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## From Private to Public: The collection of David P. Harris

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## 2 From Private to Public: The Collection of David P. Harris

## Brad Hostetler with Ani Parnagian

The thirty-six Ethiopian objects featured in this catalog are part of a bequest from the estate of David P. Harris (1925–2019), a 1946 graduate of Kenyon College (fig. 2.1). In July of 2020, over 450 of Harris's objects were accessioned into the Department of Art History's study collection, now named the Blick-Harris Study Collection (BHSC). In this essay, we situate the Ethiopian pieces in the broader context of Harris's bequest, by examining his collecting habit, his organization of objects, and the ways in which his purchases of Ethiopian works of art fit into his overall collection.

## **Biography**

David Payne Harris was born January 5, 1925 in Cleveland, Ohio, and raised in the suburb of Rocky River.<sup>2</sup> Following a year at the College of Wooster, he transferred to Kenyon in 1944, where he majored in English, served as editor for the *Collegian*, and was a member of the Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity. His interest in languages blossomed during his undergraduate studies; he took courses in Latin, Greek, French, Italian, and German.<sup>3</sup> He graduated *cum laude* in 1946, and then entered the graduate program at the University of Michigan, earning his PhD in Linguistics in 1954.<sup>4</sup> While at Michigan, he designed tests for the Educational Testing Service

and the English Language Institute. In 1954 he joined the English faculty at the University of Florida in Gainesville.5 Harris quickly became a prominent scholar in his discipline. In 1961 he was appointed Professor of Linguistics and became the first Director of the American Language Institute at Georgetown University.6 He was part of the development of the first Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) exam, and served as the first president of the Association of Teachers of English as a Second Language (ATESL). His book, Testing English as a Second Language (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969) was an influential contribution to the field. Harris also held two Fulbright residencies in Greece; he was first a Lecturer at the National & Kapodistrian University of Athens in 1957-58, and then the Coordinator of the Fulbright English Language Program in Greece and Visiting Professor of Linguistics at the Universities of Athens and Thessaloniki in 1967–68.7

Harris remained at Georgetown University until his retirement in 1990. Friends have told us that he spent his retirement developing and researching his collection, traveling, and attending exhibitions and concerts. He resided in Washington, DC until his death on August 19, 2019 at the age of ninety-four. His ashes were spread at the Kenyon College

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The study collection was named after Harris and Boris A. Blick (1922–2005), the two donors whose estates form the foundation of the collection.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> General biographical information is drawn upon interviews with Harris's friends and colleagues, from the obituary published in the *Kenyon Alumni Magazine* 2020, p. 61; and from the author bio published in his first book, Harris 1969, p. ii. Obituaries and Harris's academic records at Kenyon state that he was born on January 6, but — thanks to the

genealogical research of Eugene Dwyer — government-issued documents indicate that he was born on January 5.

 $<sup>^3</sup>$  We are grateful to the Office of the Registrar for providing Harris's academic transcript.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Harris 1954.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Florida Alligator 1954, p. 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Gallop 2018.

<sup>7 &</sup>quot;Fulbright Alumni," Fulbright Greece https://www.fulbright.gr/en/alumni (accessed September 15, 2021).



Figure 2.1. Undated photograph of David P. Harris. BHSC. Photo: Chesshire Photographers, Youngstown, Ohio.

Cemetery, where he is commemorated with a stone marker.

In the final years of his life Harris began discussions with his *almae matres* as possible recipients of the objects he collected. He presented to Michigan his collection of letters and ship logs associated with the War of 1812. This material is now housed at the William L. Clements Library, and was featured in a 2012 exhibition. Harris wanted Kenyon to be the primary beneficiary of his estate. Discussions with the College began in May of 2009, and it was agreed that a monetary bequest would be used to establish a fund for the care, maintenance, and restoration of art on campus. Later that summer, Harris proposed to also leave his collection of Asian art to the College. Harris

Figure 2.2. Harris's Personal Catalog (HC) of his Collection. Photo: Birhanu T. Gessese.

submitted documents of select pieces to the Accessions Committee, who recommended that these objects be accepted if he decided to leave them in the bequest. When Harris died in 2019, it was discovered that he had left his entire estate to the College. The Office of Planned Giving first consulted with the Gund Gallery, who took over the role of the Accessions Committee when it was established in 2011. As most of the objects fall outside of the Gallery's collecting mission, the Department of Art History's study collection was suggested as the most suitable home. Faced with the choice of housing these objects or allowing them to be sent to auction, the Department decided to accession them so that faculty and students could research, and teach with, the pieces and more properly investigate their provenance.

## Harris Catalog (HC)

The Department also received Harris's own records of his collection (fig. 2.2). For each object, Harris produced what we refer to as a "one-sheet,"

ASIAN ARE, MOSTLY CERAMICS

BY ZANTINE-FRA SMALL ORDECTS:

CONS—BY ZANTINE TO MODERS FRA:

POST-BY ZANTINE MORPH SHEETS

MALL RUSMAN KONS. MOSTLY METAL:

ROMAN, HELLENIC, COPTIC EGYPTIAN ORDECTS

AMERICAN SMALL ORDECTS.

AMERICAN SMALL ORDECTS.

PAINTINGS, MINY FR. REGS. MISC. SMALL ITEMS

AMERICAN SMALL ORDECTS.

AMERICAN SMALL ORDECTS.

SALVANCE MISC. SMALL ITEMS

AMERICAN SMALL ORDECTS.

SALVANCE MISC. SMALL ITEMS

AMERICAN SMALL ORDECTS.

SALVANCE MISC. SMALL ITEMS

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Clements Library Chronicles 2012.

Table 2.1. Organization of the HC with sub-collection names provided by Harris. Inferred sub-collection names are given in brackets. The asterisk (\*) identifies the sub-collection for which we attribute a title not given by Harris elsewhere in the HC.

Binder	Sub-collection	Number of Objects
1. African & Other Tribal Objects; Ethiopian Crosses	A. African and Other Tribal Objects	16
	B. Untitled [Other Tribal Objects]	5
	C. Ethiopian Crosses	27
2. Asian Art, Mostly Ceramics  E. Asian Ceramics I	D. Asian Ceramics Part One	29
	E. Asian Ceramics Part Two	19
	F. Untitled [Asian Ceramics Part Three]	38
3. Byzantine-Era Small Objects; Icons: Byzantine to Modern Era; Post- Byzantine Sacred Objects	G. Byzantine Era Small Objects	46
	H. Rings and Small Pendant Crosses	28
	I. Icons: Byzantine to Modern Era	42
	J. Post-Byzantine Sacred Objects	30
4. Small Russian Icons, Mostly Metal; Roman, Hellenic, Coptic, Egyptian Objects	K. Untitled [Small Russian Icons, Mostly Metal]	17
	L. Roman, Hellenic, Coptic, Egyptian Objects	22
	M. Untitled [Early Medieval Objects]*	2
5. American Small Objects; Greek, Slavic Miscellany; Paintings, Silver, Rugs, Misc. Small Items	N. American Small Objects; Greek, Slavic Miscellany	18
	O. Untitled [Greek Miscellany]	6
	P. Untitled [Slavic Miscellany]	23
	Q. Paintings, Silver, Rugs, Misc. Small Items	39

which includes most of the following information: a photograph, title, description, dimensions, date, dealer, date of purchase, and purchase price (fig. 2.3). He filed purchase receipts and other relevant documents after the one-sheet. In some instances, two or more objects are grouped together on a single one-sheet. These documents are held in five three-ring binders, which are labeled and organized by sub-collections. Table 1 summarizes the contents of the Harris Catalog (HC), and reproduces the titles that he gave to each sub-collection. Some sub-collections are unnamed, but their titles can be inferred by those given on the covers of the respective binders.

We do not know when Harris began organizing the HC, or when he first devised these sub-collections. What we can say is that the HC was a long-term project that was continually developed and revised. Evidence suggests that he began this documentation by creating a one-sheet for each object using a typewriter, and at some point,



Figure. 2.3. Harris's One-Sheet for a hand cross (cat. 1).

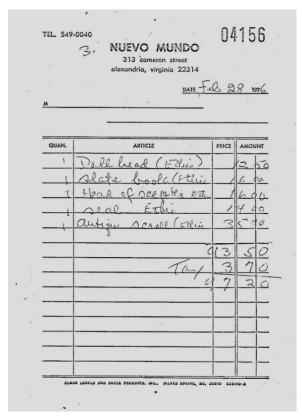


Figure. 2.4. Receipt from Nuevo Mundo, Alexandria, Virginia, dated February 28, 1976. BHSC.

perhaps in the mid-to-late 1990s, he produced and revised one-sheets on a computer. There are a few instances where Harris preserved both the typewriter- and computer-generated one-sheets for a single object, and in these cases we find minor revisions to his titles and descriptions from the first version to the second. He did not regularly save purchase receipts, and/or document specific purchase dates until the early 1960s, a few years after beginning his collection.

Our analysis of Harris's collection is through the lens of the HC, the only primary source that allows us to view the collection as through the eyes of the collector. We unfortunately never had the opportunity to speak with Harris. He was by all accounts a very private man. He left no personal diaries or letters in his estate, and while

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Harris did not number or sequence his binders and subcollections, but we have done so here for the purpose of efficiently referring to specific groupings.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.44.



Figure 2.5. Triptych with the Mother of God and Child, from Greece. BHSC, 2020.348. Photo: Birhanu T. Gessese.

conversations with friends have been helpful, they have not shed light on any specific pieces, or on the collection as a whole.

## **Building the Collection**

The BHSC acquired 284 of the 407 objects that are individually cataloged in the HC. The remaining 123 objects were either given away by Harris — as indicated in hand-written notes in the HC - or could not be responsibly accepted due to the limitations of the Department's storage space. The BHSC also received 174 objects that were not cataloged in the HC (see the Appendix for a complete list of objects accepted by Kenyon, organized by accession number and direct links to the online catalog). 11 The reason why Harris did not catalog all of his objects remains unclear; we have been able to find references to uncataloged objects on receipts filed with other objects purchased at the same time. For example, while the stone diptych (cat. 30) and the two amuletic scrolls (cats. 34, 35) were not cataloged in the HC, the purchase receipt for an Ethiopian processional cross (cat. 2) that was cataloged in the HC, lists other Ethiopian objects in



Figure 2.6. Head of Buddha, from Thailand. BHSC, 2020.72. Photo: Birhanu T. Gessese.

that same purchase (fig. 2.4). We have identified the "slate book" on this receipt as the stone diptych, and the "antique scroll" as referring to one of the amuletic scrolls.<sup>12</sup>

The HC shows that Harris's collection focused on a relatively few, specific, areas of interest. The largest, represented by Sub-collections G–K, can be characterized as Byzantine and Post-Byzantine artifacts, including jewelry, icons, and other religious objects associated with the Orthodox churches of Greece and Russia. The other major area of the collection is Asian art, represented by Sub-collections D–F. It is not clear in his

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Harris's stamp collection (BHSC, 2020.453) and his coin collection (BHSC, 2020.454) are counted in this number as two objects because the hundreds of coins and stamps in these collections have not yet been fully inventoried.

Other objects listed on the receipt include a "Doll bead," which we have not been able to identify in the bequest, and a

<sup>&</sup>quot;seal," which we identify as BHSC, 2020.230. We identified this seal late in the project and so were unable to include it in the catalog. For the stone diptych, see the essay by Sonia Dixon (ch. 8).

organization why he created three sub-collections within Binder 2 nor why he emphasized ceramics in the title.<sup>13</sup> While Harris indeed focused on ceramics in his collecting of Asian art, his Asian sub-collections also include small figural sculptures in terracotta and wood.

Harris's collecting history spanned nearly sixty years, with his greatest activity in the 1970s and 1990s, the latter period corresponding to the first decade following his retirement (table 2.2). Harris began collecting in 1957. His first purchase, acquired in Athens, is a Greek Orthodox triptych with the Mother of God and Child (fig. 2.5).<sup>14</sup> In 1957 he was in Athens for his first Fulbright residency, and it is clear that this experience greatly influenced him. Athens is where he first developed an interest in collecting, and, more specifically, collecting Orthodox icons, and we know that at some point in his adult life he converted to Greek Orthodoxy. His interests in Byzantium and Orthodox Christianity remained at the center of his collection; his last documented purchase is a small Greek triptych acquired in 2015.<sup>15</sup>

Harris also collected Asian art throughout this period. He purchased his first two Asian pieces on June 10, 1967 in San Francisco: a Ming celadon dish and a head of Buddha (fig. 2.6). He continued to add Asian objects to his collection; his last recorded purchase is a Song Dynasty stone head, purchased in San Francisco in 2005. 17

His interests in other sub-collections were more limited. His collection of antique silver (filed under Sub-collection Q, Paintings, Silver, Rugs, Misc. Small Items) was purchased in the early 1960s. <sup>18</sup> His purchases cataloged in Sub-collection L (Roman, Hellenic, Coptic, Egyptian Objects) began in 1968, but most objects in this group were bought between

It is through this lens that we look more closely at the focus of this volume, Ethiopian art. The Ethiopian crosses filed under Sub-collection C were purchased between 1975 and 1979, with one addition in 1989. His interest in Ethiopian art and Ethiopian crosses, specifically, is brief, but we can examine how his interest in these objects was piqued by examining what else he was buying at the time.<sup>19</sup> His first Ethiopian acquisitions were the sonsul and the two sənsul fragments (cats. 31, 32, 33), purchased together on October 21, 1975 in London.<sup>20</sup> Harris did not catalog these works with the other Ethiopian objects in Sub-collection C (Ethiopian Crosses), but rather included them in Sub-collection J (Post-Byzantine Sacred Objects). In 1974, one year prior to this acquisition, Harris had begun collecting African objects, filed under Subcollection A, and had already acquired over half of the objects filed under Sub-collection I (Icons: Byzantine to Modern Era); he had also been actively adding to his collection of works cataloged in Subcollection K (Small Russian Icons, Mostly Metal). It is therefore likely that purchasing Ethiopian objects satisfied two of his interests at the time: African art and Orthodox icons. The sənsul, with its extensive Gə'əz writing must have also appealed to him as a scholar of linguistics.

What culture did Harris believe he was collecting when he began acquiring Ethiopian objects? Constantine Panayotidis, the dealer who sold Harris the *sənsul* and the two fragments, identified the entire lot on the receipt as "16 Coptic Parchment

<sup>1992</sup> and 2005. Similarly, most objects in Subcollection A (African and Other Tribal Objects) were purchased in the mid-to-late-1970s.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> The three-part division of Asian art may reflect an older organization of Harris's binders. The Department received a photo of a second set of binders for the HC, but not the binders themselves, and these smaller binders, according to their labels on the spines, seemed to have contained the individual sub-collections listed in table 2.1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> BHSC, 2020.348. In that same year, he also purchased a Greek icon of the Pentecost, BHSC, 2020.322.

<sup>15</sup> BHSC, 2020.349.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> BHSC, 2020.72. The Ming celadon dish was not received in the bequest.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> BHSC, 2020.53.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> The antique silver was not received in the bequest.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> See the essay by Lynn Jones (ch. 6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> The *sənsul* and *sənsul* fragments were sold to Harris as one object; see the essay by Caitlin Mims (ch. 9) in this volume.

Drawings of Religious Scenes."<sup>21</sup> Regardless of whether Harris knew these objects were of Ethiopian origin, this purchase initiated an interest in "Coptic" art. Four days later, he visited a different London dealer and acquired two Ethiopian pectoral crosses, also identified as "Coptic" (cats. 13, 14).<sup>22</sup> Harris's purchases of pectoral crosses are not a surprise, as at this time most of the objects in Subcollections G (Byzantine Era Small Objects), H (Rings and Small Pendant Crosses), and J (Post-Byzantine Sacred Objects) were pectorals from various Orthodoxies, including Bosnian, Ukrainian, Russian, and Byzantine (fig. 2.7).<sup>23</sup>

When Harris returned to Washington, DC from his trip to London in October of 1975, he continued his "Coptic" hunt. On November 22, he made his first visit to Nuevo Mundo, a gallery in Alexandria, Virginia, to purchase what is identified on the receipt as a "Coptic textile," a tapestry weave from early medieval Egypt.<sup>24</sup> His interest in this object seems to have been the "Coptic" identifier because he returned to Nuevo Mundo a few weeks later, on December 13, to purchase his first Ethiopian hand cross (cat. 1), identified on the receipt as a "Coptic cross."25 On February 28, 1976, Harris returned to Nuevo Mundo again. He purchased five objects, identified on the receipt not as "Coptic," as was the case for his earlier purchases, but as "Ethiop." written in parentheses next to each item (fig. 2.4). From this point through 1979, Harris continued to buy Ethiopian crosses on a regular basis, and they are identified on the receipts as "Ethiopian," "Coptic," or both. He then paused his purchasing of Ethiopian crosses for ten years, with a final purchase in 1989 (cat. 10). Two years later, he bought the double-sided, painted pectoral icon (cat. 29), but he filed this object not with any other Ethiopian objects, but in Sub-collection I (Icons: Byzantine to This suggestion of why Harris became interested in Ethiopian objects — that it developed from his broader interests in Orthodoxies — is supported by a photograph of one of the display cases that he kept in his living room. When Harris died in 2019, Kyle Henderson, the Associate Vice President for Planned Giving at the time, visited the home, and photographed the objects in order to take stock of the estate. One photograph depicts a display case that includes two Ethiopian objects featured in this catalog (cats. 21, 29) with five small Post-Byzantine icons (fig. 2.8).<sup>26</sup> While this is only one case of objects, without a date of assembly, it suggests that Harris perceived his Ethiopian pieces as part of Orthodox Christian artistic traditions.

Harris kept purchase records for most of his objects, allowing us to analyze his investments in each sub-collection. We are not interested in seeing whether he over- or under-paid for a particular object; our interest lies in determining where he invested his resources. In order to create a comparative analysis across his nearly sixty-year collecting history, we have adjusted all purchase prices to 2021 values based on the rate of inflation.<sup>27</sup> In doing this, we are able to see how his purchases in the 1950s are compatible with those later in his life, and can then examine the amount he invested in each sub-collection, and the average price he paid per object. This method admittedly does not account for his changing financial resources over time, or for other social conditions that would

Modern Era). This narrative suggests that what started as an initial interest in Coptic art and its relationship to other Eastern Orthodoxies, evolved into the collecting of Ethiopian crosses. This subcollection in the HC is the most narrowly defined in terms of culture, object type, and the period of time in which he purchased them.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.189.1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.31. For Harris's neck crosses, see the essay by Sarah Mathiesen (ch. 7).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> For the pectoral crosses depicted in figure 2.7, see BHSC, 2020.142, 2020.153, 2020.154, 2020.165, 2020.170.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.401.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.29.

Objects featured in this photograph include BHSC, 2020.40, 2020.190, 2020.329, 2020.326, 2020.324, 2020.350, 2020.328.
 We used the CPI Inflation Calculator provided by the United States Department of Labor, https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation\_calculator.htm (accessed October 16, 2021).



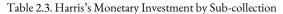
Figure 2.7. Group of Orthodox Crosses. BHSC (upper row then lower row, left to right,), 2020.165, 2020.142, 2020.170, 2020.154, 2020.153. Photo: Birhanu T. Gessese.

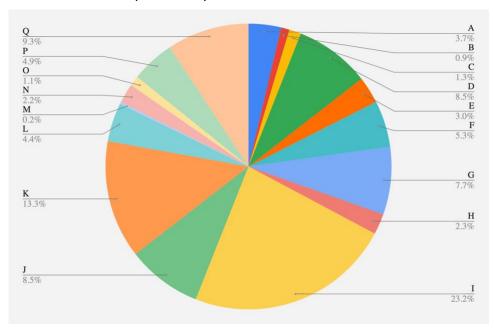


Figure 2.8. One of Harris's display cases in his home, as photographed in February of 2020. BHSC (upper row then lower row, left to right), 2020.40 (cat. 21), 2020.190 (cat. 29), 2020.329, 2020.326, 2020.324, 2020.350, 2020.328. Photo: Kyle Henderson.

150 100 1950s 1960s 1970s 1980s 1990s 2000s 2010s Decade

Table 2.2. Number of Objects that Harris Purchased by Decade





- A. African and Other Tribal Objects
- B. Untitled [Other Tribal Objects]
- C. Ethiopian Crosses
- D. Asian Ceramics Part One
- E. Asian Ceramics Part Two
- F. Untitled [Asian Ceramics Part Three]
- G. Byzantine Era Small Objects
- H. Rings and Small Pendant Crosses
- I. Icons: Byzantine to Modern Era

- J. Post-Byzantine Sacred Objects
- K. Untitled [Small Russian Icons, Mostly Metal]
- L. Roman, Hellenic, Coptic, Egyptian Objects
- M. Untitled [Early Medieval Objects]
- N. American Small Objects; Greek, Slavic Miscellany
- O. Untitled [Greek Miscellany]
- P. Untitled [Slavic Miscellany]
- Q. Paintings, Silver, Rugs, Misc. Small Items

influence his purchasing decisions, but it does offer us a snapshot of how and when he was willing to invest in particular areas. For example, many of Harris's more costly purchases occurred in the last twenty years of his life, and most of these objects are part of his Asian and Byzantine sub-collections. This could reflect many factors: a changing market, a more sophisticated eye, and/or a willingness to take greater purchasing risks in specific sub-collections. When the purchasing date and price are not known for an object, we did not include it in our analysis. Table 2.3 illustrates the financial share of each sub-collection.

As we can see, Sub-collections I (Icons: Byzantine to Modern Era) and K (Small Russian Icons, Mostly Metal) represent approximately one-third of Harris's overall investment. This higher spending within these specific areas also reflects his sustained interests over the course of his collecting career. By contrast, Sub-collection C (Ethiopian Crosses) represents a very small share of his total investments. It is also the area in which he spent the lowest amount per object. The reasons why dealers priced these Ethiopian crosses as they did is not one that can be adequately addressed within the scope of this essay, but might include low market demand and/or an abundant supply. When we look closer at individual purchases, we notice that the most expensive Ethiopian purchases — the sonsul and fragments (cats. 31, 32, 33) and the double-sided painted pectoral (cat. 29), which were also his first and last Ethiopian purchases — are not, as we have seen, cataloged with the crosses in Sub-collection C, but are rather placed with Byzantine and Post-Byzantine objects.

# Harris's Intellectual Engagement with the Collection

Harris's friends and colleagues all noted that he enjoyed researching the objects in his collection. He found continual pleasure in his purchases, as he studied them and shared them with friends. He did



Figure 2.9. Icon of Christ, from Crete. BHSC, 2020.323. Photo: Birhanu T. Gessese.

not research all of his objects. His Asian pieces, for example, received little recorded intellectual engagement — even though they encompass a significant portion of his collection in terms of number and financial investment. His descriptions, dates, and identifications for these works largely correspond to those provided on the purchase receipts.

Harris was demonstrably more intellectually engaged with his Byzantine and Post-Byzantine objects in Sub-collections G–K; this engagement is evident in a number of ways. We find him correcting one dealer's identification of a saint on an icon, and emending another dealer's reading of an inscription. Harris was also interested in seeking out comparative material for pieces in his collection. In the HC, he included photocopies of pages from books and print-outs from museum websites. The museums he most often cited are those that were closest to his Washington, DC home, including the

 $<sup>^{28}</sup>$  See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.407, 2020.365.



Figure 2.10. Wing of a Triptych with Saints Nicholas and Demetrios. BHSC, 2020.350. Photo: Birhanu T. Gessese.

Freer Art Gallery and Dumbarton Oaks, and, when he was living in Greece, the Benaki Museum in Athens — suggesting a familiarity and thus regular visits to his local museums. One example is a Cretan icon of Christ, purchased in Athens in 1967, during his second Fulbright residency (fig. 2.9).<sup>29</sup> In the HC, Harris compared this to an icon at the Benaki, signed by Emmanuel Lambardos, a name shared by two artists, an uncle and nephew working in the same workshop in Heraklion in the seventeenth century.<sup>30</sup> Harris also consulted scholarly literature to glean additional information on objects in his

collection, such as identifying the weight value of his Byzantine weights by consulting the seminal source on these objects.<sup>31</sup> We also find examples of his ability to read Greek inscriptions even on the most epigraphically challenging objects.<sup>32</sup> There are also a few objects in the HC for which Harris included short, type-written research papers, complete with footnotes and brief bibliographies.<sup>33</sup> For every document that Harris filed in the HC, he followed academic procedure, citing sources that he consulted. These type-written papers are given no attribution, and so appear to be authored by him.

Harris's intellectual engagement also included the restoration of particular works of art. We have evidence of this for three pieces, all post-Byzantine icons. His notes indicate that after purchasing an icon of Saint Nicholas in Athens in 1967, he had a large central crack repaired the following year in London by the Bowater Gallery.<sup>34</sup> He had two other icons repaired by prominent Byzantinists in Athens. The triptych with the Mother of God and Child (fig. 2.5) was cleaned in 1958 by Fotis Kontoglou (1896-1965), the celebrated iconographer who is also known for his work as the conservator for the Byzantine and Christian Museum and in Athens, and for his restoration work on the fourteenthcentury frescoes at the Peribleptos Monastery at Mystras.<sup>35</sup> A wing of a triptych (fig. 2.10), purchased in Athens in 1968, was cleaned that same year by Maria Sotiriou (1888-1979), who was also a conservator at the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens, and co-author of a number of important studies with her husband, George Sotiriou (1881-1965), the first Director of the museum.<sup>36</sup>

Harris's interest in having his works appraised can also be seen as an aspect of his intellectual engagement. Of the sixteen objects in Sub-collection A (African and Other Tribal Objects), ten were

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> BHSC, 2020.323.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Benaki Museum, ΓΕ 2988,

https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com\_collectionit ems&view=collectionitem&id=107671&lang=en (accessed October 16, 2021). See also Drandaki et al 2000, pp. 194–95.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> His citation to Bendall 1996, is found in the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.148.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.121.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.405, 2020.162, 2020.166, 2020.167.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.318.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.348.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.350.

appraised by William L. Hommel (1935–2018), who was, in the 1970s, when these works were purchased, a curator at the Museum of African Art in Washington, DC.<sup>37</sup> Seven of these appraisals are indicated on the purchase receipts from the Von Barghahn Gallery in Washington, DC.<sup>38</sup> Harris also sought out Hommel's expertise for the appraisal of three other African objects that he purchased from other dealers.<sup>39</sup> While Harris may have been interested in an object's value, his work with Hommel, Sotiriou, and Kontoglou may also reflect an interest in verifying the authenticity of specific pieces.

Based on what remains in the HC, it appears that Harris had less intellectual engagement with his Ethiopian objects. He did not include any images of comparanda, nor do we find the type of research activities discussed above. However, the terminology he used to describe these pieces on the one-sheets evolved as he made more purchases. What may have begun as a desire for Coptic works, Harris later understood to be from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

## Provenance

Research on any collection must address questions of provenance. This is of importance not only for the purpose of evaluating an object's authenticity, but for also determining its ownership history, both licit and illicit; for an in-depth examination of these issues, see the essay in this volume by Elizabeth Marlowe (ch. 3). Such information is critical in determining how the Department of Art History and Kenyon College should responsibly serve as stewards of Harris's collection.

The Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) provides guidance on this matter. The 2008 report on the "Acquisition of Archaeological

Materials and Ancient Art" identifies the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import and Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property held on November 17, 1970 as providing the critical benchmark for art acquisitions. <sup>40</sup> This report, following the date and guidance of the UNESCO Convention, states that:

Member museums normally should not acquire a work unless provenance research substantiates that the work was outside its country of probable modern discovery before 1970 or was legally exported from its probable country of modern discovery after 1970.

We have very little information regarding the predealer history of Harris's objects. Of the 458 objects that were accessioned into the BHSC from the Harris bequest, thirty-eight meet the guidelines established by the UNESCO Convention and that supported by the AAMD (see the Appendix). The AAMD Report also offers guidance when an object's full ownership history is not available. They cite that "the cumulative facts and circumstances resulting from provenance research" may lead to the conclusion that a work most likely meets the 1970 threshold, and in such cases a museum may choose to accept a work. If so, then the museum must also publicize all known information that led to the decision to acquire the work. But they warn:

The museum must carefully balance the possible financial and reputational harm of taking such a step against the benefit of collecting, presenting, and preserving the work in trust for the educational benefit of present and future generations.

Kenyon, as Harris's primary beneficiary, immediately became the new owner of the collection upon his death in 2019, and the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> The six African pieces in this sub-collection that were not appraised by Harris: BHSC, 2020.4, 2020.7, 2020.11, 2020.12, 2020.15, 2020.16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.2, 2020.3, 2020.6, 2020.8, 2020.10, 2020.13, 2020.14.

 $<sup>^{39}</sup>$  See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.1, 2020.5, 2020.9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> AAMD 2008; UNESCO 1970.

Department of Art History was then given the extraordinary opportunity and privilege to have a voice in determining how to best care for the pieces. Faced with the choice of incorporating Harris's bequest into the BHSC or allowing the estate to be liquidated at auction, the Department chose the former. Objects were immediately accessioned and added to the online collection catalog, where provenance materials will continue to be publicized. If research "establishes another party's right to ownership of a work" — as stated by the AAMD 2008 Report — the Department of Art History and Kenyon College, as the current stewards of these pieces, are prepared to return the work to said owner. Harris's records have already revealed the existence of one possible looted object in the collection: a glazed sgraffito Byzantine potsherd, which was reportedly "found in 1968 near the Church of Saint Demetrios, Salonica."41 As we have seen, Harris was methodical in indicating when, where, and how he acquired his objects. Given that this note says nothing of a purchase, we can assume that he was the one who found and smuggled the potsherd back to the United States. We have already been in contact with the Ephorate of Antiquities of Thessaloniki City regarding this piece, and will post information to our website when the issue is resolved.

The HC also preserves documentation that shows at least one object purchased after 1970 was exported from its country of modern discovery. A small Byzantine stone icon, purchased from Christopher Martin-Zakheim of Iconastas in London on October 20, 1994, was acquired by Martin-Zakheim in March of that same year from the State Historical Museum in Moscow. A letter preserved in the HC, and signed by curator Galina Grigorievna Smorodinova, authorized the object's deaccessioning and sale (fig. 2.11). Such a document is exceptional in the HC. For most objects, we know when and where they were purchased, but we have little or no information regarding their pre-dealer



Figure 2.11. Letter from the State Historical Museum in Moscow authorizing the sale of BHSC, 2020.181, dated March 23, 1994.

history. In the absence of this documentation, we must turn to other details preserved in the HC. We offer some approaches that may help in uncovering the provenance of Harris's objects.

We begin by looking at what the dealers wrote on the receipts. Most dealers do not provide provenance, and when they do, the notes are minimal and/or ambiguous. For one Byzantine belt buckle, a receipt from Tetragon, a London-based gallery operated by Julia Schottlander, includes the handwritten note "8th–9th or 9th–11th [century] bronze belt buckle with a lion, Syria, £90." It is not clear what Schottlander meant by this attribution. Is Syria a suggested place of origin; is it a known find location? Perhaps she verbally clarified these questions to Harris. On the one-sheet, he interprets her note thusly, "The piece comes from Syria." On the receipt for another Byzantine belt buckle, Schottlander writes, "complete buckle with 2

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 41}$  See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.146.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.181.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.122.

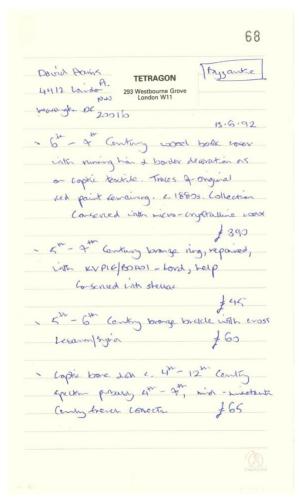


Figure 2.12. Receipt from Tetragon for BHSC, 2020.188, 2020.101, 2020.126, and 2020.177, dated June 13, 1992.

crosses, punched, & incised design, Lebanon/Syria, 6th–8th [century] AD." On the one-sheet, Harris clarifies this attribution by noting: "The present buckle was believed by the dealer to have come from Lebanon or Syria."44

Some receipts indicate that objects were once part of older collections, but this information is also told in varying degrees of specificity. On one receipt, Schottlander states that a writing tablet came from a "c. 1880s Collection," and a bone doll from a "mid-

nineteenth century French collection" (fig. 2.12).45 No additional documents were included to prove these claims, but the mention of these purported collections was certainly meant to legitimize the acquisition and sale, as they claimed that these objects left their countries of modern discovery prior to 1970. In other instances, Schottlander was more specific about the source collections. A gold Byzantine earring is said to have come from the "Moustaki collection," referring to Gustave Mustaki (d. 1965), a Greek-born resident of Alexandria, who collected ancient and medieval antiquities in the first half of the twentieth century. 46 This provenance is also suggested by the modern handwritten "M" on the back of the gold earring, but there is no certainty as to who produced this label.

The HC also includes provenance information that is not reflected in documents provided by the dealers. A Byzantine ring purchased from the Temple Gallery in London on June 12, 1992, is filed with a photocopied image of the same ring, from an auction catalog for the Jerusalem antiquities dealer L. Alexander Wolfe.<sup>47</sup> There is no mention of this catalog on the receipt, but presumably the Temple Gallery acquired the ring from this auction, which was held in Zurich on November 20, 1989. On the one-sheet for a Roman appliqué head, Harris added that the object is "said to have come from Mildenhall, England."48 Again, this information is not found on the purchase receipt from Schottlander, and so it is unclear how Harris gained this information. We can also learn about the ownership history of these pieces by studying the objects themselves. One example is an amulet from the Church of Saint Spyridon in Corfu (fig. 2.13), which preserves inside not a relic, but a business card from the local silversmiths, "O. Marolla & Fils" and

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 44}$  See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.125.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.188, 2020.177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.111. After World War II Mustaki legally exported most of his collection to London, and upon his death in 1965, his objects passed to his daughter Elsa MacLellan; Green 2019/2020, p.

<sup>207</sup>n75. For a list of Mustaki's objects that were acquired by the British Museum, see

https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG5953 9 (accessed October 16, 2021).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.100. For the auction catalog, see Wolfe 1989, pp. 92–93, no. 347.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.179.

the handwritten date, May 14, 1929, presumably when the amulet was made.<sup>49</sup>

Another way we might approach the provenance of items in Harris's collection is by looking more closely at the dealers. This may not tell us much about the provenance of specific objects, but can reveal the types of objects they sold, and where they may have acquired them. Julia Schottlander of Tetragon serves as a case study for this approach. Between 1989 and 2005, Harris acquired seventyone objects from Schottlander — the most from any one dealer. He cataloged them in Sub-collections G (Byzantine Era Small Objects), H (Rings and Small Pendant Crosses), and L (Roman, Hellenic, Coptic, Egyptian Objects). We were unable to make contact with Schottlander, but the objects that she sold to Harris and donated to museum collections indicate that she specialized in artifacts from ancient and medieval Egypt and the Near East.<sup>50</sup> Based on the documents preserved in the HC, she was active in acquiring existing collections, as we saw with the gold earring from the Mustaki collection.<sup>51</sup> A fragment of a Roman lamp handle in the shape of a horse's head came from the collection of Hans Abarbanell.<sup>52</sup> An amphora-shaped pilgrim vessel came from the collection of Lord Alistair McAlpine.53 We do not have documented proof that these objects came from these older collections; Schottlander's handwritten notes on the receipts are the only source of this information. Schottlander is on record as having donated and sold objects associated with these former collections to major

Figure 2.13. Amulet of Saint Spyridon with contents, from Corfu. BHSC, 2020.159. Photo: Birhanu T. Gessese.

museums. She also donated a set of two copper alloy sculptures of camels from the Arbanell collection to the British Museum in 2000, and in 1992 sold a Barbotine cup from the Mustaki collection to Peter

the British Museum, see

https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG6294 0 (accessed October 16, 2021).

https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG8382 3 (accessed October 16, 2021).

HORLOGERIE - BIJUTERIE

O. MAROLLA & RILLS

LES ILES ICNNIENS

REF FEGENE ROPIGIANS IL

May 14-1/24

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.159. The amulet also contains a tag branded by the London printer, "W Straker Ltd" and "The Ludgate Tag" and the same handwritten date, "Corfu, May 14, 1929." We also found a clipping — perhaps from a guidebook — that describes Corfu and the shrine of Saint Spyridon.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Musée du Louvre, E 32581 A

https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010036874, E 32581 B

https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010036875, E 11378

https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010009825 (all accessed October 16, 2021). Albany Institute of History & Art, 2015.47. For a list of Schottlander's objects acquired by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> See also BHSC, 2020.310.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.184. For a list of Abarbanell's objects that were acquired by the British Museum, see

 $<sup>^{53}</sup>$  BHSC, 2020.115. For a list of McAlpine's objects that were acquired by the British Museum, see

https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG7475 6 (accessed October 16, 2021).

Table 2.4. Chronology of Harris's Purchases of Ethiopian Art

	Date of Purchase	Dealer	Cat. nos.
1	[date unknown], 1975	Christopher Martin, Portobello Galleries, London	12
2	October 21, 1975	Constantine Z. Panayotidis, Antiques by Constantine Ltd., London	31, 32, 33
3	October 25, 1975	Christopher Martin, Portobello Galleries, London	13, 14
4	December 13, 1975	Maria Teresa O'Leary, Nuevo Mundo, Alexandria, Virginia	1
5	February 28, 1976	Maria Teresa O'Leary, Nuevo Mundo, Alexandria, Virginia	2, 30, 34 or 35
6	March 5, 1976	Endicott-Guthaim Gallery Inc., New York	3
7	October 11, 1976	Maria Teresa O'Leary, Nuevo Mundo, Alexandria, Virginia	4
8	January 19, 1977	Michael and Vivian Arpad, Arpad Antiques, Washington, DC	5, 6
9	February 18, 1977	Endicott-Guthaim Gallery Inc., New York	22
10	February 20, 1977	United Nations Gift Center, New York	7
11	February 21, 1977	Endicott-Guthaim Gallery Inc., New York	21
12	June 1977	Christopher Martin, London	23
13	August 15, 1977	Guthaim Gallery Inc., New York	24, 25, 26
14	August 15, 1977	Guthaim Gallery Inc., New York	8
15	November 26, 1977	The African Gallery, San Francisco	9, 15, 16
16	October 23, 1978	Guthaim Gallery Inc., New York	18, 19, 20
17	June 1979	Unnamed dealer, London	17
18	June 23, 1989	Bruce and Marcia McDougal, New Davenport Cash Store Pottery Gallery & Restaurant, Davenport, California	10
19	April 26, 1991	Xanadu, San Francisco	29

Lacovara, who later donated it to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.<sup>54</sup> Schottlander provides us with a special case for a deeper investigation of Harris's dealers because there is so much information available on her donations and sales to other clients.

Can we apply this approach to the dealers who sold Harris his Ethiopian objects? Table 2.4 lists the individual purchases made by Harris for the Ethiopian objects in this catalog. We have listed only those objects for which we have a receipt, or Harris's recording of the date and dealer. Harris made nineteen purchases of thirty-two objects. Seventeen of these purchases occur between a narrow window of time, between 1975 and 1979; two additional purchases were made over a decade later. These purchases come from nine named dealers.

Harris did not have a long purchasing history with most of these dealers. He made only one purchase from Constantine Z. Panayotidis of Antiques by Constantine, Michael and Vivian Arpad of Arpad Antiques, The African Gallery, and Bruce and Marcia McDougal of the New Davenport Cash Store Pottery Gallery & Restaurant. He made more than one purchase from each of the other dealers, often buying a few non-Ethiopian objects as well. From Nuevo Mundo, he also bought a medieval Egyptian textile in 1975 and an Afghan necklace in 1980 — a five-year purchasing period.55 From the Endicott-Guthaim Gallery, which was later incorporated at the same address as the Guthaim Gallery, Harris purchased two other African objects and a Turkmen bracelet in 1976, and a Turkmen breast ornament in 1980 — a four-year purchasing period.<sup>56</sup> From the United Nations Gift Center, Harris bought a Yoruba scepter in 1976, one year before buying an Ethiopian hand cross (cat. 7) with

a silver Agadez pectoral.<sup>57</sup> While he made only four purchases from Xanadu, he did so over a fifteen-year period starting with a Yoruba baton in 1983, then a Chinese soapstone figure of Luohan in 1986, followed by the Ethiopian painted pectoral (cat. 29) in 1991, and ending with an iron Marka mask in 1998.<sup>58</sup> Christopher Martin is the exception to these short-lived relationships. Prior to opening the gallery Iconastas in 1975, and changing his name to Christopher Martin-Zakheim, this dealer operated a small shop on Portobello Road in London, where Harris purchased four of his Ethiopian neck crosses (cats. 12, 13, 14, 23).59 His next purchase from Martin-Zakheim was at Iconastas in 1985, and his last was in 2015, establishing forty-year history with this dealer of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine religious artifacts. In total, Martin-Zakheim was the second greatest source for Harris's collection (four from Portobello Road and forty-three from Iconastas) after Schottlander (seventy-one objects).

When we look at the dealers associated with Harris's Ethiopian objects, we are left with many unanswered questions. Harris purchased most of these objects nearly five decades ago; many dealers have died or are no longer in business, and attempts to make contact with people who may have known them has yielded little information. What then can we say more generally about the dealers, how they acquired their pieces, and who were their clients? Answers to these questions are limited, but we present what we have been able to find in the hope that this will prompt further research.

Not much is known about The African Gallery in San Francisco. Online records indicate that the business was incorporated in 1977, the same year that Harris made his single purchase of one hand

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> British Museum, 2000,0326.1

https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W\_2000-0326-1, 2000,0326.2

https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W\_2000-0326-2 (both websites accessed October 16, 2021). Museum of Fine Arts Boston, 1992.94

https://collections.mfa.org/objects/164724 (accessed October 16, 2021).

<sup>55</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC 2020.401, 2020.17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.5, 2020.12, 2020.19, 2020.18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.4, 2020.16.

See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.15,
 2020.7. The soapstone figure was not received in the bequest.
 The Times 2019.

cross (cat. 9), one neck cross (cat. 15), and an earpick (cat. 16). The receipt lists additional locations in Los Angeles, New York, Seattle, and Washington, DC, but we have not been able to determine whether any of these branches are still in operation.<sup>60</sup>

We also have minimal information regarding Xanadu for the fifteen-year period in which Harris was a customer. The gallery was established in 1979. A new owner took over in 2000 and merged Xanadu with her own gallery; she was unable to provide us with any information about the acquisition practices of the previous owner.

Bruce and Marcia McDougal built the New Davenport Cash Store Pottery Gallery & Restaurant in 1977 as part of their pottery studio, making Davenport, California an artistic hub and tourist destination. <sup>61</sup> When Harris visited Davenport in 1989 he had not purchased an Ethiopian object for ten years. It is not clear whether the McDougals regularly sold objects such as this in their store, and if so, where they would have acquired such pieces.

Maria Teresa Eneim O'Leary established Nuevo Mundo in Alexandria, Virginia with her business partner, Cornelia Noland, in 1966. <sup>62</sup> Her store sold clothing and jewelry as well as antiques from around the world. O'Leary's expertise in textiles led to her serving on the Advisory Council of the Textile Museum in Washington, DC. <sup>63</sup> She traveled extensively to Latin America and Asia, and her obituaries state that this was how she sourced many of her products. <sup>64</sup> We can assume that she acquired Ethiopian material in the same manner, but we have not been able to make contact with O'Leary's family members to verify this information. While Nuevo Mundo remained in business until 2011, Harris's

We are unsure when Antiques by Constantine of London was in business, but they seem to have been most active in the mid-to-late 1970s and in the first part of the 1980s. They frequently exhibited items in London antique fairs and advertised in collector magazines, including as *The Connoisseur*. Based on these advertisements we were able to determine that Antiques by Constantine specialized in "Netsuke, Tsuba, Japanese Swords, Ikons, Jade, Oriental Porcelain." Harris's sole purchase from them was for the *sənsul* and the *sənsul* fragments (cats. 31, 32, 33).<sup>65</sup>

Arpad Antiques of Washington, DC was in operation from 1966 to 1990. While Harris made a single purchase from them, for two Ethiopian crosses in 1977 (cats. 5, 6), their focus was in other areas, specifically American art. Arpad Antiques dealt in works that were associated with high profile artists such as James McNeill Whistler (1834–1903), and with historical figures, including the merchant Elias Hasket Derby (1739–99). They also are on record as having sold a wooden sculpture of President Benjamin Harrison to the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery.

The Endicott-Guthaim Gallery is no longer in operation, and we were unable to find a contact. However, this dealer appears to have been most active in the mid-1970s, when Harris was a customer. The gallery hosted an exhibition of African art in 1975, and regularly advertised in issues of the peer-reviewed journal *African Arts*. 68

The United Nations Gift Center opened in 1952 under its first Director, Mary Dean, and Executive

purchases were limited to a five-year period (1975–80), during which he made at least five purchases.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.23.

<sup>61</sup> Smith 2018.

<sup>62</sup> Theismann 2015, pp. 5, 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> The Textile Museum 2014, p. 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> The Washington Times 2015.

<sup>65</sup> Advertisements can be found in the following publications: Financial Times (June 24, 1978), p. 13; Antique Collector (June 1976), pp. 12, 13; Antique Collector (September 1981), p. 16; The Connoisseur (September 1981), p. 16; The Connoisseur (June 1976), pp. 12, 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> MacDonald and Petri 2020, cat. YMSM 269. For the tumbler owned by Elias Hasket Derby, see Metropolitan Museum of Art, 67.94

https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/385 (accessed October 16, 2021).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> National Portrait Gallery, NPG.77.249

https://americaspresidents.si.edu/object/npg\_NPG.77.249 (accessed October 16, 2021).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Scheinberg 1975. Examples of advertisements can be found in *African Arts*, vol. 8, no. 2 (Winter 1975), p. 73, and in vol. 9, no. 1 (October 1975), p. 68.

## UNITED NATIONS GIFT CENTER

A service of the United Nations Cooperative, Inc. United Nations Headquarters, New York

Native arts and crafts of many lands are represented by products on sale at the United Nations Gift Center, situated in the General Assembly Building of the United Nations. Here daily hundreds of visitors come, from different parts of the United States and from all continents. The Gift Center, established by the United Nations Cooperative, Inc., is a showplace for the handicrafts, where many beautiful products are displayed and sold.

The Gift Center is constantly seeking new sources for unusual and beautiful articles; it will accept sample shipments comprising one article of a kind, placing initial orders after inspection of samples, whenever saleable objects are offered. The most saleable articles are those which combine skilled craftsmanship with functional use and decorative value. These display beauty of design, pleasing colour combinations, good proportions and interesting materials. All articles must be in good taste and of good quality and workmanship.

The lists at the right give an idea of the types of articles carried. Except for items of transitory interest, such as articles of the "souvenir" type, which the Gift Center does not carry, any product of native arts and crafts may be acceptable. The Gift Center is constantly widening its assortment to include new and beautiful examples of craft products resulting from unusual processes, new use of materials, unusual decorative treatment and other innovations. It provides an ideal outlet for the best in handicrafts and art creations.

Types of articles: Those suitable for gifts or for home decoration (Metalware, jewelry, wood carvings, glassware, ivory, leather goods, tortoise shell, textiles. Very bulky articles cannot be handled, nor goods sold by the yard, nor those sold by size, such as gloves, shoes and hats.)

#### GLASSWARE

Individual pieces or pairs, not complete sets; modern designs or good traditional forms; silver deposit ware

#### IVORY

Small carved pieces; letter openers; pins; inlaid work on trays and other usable articles

#### LEATHER GOODS

Polished leather and tooled leather boxes; cigarette cases; jewel boxes; boys' belts

#### **TEXTILES**

Woven fabrics in suitable finished lengths for scarves, stoles, etc. In hand woven goods, the colour combinations should be in good taste

#### METALWARE

Copper, traditional or modern; copper or brass with coloured enamel finish; pewter; silver

#### **JEWELRY**

Brooches, earrings, bracelets of silver, gold on silver or gold; silver filigree work; silver and turquoise; semi-precious stones and the less expensive gems such as garnet, moonstone, amethyst, topaz, carnelian, etc., set in ornaments like rings, tie clasps, and brooches

#### WOOD CARVINGS

Hand carved statuettes; polished bowls; salad fork and spoon sets; unusual decorative carved animals; special woods

#### INDIVIDUAL CERAMICS

Decorative pieces to serve as ashtrays, bonbon dishes, vases, mantel ornaments (but not sets such as dinnerware sets)

#### CHARACTER DOLLS

Suitable for collectors or for children, in authentic national costumes; peasant types in provincial costumes or in modern dress; tradesmen (lumbermen, fishermen, etc.)

## CHILDREN'S TOYS

Unbreakable toys characteristic of a particular region, made of sanitary materials

## SPECIAL MATERIALS

Articles made of mother of pearl; cloisonne; onyx; lacquered articles

#### DESK AND OFFICE ORNAMENTS

Letter openers; ashtrays, ornamental objects

#### OTHER TYPES OF ARTICLES

Well designed men's jewelry; boxes and cases for accessories; travel accessories; hand woven ties; gift toilet articles; small woven or braided baskets and trays; well made replicas of traditional items (masks, boats, ceremonial articles, bells, amulets, etc.) and interesting modern adaptations of these

Figure 2.14. United Nations Gift Center Pamphlet, undated. BHSC, 2021.26.

Director, Eleanor Roosevelt, seeking "to promote international understanding through the medium of arts and crafts." <sup>69</sup> The Gift Center sourced its stock by soliciting handmade goods from around the world. We were able to find one undated pamphlet that describes the kinds of objects they desired (fig. 2.14):

The most saleable articles are those which combine skilled craftsmanship with functional use and decorative value. These display beauty of design, pleasing color combinations, good proportions and interesting materials.<sup>70</sup>

The UN Gift Center also acquired established collections. The HC preserves a document from the Gift Center regarding the provenance of the Yoruba scepter that Harris purchased on March 7, 1976.<sup>71</sup> The document is type-written, with "for David Harris" at the top, suggesting that it was prepared for him after the purchase. The document states that the scepter came from the collection of Sandford Griffith (1893–1974), a New York based collector of African art.<sup>72</sup>

Christopher Martin, first as a dealer at the Portobello Gallery then as Christopher Martin-Zakheim of Iconastas, offers us the possibility of more information if only because Harris had such a long purchase history with him. Martin-Zakheim operated Iconastas from 1974 until his death in 2018.<sup>73</sup> While Iconastas lists Ethiopian objects on their website and in their published sales catalogs, Harris only purchased Ethiopian material from Martin-Zakheim prior to the establishment of Iconastas gallery.<sup>74</sup> It is unclear how Martin-Zakheim acquired the specific objects purchased by Harris, but his obituary, published in *The Times* of London, describes one way in which he sourced his

We are left with unanswered questions regarding the ways in which these dealers acquired Harris's Ethiopian objects. This information is imperative because each of these purchases were made after Ethiopia's own Antiquities Proclamation of 1966 and after the UNESCO Convention date of November 17, 1970.76 While we are uncertain of the age of these objects, Ethiopia's current definition of cultural heritage, as established in 2000, does not stipulate age as a criterion for protection, but includes, among other things, "parchment manuscripts, stone paintings and implements, sculptures and statues made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, copper or of any other mineral or wood, stone," and that "Cultural Heritage illegally held in other countries shall be repatriated."77 The Ethiopian objects featured in this catalog certainly fit within this definition of Cultural Heritage. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the Department of Art History and Kenyon College to conduct additional provenance research on Harris's collection, to determine whether any were illegally acquired, and — if so — to repatriate them.<sup>78</sup>

objects.<sup>75</sup> The Patrice Lumumba University, established in Moscow in 1960 for students from developing nations, prohibited students from leaving the USSR with cash, but allowed them to take purchased objects with no restrictions. Martin-Zakheim would meet these students at Heathrow, and buy their Soviet purchases. This obituary also describes the ways in which Martin-Zakheim bypassed paying costly customs fees to the United States by gaining permission to pack items in shipping containers with the United States Air Force. These actions speak to Martin-Zakheim's willingness to avoid legal and documented forms of object acquisition and customs control.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Cartwright 1954, p. 178.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> BHSC, 2021.26.

 $<sup>^{71}</sup>$  See the supporting documentation for BHSC, 2020.4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> New York Times 1974, p. 44.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> The gallery is now operated by his widow, Alexandra Martin-Zakheim, by appointment only.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> The website for Iconastas is https://www.iconastas.com/ (accessed October 16, 2021).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> The Times 2019.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Habte-Wold 1966. Ethiopia ratified the UNESCO Convention in 2003; see Woldegiorgis 2003. See also, Nair 2016.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Gidada 2000, Articles 3.8.a and 26.1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Jacobs and Porter 2022 serves as an excellent model for college and university museums as they pursue repatriation efforts.

This survey helps us to better contextualize Harris's broader collecting interests and habits, and the ways in which he may have become interested in smaller cultural groupings, such as the Ethiopian objects featured in this volume. While Ethiopia was not a long-term collecting passion of his or a large monetary investment, it emerged at the same time as his interest in collecting African art. As we have suggested, his interest in collecting Ethiopian objects was also likely first piqued by his interest in

objects associated with Orthodox Christianities. This essay also raises questions, and opens up many avenues for future research on provenance. While we have a great deal of material with which to begin our analyses, this information can only take us so far. It is our hope that students and researchers will continue this work by helping us place these objects in context, maintain their preservation, expand our knowledge of their provenance, and, when possible, ensure their repatriation.

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