

Preface

The genesis of this book can be traced directly to the activities of the International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council (ISPAC) of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Program. Established in 1991, ISPAC's secretariat is located in Milan, Italy, at the Centre Nazionale di Prevenzione e Difesa Sociale (CNPDS).

ISPAC's tasks have been defined as

channelling to the United Nations professional and scientific input and creating a capacity for the transfer of knowledge and exchange of information in crime prevention and criminal justice drawing on the contributions of non-governmental organisations (NGO's), academic institutions and other relevant entities, so as to assist the United Nations in program formulation and implementation in this field.

In December 2008 ISPAC, together with the Courmayeur Foundation and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), sponsored an international conference on "Organised Crime in Art and Antiquities". It should be noted that this was not the first occasion on which ISPAC had been involved in such a gathering. In June 1992 ISPAC, in collaboration with the Division of Cultural Patrimony of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), held an international workshop on the "Protection of Artistic and Cultural Property" in Courmayeur, Mont Blanc in Italy. This workshop resulted in the formulation of the so called Charter of Courmayeur, urging national and international action against the illicit trade with objects belonging to the cultural patrimony of nations (see Annex #24??).

The 2008 conference also took place in Courmayeur and was attended by 145 experts from 27 different countries including, among others, representatives of national governments and international organisations, NGOs, academia and the private sector. Selected papers from the conference were subsequently published as an edited collection by ISPAC/CNPDS (Manacorda 2009). Following this publication, which had only limited circulation, it was decided by ISPAC that a broader audience needed to be reached and subsequently an agreement was entered into with Springer, an international publisher based in New York in the USA, to produce the current book. This agreement provided for the joint editorship of Stefano Manacorda, who had coordinated the 2008 conference and edited its proceedings,

and Duncan Chappell who had participated as an expert at the conference, and is a member of the Board of Management of ISPAC.

As is seen from the list of contents of this book a number of the chapters, revised and updated, have been drawn from the papers presented at Courmayeur in 2008 while others are newly commissioned works. In addition, as an Annex, a collection of the major international instruments and related documents concerned with the protection of art and antiquities of cultural significance has been reproduced. As anyone involved in this area of academic and scientific endeavour quickly discovers many of these documents are by themselves very difficult to locate – a problem which, it is hoped, is overcome through the provision of the material contained in the Annex.

As editors, we wish to express our warm gratitude to ISPAC for permitting us to participate in the production of this book, and for supporting us in so many ways throughout a quite lengthy gestation period. During this period, we have also engaged with ISPAC in the organisation of an ancillary meeting, titled “Protecting Cultural Property: The State of the Art”, held at the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Salvador, Brazil in April 2010, and a subsequent workshop on this topic conducted in May 2010 at the Vienna meeting of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

This book could not have been produced without the encouragement and assistance of Eleni Papageorgiou and Camilla Beria di Argentine at ISPAC. We owe a special debt of gratitude to Eleni who did so much to smooth the frustrations and logistics involved in working with editors, authors and a publisher scattered across the globe. We also wish to convey our thanks to each of the contributors to this book who have given so freely of their time and expertise. Last, but not least, we express our appreciation to our publisher, Springer, and in particular to Welmoed Spahr and Katherine Chabalko, for their patience and understanding over the number of months it has taken to bring this venture to a successful conclusion.

Naples, Italy
Sydney, Australia
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Reference

Manacorda, S. (Ed.) (2009) *Organised crime in art and antiquities*. Milano, Italy: ISPAC.



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