

Stolen and Returned: The Marble Statue of *Philippe* from Samos

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Abstract

For almost a year, from November 1943 to October 1944, the Greek island of Samos was under German occupation. General Friedrich-Wilhelm Müller, who was responsible for Samos, ruthlessly exploited his position of power and attempted to secretly take the *Philippe*, a female statue of the so-called Geneleos Group, out of the country. Fortunately, this criminal action and the planned transport of the statue to Trier were prevented by the Kunstschutz of the Wehrmacht. Finally, in 1954, the *Philippe* was returned

from the Athens National Museum to Samos, where it is now exhibited in the archaeological museum of Vathi. The adventure of the *Philippe* statue sheds light on the situation of the antiquities on Samos during the German occupation. Selected sources will also be used to show how the Kunstschutz officers proceeded in their rescue operations and how they themselves defined their role as part of the German Wehrmacht after the war.

Introduction

[1] In the 1930s, the Samos Heraion excavation was seen as the most important undertaking of the German Archaeological Institute (DAI). Numerous publications document the important discoveries and valuable scientific knowledge gained on the island. The outbreak of World War II and the subsequent occupation of Greece led to a cessation of all DAI activities on Samos for several years. Samos was subject to three successive occupations during the war: first under Italy (May 1941 to September 1943), then Britain (“temporary liberation” from September to November 1943), and finally under the Germans (November 1943 to October 1944). The final liberation took place on 5 October 1944. The island, situated in the eastern Aegean Sea in direct proximity to neutral Turkey, was in a state of constant emergency. During the occupation, Samos endured looting, bombardments, and massacres. Under these conditions of general lawlessness, archaeological artefacts from the excavations at the important ancient sanctuary of Hera were also at great risk—a topic that is the focus of this article. Some fundamental works, which formed an important starting point for this article, have been published in recent years.¹

The major DAI excavations in Greece during the National Socialist Era

[2] In 1933, the year in which Hitler seized power in Germany, the DAI Athens found itself in a critical situation. Without external assistance, it was not in a position to carry out and fund its most important and prestigious excavations in Greece. The Olympia excavation had been on hold since 1929² and would not be revived until 1936, to coincide with the Olympic Games to be held in Berlin. From the first excavation campaign in autumn 1936 until war led to a further cessation in 1943, the activities in Olympia were paid for by Hitler’s personal funds. The budget plans were

¹ Βασίλειος Πετράκος, “Τα αρχαία της Ελλάδος κατά τον πόλεμο 1940–1944”, in: *Mentor* 7 (1994), no. 31, 69-185; Βασίλειος Πετράκος, *Πρόχειρον αρχαιολογικόν 1828–2012*, Athens 2013; Βασίλειος Πετράκος, *Το παρελθόν σε δεσμά*, 4 vols., Athens 2021; Georgia Flouda, “Archaeology in the War Zone: August Schörgendorfer and the Kunstschutz on Crete during World War II”, in: *Annual of the British School at Athens* 112 (2017), 341-377; Eleni Pipelia, *The Looted Antiquities in Greece during World War II: Case Studies of Return and Restitutions*, Athens 2014, https://www.academia.edu/9907132/The_looted_antiquities_in_Greece_during_World_War_II_case_studies_of_return_and_restitutions (accessed 2 March 2023); Elevation Akrivopoulou, “Art Theft in Thessaloniki during the German Occupation” (lecture, American School of Classical Studies at Athens, April 2022); Irene Bald Romano, “Antiquities in the Nazi Era: Contexts and Broader View”, *RIHA Journal* 0282, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11588/riha.2023.2.92735>, paragraphs 8-11, on antiquities in Greece during the Nazi occupation. On the restitution of antiquities stolen in Greece during World War II, see also “Griechenland in Österreich – Nachrichten der Botschaft”, 8 December 2017, <https://www.mfa.gr/missionsabroad/de/austria-de/news/veranstaltung-in-der-griechischen-botschaft-in-wien-anlasslich-der-rueckgabe-26-antiker-griechischer-objekte-von-der-universitaet-graz-an-griechenland-die-illegal-aus-kreta-waehrend-der-nazi-besatzung-griechenlands-entwendet-waren.html>, and Thomas Wagner, “Baden-Württemberg gibt Nazibeute zurück”, in: Deutschlandfunk, 18 June 2014, <https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/raubkunst-baden-wuerttemberg-gibt-nazibeute-zurueck-100.html> (both accessed 2 March 2023).

² For information regarding archaeological research in Greece during 1929 and 1930, see *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (1930), no. 5, 115-120: annual report “1929–1930”.

based on prior work and calculations that had already been carried out in 1934–1935 by former employees of the DAI, Georg Karo and Heinz Johannes³. Finally, in 1937, the experienced experts Emil Kunze and Hans Schleif were selected to lead and implement the project⁴. In the seven years that followed, they worked largely independently of the DAI Athens and, due to the generous funding, had access to plenty of machinery, locations for working, and a large group of assistants, expert colleagues, and technicians⁵.

[3] The DAI Athens' Kerameikos excavation was less generously supported in the early years of the National Socialist regime. Until 1936, funding was provided mainly by donations from the German-American businessman Gustav Oberländer. From 1931 onward, Karl Kübler, working for the DAI on a freelance basis, coordinated all archaeological activities at the ancient cemetery in Athens. The DAI offered assistance in the form of a team of highly specialized experts⁶. The DAI Athens rewarded Kübler's involvement with a permanent contract in 1937. Furthermore, in late 1939 Kübler's preferred candidate, Kurt Gebauer, obtained the highly coveted post of senior assistant at the DAI Athens and was able to provide valuable support in all archaeological undertakings until late 1942⁷. During the occupation, the DAI received additional "significant government funds" and generous donations from Deutsche Industriebank, the German Electricity Company (AEG), the company Dyckerhoff & Widmann as well as from Osram in Berlin and the

³ Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Berlin, Archiv der Zentrale (hereafter: DAI AdZ), Theodor Wiegand papers, correspondence with Georg Karo in April 1935; DAI AdZ, Altregistratur 34-04-I, correspondence 1934 to 1935 with details of the planned undertaking and the cost calculations made by Johannes for the Olympia excavation; Astrid Lindenlauf, "Georg Heinrich Karo. 'Gelehrter und Verteidiger deutschen Geistes'", in: *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 130 (2015), 259-354: 285 n156.

⁴ DAI AdZ, Altregistratur 34-04-II (Ausgrabungen Griechenland Olympia, 01.04.1937–31.09.1939); DAI AdZ, Altregistratur 10-40 (Allgemeine Aufgaben, Leitung und Aufbau, Athen Allgemeines 1936–1945, 1948–1950); Julian Klein, "Hans Schleif. Stationen der Biographie eines Bauforschers im Nationalsozialismus", in: *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 131 (2016), 300-317; Alexandra Kankeleit, "Die feierliche Eröffnung der neuen Ausgrabungen am 10. April 1937 in Olympia", in: *DAI e-Forschungsberichte* (2018), no. 1, 34 [35]-41, <https://publications.dainst.org/journals/efb/2109/6459> (accessed 2 March 2023).

⁵ A newspaper article from 27 March 1938, which refers to a talk given by Hans Schleif, gives an impression of the huge scope of the excavation. According to the article, during one year of the excavation, approximately 800 workers were involved and over 70,000 cubic meters of rubble had to be removed; see DAI AdZ, Altregistratur 34-04-II.

⁶ *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (1931), cols. 215-216: annual report "1930–1931"; Jutta Stroszeck, *Der Kerameikos in Athen. Geschichte, Bauten und Denkmäler im archäologischen Park*, Möhnesee 2014.

⁷ Alexandra Kankeleit, "Athen, Griechenland. Aufarbeitung der Geschichte des DAI Athen. Die Arbeiten der Jahre 2017 und 2018", in: *DAI e-Forschungsberichte* (2019), no. 1, 41-63, <https://publications.dainst.org/journals/efb/2180/6593> (accessed 2 March 2023); Kurt Gebauer papers (in the possession of his grandson Gregor Gebauer), letter from Kurt Gebauer to Ernst Buschor on 2 August 1941 and letter from Kurt Gebauer to Gerhart Rodenwaldt, 22 September 1941; Alexandra Kankeleit, "Το βλέμμα του κατακτητή: Η Ελλάδα στις φωτογραφίες 1941–1944. Γερμανοί αρχαιολόγοι στην Ελλάδα κατά τη διάρκεια του Β' Παγκοσμίου Πολέμου", video presentation, 12 April 2019, <https://www.blod.gr/lectures/to-blemma-tou-katakiti-i-ellada-stis-fotografies-1941-1944-germano-i-arhaiologoi-stin-ellada-kata-ti-diarkeia-tou-b-pagkos-miou-polemou/>, starts at 17:50 (accessed 2 March 2023).

Electricity Company in Athens⁸. This funding meant that the excavation area could be continuously expanded and thoroughly investigated during the war.

[4] However, until 1936 the Heraion of Samos was considered the “most exceptional undertaking of the Institute”⁹. Numerous publications by the head of the excavation, Ernst Buschor, and his colleagues, including the architect and archaeologist Hans Schleif and the pottery and ceramics specialist Richard Eilmann, testify to the significant discoveries and immense knowledge gained on Samos¹⁰. As the excavation was directly funded by the DAI headquarters in Berlin from the “Samos fund”, it was not always clear that this was a DAI Athens project. For example, Karo, First Director of the DAI Athens from 1930 to 1936, acknowledged that the “Samos campaign” ought to be referred to as an “Institute excavation” even if it “was not led by an employee of the Institute”¹¹. In fact, Buschor was employed full-time as a professor at the University of Munich from 1929 (Fig. 1)¹². His colleagues at the Samos excavation were also frequently not employees of the German Archaeological Institute.

⁸ *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (1941), p. VI: annual report “1940–1941”; *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (1942), col. 203: annual report “1941-1942”.

⁹ *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (1936), p. VII : annual report “1935–1936”.

¹⁰ Ernst Buschor, “Heraion von Samos: frühe Bauten”, in: *Athenische Mitteilungen* 56 (1930), 1-99; Ernst Buschor, “Altsamische Grabstelen”, in: *Athenische Mitteilungen* 58 (1933), 22-46; Ernst Buschor and Hans Schleif, “Heraion von Samos: der Altarplatz der Frühzeit”, in: *Athenische Mitteilungen* 58 (1933), 146-173; Ernst Buschor, *Altsamische Standbilder*, Berlin 1934, 26-29, figs. 92-95; Ernst Buschor, “Bronzekanne aus Samos”, in: *Abhandlungen der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Historische Klasse* 17 (1944), 1-33; Richard Eilmann, “Frühe griechische Keramik im samischen Heraion”, in: *Athenische Mitteilungen* 58 (1933), 47-145; Hans Schleif, “Der große Altar der Hera von Samos”, in: *Athenische Mitteilungen* 58 (1933), 174-210; Hans Schleif, “Heraion von Samos: das Vorgelände des Tempels”, in: *Athenische Mitteilungen* 58 (1933), 211-247.

¹¹ Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Athen (hereafter: DAI Athens), Archive, box 10 (previously box 37), letter from Theodor Wiegand to Georg Karo, 19 October 1934; letter from Georg Karo to Theodor Wiegand, 23 October 1934.

¹² *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (1930), p. V; *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (1931), p. IV.



Fig. 1. Cheerful scene from the interwar period: Ernst Buschor (in the center) with his Greek excavation team at the Heraion of Samos, without date, presumably in the 1930s (photograph: Ernst Buschor papers in the possession of his grandson Michael Kraft)

[5] Extensive archaeological research took place on the island up until 1939. The results were swiftly presented in various excavation reports and special monographs. However, the outbreak of World War II and the subsequent occupation of Greece (1941–1944) put a stop to all DAI activities for a period of several years. In the following sections, previously unseen documents will be presented that show the threat posed to the ancient artifacts on Samos during the war and particularly during the German occupation of the island¹³.

Samos during World War II

[6] During World War II, the island of Samos experienced a turbulent and highly dramatic period that would also have consequences for archaeological work. Following the capitulation of Greece in April 1941, Samos fell under Italian rule, and on 8 May 1941 some 9,000 men from the 6th Infantry Division “Cuneo” occupied the island. At the same time, members of the German military also visited the island. The interest that the German invaders had in the island can be seen, for example, in the military’s reconnaissance map dating from 1941 (Fig. 2).

¹³ For more information on the fate of archaeological artifacts on Samos, see Υπουργείου Θρησκευμάτων και Εθνικής Παιδείας, eds., *Ζημίες των αρχαιοτήτων εκ του πολέμου και των στρατών κατοχής*, Athens 1946, 17-18, 28-29, <http://anemi.lib.uoc.gr/metadata/4/2/9/metadata-1333521439-162633-20737.tkl> (accessed 2 March 2023); British Committee on the Preservation and Restitution of Works of Art, Archives and Other Material in Enemy Hands, ed., *Works of Art in Greece, the Greek Islands and the Dodecanese. Losses and Survivals in the War*, London 1946, 27-28, <https://viewer.slv.vic.gov.au/?entity=IE4874170&mode=browse> (accessed 2 March 2023); Roland Hampe, “Griechischer und englischer Kunstschutzbericht”, in: *Gnomon* 22 (1950), 4-5, 7-8, 13, 16; Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv Freiburg i. Br., RW40-116a, and Bundesarchiv Koblenz, B120-258, final report by Wilhelm Kraiker “Der Kunstschutz in Griechenland” (The [German] department for the protection of art in Greece), 13 February 1945, 3; Πετράκος, *Το παρελθόν σε δεσμά*, vol. 4, 47-54, no. 766 on the state of the five depositories for antiquities on the island of Samos (museums, exhibition spaces, public collections, and storerooms).



Fig. 2. German military map from 1941 showing the Heraion of Samos (red dot) on the east side of the island (reprod. from: Staatsbibliothek Berlin, Kart. 8193-Sheets 5 and 6: Samos Osthälfte; Griechische Inseln / hergestellt im Auftr. Gen. St. d. H., Abt. f. Kr.-Kart. and Verm.-W. [II])

[7] In September 1943, the Armistice of Cassibile resulted in British troops taking control of the island. However, they were only able to remain for a short time. German aerial bombardment led to the capitulation of the British and the Italians loyal to Chief of Staff Pietro Badoglio. For almost one year, from November 1943 to October 1944, Samos was in German hands. Footage from the *Deutsche Wochenschau* (German newsreel) from 1943 details the taking prisoner and deportation of the British and Italian troops¹⁴. The footage shows the German general Friedrich-Wilhelm Müller in a relaxed mood with other members of the German army drinking the famous Samos wine and enjoying local agricultural products such as bananas and lemons¹⁵.

The planning of a “rescue mission” in 1942?

[8] For the DAI these events meant that from 1940 onward all archaeological activities on Samos had to be stopped. Even a visit to the island during this period was a very dangerous undertaking, as Walther Wrede, First Director of the DAI Athens from 1937 to 1944, repeatedly mentioned in

¹⁴ *Die Deutsche Wochenschau*, no. 692 of 12 August 1943, in: Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/1943-12-08-Die-Deutsche-Wochenschau-692>, starts at 15:00 (accessed 2 March 2023).

¹⁵ For more information on the situation on Samos during the war, see Γιάννης Ζαφείρης, *Η κατοχή και η εθνική αντίσταση στη Σάμο*, Athens 1962; Hagen Fleischer, *Im Kreuzschatten der Mächte: Griechenland 1941–1944. Okkupation, Resistance, Kollaboration*, 2 vols., Frankfurt am Main 1986, vol. 1, 305–311; Mark Mazower, *Inside Hitler's Greece. The Experience of Occupation, 1941–44*, New Haven 1993, 72, 148. For more on General Friedrich-Wilhelm Müller, see Franz-Josef Schmit, *Wittlichs erster Standortkommandant: General Friedrich Wilhelm Müller als Divisionschef und Kommandant der “Festung Kreta” und seine Verantwortung für Kriegsverbrechen der Wehrmacht im besetzten Griechenland 1941–1944*, Wittlich 2015 (thanks to Bettina Münch-Rosenthal for drawing my attention to the material).

letters to the headquarters in Berlin¹⁶. However, for a short period in 1942 a state of relative calm seemed to have existed. Buschor planned a trip to Samos in the autumn of that year in order to, among other things, help transport a box with damaged bronze figures. A document from the archive of the Greek Ministry of Culture provides details on the preparations (Fig. 3)¹⁷:

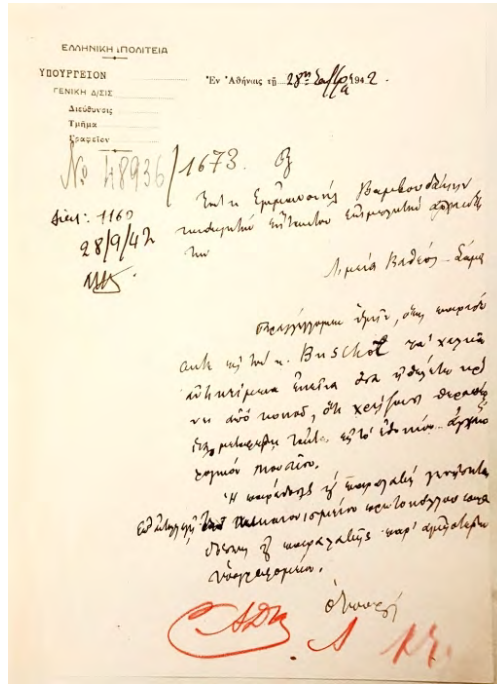


Fig. 3. Letter from the Greek government to Emmanuel Bamboudakis, curator of the antiquities in Limenas Vatheos (Port Vathi, capital of Samos), 28 September 1942 (reprod. from: Greek Ministry of Culture [as n37], box 604, document 1160/28-9-1942)

Here is the transcript of the text, which is difficult to read:

Ελληνική Πολιτεία
 Εν Αθήναις τη 28η Σεπτεμβρίου 1942
 [...]

 Εις κ. Εμμανουήλ Βαμβουδάκη καθηγητήν έκτακτον επιμελητήν αρχαιοτήτων
 του
 Λιμένα Βαθέος - //Σάμου//
 Παραγγέλλομεν υμίν, όπως παραδώσατε εις τον κ. Buschor τα χαλκά

¹⁶ Marie Vigener, “Ein wichtiger kulturpolitischer Faktor”. *Das Deutsche Archäologische Institut zwischen Wissenschaft, Politik und Öffentlichkeit, 1918–1954*, Rahden 2012, 94 n366; DAI AdZ, 10-40, letter from Walther Wrede to Martin Schede, 13 October 1941: “Samos. At that time, the military authorities strictly stated that under no circumstances would they allow any prominent persons to travel to Samos due to the danger of such a trip. We intend to soften this stance and determine whether the danger really is that acute”; DAI AdZ, 10-40, letter from Martin Schede to Walther Wrede, 13 June 1942: “Buschor will be informed; at the meeting of the Central Direction, he already stated his willingness to travel to Samos in the autumn”. (Translations by A. Kankeleit).

¹⁷ Thanks to Archontoula Papoulakou for drawing my attention to the document.

αντικείμενα εκείνα όσα ηθέλετε κρίνει από κοινού, ότι χρήζωσι θεραπείας
ίνα μεταφέρη ταύτα εις το εθνικόν αρχαιολογικόν μουσείον.
Η παράδοσις και παραλαβή //γενήσεται// επ' //ανταλλαγή// του
//κανονισμένου// πρωτοκόλλου παράδοσης και παραλαβής παρ' αμφοτέρων
υπογραφομένων.
ο Υπουργός

And here is the free translation:

The Greek Government
Athens, 28 September 1942
[...]
To: Mr Emmanuel Bamboudakis, teacher and exceptional curator of the antiquities
of
Limenas Vatheos [Port Vathi: Capital of Samos] of Samos
We instruct that the bronze objects on which there is agreement that they require
restoration are to be handed over to Mr Buschor, so that they can be brought by him to
the Archaeological National Museum [in Athens].
The handing over and acceptance will take place after the corresponding protocol has
been signed by both sides.
The Minister
[presumably Konstantinos Logothetopoulos]

To date, there are hardly any references or further information about Buschor's trip to Samos in 1942¹⁸. The military and political situation made such a trip almost impossible. Not until 1944 is there evidence that German archaeologists, including Walther Wrede and Wilhelm Kraiker, visited the island for an extended stay¹⁹.

¹⁸ DAI Athens, Archive, box B7 (previously box 39), *Bericht über Personal und Tätigkeit der Zweigstelle Athen in dem Geschäftsjahr 1. April 1942 – 31. März 1943* [Report on personnel and activities of the Athens Branch Office during the fiscal year April 1, 1942 – March 31, 1943]: "Die Gastzimmer des Hauses Phidiasstrasse 1 wurden bewohnt von den Institutsangestellten [...] sowie von den Gästen: Prof. E. Buschor (auf der Durchreise nach und von Samos) [...]." [The guest rooms of the house at Phidiasstrasse 1 were occupied by the institute staff [...] as well as by the guests: Prof. E. Buschor (passing through on his way to and from Samos) [...]. There is no information on the exact date of the trip.

¹⁹ On a trip by Hans-Ulrich von Schoenebeck to Samos in 1942: Raik Stolzenberg, "Samos zwischen den Fronten", in: Laura Puritani, Martin Maischberger and Birgit Sporleder, eds., *Konstantinopel – Samos – Berlin: Verpfändung, Fundteilung und heimliche Ausfuhr von Antiken am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkrieges*, Heidelberg 2022 (= *Schriften zur Geschichte der Berliner Museen*, 7), 280-337: 331 n253, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11588/arthistoricum.1014> (accessed 2 March 2023). According to a letter from Hans-Ulrich von Schoenebeck to Ernst Buschor, von Schoenebeck considered a journey to Samos to be relatively harmless but ruled out continuing the excavation work altogether. Rather, he demanded that particularly sensitive objects made of wood or bronze be transported to Athens by Greek and German experts. DAI AdZ, folder 34-02 (Samos 1936-1956), 4 June 1942.

The theft of an ancient marble statue: The *Philippe* of the Geneleos Group

[9] Another incident involving German archaeologists occurred toward the end of 1943; it concerned the archaic marble statue of the *Philippe*²⁰ stolen by the previously mentioned General Friedrich-Wilhelm Müller. Ulf Jantzen (1909–2000; Fig. 4), a long-serving employee and former director of the DAI Athens, describes the incident in his memoirs (Fig. 5). Accordingly, the German Kunstschutz in Greece would prevent this theft²¹:



Fig. 4. Ulf Jantzen in the 1930s (photograph: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Berlin, Archiv der Zentrale, Frank Brommer papers, box 1, photo album)

²⁰ For current literature on the statue group and its inscription, see Puritani, Maischberger and Sporleder (2022), 183-184 n95; Konstantinos Tsakos, *Samos: The Archaeological Museums*, Athens 2012, 26-27, https://www.latsis-foundation.org/content/elib/book_19/samos_en.pdf (accessed 2 March 2023).

²¹ The Kunstschutz was a special German military unit composed of archaeologists and art historians whose task was to protect the cultural heritage of the occupied countries. Selected literature on the Kunstschutz in World War II: Hampe (1950); Julia Freifrau Hiller von Gaertringen, "Deutsche archäologische Unternehmungen im besetzten Griechenland 1941–1944", in: *Athenische Mitteilungen* 110 (1995), 461-490; Christina Kott, "Der Deutsche 'Kunstschutz' im Ersten und Zweiten Weltkrieg. Ein Vergleich", in: Ulrich Pfeil, ed., *Deutsch-französische Kultur- und Wissenschaftsbeziehungen im 20. Jahrhundert*, Oldenburg/Munich 2007 (= *Pariser Historische Studien*, 81), 137-153, https://perspectivia.net//publikationen/phs/pfeil_wissenschaftsbeziehungen/kott_kunstschutz (accessed 2 March 2023); Christina Kott, "'Kunstschutz im Zeichen des totalen Krieges'. Johann Albrecht von Reiszitz und Wilhelm Unverzagt in Serbien, 1941–1944", in: *Acta Praehistorica et Archaeologica* 49 (2017), 245-270, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11588/apa.2017.1.79241>; Flouda (2017); Christian Fuhrmeister, *Die Abteilung "Kunstschutz" in Italien: Kunstgeschichte, Politik und Propaganda 1936–1963*, Vienna 2019; Alexandra Kankeleit, "Briefe aus dem Exil: Karl Lehmann und Karl Schefold im Jahr 1945", in: *Antike Kunst* 63 (2020), 69-92; Πετράκος (2021); Hans-Werner Langbrandtner, Esther Rahel Heyer and Florence Peyronnet-Dryden, eds., *Kulturgutschutz in Europa und im Rheinland: Franziskus Graf Wolff Metternich und der Kunstschutz im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Vienna 2021.

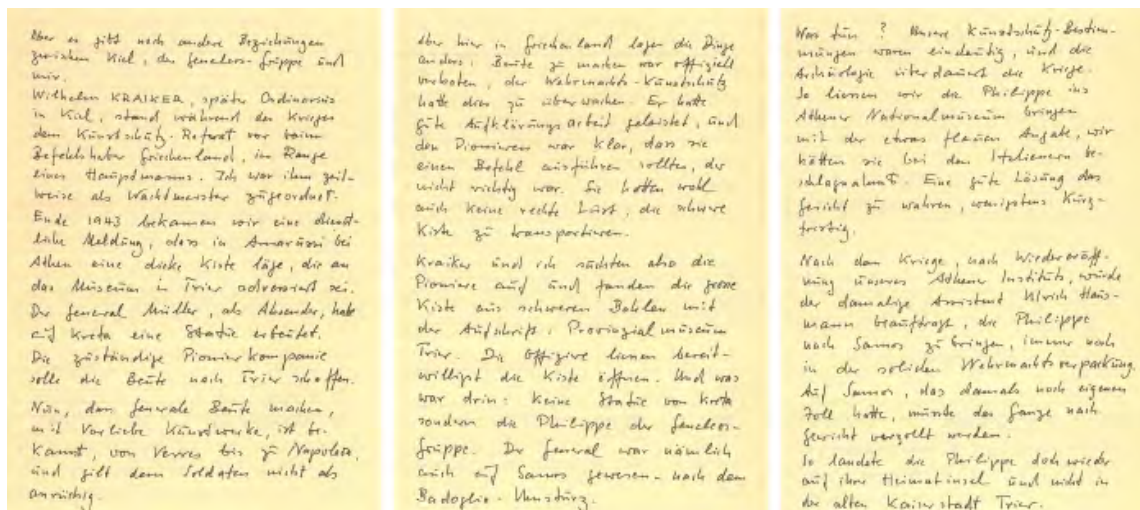


Fig. 5. Extracts from the publication by Ulf Jantzen, *Anekdoten zur Geneleos-Gruppe*, Kiel 1990 (= Facsimile of the original handwritten manuscript [18 pages]), 16-18

In late 1943, we [i.e., Kraiker and Jantzen as representatives of the German Kunstschutz department in Greece] received an official message that a large box addressed to the museum in Trier was waiting in Amarussi near Athens. General Müller, who was responsible for sending the box, had taken a statue from Crete. The responsible pioneer battalion was supposed to transport the statue to Trier. It is a well-known fact that generals, from Verres to Napoleon, like to plunder—preferably artworks—and soldiers see nothing wrong with this. But here in Greece the situation was different: Plundering was officially forbidden, and the army's Kunstschutz department was supposed to enforce this. [...] The officers were perfectly willing to open the box. And what was inside? Not a statue from Crete, but the Philippe of the Geneleos Group. The general had also been on Samos, following the defeat of Badoglio's troops. What were we to do? Our instructions from the Kunstschutz were clear, and archaeology outlives war²².

²² Ulf Jantzen, *Anekdoten zur Geneleos-Gruppe*, Kiel 1990 (= Facsimile of the original handwritten manuscript [18 pages]), 16-18; Ulf Jantzen and Adolf Heuser, "Kriegsbeute aus Samos für das Trierer Provinzialmuseum?", in: *Kurtrierisches Jahrbuch* 37 (1997), 211-214; for more information on the incident, see also Hampe (1950), 5: "After the bombardment of Tigani, during which the Dimarchion [town hall], in which the ancient artifacts were housed, suffered damage, a German military unit stole the Philippe statue of the Geneleos Group and brought it to Athens. The vigilant German Kunstschutz department managed to intercept the transport. W. Kraiker handed the statue over to Ms. Semni Karusu, Ephor of Antiquities at the Nat.-Mus. [...]". For more details on the robbery and later transfer of the *Philippe* to the National Museum of Athens from April to June 1944, see Πετράκος (2021), vol. 2: 219-221, vol. 4: 45-46, 50.

[10] The *Philippe* belonged to a group of six archaic statues forming a dedicatory monument to Hera and was signed by the sculptor Geneleos; the name Philippe is inscribed on the drapery on the statue's right side (Figs. 6, 7)²³. It is no longer clear whether the statue was destined for the archaeological museum in Trier or for Müller's private collection in Wittlich²⁴. In 1944 the *Philippe* was brought by the Kunstschutz to the National Museum in Athens, where, thankfully, it survived the occupation and the Greek Civil War that followed. In the 1950s, partly thanks to the efforts of Ulrich Hausmann (discussed below), a member of the DAI Athens' research staff from 1952 to 1955, the statue returned to Samos and has been an important attraction at the archaeological museum in Vathi ever since.



Fig. 6. The *Philippe* of the Geneleos Group from Samos, around 550 BC (photograph: DAI Athens, image archive, D-DAI-ATH-Samos-6650)

²³ The *Philippe's* sister statue *Ornithe* had already been taken to Berlin before World War I following German excavations on Samos. Documents in the Zentralarchiv of the Staatliche Museen in Berlin provide detailed information about the transport to Germany: SMB-ZA, I/ANT 007 (Title: "Ausgrabungen in Milet, Priene, Didyma, Myos und auf Samos. Vol. 5: 1911–1914"); see: Puritani, Maischberger and Sporleder (2022). Also fundamental to this topic: Θανάσης Καλπαξής, *Αρχαιολογία και πολιτική I: Σαμιακά αρχαιολογικά 1850–1914*, Rethymno 1990; on the presentation of the *Ornithe* statue in East Berlin after World War II, see Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli, *Hitler, Mussolini und ich. Aus dem Tagebuch eines Großbürgers*, trans. from the Italian, commented on, and ed. by Elmar Kossel, Berlin 2016, 123.

²⁴ Unfortunately, the papers in the museum's archive do not offer any clues. (Thanks to Jürgen Merten from the Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier for the information.) Müller's hometown of Wittlich is just a few kilometers from Trier; see n15 above. However, there is no evidence of direct contact between Müller and the director of the Trier Museum at that time, Wilhelm von Massow. It is also not clear whether Müller intended to remove other artifacts from Greece.

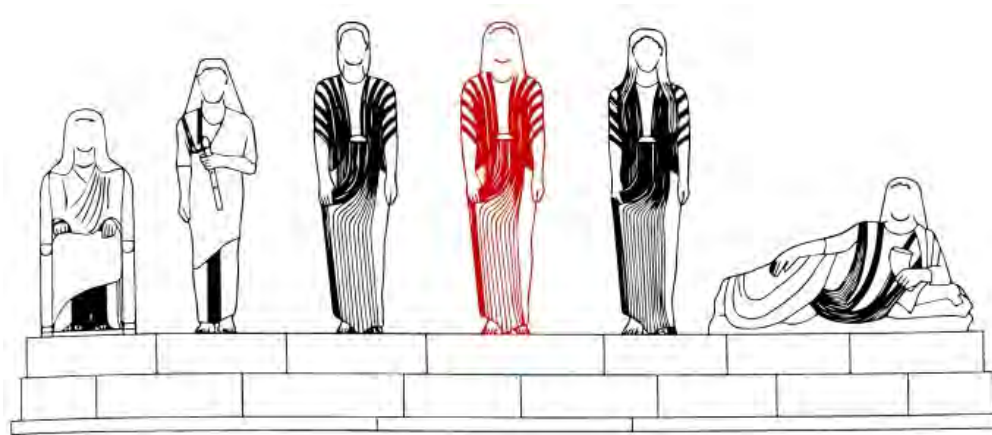


Fig. 7. Reconstruction of the Geneleos Group. Statue of Philippe (marked in red) in the center (reprod. from: Elena Walter-Karyde, "Geneleos", in: *Athenische Mitteilungen* 100 [1985], 91-104)

Self-reflection and self-criticism after 1945? German archaeologists on their responsibility during the Occupation

[11] Jantzen's uplifting report does not go into the background and reasons as to why the theft of the *Philippe* statue in 1943 was possible in the first place²⁵. The war and repeated occupation of Samos meant that the desperate local population had no chance to resist the acts of plundering and destruction carried out by the Italian and German occupying forces²⁶. Jantzen completely ignores this aspect and instead presents himself and Kraiker as saviors of the situation. Admittedly, the *Kunstschutz* was able to prevent the theft of the *Philippe* statue²⁷, but by 1990 one might have hoped for a more critical and nuanced analysis of the wartime events and his role as a former representative of the German occupiers. Nevertheless, Jantzen does offer some insight into his way of thinking by depicting the occupation of Greece as a daring adventure, indeed almost as a test of courage. Meanwhile, other German archaeologists who held important

²⁵ Other texts by Jantzen that address the occupation reveal a similar view: Ulf Jantzen, *Einhundert Jahre Athener Institut, 1874–1974* (= *Das Deutsche Archäologische Institut. Geschichte und Dokumente*, 10), Mainz 1986, 55-56; Ulf Jantzen, "Anekdoten II: Kreta 1941–1942", in: *Athenische Mitteilungen* 110 (1995), 491-499. In an article in the German military newspaper *Veste Kreta* from 18 February 1943, he lists his achievements in protecting valuable cultural artifacts on Crete (Thanks to Julia Hiller von Gaertringen for drawing my attention to the material). The reader gets the impression that the ancient artifacts were, thanks to Jantzen, better cared for than ever and that the Greek population ought to be grateful to him and the *Kunstschutz* for their service.

²⁶ General Friedrich-Wilhelm Müller was sentenced to death for war crimes on Crete by a Greek court and executed in Athens in 1947.

²⁷ The *Kunstschutz* did help to ensure that in Greece, compared to other occupied countries (particularly the territories in the East), the theft of artworks and the destruction of ancient cultural artifacts and monuments remained relatively limited. The damage would certainly have been greater had it not been for the *Kunstschutz* and had responsibility for ancient Greek culture lain exclusively with organizations such as the Reichsleiter Rosenberg Task Force (ERR) and the SS Ahnenerbe; for more information on the ambivalent role played by the *Kunstschutz* during World War II, see Kott (2007), 150-152; Kott (2017), 248, 267; Fuhrmeister (2019), 298-299.

positions in Greece during the occupation never made any public statements on this period. When the war ended, they retreated into silence²⁸.

[12] Three documents from the papers of Graf Wolff-Metternich²⁹ offer an impression of how Kraiker, just a few years after the end of the war, assessed the relationship between Germany and Greece. Similar to Jantzen, Kraiker emphasized the altruistic service of the Kunstschutz in Greece and its dedication to higher aims. In addition, he defended the German military commanders who were in charge in Greece during the war (Fig. 8):

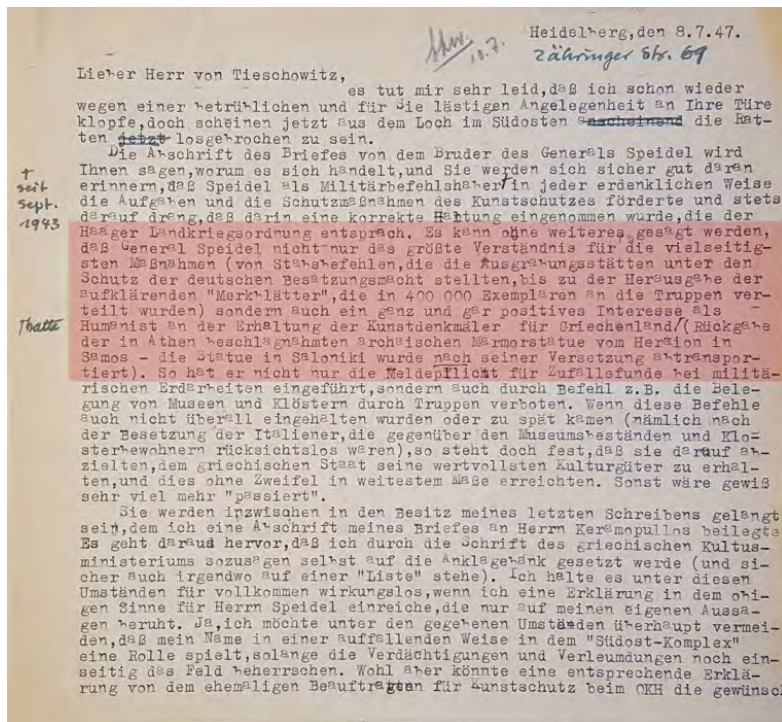


Fig. 8. Letter from Wilhelm Kraiker to Bernhard von Tieschowitz, 8 July 1947 (reprod. from: Metternich papers [as n29], no. 146; red marking by A. Kankeleit)

²⁸ The reports by Roland Hampe from the 1940s and 1950s are an exception. These will be discussed in a different context. Other archaeologists, including Emil Kunze, Karl Kübler, and Erich Boehringer, maintained a stubborn silence after 1945 concerning their war experiences in Greece. There are almost no photographs of these individuals in the critical period 1939–1944; this is remarkable given the emphasis that the German military's propaganda machine placed on photographs of ancient sites (see n7 above).

²⁹ Franz Graf Wolff-Metternich and Bernhard von Tieschowitz were in charge of the Kunstschutz in several occupied countries during World War II, including France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, and Greece. They were thus the former superiors of Wilhelm Kraiker, who led the Kunstschutz in Greece from 1942 to 1944. The estate of Franz Graf Wolff-Metternich has been deposited with the Vereinigte Adelsarchive im Rheinland e. V. (VAR) since 2013: Vereinigte Adelsarchive im Rheinland e. V. (VAR), Pulheim / Schloss Ehreshoven, Familienarchiv der Grafen Wolff Metternich zur Gracht (Archiv Schloss Gracht), Nachlass Franziskus Graf Wolff Metternich (hereafter: Metternich papers). See the online database "Sachinventar zum militärischen Kunstschutz im Zweiten Weltkrieg – Archivübergreifendes Findmittel zur Kontextforschung Kulturgutschutz", <https://kunstschutz-wolff-metternich.de> and <https://adelsarchive-rheinland.de/mitgliedsarchive.html>.

Without any doubt it can be said that General Speidel possessed not only complete understanding for the various measures that were undertaken [...] but also had a deep interest as a humanist in preserving Greek cultural artifacts (handing back the archaic marble statue that had been stolen from the Heraion in Samos [...])³⁰.

Kraiker was even more explicit in his correspondence with Metternich (Fig. 9):

For weeks, the entire contents of the museum in Vathi lay out in the open, vulnerable to any passer-by—local or foreign—and neither the Greek guard nor the assistant curator in Vathi made any effort to bury them. The Italian soldiers who had temporarily been stationed at the museum emptied all the museum’s cabinets and other collections and dumped them on the street. The cabinets, windows and doors as well as the museum’s roof were so badly damaged by bombs and this treatment that they no longer offered sufficient protection for the museum’s contents, the most valuable of which came from German excavations before the war. To ensure the safety of the most valuable contents that were able to be transported, I, the undersigned, transported a number of them to Athens where they were handed over to Christos Karuzos, the Director of the National Museum. As the museum did not have an inventory, no protocol was drawn up [...]³¹.

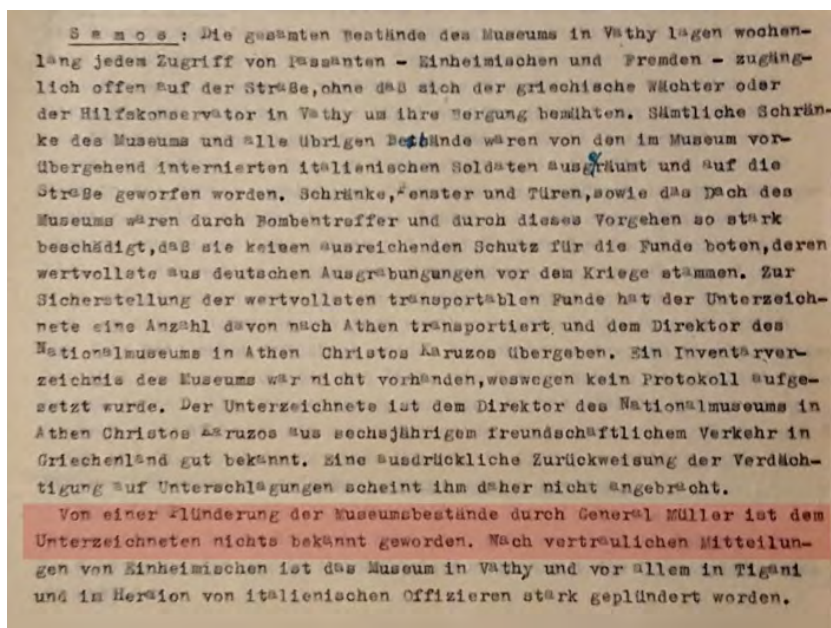


Fig. 9. Statement by Wilhelm Kraiker “On the memorandum: ‘Ancient works of art looted by the Germans from Greece’”, 15 September 1948 (reprod. from: Metternich papers [as n29], no. 171; red marking by A. Kankeleit)

³⁰ Letter from Wilhelm Kraiker to Bernhard von Tieschowitz, 8 July 1947, in: Metternich papers (as n29), no. 146; General Wilhelm Speidel was the military commander of Greece (MBGR: Militärbefehlshaber Griechenland) from September 1942 to April 1944. He was sentenced to 20 years in prison in 1948 but was released early in 1951.

³¹ Statement by Wilhelm Kraiker “On the memorandum: ‘Ancient works of art looted by the Germans from Greece’”, 15 September 1948, in: Metternich papers (as n29), no. 171.

The undersigned is unaware of any plundering of the museum's contents by General Müller (Fig. 9, see the passage marked in red). He relates that, according to confidential reports from locals, the museums in Vathi and in particular in Tigani and in the Heraion were badly plundered by Italian officers³².

[13] On the other hand, Kraiker sent a strongly worded letter to Antonios Keramopoulos, the editor of the Greek report on the damage to antiquities caused by the war and the occupying armies (Fig. 10):

I read with interest your report on damage caused to ancient artifacts in Greece during the war, which was published by the Greek Ministry of Culture last year. [...]

Following the fall of the Hitler regime, which suppressed every independent opinion, today, thank God, nobody can prevent me from speaking out on the reprehensible nature of such unnecessary damage, given that we are now at least free again to express personal views.

I'm sure you will understand if I make use of this freedom in relation to you to also address the questions that the report raises. In so doing, I would like to refer to a statement by Robert D'Harcourt, who as a professor at the Institut Catholique in Paris [...] is a man whom you would surely not accuse of a lack of patriotism or blindness regarding the "German evil". In addition, he is the citizen of a country which suffered a lot more under German occupation than your country and fellow citizens did. [...]

"The mistake that many foreigners make with respect to National Socialism lay in the fact that in all areas, from troops to leadership, they saw evidence of the crime, whereas the Third Reich really involved just one adventurer coming into contact with hundreds of thousands of decent citizens and petit-bourgeoisie [...]"³³.

This last point I would also like to claim for myself and as evidence briefly draw your attention to the following: The prevention of further illegal excavations and systematic plundering by the Rosenberg Kommando. The rescue of the Geneleos statue from the Heraion in Samos, performed by me in Athens, where the statue was already packed and ready to be sent to Germany. However, the Greek report fails to mention that I—with a hand-written letter from the military commander—handed the statue over to Ms Karousou, the Ephor in the National Museum³⁴.

³² Statement by Wilhelm Kraiker "On the memorandum: 'Ancient works of art looted by the Germans from Greece'", 15 September 1948, in: Metternich papers (as n29), no. 171.

³³ The German text refers to "braven Bürgern und Philistern" (literally, decent citizens and philistines). *Philister* can have various connotations. We have opted for the meaning of conventional, conservative petit-bourgeoisie (*Spießler*); see Karl Heisig, "Dt. Philister = Spießbürger", in: *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 83 (1964), 345-350.

³⁴ Letter from Wilhelm Kraiker to Antonios Keramopoulos, 27 June 1947, in: Metternich papers (as n29), no. 146; see above for more on the Greek report on the damage to antiquities caused by the war and the

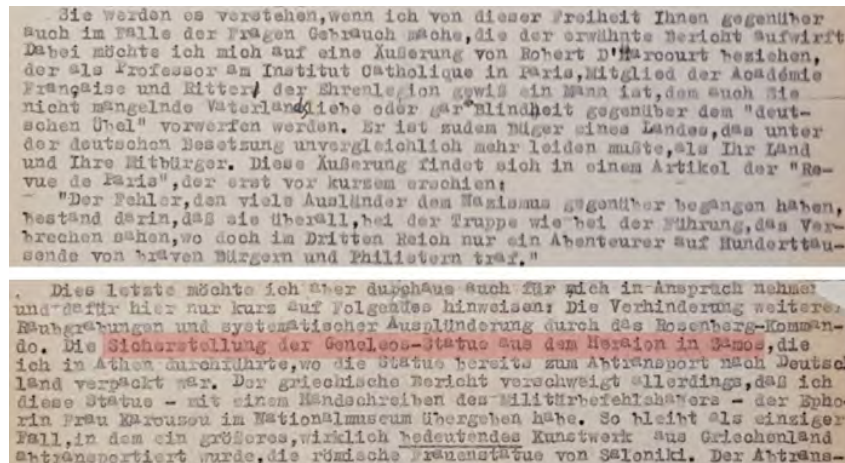


Fig. 10. Letter from Wilhelm Kraiker to Antonios Keramopoulos, 27 June 1947 (reprod. from: Metternich papers [as n29], no. 146; red marking by A. Kankeleit)

[14] The above quotations make it clear that after the war neither Kraiker nor Jantzen felt any responsibility for the crimes perpetrated by the German occupiers or for the resulting suffering endured by the Greek population. They seemed instead to have promoted the image of themselves as defenders of ancient Greek culture who played a benevolent role in the country. The damage caused by the war in Greece seemed not to have concerned them at all. Kraiker even went so far as to claim that Greece suffered far less than France, which in no way reflects the reality³⁵. Both archaeologists adopted the prevailing view in Germany, which placed the blame for the National Socialist regime and World War II on a small group of fanatical manipulators rather than on the broader German population³⁶.

More documents about the art theft on Samos

[15] Previously unknown archival material provides additional information on the handing over of the *Philippe* statue to the National Museum in Athens in 1944 and its eventual return to Samos ten years later. The essential details conform to the version handed down by Jantzen.

[16] A file in the National Archive of Monuments kept by the Greek Ministry of Culture provides information on all objects from Samos that German archaeologists transported to Athens in 1944³⁷. The *Philippe* is mentioned first on a list of objects that were rescued: "The following

occupying armies: nn13, 21, 27, 32; Robert D'Harcourt was a French Catholic intellectual and expert in German culture who played an active role in the French Resistance.

³⁵ For more on the catastrophic situation in Greece during and after the occupation, see Hagen Fleischer, *Griechenland 1941–1944, Kampf gegen Stahlhelm und Krone*, Berlin 1978; Fleischer (1986); Χάγκεν Φλάισερ, *Στέμμα και σβάστικα. Η Ελλάδα της Κατοχής και της Αντίστασης 1941–1944*, Athens 1995; Mazower (1993).

³⁶ For more on this attitude, which prevailed throughout the Adenauer era (Konrad Adenauer, chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany from 1949–1963), see Kankeleit (2020).

³⁷ Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports, Athens, [National Archive of Monuments](#), Historical Archive of Antiquities and Restorations (Υπουργείο Πολιτισμού και Αθλητισμού / Διεύθυνση Διαχείρισης Εθνικού

ancient artifacts were taken from the museums in Samos and given by Kraiker to the National Museum: 1) the headless Philippe statue (from the Geneleos Group) from the museum in Tigani”³⁸.

[17] However, other lists indicate that during the occupation a number of ancient objects were displaced or stolen. In 1948, with the help of the previously mentioned Ernst Buschor, a clay pot from Samos was retrieved on the island of Rhodes (Fig. 11)³⁹.

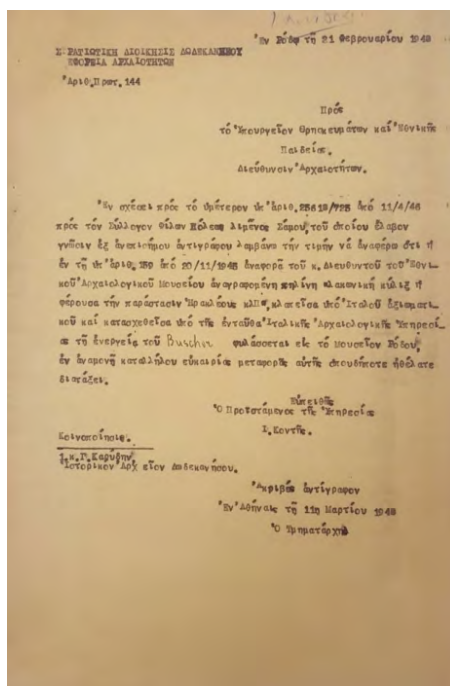


Fig. 11. Letter from Ioannis Kondis to the Greek Ministry of Religious Affairs and National Education, 21 February 1948 (reprod. from: Greek Ministry of Culture [as n37], box 560 E)

[18] A more detailed analysis of the documents in the National Archive of Monuments of the Greek Ministry of Culture would certainly be a worthwhile undertaking. For example, the archive contains a long list of smaller objects, primarily bronze or terracotta statues, which Kraiker

Αρχείου Μνημείων / Τμήμα Διαχείρισης Ιστορικού Αρχείου Αρχαιοτήτων και Αναστηλώσεων [ΥΠΠΟΑ/ΔΔΕΑΜ/ΤΔΙΑΑΑΑ]; hereafter: Greek Ministry of Culture), box 560 E, object list dated 8 February 1945, titled “Verpackte Bronzen” [Packed bronzes], added by hand in Greek: “Given to the National Museum by Kraiker” [Παρεδόθησαν υπό Kraiker στο Έθν.Μουσ.]; damage list of the Greek Antiquities Authority from 27 April 1945.

³⁸ Letter from Christos Karouzos to the Greek Ministry of Religious Affairs and National Education (Υπουργείο Θρησκευμάτων και Εθνικής Παιδείας; now Ministry of Culture and Sports), 20 November 1945, in: Greek Ministry of Culture (as n37), box 560 E.

³⁹ Letter from Ioannis Kondis to the Greek Ministry of Religious Affairs and National Education, 21 February 1948, in: Greek Ministry of Culture (as n37), box 560 E. For more information about Buschor’s attempts in the postwar period to help the Greek authorities find antiquities from Samos, see Πετράκος (2021), vol. 4, p. 55, no. 768, and p. 432 (keyword “Samos”).

transported to Athens just a few months before the German army withdrew from Greece⁴⁰. In this case, a comparison with the inventory of today's museums on Samos could help in the search for objects that have been missing since the war⁴¹.

The final return of the *Philippe* to Samos

[19] In the archive of the DAI Athens there is a document in Dr. Ulrich Hausmann's staff file, that provides information on the *Philippe* statue's return journey to Samos in 1954. Hausmann (1917–1996), a researcher at the DAI Athens from 1952 to 1955, undertook a working trip to Samos from October 12–21, 1954, to accompany the return of the *Philippe* to the island and its installation in the museum in Vathy. The fact that, barely ten years after the end of the war, the National Museum in Athens entrusted a German archaeologist with transporting the *Philippe* statue back to its home in the archaeological museum in Vathi can be seen as a sign of the gradual improvement in relations between Greece and Germany. The document enlists the travel expenses in detail. The total cost of Hausmann's journey to Samos amounted to 257.17 Deutschmarks (DM), which at the time corresponded to 1,837.20 drachmas. A high single item of 200 DM is not explained; possibly this was the contribution to the museum's furnishing work (Fig. 12)⁴². Collaboration between Greek and German archaeologists would resume in the years that followed and lead to various successful joint projects (Fig. 13).

⁴⁰ List made by Kraiker (in German), a total of four pages and undated, in: Greek Ministry of Culture (as n37), box 560 E.

⁴¹ This work should be carried out as part of a larger international project. On the theft and destruction of antiquities in Greece during the occupation, see n1 above.

⁴² The document was found in the administrative archive of the DAI Athens, which houses the staff files of all DAI Athens employees to date. Sifting through the files of former employees revealed that they contain not only contracts, invoices, and details of salaries but also correspondence, which in some cases contains valuable information regarding archaeological activities.

wiss. Angestellten Dr.		54
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in Athen. Dienstreise von Athen nach Vathy.		06
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9,40 an Kolonna		
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Fig. 12. Travel expenses Dr. Ulrich Hausmann for accompanying the return transport of the *Philippe* to Samos and installation in the museum, 12-21 October 1954 (“Dienstreise von Athen nach Vathy. Transportbegleitung bei der Überführung des Standbildes der Philippe nach Vathy und Assistenz bei den Einrichtungsarbeiten des Museums”) (reprod. from: DAI Athens, archive, staff file of Ulrich Hausmann)

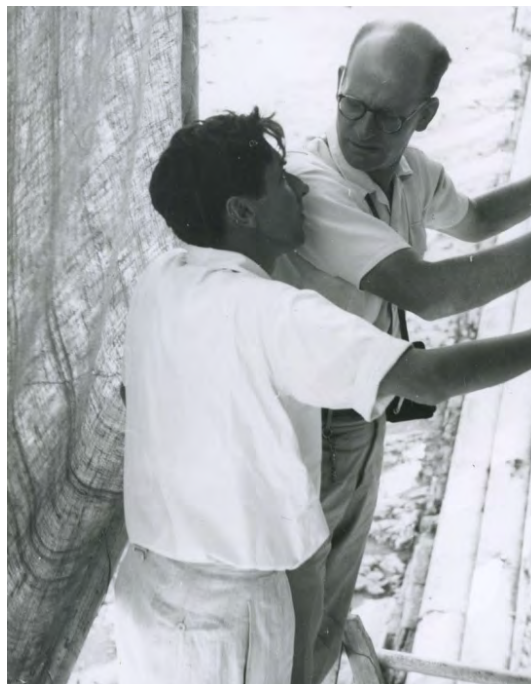


Fig. 13. Signs of collaboration between German and Greek archaeologists in the post-war period; Ulrich Hausmann (right) and Alfred Mallwitz (left) during investigations at the Parthenon on the Acropolis in 1955 (reprod. from: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Berlin, Archiv der Zentrale, Frank Brommer papers, box 1, photo album)

[20] As this brief illumination of the fate of the antiquities of Samos during and after WWII shows, various questions remain open. In particular, the influence of the occupying powers and of foreign archaeologists on the preservation or dispersion of the island's cultural artifacts is worthy of more detailed investigation.

Acknowledgments

My thanks go to Irene Bald Romano for her interest in my article and for including it in this anthology. I am also very grateful to the following people for useful information and their support in the search for illuminating documents on the history of Samos: Michael Kraft (Königsdorf), Gregor Gebauer (Leipzig), Holger Scheerschmidt (Map Department of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin), Hans-Werner Langbrandtner (LVR-Archivberatungs- und Fortbildungszentrum, Pulheim), Katharina Brandt, Dimitris Grigoropoulos, Ingrid Schäffer and Karin Weiß (DAI Athens), Martina Düntzer and Johanna Mueller von der Haegen (DAI Berlin), Archontoula Papoulakou (Directorate of the Archive of Monuments of the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports, Athens), Martin Maischberger (Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz), Panagiotis Chatzidakis (Ephorate of Antiquities Samos—Ikaria), and Nikolaos Nikoloudis (Athens).

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Alexandra Kankeleit studied classical archaeology, history of art, and history in Frankfurt am Main and in Bonn. Since the 1990s, she has worked as a project manager in various sectors and fields: museums, excavations and archaeological surveys, editorial work, e-business, and tourism. With her German-Greek background, she is particularly interested in the history and culture of Greece. She has also been a research associate at the Center for Modern Greece (CeMoG: Centrum Modernes Griechenland) at the Freie Universität Berlin since 2021. A comprehensive overview of her projects and interests is available at www.kankeleit.de.

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