

(Download free ebook) Beautiful Loot: The Soviet Plunder of Europe's Art Treasures

## Beautiful Loot: The Soviet Plunder of Europe's Art Treasures

*Konstantin Akinsha, Grigorii Kozlov*

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#1225643 in Books Random House 1995-09-19 1995-09-19 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.50 x 6.25 x 1.00l, #File Name: 0679443894301 pages | File size: 34.Mb

**Konstantin Akinsha, Grigorii Kozlov : Beautiful Loot: The Soviet Plunder of Europe's Art Treasures** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Beautiful Loot: The Soviet Plunder of Europe's Art Treasures:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. THE book on the topicBy Penny SwearsThis is a wonderful and suprisingly emotional read for anyone who loves history, WWII, art history, or the Soviet Union. It traces all the twists and turns that a collection of art takes as it passes from Nazi Germany to the Soviet Union and (some of it) back to East Germany. The authors rebuild the WWII happenings with attention to detail and in a believable and coherent way.As another review states, this book is heavy as it contains almost all the information available on the topic. The two authors broke the story of this unknown loot in the early 1990s and this book is the culmination of their continued study of the topic.A fascinating read and wonderful, scholarly source.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent work update?By T. WallaceWhile I'm convinced that no exhaustive volume can ever hope to be written about this subject, this book is undoubtedly the best effort yet in that very direction. The writing gets particularly animated towards the end. It would be nice to read a subsequent update. I'd like to think artwork exchanges and returns have continued at the same or higher levels, and would pay to read a sequel.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. a shocking story of planned pillageBy K. Kennedy"Beautiful Loot" by Konstantin Akinsha is the story of how the Soviet Union methodically stripped Germany of its art treasures, architectural details, and other cultural heritage items as World War II ended, and even several years afterward. I had always assumed there was some degree of

looting by Soviet (and Allied) soldiers, but was shocked at how planned this was, and how everyone up to the highest level of the Soviet government knew and approved of it. Revenge taken for the horrific destruction and slaughter on Soviet territory by Nazi troops taken in paintings and porcelain...a strange idea. And this book does leave you wondering where the thousands of still missing cultural items are to this day...

Written by the two men who revealed the existence of secret depositories of treasures, this book is the dramatic account of the plundering of precious objects during the last terrible days of the Reich, the buffoonish political maneuvering and corruption that kept the art hidden and neglected for years, and the bold detective work that led to its discovery. 16 pages of photos.

From Publishers Weekly Art historians based in Moscow, Akinsha and Kozlov spent eight years working in Russian and German archives, tracking down the fate of a vast hoard of cultural valuables looted from Germany by occupying Soviet forces at the end of WWII. In 1945, special Soviet brigades of museum officials, restorers, art historians and soldiers scoured Berlin, Leipzig and other cities, transporting to Moscow and Leningrad masterpieces by El Greco, Durer, Raphael, Van Gogh, Gauguin and Degas; manuscripts by Goethe, the Trojan gold excavated by Heinrich Schliemann, archival books, silverware, tapestries and porcelain. The Soviets, who stole from German museums and private collections, justified their activities as retaliation for their country's devastation and for the extensive looting of Soviet art by the invading Germans. Russia kept the existence of these treasures a secret for decades, and the authors estimate that more than a million looted paintings and objects are still hidden. Their treasure hunt has yielded this incredible saga of plunder, greed, vengeance and Cold War politics. Photos. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal As the Soviet armies moved west into Poland during World War II, plans were made for special army brigades to collect "trophy art" from enemy collections in compensation for artworks looted or destroyed by the Germans. Hundreds of thousands of pieces of art and whole libraries were removed in chaotic circumstances, only to disappear into the gulag of Stalinist cultural policy. The very existence of such loot was denied until well into the 1990s. In what could be considered the sequel to Lynn Nicholas's *Rape of Europa* (LJ 5/1/94), which dealt with Nazi art pillage, a group of Russian art historians and museum workers have pieced together the rough outlines of how this happened, interviewing many of the minor players in the process. Their narrative, while disjointed, therefore has some personal immediacy as recent official acknowledgment of Russian actions and continued contests over ownership and restitution have been made public. There is a beginning and a middle, but no end yet; for all its unevenness and episodic quality, this is still an engrossing tale. Recommended for general collections. [For a book on some of the pillaged art now on view at the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, see Albert Kostenevich's *Hidden Treasures Revealed*, LJ 6/15/95. Ed.] Jack Perry Brown, *Art Inst. of Chicago Lib.* - Jack Perry Brown, *Art Inst. of Chicago Lib.* Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist In *The Rape of Europa* (1994), Lynn Nicholas documented the systematic looting of the art treasures of Europe by the Nazis during World War II. Now we have the flip side, a staggering account of the chaotic and revengeful looting of the art treasures of Germany by the Soviets. Akinsha and Kozlov, two Russian art historians, came across evidence of the Soviets' postwar rampage quite by accident, eventually uncovering the scandalous truth about the hasty theft of "more than two and a half million art objects" from every major city in Germany. These art objects include the infamous Trojan gold excavated by Heinrich Schliemann and priceless works by Durer, Rembrandt, Titian, Raphael, Vermeer, Van Gogh, and many impressionists. Most of these treasures were unceremoniously stashed in "secret museums" within museums, particularly the Hermitage and Pushkin, then all but forgotten until Akinsha and Kozlov courageously went public with the story in 1991. The debate over these "trophies" still rages. This is a compelling, bizarre, sad, and ironic tale that contrasts the best of humankind, its gift for beauty, with the worst, our predilection for violence. Donna Seaman