



Glossary

A

Ahnenerbe

Society for Research into the Teaching of Ancestral Heritage. SS institution founded by Himmler in July 1935 for research into racial prehistory of the German Volk. Sponsored about forty research projects dealing with German prehistory, race, lore, and ethic, national, and cultural identity. Later involved in the theft of cultural objects and so-called medical experiments on concentration camp prisoners.

Allegory

Personifications of abstract ideas and concepts such as Hope, Love, Peace, Concord, War, the Seasons et cetera. Many allegories derive from antiquity (e.g. virtues and vices), yet most are Christian.

Annulment Act ("Nichtigkeitsgesetz")

A federal law adopted in Austria on May 15, 1946 concerning the annulment of legal transactions and other legal acts which were concluded during the NS regime in Austria between 1938 and 1945 in the course of the German Reich's penetration into the political and economic sphere. These transactions or legal acts were intended to strip persons or legal entities of assets or entitlements to assets which they held on the March 13, 1938 (Federal Law Gazette 1946/106).

Anschluss

Describes the assumption of power by the German Reich in Austria on 12 March 1938.

Antependium

A decorative covering for the base of the altar, designed especially elaborately in the Middle Ages.

Aquatints

A method of rotogravure by which etching produces various shades of grey on a metal plate. In contrast to the etching method, an aquatint does not produce lines but areas; this is why the executed sheets resemble washed (that is to say coloured with watercolours) Indian ink drawings.

Art Deco

A term derived from the international art trade fair in Paris in 1925 ("L'Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes") for the decorative artistic trends between 1920 and 1930. Art Deco was primarily applied in interior design (furniture, and crafts, etc.), posters and illustration as well as painting and sculpture. The style is characterised by its clear, linear forms, though elements of Art Nouveau also survived.

Art Nouveau

A style used around 1900 in the applied arts (painting, sculpture, graphics, etc.) The linear, often asymmetrical ornaments of floral or geometric origin are characteristic. Particular emphasis is placed on refined craftsmanship, precious and/or exotic materials as well as undulating lines.

Art Restitution Law

A law issued in 1998 on the restitution of art objects from Austrian federal museums and collections whose origin, in view of the NS regime during the period from 1938 to 1945, is questionable (Federal Law Gazette 1998/181).

B

Baroque

A style that evolved in Italy during the second half of the 16th century. Baroque did not spread to the rest of Europe until 1600/1620 and lasted until 1770/80. The period from around 1730 is called Late Baroque or Rococo.

Bashlik

A traditional Turkic and Cossack cone-shaped headdress or hood. Made of leather, felt or wool, it is an ancient round-topped felt bonnet with lappets for wrapping around the neck. A traditional folk headdress, it was also in use as part of a military uniform.

Betel Cutters

The betel nut is the fruit of the betel palm (*Areca catechu*), common to South and Southeast Asia. The raw betel nuts are chewed as a stimulant. The betel cutters are used for the preparation of the betel nut and as an often richly decorated tool, are an expression of the social prestige of their owner.

Biedermeier

Indicates the German and Austrian style from the period between the 1815 Congress of Vienna and the Revolution of 1848. This epoch was shaped by the political backlash of the Restoration, which strived for the re-establishment of the conditions prior to the French Revolution. The limited freedom of expression and restrictions on any kind of political activity led to a displacement of cultural life to the private civil sphere. Painting was dominated by portraits as well as genre painting and landscapes, furniture was characterised by clean lines and utilitarian design.

Board (Art Restitution Advisory Board)

A board established with the Federal Ministry for Education and Cultural Affairs (now Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture) pursuant to the Art Restitution Law of 1998 (Federal Law Gazette 1998/181) to advise the competent federal ministers on the identification of those persons entitled to the restitution of artwork. Members of the Board are a representative each of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour, the Federal Ministry of Justice, the Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture as well as the Federal Ministry of Defence. The Board also includes a representative of the State Financial Procurator's Office and an expert in the field of history as well as an expert in the field of art history who are nominated by the Rectors' Conference. The Board issues to the competent federal minister recommendations for the transfer of artwork on the basis of dossiers compiled by the provenance researchers. The Republic of Austria obtained ownership of these works of art in the course of or as a consequence of the NS dictatorship during the period of 1938 to 1945.

Bochara/Bukhara

City and province in today's Uzbekistan, former capital of the Emirate of Bukhara.

C

Central Art Collecting Point (CACP)

Collecting points for seized artwork established by the US-American troops after the end of the World War II. The Collecting Point most relevant for Austria was located in Munich, Germany.

Central Depot

A storage facility for confiscated privately owned art collections established in the autumn of 1938 in the Neue Burg of the Imperial Palace in Vienna.

Central Office for the Protection of Monuments

As of 1938 the Austrian State/Federal Office for the Protection of Monuments was referred to as the "Central Office for the Protection of Monuments". Similarly, from 1940 to 1945 it was referred to as the "Institute for the Preservation of Monuments". Since 1945, this institution has operated again under the name of the "Federal Office for the Protection of Monuments". In 1998 the Office of the Commission for Provenance Research was established with the Federal Office for the Protection of Monuments.

Chatelaine

A short chain for watches, keys et cetera, usually tied to a belt around the waist.

Classicism

A stylistic period between 1750 and 1830. The initial academic research into antique arts laid the foundation for the reception of predominantly Greco-Roman antique exemplars in all areas of the arts.

Collection Points A and B

Established in 1957 as legal entities under private law by the Collection Agencies Act pursuant to the obligation under the State Treaty of Vienna of 1955. All claims to heirless or at that point unclaimed property which had been seized during the NS era were transferred to the Collection Points, in particular the right to assert claims for restitution. The Collection Points were intended to distribute all generated proceeds to the NS victims and to use them for collective purposes. After completion of their task, the Collection Points were dissolved in 1971.

Colour Etching

Colour etchings are created in the same way as etchings. However, a separate plate is made for each colour used, with which the colours are printed on the paper one after another.

Colour Lithography

Colour lithographs are created in the same way as lithographs. However, a separate stone plate is made for each colour used, with which the colours are printed on the paper one after another.

Colour Printing

A printing technique that uses many colours. A distinction is made between three colour printing (cyan, magenta and yellow), four colour printing (cyan, magenta, yellow and black) as well as multi-colour printing.

Commission for Provenance Research ("Kommission für Provenienzforschung")

In March 1998, prior to the enactment of the Art Restitution Law, the Federal Ministry for Education and Cultural Affairs established the Commission for Provenance Research. The Commission receives the results of the individual provenance researchers of the Austrian federal museums and collections regarding artwork which can possibly be restituted. Where necessary, the Office of the Commission for Provenance Research reviews and revises the devised dossiers and forwards them on to the Board (Art Restitution Advisory Board).

Copper Engravings

A rotogravure method by which the motif is cut into a copper plate using a graver. The colour applied penetrates the depressions and is absorbed by the moistened paper during printing.

D

Dervish

An Islamic mystic and ascetic, usually a member of a dervish religious order.

Dorotheum

Viennese auction house that in the Nazi era was significantly involved in the redistribution of looted art, stolen from Jews in Austria.

E

Early Printing/Incunabula

Texts printed by means of movable characters from the early days of book printing (1453 to 1500).

Empire

A movement that appeared in France in the 1790s. It was spread throughout Europe by Napoleon Bonaparte and remained predominant until around 1830. It is characterised by representational forms and was used above all in interior decoration and furniture design as well as arts and crafts. Greek, Roman and Egyptian motifs were popular, furniture design- was based on geometric patterns.

Engravings

Engravings can be produced by rotogravure or by relief printing. The motif is scribed into the plate using a graver. While the colour is taken by the raised parts of a wood engraving, it instead penetrates the depressions of copper and steel engravings.

Etchings

A method of rotogravure by which an acid-resistant layer is applied to a metal plate, which is then engraved using an etching stylus. In an acid bath, only the part of the plate which is etched is eaten away. The acid-resistant layer is then removed, the plate inked, wiped, and printed. In the case of colour etchings, this process has to be repeated for each colour individually.

Export Prohibition Law ("Ausfuhrverbotsgesetz")

A law passed by the First Republic on December 5, 1918 prohibiting the export of items of historical, artistic or cultural importance (State Law Gazette 1918/90, last amended version Federal Law Gazette 1986/391). An exception applies to artwork restituted as of 1998 pursuant to the Art Restitution Law.

Expressionism

The predominant style of the first third of the 20th century, particularly in German art. Pronounced subjectivity, in opposition to tendencies toward tradition, are characteristic. Colour and form are used against the true representation of reality.

F

Faience

Ceramics with a covering of white or colourful tin-glaze, usually with colours beneath the glaze, named after Faenza, the place in Italy where it is produced.

Fo Dog

A name for the Buddhist Lion, depicted with a wavy mane and wide jaws in East Asian art.

Führer Museum

The so-called Führer Museum formed part of the National Socialist art and cultural center planned for the City of Linz which remained, however, a proposal. The majority of the collection of this picture gallery was intended to be compiled by artwork seized from Jewish holdings of works of art.

Führer's Donation ("Führerspende")

Artwork confiscated between 1938 and 1945 from private collections of Jewish Austrians which was distributed as a "Donation by the Führer" to Austrian museums provided the works of art had not been selected for the proposed Führer Museum in Linz.

Führer's Prerogative ("Führervorbehalt")

Issued on June 18, 1938, the "Führer's Prerogative" intended to secure Adolf Hitler priority access to all confiscated artwork privately held by Jewish Austrians.

G

Genre scenes

Depictions of scenes from daily life - often scenes of harvests, inn interiors, and from the lives of farmers and craftsmen.

GESTAPO (Secret State Police)

The GESTAPO - being the political police of the NS regime under the control of the Reich Ministry for the Interior - also played an important role in the confiscation and seizure of assets.

Gimballed Suspension

An apparatus for the freely rotatable suspension of measuring instruments and the like, independent from location and movement. It consists of a metal ring in which two further rings, each offset by 90° to each other, are placed within one another so that they can turn.

Girandole

An ornamental branched candlestick or lighting device often composed of several branches.

Gobelin

Term for a tapestry produced at a royal manufactory in Paris.

Gouaches

Painting in gouache employs watercolours and additives, which, in contrast to watercolours, have an opaque, covering effect.

Grisaille painting

Monochrome painting in shades of grey.

H

Historicism

A style prevalent in the second half of the 19th century that was orientated towards styles of earlier epochs (Neogothic, Neorenaissance, etc.).

Histories

Depictions of historic events such as battles, triumphal processions, revolts et cetera.

I

Impressionism

This style evolved in France in the 1860s and 1870s and influenced the art of almost all European countries and North America. Impressionists were striving to capture, almost as it happened, the individual optical impressions, renouncing traditional art teachings such as composition and uniform perspective.

Incunabla

Name by convention used for those printed items which were produced before 1500 following Johannes Gutenberg's invention of movable type.

J

Jardinière

Oblong bowl in which flowers are grown.

Jewish Property Levy ("Judenvermögensabgabe")

Following the November Pogrom in 1938 "the Jewish people as a whole who hold German citizenship" were subjected to the payment of a contribution in the amount of one (1) billion Reichsmark pursuant to an ordinance decreed by Field Marshal General Göring. Jewish people who held funds of more than 5,000 Reichsmark had to transfer to the tax office initially 20% of their assets and, as of October 1939, 25 % as an "atonement fee" for "the hostile attitude of the Jews towards the German people and the Reich".

L

Lithographs

A method of printing by which the drawing to be printed is applied to a prepared stone with a greasy substance. Etching enhances the contrast between areas to be printed and those to be left blank. When inked, only the greasy parts take the colour. In the case of colour lithographs, this process has to be repeated for each colour individually.

Lorgnon

Hand-held reading lens with a single handle.

M

Majolica

Objects made from fired pottery with white tin glazes and often bright colours.

Masrabiya

A grill-like ornamental carving for windows, doors, etc. often made of wood and to be found predominantly in Islamic culture.

Mauerbach

Former Carthusian monastery in Lower Austria used from the 1960's onwards to store those works of art expropriated during the NS regime which could not be restituted. In 1996 these objects were transferred into the ownership of the Jewish Community and were auctioned off for the benefit of NS victims (Mauerbach Auction).

Miniatures

The term miniature painting is applied to painted depictions of small format, especially miniature portraiture, but also for book illumination and enamel painting. Various materials serve as a ground, such as wood, ivory, metal, et cetera. Miniature painting is mostly executed in watercolour and gouache.

Mixed Technique

Mixed technique combines various techniques, mostly oil and tempera painting.

N

National Emigration Tax ("Reichsfluchtsteuer")

The German Reich imposed the National Emigration Tax as of 1931 on persons with German citizenship who gave up their residence within the borders of the Reich. In Austria, this tax was introduced after the Anschluss in 1938 on the basis of the "First Decree concerning the Introduction of Tax Provisions in the State of Austria of 14 April 1938". The National Emigration Tax amounted to 25 % of those assets which Jewish people had to register with the NS authorities in 1938 (Property Notice).

NSDAP (National Socialist German Workers Party)

Sole permitted party in Germany from 1933 to 1945.

O

Oil Paintings

For oil painting, colour pigments are dissolved in oil. By adding resin, wax, or laqu, different effects can be achieved (covering, glazing, matte or glossy). After drying, oil colours retain their colour.

P

Pastels

Pastel painting offers the possibility of combining drawing with painting either by applying the colours next to each other (using a bonding agent) or by wiping them. Pastel painting distinguishes itself by delicate, finely defined and shimmering shades.

Pelike

A pear shaped storage and transportation vessel with two handles, a special form of the Amphora. Unlike the Amphorae, Pelike posses a solid base.

Philately

The collection and study of postage stamps, post marks and related materials.

Photo or Helio Engraving

A photomechanic printing technique, representing a further development of the aqua tint technique. Developed in 1879 by Karl Klietsch (1841 - 1926).

Phototypes

A method of planographic printing by which a photosensitive layer is applied to an etched glass pane. The photo subject is photomechanically projected onto this pane, by which the parts to be printed are coloured. In the humidifying process, these parts are printed onto the paper.

Physharmonika

A keyboard instrument constructed by Anton Haeckl in Vienna in 1818, said to be a forerunner of the Harmonium.

Property Notice ("Vermögensanmeldung")

Pursuant to the "Decree for the Registration of Jewish Property" (Austrian Law Gazette No. 102/1938 of April 27, 1938) Jewish persons and non-Jewish spouses of Jewish persons were required to declare their entire assets located in Austria and abroad. Only items for personal use or household effects which were not luxury items were excepted. The obligation to declare assets was waived where the total amount of the assets to be declared did not exceed 5,000 Reichsmark. The National Emigration Tax and the Jewish Property Levy were calculated on the basis of the Property Notice. Property Notices were to be submitted at the Property Transactions Office of the Ministry for Trade and Transport.

Q

Quodlibet

An object depicted in such a manner that the viewer sees it as three-dimensional.

R

Reich Exchange Department

An auxiliary department of the Reich Ministry of Science, Education and National Training established during the Weimar Republic to exchange published material. During the Third Reich it was involved in the redistribution of goods looted by the Nazis.

Rococo

The name for the late phase of Baroque, between around 1720 and 1780. It takes its name from the rocaille, a shell-like ornament characterised by asymmetry and the ornate resolution of solid forms.

Romantic

A style developed at the beginning of the 19th century that expresses an emotional, wonderful, fairy tale like and fantastically inclined world view. The Romantic is expressed most clearly in painting. It responded to the literary ideas of the time and, above all in the representation of landscape, found a direct expression of the Romantic experience of the world.

S

Samovar

A vessel for heating and boiling water for making tea, particularly in Slavic and Central Asian areas and Asia Minor.

Sepia painting

Painting using pigments made from the secretion of a cuttlefish.

Silhouette

Two-dimensional outline drawing which forms a dark contrast to a light background. A portrait silhouette depicts the shadow of a human being in profile against a vertical plane.

Steel Engravings

A rotogravure method by which the motif is either cut or etched into a steel plate using a graver. The colour applied afterwards penetrates the depressions and is absorbed by the moistened paper during printing.

Still-life

Depictions of inanimate objects such as fruits, flowers, containers, dead animals et cetera.

T

Ta'liq

Arabian decorative writing.

Tapestry (French tapis)

Expression generally used for woven rugs with depictions to be hung on the wall.

Tempera

Tempera painting was above all used for Medieval art. The pigments are mixed with water and a bonding agent (egg yolk, glue, wax or resin). The resulting emulsion dries quickly and cannot be re-worked.

Torc

A neck band open at the front, which often resembles a twisted cord in appearance and with a specially formed end piece.

Tschekan

A battle-axe.

Typescript

A text created by machine.

V

Verdure

Term for tapestries of generally green portrayals of foliage and shrubbery, in some cases also of animals, particularly birds.

VUGESTA

"Gestapo Office for the Disposal of the Property of Jewish Emigrants" - an organization established in 1940, which played a key role in the theft of privately owned assets of Jewish Austrians.

W

Watercolours

Watercolour painting employs water-soluble colour, usually on paper. The transparency of the colours is a significant feature.

Wood Engraving (Xylography)

A high-pressure technique in which the wooden plate is cut across the grain rather than with it, as opposed to wood cut. This and the use of hard woods made a considerably finer rendering of the motifs possible. Thomas Bewick (1753 - 1828) developed this technique at the end of the 18th century to replace etching with a cheaper and more versatile technique.

Woodcuts

A method of relief printing for which a wooden printing block is used (woodcut). The motif in reverse is cut out of the wood, the high parts of which are inked and then printed from.

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