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The Russian Cultural Property Law in Historical Context

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SPOILS OF WAR V. CULTURAL HERITAGE:



The Russian Cultural Property Law in Historical Context

February 8–9, 2008

Langdell South Classroom
Harvard Law School
Cambridge, Massachusetts

After WWII, Soviet authorities used special “Trophy Brigades” to transport millions of cultural treasures to the USSR where they were held in relative secrecy until the final years of glasnost. As European countries started to demand their cultural treasures, Russian legislators passed a law that potentially nationalized all cultural treasures brought to Russia at the end of WWII. The Russian Constitutional Court issued an opinion upholding the law if amended. What are the chances for restitution? What about international law?

Participants include:

- KONSTANTIN AKINSHA, co-author of *Beautiful Loot: The Soviet Plunder of Europe's Art Treasures* (1995)
- MICHAEL BAZYLER, author of *Holocaust Justice: The Battle for Restitution In America's Courts* (2003)
- WOLFGANG EICHWEDE, Director of the Research Centre for East European Studies, University of Bremen
- PATRICIA KENNEDY GRIMSTED, co-editor of *Returned From Russia: Nazi Archival Plunder in Western Europe and Recent Restitution Issues* (2007)
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The poster that appears as the Frontispiece (and part on the cover) was prepared at the Harvard Law School, under the direction of Harry S. Martin III (Terry), Henry N. Ess III Librarian and Professor of Law, Emeritus, who organized the symposium in February 2008. The photograph featured is from the collection Signal Corps Photographs in Record Group 111 (SC-204899), in the National Archives of the United States in College Park, MD. Courtesy of Harry S. Martin III.

The editors and contributors to this issue are deeply indebted to Professor Martin and his HLS staff for organization of the HLS symposium, and we wish him well in his retirement.

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