

Cultural Internationalism and the Italian Model of Repatriation

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THE YEAR 2016 MARKS THE tenth anniversary of one of the most famous and controversial instances of cultural repatriation (or the negotiated return of artifacts and artworks to their country of origin). In February 2006, the Metropolitan Museum of Art agreed to transfer title to 21 objects of archaeological and historical interest to the Italian government.¹ Among them was a fifth century BC krater (ceramic bowl) used for mixing wine, decorated with exquisite scenes by the painter Euphronios. The Euphronios krater had been the subject of contention for some 30 years, with the Italian government alleging that it had been illegally removed from Italian soil and purchased by the Metropolitan Museum in bad faith.² While the agreement resolved this specific dispute, it also generated a vigorous discussion about the ethics and goals of cultural repatriation. That conversation continues to this day. Since 2007, the United States has returned more than 8,000 artifacts to 30 countries, including Cambodia, China, Egypt, Greece, India, Iran, Italy, Mexico, Peru, Turkey, and Yemen.³ It is the Italian government, however, that receives especially harsh judgment from opponents of repatriation.

Essayist and arts critic Hugh Eakin argues that the Italian model of state cultural heritage policy is premised on “trophy hunting.” The national govern-

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ment, he says, is obsessed with winning back every artwork or artifact linked with Italy—however tenuously—and employs a “hardball strategy” involving pressure tactics and intimidation. In a 2013 *New York Times* opinion piece, Eakin wrote:

Countries like Italy and Greece have used the news media to embarrass museums with alarming stories of rogue curators and nefarious dealers; they have withheld exhibition loans from museums that rebuff them; and they have resorted to aggressive legal action, opening criminal investigations of museum staff and enlisting the help of American federal prosecutors to obtain museum records and seize disputed works. In the process, museums’ relationships with foreign governments have become increasingly contingent upon giving in to unreasonable, and sometimes blatantly extortionary, demands.⁴

In Eakin’s view, what started out as a reasonable attempt by the Italian state to get foreign museums to repatriate a few works as a symbolic act of goodwill morphed into a zealous ideological program. Eakin deems “unreasonable” the Italian officials’ continued pursuit of ancient works when they already had “more than enough antiquities of their own to worry about,” invoking a familiar trope about Italy having insufficient resources or organizational capacity to properly conserve and care for its cultural artifacts.⁵

With this critique, Eakin aligned himself with James Cuno, a vocal supporter of the universal museum. Cuno defines the universal museum as a model in which artworks from all over the world are displayed in such a way as to “present their visitors with experiences that encourage looking for connections between apparently disparate works and cultures.”⁶ For Cuno, the problem with Italy is its claim that “the cultural patrimony represented by [archaeological materials] is a source of identity and esteem for the modern Italian nation.” This logic, he insists,

[devalues] the international exchange of archaeological artifacts and cultural property for the benefit of the world’s people and privileges instead the retention of cultural property...by modern nation states for the benefit of local peoples.⁷

Retentionism, according to Cuno, is the worst form of cultural nationalism. It purports to protect local identity but instead perverts the natural order of international cultural exchange by forcibly interring artifacts within the institutions and boundaries of the modern nation-state. Protecting a few treasured objects for citizens’ enjoyment at home is understandable, he suggests, but the strict control of artifact circulation is not. Doubting that all of the repatriated

or claimed artifacts are critical to the national identity and self-esteem of the Italian people, Cuno views the only plausible explanation for the flawed logic of retentionism to be politics. Extending Cuno's skepticism about the real value of mundane archaeological objects to Italian national identity, cultural property lawyer Joshua Wolkoff calls the Italian model a "crusade" to reestablish the Roman Empire. The essence of the Italian model is not substantive identity or meaningful symbols, he asserts, because "it is difficult for Italy to allege a strong emotional attachment to a work it never knew existed" when objects have been looted and exported.⁸ Retentionism, bullying tactics, and a crusade: what all three criticisms acknowledge is that the power of the Italian state is rooted not only in its capacity to control the flow of resources and encourage citizens' complaisance with formal law, but also in its ability to instantiate the nation via cultural goods.

The continued dispute over the Italian model sets up a key challenge for scholars of cultural policy: to assess the role of the nation in repatriation claims. The task is particularly important at a moment when far-right political parties mobilize a virulent form of populist nationalism, a development that threatens to overshadow the original idea of the nation-state as a politically progressive, emancipatory space.⁹ Critics of repatriation abjure the practice as a tool of cultural nationalism. They characterize cultural nationalism as an ideological program of retentionism and homogeneity and instead support the transnational movement of cultural property according to the principles of cultural internationalism.¹⁰ As many scholars have pointed out, this is an unhelpfully reductionist view, one that overlooks the significance of contextual information (surrounding objects, built structures, landscape, and so forth) in interpreting an artifact's meaning.¹¹ Particularly germane is the contrast made between cultural nationalism and the "universal museum," an institution in which artworks from multiple cultural groups and geographical spaces are supposed to be linked through synthesizing display and narration. This contrast fallaciously pits an institution type against an ideology when the institution is itself a product and purveyor of that ideology. Hence, rather than posit another argument for or against repatriation on grounds of (good) universalism versus (bad) nationalism, a more promising route is to address the factors that shaped the rise of the Italian model and its enduring relationships with cultural internationalism and the universal museum.

Like many countries, Italy operates a centralized cultural heritage management framework with three main areas of activity: customs (or the regulation of the import and export of protected cultural goods), bilateral agreements with foreign governments, and the ratification and support of international conven-

tions (for example, the 1970 UNESCO Convention and the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention). What sets the Italian model apart is the utilization of activism and performance to disseminate a consistent message about cultural ownership. By activism, I mean vigorous, coordinated efforts in multiple areas of authority to challenge the status quo in the international antiquities market. These areas of authority include international cultural bodies such as the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), domestic and international media, and scientific archaeology. The goal for the Italian government, then, is

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to shape the way people think about and behave toward the antiquities trade, not just to enforce existing policies. This form of activism is highly visible in frequent, carefully choreographed public events such as press conferences, museum exhibitions, and public archaeology days.¹²

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These features are a lightning rod for proponents of cultural internationalism who believe the Italian government furthers its agenda by embarrassing foreign institutions and crowing about its repatriation successes. To their dismay, the Italian model is itself quickly becoming international, thanks to the diffusion of the model through training sessions and joint missions led by members of the Italian *Carabinieri*, the nation's gendarmerie.¹³ With all signs pointing to the continuation and growth of the activist model of cultural repatriation, two key questions present themselves: Why did the Italian model emerge as it did, and what does the actual process of repatriation reveal about the relationship between cultural nationalism and internationalism?

THE ITALIAN MODEL: HISTORICAL UNDERPINNINGS

Unlike the U.K. and France, two of Europe's leading powers in the nineteenth century, Italy could not rely on robust economic and military resources to assert itself on the main stage of global politics. While mechanized production, urban growth, and military power developed slowly in the decades after Italian unification in 1861, lawmakers in Rome set about regulating the trade in artworks, manuscripts, monuments, and other objects deemed to hold historic and artistic significance for the national community. In doing so, they were continuing a long history of cultural heritage management. Since at least the fifteenth century, Vatican authorities and the independent kingdoms and city-

states of the Italian peninsula have enacted legislation to protect the collective patrimony. The nemeses of that patrimony were private collectors and dealers who sold cultural treasures to foreign elites and landowners, many of whom destroyed historic buildings and monuments to make way for new projects. The task for the government of a unified Italy was to weave the patchwork of laws from across the peninsula into a single legal code. It was a challenging task. Elected officials and bureaucrats rejected the primacy of the national government, insisting that local governments and civic institutions should manage their own cultural assets. For example, they asked why lawmakers in Rome should have a say over basilicas, manuscripts, and ruins in Bologna or Florence when those cities had been successful stewards of their own cultural assets for centuries.¹⁴ Moreover, there were already many existing museums across Italy. Because these museums were strongly bonded to their hometowns, the national government had to portray these institutions as national rather than local, further angering towns and regions outside the capital.¹⁵ Finally, funds were scarce and the existing cultural property protection laws were easy to avoid: exploiting the organizational dysfunction, private collectors and dealers continued to export cultural treasures unabated. It was only with the passage of the country's first nationalized culture law in 1909 that Italy established the policy platform required to control the circulation of protected artworks and archaeological artifacts.¹⁶

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An important point to take away from the history of Italy's cultural heritage policy is that heritage itself had to be formulated.¹⁷ It is a trope that after establishing Italy as a political unit, the next step was to make Italians. The project of making Italian national subjects was undertaken on a number of fronts, including schooling, language, common symbols, and historic infrastructure. It was through the classification and codification of artifacts, ruins, and other historic materials that a national heritage—as opposed to Florentine or Milanese or Sardinian heritages—was born. To make cultural heritage a salient feature of Italian nationalism, it had to be consistently and concretely instantiated, through policy, rhetoric, and performance. For example, during the debate over the state's role as the presumed owner of Italy's cultural treasures, the Minister for Public Instruction, Luigi Rava, denounced the bidding system that allowed objects to leave the country for foreign collections. When Italian owners of cultural property wished to sell an object, they were obliged to allow the Italian government to bid. Time and again, the government found itself outbid by foreign collectors, particularly American *nouveaux riches* whose *prezzo Americano* (American price) was much higher than the Italian state could pay.¹⁸ Rava turned the problem into a rallying cry for Italian national culture,

urging that the “true price” be asserted by the government as a defense against “acquisitive” Americans with their overwhelming buying power. The *prezzo Americano* was a substantive problem that became an effective rhetorical device, galvanizing Rava’s colleagues to reform the antiquities market and eventually restrict the international movement of Italian cultural property.

The spirit behind Rava’s argument and the 1909 cultural nationalization law can be traced directly to the year 1815, when artworks were restored from France to Italy in a massive restitution program. Beginning in the spring of 1796, the occupying French forces undertook an extensive and systematic appropriation

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of cultural goods from the Italian peninsula.¹⁹ The list of purloined masterpieces included the bronze horses from St. Mark’s Basilica in Venice, Raphael’s *Transfiguration*, Mantegna’s *Madonna della Vittoria*, Guido Reni’s *The Crucifixion of St. Peter*, Veronese’s *Wedding at Cana*,

and countless Greek and Roman statues from Naples and Pompeii.²⁰ The works were given a triumphal reception in Paris: a cavalry detachment with a military band led 250 wagons of art, manuscripts, and historical specimens, each decorated with garlands and bearing a banner with a description of contents. The parade went on for two days, from 27 to 29 July 1797, from the Austerlitz district to the Champ de Mars, the gathering place traditionally used for the Revolution celebrations.²¹ The captured artworks played a key role in the project of fashioning Paris as the new Rome.²² Roman antiquities were to be symbols of French national identity and political legitimacy. By harnessing the magisterial symbolism of Roman antiquity, Napoleonic image-makers denied the Italian-ness of the objects and inserted them into a new national context.

French and Italian artists and intellectuals mounted a sustained criticism of Napoleon’s actions, arguing that the works of art had a universal quality that could only be cultivated in the context in which they were produced. Antoine Quatremère de Quincy, an influential French author and art critic, argued in a series of published letters that works of art derived their essential meaning “not from their formal, aesthetic qualities alone, but also from such important factors as placement, especially in the urban context; local customs and traditions; ruins; geology; and even meteorology.”²³ Universalism, in other words, extended from particularism, or the specific physical, cultural, and historical environment of an object’s initial creation and use. Of all possible “particular”

environments, the *patria* (homeland) was especially important because it was a nostalgic homeland extending back to the classical origins of Italy. Through coordinated action of intellectuals and diplomats from the Allied countries, collective opinion gradually turned against Napoleon, and a substantial number of the objects were returned in 1815, constituting one of the largest acts of cultural repatriation in modern Europe.

AFTER REPATRIATION

Once in Italy, the repatriated artworks generally went back to Rome, even if that is not where they were taken from. Thinkers like Quatremère argued that authentic restoration had to be balanced by the desire to make an artwork visible.²⁴ There were exceptions. The bronze quadriga from St. Mark's Square in Venice was returned to that city in December 1815 with great fanfare.²⁵ Upon arriving at Fusina, the mainland port across from Venice, the horses were met by a carefully selected representative of the city: a descendant of the Doge Enrico Dandolo, the man who had removed the horses to Venice from Constantinople in 1204.²⁶ The horses were first taken to the foundry at the Venetian Arsenal for cleaning and repair, and their arrival in the foundry was made known to local residents. After six days, they were presented to dignitaries and cheering crowds for formal reinstatement.

The story of the bronze horses' return to Venice reveals two mechanisms that are vital to the repatriation process: medium and reallocation. By "medium," I mean that the object itself has to be materially remade in the mold of civic identity. The horses required basic repair after an arduous journey out and back, yet what was happening in the foundry was also significant on a symbolic level: the material objects were back under the technical expertise of local craftsmen. By "reallocation," I mean the movement of the object back to its point of origin. It is not inevitable that the original point of origin is the destination; in fact, in many cases this is impossible or unfeasible. The horses' original place, after all, was Constantinople, and yet this was clearly not the intended destination of the pro-restitution petitioners. In calling for a descendant of the Doge Dandolo to receive the horses at Fusina, the city insisted on its own version of cultural history, effectively recreating the Doge's original appropriation. The logic of reallocation, then, is to relocate the object to a place where the object is visible, resonates with collective memory, and prominently figures in the *patria*. In the case of the horses of San Marco, the mechanism of reallocation involved the first movement—from Paris to Fusina—and then the second stage of movement

from the Arsenal to San Marco itself. These physical intervals corresponded to the symbolic intervals of transfer of custody. Repatriation, then, is not just a legal process but also a process of cultural production.²⁷

For the artworks that went from Paris to Rome, their role was to constitute a universal museum that connected with European-wide investments in universal culture. In the decades after the 1815 restitution, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany deployed colonial archaeological services to fill their respective national museums with antiquities and thereby connect national identity with empire-building.²⁸ The British Museum, the Musée du Louvre, and, later, the Königliches Museum (now known as the Altes Museum) brought together collections of antiquities from throughout the classical world and claimed them for the nation through narrative and display decisions.²⁹ Such projects were simultaneously about universalism and nationalism, just as notions of national citizenship could comfortably encompass both ideals.³⁰

While the 1815 restitution was not explicitly about Italian nationalism (because there was not yet a unified Italian nation-state), the episode did shape future repatriation claims in at least two ways. First, it effectively confirmed the idea that national groups have legitimate claims on artworks that originated in the boundaries of their nation regardless of cultural affinity. Second, it emphasized the power of political performance, both in Napoleon's victory procession and in the joyful homecoming ceremonies in Venice and elsewhere.

CONCLUSION: THE ITALIAN MODEL TODAY

The practical operationalization of the Italian model is now centralized in the Ministry of Culture, which is "responsible for...the institutional protection, preservation, and optimum utilization of the Italian archaeological heritage, which is the source of the national collective memory and a resource for historical and scientific research."³¹ The principle of activism is expressed through a robust law enforcement effort, in the form of the *Comando Carabinieri per la Tutela del Patrimonio Culturale* (TPC) and the Ministry of Culture's accessibility to the press on matters of cultural heritage. The TPC, also known as the Art Squad, is an elite military-police unit comprising some 200 agents across the peninsula.³² It combats looting and trafficking activity, maintains a database of stolen art, and monitors international auctions and museum catalogues for possible instances of unprovenanced Italian cultural property.³³ Successful instances of cultural heritage protection are publicly disseminated and celebrated via museum displays, publications, and press conferences. While the performative

nature of Italian cultural policy is a lightning rod for repatriation opponents, such criticisms miss the essential meaning of performative politics and the way in which state cultural institutions are remade through public ritual and show.³⁴

In Italy, the performative claiming of cultural power is just as important as its enforcement. For example, the return of the Euphronios krater to Rome took the form of a procession and choreographed presentation at the attorney general's office involving state ar-

chaeologists, elected officials, uniformed Carabinieri, and the Italian flag.³⁵ Through such performances, the repatriated antiquity symbolizes an authentic link with the collective community's past. The retrieval of the object from its foreign possessor is a homecoming, with the patria part of "repatriation" symbolizing the cultural homeland that exists within, and in spite of, the modern state. The patria locates the national community in a specific land, or *terroir*, and the artifact is thus doubly symbolic as an authentic link between (modern) nationals and their (pre-modern) past. Whether this past is imagined, contrived, or a mere "rhetorical claim," as former Metropolitan Museum director Philippe de Montebello has argued, is beside the point. Within the space of cultural nationalism, the performance is real, and it grounds a broader set of geopolitical complexities and disputes in a readily comprehensible set of images.

Today, as in 1815, the question is not whether an antiquity will be repatriated to its find-spot or soil matrix. There was never any doubt that the Euphronios krater would end up in an Italian museum post-repatriation, rather than in the Cerveteri cemetery where tomb robbers dug it up. The question now is which of several potential recipient museums will end up with the repatriated goods.³⁶ Repatriated objects begin their homecoming in Rome. Objects are examined and given conservation treatment as needed. Then follows a process, led by the Ministry of Culture, of determining where they should go within Italy. Receiving institutions must have the resources necessary for display, storage, and conservation, and ideally have a collection that makes thematic and material sense for the restituted object. One of the questions most frequently asked about repatriation is whether it is good for the objects themselves: will they be given optimal conservation and display treatment? That is a fair question and one that eludes easy answers. In general, claimant countries do their

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best with the available resources. But another important dimension to the post-repatriation object is where it goes after it has been brought back to the claimant nation. This is especially interesting when the object was not previously part of the national consciousness because it was looted and smuggled out of the country before it could be classified as Italian. The process of repatriating a cultural object back to Italy involves the creation of a new context for the object. Once it has been established that a recovered good has come “home” to Rome, there is the opportunity to place the good in a national context. This is done through the mechanisms of medium and reallocation, as identified in the case of the bronze horses of St. Mark’s. It happens in the way that cultural objects are accessioned, classified, preserved, and displayed. It is done, too, through the rhetoric, symbols, and performance of state agencies including the *Guardia di Finanza* (Customs), Carabinieri Art Squad, and the Ministry of Culture.

Cultural internationalism is fundamentally national in character: it reinforces the nation-state as the dominant political unit in global affairs. The nation, moreover, is never monolithic. It is part of the “generalized category of political identity,” one that waxes and wanes according to the sociohistorical context.³⁷ Cultural internationalism does not have a privileged relationship with universal cultural values. As I have argued, universal ideals of culture were there at the birth of the modern age of repatriation in 1815. Moreover, it is misleading to suggest that repatriation is unjust because it is performative or somehow unnatural for the lives of artifacts because repatriation restricts the circulation of objects to a single national domain. The national cultural consciousness is fluid, dynamic, and multivalent. It is never about a single idiom but rather absorbent of dialects, religions, symbols, and beliefs that draw from local contexts as well as immigrants. It is this mode of relationality that will move the discussion beyond the cultural internationalism versus nationalism dispute and toward a more productive understanding of the logic and meaning of repatriation. 

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NOTES

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1. For the full text of the agreement, see: “The Metropolitan Museum of Art—Republic of Italy Agreement of February 21, 2006,” *International Journal of Cultural Property* 13 (2006): 427–434.

2. Elisabetta Povoledo, “Ancient vase comes home to a hero’s welcome,” *New York Times*, January 19, 2008; Vernon Silver, *The Lost Chalice* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009).

3. Alison Daye, “US returns \$100 million worth of stolen artifacts to India,” *CNN*, June 8, 2016; For an in-depth discussion of how a major U.S. art museum has adapted to the heightened interest in provenance and repatriation, see: Victoria Reed, “Due diligence, provenance research, and the acquisition process at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston,” *DePaul Journal of*

Art, Technology & Intellectual Property Law 23, no. 2 (2013): 363–73.

4. Hugh Eakin, “The Great Giveback,” *New York Times*, January 26, 2013.

5. A variation on this trope is the claim that antiquities brought to Western museums in the colonial period were rescued from hostile conditions. Consider, for example, Philippe de Montebello, former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, who said in a 2007 interview: “I never see a questioner asking, ‘Isn’t there value to these objects having been in the Western museums, having been studied?’ When Layard from England and Botta from France went to Mesopotamia, got the great winged horses and brought them back to the Louvre and to the British Museum, to describe the local attitude towards these pieces as indifferent would be generous, because most of them were being quarried to build local buildings and so forth.” For excerpt source, see: Richard Lacayo, “A Talk With: Philippe de Montebello,” *Time*, November 27, 2007.

6. James Cuno, “View from the universal museum,” in *Imperialism, Art, and Restitution*, ed. John Henry Merryman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 15–36.

7. *Ibid.*, 26.

8. Joshua Wolkoff, “Transcending cultural nationalist and internationalist tendencies: The case for mutually beneficial repatriation agreements,” *Cardozo Journal of Conflict Resolution* 11, no. 2 (2010): 709–38.

9. Gregor Aisch, Adam Pearce, and Bryant Rousseau, “How far is Europe swinging to the Right?,” *New York Times*, July 5, 2016; Will Kymlicka, *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism, and Citizenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 203–20.

10. Kwame Anthony Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 2006); James Cuno, “View from the universal museum.” According to John Henry Merryman, one of the leading U.S. scholars of art law until his death in 2015, the nationalist perspective treats cultural property as “part of a national cultural heritage.” What this means is that nations have a special interest in the artifacts found in their soil, or in the artworks, manuscripts, and monuments made within their territories. Cultural nationalism, moreover, suggests that objects have a national character, thereby legitimating nation-state policies that control the export and private purchase of cultural property. The internationalist perspective approaches artifacts and other objects of artistic and cultural interest as “components of a common human culture, whatever their places of origin or present location, independent of property rights or national jurisdiction.” See: John Henry Merryman, “Two ways of thinking about cultural property,” *American Journal of International Law* 80, no. 4 (1986): 831–2.

11. Christina Luke and Morag Kersel, *U.S. Cultural Diplomacy and Archaeology: Soft Power, Hard Heritage* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

12. Monica DiFonzo, “‘Think you can steal our Caravaggio and get away with it? Think again.’ An Analysis of the Italian cultural property model,” *George Washington International Law Review* 44, no. 3 (2012): 539–71.

13. Laurie Rush and Luisa Benedettini Millington, *The Carabinieri Command for the Protection of Cultural Property: Saving the World’s Heritage* (Rochester: Boydell Press, 2015), 161–74.

14. Ilaria Porciani, *La festa della nazione. Rappresentazione dello Stato e spazi sociali nell’Italia unita* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1997).

15. Simona Troilo, “National museums in Italy: A matter of multifaceted identity,” *Building National Museums in Europe 1750–2010*, Peter Aronsson and Gabriella Elgenius (Bologna: EuNaMus, 2011), 461–95.

16. Roberto Balzani, *Per le antichità e le belle arti. Le legge n. 364 del 20 giugno 1909 e l’Italia giolittiana* (Rome: Mulino, 2003); Marco Serio, *Istituzioni e politiche per i beni culturali. Materiali per una storia* (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2003).

17. Giulio Carlo Argan, “Beni Culturali: ma di chi?,” *Insegnare* 2, no. 7–8 (1986): 7–9.

18. *Atti Parlamentari Camera Deputati* [Parliamentary Acts of the Chamber of Deputies], 234, Session 1909, Discussion 2, 24 May–18 June 1909, 1405–30.

19. Cecil Gould, *Trophy of Conquest, the Musée Napoléon and the Creation of the Louvre* (London: Faber & Faber, 1965); Margaret M. Miles, *Art as Plunder: The ancient origins of debate*

about cultural property (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

20. Ronald Ridley, *The Eagle and the Spade Archaeology in Rome during the Napoleonic Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

21. David Jordan, *Napoleon and the Revolution* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

22. Valérie Huet, “Napoleon I: A New Augustus?” in *Roman Presences: Receptions of Rome in European Cultures*, ed. Catharine Edwards (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 53–60.

23. Christopher Johns, *Antonio Canova and the Politics of Patronage in Revolutionary and Napoleonic Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 193.

24. Dominique Poulot, *Letters to Miranda and Canova on the abduction of antiquities from Rome and Athens, by Quatremère de Quincy* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2012), 45–46.

25. Giustina Renier Michiel (letter dated 16 December 1815). Reprinted in: *Dei Quattro cavalli riposti sul pronao della basilica di S. Marco*, ed. Cesare Musatti (Venice: Kirchmayer e Scozzi, 1893).

26. A. Guidi Toniato, “The Horses of San Marco from the fall of the Republic to the present day,” in *The Horses of San Marco, Venice*, ed. Guido Perocco (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 117–23.

27. For an insightful critical discussion of the symbolism of repatriation in the case of contemporary Tibet, with ideas applicable to the present framework, see: Kavita Singh, “Repatriation without *Patria*. Repatriating for Nepal,” *Journal of Material Culture* 15, no. 2 (2010): 1–24.

28. Holger Hoock, *Empires of the Imagination: Politics, War, and the Arts in the British World, 1750–1850* (London: Profile Books, 2010); Fiona Rose-Greenland, “The Parthenon Marbles as Icons of Nationalism in 19th Century Britain: From pre-national to supra-national,” *Nations and Nationalism* 19, no. 4 (2013): 654–73.

29. Hoock, *Empires of the Imagination*.

30. Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 2.

31. As explicated in the opening text of the Metropolitan Museum of Art–Republic of Italy Accord of 2006, see: Daye, “US returns \$100 million worth of stolen artifacts to India.”

32. Rush and Millington, *The Carabinieri Command for the Protection of Cultural Property*.

33. Simona Troilo, *La patria e la memoria. Tutela e patrimonio culturale nell’Italia unita* (Milano: Electa, 2005).

34. Shirin Rai, “Analysing ceremony and ritual in Parliament,” *Journal of Legislative Studies* 16, no. 3 (2010): 284–97.

35. On the repatriation press conference for the Euphronios krater, see: Elisabetta Povoledo, “Ancient vase comes home to a hero’s welcome,” *New York Times*, January 19, 2008.

36. An additional question, important but beyond the scope of the current discussion, is how the Italian government decides what objects to attempt to repatriate in the first place. As the case of the bronze Etruscan chariot from Monteleone di Spoleto demonstrates, there can be discord between local governments and the national government over this question. See: Sylvia Poggioli, “Italian village demands return of ancient chariot,” *NPR*, August 21, 2007.

37. Prasenjit Duara, “Historicizing National Identity, or Who Imagines What and When,” in *Becoming National: A Reader*, Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 151–77.