the KMSG in St. Gallen.

30 See Read and Dalton, "Antiquities from the City of Benin and from Other Parts Of West Africa in the British Museum."

4.3 A Sotheby's Sale and a Shipping Company

MRZ RAF 607

18th century, commissioned from the Royal Ivory-sculptors Guild (Igbesanmwan) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; ca. 1900 Arnold Ridyard (?) (collector and engineer Elder Dempster & Co) or George William Neville (?) (agent Elder Dempster & Co); until 1908, William John Davey (?) (manager Elder Dempster & Co.); until 1928, Lydia Davey (?); until 1946, Harold Davey (?); until 1962 Florence Ellen Davey; 1962 Sotheby's London; from 1962, Kenneth John Hewett (dealer, London); until 1993, Ernst Winizki (dealer); 1993, purchased by Museum Rietberg Zürich

The third, and last item to be presented here is an ivory tusk from the Museum Rietberg. This carved tusk would have been incorporated into an altar and placed upon a commemorative head to honor deceased male family members. Burn marks on the object are a good indicator that it is likely to have been present during the looting of Benin City, when a fire spread through the city.

The object was purchased by the museum in 1993 from Ernst Winizki, an art collector and photographer based in Zurich. It was purchased for 70'000 CHF, and the invoice clearly notes that the object is part of the loot from Benin City, "Zahn, aus der Zeit, wohl 1897."³¹ Ernst Winizki had purchased the object via Kenneth John Hewett, a London based trader who traded via a small shop on Sydney Street and worked closely with Sotheby's.

Hewett had purchased it when it came up for sale on the 26th November 1962 at Sotheby's.³² It was listed as "a fine Benin Ivory Tusk carved in high relief with Obas, warriors, and also with

various animals, birds and reptiles, including crocodiles, at the base a frieze of typical Benin state swords in relief, 47 in. Particular notice should be taken of an unusual figure of an archer in semi-European dress, with the head twisted on the shoulders." A copy of the sales catalogue provided by Sotheby's showed Hewett's name, along with the price £300 penciled into the margins. The tusk had been put on sale following the death of its owner, a Miss F. E. Davey, but who was this person?

Using census records and probate services we were able to establish that F. E. Davey was Florence Ellen Davey, who died a wealthy spinster in Marylebone, London.³³ As a child she had lived in Liverpool, which again sparked interest, given the connection between the port and the British Navy. Her father was William John Davey (1853 - 1908), who started his career as a timber merchant's clerk, and is then named as a ship owner in the 1891 census. We reached out to John Winrow from the Maritime Archives and asked him if they could help us learn more about him. From him, we learnt that William John Davey was the manager and junior partner of the Elder Dempster shipping company.

The Elder Dempster steam company, (previously known as the African Steam Ship company), worked in close cooperation with British military naval forces, shipping military equipment and men between Liverpool and West Africa. In the case of 1897, a ship from the company, the Bathurst, took contingents of military officers and fifteen tons of essential goods for the Navy to West Africa to direct operations against the Oba. Davey is listed as a shareholder in the British and African Steam Company, but appears to have worked in the shadow of the senior partner, who was later knighted, Sir. Alfred Lewis Jones. Despite having remained Sir. Alfred Jones' right hand man, he died none the less a very wealthy man, leaving behind an estate that today would be estimated at around six million pounds.

Another employee of the shipping firm was

³¹ MRZ, Archiv, S. 0002-0005, Rechnung von Ernst Winizki an Museum Rietberg, 14.4.1993.

³² Tisa Francini 2018 (*The Question of Provenance*): Hewett.

³³ This research was undertaken by the genealogist Christine Cocks.

George William Neville³⁴ – an agent for the shipping firm Elder Dempster & Co, who was based in Bonny and Lagos in Nigeria. Neville had several years previously founded the Bank of British West Africa with Sir Alfred Jones, and in 1897 had accompanied the British expedition to Benin City in a civilian capacity. Neville acquired a significant collection of Benin bronzes, displaying them in his home in Weybridge; this included a bronze cockerel donated to Jesus College and recently returned to Nigeria.³⁵ His collection was exhibited upon his return at the Royal Colonial Institute in June–July 1897. After his death, a large collection of 128 objects of Benin bronzes was sold by the Foster’s auction house on 1st May 1930, in an auction titled, “Highly Important Bronzes, Ivory & Wood Carvings from the Walled City of Benin, West Africa (G. W Neville Collection from Benin Punitive Expedition of 1897).” One, highly likely possibility is that Neville acquired the tusk directly in Benin City and either exchanged, gifted or sold it to his manager, William John Davey back in Liverpool.

However, there is another member of staff at the Elder Dempster steam company who is also of interest. Arnold Ridyard was the chief engineer in the company. Arnold Ridyard was an avid collector, donating almost six and a half thousand objects from the coastal regions of West and Central Africa to Liverpool.³⁶ This included objects from 1897 from Benin City, for example, the 16th century commemorative altar head of the Queen Mother (27.11.99.8) that he donated to the Liverpool museum in 1899. According to the provenance of this object, Ridyard would have acquired it the same year from an unknown intermediary in West Africa.

This leaves us with two quite likely provenances for the ivory tusk at the Rietberg. Our current hypothesis is that the tusk was either acquired directly in Benin City by Neville and then transferred to his manager William Davey, or acquired through an intermediary by Ridyard,

who was not present at the expedition, again before being passed on to Davey. It is of course possible that the tusk was taken to Liverpool by any number of other naval officers transported by Elder Dempster and then passed hands to William John Davey.

When William John Davey died in 1908 he left his estate to his wife, Lydia Davey, who upon her death in 1928 left most of her estate to her son Harold Davey. When he died in 1946, it is likely that the tusk, as part of a much wider inheritance, was then passed from Harold Davey to his sister Florence Ellen Davey. However, none of the wills of the above family members specifically mention the tusk, and it is also possible that the tusk was gifted directly from the father to his daughter. It was only when Florence Ellen Davey died in 1962 that the tusk left the family and entered the art market.

³⁴ For further information on Neville see <https://digitalbenin.org/provenance/838>.

³⁵ Hicks, *The British Museums*.

³⁶ See also Clubb I. 1915-16. cited in Tythacott, “From the ‘fetish’ to the ‘Specimen’: The Ridyard African Collection at the Liverpool Museum 1895-1916.”

5. Open Questions, Further Research and Collaboration

The Swiss Benin Initiative (BIS) adopted a collaborative approach to research the provenance of Benin collection in eight Swiss museums. It has established with certainty that 21 Benin objects in the BIS museums were looted in 1897, and that 33 are likely to have been looted. However, we have also learnt that 27 were definitely not looted, and that 15 are highly to have been looted.

Today with these results in hand, new questions arise. How do we make these provenance research findings accessible? How can museums build shared futures with their colleagues in Nigeria? How should they cultivate ethical relationships with concerned communities?

The BIS will now develop a second stage of the project to focus on dialogue and outreach, as the participating museums seek to create spaces for multiple voices to discuss the provenance and explore the future of the Benin collections.

The first objective is to communicate the provenance findings from the first BIS phase to both the general public and specialist audiences. The participating museums aim to reach out to their audience(s) to inform them as to where the Benin collections come from, how they arrived in Switzerland and the questions this raises today. These, at times complicated trajectories, involve a wide range of actors, and contain moments of uncertainty. This objective

will move beyond the project report, currently the main communication tool of the project outcomes and the project website hosted by the Museum Rietberg. It will seek to inform national debates on contested collections and contribute to international conversations on museum practices. The participating museums will develop a networked series of “satellite” exhibitions to be opened in 2024 that will communicate the provenance of the Benin collections. These exhibitions will address the research process, results and open questions.

The second objective of this BIS phase is to provide context in order to frame our current provenance findings. The project team will develop, in collaboration with Nigerian partners, contextual elements to improve understanding. This will include for example information on the art-market in colonial and post-colonial Nigeria, or the meaning of Benin art in African and global art history or the revival of Benin art in the first half of the 20th century. This contextual information will enable the BIS to better communicate the significance of provenance results and enable the audience to understand the subtleties in the data.

The BIS team will continue to work with research currently being published, or forthcoming to make sure our findings are up to date. For example, since phase one ended, Digital Benin was launched, a platform that will enable new links to be established between Swiss collections and international collections. The second phase aims to monitor the publication of new results, or the digitalization of new archives that have the potential to yield further results for the Swiss collections.

The third objective is to develop new methodologies for museum cooperation in a context of contested collections and problematic provenance. Whilst the first stage of the BIS looked to the past, gathering data and establishing how the objects arrived in Switzerland, this objective focuses on the future. It aims to develop tools and collaborative practices to work with communities of origin and other concerned stakeholders. The objective here is to improve participatory processes and strengthen dialogues with regard to colonial collections. The second stage of the BIS project intends to develop, test and evaluate a range of tools with participating museums. The objective here is that these tools could then be further deployed, and transferred when working in other contested colonial contexts. Another goal here is to foster ownership of the BIS project by Nigerian stakeholders as they partake in shaping the future of the Swiss collections.

Most importantly, there are also very concrete decisions to be made on the future of the collections. These will notably concern objects that have been identified as having been looted, or likely to have been looted in 1897. This political dialogue is a decision-making process that will involve a consortium of actors, both in the museum leadership and in government and, of course, Nigerian partners, notably from the National Commission for Museums and Monuments, and the Palace. A first step in this dialogue is the Benin Forum, to be held on the 2nd February 2023. The event will also symbolically mark the end of phase one of this project. It will include a ceremonial hand-over of the current report with provenance data to our partners in Nigeria. It will bring together the BIS museum directors and curators, along with a Nigerian delegation, including the National Commission for Museums and Monuments, representatives of the Royal Palace of Benin, as well as researchers and members of the bronze guilds, to discuss together the future of the Benin objects currently held in Switzerland.

Annexes

6. Participating Museums

The participating museums include four ethnographic museums (MKB, MEN, MEG, VMZ), of which the VMZ is also a university museum, two historical museums (BHM, MSB), one historical and ethnographic (KMSG), and one art museum (MRZ). They also vary in terms of their ownership and legal status, with three of the museums being owned by a municipality (MEG, MEN, MRZ), two by a canton (MKB, VMZ) and three falling under the ownership of public or private foundations with various stakeholders (BHM, KMSG, MSB). The size of the collections and resources of the museums vary widely, along with the significance and size of their Benin holdings which comprise three to twenty objects. Finally, of the participating museums, six are in the German speaking part of Switzerland and two in the French speaking part (MEG, MEN). There are no participating museums from the Italian speaking part of Switzerland.³⁷

The listings below present the participating museums, their specificities and institutional background along with the relevance of their African collections, again ordered by number of objects.

6.1 Museum der Kulturen Basel (MKB)

Director Anna Schmid
Africa Curator Ursula Regehr
Founded in 1849
21 Benin objects
Belongs to the Canton Basel-Stadt
<https://www.mkb.ch/en/museum/sammlung.html>

The museum was founded in 1893 by an ethnographic association. There are however collections in the museum that pre-date this, and were already being shown from 1849. The collections of the museum were constituted primarily of objects collected by the Basel bourgeoisie during their travels, as well as by prominent traders and missionaries, notably the Basel Mission, a protestant missionary society founded in 1815. Later the museum was led by scholars

³⁷ *The Museo delle Culture in Lugano does not hold any pieces from Benin.*

including Fritz and Paul Sarasin, Felix Speiser and Alfred Bühler. The museum has had several names; from 1944 it was called Museum für Völkerkunde und Schweizerisches Museum für Volkskunde (Museum of Ethnology and Swiss Museum of Folk Culture), and in 1996 was renamed Museum der Kulturen Basel (Museum of Cultures Basel). In 2011, after a major renovation and enlargement, it reopened with new transversal exhibitions. The museum holds roughly 340'000 artefacts and 250'000 historical photographs and is made up of six regional departments. The Africa department houses 35'000 artefacts, which include masks, sculptures, weapons, subsistence objects and jewelry. It focuses mainly on West and Central Africa and is well known for its rich textile collection. It holds 20 Benin objects, and of all of the Swiss museums, it was the first to acquire objects directly after 1897, purchasing ten objects between 1899 and 1901.

6.2 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich (VMZ)

Director Mareile Flitsch
Africa Curator Alexis Malefakis
Founded in 1914
Belongs to the Canton of Zurich
18 Benin objects

The Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich (VMZ) is a university museum, which is somewhat of a rarity in the German speaking world. The collection was founded in 1888 by the Ethnographische Gesellschaft (a private initiative) that merged in 1899 with the Geographische Gesellschaft to form the Geographisch-Ethnographische Gesellschaft Zürich (GEGZ). By the end of the 19th century it had a collection of roughly 500 objects that had been accumulated through the initiative of people with different academic backgrounds who travelled the world and acquired private collections. The collection was donated to the University of Zürich in 1913 and put on display in 1916. Today, like the university, it is owned and managed by the Canton of Zurich (unlike the Rietberg Museum, which is managed by the City of Zurich). The Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich is today a social anthropology science museum. At the interface between the university and the public, the staff are committed to research and practice-saturated teaching, collections conservation, object research and knowledge transmission. Its research focus is on human competences and skills in technical, material and social domains. To a large extent, the African collections at the museum reflect European research and collecting interests in the 19th and 20th century. The collection mostly consists of everyday objects such as household objects, cooking utensils, clothes, tools and weapons, but also objects from various religious, social and political contexts that have often been classified as 'art' in European collections. A large section of the Ethiopia collection was assembled by Alfred Ilg, a Swiss engineer who travelled to Ethiopia in 1879, stayed there for 28 years and became a close confidant of Emperor Menelik II and his minister of foreign affairs.

6.3 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel (MEN)

Directors Yann Laville and Grégoire Mayor

Africa Curator Julien Glauser

Founded in 1904

Belongs to the city of Neuchâtel

18 Benin Objects

<https://mus-e.ne.ch/app/eng1/f?p=135:8>

The first collections of the MEN predate the museum; in 1795 the Swiss mercenary Charles Daniel de Meuron donated his curiosity cabinet to the town of Neuchâtel. After being housed in various locations, the ethnographic collection was transferred to its current setting in 1904, upon the donation of a villa to the city by James Ferdinand de Pury. The museum currently holds 58'000 objects, most of which are in storage and about half of which are African. The ethnographic collections cover many categories of objects, from beads to window frames. Most of all it is a reflection of the travels of the local bourgeoisie, and related to the history of the region, for example travelling missionaries, or the strongest links with the textile and watch industries. The Africa collections at the MEN largely feature Northern and Southern Africa, Angola but also Gabon, Cameroon and Congo. They were also enriched by the ethnographic missions of former directors of the museum, those of Jean Gabus in the Sahel and Théodore Delachaux in Angola.

6.4 Museum Rietberg Zürich (MRZ)

Director Annette Bhagwati

Africa and Oceania Curator and Deputy Head of Curatorship Michaela Oberhofer

Head of Archives and Provenance Research Esther Tisa Francini

Museum of World Art

Founded in 1952

Belongs to the city of Zurich

16 Benin Objects

<https://rietberg.ch/en/collection>

<https://rietberg.ch/en/collection/benin-sammlung>

The Museum Rietberg was founded in 1952 and is Switzerland's only museum for world art. Its founding collection was donated by Eduard von der Heydt, a German banker who was naturalized in Switzerland. His concept of "Ars Una", the idea that there is one universal art form, is still a strong marker of the Rietberg's identity. Many other private donations completed the founding collection, which poses particular challenges in establishing the provenance of the collections, given that objects were often donated with little documentation and had been purchased on the art market. The museum contains 25'000 objects and 45'000 photographs, as well as an extensive library and archive. The museum currently has 2700 African objects, mostly from West and Central Africa, and encompasses more than 600 years of the history of the African continent. About 5% of the objects are from Nigeria. Masks, figures, and items for ceremonial or everyday use made of wood, metal, pottery or textiles reflect the whole range of materials and forms.

6.5 Musée d'ethnographie de Genève (MEG)

Director Carine Ayélé Durand

Curator Floriane Morin

Ethnographic collection founded in 1901

Belongs to the City of Geneva

9 Benin Objects

<https://www.meg.ch/fr/recherche-collections/consulter-collections>

The MEG is a municipal institution of the City of Geneva. It was in 1901, during the reorganisation of Geneva's public collections, that the institution, then called the "Ethnographic Museum", took shape. The ethnographic collections were then separated from the archaeological collections and enriched with those of the Musée de la Société des Missions évangéliques. They were installed in the Villa Plantamour in the Parc Mon Repos, which served as an annex to the municipal museums and which also exhibited paintings. It was not until 1910 that the entire space was devoted to ethnography. Eugène Pittard, professor of physical anthropology at the University of Geneva, became the curator and then the first director. Today, the MEG houses a collection of 74,000 objects, musical instruments and works of art of various kinds and more than 300,000 documents (books, photographs, iconographic documents, sound and musical recordings) relating to some 1,500 cultures spread over five continents. The Africa collection contains more than 16,765 objects, the vast majority of which were brought back to Europe during the period of colonisation, between the beginning of the 19th century and the 1960s. The Protestant missions in Africa are, together with the art market in Paris and Brussels, the major sources of the growth of the MEG's African collections. The anthropologists Hans Himmelheber (1908-2003) and Conradin Perner (born 1943) made a considerable contribution to the development of the collections, as did the MEG curator Claude Savary (1939-2014). Finally, we should mention the Geneva painter Émile Chambon (1905-1993) who donated his personal collection of African and Oceanic art to MEG in 1981.

6.6 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen (KMSG)

Director Peter Fux

Curator of Cultural Anthropology Anja Soldat

Previously Historisches und Völkerkundemuseum St. Gallen (HVM)

Belongs to a foundation made up of the canton, city and local authorities

8 Benin objects

<http://www.online-collection.ch/>

The Kulturmuseum St. Gallen (KMSG), previously known as the Historisches und Völkerkundemuseum St. Gallen (HVM), turned 100 years old in 2021 and is the main museum of cultural history in the eastern part of Switzerland, divided into three departments: a historical, archeological, and ethnographic collection. The ethnographic collection of the museum is primarily due to the boom of the St. Gallen embroidery industry (1865-1914) and the collecting efforts of two associations founded in the 19th century, the "Historischer Verein" (Historical Society) and the "Ostschweizerische Geographisch-Commercielle Gesellschaft" (Eastern Swiss Geographical-Commercial Society). Most of the additions to these collections came from donations and sales by people of the region of eastern Switzerland who traveled abroad. Today, the museum is run as a foundation, which belongs to a mix of stakeholders, the canton, city,

and local authorities. The ethnographic collection represents around 20'000 objects, of which roughly 6000 are of African origin, including from Congo, Nigeria, the Ivory Coast and Cameroun. The museum maintains a particular rapport with Han Coray, the collector of its Benin collections, because, as a child, he grew up in an orphanage in St. Gallen.

6.7 Bernisches Historisches Museum (BHM)

Director Thomas Pauli-Gabi

Curator Samuel Bachmann

Founded in 1893

Belongs to a foundation, made up of the city, canton and local guilds

3 Benin objects

The Bernisches Historisches Museum (BHM) located in the Swiss capital Bern is a museum of cultural history, and is divided into four departments: a historical, numismatic (currency), archaeological and ethnographic collection. In the late 19th century the museum was vying to achieve the status of national museum, (which in 1894 instead was awarded to the Landesmuseum in Zurich). As part of this early strategy they developed an ethnographic collection, and then later focused on a regional scope and the history of the republic of Bern, the canton and city. The ethnographic collections were acquired by people from Bern who travelled the world, bringing back objects to their home towns, this being done in close connection with the first curator Rudolph Zeller, a key figure for the museum collections. The ethnographic collection is the smallest department in the museum, with 65'000 objects, of which 10'000 are of African origin. The African collection is not particularly significant for the museum, and not a single object from the African department is on show in the museum. The founding bodies of the museum are the city, canton, and bourgeoisie guilds of Bern, these three bodies holding equal parts in the governance of the museum.

6.8 Museum Schloss Burgdorf (MSB)

Director Daniel Furter

Curator: the ethnographic museum has no permanent curator

Founded in 1886

Belongs to a foundation

3 Benin objects

There has been a museum in Burgdorf Castle since 1886. At that time, some citizens took the initiative to start up the association of the Knights' Hall in order to preserve this historic hall and make it accessible to the public. In 1959, the association of the Knights' Hall was able to open the dungeon, the entrance tower platform and eight rooms for the public, and gradually a museum was established. In 2001 the Burgdorf Ethnological Museum moved into the castle with its collection founded by Heinrich Schiffmann (1872 - 1904), son of an important family of cheese exporters. Suffering from tuberculosis, he spent a lot of his life travelling all over the world and bought many ethnographic objects that he bequeathed in his will to the gymnasium of his native town, Burgdorf. In the 100 years that followed, the collection continually grew thanks to the tireless commitment of its curators. Today, the ethnographic collection of Burgdorf contains 5,000 objects from the cultures of Asia, Africa, America and Oceania. When the court, the prison and the prefecture left the castle in 2012, other rooms became free. They have been occupied since 2020 by the new museum, a youth hostel and a restaurant.

7. Object Listings

1 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 1033
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Elao
English designation	Commemorative Head of an Oba
Provisional dating	16th/17th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 29 cm D. 21 cm
Institution acquisition date	1899



Current provenances

16th / 17th century century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...] ; until 1899 William D. Webster (London); 1899 purchased by Museum der Kulturen Basel with funds from Elisabeth Sarasin-Sauvain

2 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 1034
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Agba
English designation	Top Panel of a Stool of Judgement
Provisional dating	19th century
Material	Wood, iron nails, fire marks
Dimension/s	W. 31 cm L. 60 cm
Institution acquisition date	1899



Current provenances

19th century produced by the Oba's sword bearers (Emada, sing. Omada) in Benin City; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...] ; 4th December 1899, J. C Stevens Auction Rooms (London) sold for £3.0.0; 1899, William D. Webster (Reg.No.: 9486) (trader, London); 28th December 1899, purchased by Museum der Kulturen Basel with funds from Paul and Fritz Sarasin

3 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 1035
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ikoro
English designation	Arm cuff
Provisional dating	Before 1897
Material	Brass/bronze
Dimension/s	H. 13.5 cm D. 10.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1899



Current provenances

Date unknown, probably produced in Benin City or in surrounding provinces; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; 4th July 1899, sold at J. C Stevens Auction Rooms (London) for £0.0.8; 1899, William D. Webster (Reg.No.: 7588) (dealer, London); 12th December 1899 purchased by Museum der Kulturen Basel with funds from Wilhelm Vischer-Iselin

4 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 1036
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmun Eyen / Ikpin
English designation	Snake Figure
Provisional dating	17th/18th century
Material	Brass, iron nails
Dimension/s	H. 17 cm W. 31 cm L. 43 cm
Institution acquisition date	1899



Current provenances

19th century produced by the Oba's sword bearers (emada, sing. omada) in Benin City; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; 4th July 1899 sold at J. C Stevens Auction Rooms (London) for £3.0.0; 1899, William D. Webster (Reg.No.: 7573) (dealer, London); 28th December 1899, purchased by Museum der Kulturen Basel with funds from Paul and Fritz Sarasin

5 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 1037
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ọkpa / Ọkporhu
English designation	Rooster Figure
Provisional dating	17th/18th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 42 cm W. 19 cm L. 47 cm
Institution acquisition date	1899



Current provenances

17th/18th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; 12th September 1899, J. C Stevens Auction Rooms (London) sold for £16.16.0; 1899; William D. Webster (Reg.No.: 8789) (dealer, London); 9th December 1899 purchased by Museum der Kulturen Basel with funds from Emanuel Passavant-Allemandi

6 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 1038
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Aken'ni Elao
English designation	Carved altar Tusk
Provisional dating	18th century
Material	Ivory, fire marks
Dimension/s	
Institution acquisition date	1899



Current provenances

Unknown date commissioned from the Royal Ivory-sculptors Guild (Igbesamwan) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; (dates unknown), Johann Friederich Gustav Umlauff; 1899 deposited by the Freiwilliger Museumsverein Basel

7 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 1039
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Staff of Office
Provisional dating	17th/18th century
Material	Brass, iron
Dimension/s	L. 39 cm D. 2.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1899



Current provenances

17th/18th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; date unknown - 1899, W. D. Cutter (possibly Eva Cutter?); 11th April 1899 to William D. Webster (dealer, London) (Reg.No.: 6905) for £0.17.0; 31st May 1899, purchased by Museum der Kulturen Basel

8 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 1040
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ẹroro
English designation	Altar Bell
Provisional dating	18th/19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 15.5 cm W. 7 cm
Institution acquisition date	1899



Current provenances

18th/19th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; date unknown - 1899, W. D. Cutter (possibly dealer Eva Cutter?); 11th April 1899 purchased by William D. Webster (dealer) (Reg.No.: 6869) for £0.15.0; 31st May 1899, purchased by Museum der Kulturen Basel

9 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 1041
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ama
English designation	Relief Plaque Showing an Oba Holding a Rattle in his Right Hand
Provisional dating	16th/17th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 9 cm W. 19 cm L. 45.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1899



Current provenances

16th/17th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; date unknown - 1898, Eva Cutter (dealer London); 2nd December 1898; purchased by William D. Webster (dealer, London) (Reg.No.: 6369) for £7; 31st May 1899, purchased by Museum der Kulturen Basel

10 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 1190
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Emwiegbé
English designation	Bronze Pendant in the Form of Miniature Stone Axes
Provisional dating	Before 1901
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	W. 1.7 cm L. 3.3 cm
Institution acquisition date	1901



Current provenances

Date unknown, commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; possibly by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, possibly looted from the Royal Palace during the military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1901 William D. Webster (dealer, London); 1901, purchased by Museum der Kulturen Basel

11 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 1191
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Emwiegbe
English designation	Bronze Pendant in the Form of Miniature Stone Axes
Provisional dating	Before 1901
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	W. 1.5 cm L. 2.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1901



Current provenances

Date unknown, commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; possibly by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, possibly looted from the Royal Palace during the military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1901 William D. Webster (dealer, London); 1901, purchased by Museum der Kulturen Basel

12 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 1935
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu Elao oghe okhaimwen
English designation	Commemorative Head of a Dignitary
Provisional dating	Before 1901
Material	Wood, brass plate, copper sheet
Dimension/s	H. 52 cm D. 20 cm
Institution acquisition date	1904



Current provenances

Date of production unknown, probably produced by the Wood and Ivory Carvers Guild (Igbesamwuan); 1897, probably looted from Benin City during the military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1904 Johann Friederich Gustav Umlauff (dealer, Hamburg), 1904, gifted to Museum der Kulturen Basel by Fritz Sarasin

13 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 2592
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Figure Group
Provisional dating	19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 13.5 cm W. 6 cm L. 11 cm
Institution acquisition date	1907



Current provenances

19th century (?), possibly commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; [...]; 1897, possibly looted from Benin City during the military occupation of Benin; unknown date purchased from a Benin Chief in Lagos by Hans Ernst Barth (1861-1920); 1907, gifted to the Museum der Kulturen Basel by Fritz Sarasin (1859-1942)

14 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 2593
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ẹkpẹn
English designation	Leopard Figure
Provisional dating	16th-19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 16 cm W. 6 cm L. 18.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1907



Current provenances

16th/19th century (?), possibly commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; [...]; 1897, possibly looted from Benin City during the military occupation of Benin; before 1907, purchased from a Benin Chief in Lagos by Hans Ernst Barth (1861-1920); 1907, gifted to the Museum der Kulturen Basel by Fritz Sarasin (1859-1942)

15 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 2594
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ẹkpẹn
English designation	Leopard Figure
Provisional dating	16th-19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 15 cm W. 6.5 cm L. 20 cm
Institution acquisition date	1907



Current provenances

16th/19th century (?), possibly commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; [...]; 1897, possibly looted from Benin City during the military occupation of Benin; before 1907, purchased from a Benin Chief in Lagos by Hans Ernst Barth (1861-1920); 1907, gifted to the Museum der Kulturen Basel by Fritz Sarasin (1859-1942)

16 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 4048
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ẹroro
English designation	Altar Bell
Provisional dating	18th/19th century?
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 12.5 cm W. 6 cm
Institution acquisition date	1948



Current provenances

18th/19th century (?), commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin (?); possibly by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, possibly looted from the Royal Palace during the military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1948 Edgar Beer (trader, Brussels); 1948, purchased by the Museum der Kulturen Basel

17 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 4438
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Orhu Ogh'Ikpakonren
English designation	Carved Altar Tusk
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Ivory
Dimension/s	L. 30.5 cm W. 4 cm
Institution acquisition date	1914



Current provenances

Unknown date, commissioned from the Royal Ivory-sculptors Guild (Igbesamwan) by the Royal Palace of Benin; probably by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, possibly looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1914 Lindenmann (Lörrach); 1914, purchased by the Museum der Kulturen Basel

18 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 6694
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Aken'ni Elao
English designation	Carved Altar Tusk
Provisional dating	18th/19th century
Material	Ivory
Dimension/s	L. 180 cm
Institution acquisition date	1926



Current provenances

18th/19th century (?), commissioned from the Royal Ivory-sculptors Guild (Igbesamwan) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1926, Johann Friedrich Gustav Umlauff (dealer, Hamburg); 1926, deposit of the Freiwilliger Museumsverein Basel at the Museum der Kulturen Basel

19 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 26675
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ikoro
English designation	Armlet
Provisional dating	19th/20th century?
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 13 cm D. 8.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1995



Current provenances

19th/20th century (?), possibly produced in Benin City or surrounding provinces; 1897 possibly looted from Benin City during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; before 1995, Ernst and Annemarie Vischer-Wadler; 1995, bequeathed to the Museum der Kulturen Basel by Ernst and Annemarie Vischer-Wadler

20 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 6311
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Bracelet
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 2 cm W. 6 cm L. 7.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1924



Current provenances

Date of production unknown, possibly produced in Benin City or surrounding provinces; 1897 possibly looted from Benin City during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; unknown date Franz H Rolle, Berlin; until 1924 Leopold Rütimeyer; 1924, gifted to the Museum der Kulturen Basel by Leopold Rütimeyer

21 Museum der Kulturen Basel

Reg No.	III 19522
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Elao
English designation	Representation of a Head
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Brass?
Dimension/s	H. 24 cm D. 9.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1976



Current provenances

Date of production unknown, possibly produced in Benin City or surrounding provinces; [...]; until 1976 Gotthelf Kuhn; 1976, gifted to Museum der Kulturen Basel

22 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	RAF 601
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Elao
English designation	Commemorative Head of Oba Osemwenede
Provisional dating	18th/19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 51.4 cm W. 31.7 cm D. 33.3 cm
Institution acquisition date	1952



Current provenances

Ca. 1850 commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Oba Adolo; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the military occupation of Benin; [...]; 1926-1952: Eduard von der Heydt, (collector, Ascona); 1952, gifted to the Museum Rietberg Zürich

23 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	RAF 602
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ama
English designation	Relief Plaque Showing a War Chief
Provisional dating	16th/17th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 40 cm W. 34 cm D. 8 cm
Institution acquisition date	1952



Current provenances

16th / 17th century, commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...] until 1931 Han Coray (Reg. No.: BP 4) (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich; 1940 -1952 Eduard von der Heydt (collector Ascona) (Reg. No. AF,197); 1952, gifted to the Museum Rietberg Zürich

24 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	RAF 603
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ama
English designation	Relief Plaque of a Naked Boy
Provisional dating	16th/17th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 37.5 cm W. 18 cm D. 5.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1952



Current provenances

16th/17th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...] ; ca. 1925-1931, Paul Eluard (artist, Paris); 1931, Hôtel Drouot auction; 1931, Charles Ratton (dealer, Paris); 1932-1952 Eduard von der Heydt (collector, Ascona); 1952, gifted to Museum Rietberg Zürich; 1968, stolen from Museum Rietberg Zürich; [...] ; 1993, acquired by Frank Paulig (Weisbaden); 1993, purchased by Museum Rietberg Zürich with funds from Pierre Uldry

25 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	RAF 604
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Èkue
English designation	Hip Ornament
Provisional dating	18th/19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 17.7 cm W. 12.2 cm D. 5.7 cm
Institution acquisition date	1961

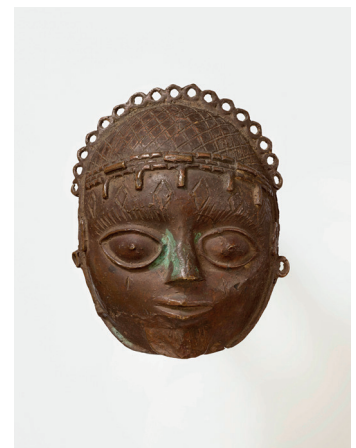


Current provenances

19th century, possibly commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; possibly by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931 Han Coray (Reg.No.: BM8) (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich; 1940 - 1961 Kunstgewerbemuseum Zürich; 1961, transferred to the Museum Rietberg Zürich

26 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	RAF 605
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Èkue
English designation	Hip Ornament
Provisional dating	19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 13.5 cm W. 11.1 cm D. 5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1982



Current provenances

19th century, possibly commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; possibly by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; ca. 1928, Paul Guillaume (collector, dealer, Paris); until 1931 Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo) (Reg.No.: BM10); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich; 1940 - 1982 Kunstgewerbemuseum Zürich (Reg.No.: 11567); 1982, transferred to the Museum Rietberg Zürich

27 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	RAF 606
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Figure Group Showing the Oba (King) and two Dignitaries
Provisional dating	16th/17th century
Material	Ivory
Dimension/s	H. 9.5 cm W. 9.5 cm D. 4.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	January 1991



Current provenances

16th/17th century commissioned from the Royal Ivory-sculptors Guild (Igbesanmwan) by the Royal Palace of Benin; possibly looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1965, unknown Nigerian trader; 1965 purchased by Elisabeth Zink-Niehus (collector) at Globus Department Store (Zürich) from unknown Nigerian trader at the temporary exhibition "Verschenkt die Schweiz Geld"; 1965-1991, Elisabeth Zink-Niehus, Bern; 1991, gifted to Museum Rietberg Zürich

28 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	RAF 607
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Aken'ni Elao
English designation	Carved Elephant Tusk
Provisional dating	18th century
Material	Ivory
Dimension/s	H. 114,7 cm W. 12,5 cm D. 15 cm
Institution acquisition date	March 1993



Current provenances

18th century, commissioned from the Royal Ivory-sculptors Guild (Igbesanmwan) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; ca. 1900 Arnold Ridyard (?) (collector and engineer Elder Dempster & Co) or George William Neville (?) (agent Elder Dempster & Co); until 1908, William John Davey (?) (manager Elder Dempster & Co.); until 1928, Lydia Davey (?); until 1946, Harold Davey (?); until 1962 Florence E. Davey; 1962 Sothebys's London; from 1962, Kenneth John Hewett (dealer, London); until 1993, Ernst Winizki (dealer); 1993, purchased by Museum Rietberg Zürich

29 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	RAF 608
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ikoro
English designation	Armbrace
Provisional dating	18th/19th century
Material	Ivory
Dimension/s	H. 12.3 cm W. 8.3 cm D. 7.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	2001

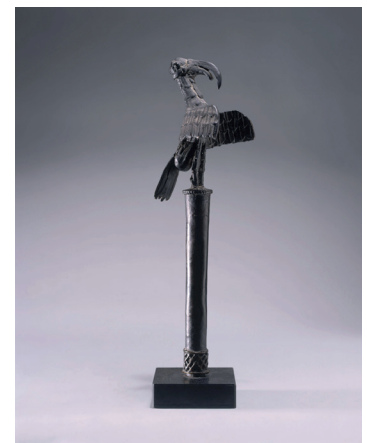


Current provenances

18th/19th century, commissioned from the Royal Ivory-sculptors Guild (Igbesanmwun) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin by Admiral Harry Rawson (1843-1910); 1897 - 1910, Admiral Harry Rawson; 1910 - at least 1919, heirs Rawson (?); [...]; 1928-1979, Hans Coray (collector, Agnuzzo) (Reg. No.: EA 1(?)); 1979-1985, Hans Coray (Zürich) (Reg. No.: HC 40); 1985-2001, Hans W. Kopp, Zumikon; 2011, purchased by the Rietberg Museum Zurich with private funds and with support of the Rietberg Circle

30 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	RAF 609
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ahianmwẹ-Ọrọ
English designation	Bird of Prophecy Staff
Provisional dating	19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 32.5 cm W. 8.3 cm D. 9.6 cm
Institution acquisition date	Nov. 2001



Current provenances

19th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwun) by the Royal Palace of Benin (?); by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897) (?); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; before 1928 - ca. 1974, Hans Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); ca. 1974 - 1985, Hans Coray, (Zürich); 1985-2001, Hans W. Kopp, Zumikon, 2001 purchased by the Museum Rietberg, Zürich

31 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	RAF 621
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Aken'ni Elao
English designation	Fragment of an Altar Tusk
Provisional dating	18th century
Material	Ivory
Dimension/s	H. 21.5 cm W. 15.5 cm D. 17.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1961

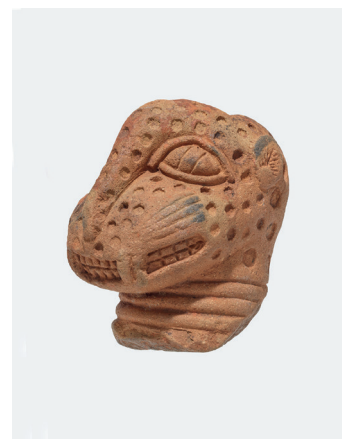


Current provenances

18th century, possibly commissioned from the the Royal Ivory-sculptors Guild (Igbesanmwan) by the Royal Palace of Benin; possibly by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931 Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo) (Reg. No EK 4); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich; 1940 -1961 Kunstgewerbemuseum Zürich; 1961, transferred to the Museum Rietberg Zürich

32 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	RAF 623
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ékpén
English designation	Leopard Head
Provisional dating	18th/19th century
Material	Terracotta
Dimension/s	H. 11.5 cm W. 11.5 cm D. 8.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	May 1962



Current provenances

18th/19th century, probably produced in Benin Court workshop; [...]; before 1936 possibly gifted to Eckart von Sydow by Oba Akenzua II; 1936-1937: Eckart von Sydow (anthropologist); 1937-1952, Eduard von der Heydt (collector, Ascona); 1952 gifted to Museum Rietberg Zürich

33 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	RAF 624
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu Elao
English designation	Commemorative Head
Provisional dating	18th/19th century
Material	Terracotta
Dimension/s	H. 25.9 cm W. 14.7 cm D. 19.8 cm
Institution acquisition date	March 1961



Current provenances

18th/19th century, probably produced in Benin Court workshop; [...]; before 1961: Emil Storrer, Zürich; 1961 purchased by the Museum Rietberg, Zürich

34 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	2006.132
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Egba
English designation	Bracelet
Provisional dating	19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 3 cm W. 12 cm D. 10.7 cm
Institution acquisition date	June 2006



Current provenances

19th century, commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; probably by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1970, Paul and Maria Wyss (dealers, Basel); until 2006, Ulrike and Rolf Schenk (Meilen); 2006, gifted to Museum Rietberg Zurich

35 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	2011.9
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Ẹkue
English designation	Hip Ornament
Provisional dating	17th/18th century
Material	Brass, iron
Dimension/s	H. 21 cm W. 12.8 cm D. 5.2 cm
Institution acquisition date	June 2011



Current provenances

17th/18th century, commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; 1st July 1902 purchased by William D. Webster (dealer, London) at J.C Stevens Auction House (London) for £1.17.0 (reg. no 14356); date unknown, purchased by Hans Meyer (dealer, Leipzig) for £7.10; ca. 1930-1955, Ernst Heinrich, Stuttgart; 1960s-2009, Sybille Zemtis (daughter of Ernst Heinrich), USA; 2009, Leod and Mia van Bussel (dealers, Amsterdam); 2010-2011, Jacques Germain (dealer, Montreal); 2011 purchased by the Museum Rietberg Zurich with funds from Regula Brunner-Vontobel

36 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	2021.423
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu Elao Oghe Iy'oba
English designation	Commemorative Head Queen Mother
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 41 cm W. 15 cm D. 20.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	2021

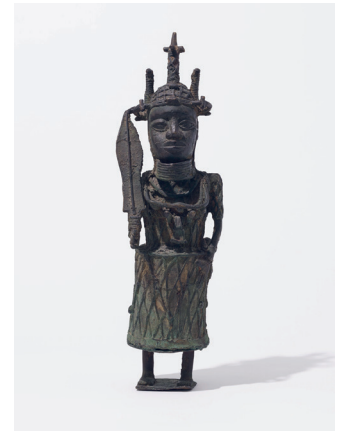


Current provenances

Produced in the 20th century, possibly in Benin City, artist unknown; circa 1966/70, acquired by Fritz Real, in Lagos; until 2019, held by Anna Maria Züllig; 2021 donated by the heirs of Fritz Real to the Museum Rietberg Zurich

37 Museum Rietberg Zürich

Reg No.	2022.3
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Figure
Provisional dating	20th century
Material	Copper alloy
Dimension/s	H. 55.5 cm W. 16.5 cm D. 17 cm
Institution acquisition date	2022



Current provenances

Produced in the 20th century, possibly in Benin City, artist unknown; until circa. 2000, Dr. August R Lindt (Swiss ambassador) ; 2000, donated to Museum Rietberg; 2022, enters Museum Rietberg inventory

38 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	52.1.1
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ama
English designation	Relief Cast Brass Plaque Showing a Portuguese Soldier
Provisional dating	16th / 17th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 41 cm W. 29 cm
Institution acquisition date	September 1952



Current provenances

16th century century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1898 Heinrich Bey & Co (trading company, Hamburg); 1898, Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin (Reg.No.: IIC 8356); 1923, Arthur Speyer II; before 1933 probably acquired by Hans Lachmann Mosse; 1933; probably forced transfer of ownership to the Rudolf Mosse Stiftung GmbH; 1934, probably sold at the Lepke Auction House in Berlin to Friedrich Wolff-Knize for 210 Reichsmark; 1941, probably confiscated by the Gestapo in Vienna; 1941, probably acquired by the Völkerkunde Museum in Vienna; 1947, probably restituted to Friedrich Wolff-Knize (Paris); 1949, probably inherited by Annie Wolff-Knize; after 1949, acquisition by the Musée d'ethnographie de Neuchâtel; 1952, added to inventory

39 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.1
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ekpen
English designation	Head Figure Representing an Anthropomorphic Leopard
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 19.4 cm W.16.7 cm D. 16.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as a 15th century piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

40 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.2
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu Elao
English designation	Commemorative Head
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 24.5 cm W.13.3 cm D. 12.2 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as a 14th century Ife piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

41 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.3
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu Elao
English designation	Commemorative Head
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 37.3 cm W. 23 cm D. 14.4 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as a 15th century piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

42 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.4
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ahianmwe-Oro
English designation	Bird of Prophecy Staff
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 28.1 cm W. 15.9 cm D. 14.4 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as an 18th century piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

43 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.5
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Ekue
English designation	Head Figure
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 22.7 cm W. 14 cm D. 7.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as a 15th century piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

44 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.6
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Erero
English designation	Bell
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 11.5 cm W. 6 cm D. 6 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as a 16th century piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

45 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.7
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu Elao Oḡhe Iy'oba
English designation	Commemorative Head Queen Mother
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 36.5 cm W. 17.8 cm D. 15 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as a 17th century piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

46 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.8
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Head Figure
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 36.5 cm W. 17.8 cm D. 15 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as a 14th century Ife piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

47 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.9
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Figure Group Representing the Oba Cutting a Slave's Head Off
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 44 cm W. 38.6 cm D. 18 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963

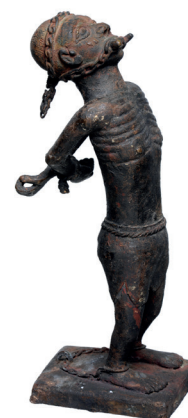


Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as a 16th century piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

48 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.10
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Statue Representing a Slave
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 29.9 cm W. 12.8 cm D. 8.8 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as a 15th century piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

49 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.11
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Oba Arouarhan Holding his Hereditary Enemy "Benin the Giant" with his Hands Bound
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 34.5 cm W. 10.7 cm D. 9.8 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as a 1300 piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

50 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.12.a-b
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Oba Figures
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 25.6 cm W. 8.2 cm D. 9.7 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as a 16th century piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

51 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.13
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Statue of an Oba Sitting on a Chair
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 25.5 cm W. 13.6 cm D. 10.2 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as a 16th century piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

52 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.14
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ama
English designation	Relief Plaque Showing Four People
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 17.4 cm W. 13.6 cm D. 5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, purchased by Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

53 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.15
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Statue of Beni Akazouawa II
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 32.9 cm W. 17.5 cm D. 14.8 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, produced by the Chief Inneh of the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...]; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, purchased by Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

54 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.16
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Elao
English designation	Bust of Ewuare the Great
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 34.2 cm W. 18.8 cm D. 14.8 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...]; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as 18th century piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

55 Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

Reg No.	63.16.17
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Statue of an Oba Sitting on a Chair
Provisional dating	Mid-20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 34.9 cm W. 18.8 cm D. 14.8 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

Mid 20th century, probably produced by the Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) or "Benin Art Society" in Benin City; [...] ; until 1963, Peter Rufus Osunde (artist, art professor, trade-unionist) Benin City & Lagos; 1963, sold as a 16th century piece to Jean Gabus (dir. MEN) in Benin City for the Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel

56 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10001
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Elao
English designation	Commemorative Head with Winged Helmet
Provisional dating	Before 1914
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 52 cm
Institution acquisition date	1940



Current provenances

Date unknown commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; until 1914, Johann Friederich Gustav Umlauff (Hamburg) (?); [...] ; until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, purchased by Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

57 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10002
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu Elao Oḡhe Iy'oba
English designation	Commemorative Queen Mother Head
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 48 cm
Institution acquisition date	1940



Current provenances

Date unknown commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; by 1913, Brummer Gallery (Paris); February 1913, probably purchased by Alphonse Kann (collector); after 1924 and until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, purchased by Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

58 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10003
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Elao
English designation	Bronze Head
Provisional dating	19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 16.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1940



Current provenances

19th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin (?); by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897) (?); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin (?); [...]; until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, purchased by Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

59 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10004
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ama
English designation	Relief Plate
Provisional dating	16th/17th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	Not verified



□ ■ ■ ■ ■

Institution acquisition date 1941

Current provenances

16th/17th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...] until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1941, purchased by Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

60 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10005
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ama
English designation	Relief Plate
Provisional dating	16th/17th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	Not verified



□ ■ ■ ■ ■

Institution acquisition date 1941

Current provenances

16th/17th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...] until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1941, purchased by Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

61 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10006
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Pendant Plaque
Provisional dating	17th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 14 cm
Institution acquisition date	1941



Current provenances

17th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1941, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

62 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10007
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Figure of a Horse Rider
Provisional dating	16th/17th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 59.9 cm W. 18.5 cm L. 37.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1941



Current provenances

16th/17th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1941, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

63 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10008
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ahianmwẹ-Ọrọ
English designation	Fragment of an Altar Tableau
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 20 cm



Institution acquisition date 1941

Current provenances

Unknown date commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1941, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

64 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10009
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Ẹkue
English designation	Pendant Mask
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 17 cm



Institution acquisition date 1941

Current provenances

Unknown date commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1941, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

65 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10010
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ahianmwẹ-Ọrọ
English designation	Bird of Prophecy Staff
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	L. 30 cm
Institution acquisition date	1941



Current provenances

Unknown date commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1941, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

66 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10011
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ero
English designation	Bell
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Ivory
Dimension/s	H. 86 cm
Institution acquisition date	1941



Current provenances

Unknown date commissioned from the Royal Ivory-sculptors Guild (Igbesamwan) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1941, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

67 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10013
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Aken'ni Elao
English designation	Carved Altar Tusk
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Ivory
Dimension/s	H. 86 cm
Institution acquisition date	1941



Current provenances

Unknown date commissioned from the Royal Ivory-sculptors Guild (Igbesanmwan) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1941, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

68 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10014
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Akohen/Okò
English designation	Side-blown Horn / Flute
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Ivory
Dimension/s	L. 32 cm
Institution acquisition date	1941



Current provenances

Unknown date commissioned from the Royal Ivory-sculptors Guild (Igbesanmwan) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1941, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

69 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10340
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Egba
English designation	Bangle with Clamps
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	D. 11 cm
Institution acquisition date	1941



Current provenances

Possibly produced in Benin City or surrounding provinces;[...]; until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1941, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

70 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	10341
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Staff of Office Featuring Birds
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	L. 53 cm (broken)
Institution acquisition date	1941



Current provenances

Unknown date commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1941, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

71 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	13169
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ẹbẹn
English designation	Sword
Provisional dating	20th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	Not verified
Institution acquisition date	1969



Current provenances

20th century, possibly produced in Benin City or surrounding provinces; before 1969, Gallery Menist, Amsterdam; 1969 purchased by the Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

72 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	08886
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Egba
English designation	Armring
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	Not verified
Institution acquisition date	Unknown



Current provenances

Unknown date of production, possibly in Benin City or surrounding provinces; [...]; unknown date, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

73 Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

Reg No.	13158
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Asa
English designation	Shield
Provisional dating	Unknown
Material	Vegetal
Dimension/s	Not verified
Institution acquisition date	1969



Current provenances

Unknown date, possibly produced in Benin City; before 1969 Lemaire Gallery (Amsterdam); 1969 purchased by the Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich

74 Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

Reg No.	MEG ETHAF 020501
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Èkuẹ
English designation	Hip Ornament
Provisional dating	19th century?
Material	Brass, copper
Dimension/s	H. 17.5 cm W. 11 cm D. 5 cm
Institution acquisition date	Before 1945



Current provenances

18th/19th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin, [...], 4th July 1899, J.C Stevens Auction House (London) sold for £5.10.00; 1899 - 1902 (?), William D. Webster (1868-1913 dealer, London) Webster N° 1683 & 7610; 3rd June 1902 sold at Stevens Auction House for £7.10.0 (?); date of acquisition by Musée d'ethnographie de Genève unknown

75 Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

Reg No.	MEG ETHAF 021934
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Aken'ni Elao
English designation	Carved Altar Tusk
Provisional dating	18th century
Material	Ivory
Dimension/s	H. 155 cm
Institution acquisition date	1948 / 1949



Current provenances

18th century commissioned from the Royal Ivory-sculptors Guild (Igbesanmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin possibly by Oba Eresonyen ca. 1735; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; 11th August 1898 sold at Stevens Auction House for £2.2.0; 1898 - 1902 (?); William D. Webster (1868-1913 dealer, London) Webster N°5443; 3rd June 1902 sold at Stevens Auction House for £7.10.0 (?); [...]; until 1948 Berkeley Gallery (William Ohly London); 1948 acquired by the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève for 2571.30 Fr

76 Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

Reg No.	MEG ETHAF 022818
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Figure Group
Provisional dating	19th/20th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 25 cm
Institution acquisition date	July 1950



Current provenances

Ca. late 19th / early 20th century, possibly produced by the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) in Benin City, [...]; 1932 Ernst Ascher, Paris; [...] until 1950 Reine Margot Gallery, Paris; 1950 purchased with piece MEG ETHAF 022819 for 125000 -Frs.f by E. Pittard and Mme Lobsiger-Dellenbach for the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

77 Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

Reg No.	MEG ETHMU 022819
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Eroro
English designation	Quadrangular Altar Bell with Head of Portuguese in Low Relief on Front Panel
Provisional dating	20th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 11 cm
Institution acquisition date	July 1950



Current provenances

Ca. late 19th / early 20th century, possibly produced by the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) in Benin City; [...]; collection of Ernst Ascher (1888-c.1953), Paris (?); [...]; until 1950 Reine Margot Gallery, Paris; 1950 purchased with piece MEG ETHAF 022818 by E. Pittard and Mme Lobsiger-Dellenbach for the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

78 Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

Reg No.	MEG ETHAF 023094
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Elao
English designation	Commemorative Head of a Oba
Provisional dating	20th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 33 cm
Institution acquisition date	1951



Current provenances

Early 20th century possibly produced by the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) in Benin City; [...]; before 1951, Berkeley Gallery (William Ohly), London; 1951 purchased by the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

79 Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

Reg No.	MEG ETHMU 027421
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ẹroro
English designation	Quadrangular Altar Bell with Head of Leopard in Low Relief on Front Panel
Provisional dating	18th/19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 22.5 cm W. 12.5 cm D. 13 cm
Institution acquisition date	1958



Current provenances

18th/19th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1958 Baron Maurice de Rothschild; May 1958 acquired by the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève for 485 Frs at auction at Port Gitana, Bellevue, near Geneva

80 Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

Reg No.	MEG ETHAF 022867
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ọkpá / Ọkporhu
English designation	Rooster Figure
Provisional dating	20th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 35 cm W. 38 cm
Institution acquisition date	July 1950



Current provenances

20th century, possibly produced by the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon); [...]; collection Whitaker (identity uncertain), possibly by descent to Thomas Whitaker Clayton (Ireland, 1874-1949) (?); until 1950 Gallery Carrefour (Pierre and Suzanne Vérité), Paris; July 1950 purchased by the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

81 Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

Reg No.	MEG ETHAF 031761
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu Elao
English designation	Commemorative Head of a Chief
Provisional dating	19th century
Material	Wood, sheet brass
Dimension/s	H. 56 cm W. 28 cm D. 25 cm
Institution acquisition date	1963



Current provenances

19th century, possibly produced in Benin City; [...]; until 1963 S. Podgorska (antiques dealer, Genva); 26 February 1963, purchased by Laurent Rehfoos for the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève for 1400 Frs

82 Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

Reg No.	MEG ETHAF 032616
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ama
English designation	Relief Plaque Showing Soldiers
Provisional dating	20th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	W. 39.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1965



Current provenances

20th century, possibly produced by the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon); [...]; date unknown, acquired by G. Berthoud (curator) in Lagos; 1965 acquired by the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

83 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

Reg No.	VK C 3173
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ama
English designation	Relief Plaque with a War Chief
Provisional dating	16th / 17th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 46 cm W. 38 cm D. 7 cm
Institution acquisition date	December 1940



Current provenances

16th/17th century, commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; 1897-1898 British Foreign Office (Plaque No. 191); 1898, dealer Casper Andreas Valdemar Blad (?); 1898-1928, Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden (Reg.No.: 16058); 1928 Arthur Speyer II Berlin; until 1931 Han Coray (Reg.No.: BP 3); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich; since 1940 Historisches und Völkerkundemuseum St. Gallen

84 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

Reg No.	VK C 3172
Category	Looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Elao
English designation	Queen's Head
Provisional dating	End of 18th/beginning of 19th century
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 52 cm W. 27 cm D. 28 cm
Institution acquisition date	December 1940



Current provenances

Late 18th/ early 19th century, commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; 1898, Consul Eduard Schmidt; 1898-1922: Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde Berlin (Reg.No.: III C 8188); from 1922, Firm Ludwig Glenk; [...]; until 1931 Han Coray (Reg.No.: BK 02) (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich; since 1940 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

85 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

Reg No.	VK C 3170
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Staff of Office with Crowning in the Shape of a Warrior
Provisional dating	19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 59 cm W. 3 cm D. 1.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	December 1940



Current provenances

19th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931 Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich; since 1940 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

86 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

Reg No.	VK C 3169
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Egba
English designation	Bracelet
Provisional dating	18th/19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 12 cm W. 12 cm D. 1 cm
Institution acquisition date	December 1940



Current provenances

18th/19th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931, Han Coray (collector, Agnuzzo); 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich; since 1940 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

87 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

Reg No.	VK C 3168
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Erero
English designation	Altar Bell
Provisional dating	18th/19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 18.5 cm W. 10 cm D. 9 cm
Institution acquisition date	December 1940



Current provenances

18th/19th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931, Han Coray; 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich; since 1940 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

88 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

Reg No.	VK C 3167
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ahianmwe-Oro
English designation	Bird of Prophecy Staff
Provisional dating	19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 30 cm W. 11 cm D. 9 cm
Institution acquisition date	December 1940



Current provenances

19th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931, Han Coray; 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich; since 1940 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

89 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

Reg No.	VK C 3166
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Ekue
English designation	Hip Ornament
Provisional dating	19th century
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 13.5 cm W. 11 cm D. 3 cm
Institution acquisition date	December 1940



Current provenances

19th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931, Han Coray; 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich; since 1940 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

90 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

Reg No.	VK C 3165
Category	Likely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Standing Figure, Courtier with Bell and Bat
Provisional dating	18th/19th century?
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 18.5 cm W. 7.3 cm D. 4 cm
Institution acquisition date	December 1940



Current provenances

18th/19th century commissioned from the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; by descent to Oba Ovonramwen (Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, b. about 1857 - d. about 1914; r. 1888 - 1897); 1897, probably looted from the Royal Palace during the British military occupation of Benin; [...]; until 1931, Han Coray; 1931-1940, Schweizerische Volksbank; 1940, Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich; since 1940 Kulturmuseum St. Gallen

91 Bernisches Historisches Museum

Reg No.	E/1903.326.0004
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Figure Group
Provisional dating	Before 1903
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 24.5 cm W. 20.0 cm D. 14.0 cm
Institution acquisition date	1903



Current provenances

Dates unknown, possibly produced by the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) in Benin City; [...]; dates unknown, F. W Reichert (collector); date unknown - ca. 1903, Völkerkundemuseum Hamburg; 1903 acquired by Bernisches Historisches Museum with funds from Prof. M. M. Stein, Prof. Sidler, Ryf and Baur

92 Bernisches Historisches Museum

Reg No.	E/1903.326.0005
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ẹroro
English designation	Altar Bell
Provisional dating	Before 1903
Material	Brass
Dimension/s	H. 11.5 cm W. 6.5 cm D. 6.5 cm
Institution acquisition date	1903



Current provenances

Dates unknown, possibly produced by the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; [...]; dates unknown, F. W Reichert (collector); date unknown - ca. 1903, Völkerkundemuseum Hamburg; 1903 acquired by Bernisches Historisches Museum with funds from Prof. M. M. Stein, Prof. Sidler, Ryf and Baur

93 Bernisches Historisches Museum

Reg No.	E/1995.325.0389
Category	Unlikely to have been looted in 1897
Edo designation	Uhunmwu-Ẹkue
English designation	Pendant Mask
Provisional dating	Before 1954
Material	Brass / bronze
Dimension/s	H. 18.0 cm W. 11.0 cm D. 7.0 cm
Institution acquisition date	1995



Current provenances

Dates unknown, possibly produced by the Royal Bronze-casting Guild (Igun Eronmwon) by the Royal Palace of Benin; [...] ; ca. 1949-1954 purchased by Ernst F. Rohrer; 1954-1995: community of heirs of Ernst F. Rohrer; 1995 gifted to Bernisches Historisches Museum by the community of heirs of Ernst F. Rohrer

94 Museum Schloss Burgdorf - Ethnologische Sammlung

Reg No.	14009
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Ama
English designation	Relief Plaque, Showing Three Figures
Provisional dating	Before 1976
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	H. 28 cm W. 38 cm
Institution acquisition date	December 1976



Current provenances

Date of production unknown, possibly produced in Benin City or surrounding provinces; [...] ; until 1976: Erwin Stiefel

95 Museum Schloss Burgdorf - Ethnologische Sammlung

Reg No.	10100
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	
English designation	Standing Figure
Provisional dating	Before 1989
Material	Metal alloy
Dimension/s	Not verified



Institution acquisition date 1989

Current provenances

Date of production unknown, possibly produced in Benin City or surrounding provinces; [...]; before 1989, René Gardi, Bern; 1989, Gifted to Museum Schloss Burgdorf by Max Vogt-Hofer

96 Museum Schloss Burgdorf - Ethnologische Sammlung

Reg No.	84/23b
Category	Not looted in 1897
Edo designation	Aken'ni Elao
English designation	Carved Altar Tusk
Provisional dating	Before 1984
Material	Ivory
Dimension/s	Not verified



Institution acquisition date 1984?

Current provenances

Date of production unknown, possibly produced in Benin City or surrounding provinces; possibly acquired in 1984 by the Museum Schloss Burgdorf

8. Bibliography

8.1. Archives

Switzerland

Museum Archives

Across the participating museums we consulted old inventory cards, inventory books, correspondence, annual reports and the current museum databases.

Museum der Kulturen Basel (MKB)
Bernisches Historisches Museum (BHM)
Museum Schloss Burgdorf (MSB)
Musée d'ethnographie de Genève (MEG)
Musée d'ethnographie de la Ville de Neuchâtel (MEN)
Kulturmuseum St. Gallen (KMSG)
Museum Rietberg Zürich (MRZ)
Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich (VMZ)

Kunsthhaus Zurich

The archives at the Kunsthhaus Zurich document the exhibition *Kunst von Schwarz-Afrika* in 1970. The show featured 51 works from Benin from Nigeria, museums and private collections. The correspondence provides insight into the networks and actors in connection to Swiss collections at the time.

Files consulted:

Kunst von Schwarz-Afrika 1.11.70 - 10.2.71
Korrespondenz, Leihscheine, Transporte, Quittungen, Versicherungs-Zertifikate
Archiv 10-70.20.50 - Fotoarchiv Walter Drayer WD N0001 - N0005
Archiv 10.70.30.39 - Fotoarchiv Pressebilder FP P0151 - P0153

Stadtarchiv City of Zurich

The Museum Rietberg belongs to the City of Zürich, so a selection of its archives are held in city hall, under the section V.B c.6.4 Präsidialabteilung bis 1995. They include documents from the acquisition committee, files regarding the theft of a plaque in 1968 (RAF 603), and the transfer of Benin collections from the Kunstgewerbemuseum to the Museum Rietberg.

Files consulted

V.B c.64.4.5.7 Ankaufskommission
V.B c.64.4.5.6.4_Diebstahl
V.B c.64.4.5.6.1_Ausscheidung mit dem Kunstgewerbemuseum
V.B c.64_Akten Sonstiges

Private papers of Michel Storrer

Descendant of Emil Storrer

United Kingdom

Liverpool Records Office, Liverpool

Files consulted:

Architectural Drawings & Building Plans 7/40
Elder Dempster Architectural Plans
Record Office, Colonial House, 7/6/40 B

London Metropolitan Archives, London

In the literature (Waterfield & King, 2009) it is suggested that W. D. Webster is thought to have created exhibitions at Earls Court, London. The archives of these exhibitions are held at the London Metropolitan Archives. Whilst the documents provide a good overview of historical objects and "relics" loaned from military men for the shows, there is only one mention of W. D. Webster, who held a stall with relics of Borneo, Benin and China at the Military Exhibition in 1901.

Files consulted:

London Metropolitan Archives, Early Court and Olympia
LMA_4684_01_02_1899_001_Greater Britain Exhibition May - Oct 1899. Official Catalogue
LMA_4684_01_02_1905_001_Naval, Shipping and Fisheries Exhibition May - Oct 1905. Guide and Catalogue.
LMA_4684_01_02_1911_001_Ancient Art Exhibition
LMA_4684_EOG02_11_01_002, Text, "They Had Great Exhibitions"

National Archives, Kew

The archives in Kew contain the official military records of 1897 from the British Army. This includes archives from the records of the Admiralty (ADM) and from the Foreign Office (FO). There is information regarding the actions of Heinrich Bey & Company, as well as specific information on the actions of Rawson. There is also specific information concerning the donation of a tusk and head from the collections of Rawson to the British Museum, following the expedition (FO 2/121). However there is no listing of loot seized by the soldiers during the attack.

Files consulted:

ADM 1/27823 : Ivory tusk from Benin City: presentation to British Museum. Includes 2 photographs depicting: Benin City Trophy: large carved ivory tusk and bronze head collected by Rear Admiral H Rawson during the punitive expedition to Benin City in 1897. Dated [1961].
ADM 123/127 : Punitive Expeditions in Gambia, Benin and Sierra Leone, etc.
ADM 123/128: Punitive Expeditions in British East Africa, Zanzibar and Benin City.
ADM 116/87: Benin massacre.
FO 83/1610 : Miscellaneous. Africa. Volume 5
FO 2/121: Niger Coast. Commissioners and Consuls General. Mr. Moor, Capt.

Gallwey. West Coast. Despatches, 1-50. Vol. 1.
FO 881/7754X: AFRICA: Report. Enquiry into Outrage committed on Brass People by Royal Niger Company. (Sir J. Kirk). Bound: Africa 31.
FO 2/102: Niger Coast. Commissioners and Consuls General. Mr. Moor, Capt. Gallway, Mr. Phillips. West Coast. Despatches, 83-119. Vol. 3.

The British Museum, London

A first source of information at the British Museum was its online listings of Benin collections and their provenance. In addition to this, the museum holds the annotated photo album of William D. Webster, which features several objects from the BIS collections. Also of interest is the document "The Fate of the Plaques", which documents the sale of Bronze plaques by the British Museum in 1899 on behalf of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The British Museum library also contains a series of catalogues of early Benin sales.

Documents consulted:

The Fate of the Plaques
Annotated photo album of William D. Webster
Hales, Fosters & J.C Stevens Catalogues

The Whitaker Museum + Art Gallery, Rossendale

The Bronze Cockerel MEG ETHAF 022867 is listed as "Whitaker Collection." This led us to consult the archives of the Whitaker museum, which opened in 1902 in Rossendale. It was deemed unlikely that there was any connection with the BIS object.

Files consulted:

Museum paper records
Museum database
Records of transfers from 1950s

France

Archives de la Ville de Paris

These archives hold the notes of the auctioneers working at the Paris auction house Drouot, along with their notes from each sale.

Documents consulted:

D5. E3/92_ 1931.03.17_
D5. E3/93 - Bellier_1931.05.07_
D5. E3/93 Bellier_1931.07.2&3_
D5. E3/95 Bellier_1932.01.11&12_D149E3_0007

Link: <https://archives.paris.fr/a/248/commissaires-priseurs-parisiens/>

Archives de la collection Walter-Guillaume, Paris

The Walter-Guillaume archives are held at the Bibliothèque de l'Orangerie and document the activities of the art dealer Paul Guillaume, one of whose clients, Han Coray, collected 30 of the Benin objects in the BIS collections.

Documents consulted:

Archives Paul Guillaume D.0125 D.0273
Press Book Paul Guillaume 1929-1938
Archives Paul Guillaume F2

Link: <https://rb.gy/ocmd20>

Archives of the Musée d'ethnographie du Trocadéro, Paris

The archives of the Musée d'ethnographie du Trocadéro were transferred to the Bibliothèque du Musée d'Histoire Naturelle. They include the archives of the exhibition of Benin objects at the Trocadéro in 1932, and correspondence with various collectors and traders who are also connected to objects within the BIS collections.

Documents consulted:

FR_751059807_MNHN_Archives_2AM1 : Trocadéro Archives

2 AM 1 B4 _Revue de Presse

2 AM 1 C1b_15 Juin 1932 _ Bronzes et Ivoires du Royaume du Benin

2 AM 1 K46a_Correspondance Paul Guillaume

2 AM 1 K48_Correspondance Edward von der Heydt

2 AM 1 K81d_Correspondance Ratton

2AM 1 K48_Correspondance Ascher

Link: <https://francearchives.fr/findingaid/1ba1bd566657117c3a17468a52db36212e1ca97c>

Fond Louis Carré, Paris

Louis Carré, a gallery owner in Paris, was involved in the trade of Benin artwork in the 1930s. His archives provide a rich overview of the context of these exchanges. Although he is not listed in the BIS provenance, it is highly likely that he was involved in the circulation of BIS objects in Paris.

Documents Consulted:

QUAIBR75_00000208: Archives Privées: Fond Louis Carré

Including:

Arts Primitifs Ventes 1931-1932_1305

Documentation Diverse _DA001298

Documentation sur l'art et la culture du royaume du Benin DA001294

Eckart Von Sydow. Manuscrits et archives_DA001306

Exposition Art of Benin aux US 1935-1938 DA001295

Expositions _d'Art Primitif_ DA001308

Photographies d'Objets_DA001299

Photos Exposition Benin

Link: shorturl.at/aMNX9

Ireland

National Museum of Ireland, Dublin

Holds correspondence with Mrs. T. Whitaker, donator of Benin objects to the National Museum of Ireland, could correspond to the "Whitaker" collection named as provenance for the object MEG ETHAF 022867

Files consulted:

Correspondence with donator, Mrs. T. Whitaker Clayton

Germany

Bundesarchiv

RAF 623 was acquired by Eckart von Sydow in 1936 during a research trip to Benin City. These files document his research trip during that period.

Files consulted:

Federal Archives, Foreign Affairs, Colonial and Occupation Administration
R 1001 Imperial Colonial Office
R_1001_3327_0001: Forschungsreise Eckart von Sydow 1936-1939

Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museum zu Berlin

Two objects in the BIS collections were previously held at the Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin: VK C 3172 and 52.1.1 documents were consulted regarding their entry and resale.

Documents consulted:
E 1151/1898 – Erwerbung (Heinrich Bey)
E 1304/1923 – Abgabe (Hentze/Speyer)
HK_Afr_5_III_C_8356

Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden

One object in the BIS collections were previously held at the Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden, bronze plaque VK C 3173. The archives were consulted in order to shed light on the role of a trader named Blad involved in the sale of the object from the British Museum to Dresden.

Documents consulted:
Receipts and entry books for plaque Reg. No.: 16058
Currently held in St. Gallen (VK C 3173)

Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum Köln

RAF 623 was acquired by Eckart von Sydow in 1936 during a research trip to Benin City. These files document the wider collection acquired by von Sydow during that trip, and gifted to the museum by von der Heydt.

Files consulted:
1949/5 Benin Sammlung E. Von Sydow (Geschenk Eduard von der Heydt)

Private papers of Ernst Heinrich, collector 1896 -1972 Cannstatt

The object 2001.9 was in the ownership of the Heinrich family from ca. 1930 to 2009.

United States of America

The Morgen Library, New York

Pierre Matisse Gallery Archives
Accession number: MA 5020

Files consulted:

Subseries: Ascher, Ernest (Paris) 111.211931-1946

94.52-60 Ratton (Paris), 1932-1934

99.11 Oceanic art exhibition, 1934 October 29-November 17 and America, Oceania, Africa (1936 April 20-May 9), 1934-1937

The MET, New York

The Cloisters Archives, Collection No 31

The Brummer Gallery Records

Files consulted: Album of mounted photographs of African, Egyptian, Asian Sculpture

National Archives

Records of US Occupation Headquarters World War 2 1923-1972

Files Consulted: PC/V/I/97 Frederick Knize

Local identifier: NAID: 74298013

New Zealand

Aotearoa New Zealand

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Washington

The stock books and correspondence of the trader William D. Webster are held here. They feature additional information on ten of the "Webster" items held in the BIS collections, notably where Webster purchased them.

Correspondence and stock books

MA_DOC002035_TePapa_Webster-Collection-Outward_full

MA_DOC002040_TePapa_Webster-Collection-Outward_full

Webster stockbook - CA000229-001-0001

Webster stockbook - CA000229-002-0001

Link: <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/agent/34847>

8.2 Bibliography

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8.3 Contact Persons and Experts

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8.4 Databases

African Heritage Documentation & Research Centre

Database of objects, sales, collectors and dealers' biographies, with an exclusive focus on African heritage, established by Guy von Rijn and his son Titus van Rijn.

Link: <http://www.guyvanrijn.com/>

Artkhalde

Database for the ancient art markets of Africa, Asia, Oceania and the Americas. Lists 795 objects from Benin Kingdom.

Link: <https://www.artkhade.com/en/>

Digital Benin

Digital Benin brings together all objects, historical photographs and rich documentation material from collections worldwide to provide a long-requested overview of the royal artefacts from Benin Kingdom looted in the late nineteenth century. The historic Benin objects are an expression of Benin arts, culture and history, and were originally used as

royal representational arts, to depict historical events, to communicate, to worship and perform rituals. It currently lists 70 objects from 7 of the BIS museums.

Link: <https://digitalbenin.org/>

Genealogy Websites

Genealogy websites provide centralized access to historical databases, including census material, army records, birth, marriage and death certificates. In January 2022 the census data for 1921 was released in the UK, providing new opportunities to trace the traders and collectors active in the UK during this period. Often these websites also enable crowd sourcing, with family members uploading documents, family trees and photos. This is of particular use in tracing the descendants of members of the 1897 military expedition.

Link: <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/>

Link: <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/>

German Contact Point for Collections from Colonial Contexts

This database presents an overview of the Benin objects that are held in German museums. The information and the pictures in this database are updated regularly - at the time of writing the database listed 1228 objects held in fifteen museums in Germany. It is possible to search the database by museum, object type, material or provenance (person). There is an overlap with provenance in the BIS collections.

Link: <https://www.cp3c.org/benin-bronzes/>

Institut National de l'Histoire de l'Art

Répertoire des acteurs du marché de l'art en France sous l'Occupation, 1940-1945, RAMA,

<https://agorha.inha.fr/database/76>

The directory, published in German and French from 3 December 2021 (in English in 2022), offers portraits of the men and women who acted on the market (dealers, experts, agents, etc.) and points out the archival sources needed to understand the workings of the market.

Documents consulted:

Profiles of Louis Carré , Charles Ratton , Alphonse Luis Marie Bellier , Frères Bacri

James J. Ross Archive of African Images

The James J. Ross Archive of African Images presents approximately 5000 objects of African art published before 1921.

Link: <http://rossarchive.library.yale.edu/web/site/index.php?globalnav=about>

Mosse Art Research Initiative

In March 2017, the Mosse community of heirs together with the Freie Universität Berlin founded the Mosse Art Research Initiative (MARI). In order to examine and present the complex material, MARI Online Portal is efficiently custom-made for the needs of provenance research and lists 12 Benin objects.

Link: <https://www.mari-portal.de/>

Pitt-Rivers Museum, Oxford

Rethinking Volumes is an online database of the two collections of Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt-Rivers (1827-1900). The first became the founding collection of the Pitt Rivers Museum at the University of Oxford an online database makes it possible to search the pages of the accession catalogues for this collection. His second collection remained in his family's hands and was listed in nine illustrated volumes of a catalogue now part of the collections of Cambridge University Library. This is also accessible online and lists 313 objects from Benin.

Link: http://databases.prm.ox.ac.uk/fmi/webd/rethinking_volumes

The Pitt-Rivers also has an extensive online photographic archive of images taken in 1897 in Benin City, notably from the photographer Reginald Kerr Granville

Link: http://databases.prm.ox.ac.uk/fmi/webd/Photos_PRM

Probate Service

In the United Kingdom it is possible to search probate records and order wills. This service is an important resource for identifying the heirs and estates of those present in 1897 but also of descendants of dealers and collectors of Benin objects in the UK.

Link: <https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/>

(Re)Entanglements Blog

[Re:]Entanglements is the website of a project entitled 'Museum Affordances' funded by the UK's Arts & Humanities Research Council, which is re-engaging with a remarkable ethnographic archive – including objects, photographs, sound recordings, botanical specimens, published work and fieldnotes – assembled by the colonial anthropologist, N. W. Thomas, in Southern Nigeria and Sierra Leone between 1909 and 1915. The project is being led by Paul Basu at SOAS University of London and involves a growing number of partnerships in the UK, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and beyond. These include the many institutions across which this ethnographic archive has been dispersed, including the University of Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, the British Library Sound Archive, the Pitt Rivers Museum, the Royal Anthropological Institute, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and the UK National Archives. It provides numerous insights into objects collected in Benin City.

Link: <https://re-entanglements.net/blog/>

8.5 Specialist Libraries

Kunstabibliothek, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin
Cambridge University Library
Geneva Library Services "Interroge"
Special Collections & Galleries, Leeds University Library Specialist libraries
National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum
Library of the British Museum
Multiple Collections, British Library
Bibliothèque des Arts Décoratifs
Médiathèque du Musée du Quai Branly
Bibliothèque de l'Institut National de l'Histoire de l'Art
Bibliothèque nationale de France
Davidson Library, University Library of California, Santa Barbara
National Gallery of Art, Washington
Museum Rietberg, Library

9. Auction Catalogues

Date	Title of the auction catalogue	Seller	Auction venue	Auctioneer(s)
18/8/1897	<i>Catalogue of a Collection of Carved Ivory Tusks and Metal idol, Bell, & c., (Captured at the Fall of Benin City), And supposed to some thousands of years old, also 5 sets Carved Ivory Elephants and 1 Hippopotamus Skull</i>		10, Fenchurch Avenue, E.C., London	Hale & Son
24/8/1897	<i>A Catalogue of Curiosities from Benin (Captured at the fall of the City) Consisting of Carved ivory Tusks, Bronzes, Plaques, Castings, &c. From Solomon Islands, &c., &c. To which is added Collection of Bird Skins, Cabinet for ditto, Birds Set Up in Glass Cases, Animal Skins, Horns from India, Minerals and Fossils, and other Natural History Specimens</i>		38 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C. London	Mr. J. C. Stevens
/11/1897	<i>Catalogue of Ethnological Specimens, European and Eastern Arms and Armour, Prehistoric and other Curiosities on Sale by W. D. Webster, Oxford House, Bicester, Oxon, England. November 1897, No. 15</i>	W. D. Webster, Oxford House. Bicester. Oxon. England		
6/7/1898	<i>A Catalogue of a Choice and Valuable Collection of Curios from many parts, including some specially fine Bronze Plaques, Tusks, Carvings, and other Native Work from Beniin, also Skulls, War Clubs, Spears, Paddles, Dress, etc., Old Armour, Weapons, China, Relics, Ancient Implements, Jewellery, Coins, Swords, Autographs, Antiquities, Bronzes, etc.; a magnificent Pair of Satsuma Vases, a splendid Single-stone Diamond Ring, and a valuable Sandwich Island Feather Cloak.</i>		38 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C. London	Mr. J. C. Stevens
/1/1898	<i>Catalogue of Ethnological Specimens, European and Eastern Arms and Armour, Prehistoric and other Curiosities on Sale by W. D. Webster, Oxford House, Bicester, Oxon, England. January 1898, No. 16</i>	W. D. Webster, Oxford House. Bicester. Oxon. England		
/6/1898	<i>Illustrated Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens, Prehistoric and other Antiquities, on Sale by W. D. Webster, Oxford House, Bicester, Oxon, Eng. June 1898. No. 17.</i>	W. D. Webster, Oxford House. Bicester. Oxon. England		
11/8/1898	<i>Sales Catalogue</i>			Stevens's Auction Rooms Ltd.

Date	Title of the auction catalogue	Seller	Auction venue	Auctioneer(s)
10/1/1899	<i>Catalogue of a Collection of Old Chinese Enamelled Porcelain, the Property of a Gentleman, Formerly Minister at peking; Also a Collection of Chinese Enamelled, Blue & White Nankin & Whole-Coloured Porcelain, the Property of a Gentleman; Chinese Porcelain, Cloisonné Enamel and Jade, the Property of a Lad; Interesting Relics from Benin City; and Pure Gold Relics, found in the Tombs in Colombia, South America</i>		8 King Street, St. James's Square, London	Christie, Manson & Woods
4/7/1899	<i>Sales Catalogue</i>			Stevens's Auction Rooms Ltd.
4/12/1899	<i>Sales Catalogue</i>			Stevens's Auction Rooms Ltd.
12/9/1899	<i>Sales Catalogue</i>			Stevens's Auction Rooms Ltd.
12/2/1901	<i>A Catalogue of Benin Curios including Armlets, Bells, Birds and Columnar Pedestals, Boxes, Bracelets, Bronze or Brass Figures and Pendants, Bronze or Brass Ju-Jus, Bronze or Brass Supports for Ju-Jus, Ceremonial Irons Swords, Ceremonial Bronze Wands, Daggers, handles, Heas, Household Articles, Iron Ju-Jus, Ivory Carving, Keys, Knives, Masks, Musical Instruments, Ornaments, Paddles, Plaques, Stools, Toilet Articles, Weapons, Wood-Carving, Curios from East, West and Central Africa including Musical Instruments, Weapons and Accoutrements, Articles of Dress, Household Articles, Ornaments and Zoological specimens.</i>		38 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C. London	Stevens
3/6/1902	<i>A Catalogue of Benin Bronzes Cast & Hammered Brass, Wrought Iron, Carved Ivory & Wood. This Collection of Benin Specimens was taken by the British Punitive Expedition under the command of Admiral Rawson in February, 1902–1897</i>		38 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C. London	Mr. J. C. Stevens
1/7/1902	<i>Sales Catalogue</i>			Stevens's Auction Rooms Ltd.
/8/1903	<i>Illustrated Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens. W.O. Oldman. Sale Catalogues. Reprinted 1976. From W. Ol. Oldman, Dealer in Curiosities., Weapons, Coin. Monthly List of Latest Purchases. List No 9.</i>		77, Brixton Hill, London, S.W.	W. O. Oldman
/10/1903	<i>Illustrated Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens. W.O. Oldman. Sale Catalogues. Reprinted 1976. From W. Ol. Oldman, Dealer in Curiosities., Weapons, Coin. Monthly List of Latest Purchases. List No 11.</i>		77, Brixton Hill, London, S.W.	W. O. Oldman

Date	Title of the auction catalogue	Seller	Auction venue	Auctioneer(s)
15/11/1904	<i>A Catalogue of the First Portion of the Ethnographical Collection formed by Mr. W. D. Webster, Probably the finest outside any Museum</i>	W. D. Webster	38 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C. London	Mr. J. C. Stevens
30/11/1904	<i>A Catalogue of the Second Portion of the Ethnographical Collection formed by Mr. W. D. Webster, Probably the finest outside any Museum. Third Day's Sale</i>	W. D. Webster	38 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C. London	Mr. J. C. Stevens
14/12/1904	<i>A Catalogue of Chinese and Japanese Bronzes, Porcelain Lacquer & Cloisonné, Carvings, Metal Ware and Curios from Tibet, benin, New Zealand and all parts</i>		38 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C. London	Mr. J. C. Stevens
14/12/1904	<i>A Catalogue of Chinese and Japanese Bronzes, Porcelain Lacquer & Cloisonné, Carvings, Metal Ware and Curios from Tibet, benin, New Zealand and all parts</i>		38 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C. London	Mr. J. C. Stevens
30/11/1904	<i>A Catalogue of the Second Portion of the Ethnographical Collection formed by Mr. W. D. Webster, Probably the finest outside any Museum. First Day's Sale</i>	W. D. Webster	38 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C. London	Mr. J. C. Stevens
/6/1906	<i>Illustrated Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens. W.O. Oldman. Sale Catalogues. Reprinted 1976. Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens, No. 39.</i>		77, Brixton Hill, London, S.W.	W. O. Oldman
30/11/1909	<i>A Catalogue of African Curios & Trophies Benin bronzes, Ivory Carvings, &c. &c. The Collection of Dr. W. J. Ansorge</i>	Dr. W. J. Ansorge	38 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C. London	Mr. J. C. Stevens
//1911	<i>Catalogues of Ethnographical Specimens from Australia, New Zealand, Hervey Island, Marquisas, New Guinea, New Ireland, Tahiti, Samoa, Tonga, Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, Norfolk Island, Admiralty Islands, and Other Parts of Polynesia; benin City, and Other Parts of Africa, Various Parts of North and South America, the Malay Archipelago, and Other Localities. Illustrated Series with over 100 Collotype Plates, Exhibiting Upwards of 1,200 Specimens.</i>	W. D. Webster, Oxford House. Bicester. Oxon. England		
12/11/1920	<i>Sammlung des verstorbenen Herrn Ludwig Hermann Reiss, Frankfurt a.M. Antiquitäten, Ostasiatische Kunst, Antiken, Keramik, Bronzen, Silberarbeiten, Uhren, Ringe u. Bijouterien, Elfenbein, Miniaturbücher, Möbel u.a.m.</i>	Herr Ludwig Hermann Reiss, Frankfurt a.M.	Bockenheimer Landstr. 8, Palais Oppenheimer, Frankfurt a.M.	Galerie Helbling in Frankfurt a.M.

Date	Title of the auction catalogue	Seller	Auction venue	Auctioneer(s)
9/11/1926	<i>A Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens Including a Rare Collection of Human Skulls, War Trophy Heads and other Specimens, Native bronzes, Brasses, etc., Coins and Precious Stones, also Weapons, Furniture, Silver and Plate, Jewellery, Clocks, Carpets and Rugs, Chinese and other Porcelain, and Curiosities from all parts of the world</i>	<i>Unknown (by Order of Executor - Native Bronzes, Brasses, etc.)</i>	<i>38 King Street, Covent Garden, and 15/16 Floral Street, London, W.C.2</i>	<i>Stevens's Auction Rooms Ltd.</i>
3/1/1928	<i>A Catalogue of Rare Benin Bronzes and ivories, Thibetan Hangings, Teapots, etc., Antique and Modern Furniture, Oil Paintings, Japanese and other Prints. Embroideris, Tiger Skin Rugs, Coins China, etc.</i>	<i>Ralph Locke, Esq. (late Divisional Commissioner of S. Nigeria.)</i>	<i>38 King Street, Covent Garden, and 15/16 Floral Street, London, W.C.2</i>	<i>Stevens's Auction Rooms Ltd.</i>
15/11/1929				<i>Sotheby's & Co</i>
9/11/1929	<i>Belle et importante collection appartenant à un Amateur. Art océanien, masques, fétiches, statuettes et ornements divers. Nouvelle</i>	<i>Un Amateur</i>	<i>Hôtel Drouot</i>	<i>Lair-Dubreuil, Flagel</i>
26/6/1930	<i>A Catalogue of West African, American and Oceanic Wood Carvings and Curios. Also Benin Bronzes.</i>	<i>Several collections</i>	<i>The Galleries, 54, Pall Mall, S.W.1., London</i>	<i>Foster</i>
1/5/1930	<i>A Catalogue of the Highly Important Bronzes, Viroy and Wood Carvings from the Walled City of Benin, West Africa</i>	<i>G. W. Neville, Esq., of Weylea, Weybridge, a member of the Benin Punitive Expedition, who himself removed them after the capture of the City in 1897</i>	<i>The Galleries, 54, Pall Mall, S.W.1., London</i>	<i>Foster</i>
26/6/1930	<i>A Catalogue of Wst African, American and Oceanic Curios. Benin Bronzes and Ivory and Wood Carvings, etc., From Several Collections.</i>	<i>A Gentleman, were on Exhibition at the Brighton Museum (lot 1-61) Rev. E. E. Hill of West Malling (lot 62-79) Admiral Seymour E. Erskine (lot 80-81) An Important and Well- Known Collection (lot 81a- 87)</i>	<i>54 Pall Mall, London, S.W.1.</i>	<i>Foster</i>

Date	Title of the auction catalogue	Seller	Auction venue	Auctioneer(s)
5/12/1930	<i>Arts primitifs : Amérique Précolombienne, poteries Mexicaines, Pierres sculptées, poteries Péruviennes : Afrique, masques et fétis</i>	<i>Unspecified</i>	<i>Hôtel Drouot</i>	<i>Flagel</i>
16/7/1931	<i>Catalogue of Fine Bronzes Ivory and Wood Carvings from the Walled City of Benin, West Africa. The Property of an Officer who was in the Benin Expedition, and from Various Sources Also Chinese Bronzes, Iron Heads and Curios, Consigned from Shanghai.</i>	<i>Member of the Benin Expedition</i>	<i>54 Pall Mall, London, S.W. 1.</i>	<i>Foster</i>
26/11/1931	<i>A Catalogue of Benin Bronzes, Ivory & Wood Carvings, West African, Mexican and Peruvian Curios and Native Weapons. The Property of Capt. Shelford, also part of the collection of Dr. Robert Allman, C.M.G., and from various sources</i>	<i>Capt. Shelford part of the collection of Dr. Robert Allman, C.M.G., and from various sources.</i>	<i>The Galleries, 54, Pall Mall, S.W. 1., London</i>	<i>Foster</i>
7/7/1931	<i>Münz-Auktion</i>			<i>Otto Helbling Nachf.</i>
28/1/1932	<i>A Catalogue of Fine Benin Bronzes and Ivory Carvings and West African Native Wood Carvings and Curios</i>	<i>The Collection of a Naval Officer part of the Collection of the late Dr. Robert Allman various other Collections</i>	<i>The Galleries, 54, Pall Mall, S.W. 1., London</i>	<i>Foster</i>
22/6/1932	<i>Vente de sculptures anciennes d'Afrique, d'Amérique et d'Océanie provenant en majeure partie de deux importantes collections</i>	<i>Unspecified</i>	<i>Hôtel Drouot</i>	<i>Bellier</i>
17/3/1932	<i>Objets d'art : appartenant à Monsieur E. V. Afrique et Océanie. Masques et Fétiches en bois sculpté ou bronze. Amérique, Mex</i>	<i>Divers amateurs</i>	<i>Hôtel Drouot</i>	<i>Flagel</i>
30/5/1934	<i>Kunstsammlung Rudolf Mosse, Berlin</i>	<i>Rudolf Mosse, Berlin</i>	<i>Berlin W 35, Potsdamer Strasse 122 a-b</i>	<i>Rudolph Lepke's Kunst-Auctions-Haus</i>

Date	Title of the auction catalogue	Seller	Auction venue	Auctioneer(s)
27/7/1937	<i>Catalogue of Coins and Medals, Egyptian, Greek and Roman Antiquities, etc. and Collection of Native Art</i>	<i>Harold B. Bompas, Esq. Arthur G. Hemming, Esq. Mrs. G. and Mrs. K. Maconochie (all Collections of Native Art)</i>	<i>34 & 35 New Bond St., London. W.1</i>	<i>Sotheby & Co. G.D. Hobson, M.V.O. F.W. Warre, O.B.E., M.C. C.G. des Graz C.V. Pilkington</i>
1/7/1937	<i>Art n****. Sculptures en bois. Afrique. Océanie. Poteries péruviennes et précolombiennes. Tableaux anciens et modernes. Faiences et Porcelaines anciennes. Argenterie. Métal. Objets variés. Buste en plâtre de Chinard. Etoffes. Meubles et sièges</i>	<i>Unspecified</i>	<i>Hôtel Drouot</i>	<i>Petit (Edmond)</i>
31/5/1938	<i>Kunstwerke aus dem Nachlass Dr. J. von Bleichröder Berlin (Katalog 2123)</i>	<i>Dr. J. von Bleichröder, Berlin</i>	<i>Berlin W 35, Potsdamer Strasse 122 a-b</i>	<i>Rudolph Lepke's Kunst-Auctions-Haus</i>
7/12/1953	<i>Catalogue of Islamic Ceramics, Indian and Oriental Art, Egyptian and Classical Antiquities, also Ethnographical Art Including Highly Important Benin Bronzes and Ivories</i>	<i>R. B. Allman, Esq. (Benin Bronzes and Ivories)</i>	<i>34 & 35 New Bond St., London. W.1</i>	<i>Sotheby's & Co.</i>
8/3/1957	<i>Oriental and European Rugs and Carpets; Textiles and Tapestries; English and Continental Clocks and Fine French and English Furniture. Sale Catalogue</i>		<i>London</i>	<i>Sotheby's and Co.</i>
5/5/1958	<i>China, Japan, Siam, Persien, Griechenland, Afrika, Südsee, Südamerika, Mexiko. Auktion 80</i>		<i>Hamburg 36, Fontenay 4</i>	<i>Dr. Ernst Hauswedell</i>
12/5/1959	<i>Bronze, Keramik, Porzellan, Malerei & Graphik aus China, Japan, Indien, Persien, Mexiko, Peru, Afrika, Südsee. Auktion 87</i>		<i>Hamburg 36, Fontenay 4</i>	<i>Dr. Ernst Hauswedell</i>

Date	Title of the auction catalogue	Seller	Auction venue	Auctioneer(s)
27/6/1960	<i>Catalogue of Important African Sculpture South American & Oceanic Art Including a Fang Carved Wood Figure, a Benin bronze Plaque, a 17th Century Benin Ivory Standing Figure of a Warrior and a Magnificent 16th Century Benin Ivory Pectoral Mask</i>	<i>R. B. Allman, Esq. (formerly in the Collection of the late Dr. R. Allman, C.M.G., Principal Medical Officer, Southern Nigeria, 1891-1905) The Trustees of the British Museum Other Owners</i>	34 & 35 New Bond St., London. W.1	<i>Sotheby's & Co. P. C. Wilson J. C. Butterwick A. R. A. Hobson A. J. B. Kiddell T. H. Clarke F. Rose R. S. Timewell C. Gronau R. J. Rickett</i>
20/11/1961	<i>Catalogue of African Sculpture, Pre-Columbian Gold Ornaments and North-West American Art</i>	<i>A Lady Monsieur Nicolas de Kun Ronald Searle, Esq. Late Captain J. S. Howe, R.E, Others</i>	34 & 35 New Bond St., London. W.1	<i>Sotheby's & Co. P. C. Wilson J. C. Butterwick A. R. A. Hobson A. J. B. Kiddell T. H. Clarke F. Rose R. S. Timewell C. Gronau R. J. Rickett</i>
25/11/1963	<i>Catalogue of African, American, Oceanic and Indian Art</i>	<i>Dr. Reginald le May O. R. Bagot, Esq. Sir James Dodds, K.C.M.G. late Professor P.L. Mercanton other owners</i>	34 & 35 New Bond St., London. W.1	<i>Sotheby's & Co.</i>
20/5/1964				<i>Sotheby's & Co.</i>
20/5/1964	<i>African, Oceanic, Pre-Columbian and Indian Art. Sale Catalogue</i>		London	<i>Sotheby's and Co.</i>
29/3/1965	<i>Catalogue of Important African Sculpture, Pre-Columbian, Oceanic and Indian Art. Sale Catalogue</i>		London	<i>Sotheby's and Co.</i>

Date	Title of the auction catalogue	Seller	Auction venue	Auctioneer(s)
15/11/1965	<i>Important African, Pacific North-West Coast, Oceanic and Indian Sculpture including a group of Gandhara grey schist standing and seated figures of Buddha, two Gandhara grey schist heads of Buddha all 3"-400 A.D., a rare Hawaiian wood figure of a god, a New Ireland ancestor memorial wood plaque, a New Ireland Totok wood carving, four New Ireland wood masks, a large Dogon wood figure, a Benin bronze plaque, two Benin bronze heads, a Benin bronze figure of a boy and an important Benin bronze figure of a rifleman</i>		London	Sotheby's and Co.
28/11/1966	<i>Catalogue of African, Oceanic, Pre-Columbian and American Indian Art also Indian Sculpture and Islamic Pottery. Sale Catalogue</i>		London	Sotheby's and Co.
//1967	<i>West Africa: Court and Tribal Art. Exhibition Catalogue</i>	London, Arts Council of Great Britain	London	
25/6/1968	<i>Catalogue of Important Primitive Art and Nepalese Patas and Indian Sculpture. Sale Catalogue</i>		London	Sotheby's and Co.
25/5/1968	<i>China, Japan, Tibet, Siam, Indien, Amerika, Afrika. Auktion 157</i>		Hamburg 13, Päseldorferweg 1	Dr. Ernst Hauswedell
8/12/1969	<i>Catalogue of African, oceanic, Pre-Columbian and American Indian Art also Indian Sculpture including a Hawaiian Wood 'Stick' God, a Hawaiian Wood Male Figure, an American Indian Wampum Belt, a Benin Bronze Standing Male Figure, a Benin Ivory Carving of a Leopard, four Gandhara Grey Schist Standing Figures of Buddha, all 3rd/4th Century A.D, two Gandhara Grey Schist Figures of Atlas, 3dr/th Century A.D. and a Large Central Indian Sandstone Head of Bhairava, circa 9th Century A.D.</i>		London	Sotheby's and Co.
13/7/1971	<i>Catalogue of Primitive Art and Indian Sculpture. Sale Catalogue</i>		London	Sotheby's and Co.

Date	Title of the auction catalogue	Seller	Auction venue	Auctioneer(s)
11/7/1972	<i>Catalogue of Primitive Art, Tibetan and Nepalese Tankas, Indian, Khmer, Tibetan, and Nepalese Sculpture also Islamic Pottery and Metalwork. Sale Catalogue</i>		London	Sotheby's and Co.
5/12/1972	<i>Catalogue of African, Oceanic, Pacific North-West Coast, American Indian, and Pre-Columbian Art, Tibetan and Nepalese Tankas, Nepalese, Tibetan and Indian Art including a Highly Important Rarotonga Wood Figure of a God, a Fine Benin Bronze Female Head and an Important Fifteenth Century Nepalese Pata</i>		London	Sotheby's and Co.
8/7/1974	<i>Catalogue of African, Oceanic, Eskimo, Pacific North-West Coast, American Indian and Pre-Columbian Art including a Highly Important Benin Bronze Figure of a Flute Player, a Benin Bronze Altar Stand, two Benin Bronze Heads, a Benin Bronze Execution Group, an Afro-Portuguese Ivory Salt Cellar, a Maori Wood 'Presents' Box and a Cree Indian Chief's Regalia</i>		Royal Watercolour Society Galleries, 26 Conduit Street, London, W.1	Sotheby's and Co.
15/7/1975	<i>African, Oceanic, Pre-Columbian, Pacific North-West Coast and American Indian Art including a Benin bronze Head, a Benin bronze Plaque, a Benin bronze Belt Mask, an Hawaiian wood Stick Figure and a Marquesas Islands wood Figure</i>		Royal Watercolour Society Galleries, 26 Conduit Street, London, W.1	Sotheby's and Co.
27/4/1976	<i>Tribal Art from Africa, Melanesia, Polynesia, Asia and the Americas</i>	Sir Cecil Beaton, C.B.E. W.F. Damant, Esq. Miss	8 King Street, St. James's Square, London	Christie, Manson & Woods
14/7/1976	<i>African Art from the James Hooper Collection</i>	James Hooper	8 King Street, St. James's Square, London	Christie, Manson & Woods

Date	Title of the auction catalogue	Seller	Auction venue	Auctioneer(s)
13/7/1976	<i>Egyptian, Middle Eastern, Greek, Etruscan and Roman Antiquities, Islamic Art, Indian, Nepalese, Tibetan and South-East Asian Art, African, Oceanic, American Indian and Pre-Columbian Art including an Achaemenid pale-green glass Bowl circa 5th Century B.C., a Mesopotamian inscribed black stone Figure of a Lion 2nd Millenium B.C., an Assyrian Relief with the Figure of a warrior circa 700 B.C., a Hellenistic marble Head of a Woman circa 3rd Century B.C. and a large Sino-Tibetan silk appliqué Tanka 19th Century A.D.</i>		34 & 35 New Bond St., London. W.1	Sotheby Parke-Bernet and Co.
26/4/1977	<i>Tribal Art and Ethnography from the Americas, Africa and Pacific</i>	<i>Robert Clatworthy, Esq., R.A. Eric Heckett, Esq. The Rev. And Mrs. Joseph Lagergren Miss M. and John Pinder, Esq.</i>	8 King Street, St. James's Square, London	Christie, Manson & Woods
13/7/1977	<i>Tribal Art and Etnography from Asia the Americas, Africa and Pacific</i>	<i>The late Prince S. A. Radziwill Mrs. Marion Topolski Dr. Karl-Ferdinand Schaedler various sources</i>	8 King Street, St. James's Square, London	Christie, Manson & Woods
12/7/1977	<i>American Indian, Pre-Columbian, Oceanic and African Art including a Teotihuacan greenstone Mask, a Mayan pottery Jar, a Bakongo wood maternity Group, a Fang wood Figure, an Ashira-Bapunu white-painted wood Mask and a Benin bronze Plaque with a Portuguese soldier</i>		Royal Watercolour Society Galleries, 26 Conduit Street, London, W.1	Sotheby Parke-Bernet and Co.
13/12/1977	<i>Catalogue of Egyptian, Greek, Etruscan and Roman Antiquities, Islamic Art, African, Oceanic, American Indian and Pre- Columbian Art including an Egyptian green-glazed steatite 'Lion-Hunt' Scarab of Amenophis III Late XXVIth Dynasty, an Egyptian black stone „block“ Statue of a seated male figure XXVIth Dynasty, a Group of Egyptian bronze Cats, all Saite Period, an Egyptian black basalt Head of an Official, Late Period, a Bakongo wood Maternity Group and a Benin bronze male Head, 16th Century A.D.</i>		34 & 35 New Bond St., London. W.1	Sotheby Parke-Bernet and Co.

Date	Title of the auction catalogue	Seller	Auction venue	Auctioneer(s)
13/6/1978	Important Tribal Art	<i>The Lord Strange The late Joseph Mueller J.L.H. Williams, Esq. Capt. E. A. Pereira various sources</i>	8 King Street, St. James's Square, London	Christie, Manson & Woods
25/7/1978	<i>Tribal Art and Ethnography from Asia, the Americas, Africa and the Pacific</i>	Various properties	8 King Street, St. James's Square, London	Christie, Manson & Woods
24/10/1978	<i>Tribal Art. Sale Catalogue</i>		London	Christie's
20/3/1979	<i>Tribal Art from the Collection of the late Josef Mueller of Solothurn, Switzerland and his heirs, Part II</i>	Josef Mueller	London	Christie, Manson & Woods
19/6/1979	Important Tribal Art	<i>The Hon. Sir Clive Bossom, Bt. Count Baudouin de Grunne The Trustees of the Salisbury New Pool Settlement The Countess of Sutherland removed from Dunrobin Castle Museum Various Sources</i>	London	Christie, Manson & Woods
21/6/1979	<i>Catalogue of African, Oceanic and American Indian Works of Art including Two Songo wood Thrones, Three Tchokwe wood Chairs, a Baluba „Master of Buli“ wood Stool supported by a female figure, a Baluba wood Ancestor Figure, a Baule wood Mask from the Collection of Paul Guillaume, a Tiv wood Figure, a Benin Bronze head of an Oba, an Afro-Portuguese ivory Oliphant, a Huon Gulf wood Mask, two Lake Sentani wood Figures, a Sepik River wood Hook Figure, an Eastern Woodlands American Indian wood human- headed Club and wood Mask</i>		34 & 35 New Bond St., London. W.1	Sotheby Parke-Bernet and Co.

Date	Title of the auction catalogue	Seller	Auction venue	Auctioneer(s)
26/11/1979	<i>Catalogue of African, Oceanic and American Indian Works of Art including a North-west coast wood grease bowl, a fine collection of Eskimo ivory figures, two large Dogon sculptues, two Shankadi wood stools, an important Hemba wood stool, two Benin bronze heads, a Songe wood fetish figure, a Senufo wood rhythm-pounder figure and two Hemba wood ancestor figures</i>		34 & 35 New Bond St., London. W.1	Sotheby Parke-Bernet and Co.
16/6/1980	<i>A Catalogue of a Collection of Benin Works of Art</i>	European Private Collector	34 & 35 New Bond St., London. W.1	Sotheby Parke-Bernet and Co.
2/12/1980	<i>Pre-Columbian, American Indian, Oceanic and African Works of Art including a Nootka wood Figure, a Chilkat wool Blanket, a New Hebrides wood Mask, a Fiji wood Figure, a Tahitian wood Bowl, three Fang wood Figures, a Benin bronze Cockerel, an important Dogon wood Equestrian Group and a Chokwe wood Ancestor Chief Figure</i>		34 & 35 New Bond St., London. W.1	Sotheby Parke-Bernet and Co.
3/4/1981	<i>Ashanti Gold and Goldweights, Art and Ethnography from Africa, the Americas and the Pacific</i>	Late H.R.H. Prince William of Gloucester Mr. George Encil various sources	8 King Street, St. James's Square, London	Christie, Manson & Woods
30/11/1981	<i>American Indian, South American, Pre-Columbian, Oceanic and African Works of Art including an American Indian north-east Woodlands ball-headed Club, a Maori Canoe Prow, a Maori Ceremonial Bowl, a group of Maori Tikis, a pair of Marquesas Islands Stilt Steps, a Vili wood Ceremonial Bell, a Kongo ivory Sceptre, a Kota Reliquary Figure, a Songe Fetish Figure and Kifwebe Mask, two Benin bronze Plaques, a Lower Niger Bronze Head and a Lengola wood Ancestor Figure</i>		34 & 35 New Bond St., London. W.1	Sotheby Parke-Bernet and Co.
1/12/1982	<i>Tribal Art</i>		85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 3JS	Christie's South Kensington
1/12/1982	<i>Art and Ethnography from Asia, Africa, the Americas and the Pacific</i>	Bernard Fagg Esq., MBE	8 King Street, St. James's Square, London	Christie, Manson & Woods
8/7/1984	<i>Primitive Art. Sale Catalogue</i>		London	Sotheby's

Date	Title of the auction catalogue	Seller	Auction venue	Auctioneer(s)
//1985	<i>Nigerian Bronzes from the Museum of Mankind on Colour Microfiches</i>	<i>London, British Museum</i>	<i>London</i>	
3/12/1985	<i>Tribal Art</i>		<i>85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 3LD</i>	<i>Christie's South Kensington</i>
23/6/1986	<i>Art and Ethnography from Africa, North America and the Pacific Area</i>		<i>85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 3LD</i>	<i>Christie's South Kensington</i>
23/6/1986	<i>Tribal Art</i>		<i>34 & 35 New Bond St., London. W.1</i>	<i>Sotheby's</i>
29/6/1987	<i>Art and Ethnography from Africa, North America and the Pacific Area</i>		<i>85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 3LD</i>	<i>Christie's South Kensington</i>
30/6/1987	<i>Tribal Art</i>		<i>34 & 35 New Bond St., London. W.1</i>	<i>Sotheby's</i>
28/6/1988	<i>Art and Ethnography from Africa, the Americas and the Pacific Area</i>		<i>85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 3LD</i>	<i>Christie's South Kensington</i>
4/7/1989	<i>Tribal Art. Sale Catalogue</i>		<i>London</i>	<i>Christie's</i>
3/7/1989	<i>Tribal Art including Property from the British Rail Pension Fund and Other Owners</i>	<i>The British Rail Pension Fund Other Owners</i>	<i>Conduit Street Gallery, 26 Conduit Street, London W1</i>	<i>Sotheby's</i>
3/7/1990	<i>Art and Ethnography from Africa, the Pacific and the Americas. Sale Catalogue</i>		<i>London, South Kensington</i>	<i>Christie's</i>
4/12/1990	<i>Tribal Art</i>		<i>London, South Kensington</i>	<i>Christie's</i>
898/99/1900	<i>Illustrated Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens. Catalogue 21</i>	<i>W. D. Webster, Oxford House. Bicester. Oxon. England</i>		

Date	Title of the auction catalogue	Seller	Auction venue	Auctioneer(s)
898/99/1900	<i>Illustrated Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens. Catalogue 24</i>	W. D. Webster, Oxford House. Bicester. Oxon. England		
898/99/1900	<i>Illustrated Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens. Catalogue 27</i>	W. D. Webster, Oxford House. Bicester. Oxon. England		
[1898/99?]	<i>Illustrated Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens. Catalogue 19</i>	W. D. Webster, Oxford House. Bicester. Oxon. England		
[1898?]	<i>Illustrated Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens. Catalogue 18</i>	W. D. Webster, Oxford House. Bicester. Oxon. England		
[1898-1903?]	<i>Illustrated Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens. Catalogue 28</i>	W. D. Webster, Oxford House. Bicester. Oxon. England		
[1898-1903?]	<i>Illustrated Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens. Catalogue 29</i>	W. D. Webster, Oxford House. Bicester. Oxon. England		
[1899?]	<i>Benin Bronzes and Ivories. W.D. Webster Bicester England</i>	W. D. Webster		
[1903-1906?]	<i>Illustrated Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens. W.O. Oldman. Sale Catalogues. Reprinted 1976. Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens, No. 76.</i>		77, Brixton Hill, London, S.W.	W. O. Oldman
[1903-1906?]	<i>Illustrated Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens. W.O. Oldman. Sale Catalogues. Reprinted 1976. Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens, No. 96. Vol. viii.</i>		77, Brixton Hill, London, S.W.	W. O. Oldman
[1903-1906?]	<i>Illustrated Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens. W.O. Oldman. Sale Catalogues. Reprinted 1976. Catalogue of Ethnographical Specimens, No. 107. Vol. ix.</i>		77, Brixton Hill, London, S.W.	W. O. Oldman

10. Research Outputs

10.1 Press Release

26th January, 2021

Link: https://rietberg.ch/en/press/press_releases

10.2 Project Website

Subsections: Videos, Cooperation with Nigeria, Findings from the collection, lectures on the Swiss Benin Initiative, Research Trip to Nigeria in March 2022, Audience with the Oba on 25th March 2022, Benin Forum, Acknowledgements, Contacts, Media Review

Downloads: Full list of BIS collections with current provenance

Languages: German, English, French

URL: <https://rietberg.ch/en/research/the-swiss-benin-initiative>

Communications team: Elena del Carlo, Alain Suter & Lena Zumsteg

10.3 Film Material

In Search of Evidence - The Swiss Benin Initiative

Length: 18:25 mins, Language: English

Filming: Switzerland & Nigeria

A film by Melanie Gärtner, with input from Alice Hertzog and Michaela Oberhofer

Camera: Adeoluwa Owu, Vita Spieß, Johnathan Watts,

Funding: Museum Rietberg Zürich

Link: <https://rietberg.ch/bis#filme>

The BIS video was generously supported by Dr. J. Plattner in memory of his wife Nelly Pajarola Plattner.

Trailer: The Swiss Benin Initiative

Length: 1:45 mins

Filming: Switzerland, Language English

Language: English

Camera: Johnathan Watts, Martina Pans
Editors: Elena del Carlo, Julien Glauser, Alice Hertzog, Floriane Morin,
Michaela Oberhofer, Esther Tisa Francini
Link: <https://rietberg.ch/bis#filme>

10.4 Exhibition

Exhibition: Wege der Kunst: Wie die Objekte ins Museum kommen
(Pathways of Art: How Objects Get to the Museum)
Dates: 17th June 2022 - 25th June 2023
Showcase S: Benin - From Colonial Injustice to Collaborative Provenance
Research. Artworks from the Kingdom of Benin
Curators of the Showcase S: Esther Tisa Francini & Michaela Oberhofer
Link: <https://rietberg.ch/ausstellungen/wege-der-kunst>

10.5 Publications

Museum Publications

Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe, "Aus der Sammlung", Bi-Monthly
Museum Newsletter, Jan-Feb 2022, Museum Rietberg
Link: <https://rietberg.ch/en/press/downloads>

Benin Initiative Schweiz- Forschung und Dialog mit Nigeria, Bi-
Monthly Museum Newsletter, Jan-Feb 2022, Museum Rietberg
Link: <https://rietberg.ch/en/press/downloads>

Alice Hertzog, Michaela Oberhofer, Esther Tisa Francini, Benin Initiative
Schweiz, Annual Report, 2021, Museum Rietberg
Link: <https://rietberg.ch/en/press/downloads>

Exhibition Catalogue

Oberhofer, Michaela and Esther Tisa Francini. "Traces of Colonial
Injustice: Collaborative Provenance Research on Artworks from the
Kingdom of Benin." In Pathways of Art - How Objects Get to the Museum,
edited by Esther Tisa Francini, with Sarah Csernay, Scheidegger und Spiess
AG, 2022. p. 47-66.

Book Review

Hertzog, Alice. "The Brutish Museums. The Benin Bronzes, Colonial
Violence and Cultural Restitution. by Dan Hicks." Culture & Musées,
no. 40 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.4000/culturemusees.8405>.

Book Chapter

Hertzog, Alice and Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe (forthcoming) "Back
and Forth: Collaborative Provenance Research on the Benin Bronzes in
Switzerland" In. Decolonisation and the New Museum Paradigm (working
title) edited by Sam Aylett, Lennon Mhishi and Matthew Jones.
Liverpool University Press: Liverpool.

Paper Series

Hertzog, Alice, and Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe. "The Paperless Archive. Recasting Benin Collections as a Displaced Archive." In *Thinking About the Archive and Provenance Research Working Paper Series 2*, eds. Yagmur Karkis & Carl Deussen, 2022.

Research Proceedings

Hertzog, Alice, and Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe, *L'Initiative Bénin Suiss, Note de Recherche, Cahiers d'Études Africaines, Special Edition, Le Retour de la Restitution, Mobilisations, imaginaires, (ré)appropriations*, edited by Saskia Cousin (CESSMA, University of Paris) Anne Docket (IMAF, IRD) & Alexandra Galitzine-Loumpet (CESSMA)
Link: <https://journals.openedition.org/etudesafricaines/33038>

10.6 External Presentations

27th January, 2021

Online colloquium "Global Provenance"

Conveners: University of Bern, the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève, the Musée d'ethnographie de Neuchâtel, and the Palais de Rumine
Conveners: Clarie Brizon (IKG-UNIBE), Floriane Morin (MEG), Oliver Schinz (MEN), Laura Toscan (MEG)

Speaker: Michaela Oberhofer

Presentation: "The Transnational Benin Initiative: Provenance Research and Cooperation between Nigeria and Switzerland"

Link: <https://youtu.be/Z500wyBs1Is>

15th April, 2021

Seminar: *Parcours d'objets. Études de provenance des collections d'art « extra-occidental »*, Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, Paris

Moderator: Emilie Salaberry (Angoulême Museum)

Speaker: Floriane Morin

Presentation: *Stratégie "décolonise" helvète et collections coloniales*

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7nxBafHjcZk>

23rd - 24th September, 2021

Conference: *Decolonizing Heritage - The Return of Cultural Objects to Africa: An International Law Perspective*

Convener: Marc-André Renold, University of Geneva

Speakers: Boris Wastiau and Floriane Morin

Presentation: *"Les biens culturels africains conservés au MEG enjeux et défis"*

15th October, 2021

Online Seminar: *New Museum Paradigm*

Host Institutions, The Postcolonial Heritage Research Group

The University of Sussex School of Media, Arts and Humanities

Session Five: *Museums and Restitution*

Convener: Samuel Aylett, Visiting Fellow at The Open University

Speakers: Alice Hertzog & Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe

12th March, 2022

Naturmuseum Winterthur

Convener: Sabrina Schnurrenberger

Speaker: Alice Hertzog

Presentation: "Benin Initiative Schweiz: Kooperative Provenienzforschung"

21st March, 2022

ETH Zürich, Chair for French literature and culture

Symposium, "Translokation & Restitution zum Umgang mit sensiblen Sammlungen"

Panel 1: Afrikanische Kunst in europäischen Museen

Mit: Annette Bhagwati (Museum Rietberg), Ibou Diop (HU Berlin), Elisio Makamo (Universität Basel), Bénédicte Savoy (TU Berlin, ETH Zürich)

Moderation: Gesine Krüger (Universität Zürich)

21st March, 2022

National Museum of Nigeria, Lagos

Presentation to the National Commission of Museums and Monuments

Speakers: Alice Hertzog, Michaela Oberhofer, Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe

25th March, 2022

University of Benin City

Workshop "The Swiss Benin Initiative, Research and Dialogue with Nigeria"

Speakers: Alice Hertzog, Michaela Oberhofer, Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe

31st March, 2022

ETH Zürich, Chaire de la littérature française

Seminar "Extraction Culturelle. Le transfert du patrimoine culturel d'Afrique en Europe, 19-20 siècle."

Convener: Bénédicte Savoy

Speaker: Alice Hertzog

Presentation: The Swiss Benin Initiative

5th April 2022

Musée d'ethnographie de Genève

Debate: Why decolonize museums?

A conversation between Felwine Sarr and Carine Ayélé Durand

Moderated by Romaine Jean

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ey35lmea_B8

8th April, 2022

Workshop: Boas Blog DCNtR Debate #2

Decolonizing Collections - Networking towards Rationality

Thinking About the Archive & Provenance Research

Convener: Yagmur Karakis (University of Duesseldorf/RautenstrauchJoest-Museum) & Carl Deußen (University of Amsterdam, Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum)

Speakers: Alice Hertzog & Enibokun Uzébu-Imarhiagbe

Presentation: "The Benin Bronze Archive"

11th June, 2022

Workshop: Colonial Provenance Collections in Need of Clarification

Bernisches Historisches Museum

Convener: Samuel Bachmann

Speaker: Alice Hertzog

Presentation: Back and Forth: Collaborative Provenance Research on the Benin Bronzes

17th June, 2022

Schweizerische Institut für Kunstwissenschaft Course "Angewandte Kunstwissenschaft. Material und Technik"

Speakers: Michaela Oberhofer & Alice Hertzog

Presentation: Materialität und Wissenspeicher, von der oralen Geschichte zum kolonialen Unrecht

5th October, 2022

Ethnologie Fassbar, Museum für Kulturen, Basel

Convener: Ursula Regehr

Speaker: Alice Hertzog & Ursula Regehr

Presentation: Initial Results of the Swiss Benin Initiative

29th October 2022

Swiss Researching Africa Days

Convenor: Samuel Bachmann & Larissa Tiki Mbassi

Panel 7: Decolonising Museum Collections

The Swiss Benin Initiative: How 100 objects got to 8 Swiss Museums

21st November 2022

Ringvorlesung „Kulturanalyse jetzt“

Moderation: Gesine Krüger

Speaker: Michaela Oberhofer & Marko Scholze

Presentation: Dekolonisierung – Kooperation

23rd November 2022

Arbeitskreis - Provenienzforschung e.V.

Convener: Tessa Rosebrock

Speaker: Alice Hertzog

Presentation: Benin Initiative Schweiz. Forschung und Dialog mit Nigeria

10.7 Cultural Events

10 & 11 May 2022

«Le Miroir d'Iyagbon»

A site-specific performance by the Compagnie Onyrikon and Samson Ogiamien.

Teaser: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6RKqV_A7xyw

Funded through the MEG and Ville de Genève

10.8 Press Coverage

The BIS project has received consistent press coverage, in all Swiss regions. Below a non-exhaustive list of the coverage:

1/26/2021 swissinfo.ch

Otto musei indagano su provenienza opere del Benin

1/26/2021 RSI Rete Uno

Radiogiornale

1/27/2021 Tages-Anzeiger

Ursprung der Benin-Bronzen wird mit Bundesgeldern erforscht

1/27/2021 Radio SRF 2 Kultur

So wollen Schweizer Museen koloniale Raubkunst aufdecken

1/28/2021 cultureetplus.over-blog.com

Initiative Bénin – Recherche et Dialogue entre le Nigeria et la Suisse

1/29/2021 Arcinfo

Neuchâtel: les collections du musée d'ethnographie sous la loupe

2/4/2021 Saiten

Fliegen die Bronzen bald nach Benin City?

2/10/2021 St. Galler Tagblatt

Auch im Historischen und Völkerkundemuseum steht Raubkunst: In die Debatte um Artefakte aus Benin kommt jetzt Bewegung

2/16/2021 La Liberté

Rendre un trésor, et la mémoire

2/20/2021 La Tribune de Genève

Jeu de piste au Musée d'ethnographie

4/17/2021 Le Temps

Décolonisation, où en sont les musées?

9/21/2022 SRF Kulturplatz

Warum schweizweit (noch) keine Benin-Objekte zurückgegeben werden

1/26/2021 Keystone SDA

Acht Schweizer Museen untersuchen im Verbund Provenienzen aus Benin

1/27/2021 Basler Zeitung

Ursprung der Benin-Bronzen wird mit Bundesgeldern erforscht

1/27/2021 Bieler Tagblatt

Werkgeschichte gemeinsam unter die Lupe nehmen

1/26/2021 Radio 24
Museen prüfen Sammlungen auf Raubkunst

1/27/2021 SRF2 Kultur
Schweizer Museen wollen gemeinsam koloniale Raubkunst in ihren Beständen untersuchen

2/4/2021 SRF 4 News
Wie soll die Schweiz mit kolonialer Raubkunst umgehen?

2/22/2021 Azione
Restituzioni delle opere: urge riflettere

2/22/2021 swissinfo.ch
Lawmaker seeks support of Parliament to decolonise Swiss museums

3/25/2022 tachler
Die Kunst, Haltung zu zeigen

4/25/2021
NZZ am Sonntag
Die lange Blutspur der Benin-Bronzen

4/30/2022 Tages Anzeiger
Die koloniale Beute kehrt heim

5/21/2022 Basler Zeitung
Wo Krieg ist, wird geplündert

8/25/2022 Keystone SDA
Preussen-Stiftung überträgt Eigentum aller Benin-Bronzen an Nigeria

9/19/2022 SRF1 TV Kulturplatz
Warum schweizweit (noch) keine Benin-Objekte zurückgegeben werden

9/25/2022 RSI Rete Uno
Arte e colonialismo: che fare delle opere d'arte?

10/7/2022 La Liberté
Les bronzes du Bénin pour l'exemple

10/9/2022 NZZ Sonntag
Gehören die Benin-Bronzen den Nachfahren der Sklaven?

11/9/2022 Keystone SDA
Digitale Plattform listet weltweit verstreute „Benin-Bronzen“ auf

Contact

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