

MUSEUM IN THE SERVICE OF THE REGIME: THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM IN ZAGREB AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR

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INTRODUCTION

Private collections often contained valuable archaeological and artistic objects. However, their fate was often connected with political and economic changes. This paper analyses how the legal frameworks that regulated the ownership of archaeological finds changed during the 20th century, especially in the context of World War II and the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH). Through the prism of archaeological finds, we investigate how political ideologies and war conflicts affected the fate of Croatian cultural heritage and how museums, as institutions responsible for preserving heritage, were often involved in these processes. Special attention is paid to the fate of private collections and how they were confiscated and nationalised.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBJECTS AND OWNERSHIP

Croatian archaeological heritage has been the subject of interest and protection for centuries. From the time of the Habsburg

Monarchy until the turbulent 20th century, the legal frameworks that regulated the ownership of archaeological finds went through numerous changes. To better understand the issue of ownership of archaeological finds, the paper begins with an overview of the legal provisions that governed it, from the Habsburg Monarchy to the NDH.¹

Ownership of archaeological material, often called “hidden treasure,” in the Habsburg Monarchy was regulated by the *General Civil Code* from June 1, 1811.² According to that *Code*, found treasure was divided into three equal parts: one part belonged to the state, one to the finder, and one to the owner of the land.³

The order of December 28, 1818, prohibited the export of archaeological material outside the country. The ban was also confirmed by the order of June 15, 1846, which prescribed an equal division of the finds between the finder and the owner of the land, and the state lost the right to one third. Additionally, the same order stipulated that the found antiquities be kept together; they could not be separated, sold or destroyed without special government permission, and the violation of these provisions was punishable by confiscation. The *Restoration of the Old Laws and the Order Regarding the Exportation of Antiquities from Our Country and Their Preservation* was adopted on November 25, 1880, by provision n. 3302.⁴ It allowed private persons to request permission from the government and the Archaeological Museum for the excavation of archaeological sites and the purchase of archaeological objects, especially if these activities were in the interest of the Museum.

Provision on the Preservation of Antiquities and Natural Monuments from

July 25, 1940, extended the protection to archaeological, artistic, historical, ethnographic, architectural and natural heritage, regardless of ownership. It was forbidden to destroy and take such objects outside the cultural area to which they belonged, especially outside state borders, without the approval of the competent authorities. The provision also gave the competent Banovina museum the right of first purchase within three months of the notification of the find. Failure to report was punishable by up to three months in prison and a fine of up to 5,000 dinars.

Continuity in the effort to prevent trade and removal of archaeological material from the country must be emphasized, as well as the changes in the distribution of ownership and authority over the finds. The 1940 *Provision* expands the protection of cultural heritage and gives the state greater control over trade.

A new legal provision, adopted on June 30, 1941, during the NDH, declared all immovable cultural-historical and natural monuments of special scientific, artistic or aesthetic value, located on the territory of the NDH, as Croatian national monuments. These monuments could not be the subject of private ownership.⁵

ORGANISATION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM IN ZAGREB IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Croatian National Archaeological Museum (currently the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb – AMZ) changed its name to the Croatian State Archaeological Museum in 1941. During World War II, the AMZ was led by two directors.

During the NDH, Viktor Hoffiller⁶ was the director of the Croatian State History Museum and the Croatian State Archaeological Museum. Until 1943, these two museums operated under joint management. Hoffiller was suddenly retired in January 1943. Some researchers associate his dismissal with the refusal to give the Prussian flag and the chess of Frederick II to Hitler as a birthday present or with his declaration to General Edmund Glaise von Horstenau that Germany will lose the war.⁷

However, the chess and the flag were handed over to Hitler much earlier, in June 1941, during the first meeting with Ante Pavelić in Berghof. The Head of the Sub-Department for Higher Education and Scientific Institutes of the Ministry of Education of the NDH, Božidar Murgić,⁸ personally selected and collected these items from the Museum, together with the relief depicting the birth of Dionysus, which was later returned.⁹

This fact calls into question the thesis about Hoffiller's resistance to Nazi demands as the main reason for his dismissal. It seems more likely that his retirement was related to the introduction of the compulsory pension for people over 65, which happened in 1943.

Mirko Šeper¹⁰ took his place at the Archaeological Museum, who on January 29, 1943, as a trainee curator, became an associate professor of classical archaeology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

The Military Court in Zagreb convicted Mirko Šeper, PhD to ten years of forced labor in 1946, for the following reasons: 1) participation in the Ustasha army as an artillery officer and opening fire on the People's Liberation Army, and 2) coopera-

tion with Ustasha newspapers and spreading Ustasha propaganda. In this context, Šeper's article in the *Hrvatska smotra* magazine (1942, no. 1, 48–51) should be highlighted, in which he claimed that Jewish art did not exist.¹¹

After Hoffiller, Držislav Švob became the director of the Croatian State History Museum in Zagreb. Švob was arrested in April on the charge of aiding the partisan movement and was charged with a crime against “the existence of the state and its organization.” The High Court in Zagreb sentenced him to death, and then he was pardoned to life imprisonment. He was killed under unknown circumstances at the very end of the war, in April 1945, in the Lepoglava concentration camp.¹²

INITIATIVE FOR THE PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

In the turbulent context of the establishment of the NDH on May 10, 1941, the directors of leading Croatian museums and the Zagreb Conservation Institute launched an initiative to protect and preserve cultural heritage by centralising important art and historical objects in state museums (Figs. 1 and 2).

Viktor Hoffiller (Croatian National History Museum), Milovan Gavazzi¹³ (Croatian National Ethnographic Museum), Vladimir Tkalcic¹⁴ (Croatian National Museum of Arts and Crafts) and Gjuro Szabo¹⁵ (Zagreb Conservation Institute) emphasized the importance of preserving artistic and historical objects in private collections that “stole” these items from state museums “with their more abundant funds.”

In their proposal, they emphasized that these objects should be removed from private use and handed over for safe-keeping to state museums, which were, in their opinion, the only proper place. This initiative, they said, was motivated by a desire for the advancement of Croatian science and education, and the development of Croatian museums, which often faced financial constraints in acquiring museum objects.¹⁶

LEGAL PROVISION IN THE NDH ON THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

The initiative of museum directors to protect cultural heritage, although seemingly noble,¹⁷ was quickly instrumentalized by the NDH. The *Legal Provision on the Prohibition of the Alienation and Export of Antiques and Artworks, Cultural, Historical, and Natural Monuments from the Territory of the Independent State of Croatia*, passed only two days after the initiative, enabled the state to take control of private collections, especially those owned by Jews and Serbs, under the guise of protection.¹⁸

According to Article 3 of the *Legal Provision*, private individuals who could not adequately preserve monuments from their property were obliged to hand them over to one of the Croatian state museums. The museum, in turn, was obliged to issue a written confirmation of receipt on behalf of the NDH. Failure to comply with the *Provision* was punishable by imprisonment for up to five years and a fine of up to 500,000 dinars. In conclusion, all private collections that fell under Article 3 of the *Provision* had to be stored in one of the state museums.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE PROTECTION MEASURES IN THE NDH: ANALYSIS OF A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE *GOOD RESPONSE FROM CITIZENS REGARDING THE POGLAVNIK'S PROVISION ON THE PRESERVATION OF ANTIQUES AND NATURAL MONUMENTS*

The newspaper article *Good response from citizens regarding the poglavnik's provision on the preservation of antiques and natural monuments* (*poglavnik* – leader of NDH) published in the daily newspaper *Danas* on 30 June 1941, provides insight into the implementation of cultural heritage protection measures in the NDH and is an interesting example of propaganda rhetoric in the service of the regime.¹⁹ The seemingly positive news about the “good response of the public” to the decision to preserve cultural heritage conceals deeper political and ideological implications. The regime authorities sought to present the protection measures as voluntary and in the interests of the owners, emphasizing the positive response among the public. The article uses positive language and emphasizes the mutual benefit of the protection measures. However, in the context of an authoritarian regime, it is difficult to speak of true voluntariness.

The Conservation Institute authorised and responsible for the inventory,²⁰ emphasized that the owners of the objects could allow the inventory and inspection of their antiquities without fear because they would remain in their ownership. The process was presented as mutually beneficial: the owners gained insight into the value of their antiquities and advice on their preservation,

and the state gained an overview of the cultural heritage. If the owners could not adequately care for their antiquities, their transfer to the appropriate Croatian state museum for safekeeping was presented as an option, with the note that the ownership of the objects remained unchanged. The Conservation Institute called on the owners of the antiquities to cooperate with the Institute's representatives and facilitate their work, emphasizing that the inventory was in the interest of both the owners themselves and the entire Croatian people.²¹ The 1941 article provides valuable insight into how the NDH regime used culture as a means of legitimising its rule and how it sought to control all aspects of social life. Although at first glance the measures to protect cultural heritage appear to have been well-intentioned, a deeper analysis shows that they were part of a broader ideological project and had negative consequences for individuals and the community. The protection of cultural heritage was presented as part of a larger plan to build Croatian national identity. The emphasis on the “Croatian state museum” and the interest of the “entire Croatian people” suggest that the protection of culture was instrumentalised in the service of the regime's ideology.

REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEGAL PROVISION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE ALIENATION AND EXPORT OF CULTURAL-HISTORICAL AND ARTISTIC OBJECTS IN THE NDH (JULY 26, 1941)

Based on the *Legal Provision*, officials of the Croatian state museums in Zagreb began an extensive campaign to collect

all cultural, historical and artistic objects to which it referred. The goal was to store them in museums and preserve them as the property of the Independent State of Croatia.²²

Most of the objects were collected from Orthodox monasteries, for example twenty crates were sent to the Croatian State Museum of Arts and Crafts (today the Museum of Arts and Crafts – MUO) from Krušedol. A team, led by curators Ivan Bach (MUO) and Mirko Šeper (AMZ), visited other monasteries and parishes, starting from the Ogulin region. The first shipment of around sixty crates was soon on its way.

A second group of experts, led by the director of the MUO, Vladimir Tkalcic, and Držislav Švob from the History Museum, set off via Kostajnica and Pakrac to Slavonia. The Ustashas provided considerable assistance in this endeavour. The Ministry of Transport and Public Works approved the free transport of all the collected objects.

An inventory of the main privately owned collections was carried out in Zagreb. Some owners immediately deposited their objects in the Croatian State Museum of Arts and Crafts. The most valuable of the deposited collections was that of the late Artur Marić. The Hinko Lederer collection was stored in the Gypsotheca before the law was passed, but steps were taken to move it to the Museum of Arts and Crafts. The Milan Marić collection, one of the most valuable in the country, had not yet been delivered. Among other smaller collections, that of Žiga Herzog stood out. The collection of Julije König, who had left Zagreb, remained untouched in the apartment at 18 Palmotićeva Street. Minister Bulat, who was living in that

apartment at the time of the inventory of the collections, agreed with the director Tkalcic to transfer the collection to the state museum.²³

ANALYSIS OF PRIMARY SOURCES FROM THE NDH ERA: FORCED EVICTIONS AND CONFISCATION OF PROPERTY

The documents in question from the time of the NDH provide insight into the implementation of racially motivated policies and the systematic plunder of the property of ethnic and religious minorities:

Document 1

“Zagreb, May 8, 1941, Announcement – I order that within 8 days all SERBS and JEWS living on the northern side of Maksimirka Street, Vlaška Street, Jelačić Square, Ilica to the toll booth, as well as those parts of the city located north of the marked road section, must move to other parts of the city of Zagreb.

Director of the Police Department: Marijan Nikšić, hand signed”²⁴

Document 2

“Dearest professor! [...] 2. The same museum people, through the Conservation Institute, are making an inventory of all private collections and other artistic and cultural historical objects that are in private possession, but in carrying out this work, which is based on the recently issued legal provision by the *poglavnik*, they have encountered certain difficulties. That is why they have asked the police directorate for assistance in such cases, there is so much intervention to meet this request. The officials have

the proper identification and orders, but the Jews, Serbs, and some of our capitalists care little about it.

3. As you know, bank safes will be inspected, and this is already being done. There are many valuables in Jewish and Serbian safes. I ask that you please arrange with Minister Artuković, PhD to order all those authorities that are involved in confiscation and inspection to have such safes inspected by an expert committee of museum and other experts, who will carry it out.

4. The German and Italian military authorities hold in their possession many houses, villas and apartments, which until recently belonged to various Jews and Vlachs. When these had to flee, the apartments remained completely furnished. It is a well-known fact that these bloodsuckers and rich people, with our stolen money, collected various valuables, works of art, antiques, etc., for years, and these were found in these Vlach, and especially Jewish, houses. Although no one, not even you, thinks that the Germans or Italians might touch it, there is still a great danger that irresponsible elements could abstract these precious objects, which are the property of the Croatian people. I hereby most earnestly beg and implore you to do everything in your power to allow the envoys and officials of the Conservation Institute and our state museums to inspect these apartments and villas in cooperation with these foreign authorities and to store in the museum what is of historical and artistic importance for our museums.”²⁵

The first document, an announcement of the forced relocation of Serbs and Jews

from the northern part of Zagreb, testifies to segregationist measures directed against these groups. The second document, a petition by Božidar Murgić addressed to an unnamed “versatile cultural figure, but also a great Croatian patriot, who is highly regarded by the highest levels of Croatian state politics,” reveals the systematic confiscation of art and cultural property from private ownership, especially that owned by Jews and Serbs. Murgić requests assistance in conducting the inventory and seizure of property, using derogatory terms (“blood-suckers,” “Vlach houses”) that reflect the official rhetoric of the time.

These documents illustrate institutionalised discrimination and systematic human rights violations during the NDH. They also provide insight into the mechanisms of confiscation of property and cultural heritage of minority communities, which is an important aspect of studying the history of that period.

THE ROLE OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF THE NDH AND BOŽIDAR MURGIĆ

The Ministry of Education of the NDH (later the Ministry of National Education), under the leadership of the Head of the Sub-Department for Higher Education and Scientific Institutes, Božidar Murgić, played a key role in the seizure and redistribution of cultural property, especially that owned by Jewish and Serbian citizens. Taking advantage of the legal framework that enabled the forcible seizure of property, the Ministry organised extensive campaigns to collect works of art and other cultural objects.

Based on the order of the Ministry of Education no. 24323 of 19 July 1941,

officials and janitors of the Archaeological Museum were sent throughout the country to collect objects abandoned by the Orthodox population and transport them to Zagreb. This task, which required considerable effort and expense, was additionally rewarded with a special daily allowance of 50 kuna, amounting to 50,000 kuna provided from the budget of the Ministry of Education. Solid financing indicates the seriousness and scope of the measures taken.

Among the officials who participated in these actions were employees of the History and Archaeological Museum: Držislav Švob, PhD, curator (106 days on the road); Mirko Šeper, PhD, curator trainee (31 days on the road); Jakov Pavelić, preparator (75 days on the road); and Antun Tuđan, janitor (91 days on the road).²⁶

The Ministry of Education was also active in implementing legal provisions on the collection of cultural property. In a memo dated 25 July 1941, addressed to the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, the Ministry of Education requested an explanation as to why the collection of antiquities belonging to the Jewish owner Hinko Lederer had not been handed over to the Museum and ordered that all necessary measures be taken to immediately place the collection in the AMZ (Fig. 3).²⁷

In the context of the given documents, orders related to museum activities were issued by the Ministry of Education, which was directly responsible for sending officials to the field to collect objects. The Ministry also managed the financial resources allocated for this activity. The Ministry of Education was therefore the key body that supervised the implementation of laws related to the collection and protection of cultural property during the NDH.

On the other hand, the *poglavnik's Legal Provision* played a key role as the legal basis for such actions. Although it did not issue direct orders to museums, it enabled the implementation of measures such as the attempted seizure of the Lederer collection, giving various bodies the authority to act. Under this *Provision*, the Lederer numismatic collection was confiscated from the safe of the Zemaljska Banka in Sarajevo in 1944.

In short, the Ministry of Education had an executive role in implementing specific actions, while the *poglavnik's Provision* was the legal framework that made those actions possible. Božidar Murgić proved to be a key participant in that process, actively participating in the planning and coordination of those actions.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEGAL PROVISION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE ALIENATION AND EXPORT OF CULTURAL GOODS

The implementation of the *Legal Provision* that prohibited the alienation and export of cultural goods was carried out through orders from the Ministry of Education sent to various institutions and individuals. For example, the Ustaša camp in Orahovica was ordered to hand over all objects falling under the *Legal Provision* to the delegate of the Croatian State Museum of Arts and Crafts, Držislav Švob (an employee of the Croatian State History Museum), and to provide him with all necessary assistance and protection.²⁸

Mirko Šeper, an employee of the Croatian State Archaeological Museum, was issued a travel order to inspect and take over

cultural, historical and artistic antiquities from abandoned Orthodox churches and monasteries in the Ogulin and Senj districts.²⁹

Another order was sent to an unnamed individual, with instructions to take over the Weissmann collection in Osijek and to report to the mayor of Karlovac to inspect and retrieve items from abandoned Orthodox churches.³⁰

In the case of Hinko Lederer's collection, Šeper referred to the *Act on the Protection of Artistic, Historical, Ethnographic and Natural Antiquities*, which prohibits the destruction and removal of such objects outside the borders of the state without the approval of the competent authorities.³¹ These examples illustrate how the Ministry of Education actively coordinated and supervised the implementation of the *Legal Provision on the Prohibition of the Alienation and Export of Antiques and Artworks, Cultural, Historical, and Natural Monuments*, using a network of state institutions and individuals to locate, examine and transfer objects to state museums.

TRANSFER OF OBJECTS FROM OTHER MUSEUMS

On 16 September 1944, the Croatian State Museum of Arts and Crafts handed over prehistoric and Roman objects to the Croatian State Archaeological Museum in Zagreb. Although a list has been preserved, the objects handed over cannot be identified due to their general nature.³²

OBJECTS IN THE AMZ COLLECTIONS

The numismatic collections of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb contain several items acquired based on the order

from 1941.³³ The documentation refers to the following sources:

1. Office for Nationalised Property – objects were received in 1944 (AMUO no. 481/1944 = AAMZ no. 241/1944) and 1946 (file no. 90/1946)
2. Main Ustasha Headquarters – Minister-in-charge Ljudevit Šolc, PhD donated the objects to the Museum in 1942
3. Franciscan Monastery, Zagreb – objects were handed over by Land Administration of National Goods in 1946
4. District Court Ogulin – the objects were received in 1949 (record 50/49, no. 181)
5. Ministry of Finance of the People's Republic of Croatia – the objects were received in 1949 (no. 452/1949)
6. Museum of Arts and Crafts – the objects were received on 11 June 1951 from various donors.

The data confirm the diversity of sources from which the objects were acquired, including state institutions, religious communities and private donors. It is important to note that some objects were acquired through the Office for Nationalised Property, which certainly indicates the confiscation of property during World War II.

This paper will focus on the two largest confiscated collections. The numismatic collection from the Ustasha camp in Požega, consisting of 2,489 pieces of Roman coins, was transferred to the Croatian State Archaeological Museum on 16 September 1944. The collection was previously in the possession of the Croatian State Museum of Arts and Crafts, to which it was received on 12 August 1944 by the Office for Nationalised Property of the Ministry of the State Treasury of the NDH.

The coins were packaged in two types of envelopes: beige ones with the header “State Directorate for Restoration” and grey-blue ones with the header “Ministry of the State Treasury / Department for State Property, Trusts and Debts / Office for Nationalised Property” (Figs. 4 and 5). The envelopes were numbered according to Benko Horvat’s list, and later received AMZ inventory numbers.

The origin of the collection and the identity of its original owner remain unknown, but the fact that it came from the Office for Nationalised Property suggests that it was property confiscated during World War II. The collection is an important source for studying the history of the period despite the uncertainties surrounding its origin.³⁴

The AMZ also houses around four thousand coins from a large hoard of Roman imperial coins from the 3rd century found in Kamenica.³⁵ Some of the coins were handed over to the Museum by Milan Mežina on behalf of the Ministry of Finance of the People’s Republic of Croatia, after the Ministry took them over from the former Land Administration of National Goods, which in turn confiscated them from the Office for Nationalised Property.³⁶

Additional research of the Archives³⁷ revealed that part of the collection (2503 pieces) was handed over to the director of the AMZ, Viktor Hoffiller, for purchase shortly before or at the beginning of the war by foreman Marko Lederer. However, the foreman never returned (Hoffiller assumed that he had fled the country or been taken to a camp), and the collection remained in the possession of the AMZ. When the numismatic collection of H. Lederer (1954), which was confiscated from the safe deposit box of a Sarajevo

bank, was returned, this part of the collection was not returned to the family.³⁸ This case illustrates the complex procedure by which cultural goods, such as numismatic finds, were relocated and nationalised during and after World War II. It also points to the importance of archival materials in reconstructing the provenance of museum objects.

FROM THE AMZ ARCHIVE

The archival records of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb testify to various activities during World War II and the post-war period.

On 27 December 1944, two amphorae from Jurjevska Street 27b were deposited in the AMZ. The archival note states that the amphorae are “only held for safekeeping in this museum,” which presupposes the temporary nature of their placement and the possibility of further relocation or return to the owner.³⁹

On 16 September 1944, the Croatian State Museum of Arts and Crafts handed over prehistoric and Roman objects to the AMZ (Fig. 6). Unfortunately, due to the general description in the documentation, an exact list of the objects handed over cannot be determined.⁴⁰

The Archaeological Museum in Zagreb served as a temporary storage for cultural property during World War II and the post-war period. An example of this is the handover of the objects of Antun Adamović from Osijek, Leonard Grivičić from Zagreb and Jakob Eltz from Vukovar, which were stored in the AMZ. These objects were taken over from Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities according to the record 227/1945 of 25 October 1945

and were subsequently handed over to the Museum of Arts and Crafts.⁴¹

CONCLUSION

This paper provides insight into the complex role of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb during World War II. An analysis of legal provisions, primary sources, and archival materials clearly outlines how the Museum, under the auspices of the Independent State of Croatia, became an instrument of regime policy.

While the legal provisions on the protection of cultural heritage seemingly had noble goals, their implementation in practice reveals the systematic confiscation of property and the erasure of the cultural heritage of ethnic and religious minorities. Museum employees, under great pressure from the Ministry of Education of the NDH, actively participated in the implementation of these measures. This analysis demonstrates the importance of a critical approach to historical sources and the need for further research into the role of the Museum in turbulent times.

NOTES

¹ For more on old acts see: Petar Kos and Ivan Mirnik, “Coin hoards from Croatia: XVII. The Križovljani (Varaždin) hoard of Celtic tetradrachms (1843),” *Vjesnik Arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu* 44, no. 1 (2011): 80–87; Maja Bunčić and Ana Solter, “Ta ova je godina dobra počela samo da nije B. i G.’a.: Trgovina arheološkim nalazima početkom 20. stoljeća na primjeru Srijemske Mitrovice,” *Vjesnik Arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu* 53, no. 1 (2020): 204–206.

² “Allgemeines bürgerliches Gesetzbuch für die gesammten Deutschen Erbländer der Oesterreichischen Monarchie,” *Justizgesetzsammlung*, no. 1–6 (1811). Although the *Code* was officially in force throughout the monarchy until 1861, it

continued to serve as the Croatian civil code until 1945, and partly until the 1970s.

³ *Ibid.*, art. 399. According to the same *Code*, one third also belonged to workers who accidentally found treasure, but if the owner “especially hired them [...] to search for treasure, they should be satisfied with their regular wages.”

⁴ Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government, Department of Religious Worship and Education, “Obnova starih zakona i naredba u pogledu izvažanja starina iz naše zemlje i njihova sačuvanja,” no. 3302, November 25, 1880.

⁵ *Narodne novine* 63, June 30, 1941.

⁶ Viktor Hoffiller (Vinkovci, 1877 – Zagreb, 1954) was a curator at the Archaeological Museum from 1901 to 1920, after which he became the director of the Prehistoric Department. Also, from 1924 until 1943 he was the director of the Archaeological Museum. In 1945 he was returned to his post as director of the Archaeological Museum until 1951. For his biography, see: *Hrvatski biografski leksikon (1983–2024), mrežno izdanje* (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2024), s. v. “Hoffiller, Viktor,” <https://hbl.lzmk.hr/clanak/hoffiller-viktor> (accessed September 6, 2024).

⁷ Mira Kolar-Dimitrijević and Elizabeta Wagner, “Brunšmid i Hoffiller, osnivači moderne sjevernohrvatske arheologije,” *VDG Jahrbuch* 15 (2008): 79–98.

⁸ Božidar Murgić (1901 – ?) studied philosophy in Vienna where he defended his doctoral thesis in 1928. From 1930 he worked as an intern in the Department of Education of the Royal Banovina Administration of the Sava Banovina in Zagreb. He was appointed senior assistant to the Department of Education of the Banovina of Croatia in 1940. On 15 February 1941 he was assigned as an assistant to the Croatian National Archaeological Museum, but soon after the proclamation of the NDH, he became head of the Department for Higher Education and Scientific Institutes of the Ministry of Education of the NDH in Zagreb. After the war he left Croatia and from 1966 he disappeared without a trace.

⁹ Ana Solter, *Arheološki muzej u Zagrebu – život od 19. do 21. stoljeća* (Zagreb: Arheološki muzej u Zagrebu, 2016), 176.

¹⁰ Mirko Šeper (Zagreb, 1912 – Zagreb, 1970) graduated in archaeology and art history at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb in 1936, where he received his doctorate in 1941 with the topic *Ancient Gem-Amulets*. From 1938, he was employed in the Archaeological and Department of History of the National Museum in Zagreb, and from 1943, he was the director of the Croatian State Archaeological Museum. For his biography, see: *Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje* (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2013–2024), s. v. “Šeper, Mirko,” <https://www.enciklopedija.hr/clanak/seper-mirko> (accessed September 10, 2024).

¹¹ Rajna Šošić Klindžić, Ana Solter and Dragana Rajković, “Archaeology and National Socialism in the Independent State of Croatia (1941–1945),” in: *National-Socialist Archaeology in Europe and its Legacies*, eds. Martijn Eickhoff, Daniel Modl, Katie Meheux and Erwin Nuijten (New York: Springer, 2023), 631–634.

¹² For his biography see: *Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje* (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2013–2024), s. v. “Švob, Držislav,” <https://www.enciklopedija.hr/clanak/svob-drzislav> (accessed September 10, 2024).

¹³ Milovan Gavazzi (Gospić, 1895 – Zagreb, 1992) was the curator of the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb from 1922 to 1927 and its director from 1939 to 1941. From 1927 until his retirement in 1965, he taught ethnology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb. For his biography, see: *Hrvatski biografski leksikon (1983–2024), mrežno izdanje* (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2024), s. v. “Gavazzi, Milovan,” <https://hbl.lzmk.hr/clanak/gavazzi-milovan> (accessed September 6, 2024).

¹⁴ Vladimir Tkalčić (Zagreb, 1883 – Zagreb, 1971) worked at the Archaeological Museum from 1907 to 1919, first as an assistant curator and then as a curator. From 1919 he held the position of curator at the Ethnographic Museum and its director from 1925 to 1933. From 1934 until his retirement in 1952, he was director of the Museum of Arts and Crafts. For his biography see: *Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje* (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2013–2024), s. v. “Tkalčić, Vladimir,” <https://www.enciklopedija.hr/clanak/tkalcic-vladimir> (accessed September 6, 2024).

¹⁵ Gjuro Szabo (Novska, 1875 – Zagreb, 1943) was the director of the Museum of Arts and Crafts from 1919 to 1926, the Zagreb City Museum from 1928 to 1943, and acting conservator until October 1941. For biography see: *Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje* (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2013–2024), s. v. “Szabo, Gjuro,” <https://www.enciklopedija.hr/clanak/szabo-gjuro> (accessed on September 6, 2024).

¹⁶ Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia, Central Documentation in the Field of Cultural Heritage (hereinafter: MKM – SDKB), Collections of Older Material, Documentation materials of the Conservation Office (1928–1945), 82/1941, May 10, 1941; Martina Juranović Tonejc, *Institucionalni razvoj zaštite pokretne umjetničke baštine u Hrvatskoj od 1850. do 1990. godine* (Zagreb: Ministarstvo kulture i medija Republike Hrvatske, 2021), 189.

¹⁷ Juranović Tonejc, *Institucionalni razvoj zaštite pokretne umjetničke baštine u Hrvatskoj od 1850. do 1990. godine*, 190–191.

¹⁸ Josip Junašević and Miroslav Šantek, eds., *Zbornik zakona i naredaba Nezavisne Države Hrvatske 1*, vol. 2, no. 130 (Zagreb: Zakonodavno povjereništvo pri Poglavniku, 1941), 85–86. More about legal regulations in the NDH in: Martina Juranović Tonejc, “Zakonska regulativa u zaštiti pokretne baštine u doba Nezavisne države Hrvatske,” *Godišnjak zaštite spomenika kulture Hrvatske* 33/34 (2009/2010), 15–22; Juranović Tonejc, *Institucionalni razvoj zaštite pokretne umjetničke baštine u Hrvatskoj*, 219–223.

¹⁹ “Lijep odaziv gradjanstva povodom Poglavnikeve odredbe o čuvanju starina i prirodnih spomenika,” *Danas*, June 30, 1941, 6.

²⁰ MKM – SDKB, Collections of Older Material, Documentation materials of the Conservation Office (1928 – 1945), 87/1941, G. Szabo to the Police Directorate, May 23, 1941.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 90/1941, G. Szabo, “Upozorenje vlasnicima starina,” May 12, 1941.

²² Croatian State Archives, Božidar Murgić Collection of the museum activities from the 1920s to the 1940s (hereinafter: HR-HDA-1149), box 1, “Izvještaj o provedbi zakonske odredbe o zabrani otuđivanja i izvažanja starinskih umjetničkih, kulturno-povjesnih i prirodnih spomenika na

području Nezavisne Države Hrvatske,” July 26, 1941.

²³ More on the collections: Iva Pasini Tržec, “O sudbini pet privatnih zbirki zagrebačkih židovskih obitelji za vrijeme i nakon sloma Nezavisne Države Hrvatske,” *Peristil* 64 (2021): 97–113.

²⁴ *Hrvatski narod* 87, May 10, 1941.

²⁵ HR-HDA-1149, box 1, “Vrlo poštovani i dragi profesore,” no date.

²⁶ Archives of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb (hereinafter: AAMZ) 107, 757/1941.

²⁷ AAMZ 37/8, *Hinko Lederer* file, B. Murgić’s memo (Ministry of Education in Zagreb), July 25, 1941.

²⁸ HR-HDA-1149, box 1, B. Murgić to the Ustasha camp in Orahovica, August 18, 1941.

²⁹ AAMZ 37/4, *Mirko Šeper* file, 401/1941.

³⁰ AAMZ 107, 442/1941.

³¹ AAMZ 37/8, *Hinko Lederer* file, M. Šeper’s memo to the Office for Nationalised Property, May 2, 1944.

³² AAMZ 110, Museum files: 1944, “Zapisnik od 16. rujna 1944,” 240/1944.

³³ Collection of banknotes, Collection of Byzantine coins, Collection of European and world medals, Collection of Croatian medals, Collection of Croatian medieval and modern coins, Collection of medieval and modern coins of Southeast European countries, Collection of medieval and modern coins of Central and Eastern European countries, Collection of medieval and modern coins of non-European countries, Collection of medieval and modern coins of Western European countries, Collection of Turkish coins, Study collection of modern coins, Study collection of Roman imperial bronze coins, Collection of Roman republican coins and Collection of hoards of Roman coins from the 3rd century. I would like to thank my colleagues Tomislav Bilić and Miroslav Nađ for the information.

³⁴ Tomislav Bilić, *Aliena pecunia: zbirka antičkog novca zaplijenjena u Ustaškom logoru Požega* (Zagreb: Arheološki muzej u Zagrebu, 2020).

³⁵ Miro Nađ and Anja Bertol Stipetić, *Kamenica: ostava rimskog srebrnog novca iz zbirke Arhe-*

ološkog muzeja u Zagrebu (Zagreb: Arheološki muzej u Zagrebu, 2016).

³⁶ AAMZ 115, Museum files: 1949, “Zapisnik o preuzimanju starih novaca od Ministarstva financije NRH,” 452/1949.

³⁷ I would like to thank my colleague Iva Validžija for the information.

³⁸ AAMZ 37/8, *Hinko Lederer* file, *Hinko Lederer Files* 11/1954.

³⁹ AAMZ 110, Museum files: 1944, memo from December 22, 1944, 349/1944.

⁴⁰ AAMZ 110, Museum files: 1944, record from September 16, 1944, 240/1944.

⁴¹ AAMZ 111, Museum files: 1945, “Zapisnik predmeta pohranjen u Arheološkom muzeju od Antuna Adamovića iz Osijeka, Leonarda Grivičića iz Zagreba, Jakova Eltza iz Vukovara,” 219/1945, 229/1945, 227/1945.

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MUZEJ U SLUŽBI VLASTI: ARHEOLOŠKI MUZEJ U ZAGREBU I DRUGI SVJETSKI RAT

Arheološki muzej u Zagrebu u Drugome svjetskom ratu sudionik je u širim društvenim i političkim procesima. Pod okriljem Nezavisne Države Hrvatske Muzej je bio instrument u provedbi ideološki motivirane politike prema kulturnoj baštini.

Iako su na početku rata doneseni zakoni u cilju zaštite arheološke i kulturne baštine, u praksi su ti zakoni iskorišteni za sustavno oduzimanje imovine, posebno od židovskih i srpskih vlasnika. Pod krinkom očuvanja nacionalne baštine provođene su rade i popisivanje privatnih zbirki, a brojni predmeti prisilno su predavani u državne muzeje.

Arheološki muzej postao je skladište za predmete zaplijenjene iz privatnih zbirki. Muzejski su djelatnici, pod pritiskom vlasti, aktivno sudjelovali u tim procesima. Njihova uloga protezala se od popisivanja predmeta do njihova prijenosa u Muzej.

Takva praksa imala je dugoročne posljedice za Muzej i hrvatsku kulturnu baštinu. Mnogi predmeti nasilu su odvojeni od svojeg konteksta i izvornih vlasnika, a njihova provenijencija često je nejasna.

Iako je Arheološki muzej u Zagrebu imao važnu ulogu u očuvanju hrvatske baštine, tijekom Drugoga svjetskog rata bio je dio mračnog razdoblja povijesti. Ovaj rad pokazuje kako su muzeji kao ustanove uvučeni u političke procese i kako su njihove zbirke postale žrtve ideologije.