

Through their Western Worldview: An Analysis of the Office of Strategic Service's

Art Looting Investigation Unit

By  
Claire Elizabeth Mercer

A Thesis Submitted to  
Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Arts in History

December 2023, Halifax, Nova Scotia

© Claire Elizabeth Mercer, 2023

Approved: Dr. Kirrily Freeman  
Supervisor

Approved: Dr. Shira Lurie  
Reader

Approved: Dr. Sveva Savelli  
External Examiner

Date: December 13, 2023

Through their Western Worldview: An Analysis of the Office of Strategic Service's

Art Looting Investigation Unit

By Claire Elizabeth Mercer

Abstract:

This study analyzes the collective biographies and worldview of the members of the American Office of Strategic Services' Art Looting Investigation Unit (ALIU) during and after the Second World War, with an emphasis on six of the unit's members: James Sachs Plaut, Theodore Duncan Rousseau, Jr., Samson Lane Faison, Jr., Otto Wittmann, Charles Henry Sawyer, and John Marshall Phillips. This research demonstrates that the elite context in which these men were raised and educated cultivated within them a worldview that centered the United States as the leader of Western civilization and culture. This thesis illustrates that their common Ivy League educations and high-level cultural professions influenced the unit's work throughout the war and reinforced their worldview. In returning to their civilian jobs, these men were at the forefront of American cultural institutions, where the idea that the United States was the guardian of Western culture again influenced their decision making. This worldview, and the consequences of their work, persist in the current American museum culture.

December 13, 2023

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	6
Chapter One: Biographies.....	34
Chapter Two: The War Years.....	64
Chapter Three: The Postwar Period until the Present.....	94
Conclusion .....	113
<i>Appendix 1 – Biographies of Non-Unit Members.....</i>	<i>122</i>
<i>Appendix 2 –Interrogation Report Subjects.....</i>	<i>127</i>
Bibliography .....	133

## **List of Figures**

Figure 1. Chart of intended structure and chain of command for Project Orion, November 1944.	10
Figure 2. Structural chart of OSS X-2 Branch, March 1945.	11
Figure 3. Lake Alt Aussee.	76

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Biographies of Non-Unit Members	122
Appendix 2 –Interrogation Report Subjects	127

## Introduction

American cultural officials of the Second World War are frequently portrayed as heroic guardians and saviours of Western art.<sup>1</sup> One of these groups is the Office of Strategic Service's (OSS) Art Looting Investigation Unit. The Art Looting Investigation Unit (ALIU, or Project Orion) was an American intelligence operation created in November 1944, primarily tasked with investigating Nazi art looting and collecting schemes, for the purpose of American restitution efforts and war crimes trials.<sup>2</sup> The unit's second task was to interrogate German government officials and Nazi art dealers to compile detailed reports for the Judge Advocate General and postwar criminal trials. Between 1945 and late 1946, unit personnel travelled across Europe to conduct their investigations and compile reports, some of which became influential in the postwar prosecution of Hermann Göring and Alfred Rosenberg. Although the unit's tasks were a complicated undertaking, only six individuals were assigned to investigative operations:<sup>3</sup> James Sachs Plaut, Samson Lane Faison, Jr., Theodore Rousseau, Jr., Otto Wittmann, Jr., Charles Henry Sawyer, and John Marshall Philips.

These six men had notably similar life trajectories and experiences. Before the war, they all completed Bachelors of Arts at Ivy League institutions: Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and the University of Pennsylvania. During the war, these men were recruited to the ALIU because of their museum expertise, and experience in the US navy, army, or air force. The fact that all six men had Ivy League educations and strong professional networks in the US and in Europe

---

<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Petropoulos, "Five Uncomfortable and Difficult Topics Relating to the Restitution of Nazi-Looted Art." *New German Critique*, 44:1 (2017): 125–142. (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>2</sup> Getty Research Institute (GRI), Special Collections (SC), Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 6, "Memorandum from James Sachs Plaut and Theodore Rousseau Jr., to James R. Murphy, "Fine Arts Project – Orion" X-2 Branch" (21 November 1944).

<sup>3</sup> Their work was supported by four administrative staff.

amplified their qualifications for the unit. After the war, these six men rose through the ranks of prominent American cultural institutions, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, and the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston. Until now, the lives and experiences of Plaut, Faison, Rousseau, Wittmann, Sawyer, and Philips have not been studied collectively, nor have they been examined in the context of their common social, intellectual, cultural, and political backgrounds. Rather, ALIU members and their work tend to be placed in a triumphalist, and individualist, narrative very similar to the narratives propagated about another related organization, the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) program.<sup>4</sup> A prominent example of this glorification is through an American non-profit organization called the Monuments Men and Women Foundation, which groups together “the heroes” of the ALIU, the MFAA and other cultural initiatives.<sup>5</sup> The front page of the foundation website reads “the Monuments Men and Women were a group of American and British men and women -- museum curators, art historians, librarians, architects, even artists -- responsible for preserving the artistic and cultural achievements of western civilization from the war and theft by the Nazis.”<sup>6</sup> This tendency to romanticize wartime monuments work and celebrate heroic individualism has several consequences: it decontextualizes members of the ALIU and the MFAA from the broader elite social, economic, and academic context of which they were a part and it illustrates the persistence of a worldview in which the United States is the unquestioned leader and saviour of Western Civilization, a worldview which also shaped the wartime and postwar careers of members of the ALIU.

---

<sup>4</sup> Petropoulos, “Five Uncomfortable and Difficult Topics,” 125.

<sup>5</sup> Until a recent rebrand, the Foundation was called the Monuments Men Foundation.

<sup>6</sup> The Monuments Men and Women Foundation, “The Heroes.” <https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/>. (accessed 2 August 2023).

Literature that deliberately focuses on romanticizing and glorifying wartime art protection measures has overshadowed the fact that American cultural professionals were not immune to unethical and immoral decisions.<sup>7</sup> The men of the ALIU were no exception, and some were perhaps the guiltiest of their peers.<sup>8</sup> This thesis analyzes ALIU investigators' roles as American intelligence agents and career museum professionals and finds that their social, cultural, political and intellectual backgrounds and their overarching worldview led some of them to unethical behaviour, despite their proclaimed role as protectors and saviours of art. This worldview, however, was flexible enough to support contradictory tendencies, as we shall see, and resilient enough to continue to shape public perceptions.

### **The ALIU**

From 15 August to 15 September 1945, American art historian Samson Lane Faison interrogated German art historian and Nazi collaborator, Hermann Voss.<sup>9</sup> The setting of the interrogation was a picturesque Austrian villa in the town of Alt Aussee where, in May 1945, the US Third Army found troves of art in a nearby salt mine, stored there by the Nazis.<sup>10</sup> From his arrival in May 1945, throughout the summer and into the fall, Faison and his fellow ALIU members lived in this beautiful mountainous region, interrogating Nazi art looters and their collaborators in order to compile evidence for the interrogation reports they would later produce.

---

<sup>7</sup> It is important to distinguish between a spectrum of immoral or unethical actions. The spectrum Petropoulos highlights has a Nazi who looted a Jewish family's art during the war on one end, and on the other end, an individual dealing in previously looted art after the war. This thesis is geared toward the latter end. Jonathan Petropoulos, "Art Dealer Networks in the Third Reich and in the PostWar Period," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 52.3 (2017): 547, 552. JSTOR (accessed 6 Aug. 2023).

<sup>8</sup> Petropoulos, "Five Uncomfortable and Difficult Topics," 129.

<sup>9</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR No. 12, Herman Voss" (September 15, 1945). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231997047/12> (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>10</sup> Lynn H. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 346.



The American Art Looting Investigation Unit was formed to address the challenge of locating Nazi looted art and art looters, and to ascertain how the Nazi regime amassed so much property from individuals and institutions across Europe. Information gathered was to be used in war crime trials. Formed on 21 November 1944, the ALIU was initially supposed to comprise twelve people but ended up with ten: four officers, three enlisted men, and three civilian staff.<sup>11</sup> The four officers were Plaut, Rousseau, Faison, and Wittmann. The enlisted men were Phillips, Sawyer, and Terrence Coyne. Coyne worked as Plaut's personal assistant, as the latter was the Unit Director. Rousseau worked as the unit's Operations Officer. The three civilian administrators were analysts Elizabeth Lambie and Alice Whitney, and clerk Sarah J. Sillcocks. The small, secret unit reported to the Counterintelligence (X-2) branch of the wartime American intelligence service, the OSS, which was directed by the American lawyer William "Wild Bill" Donovan.

To achieve their goals, the ALIU worked collaboratively with other Allied groups like the OSS of which it was a part, the Roberts Commission, and the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives program (MFAA). These three groups supported the ALIU throughout its endeavors, including the unit's interrogations and reporting. The OSS was established in 1942 and was quickly called upon by the Roberts Commission to assist in the investigation of art looting across

---

<sup>11</sup> The men who ultimately did not join the unit included Sheldon Keck, Lamont Moore (Appendix 1), and John Baur. These three men were listed as "for indoctrination" in a 21 November 1944 memorandum. GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 6, folder 9.

21 November 1944

ORION Memorandum, Annex A

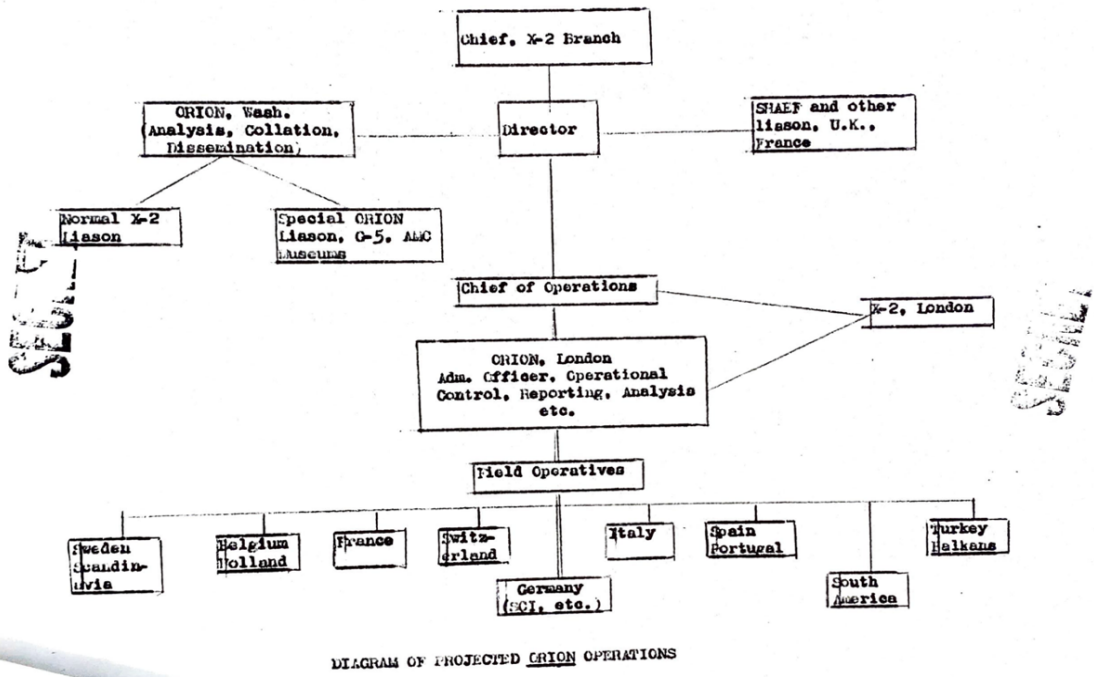


DIAGRAM OF PROJECTED ORION OPERATIONS

Figure 1. Chart of intended structure and chain of command for Project Orion, November 1944. GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 6, folder 9.

Nazi occupied territory. The Roberts Commission worked with the OSS's Research and Analysis Branch (R&A) in 1943 because of two reports the OSS received about German movement of art. From that first sharing of information, OSS Director Donovan continued to provide the Commission with reports on Nazi looting activities. By the summer of 1944, it was requested that the OSS form a small intelligence group to deal directly with art looting while simultaneously supporting the Commission and the MFAA.<sup>12</sup> This request resulted in the establishment of the ALIU.

<sup>12</sup> National Archives and Records Administration Washington, DC, "Records of the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas (the Roberts Commission), 1943-1946," 2007. <https://www.archives.gov/files/research/microfilm/m1944.pdf>. (accessed 7 August 2023), 4.



artistic, property, and that violations of these laws were punishable by legal proceedings. Among many other powers, the US and Germany signed onto this agreement.<sup>14</sup>

In 1942, leading American museum officials like Francis Henry Taylor, Paul J. Sachs, George Stout, and David Finley (Appendix 1), expressed concern that fighting on the European continent would jeopardize important cultural property. Taylor, the director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, asserted that the US must participate in the protection of this property abroad. Stout, a Harvard graduate and chief of conservation at the Fogg Museum, thought the best method to ensure protection would be through a government-backed, yet independent, organization.<sup>15</sup> Finley approached Chief Justice Harlan F. Stone, (also the chair of the National Gallery's Board of Directors),<sup>16</sup> to bring the proposal directly to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Roosevelt passed the proposal to the Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, who needed approval from the United States' Military's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).

Meanwhile, civilian groups proposed and developed numerous organizations to further the cause of protecting cultural property. Most prominent of these groups were the American Council of Learned Societies' Committee for the Protection of Cultural Treasures in War Areas<sup>17</sup> and the American Defense-Harvard Group.<sup>18</sup> On 27 April 1943, members of the War Department

---

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 7-8. Although during the Second World War, the US was bound by the 1907 Hague Convention, the international legislation does not come up in sources as motivation for the ALIU's work.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 49.

<sup>16</sup> Stone's desire to protect European art stemmed from the belief that it was a physical manifestation of the evolution of civilization. Anne Rothfeld, "Project Orion: An Administrative History of the Art Looting Investigation Unit (ALIU): An Overlooked Page in Intelligence Gathering" (M.A. thesis, University of Maryland Baltimore County, 2002), chapter 2, 24.

<sup>17</sup> The American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) is a non-profit organization, founded in 1919, that promotes and represents scholarly organizations in the humanities and social sciences. In 1943, the ACLS created the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Treasures in War Areas to combine scholarly expertise to limit destruction of cultural property across occupied territory. American Council of Learned Societies, "ACLS and the Monuments Men," 2023. <https://www.acls.org/acls-and-the-monuments-men/>. (accessed 7 Aug. 2023).

<sup>18</sup> The American Defense-Harvard Group was created in June 1940 by a group of Harvard faculty who wanted to provide expertise in areas that could have been useful to the war effort. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*, 209-210; Kurtz, *America and the Return of Nazi Contraband*, 51-52.

and the National Gallery of Art met to discuss the importance of a national commission to protect cultural treasures. Roosevelt saw the importance but wanted to ensure that the Soviet Union and Britain agreed, to maintain strong Allied relations.<sup>19</sup> Hull named the group the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in Europe which became known as the Roberts Commission, named after its chair Justice Owen J. Roberts (Appendix 1). The Roberts Commission was approved on 20 August 1943 and faced many challenges after its creation, especially regarding the definitions of “cultural property” or “art.” Initially, its focus was protection and preservation, but as the volume of artwork displaced by the Nazis became clear, restitution was prioritized, with the help of the military. The Roberts Commission sought military support through the War Department’s Civil Affairs Division in establishing the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives program, which would be tasked with enacting cultural protection and restitution work in the field.<sup>20</sup>

### **Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives**

The MFAA was an international group of cultural experts that worked to help protect and preserve cultural property across war-torn territory. The MFAA, established in December 1943, was initially a group of a dozen specialized officers that grew to hundreds, whose main responsibilities included housing, protecting, “and eventually restitut[ing] works of art that can only be described as loot, objects that had been taken from countries occupied by the German armies and transported back to Germany.”<sup>21</sup> The Harvard-Group and the ACLS provided the MFAA with lists of potential recruits, and then hundreds of maps and lists of cultural property to

---

<sup>19</sup> In the final draft of the proposed commission, the Soviet Union and Britain were excluded. Kurtz, *America and the Return of Nazi Contraband*, 53.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 55.

<sup>21</sup> Edith Standen, “Introduction – The Immediate Postwar Period, 1945-51,” in *The Spoils of War: World War II and Its Aftermath: The Loss, Reappearance, and Recovery of Cultural Property*, ed., Elizabeth Simpson (New York: H.N. Abrams in association with the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, 1997), 122.

be protected. Officers took these lists into their investigations. In June 1943, the first Monuments Officer deployed to Europe, American Major Mason Hammond, arrived in Italy (Appendix 1).<sup>22</sup> He was followed by a dozen other monuments officers embedded with Allied armies and who worked jointly with Britain's Civil Affairs.<sup>23</sup> Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives personnel recommended to operational divisions certain strategies for protecting property, but that was the extent of their operational influence during the war.<sup>24</sup> The MFAA's most substantial work happened after the war, when armies found troves of loot and valuables across Germany and Austria.

Under direction of General Eisenhower (military governor of the US Zone of Occupation in Germany) and his deputy General Lucius Clay, the MFAA established collecting points to store looted cultural objects. The collecting point idea originated with Hammond,<sup>25</sup> who became chief of MFAA for Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) and was supported by his MFAA colleague in the field, Major Bancel LaFarge.<sup>26</sup> Collecting points, which acted as repositories for displaced art and cultural items, were established at Wiesbaden, Munich, Marburg, and Offenbach. Due to the complicated division of Germany under Allied occupation, the growing volume of material, and the task of organizing the material, the MFAA collecting points were never centralized into one structure. Much like the Roberts Commission, the MFAA was mostly made up of elite Americans who worked in the museum field before the war. The collecting point directors, like Edith Standen and Walter Farmer (Appendix 1), dedicated

---

<sup>22</sup> Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*, 222.

<sup>23</sup> Chapter 3 elaborates on the ALIU's relationship with British MFAA officer Douglas Cooper.

<sup>24</sup> Serious structural disorganization in the American military government plagued the smooth functioning of the MFAA in occupied Germany. General Eisenhower and General Clay fought for policy making power in the US Zone through the US Forces European Theater and United States Group, Control Council. Kurtz, *America and the Return of Nazi Contraband*, 89.

<sup>25</sup> Before the war, Mason Hammond taught classics at Harvard. Before working for the MFAA, Hammond served in Air Force Intelligence. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*, 221.

<sup>26</sup> Kurtz, *America and the Return of Nazi Contraband*, 88.

themselves to the repatriation and protection of cultural property that had been systematically removed from across the European continent and further.<sup>27</sup> MFAA officers witnessed the consequences of widespread looting, but it was primarily the ALIU's role to deal with the culprits.

## **Looters**

Although looting happened extensively everywhere in Nazi occupied territory, the chief looters were not rank-and file soldiers but high-level Nazis and the art trafficking organizations they created and ran. First on the Allies' radar were Hermann Göring, Alfred Rosenberg, Karl Haberstock and Kajetan Mühlmann (Appendix 2). Although the latter two evaded prosecution, they were prime contributors to the confiscation and displacement of art throughout occupied territories.<sup>28</sup> In terms of organizations, the ALIU was interested in piecing together the plans for Hitler's proposed Führermuseum in Linz (Appendix 2). The unit also reported on Göring's own massive art collection and on the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR) (Appendix 2), the largest German looting operation during the Second World War (Appendix 2). Throughout the war, the ERR seized and confiscated all forms of property from Jews across the European continent.<sup>29</sup> Piecing together these networks from scratch would have been extremely challenging for the ALIU. When the US armies uncovered the Alt Aussee salt mine in Austria and the Führerbau in Obersalzburg, however, records on the Linz project and the ERR were located.<sup>30</sup> With these records and qualified monuments personnel, the Roberts Commission and the MFAA believed they could develop a comprehensive list of Nazi art looters and trace them in

---

<sup>27</sup> Standen, "Introduction," 123.

<sup>28</sup> Kurtz, *America and the Return of Nazi Contraband*, 89.

<sup>29</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: CIR No. 1, Activity of the Einsatzstab Rosenberg in France" (August 15, 1945). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231997512/1> (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>30</sup> Kurtz, *America and the Return of Nazi Contraband*, 89.

and beyond Germany, into France, Holland, Switzerland, and Italy. The ALIU was created to fulfill this task.

## **Methodology**

Primary sources for this thesis were attained through in-person and online archival research, and include documentary material, transcribed oral interviews, conference proceedings, newspaper and magazine articles, and declassified government documents. The personal archival collections of ALIU personnel — apart from Rousseau and Phillips — held most of these sources.

Rousseau's collection of personal papers at the Metropolitan Museum's archives have restricted access, and some contents are not accessible until 2073, one-hundred years following his death.<sup>31</sup> Interestingly, the ALIU's interrogation reports were declassified in 1974, after Rousseau's death, but while most of the rest of the unit's personnel were still alive.<sup>32</sup> I consulted the Otto Wittmann papers in the Special Collections of the Getty Research Institute. The Charles Henry Sawyer papers were accessed from the University of Michigan's Bentley Historical Library, the S. Lane Faison papers from the National Gallery of Art Archives, and the S. Lane Faison Jr., papers from the Archives of American Art.

Sawyer's postwar accounts of his ALIU and Roberts Commission work are key to understanding the logistical side of the unit. In his correspondence in the 1980s and in his personal papers from 1943 to 1946, Sawyer deconstructed the movement of ALIU personnel,

---

<sup>31</sup> Interestingly, the acquisition date of the collection is unknown, according to the finding aid. Celia Hartmann and Karol Pick, "Theodore Rousseau Records, 1928-1974 (bulk 1960-1974), 2014, [https://www.libmma.org/digital\\_files/archives/Theodore\\_Rousseau\\_records\\_b18461839.pdf](https://www.libmma.org/digital_files/archives/Theodore_Rousseau_records_b18461839.pdf). (accessed 15 November 2023); Robert E. Kohn, "Complaint for Restitution, Injunctive Relief, Damages, and Punitive Damages, For: 1. Recovery of Personal Property; 2. Restitution of Unjust Enrichment; and 3. Conversion; and Demand for Jury Trial" <https://news.artnet.com/app/news-upload/2022/12/van-gogh-olive-trees.pdf> (case 3:22-cv-08924-SK, Santa Monica, CA, 2022), 7.

<sup>32</sup> On 30 January 1959, Ardelia Hall requested the ALIU interrogation reports be declassified. In May 1959, the request was denied. Fold3, "Correspondence regarding D.I.R.s and C.I.R.s from ALIU file," (May 19, 1959). EU Roberts Commission – Protection of Historical Monuments, 1943-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/270235244> (accessed 15 November 2023).



their responsibilities, and how everyone worked collaboratively.<sup>33</sup> These sources provided insight into how small and interconnected the western art world, and its institutions, truly were. Sawyer reflected on the ALIU's work both immediately and decades after the war. Not all his wartime colleagues benefitted from the opportunity of a long life of reflection. John Phillip's early death prevented him from publicly discussing his ALIU experiences. Not only was there a lack of interest in the ALIU's work at the time of his death, but the interrogation reports and information he collected were not declassified until 1974.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, most information on Phillips is only known through secondary accounts, particularly Sawyer's and monuments officer Theodore Sizer's.<sup>35</sup> There are no collections of Phillip's personal papers at any archives.

Through the US National Archives (NARA), I accessed the ALIU's Interrogation Reports and Final Reports, though I have yet to receive copies of the ALIU's administrative correspondence which I ordered at the outset of my research. The Wittmann papers held the Report on the Final Mission to Europe, the Special Reports, and the Interrogation Report of Hans Wendland. I also made use of the extensive Ardelia Hall Collection and the Roberts Commission Collection at NARA. Sources related to British Monuments Officer Douglas Cooper were obtained from the Looted Art Collection at the UK National Archives. Genealogical research was also necessary to fill in biographical details on the subjects. These sources, along with

---

<sup>33</sup> See GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 7, folder 10, Charles H. Sawyer to Tim Naftali, (26 February 1985); GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 7, folder 10, Charles H. Sawyer to Tim Naftali, (6 March 1985); Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, Bentley Historical Library (BHL), University of Michigan, box 4, "Miscellaneous, 1943-1947."

<sup>34</sup> See Fold3, EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/publication/631/eu-wwii-oss-art-looting-investigation-reports-1945-1946>, (accessed 20 Feb. 2023).

<sup>35</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 7, folder 10, Charles H. Sawyer to Tim Naftali, (26 February 1985); Theodore Sizer, "John Marshall Phillips, 1905-1953," FamilySearch, FamilySearch International, (July 9, 1953) <https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/records/item/832801-redirect#page=20&viewer=picture&o=&n=0&q=>.

historical and contemporary news and magazine articles provided material to flesh out this project.

Methods used to interpret these sources include collective biography, intellectual history, and cultural, social, and political history. Collective biography is helpful because it looks at multiple people within a collective system in which they worked, studied, or lived.<sup>36</sup> This thesis uses collective biography and social history by tracing the common life trajectories and worldview of Plaut, Faison, Rousseau, Wittmann, Phillips, and Sawyer.<sup>37</sup> The biographical details of their lives revealed how the way these men acted, worked, studied, and lived was shaped by the privileged class in which they were raised and educated: their elite background and Ivy League education placed them within personal and professional networks that led to their recruitment in the ALIU and their employment in prestigious roles before, during and after the war. They were part of a particular “old boy network” that shaped their worldview, but also their work for the ALIU and their postwar careers.<sup>38</sup> A variety of sources reveal the common features of the ALIU members’ education and wartime and postwar work.

Due to the prominence of these men within American cultural institutions, and the interesting nature of their wartime work, scholars recorded the men’s experiences, and many unit members were interviewed in the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>39</sup> Analyzing and comparing this biographical

---

<sup>36</sup> Krista Cowman, “Collective biography” in *Research Methods for History*, ed. Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire, second edition, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 86.

<sup>37</sup> See Cowman, “Collective biography,” 85-103.

<sup>38</sup> Rothfeld, “Project Orion”, 36.

<sup>39</sup> Some interviews include S. Lane Faison, interview by Robert F. Brown, *Save America’s Treasures Program of the National Park Service*, Smithsonian Archives of American Art, 14 December 1981; S. Lane Faison Jr., interview by Anna Swinbourne, *The Museum of Modern Art Oral History Program*, MoMA Archives Oral History, 5 December 2001; Otto Wittmann, interview by Richard Cándida Smith, *Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities*, J. Paul Getty Trust, 1995. Literature includes Elizabeth Simpson, “The Spoils of War: World War II and Its Aftermath: The Loss, Reappearance, and Recovery of Cultural Property,” (New York: H.N. Abrams in association with the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, 1997); Janet Flanner, “Annals of Crime: The Beautiful Spoils,” *The New Yorker*, March 1947; Sally Anne Duncan and Andrew McClellan, *The Art of Curating: Paul J. Sachs and the Museum Course at Harvard* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2018).

information revealed the common worldview of these men of similar economic, academic, and professional backgrounds. But it became apparent that the attitudes and actions of the ALIU men were also part of a larger, intellectual and political context which influenced American cultural policy throughout the twentieth century, one which was heavily influenced by trends in Western Europe. European academics and intellectuals, particularly in the field of Art History, had a major influence on American cultural practitioners (including future members of the ALIU and the MFAA) in the 1920s and the 1930s. The Art History departments at Harvard, Princeton, and other institutions embraced German approaches to the discipline in particular,<sup>40</sup> especially through the influence of prominent émigré scholars like Erwin Panofsky. These factors considered, this thesis uses intellectual history to trace the influence and transmission of ideas from Germany to America, and address how those ideas shaped the concrete work of ALIU personnel. Because all six of the ALIU personnel highlighted here studied at Ivy League schools in the 1920s and 1930s, it was necessary to understand that these men were trained in ideas and concepts adopted from European scholars. They also frequently travelled in Europe, developing and maintaining personal and professional relationships with European colleagues. This academic and intellectual background is why they were chosen for the unit, and shaped the nature and outcomes of their unit work. This intellectual history also demonstrates that the German art world personnel that the ALIU interrogated were similarly trained and educated in the same decades. This common academic, professional, and social background led ALIU

---

<sup>40</sup> On German methods of Art History, and their transmissions into American institutions, see Marion F. Deshmukh, "The Visual Arts and Cultural Migration in the 1930s and 1940s: A Literature Review," *Central European History* 41:4 (2008): 569–604; Erwin Panofsky, "Three Decades of Art History in the United States: Impressions of a Transplanted European," *College Art Journal* 14:1 (1954): 7–27; Kathryn Brush, "German Kunstwissenschaft and the Practice of Art History in America after World War I: Interrelationships, Exchanges, Contexts," *Marburger Jahrbuch Für Kunstwissenschaft* 7:36, (1999).

members to hold their German counterparts in high professional (and sometimes personal) esteem: an important consideration when interpreting the reports the unit produced.

The Third Reich is a clear illustration of the cultural and political significance of art to modern regimes.<sup>41</sup> Hitler's politicization of art and culture was inherently linked to Nazi ideological ambitions. According to Hitler, Germans were the creators of universal art and culture, and thus they had the right to this art.<sup>42</sup> Culture, art, and foreign policies had "an ineradicable link between the racially conceived nation and its cultural manifestations."<sup>43</sup> But art was also used as a tool for US occupation forces to assert their dominance ideologically, culturally, and politically. Comprised of US military officers, enlisted men and civilian administrators, the ALIU acted as an intellectual, cultural, and political agent of ideas of Western superiority and the preservation of democracy at the heart of American policy. This conflict paralleled the political and cultural context of the war, but the US carried its belief in the superiority of Western liberal democratic values well into the postwar decades, and the ALIU men were great proponents and agents of these ideas.

After the war, the US benefitted culturally from the devastation of Europe as American museum professionals (and military) assumed a firm grasp on the art that groups like the MFAA and ALIU "saved."<sup>44</sup> This control was most famously executed through the removal of 202 German paintings in 1945, which were brought to America for "safekeeping" and ultimately displayed in a blockbuster exhibition that toured the US. The cultural and political landscape of postwar occupied Germany allowed for this removal, but even at the time the ethics of the

---

<sup>41</sup> See Jonathan Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, 243.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>44</sup> Movable works of art were well cared for by Nazis, and not in danger except from being taken by occupation forces. See Seth A. Givens, "Liberating the Germans: The US Army and Looting in Germany during the Second World War," *War in History*, 21:1 (2014): 33–54.

decision were questioned, most notably by MFAA officials. However, several of the ALIU men welcomed these paintings into the institutions that they, by this time, directed or curated. The US government and cultural officials justified the confiscation of German-owned artwork by claiming that the political context in Germany at the time was too unstable to adequately protect the paintings. Furthermore, ALIU personnel believed the best place for European works generally was in America, on display for the American people. This thesis uses political history to examine how the preservation of democracy and the salvation of Western Civilization were frequently invoked as a justification for the actions of American cultural figures and politicians, including the confiscation of artwork. The concept of Western Civilization, in this context, derives from the lessons taught in American “Western Civ” courses. These courses, provided at various educational levels, explained that the US shared a Classical heritage with Western Europe, which was “rooted in the Mediterranean and European past.”<sup>45</sup> The Western tradition promoted the values of progress, democracy, liberty, and freedom as part of that shared heritage, which was rooted in Antiquity and evolved throughout the Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment.<sup>46</sup> As this thesis demonstrates, these ideas are foundational to the ALIU personnel’s actions. A combination of collective biography, intellectual history, political, social, and cultural history helps to understand why the ALIU members made certain decisions in their wartime work and their postwar careers, even when those decisions appear contradictory or hypocritical.

## **Historiography**

---

<sup>45</sup> Eugen Weber, “Western Civilization,” in *Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret the Past*, eds., Anthony Molho and Gordon S. Wood (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 207.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

Scholarly interest in the topic of Nazi art looting and Allied responses has ebbed and flowed since the Second World War. Early works on the impact of war on cultural property emerged in the 1940s. Veterans of the MFAA and the ALIU, most of whom were scholars themselves, shared their experiences with their colleagues and academic communities. In August 1946, James Sachs Plaut, Director of the ALIU, published an article in *ARTnews Magazine* entitled “Retrieving the Loot: The Story of the Nazi Art Thieving Machine.”<sup>47</sup> In Fall 1946, Plaut published two more articles in *The Atlantic*: “Loot for the Master Race” (September 1946) highlighted Göring’s role in cultural plundering and argued that the Reichmarshall had bad taste in art, despite his massive collection;<sup>48</sup> “Hitler’s Capital” (October 1946) detailed Hitler’s ambition to develop a “Führermuseum” in Linz, Austria.<sup>49</sup> Plaut’s work highlighted a key interest in Göring’s culpability, an interest that carried on throughout scholarship on wartime art looting. In both articles, Plaut focuses on the individuals responsible for looting art. From Plaut’s publications (and his work in the ALIU), the Nazi leadership — especially Hitler, Göring, and Rosenberg — emerged as the masterminds of a vast art looting bureaucracy. In the same vein, MFAA veteran Thomas Carr Howe dedicated a chapter of his 1946 book, *Salt Mines and Castles: The Discovery and Restitution of Looted European Art*, to the Göring Collection.<sup>50</sup> Other former MFAA personnel like Bancel LaFarge and James Rorimer also published memoirs of their wartime experiences in the 1940s and early 1950s (Appendix 1).<sup>51</sup>

From the end of the war until the 1990s, literature on wartime art protection was sporadic and focused mostly on the MFAA. American journalist Janet Flanner’s 1957 essay, “The

---

<sup>47</sup> James Sachs Plaut, “Retrieving the Loot: The Story of the Nazi Art Thieving Machine,” *ARTnews*, August 1946.

<sup>48</sup> James Sachs Plaut, “Loot for the Master Race” *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 1946.

<sup>49</sup> James Sachs Plaut, “Hitler’s Capital” *The Atlantic Monthly*, October 1946.

<sup>50</sup> Thomas Carr Howe, *Salt Mines and Castles: The Discovery and Restitution of Looted European Art*, (Indiana: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1946).

<sup>51</sup> See Bancel LaFarge, *Lost Treasures of Europe*, (New York: Pantheon, 1946); James Rorimer, *Survival: The Salvage and Protection of Art in War*, (New York: Abelard Press, 1950).

Beautiful Spoils” is the most well-known of the period. In one section of the essay entitled “The Monuments Men,” Flanner tells the story of the MFAA, and briefly mentions the ALIU.<sup>52</sup> Flanner’s interpretation glorifies MFAA actions by emphasizing the “gigantic, yawning destruction of the architectural face of war-struck Europe.”<sup>53</sup> She writes that the Monuments Men “did not see everything, but they saw a great, great deal, most of it tragic and terrible for Western civilization.”<sup>54</sup> Although, at the end of the chapter, Flanner condemns the “unfortunate” decision by US officials to take 202 paintings from Germany to America, she quickly adds that “it is, of course, known that the US eventually returned the Westward Ho pictures. Whether the Soviets returned all the art they took is naturally not known.”<sup>55</sup> The essay testifies to the ideological context of the time in which it was written, a time when the Soviet Union was a negative foil to America. Flanner’s point is simple: MFAA personnel “dead or alive, were mostly heroes who received little attention and were highly civilized.”<sup>56</sup> Flanner’s partiality toward these Western “heroes” notwithstanding, her work is important for several reasons: it coined the (problematic) term “Monuments Men” which was revived in the twenty-first century as name for the MFAA, it is the earliest secondary source discussing the MFAA in detail, and it also marks the beginning of a hiatus in wartime art looting literature in the English language, which continued until the 1980s.

In 1985, historian Michael Kurtz challenged this lull in scholarship and wrote *Nazi Contraband: American Policy on the Return of European Cultural Treasures, 1945-1955*.<sup>57</sup> Kurtz’ book reignited interest in wartime looted art by looking at American involvement in

---

<sup>52</sup> Janet Flanner, *Monuments and Men*, (New York: Books for Library Press, 1970), 266.

<sup>53</sup> Flanner, *Monuments and Men*, 272.

<sup>54</sup> Flanner, *Monuments and Men*, 272.

<sup>55</sup> Flanner, *Monuments and Men*, 290.

<sup>56</sup> Flanner, *Monuments and Men*, 274.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

restitution. It was also the first notable work written following the declassification of the ALIU interrogation reports. Several key factors led to a resurgence of interest in cultural restitution after Kurtz' book. The first factor is that the US government started supporting restitution and repatriation efforts other than art, including insurance and slave labour settlements.<sup>58</sup> Jewish organisations like the World Jewish Congress worked with governments in the US, Israel, and Germany to ensure reparations were properly disbursed, and that meaningful restitution was being practiced. The second factor was that the 1990s marked 50 years since the war, and wartime commemorations were happening all over the world, feeding public and academic interest in these histories. The third factor was the end of the Cold War. Cooperation between the East and West became a possibility once more and, in turn, so did the transfer and openness of information.

Since the 1990s, there has been substantial scholarly activity on the effects of Second World War art looting. Research focuses on a range of topics, including the successes and failures of countries' restitution policies, Jewish restitution initiatives, victims of art looting, and perpetrators of it. In 1991, Russian journalists Konstantin Akinsha and Grigorii Kozlov documented the existence of the Soviet Red Army's trophy brigades, leading to international reaction.<sup>59</sup> "Spoils of War: The Soviet Union's Hidden Art Treasures" revealed that thousands of cultural objects removed from Nazi Germany by Red Army soldiers had been hidden in Soviet depositories since they were taken.<sup>60</sup> On 25 February 1945, Stalin had ordered the establishment of a Special Committee, giving it his full support to remove any cultural objects from

---

<sup>58</sup> Kurtz, *America and the Return of Nazi Contraband*, 233.

<sup>59</sup> Konstantin Akinsha, et al., *Beautiful Loot: The Soviet Plunder of Europe's Art Treasures* (New York: Random House, 1995), xiii.

<sup>60</sup> Konstantin Akinsha and Grigorii Kozlov, "Spoils of War: The Soviet Union's Hidden Art Treasures," *ARTnews*, April 1991.



Germany.<sup>61</sup> According to the Soviet leader, removing the items was justifiable as reparations for wartime losses. Akinsha and Kozlov's revelations in 1991, along with improved diplomatic relations between the US, Russia, and a re-united Germany raised the opportunity to address the tumultuous past of art confiscation and restitution.

In 1994, historian Lynn H. Nicholas published *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War*.<sup>62</sup> *The Rape of Europa* broached the broad topic of Nazi looting in Europe, including restitution programs like the MFAA and the ALIU. Nicholas conducted extensive archival research and interviewed over thirty former MFAA and ALIU personnel. Her work on Nazi art looting remains a central source within the historiography of cultural property, and arguably, a central source within Second World War literature overall. *The Rape of Europa* paved the way for historians to explore looting and repatriation in greater depth. Around the same time, Akinsha and Kozlov expanded their research to a book, *Beautiful Loot: The Soviet Plunder of Europe's Art* which built off their previous findings and discussed the oppression within the Soviet Union that prevented people from revealing the location of looted art.<sup>63</sup> Another significant study in the 1990s was Jonathan Petropoulos' *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*<sup>64</sup> which discussed the weaponization of art by the Nazis, through cultural institutions. The collecting practices of high-level Nazis is also a theme in the book, and a theme that Petropoulos carried on in later publications.<sup>65</sup> Hector Feliciano's

---

<sup>61</sup> Akinsha, et al., *Beautiful Loot*, 44-45.

<sup>62</sup> Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*.

<sup>63</sup> Akinsha, et al., *Beautiful Loot*. I anticipated that within the primary sources, there would be evidence of post-war tension between the ALIU's work and the Soviet Union, and anti-Soviet sentiment as a justification for the Unit's work. In the sources I consulted, it appeared that this tension was not evident as a justification.

<sup>64</sup> Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*.

<sup>65</sup> See Jonathan Petropoulos, *The Faustian Bargain: The Art World in Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Jonathan Petropoulos, *Artists Under Hitler: Collaboration and Survival in Nazi Germany* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014); Jonathan Petropoulos, *Göring's Man in Paris* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021).

*The Lost Museum: the Nazi Conspiracy to Steal the World's Greatest Works of Art* told the stories of five prominent Jewish collections that were confiscated by the Nazis.<sup>66</sup> Together, these works captured the imagination of art experts, politicians, historians, and the public.

In January 1995, veterans, historians, politicians, and the public brought their experiences to the table at the first international conference on the legacy of missing wartime art at the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts. The symposium, led by Elizabeth Simpson, included former MFAA and ALIU personnel, journalists, government officials, academics, and cultural professionals to discuss the history of looted art and the conditions for restitution.<sup>67</sup> Prominent academics and journalists at the symposium included Kurtz, Nicholas, Petropoulos, Akinsha and Kozlov, and Feliciano.<sup>68</sup>

An important aspect of the symposium, and the subsequent *Spoils of War* publication, was its invitation of first-hand accounts from former MFAA and ALIU personnel. The experiences shared by two former ALIU members, James Plaut and S. Lane Faison, are of particular interest to the current research. Former MFAA officers Walter Farmer, Edith Standen, Craig Hugh Smyth, and Bernard Taper also contributed (Appendix 1). The retelling of firsthand experiences is central to the research done on the MFAA, the OSS, and the ALIU. Interviews, correspondence, and other archival sources are at the heart of this scholarship, particularly when it emerged in the 1990s and veterans were still living.

---

<sup>66</sup> Hector Feliciano, *The Lost Museum: the Nazi Conspiracy to Steal the World's Greatest Works of Art* (New York: Basic Books, 1997).

<sup>67</sup> Unfortunately, international cooperation was tainted to an extent due to the controversial nature of the subject and continued ideological differences between some of the key contributors, notably representatives from the Russian Federation. Simpson, *The Spoils of War*, introduction.

<sup>68</sup> *The Spoils of War* is a compilation of 48 written contributions, touching on the seven main themes of the symposium. These themes included the justification for the symposium; loss of artistic property during and because of the Second World War; the laws, directives and conventions associated with property ownership; the repatriation efforts after the war; the reappearance and recovery of art from Russia; contemporary issues and efforts at restitution; and finally, the contributions of guest participants.

Around the same time, scholarly interest in American intelligence organizations also emerged. Work on the OSS and the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) increased after 1980, when the CIA transferred classified OSS documents to the US National Archives for review and declassification.<sup>69</sup> Accounts like Thomas F. Troy's *Donovan and the CIA: A History of the Establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency* and Bradley F. Smith's *The Shadow Warriors: OSS and the Origins of the CIA* highlight the structure, the people and the evolution of American intelligence during and following the Second World War.<sup>70</sup> Importantly, these books and articles illuminated the OSS as an "old boys' club." Nowhere is this reality discussed more than in Burton Hersh's *The Old Boys: The American Elite and the Origins of the CIA*, a collective biography of figures like Allen Dulles (former CIA director) and Donovan.<sup>71</sup> Significant works on the intellectual sphere of the OSS, like Robin Winks' 1987 book *Cloak & Gown: Scholars in the Secret War* and Barry M. Katz' *Foreign Intelligence: Research and Analysis in the Office of Strategic Services, 1942-1945* explain the role that Ivy League institutions played in staffing the OSS domestically and abroad during the Second World War.<sup>72</sup> Another important work is Elizabeth P. McIntosh's *Sisterhood of Spies: Women of the OSS*, which details the experiences of women, the author included, who worked for the OSS during the Second World War.<sup>73</sup> Each of these works provided essential information on the culture

---

<sup>69</sup> National Archives and Record Administration, "OSS Records," 2021. <https://www.archives.gov/research/military/ww2/oss#:~:text=In%201980%2C%20the%20CIA%20began,sensitive%20documents%20withdrawn%20before%20transfer>. (accessed 7 Aug. 2023).

<sup>70</sup> Thomas F. Troy, *Donovan and the CIA: A History of the Establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency* (Frederick: Aletheia Books, 1981); Bradley F. Smith, *The Shadow Warriors: OSS and the Origins of the CIA* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1983).

<sup>71</sup> Burton Hersh, *The Old Boys: The American Elite and the Origins of the CIA* (Don Mills: Maxwell Macmillan Canada, 1992).

<sup>72</sup> Robin W. Winks, *Cloak & Gown: Scholars in the Secret War* (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1987); Barry M. Katz, *Foreign Intelligence: Research and Analysis in the Office of Strategic Services, 1942-1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989).

<sup>73</sup> Elizabeth P. McIntosh, *Sisterhood of Spies: Women of the OSS* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1998).

fostered within the OSS during the war. Although not mentioned within the broader OSS historiography, the ALIU reflects similar dynamics to those of the larger intelligence organization, especially regarding members' common educational backgrounds and elite status. Many parallels can be drawn between the histories of American intelligence personnel and American cultural personnel in the mid-twentieth century, particularly regarding the glorification of the individuals involved in these respective organizations.

The possibility of interviewing veterans declined as years passed, and the literature reflects this. As these men and women aged and died, their families, and the American public, focused on solidifying their legacy as heroes. Some of the final interviews were conducted by Robert Edsel, co-author of the problematic 2009 book, *The Monuments Men: Allied Heroes, Nazi Thieves, and the Greatest Treasure Hunt in History*. Edsel's book was the inspiration for George Clooney's widely popular 2014 film of the same title. Together, the book and film are largely responsible for the present romanticization of the MFAA. Edsel's book and his leadership of the Monuments Men and Women Foundation present a narrow view of the Allied art protection effort, which is amplified by its deliberate focus on glorifying American involvement. One example of this in Edsel's work is his "Author's Note." Edsel writes:

What if I told you there was a group of men on the front lines who quite literally saved the world as we know it; a group that didn't carry machine guns or drive tanks, who weren't official statesmen; men who not only had the vision to understand the grave threat to the greatest cultural and artistic achievements of civilization, but then joined the front lines to do something about it?<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>74</sup> Robert Edsel, *The Monuments Men: Allied Heroes, Nazi Thieves and the Greatest Treasure Hunt in History*, (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2009), xiii.

Edsel's quote illustrates the "Greatest Generation" myth, that the Monuments Men (women are excluded in his statement) were ordinary Americans, yet the most heroic individuals on the planet.<sup>75</sup>

Despite this attention to art looting and restitution, literature on the ALIU itself is thin. In 2000, Anne Rothfeld wrote an MA thesis at the University of Maryland, titled "Project Orion: An Administrative History of the Art Looting Investigation Unit (ALIU): An Overlooked Page in Intelligence Gathering."<sup>76</sup> Rothfeld argues that the ALIU was ultimately unsuccessful in its attempt to have interrogation subjects prosecuted. Rothfeld's work was the first comprehensive look at the ALIU as an organization, and she rightfully notes that until that point, intelligence history had also largely excluded the unit's work. Before her, American historian Tim Naftali set out to write a history of the OSS X-2 operation. Although there is limited information on this project, correspondence between Naftali and Wittmann, and Naftali and Sawyer reveal the beginning stages of a book, with a chapter dedicated to the ALIU.<sup>77</sup> In a 16 May 1985 letter from Naftali to Wittmann, the former explains that Oxford University Press commissioned this work, and the ALIU section would highlight its history, address the unit's achievements within Allied art restitution and situate it among counterintelligence as a whole.<sup>78</sup> It appears that Naftali never published a book on this subject.<sup>79</sup> Decades later, in 2015, Mary Kate Farber argued in their honours thesis that Nazi art looting would not have been considered criminal without the work of

---

<sup>75</sup> Kenneth D. Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation: A Social History of Americans in World War II*, (New York: Routledge, 2008), 7.

<sup>76</sup> Anne Rothfeld, "Project Orion."

<sup>77</sup> GRI, SC, Wittmann Papers, series II, box 7, Charles Sawyer to Tim Naftali, (26 February 1985).

<sup>78</sup> GRI, SC, Wittmann Papers, series II, box 7, Tim Naftali to Otto Wittmann, (16 May 1985).

<sup>79</sup> Naftali published *U.S. Intelligence and the Nazis* in 2005 in collaboration with three other authors, which doesn't appear to make any mention of the ALIU. Rothfeld's MA thesis explains that Naftali's unpublished PhD dissertation provides a history of X-2 operations only until 1944 – before the ALIU began their formal interrogations. Tim Naftali, *U.S. Intelligence and the Nazis*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Rothfeld, "Project Orion," 13.

the ALIU. Farber, it appeared, was inspired to write on the ALIU after George Clooney's 2014 film, *The Monuments Men*.<sup>80</sup> In the same year, British legal historian Michael Salter published "A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence's Investigation of Nazi Art Looting" which addresses the interrogation methods of ALIU members and places the results in a generally positive light. Salter, however, reveals that because of funding cuts and the dissolution of the OSS, the ALIU was never able to fully carry out its mission, and failed to see lower-level Nazis prosecuted as war criminals.<sup>81</sup>

In 2016, Rothfeld built on Salter's argument in their PhD dissertation, "Unscrupulous Opportunists: Second-Rate German Art Dealers as Nazi Functionaries During World War Two."<sup>82</sup> For this project, Rothfeld relies primarily on ALIU reports to gain insight on the lesser-known German art dealers, in order to highlight the complexities of Nazi expropriation efforts.<sup>83</sup> An important theme in Rothfeld's work is the differentiation between Nazi art dealers as bystanders or collaborators, and how certain individuals were opportunistic in their endeavors. This thesis is by no means labelling ALIU personnel as bystanders or collaborators, but it is interested in how the men engaged with them. Biographical material on the ALIU personnel is also limited. The most extensive published biography of an ALIU member is Otto Wittmann's biography in Sally Anne Duncan and Andrew McClellan's 2018 book, *The Art of Curating: Paul*

---

<sup>80</sup> Clooney's film was largely based on Edsel's *The Monuments Men*. In 2015, Simon Curtis released *Woman in Gold*, a biographical drama about the real repatriation case of a Nazi-looted Klimt painting to Maria Altmann. Edsel, *The Monuments Men; The Monuments Men*, directed by George Clooney, (2014; Berlin, Germany: Columbia Pictures and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox), [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Monuments\\_Men](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Monuments_Men); *Woman in Gold*, directed by Simon Curtis (2015; Berlin, Germany: BBC Films), <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2404425/>.

<sup>81</sup> Michael Salter, "A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence's Investigation of Nazi Art Looting" *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 13:2 (2015): 276.

<sup>82</sup> Anne Michele Rothfeld, "Unscrupulous Opportunists: Second-Rate German Art Dealers as Nazi Functionaries During World War Two" (PhD dissertation, American University, 2016).

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

*J. Sachs and the Museum Course at Harvard*.<sup>84</sup> This account focuses on Wittmann’s civilian career, but briefly touches on his time in the OSS.<sup>85</sup>

These works have been foundational to the emerging scholarship on the ALIU. However, they do not provide a nuanced interpretation of the unit or its legacy. To my knowledge, only twice in academic scholarship has the negative side of this program faced scrutiny. In 2015, Jonathan Petropoulos presented a paper “Five Uncomfortable and Difficult Topics Relating to the Restitution of Nazi-Looted Art.”<sup>86</sup> His work, later published in 2017, calls for the upending of the “hagiographical tendencies” typically used to approach Allied restitution efforts. He argues that “museum officials outside Germany, both before and after 1945, behaved in ways that raise ethical questions.”<sup>87</sup> In the five examples of this behavior, it is significant that three of them directly involve ALIU personnel.<sup>88</sup> Petropoulos returns to this idea again in his 2021 book, *Göring’s Man in Paris*, through which he considers the role of notorious Nazi art dealer Bruno Lohse in the Third Reich’s art looting schemes. In his extensive consultation and research into Lohse and his postwar dealings, Petropoulos finds evidence of a professional, and possibly friendly, relationship between Lohse and Rousseau, Plaut, and Faison. In a chapter on Lohse in North America, Petropoulos calls on scholars to engage with the unethical practices involving Allied restitution officials, like Rousseau, who have until now been portrayed in an exclusively positive light.<sup>89</sup>

---

<sup>84</sup> Duncan and McClellan, *The Art of Curating*.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, 181.

<sup>86</sup> Jonathan Petropoulos, “Five Uncomfortable and Difficult Topics Relating to the Restitution of Nazi-Looted Art” (paper presented at *Nazi Looting, the Monuments Men, and Art Restitution Today*, University of Vermont, April 20, 2015).

<sup>87</sup> Petropoulos, “Five Uncomfortable and Difficult Topics,” 125.

<sup>88</sup> These examples will be discussed in chapters two and three.

<sup>89</sup> The most significant critical account of American cultural officials in occupied territory is Kenneth Alford’s sensational 1994 book *The Spoils of World War II: the American military’s role in stealing Europe’s treasures*. This account is highly polemical. Similarly sensational but celebratory accounts fuel the heroic (often inaccurate)

## Contributions

This thesis is determined to expand on Petropoulos' insights as they relate to the ALIU. Since 2021, cases of ALIU personnel's involvement in dealing Nazi-looted art have surfaced. These instances, like those Petropoulos highlights, are directly related to these men's work in the Art Looting Investigation Unit. This research is a contribution to understanding the dynamics among cultural professionals whose careers were greatly shaped by their Second World War service. By providing a collective account of the ALIU members from their pre-war lives through to their present-day legacies, we contextualize them and look at the bigger pictures of American cultural officials who served in the Second World War. This thesis stresses the parallels that existed between the educational, professional, and personal experiences of Plaut, Faison, Rousseau, Wittmann, Sawyer, and Phillips. It demonstrates that these parallels are not insignificant, but quite the opposite – they were the bedrock of a common worldview. This worldview helps explain how some members of the ALIU justified unethical behaviour throughout their careers. The worldview also highlights how members of the unit and the MFAA could adopt opposing positions but in support of the same idea, to amplify America's dominance over Western art. This perspective represents a new interpretation of the work of the Art Looting Investigation Unit.

This analysis begins with a collective biography of the ten ALIU members, with particular focus on Phillips, Sawyer, Wittmann, Faison, Rousseau, and Plaut, and describes how their common worldview was formed through their life experiences. The second chapter considers how the contexts of the OSS, the MFAA, and US occupation shaped and reinforced their worldview throughout their wartime and postwar work. Chapter three scrutinizes various

---

narrative that Edsel and Clooney have amplified. Kenneth D. Alford, *The Spoils of World War II: the American Military's Role in Stealing Europe's Treasures*, (New York, N.Y: Carol Publishing Group, 1994).



postwar decisions unit members made in their civilian careers and demonstrates the malleability of this worldview. We will see that the common experiences among the unit members fostered a common worldview, based on liberal, democratic, and nationalistic principles. These principles, in turn, developed the sense of right and duty to protect western civilization through the unquestioned regulation of art. The malleability of this worldview is such that its practical application by the ALIU personnel appears contradictory, and greedy. These next chapters, however, demonstrate that their sense of entitlement to control art in the way they saw fit after the Second World War was entrenched in a broader cultural and intellectual context.

## **Chapter One: Biographies**

The glorification of ALIU personnel, and American cultural officials of the Second World War more generally, persists in part because these men and women have been decontextualized from the groups in which they worked. Consequently, the common background of these figures has been overlooked and its importance thus diminished. This chapter presents the biographical experiences of the ALIU personnel before, throughout, and after the war in a collective way. It demonstrates the common threads of their lives, with particular interest given to Phillips, Sawyer, Wittmann, Faison, Rousseau, and Plaut because their work in the unit can be detailed best. This chapter will present a collective biography of ALIU personnel, revealing that the unit members had similar Ivy League educations, wartime roles, art institution careers, and family dynamics. This common experience was infused with a common worldview.

This chapter begins with a background of the ALIU roles. It goes on to collectively address the biographies of the unit's men – Phillips, Sawyer, Wittmann, Faison, Rousseau, Plaut, and Coyne. A section dedicated to the three OSS women – Sally Sillcocks, Alice Whitney, and Elizabeth Lambie – highlights the importance of secretarial work in the functioning of the unit, and the gaps that still exist in documenting women's lives and roles in wartime cultural and intelligence organizations. Following this, the chapter discusses art looting interrogators of other Allied cultural organizations and the unit's relationship with these organizations, as well as with the OSS.

Assessing the personal, social, and academic backgrounds of members of the ALIU allows for a greater understanding of the nature of their work, and each person's motivations and experiences during and after the Second World War. Whether working in the field across Europe, or in a London or Washington office, particular skills and knowledge of European art

supported the unit members' clandestine work. Their Ivy League education instilled curatorial knowledge, expertise on European art, and the ability to effectively communicate with their professional counterparts abroad. More importantly, their elite backgrounds fostered a sense of entitlement through which they often acted without professional accountability. These men were equally supported by professional American cultural networks and the "old boys club" within them. The skills the unit's men brought to the ALIU were backed by a common outlook, fostered within the specific, elite education systems where they studied. As students of UPenn, Yale, Princeton, and Harvard, Phillips, Sawyer, Wittmann, Faison, Rousseau, and Plaut were better educated — and likely viewed as more liberal and more democratic — than their GI compatriots.<sup>1</sup> As such, each person discussed in this chapter avoided the front lines during the Second World War, instead fulfilling their patriotic duty to America with their intellectual training.

## **Roles**

Accounts commonly suggest that James Sachs Plaut, Samson Lane Faison and Theodore Rousseau Jr. comprised the entire ALIU operation.<sup>2</sup> Their assignment as field agents, as opposed to administrators, perhaps accounts for this, given the romanticization of investigative work. However, Plaut, Faison, and Rousseau were not the only ALIU members. Phillips, Sawyer, Wittmann, Coyne, Lambie, Whitney, and Sillocks also meaningfully participated in the unit's work — as interrogators, research analysts, assistants, and clerks. Although the ALIU was an American outfit, the unit's work was conducted in Washington, DC, in London, and in Western Europe.

---

<sup>1</sup> Gilbert Allardyce, "The Rise and Fall of the Western Civilization Course," *The American Historical Review* 87:3 (1982): 706.

<sup>2</sup> See Flanner, "Annals of Crime: The Beautiful Spoils"; Faison, interview by Robert F. Brown, 6.

In Europe, Wittmann, Faison, Rousseau, and Plaut interrogated dozens of people involved in Nazi art looting, with the goal of developing an accurate account of three schemes in particular: the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR), the plans for Hitler's Linz Museum in Austria, and Hermann Göring's personal art collection. Through their investigations, the unit's interrogators produced three Consolidated Interrogation Reports (CIRs), twelve published Detailed Interrogation Reports (DIRs), and a Final Report. Field officers worked closely with the unit's administrators who were critical to its functioning. Throughout the unit's existence, those in the office and those in the field depended on one another.

The Art Looting Investigation Unit had two main offices – one at the OSS headquarters in Washington, DC, and one at London's Counterintelligence (X-2) branch.<sup>3</sup> Responsibilities were divided between the two offices, with Washington assuming unit administration, record maintenance, personnel training, and organization of field work. The Washington office also maintained links with several US government branches, including the War Department, G-2 (Director of Military Intelligence, Assistant Chief of Staff),<sup>4</sup> G-5 (Planning), the Treasury Department, the Roberts Commission, the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives program, and the State Department.<sup>5</sup> The London field headquarters, established in January 1945, had similar contacts, and dealt directly with branches of foreign governments and organizations, for example France's Commission de récupération artistique.<sup>6</sup> Field agents also worked closely with cultural entities in Britain and the Netherlands and, following V-E Day, the London office distributed to

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Troy, *Donovan and the CIA*, 9.

<sup>5</sup> Michael Hussey, et al., "OSS Art Looting Investigation Unit Reports," 2016. National Archives and Records Administration. <https://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/art/oss-art-looting-investigation-unit-reports.html>. (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

European states a list of twenty-one individuals wanted for their criminal activity pertaining to art looting, illegal dealing, and other crimes.<sup>7</sup>

### **Phillips, Sawyer, Wittmann, Faison, Rousseau, Plaut, and Coyne**

The ALIU's six men, though different in rank, shared many similarities. All were born within six years of one another; John Marshall Phillips on 2 January 1905, Charles Henry Sawyer on 20 October 1906, Samson Lane Faison, Jr., 16 November 1907, Terrence Coyne on 4 August 1910, Otto Wittmann, Jr., 1 September 1911, James Sachs Plaut on 1 February 1912, and Theodore Duncan Rousseau, Jr. on 8 October 1912.<sup>8</sup> Rousseau, Faison, Phillips, and Sawyer were born on the East Coast in New York, Washington, DC, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts, respectively.<sup>9</sup> Plaut and Coyne were born in Ohio, and Wittmann in Kansas City, Missouri.<sup>10</sup>

Throughout their early lives, most of these men travelled abroad, either educationally or for leisure. In a personal history statement, Sawyer listed extensive travel across the Mediterranean in 1924, Western Europe for travel, study, and research in 1930 and 1935, and Guatemala for travel and study in 1942.<sup>11</sup> As a child, Plaut moved to Paris with his mother and

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Sizer, "John Marshall Phillips, 1905-1953," 5; Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, BHL, University of Michigan, box 4, "Miscellaneous, 1943-1947.;" Douglas Martin, "S. Lane Faison Jr., Dies; Art Historian and Professor," *The New York Times*, November 14, 2006, <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/14/obituaries/14faison.html>; Greg Bradsher, "Terence A. Coyne: An Office of Strategic Services' Art Looting Investigation Unit Monuments Man," 2014. <https://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2014/07/24/monuments-man-terence-coyne/>. (accessed 15 November 2023); Wittmann, interview by Richard Candida Smith; Monuments Men and Women Foundation, "James Sachs Plaut (1912-1996), <https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/plaut-lt-cdr-james-s-usnr>. (accessed 15 November 2023); Find a Grave, "Lcdr Theodore Duncan Rousseau Jr.," <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/121545173/theodore-duncan-rousseau>. (accessed 17 November 2023).

<sup>9</sup> Find a Grave, "Lcdr Theodore Duncan Rousseau Jr.," <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/121545173/theodore-duncan-rousseau>. (accessed 17 November 2023); Douglas Martin, "S. Lane Faison Jr., Dies; Art Historian and Professor," *The New York Times*, November 14, 2006, <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/14/obituaries/14faison.html>; Sizer, "John Marshall Phillips, 1905-1953," 5; Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, BHL, University of Michigan, box 4, "Miscellaneous, 1943-1947."

<sup>10</sup> Monuments Men and Women Foundation, "James Sachs Plaut (1912-1996), <https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/plaut-lt-cdr-james-s-usnr>. (accessed 15 November 2023); Greg Bradsher, "Terence A. Coyne: An Office of Strategic Services' Art Looting Investigation Unit Monuments Man," 2014. <https://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2014/07/24/monuments-man-terence-coyne/>. (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>11</sup> Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, BHL, University of Michigan, box 4, "Miscellaneous, 1943-1947."

siblings, which began a series of trips to Europe throughout his life.<sup>12</sup> In 1924, when Faison graduated from high school, his father developed debilitating arthritis and the family travelled to Switzerland to seek spa treatment. To escape the “boredom” of Switzerland, Faison visited France with a teacher who introduced him to Chartres Cathedral. Faison identified this experience as life-altering and put him on the path of Art History.<sup>13</sup>

Rousseau also travelled extensively through Europe growing up, having studied at Eton College and the Sorbonne in Paris.<sup>14</sup> Plaut spent his grade school years studying at the Auteuil Day School in France before returning to the US and studying at the Taft School in Connecticut.<sup>15</sup> Sawyer studied at the prestigious Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, and Wittmann graduated from the Kansas City Country Day School.<sup>16</sup> Having come from a well-established Quaker family, Phillips attended regular public school, as did Coyne.

The private school educations and travel experiences of these men attest to their upbringings in prominent families. Wittmann was the son and grandson of successful businessmen, who ran saddlery and automobile companies in the American mid-west. Faison’s mother was of the “well-educated, well-travelled gentry class.”<sup>17</sup> In his interview with Anna Swinbourne for the Museum of Modern Art Oral History program in 2001, Faison recounted elaborate stories of being acquainted with Harry Garfield, son of former US President James A.

---

<sup>12</sup> James Sachs Plaut, interview by Robert F. Brown, *Archives of American Art Smithsonian Institution*, June 29 – July 13, 1971, 2.

<sup>13</sup> Faison, interview by Anna Swinbourne, 4-5.

<sup>14</sup> Monuments Men and Women Foundations, “Theodore Rousseau, Jr., (1912-1973),” <https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/rousseau-1t-theodore-jr>. (accessed 17 November 2023).

<sup>15</sup> Dictionary of Art Historians, “Plaut, James S.,” <https://arthistorians.info/plautj#:~:text=Plaut%20received%20an%20honorary%20D.F.A.,world%20artisans%20market%20their%20wares>. (accessed 17 November 2023).

<sup>16</sup> Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, BHL, University of Michigan, box 4, “Miscellaneous, 1943-1947.”; Wittmann, interview by Richard Cándida Smith.

<sup>17</sup> Faison, interview by Anna Swinbourne interview, 46.

Garfield, at school and dining with actors at MoMA exhibitions.<sup>18</sup> Rousseau's father Theodore Rousseau, Sr., was well connected to the upper echelons of American and French society, having married into the French aristocracy. His second wife, Nicole Xantho, was the widow of Prince Albert de Broglie. Rousseau Sr. was close friends with American banking mogul John Pierpont Morgan, Jr. Plaut also came from an extremely prominent family.<sup>19</sup> His mother was of the Goldman-Sachs banking family, which included the Harvard museology professor Paul J. Sachs, whose courses many of the ALIU men took.

Apart from Coyne, each of the ALIU men attended one or more Ivy League universities within a similar period. In 1927, Phillips graduated from UPenn with an undergraduate degree in Latin and History. In 1929, he completed an MA in English from the same school. There, Phillips was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and the Philomathean Society.<sup>20</sup> Sawyer graduated from Yale with a BA in 1929 and went on to start both law school and an MA at Harvard, ultimately finishing neither. Wittmann graduated with a BA in Art History from Harvard in 1933.<sup>21</sup> While he did not attend graduate school, Wittmann returned to Harvard to assist Sachs with his museology course. Faison graduated from Williams College in 1929 with a BA, and in 1932 graduated from Harvard with an MA and from Princeton with an MFA.<sup>22</sup> By 1935, Rousseau had earned a BA and an MA in Art History from Harvard. Plaut graduated with a BA in 1933, and an MA in 1935, both from Harvard.

---

<sup>18</sup> Faison, interview by Anna Swinbourne, 9, 20.

<sup>19</sup> "Princess Married at Church in Paris; Widow of Prince Albert de Broglie Wed to Theodore Rousseau, Banker, *The New York Times*, 18 March, 1937. <https://www.nytimes.com/1937/03/18/archives/princess-married-at-church-in-paris-widow-of-prince-albert-de.html>.

<sup>20</sup> Sizer, "John Marshall Phillips, 1905-1953," 6.

<sup>21</sup> At the time of Wittmann's acceptance into Harvard, the president, Abbott Lowell, ran a program to attract students from outside of Northeastern states. Wittmann was part of this program. Duncan and McClellan, *The Art of Curating*, 179.

<sup>22</sup> The Master of Fine Arts from Princeton at the time was described as having "the job-getting power of a doctorate." Craig Hugh Smyth and Peter M. Lukehart, eds. *The Early Years of Art History in the United States: Notes and Essays on Departments, Teaching, and Scholars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

Their personal connections and Ivy League educations set these men up for success in their professions of choice in the museum field. In 1929, Phillips met antiquarian Maurice Brix, and after the latter's death in 1930, catalogued his extensive American silver collection.<sup>23</sup> Through Brix's collection, Phillips became acquainted with the wealthy New York attorney, Francis P. Garvan. Phillips worked as assistant curator of American silver on the Mabel Brady Garvan Collections, and by 1935, became Curator of the Collections. The same year, he became assistant professor in Art History at Dwight Timothy College until 1945, when he advanced to Associate Professor and Acting Director of the Yale University Art Gallery. By 1948, Phillips was Director and Professor.<sup>24</sup> Sawyer directed the Addison Gallery at Phillips Academy until 1940, directed the Worcester Art Museum that same year, and then worked as affiliated professor of Fine Arts at Clark University from 1942 to 1943.<sup>25</sup>

After graduating, Wittmann worked at the newly established Nelson Gallery in Kansas City, where he learned how to “hang a picture, how to put a sculpture on a pedestal, and how to arrange furniture and decorative art.”<sup>26</sup> A few years later, Wittmann returned to Harvard to assist Sachs in his renowned museum course, where Wittmann made significant personal and professional connections. Wittmann went on to curate the Louis E. and Charlotte Hyde Collection in Glen Falls, New York.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, he taught museum courses at Skidmore and Emerson College. In a 1995 interview for the Paul J. Getty trust, Wittmann suggested that his background differed from the typical “museum man” or “Harvard man” at the time, because his father did not provide financial support for graduate studies.<sup>28</sup> For that reason, Wittmann

---

<sup>23</sup> Sizer, “John Marshall Phillips, 1905-1953,” 6.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 7.

<sup>25</sup> Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, BHL, University of Michigan, box 4, “Miscellaneous, 1943-1947.”

<sup>26</sup> Sally Ann Duncan, *Otto Wittmann: Museum Man for All Seasons* (Toledo: Toledo Museum of Art, 2001), 39.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, 10.

<sup>28</sup> Otto Wittmann, interview by Richard Cándida Smith, 94.



audited and assisted Sachs's course instead of enrolling in it.<sup>29</sup> Despite Wittmann's lack of financial support from his father, the rest of his experiences place him within the elite company of other members of the unit. Wittmann's description of the situation insinuates that his father's decision was one of character building, rather than lack of means. After graduating from Williams College in 1929, Faison taught at Yale and then returned to Williams College where he worked from 1936 until 1976 (apart from the war years). During this span of forty years, Faison also directed the Williams College Art Museum.<sup>30</sup>

Upon graduating from his undergraduate degree, Rousseau worked for the National Gallery of Art in Washington. His job as Assistant Curator of Paintings entailed frequent travel abroad to research mediaeval French art, which coincided with his MA research.<sup>31</sup> His classmate, Plaut, was no doubt advantaged in the curatorial world because of his connections to Sachs at Harvard, where Plaut himself taught as a graduate student.<sup>32</sup> His career began with an apprenticeship in paintings at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, where he then worked as Assistant Curator.<sup>33</sup> Plaut co-founded the Boston Museum of Modern Art in 1936. In 1939, he became the Museum's director.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> It is suggested that Wittmann and Sachs had a mutual respect for one another, having both come from the Midwest. Duncan and McClellan, *The Art of Curating*, 182.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 9-10.

<sup>31</sup> "Theodore Rousseau," *The Los Angeles Times*, January 2, 1974.

<sup>32</sup> A paper about American-Jewish art and museum professionals reads that "rather than receiving preferential treatment from his relative (Paul J. Sachs), Plaut had to work extra hard to prove his ability." However, the same paragraph goes on to explain that his directorship of the Boston Museum of Modern Art was likely secured by the fact that "the Institute's president was William Aldrich, a brother of Abby Rockefeller and a Sachs confidant." George M. Goodwin, "A New Jewish Elite: Curators, Directors, and Benefactors of American Art Museums," *Modern Judaism* 18:2 (1998), 57.

<sup>33</sup> *Dictionary of Art Historians*, "Plaut, James S.,"

<https://arthistorians.info/plautj#:~:text=Plaut%20received%20an%20honorary%20D.F.A.,world%20artisans%20market%20their%20wares>. (accessed 17 November, 2023).

<sup>34</sup> "James Sachs Plaut (1913-1996)," <https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/plaut-lt-cdr-james-s-usnr>, *Monuments Men and Women Foundation*, (accessed February 21, 2023).

The unit's only non-Ivy League man was Terence Coyne. After graduating from the Central Catholic High School in Wheeling, Virginia, Coyne studied math, public speaking, French, accounting, and English at night school. Following his studies, Coyne began a long career as a civil servant, where he worked positions as payroll clerk, including for the Works Progress Administration, and the US Railway Mail Service.<sup>35</sup> His modest educational background made his participation in the ALIU and the OSS stand out.

### **War Years**

In 1942, Phillips enlisted in the US Army.<sup>36</sup> After serving with the Army Intelligence Corps and US Counterintelligence in Boston, he was recruited to the ALIU by Francis Henry Taylor, in the same fashion as his close friend, Charles Sawyer.<sup>37</sup> One of Phillips' contributions to the ALIU's efforts was identifying Han van Meegeren's Vermeer forgeries, in which he noticed that "a thumb-piece on the pewter lid of a seventeenth-century tankard or jug, used as an accessory in several of the 'Vermeers', was a nineteenth-century restoration."<sup>38</sup>

In June 1943, Sawyer enlisted in the US Army. After Military Police training from July 1943 until February 1944, Sawyer worked for the German Country Unit of SHAEF and United States Control Commission in Manchester, UK until November 1944. Like his friend John Phillips, Sawyer worked for the MFAA, before being transferred to London.<sup>39</sup> There, Sawyer met with British monuments officers, including Douglas Cooper, whom he described as "a bit standoffish."<sup>40</sup> In January 1945, Sawyer left London to work at the ALIU's Washington office as

---

<sup>35</sup> Bradsher, "Terence A. Coyne: An Office of Strategic Services' Art Looting Investigation Unit Monuments Man."

<sup>36</sup> "John Marshall Phillips," U.S., World War II Draft Cards Young Men, 1940-1947, Ancestry.com, accessed February 17, 2023.

<sup>37</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, box 7, folder 10.

<sup>38</sup> Sizer, "John Marshall Phillips, 1905-1953," 10

<sup>39</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, box 7, folder 10, Charles H. Sawyer to Tim Naftali, (26 February 1985).

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

a civilian, continuing research and analysis.<sup>41</sup> With Elizabeth Lambie's support, Sawyer edited field intelligence for wider agency distribution. A substantial part of Sawyer's role in communicating with and collecting information from others was to make use of his pre-war contacts from academic institutions, like Yale, and areas of the State Department.<sup>42</sup> In Fall 1945, Sawyer began working for the Roberts Commission as Assistant Secretary, and his Orion position was filled by Otto Wittmann, who had attended Harvard with Sawyer and Plaut.<sup>43</sup> Sawyer's responsibilities as Assistant Secretary ended in February 1946.

Wittmann was drafted and sent to Camp Upton in New York for training in 1941. When Wittmann came out of the Army Air Force Officer's Training School, he worked in the personnel department, Air Transport Command, until 1944, when he transferred to the ALIU.<sup>44</sup> Charles Sawyer eventually asked Wittmann if he would take over the ALIU's Washington Office. Wittmann underwent regular OSS counterintelligence training at The Farm in Virginia, which included classes on weaponry, lock-picking, photography, and other tactics.<sup>45</sup> After training, Wittmann travelled to France, Switzerland, Britain, and Sweden for the ALIU, searching for information on the whereabouts of looted art. He befriended prominent figures in the European art world, including Robert de Vries (Appendix 1) of the Netherlands, a relationship that continued after the war.<sup>46</sup>

In 1942, Faison enlisted in the navy and worked as a training officer at an advanced Navy Radar Training Center. In a lecture he gave at Williams College following retirement, Faison joked that he "knew nothing of radar, but something of teaching," which was clearly his

---

<sup>41</sup> Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, BHL, University of Michigan, box 4, "Miscellaneous, 1943-1947."

<sup>42</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, box 7, folder 10, Charles H. Sawyer to Tim Naftali, (6 March 1985).

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Duncan and McClennan, *The Art of Curating*, 11.

<sup>45</sup> Wittmann, interview by Richard Cándida Smith, 106.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

passion.<sup>47</sup> After being recruited for the ALIU in January 1945, he spent that spring in Washington DC, in training he believed “had nothing to do with future duties,” but nevertheless “became somewhat adept at lockpicking and cryptography.”<sup>48</sup> Later that Spring, Faison travelled to London to undergo counterespionage training with the X-2 division of OSS. Faison travelled to Alt Aussee where from July 1945 he conducted interrogations before returning to London to write his reports in January 1946.<sup>49</sup> Once the ALIU was disbanded, he returned to his peacetime role at Williams College. In 1950, Ardelia Hall (Appendix 1), Chief of the Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs in Washington asked Faison to direct the Munich Central Collecting Point (CCP).<sup>50</sup> Faison arrived in Munich by December 1950, and the US State Department ended repatriation work at Wiesbaden and Munich CCPs in 1951.<sup>51</sup>

In 1942, Rousseau enlisted in the US Navy and, as a Lieutenant Commander, worked as a naval attaché to embassies in Spain before being recruited to the ALIU for interrogation work.<sup>52</sup> Rousseau was the unit’s operations officer.<sup>53</sup> For five months in 1946, Rousseau did a tour of duty in Japan with the MFAA.<sup>54</sup>

In 1940, Plaut was drafted and served in Northwest Africa as the Senior US Naval Interrogation Officer, with the responsibility of interrogation captured German U-Boat crews.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> S. Lane Faison Jr, “Forty Years Later: Memories of Orion,” (Lecture, Art Department, Williams College, Williamstown, MA, January 21, 1986), 1.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Faison, interview by Robert F. Brown, 29.

<sup>50</sup> Simpson, *The Spoils of War*, 139.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> “Theodore Rousseau, Jr. (1912-1973),” *Monuments Men and Women Foundation*.

<sup>53</sup> Thomas Hoving and Margaretta Salinger, “Theodore Rousseau, 1912-1973” *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, 8 (1973): 5-6.

<sup>54</sup> A 28 August 1948 *New Yorker* feature on Rousseau describes a five-month tour of duty in Japan, “in the fall of 1946, the nature of which was, and is, secret, beyond the fact that it has nothing to do with art...” Langdon Warner’s papers, however, suggest that Rousseau was there with the MFAA, along with Warner himself and George Stout. Theodore Bowie, ed., *Langdon Warner through his letters* (London: Indiana University Press, 1966), 171. Geoffrey T. Hellman, “Curator,” *The New York Times*, 28 August 1948.

<sup>55</sup> “James Sachs Plaut (1912-1996),” *Monuments Men and Women Foundation*.

This interrogation experience and his art expertise made him an ideal candidate for Director of the ALIU, a position he filled from November 1944 until April 1946.<sup>56</sup> During his time directing the unit, Plaut interrogated and compiled the DIRs on Günther Schiedlausky, Bruno Lohse, Gustav Rochlitz, Robert Scholz, and Karl Kress.<sup>57</sup> He was also responsible for the CIR on the ERR's activities in France.<sup>58</sup>

In 1942, Coyne enlisted in the navy, and graduated from the Foreign Service School of the Office of Naval Intelligence in Washington DC in March 1943. He served as yeoman to the Officer in Charge of the Joint Army-Navy Intelligence Collection Agency in North Africa.<sup>59</sup> In January 1944, Coyne was promoted and for almost a year served as yeoman to the Officer in Charge of the US Eighth Fleet of the Naval Intelligence Unit.<sup>60</sup> By July 1944, he was stationed in Naples, where he supervised all intelligence reports, correspondence, and other “typed” material.<sup>61</sup> Coyne's language skills allowed him to translate French and Italian documents. After contracting malaria, Coyne returned to the US and began working for OSS X-2 on 17 March 1945. He was transferred to the London Orion office on 30 May 1945. On July 16, Coyne was promoted to Chief Yeoman upon recommendation of X-2 Chief, James R. Murphy, and travelled to Alt Aussee in June as Plaut's assistant. There, he “organized the records, compiled reports, [translated] documents, and performed actual field duties ranging from help with the interrogations to assisting in the administration of the detention center.”<sup>62</sup> Shortly after arriving

---

<sup>56</sup> Plaut, “Loot for the Master Race.”

<sup>57</sup> Art Looting Investigation Unit, “WWII OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports,” <https://www.fold3.com/publication/631/wwii-oss-art-looting-investigation-reports>. (accessed February 20, 2023).

<sup>58</sup> Fold3, “ALIU: CIR No. 1: *Activity of the Einsatzstab Rosenberg in France* (August 15, 1945). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231997512/1>. (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

at Alt Aussee, Coyne took a temporary leave to the US because his baby died and his wife fell sick. He returned to London by mid-September and resumed his duties until December 1945 when the OSS was dissolved and the newly formed Strategic Services Unit (SSU) oversaw the ALIU.<sup>63</sup>

After the war, several of the ALIU's men received awards and recognition for their work. Wittmann, Faison, Rousseau, and Plaut were all decorated as officers of the French Legion of Honor. Wittmann and Rousseau also became Officers of the Order of Orange-Nassau (the Netherlands). Wittmann was named Commander of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Italy, while Rousseau was named as one of its Knight Officers.<sup>64</sup> Rousseau was also decorated with the Order of Alfonso X el Sabio of Spain. Plaut was decorated as Knight of the Order of St. Olav, First Class of Norway, and Commander of the Royal Order of Leopold of Belgium.<sup>65</sup> In April 1946 upon Plaut's recommendation, Coyne received the Army Commendation Ribbon for his service.

### **Postwar Careers**

The ALIU men quickly returned to their museum and professorial positions upon discharge from their respective wartime roles. In 1945, Phillips became associate professor at Yale and acting director of the Yale University Art Gallery. By 1948 he advanced to professor and director. All the while, he continued his involvement with the Walpole Society, an organization whose purpose is to promote British art and culture, which he had joined in 1941.<sup>66</sup> Phillips involved

---

<sup>63</sup> On 1 October 1945, Harry Truman dissolved the OSS and replaced it with the Strategic Services Unit (SSU). All OSS intelligence units, except for Research and Analysis, were transferred to the SSU. Truman assigned Brigadier General John Magruder to the SSU directorship, and in 1946 he was succeeded by Lieutenant Colonel William W. Quinn, William Donovan's initial recommendation for the position. Winks, *Cloak & Gown*, 371.

<sup>64</sup> "Otto Wittmann, Jr., (1911-2001)," *Monuments Men and Women Foundation*, <https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/wittmann-maj-otto-jr>. (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>65</sup> "James Sachs Plaut (1912-1996)," *Monuments Men and Women Foundation*.

<sup>66</sup> The Walpole Society was formed in 1911 and exists to promote the "study of Britain's art history." <https://www.walpolesociety.org.uk>. (accessed 19 November 2023).

himself in many clubs, including the American Antiquarian Society of Worcester, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, the New-York Historical Society and Numismatic Society, and the Chester County Historical Society, as well as the Antiquarian & Landmarks Society. While in London he involved himself with The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths.<sup>67</sup> In 1942, Phillips was awarded a Master of Liberal Arts as an honorary degree from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut.<sup>68</sup> Phillips died 7 May 1953.<sup>69</sup> Those who spoke posthumously about Phillips, like Sawyer and Theodore Sizer, described him as interesting and enjoyable company, and as someone who typically carried with him “some object of high antiquarian interest.”<sup>70</sup>

Sawyer worked closely with Phillips in his postwar career. He was Dean of the School of Fine Arts and Director of the Division of Arts at Yale, and professor at Timothy Dwight College, from 1947 until 1953. He received honorary degrees from Amherst College, Clark University, and the University of New Hampshire. In 1957, Sawyer became Director of the University of Michigan Museum of Art, as well as professor of Art and Art History until 1975. Before retiring, Sawyer founded the Museum Practice Program at the Rackham School, in connection with the University of Michigan Museum of Art.<sup>71</sup> Following retirement, Sawyer continued serving many cultural institutions, including the Fogg Museum and the Notre Dame Advisory Council.<sup>72</sup> He also worked with the American Association of Museums, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, the Association of Museum Directors, the College Art Association, the Committee on Art Education, the Committee on Government and Art, the

---

<sup>67</sup> Sizer, “John Marshall Phillips, 1905-1953,” 9.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 15

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>71</sup> Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, BHL, University of Michigan, box 4, “Miscellaneous, 1943-1947.”

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

Committee to Rescue Italian Art, the Ford Foundation, the Museum Publisher's Association, the National Collection of Fine Arts Commission, and the New England Museum Director's Council.<sup>73</sup> Sawyer died on 25 February 2005 in Michigan.<sup>74</sup>

By 1946, Wittmann assumed the position of Assistant Director at the Toledo Museum of Art. Margaret Hill Wittmann, Otto's wife, actively participated in museum functions as she was a Radcliffe Fine Art graduate, with expertise in Greek archaeology.<sup>75</sup> The two met through OSS work in Washington during the war. Together they obtained a significant collection for the Toledo Museum.<sup>76</sup> Upon arriving in California in 1977, Wittmann was called to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art to diffuse tensions between the museum's trustees and its staff. Two years later, Wittmann mediated such tensions at the Getty, which led to his involvement in what essentially became the restructuring and expansion of the Trust and the Museum.<sup>77</sup> Wittmann left Toledo to act as trustee and consultant to the J. Paul Getty Trust and the Getty Museum, by 1980 becoming the Museum's chief curator.<sup>78</sup> As trustee and chief curator, Wittmann held immense power within the institution. His prominence within the American museum world is reflected in the fact that before going to the Getty, he turned down prestigious directorships in Boston and Philadelphia, as well as the chief curatorship at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.<sup>79</sup> Otto Wittmann was appointed Director of the College Art Association in 1963, President of the Association of Art Museum Directors in 1961 and 1971, and Chairman of the J. Paul Getty art

---

<sup>73</sup> Laura Mills and Chris Schunter, "Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, 1930-1997," 2011.

<https://findingaids.lib.umich.edu/catalog/umich-bhl-89146>. (accessed 15 November 2023); Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, BHL, University of Michigan, box 4, "Miscellaneous, 1943-1947."

<sup>74</sup> "Sawyer, Charles H.," *The New York Times*, March 3, 2005, <https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/03/classified/paid-notice-deaths-sawyer-charles-h.html>.

<sup>75</sup> Duncan, *Otto Wittmann: Museum man for all seasons*, 12.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid*, 15.

<sup>77</sup> Duncan and McClennan, *The Art of Curating*, 186; Smyth and Lukehart, *The Early Years of Art History*, xvii.

<sup>78</sup> Smyth and Lukehart, *The Early Years of Art History*, xvii.

<sup>79</sup> Duncan and McClennan, *The Art of Curating*, 182.



acquisition committee. Wittmann's accolades are extensive and include the Distinguished Service Award of the American Association of Museums, described as "the nation's highest museum recognition."<sup>80</sup> Wittmann died in California in 2001.<sup>81</sup>

Once his time with the US Government in Germany ended, Faison returned to his career with American cultural institutions. Aside from his tenure at Williams, where he worked until retirement, Faison received a Guggenheim fellowship and completed it in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland in the 1960s. He and his colleagues, William Pierson, Jr., and Whitney Stoddard became known as the "Holy Trinity" within the American art world for setting their students up for great success in US museums like the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art.<sup>82</sup> While working for the American cultural magazine, *The National*, Faison was commissioned by MoMA to write a book, though it was never completed.<sup>83</sup> Faison died on 11 November 2006, in Williamstown, Massachusetts at age 98.

After the war, Rousseau was hired as Associate Curator of Paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1946, then moved through the ranks of Curator, Chairman of the Department of Paintings, and then Curator-in-Chief, Co-Director in 1968, and Museum Trustee.<sup>84</sup> He also belonged to the Royal Academy of San Fernando. Unlike his unit peers, Rousseau's personality and lifestyle stirred up interest among newspapers throughout his work at the Metropolitan Museum. A 1948 *New Yorker* article describes Rousseau as "cosmopolitan," adding that "the Metropolitan's new curator of art is unmarried, handsome, and a great man for goggle-fishing while swimming underwater," in Portugal, Spain, France, Japan, Brazil, and

---

<sup>80</sup> Duncan, *Otto Wittmann: Museum man for all season*, 30.

<sup>81</sup> "Otto Wittmann, Jr., (1911-2001)," *Monuments Men and Women Foundation*.

<sup>82</sup> "S. Lane Faison Papers, 1922-1981, bulk 1950-1976 – Biographical Note," <https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/s-lane-faison-papers-8102/biographical-note>, (accessed 19 November 2023).

<sup>83</sup> Faison, interview by Anna Swinbourne, 29, 44.

<sup>84</sup> "Theodore Rousseau," *The Los Angeles Times*, January 2, 1974.

Trinidad. According to an article published after his death, Rousseau was labelled as “the Golden Boy” for his status as a “suave socialite” and his elegant attire.<sup>85</sup> Accounts of former colleagues also suggested that Rousseau was unfriendly and reserved.<sup>86</sup> These traits did not seem to impair his career, however. Rousseau died in 1973, one day before his retirement.

On 1 June 1946, Plaut returned to Boston to his career at the Boston Museum of Modern Art<sup>87</sup> (which later, under his directorship, became and remains the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston) until 1956, when he assumed the role of Deputy US Commissioner for the 1958 World Fair in Brussels, Belgium.<sup>88</sup> The James Sachs Plaut Society at the ICA continues to recognize Plaut’s contributions to the American art world.<sup>89</sup> In 1974, Plaut received an honorary degree from Wheaton College in Massachusetts. He simultaneously served as secretary general of the World Crafts Council and chaired Wheaton’s visiting committee in art.<sup>90</sup> Half a century after his OSS work, Plaut contributed to the Bard Conference by writing “Investigation of the Major Nazi Art-Confiscation Agencies,” in which he briefly detailed the structure and history of the ALIU, and how the “unwitting collaboration of the Nazis themselves,” provided substantial evidence.<sup>91</sup> Plaut mentioned the cooperation of Bruno Lohse and Gisella Limberger, two Nazis within the art looting world. After retiring in 1976, Plaut and his wife started an initiative to assist artisans in

---

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, box 7, folder 10, Charles H. Sawyer to Tim Naftali, (6 March 1985).

<sup>87</sup> In a postwar interview, Plaut explained that Francis Henry Taylor asked him to take over the department of paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art after the war. Plaut turned it down for his position at the ICA, and Taylor allegedly took this personally, leading to a fracture in their relationship for many years. Plaut, interview by Robert F. Brown, 18.

<sup>88</sup> “James Sachs Plaut (1912-1996),” Monuments Men and Women Foundation Website, <https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/plaut-lt-cdr-james-s-usnr>. (accessed 20 February 2023).

<sup>89</sup> “James Sachs Plaut Society,” Institute of Contemporary Art Boston, <https://www.icaboston.org/page/james-sachs-plaut-society>. (accessed February 16, 2023).

<sup>90</sup> Wheaton College Massachusetts, “James Sachs Plaut, Honorary Degree Recipient,” <https://collegehistory.wheatoncollege.edu/twentieth-century/1970s/james-sachs-plaut/>, (accessed 19 November 2023).

<sup>91</sup> Simpson, *The Spoils of War*, 125.

the global south, called Aid to Artisans.<sup>92</sup> James Plaut died at the age of 84 in 1996. Plaut's leadership and efforts were continuously mentioned in postwar correspondence between ALIU members, and he was spoken of highly.<sup>93</sup> Plaut's assistant, Coyne, went on to work for the government, with the Internal Revenue Service. He died 6 June 2001.<sup>94</sup>

### **The Women: Lambie, Sillcocks, Whitney**

Phillips, Sawyer, Wittmann, Faison, Rousseau, Plaut, and Coyne worked with three OSS women: Elizabeth Lambie, Sarah (Sally) Sillcocks, and Alice Whitney — research analyst, clerk, and secretary, respectively. Little is known about the careers and lives of the three ALIU women, however we do know that women played a critical role in the functioning of the OSS overall, from working as agents in the field to conducting research for the R&A Branch.<sup>95</sup> The primary work on women in the OSS is Elizabeth P. McIntosh's *Women of the OSS: Sisterhood of Spies*, but the topic deserves further research. General Donovan foresaw women of the OSS serving primarily as the “invisible apron strings” of wartime intelligence, holding up the organization, yet remaining unseen.<sup>96</sup> His assumptions about women's participation in the organization were incorrect (the OSS employed women agents in the field as well as behind the scenes) but also diminish the invaluable nature of secretarial work in the war effort. Out of 13,000 OSS personnel, around 4,000 were women.<sup>97</sup> Further, women were critical participants and drivers of the Allied art restitution and protection efforts. The best and most well-known examples include French curator Rose Valland, American monuments officer Edith Standen, and Ardelia Hall,

---

<sup>92</sup> *Dictionary of Art Historians*, “Plaut, James S.”

<sup>93</sup> See GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, box 7, folder 10, Charles H. Sawyer to Tim Naftali, (26 February 1985).

<sup>94</sup> Bradsher, “Terence A. Coyne.”

<sup>95</sup> See Aline Griffith, *The Spy Wore Red: My Adventures as an Undercover Agent in World War II*, (New York: Random House, 1987).

<sup>96</sup> McIntosh, *Sisterhood of Spies*, 11.

<sup>97</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, “The ‘Glorious Amateurs’ of OSS: A Sisterhood of Spies,” 6 April 2023, <https://www.cia.gov/stories/story/glorious-amateurs-of-oss-sisterhood-of-spies/>. (accessed 7 August 2023).

State Department MFAA adviser from 1946 until 1962.<sup>98</sup> These women have become some of the most prominent figures in all the Allied cultural organizations, but they certainly were not the only ones.

Lambie, Sillcocks, and Whitney had distinct roles within the ALIU. Lambie was hired as an analyst,<sup>99</sup> but in spring 1945 she assumed all the clerical work for the unit's Washington office. After being in that role for five months, Lambie complained of the quantity of work and her disappointment that she was not doing something more fulfilling.<sup>100</sup> Coyne joined her briefly, helping with carding and typing until he travelled overseas about a month later. By May 1945, Lambie cut back to part time work from the impact of stress, and the lack of support within the office. She wrote that "the amount of information in our field which turns up in other offices hereabouts is infinitesimal except for censorship stuff whose value is questionable anyway... that leaves me with the carding, logging and other mechanical and frustrating operations, and I have really been so bored with it that nothing but my loyalty and devotion to JSP [Plaut] has prevented my accepting the offer which I had a couple of months ago — and which still stands — of an editorial job on the history project which would be much more in my line I think."<sup>101</sup> Lambie made an impression on the Washington office. Lambie's complaints of unfulfilling work suggest she may have been overqualified for what turned out to be clerical work. Perhaps she

---

<sup>98</sup> For more information on women in the MFAA, see Kirrily Freeman, "Saving Civilization: The 'Monuments Men' in History and Memory," *Journal of Women's History* 33:2 (2021): 85–110; Elizabeth Campbell, "Monuments Women and Men: Rethinking Popular Narratives via British Major Anne Olivier Popham," *International Journal of Cultural Property* 28:3 (2021).

<sup>99</sup> Greg Bradsher, "Monuments Man Charles H. Sawyer, part I: Member of the U.S Army, the Office of Strategic Services, and the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas," 21 July 2014. <https://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2014/07/21/monuments-man-charles-sawyer-i/>. (accessed 19 November 2023).

<sup>100</sup> Greg Bradsher, "Monuments Man Charles H. Sawyer, part II: Double Duty for the Roberts Commission and the OSS," 22 July 2014. <https://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2014/07/22/monuments-man-charles-sawyer-ii/>. (accessed 19 November 2023).

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*, paragraph 12.

had a university education in the historical field. Her comment on her dedication to Plaut also indicates a potential personal connection. Sawyer recalled her work in his correspondence with Naftali: she “was knowledgeable in the ways and personnel of OSS, capable, efficient, good natured and most cooperative. During those first weeks I would have been lost without her. She had organized the files to incorporate the material gradually filtering in from the London office, from other agencies, and from Plaut and Rousseau.”<sup>102</sup> By August, Lambie was promoted to Intelligence Analyst but left her post. The administration of the unit in Washington was then passed to Otto Wittmann, and the personnel in London, especially Whitney and Sillcocks.

Sarah (Sally) Sillcocks (1913-2008) worked as a clerk for the ALIU in the London field office. In certain ways, her life parallels those of the ALIU officers. A November 2021 feature in the “Princeton Portrait” series highlights Sillcocks’ accomplishments prior to her career as director of Princeton’s Office of Alumni Records, where she applied her analytical skills to locate “missing” university alumni.<sup>103</sup> Sillcocks grew up among New York’s elite, where at age eighteen she attended her debutant ball.<sup>104</sup> The class background of Sillcocks’ colleague, Alice Whitney, is unclear and would require further research. However, we do know that Whitney travelled to Alt Aussee to cover for Coyne during his personal leave in September 1945. She continued her secretarial work for Orion until December 1945.<sup>105</sup>

Although Lambie, Sillcocks, and Whitney are generally excluded from scholarship on the ALIU, their work was integral to the functioning and organization of the unit. Their work was, however, overshadowed by the unit’s men. With access to further resources, their stories would

---

<sup>102</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 7, Charles H. Sawyer to Tim Naftali, (6 March 1985).

<sup>103</sup> Elyse Graham, “Princeton Portrait: A Hunter of Lost Art and Lost Alumni,” November 2021. <https://paw.princeton.edu/article/princeton-portrait-hunter-lost-art-and-lost-alumni>. (accessed 19 November 2023).

<sup>104</sup> Although the article features more quotes from Faison than Sillcocks herself, it emphasizes that she had an aptitude for analytical work and belonged to New England’s elite.

<sup>105</sup> Bradsher, “Terence A. Coyne.”

be worth exploring.<sup>106</sup> OSS women in general emerged from the elite ranks of American society. Elizabeth McIntosh's book focused on several of these prominent women, like Barbara Lauwers, a Czech-born woman who worked in the OSS's Morale Operations, dealing with propaganda. Lauwers had a law degree and worked for the Czech embassy in DC before the war. Another was Gertrude Sanford Legendre, an American socialite from South Carolina, whose family owned a plantation. Legendre graduated from Foxcroft boarding school in Virginia, and during her teens travelled extensively for hunting trips throughout Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Canada, and Alaska.<sup>107</sup> While serving with the OSS in France, Legendre was captured by the Germans and was a POW for six months before her escape. Another example is Cora Du Bois, an anthropologist and graduate of Columbia University.<sup>108</sup> Du Bois became the OSS expert on Indonesia and eventually Chief of Research & Analysis in Southeast Asia Command. In this position, Du Bois met her long-time partner, Jeanne Taylor, a student of St. Paul School of Art and the Art Students League in New York. In 1953, Du Bois was awarded the Harvard-Radcliffe Zemurray Professorship in the Arts and Sciences. She was the first woman at Harvard offered this distinguished position.<sup>109</sup>

These are only a few examples of the OSS women whose lives shared similarities with the ALIU men. They were educated, well-travelled women who found interesting wartime work among others with comparable social status. Considering Lambie's comment about her unfulfilling work, and Sillcocks's, postwar work at Princeton, its likely they also came from the

---

<sup>106</sup> I am aware that a series of ALIU administrative material is held with NARA RG 226 Entry 190 Box 532. I was unable to access the material, despite repeated attempts.

<sup>107</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, "The "Glorious Amateurs" of OSS."

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

same elite, educated background as their female OSS colleagues. The outlook that dominated the ALIU, and OSS broadly, was driven by class and social experiences.

### **Other interrogators**

The ALIU personnel were not the only ones to conduct interrogations and investigations into Nazi art looters. Interrogations at Alt Aussee, investigations in Switzerland, and work elsewhere was a collaborative effort among art experts from several countries to locate the whereabouts of Nazi looted objects. Here we will introduce other investigators associated with the ALIU.

Jan Vlug, Captain in the Royal Netherlands Army, worked for the Fine Arts (Special Services) Dutch Restitution Committee, and joined Rousseau, Faison, and Plaut in May 1945 in Germany for interrogations.<sup>110</sup> Vlug wrote the Detailed Interrogation Report on Kajetan Mühlmann. The only personal information on Jan Vlug is on the *Monuments Men and Women Foundation* website.<sup>111</sup> His reports on Kajetan Mühlmann and associates were completed in December 1945 but excluded from the official list of ALIU DIRs.<sup>112</sup> Another interrogator is MFAA intelligence officer Bernard Taper (Appendix 1). Taper worked alongside Wittmann in investigating Hans Wendland (Appendix 2), and after the war had a career as journalist and writer.<sup>113</sup> The third person who worked closely with the ALIU, though not necessarily harmoniously, was British MFAA officer Douglas Cooper. Like Phillips, Sawyer, Wittmann, Faison, Rousseau, and Plaut, Cooper grew up around great wealth, studied at the Sorbonne, Cambridge, and Marburg prior to beginning a career in art history and collecting.<sup>114</sup> His military

---

<sup>110</sup> Hussey et al., "OSS Art Looting Investigation Unit Reports."

<sup>111</sup> Jan Vlug (1917-1999)," *Monuments Men and Women Foundation*.

<https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/taper-lt-bernard>. (accessed 19 November 2023).

<sup>112</sup> Although Vlug was not an ALIU member, he worked closely with the unit at Alt Aussee and produced important information on Mühlmann.

<sup>113</sup> "Jan Vlug (1917-1999)," *Monuments Men and Women Foundation*.

<sup>114</sup> "Douglas Cooper (1911-1984)," *Monuments Men and Women Foundation*.

<https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/cooper-sqn-ldr-douglas>. (accessed 19 November 2023).

career also parallels those of the unit interrogators, having served in Cairo with Royal Air Force Intelligence.<sup>115</sup> While Cooper and the ALIU members are similar in many ways, his beliefs and approaches to his wartime work at times conflicted with the ALIU's. Cooper's relationship with the unit members is discussed further in chapter two of this thesis.

The majority of the ten ALIU personnel, apart from Coyne, Lambie, and Whitney (the latter two whose backgrounds are unknown), emerged from wealthy, elite American society through which they became Ivy League-educated, well-travelled, and successful museum professionals. Plaut, Faison, Rousseau, and Coyne served in the US navy prior to joining the ALIU. After the war, the four interrogators, Sillcocks, and the two research analysts had successful careers within either Ivy League institutions, American museums, or both.

### **Worldview**

The described experiences were all part of a systemic development of a worldview which centered around the concept of the United States being the guardian of Western Civilization. Nowhere did the solidification of this worldview happen more than at Ivy League schools. OSS scholarship acknowledges that Ivy League institutions were preferred for recruits.<sup>116</sup> Elizabeth McIntosh explained that OSS Director Donovan urgently sought intelligence hires from Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Dartmouth, etc., because he perceived Ivy League graduates as trustworthy elites that could proceed with their work without background checks.<sup>117</sup> Outsiders were quick to take the OSS acronym as "Oh So Social," for the abundance of elitism within the organization.<sup>118</sup> Early OSS recruits were taken on specifically because of their status in society, which also carried assumptions about their character and politics: Ivy League equated to good, pro-

---

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> See Katz, *Foreign Intelligence*; Winks, *Cloak and Gown*; Hersh, *The Old Boys*.

<sup>117</sup> McIntosh, *Sisterhood of Spies*, 6.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.



American people who would protect Western civilization and democracy. Similar elitism and assumptions existed within American cultural organizations, in which the ALIU personnel, specifically Phillips, Sawyer, Wittmann, Faison, Rousseau and Plaut were nurtured. Their experiences fostered within them a worldview that Americans and their institutions were the rightful guardians of Western Civilization, a worldview that grouped Europe and the US together culturally, politically, and historically. This began prior to their entrance into Ivy League schools, but was no doubt amplified there. The indoctrination started with the privilege to travel abroad to Europe, to attend private schools or receive high quality educations. Then upon arrival at Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and UPenn, it was solidified within clubs and Western Civilization courses which taught the view that America had always been a part of Western (European) civilization.<sup>119</sup> These views and this privilege entrenched among the men was carried with them into their wartime careers and through the rest of their lives. As elite white men in these positions, they were powerful and valued within American society.

Robert Dean's *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy*, explains that "the men who made American foreign policy during the 1960s were products of a cultural milieu and a system of education that took form in the late nineteenth century."<sup>120</sup> Men of the same generation ran the biggest cultural institutions in America during the same decade. Their beliefs were structured around the perception that America was the dominant figure on the world stage, both culturally and militarily. Dean continued that "a pattern of upper-class masculine socialization that solidified between roughly 1885 and World War I retained its central attributes at least until the onset of World War II."<sup>121</sup> These assumptions

---

<sup>119</sup> Allardyce, "The Rise and Fall of the Western Civilization Course," 709.

<sup>120</sup> Robert D. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 17.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid 17.

spread throughout male boarding schools, Ivy League schools and elite, racially segregated men's clubs, excluding women, non-white men, and lower classes. Phillips' involvement in a UPenn fraternity and his dedication to the Walpole Society are examples of this. Part of establishing this brotherhood was the practice of participating in an "elite military unit" during times of war, an example being the ALIU.<sup>122</sup> America's involvement in European conflicts furthered the belief that the US had "a common development with England and Western Europe" and identified culturally with the dominant civilization and carrier of liberty, culture, and democracy.<sup>123</sup> The First World War amplified the American elite education system's need to prepare its men to defend Western Civilization.<sup>124</sup> British-modeled American boarding schools trained boys of elite families in the "stoic virtues of manliness and service to the state" which focused on producing American men capable of fighting for the dominance of the US on the global stage, schools like the Taft School and Phillips Academy where Plaut, Rousseau, and Sawyer studied, respectively. The concept of a unified citizenry with European democracies became further important for American education systems after the First World War.<sup>125</sup> Significantly, the boarding schools used total measures to instill nationalistic ideas into the boys' minds, removing them from their individual identities and creating group ones: the creation of a class of men who would carry out America's "imperial destiny" through education and military

---

<sup>122</sup> Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 18.

<sup>123</sup> Allardyce, "The Rise and Fall of the Western Civilization Course," 706.

<sup>124</sup> As a response to the First World War, students in the Army Training Corps at campuses across the United States were required to take the "War Issues" course. The course combined history and political science to explain the ideological and cultural conflicts leading to the Great War among European powers. This is an example of an early "citizenship" class that taught Americans the importance of being intelligent, liberal, democratic, and sympathetic. Allardyce, "The Rise and Fall of the Western Civilization Course," 707.

<sup>125</sup> Nigel Pollard, *Bombing Pompeii: World Heritage & Military Necessity* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2020), 135. See Robert D. Dean's *Imperial Brotherhood* for an understanding of the impact of masculinity in American Cold War foreign policy. Dean addresses the role of Ivy League institutions, among other elite, male-dominated groups, in fostering "boys club" approaches to aggressive, interventionist foreign policies. This idea relates to the cultural officials of interest in this thesis in their pro-American, pro-Western, culturally elite approaches to dealing with intervention in foreign cultural matters. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 135.

service.<sup>126</sup> American imperialism was inherently linked to the concept of civilization in American private schools, through the idea that the superior, elite personalities would dominate across the world in the conquest for power. Christianity also played a weighty part in this worldview.

While American private schools (and to a lesser extent the public schools) propagated ideas of American superiority on the world stage, university “Western Civ” courses professionalized them. In a critical essay on the “Western Civ” course, Gilbert Allardyce attributes its emergence to the twentieth-century academic debate between the elective university system or the specialization and professionalization system — the debate over which would create ideal American graduates.<sup>127</sup> At the turn of the century, American travel abroad to Europe increased, and thus the interest in European cultural did as well.<sup>128</sup> However, because American civilization and culture was perceived as the successor of European civilization and culture, Americans began to perceive their experience as a common, Western one working toward “liberty, democracy, and progress.”<sup>129</sup> One purpose of the course was to “socialize, ‘civilize,’ and integrate immigrants and members of social groups entering college with little or no exposure to the general — dominant — culture.”<sup>130</sup> In the 1930s, the course was shaped by “a time when Americans envisioned themselves as partners with the European democracies in a great Atlantic civilization, formed from a common history, challenged by a common enemy, and destined to a common future.”<sup>131</sup> However the uniqueness of the Western Civ course in America

---

<sup>126</sup> Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 22.

<sup>127</sup> Weber, “Western Civilization,” 206.

<sup>128</sup> Faison described his university professor Karl E. Weston’s practices: “He traveled a lot, and when we did something about Roman mosaics, he’d go to a drawer and pull out a piece of one and pass it around in class. You had it in your hand, not a photograph of it, but there it was! Things like that, you know.” Lane Faison, *Art History – Oral Documentation Project*, interview by Richard Cándida Smith, October 27-29, 1992.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid*, 206.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid*, 207.

<sup>131</sup> Allardyce, “The Rise and Fall of the Western Civilization Course,” 695.

was its idea of a US national culture that stemmed directly from ancient European and Mediterranean history collectively – not of one European or Mediterranean nation, but all of them and their historical experiences together, from the Renaissance, to the Reformation, Enlightenment, and beyond.<sup>132</sup> In the period when the ALIU personnel attended schools and universities, they would have been exposed to the Western Civ courses at their respective institutions. Nigel Pollard, in his book *Bombing Pompeii: World Heritage and Military Necessity* makes the same argument about the MFAA personnel in Italy during the war, but it equally applies to the ALIU. Enrolling in a Western Civ class was compulsory for all students in many institutions.<sup>133</sup> The larger purpose of the course was to create democratic unity and community among students prior to the entrance into separate disciplines. This unity, the scholarly community argued, would allow students to bring democratic, American values and history into their lives and education ahead.

Critical art history, like the Western Civ course, was rooted in European practices, and brought over from Europe in a variety of ways in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially through immigration and American travel abroad. In the 1930s, prominent American museum professionals developed Art History programs at Princeton, Harvard, Yale, UPenn, Columbia University, and others. Figures like Charles Rufus Morey, who became chairman of Princeton's Department of Art and Archaeology in 1924, worked alongside émigré scholars like Erwin Panofsky to develop the prestigious Art History programs they became known for.<sup>134</sup> Morey's ideas, influence, and prominence in the development of Art History, throughout his tenure as chairman from 1924 until 1945, was essentially unchallenged. The same goes for Paul

---

<sup>132</sup> Weber, "Western Civilization," 207.

<sup>133</sup> Allardyce, "The Rise and Fall of the Western Civilization Course," 695.

<sup>134</sup> Smyth, *The Early Years of Art History in the United States*, 38-39.

J. Sachs' influence at Harvard: Sachs epitomized the elite nature of the art historical profession. Both Morey and Sachs were heavily involved with art and monument protection and preservation efforts during the Second World War, primarily the ACLS Committee and the Roberts Commission. In 1943, Morey produced and circulated a pamphlet to US politicians regarding his and his colleagues' view on America's duty to protect and preserve European culture.<sup>135</sup> Morey situated his argument entirely in the Western civilization themes addressed above — that the US was an extension of Europe and together they made up Western civilization. Thus, it was an American obligation to serve “as the refuge and protector for the culture of [the] European past.”<sup>136</sup> Despite their physical distance from the conflict, moral, idealistic, and philosophical justifications guided US academics to argue for organizations like the Roberts Commission, the MFAA, and the ALIU. Morey also saw a physical manifestation of this cultural ideology within certain European groups directly involved in the war. Poland is one example because of its substantial emigration to the US and Polish immigrants having brought their cultural practices with them.<sup>137</sup> These were also the practical opinions of American art and museum professionals, who anticipated that the US military would need to provide material help on the ground in occupied Europe.

Morey's pamphlet is rooted in the fundamental principles of the American Western civilization education. The envisioned outcome of the American private school education, with its militaristic outlook, while combined with the required Western Civ courses of Ivy League schools, manifested in Morey and his colleagues' concerns for European property. These concerns were unconsciously self-interested, representative of US aims of hegemonic power.

---

<sup>135</sup> Pollard, *Bombing Pompeii*, 134.

<sup>136</sup> Pollard, *Bombing Pompeii*, 136.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

Most importantly, the culmination of this education did not merely instill an opinion in students, it moulded their entire worldview. However, as the rest of this thesis demonstrates, this worldview was indeed malleable, and often did not come across as blatantly as Morey put it. In a time of military necessity, in this case the Second World War, the worldview was called to action. The worldview is part of the reason that Second World War veterans are celebrated as “the Greatest Generation,” consistently labeled by later generations as American heroes.<sup>138</sup> Similar to how Edsel has championed the monuments officers as heroes of the war, others of the Greatest Generation have become “a branded item, with Americans clamoring to identify themselves or their subjects with this label.”<sup>139</sup> In his attempt to challenge the heroic Greatest Generation narrative, historian Kenneth D. Rose argues that instead of tarnishing the wartime generation (especially those on the front lines), he intended to humanize it. He stated that “the only way this can be done is to follow the truth where it leads, and to include the blemished as well as the valorous. While such an approach may run counter to the virtually irresistible temptation to create a satisfying national myth, in the end there is nothing very extraordinary (or very interesting) about a race of Titans striding the earth and performing might deeds.”<sup>140</sup> The hope for this approach was to convey the reality of the time, and the people who served, instead of a romanticized version.

In humanizing the ALIU personnel in a similar way we reveal that there is more to them than their interrogations of Nazis, their glamorous lifestyles, and their prestigious jobs. Labelling ALIU members as heroes absolves them of their faults. Phillips, Sawyer, Wittmann, Faison, Rousseau, Plaut, Coyne, Lambie, Whitney, and Sillcocks were products of their time,

---

<sup>138</sup> Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 1.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

just like everyone. Yes, they faced an unprecedented scenario of global war and the worldview through which they were trained prepared them for the ideological and military challenge that was the Second World War.

Now that the biographical information on these ten individuals is laid out, it is evident that the similarities between their social classes, educations, Ivy League affiliations, and careers embedded a worldview that put America at the top of “Western civilization.” This chapter demonstrated that the six people of particular interest in the ALIU had undeniable parallels throughout their lives, starting with a good quality elementary education. Each of the six graduated from top Ivy League institutions, which set them on a successful career path. Coyne and the unit’s women also found opportunity through their ALIU experiences and connections. This chapter also explained how US academic institutions, specifically the elite ones, of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, began using ideas about “Western Civilization” as a method of moulding young men into a liberal, pro-democracy, pro-Western civilization generation. The ALIU members, particularly the six main figures, were essentially role models for the intended outcome of those academic institutions. The ALIU personnel crucially carried this worldview with them into their wartime work, especially into the interrogations and research into the Nazi art looting system. The following chapter assesses the way the unit’s interrogators conducted themselves during their interrogations of accused Nazi art looters, through the interpretation of the unit’s Interrogation Reports.

## **Chapter Two: The War Years**

A primary goal of this project is to contextualize the ALIU in the settings in which it functioned to further establish the implications of the Western worldview on the unit's work. During the span of the ALIU's existence, its personnel worked in three different but related contexts: the OSS (and subsequently the SSU), the MFAA, and the American occupation of Germany. In these contexts, ALIU officers, administrators, and researchers worked collaboratively to create Detailed Interrogation Reports (DIR) and Consolidated Interrogation Reports (CIR), among other reports, to provide evidence of Nazi crimes. These reports were the unit's main output, and a primary reason for its establishment. Despite this, ALIU reports remain understudied by historians.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, existing interpretations of the reports have not acknowledged the limitations of the unit's work or the way it was shaped by context and worldview. This chapter investigates the different ways that the unit's interrogators' worldview and the multiple contexts in which they worked, shaped their interrogations and wartime activity. The chapter begins with a background to the ALIU interrogation program and an explanation of how it fit within the three relevant contexts. The contextualization is followed by an overview of the unit members' interrogations and compilation of reports. The chapter concludes with an assessment of the unit's contributions and an analysis of its limitations. This section focuses on the work produced by the unit's field agents and compiled in interrogation reports.

### **Background**

In a 21 November 1944 memo, Plaut and Rousseau laid out Project Orion's mission for the chief of counterintelligence, James R. Murphy:

---

<sup>1</sup> Rothfeld, "Unscrupulous Opportunists," 21.



It will be the primary mission of the Art Looting Investigation Unit to collect and disseminate such information bearing on the looting, confiscation and transfer by the enemy of art properties in Europe, and on individuals or organizations involved in such operations or transactions, as will be of direct aid to the United States agencies empowered to effect restitution of such properties and prosecution of war criminals.<sup>2</sup>

The first step in collecting and disseminating information on looters was to compile a list of suspects and distribute it to Allied organizations with the same interests, such as Britain and the Netherlands. Then, field agents collected evidence through research and the interrogation of around twenty-one individuals suspected of dealing illegally acquired objects internationally.<sup>3</sup> The following section analyzes those ALIU interrogations from January 1945 to early 1946.<sup>4</sup>

Plans for interrogations began before the ALIU's creation. In early 1944, American officials believed the Nazis were transferring and storing illegally acquired assets in neutral countries as postwar "insurance," should they lose the war. They suspected this subversive action was conducted through German espionage agents posing as art dealers.<sup>5</sup> Simultaneously, the Allies planned for peacetime, including drawing up a structure for postwar war crimes trials and lists of potential suspects.<sup>6</sup> In the interest of limiting a resurgence of German military power, and responding to the fear that cultural objects were being transferred through neutral countries, the Treasury Department, the State Department, and the wartime Foreign Economic Administration

---

<sup>2</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 6, folder 9, X2 Project (Orion), 1946.

<sup>3</sup> Salter, "A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence's Investigation of Nazi Art Looting," 263.

<sup>4</sup> For a comprehensive account of the ALIU's creation and administrative history, see Rothfeld, "Project Orion."

<sup>5</sup> Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*, 282.

<sup>6</sup> The Vaucher Commission helped to inform Safehaven. Rothfeld, "Unscrupulous Opportunists," 20; Donald P. Steury, "The OSS and Project Safehaven," 2007. <https://www.cia.gov/library/centerfor-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/summer00/art04.html#rft29>. (accessed 19 November 2023), 35.

(FEA) collaborated on Operation Safehaven, intended “to root out and neutralize German industrial and commercial power wherever it might be found.”<sup>7</sup>

Part of Safehaven’s goal was to prevent the Nazis from hoarding assets, a large portion of which were assumed to be cultural and artistic objects.<sup>8</sup> However, preserving cultural objects was not a priority for the State and Treasury Departments — American officials were chiefly concerned about holding Germany financially accountable after the war.<sup>9</sup> OSS Counterintelligence in London had already intercepted economic information on clandestine German projects (such as the ERR), and the Roberts Commission received information on the illegal art trade from Treasury reports. Because of similarities in mandate and crossover between departments, the ALIU’s field office in London fell under the direction of the X-2 Branch and therefore benefitted from Safehaven intelligence accumulated from May 1944 onward.<sup>10</sup> Elements of ALIU investigations are imbedded into Safehaven Reports No. 148 and 229.<sup>11</sup>

For the ALIU, Safehaven intelligence supplemented Ultra intelligence, Roberts Commission sources, and limited OSS information.<sup>12</sup> Charles Sawyer and John Phillips sorted through these documents to extract names and evidence for war crime proceedings, and to build their reports. This evidence was key for their counterparts in the field. From January to May 1945, Sawyer and Phillips compiled a list of over 2000 individuals and organizations involved in illegal art dealing networks. This exhaustive list was narrowed to twenty-one individuals to be

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> State officials were initially uncertain about how Safehaven would function and ignored, at first, the option of using the OSS to monitor the movement of assets. Only after extensive debate was it decided that Safehaven would be run in London under Secret Intelligence (SI) and X-2 of the OSS. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*, 276; Steury, “the OSS and project Safehaven,” 37.

<sup>10</sup> The Roberts Commission was already involved with Safehaven’s interests and helped to implement a US Customs policy which restricted the entry of cultural assets. Nicholas, *Rape of Europa*, 276, 282.

<sup>11</sup> Fold3, “ALIU: *Final Report*,” 5.

<sup>12</sup> Salter, “A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence’s Investigation of Nazi Art Looting,” 263.

interrogated and, with luck, prosecuted. The “priority list”, as it became known, was circulated among Allied intelligence organisations following V-E Day.<sup>13</sup> This list was supplemented with intelligence ALIU interrogators collected in the field from January 1945 to fall 1946.

The ALIU’s most recognized work was its Consolidated Interrogation Reports, Detailed Interrogation Reports, and Final Report.<sup>14</sup> Information presented in the reports was based on the unit’s interrogations of accused Nazi art plunderers, and investigations into larger Nazi looting schemes, like the ERR, Hitler’s Linz Museum project, and Hermann Göring’s massive art collection. These three schemes were the subject of the three published CIRs, which were accompanied by indexes of stolen items.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, twelve DIRs were published between July 1945 and May 1946. DIR number one is on Heinrich Hoffman (Appendix 2), a friend of Hitler’s and purchaser for the Linz collection.<sup>16</sup> DIR number two is devoted to Ernst Buchner (Appendix 2), a German museum professional and lead organizer of storage for the Linz collection.<sup>17</sup> Robert Scholz (Appendix 2), an Austrian-born artist and art-critic, is the subject of DIR number three. Scholz directed the Office for Pictorial Arts of the ERR.<sup>18</sup> Gustav Rochlitz (Appendix 2), the subject of DIR number four, was a German art dealer who during the war sold paintings to Karl Haberstock (Appendix 2), subject of DIR number 13. Haberstock worked as an

---

<sup>13</sup> Hussey, et al., “OSS Art Looting Investigation Unit Reports”; Jonathan Petropoulos, *Göring’s Man in Paris*, 198.

<sup>14</sup> Salter, “A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence’s Investigation of Nazi Art Looting,” 268.

<sup>15</sup> This chapter will focus mostly on the DIRs. The CIRs have gained more critical attention than the DIRs and had an impact on the criminal charges against Göring and Rosenberg. They are also more technical in nature. Unpublished CIRs on Maria Almas-Dietrich, Alois Miedl, and Hans Wendland were analyzed by Rothfeld in her PhD dissertation. See Fold3, “ALIU: CIR number 1”; “ALIU: CIR number 2”; “ALIU: CIR number 4”; Salter, “A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence’s Investigation of Nazi Art Looting”; Petropoulos, *Göring’s Man in Paris*; Rothfeld, “Project Orion”; Rothfeld, “Unscrupulous Opportunists.”

<sup>16</sup> Fold3, “ALIU: DIR number 1: Heinrich Hoffmann,” (July 1, 1945). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231995459/1> (accessed 15 November 2023), 8-9.

<sup>17</sup> Fold3, “ALIU: DIR number 2: Ernst Buchner,” (July 31, 1945). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231995559/2> (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>18</sup> Fold3, “ALIU: DIR number 3: Robert Scholz,” (August 15, 1945). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231995897/3> (accessed 15 November 2023), 1.

art advisor for a number of Nazi art looting schemes.<sup>19</sup> DIR number five details Gunther Schiedlausky's (Appendix 2) activities curating exhibitions for the ERR.<sup>20</sup> Bruno Lohse (Appendix 2), a German art historian, Nazi, and personal art collector and dealer for Göring, is the subject of DIR number six.<sup>21</sup> Gisela Limberger, the only woman featured in the published DIRs, was Göring's personal secretary and is the subject of DIR number seven.<sup>22</sup> DIR number eight, on Kajetan Mühlmann, was never issued. Walter Andreas Hofer (Appendix 2), the subject of DIR number nine, was an art collector and dealer, who acted as director of the Göring collection throughout the war.<sup>23</sup> The subject of DIR number ten was Karl Kress (Appendix 2), a professional photographer who worked for Lohse and the ERR. Walter Bornheim was a German art and antique dealer, who dealt in France and Germany on behalf of the Göring Collection.<sup>24</sup> Bornheim's activities are highlighted in both DIR number eleven and CIR number two. Finally, DIR number twelve features Herman Voss (Appendix 2), a First World War political intelligence veteran, museum director, and second director for Linz.<sup>25</sup> The unit's Final Report was published 1 May 1946, and details its accomplishments, gives recommendations for further actions, lists the reports produced and provides a biographical index of people, and organizations involved in illegal art looting.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 13: Karl Haberstock," (May 1, 1946). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231997374/13> (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>20</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 5: Gunther Schiedlausky," (August 15, 1945). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231996112/5> (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>21</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 6: Bruno Lohse," (August 15, 1945). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231996178/231996150> (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>22</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 7: Gisela Limberger," (September 15, 1945). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231996327/7> (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>23</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 9: Walter Andreas Hofer," (September 15, 1945). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231996367/9> (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>24</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 10: Karl Kress," (August 15, 1945). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231996616/10> (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>25</sup> Hussey, *et al.*, "OSS Art Looting Investigation Unit Reports."

<sup>26</sup> Otto Wittmann also produced a report titled "Final Mission to Europe (10 June 1946-24 September 1946). GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 3, folder 20.

The unit also produced unpublished reports on Alois Miedl (one of Göring's most notorious agents), Hans Wendland (close contact of Hofer and active agent in Switzerland), and Kajetan Mühlmann, the Nazi in charge of managing arts and cultural goods in the Netherlands (Appendix 2).<sup>27</sup> Other ALIU material includes a three part report on the Alois Miedl case,<sup>28</sup> an *Interim Report on German Looting of Works of Art in France*, another report on the unit's progress in France, and two reports on looted art and the unit's progress in Switzerland.<sup>29</sup> The ALIU also produced an unissued CIR on German methods of acquisition, an unissued DIR on Maria Almas-Dietrich (Appendix 2), and an unissued report on Mühlmann's secretary, Rose Bauer.<sup>30</sup>

## OSS

Office of Strategic Services personnel in normal circumstances underwent an extensive selection and training process at different training camps across the US in preparation for their missions. Since the ALIU fell under the direction of OSS Counterintelligence (X-2), agents in the field were required to undergo training at an OSS training camp (either domestically or abroad), where they would learn the techniques of interrogation and espionage. According to a job description provided to Wittmann upon his recruitment to the unit, "special Orion indoctrination and training" was supposed to take place.<sup>31</sup> Training included tactical lessons like weapon handling and pickpocketing, but also hidden photography skills, and interrogation techniques for eliciting information.<sup>32</sup> Wittmann participated in OSS training in Virginia, and Faison completed

---

<sup>27</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 3, folder 19.

<sup>28</sup> Further information on Miedl is found in Rothfeld's PhD dissertation. More reporting on Miedl is found within RG 239 of the Roberts Commission sources and also, within Safehaven reports. "Unscrupulous Opportunists," 138.

<sup>29</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: Final Report."

<sup>30</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: Final Report," 7-8.

<sup>31</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 5, folder 9.

<sup>32</sup> John Whiteclay Chambers II, "Instructing for Dangerous Missions," in *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II* (Washington: U.S. National Park Service, 2008), 207, [https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/oss/chap6.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/oss/chap6.pdf). (accessed 19 November 2023).

his in Maryland and Washington.<sup>33</sup> Because of the limited access to Plaut and Rousseau's personal information, it is unclear whether they underwent formal OSS training in preparation for their mission abroad.<sup>34</sup> Contention between the OSS and US military leaders led to inconsistencies in intelligence training. Cases of "direct commissions" meant that men or women of social or political prominence could be recruited to the OSS without training or experience.<sup>35</sup> Interestingly, most of the 13,000 OSS personnel did not go through training. Administrative personnel were not considered to be in need of specialized training, and scholars were deemed to already possess the necessary skills for their work.<sup>36</sup> This lack of training, mostly derived from assumptions that personality and class were most important, eventually changed with the emergence of the Schools and Training Branch in 1943. This branch "spent the rest of the war seeking to coordinate and to the best of its ability to standardize at least some of the training policies" across the Service, both in the US and abroad.<sup>37</sup> Research and Analysis stood out as a branch faced with lack of direction and disorganization.<sup>38</sup> Numerous attempts at the centralization of training failed.<sup>39</sup>

One purpose of OSS training was to streamline the candidates and to ensure that they didn't jeopardize or undermine their missions.<sup>40</sup> The training program a recruit underwent depended on the training camp they attended. An individual's training was also based on the OSS branch in which they would serve. For example, someone in a position behind enemy lines

---

<sup>33</sup> Faison, interview by Richard Cándida Smith.

<sup>34</sup> In a postwar interview, Plaut provided some insight into his role as interrogator for U-Boat prisoners. He does not elaborate on any form of intelligence training. Plaut, interview by Richard F. Brown, 17.

<sup>35</sup> Chambers II, *OSS Training in the National Parks*, 33.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 560.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 563.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, 69.

<sup>40</sup> OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men: Selection of Personnel for the Office of Strategic Services* (New York: Reinhart, 1948), <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015004762442&seq=43>, 8-9, (accessed 19 November 2023).

would not receive the same training as someone recruited for Research and Analysis.<sup>41</sup> Initially, training programs focused on the operational branches, which sometimes included X-2, but primarily Secret Intelligence and the Maritime Unit. By 1944, the OSS became increasingly militarized which improve the effectiveness of the training, and courses became more standardized and structured.<sup>42</sup> Eventually, the OSS required psychological assessment for recruits, because of cases of “mental breakdowns” in the field.<sup>43</sup> The assessments were to ensure that the candidate could deal with stress in the field and maintain self-control throughout their mission. The ALIU interrogators surely needed to exercise these psychological measures in their missions. In the case of the ALIU, Faison explained that the interrogator’s goal was to “give an opinion as to whether the [subjects] were perfectly decent people and were okay, in [their] opinion, or very much not,” with recommendations for further penalties such as preventing the subject’s entry into the US.<sup>44</sup> Wittmann explained that upon completion of his training, he was permitted to travel wherever he saw fit within Europe to carry out investigations.<sup>45</sup> Travel destinations were identified based on intelligence collected from the OSS R&A, Operation Safehaven, the Allied armies, and the MFAA.

## **MFAA**

Although the ALIU was not part of the MFAA, the two groups worked collaboratively, including on the collecting and disseminating of intelligence. The MFAA was a larger and more diverse organization than the ALIU but was likewise composed of similarly elite cultural professionals from various Allied countries. During their time in Germany, Faison, Rousseau, and Plaut

---

<sup>41</sup> Those recruited as espionage agents in 1942 would have attended Camp X, which was established in Toronto. Chambers II, *OSS Training in the National Parks*, 50.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 71.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 74.

<sup>44</sup> Faison, interview by Robert F. Brown, 8.

<sup>45</sup> Wittmann, interview by Richard Cándida Smith.

engaged professional and socially with MFAA personnel. Monuments officer Edith Standen noted that she spent Christmas with the ALIU men at their headquarters, where they lived “wonderfully well.”<sup>46</sup> The MFAA also had its own Army Intelligence Unit, led by art history professor Walter Horn.<sup>47</sup> Others from this intelligence unit, like American Bernard Taper and Britain’s Wing Commander Douglas Cooper worked closely with the ALIU in Europe. Taper and Wittmann collaborated on the 1946 DIR on Wendland,<sup>48</sup> created for both the ALIU and the Office of Military Government for Germany (US).<sup>49</sup> Cooper, who worked alongside Phillips and Sawyer in the London office, also focused on Wendland and Nazi activity in Switzerland.

## **Occupation**

The unit’s activities only began in the final six months of the war, and therefore most of the interrogators’ work took place during the Allied occupation of Germany. America’s cultural presence in Western Europe during the postwar period unfolded within the contexts of military defeat and occupation, “contexts in which the channels of cultural transfer were impeded by initial distrust on both sides.”<sup>50</sup> The US’s major ambition through occupation was to establish a democratic system and to democratize the German population, including through cultural life.<sup>51</sup> American occupation cultural policy in Germany asserted that German culture itself gave rise to Nazism through elitist, populist, and political means. Revitalizing democratic cultural practices

---

<sup>46</sup> Edith A. Standen, interview by Sharon Zane. *Metropolitan Museum of Art Oral History Project*, 6-13 January 1994, 38.

<sup>47</sup> “Walter Horn Papers, 1908-1992, bulk 1943-1950,” Archives of American Art, <https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/walter-horn-papers-9658/biographical-note>. (accessed 19 November 2023).

<sup>48</sup> Taper himself compiled a January 1947 report on Nazi collaborator Carl W. Buecking regarding his eligibility to enter the US, based on his involvement with Linz. GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, Wittmann, box 4, folder 8.

<sup>49</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, Wittmann, box 3, folder 19.

<sup>50</sup> Rebecca Boehling, “The Role of Culture in American Relations with Europe: The Case of the United States Occupation of Germany,” *Diplomatic History* 23:1, (1999), 58.

<sup>51</sup> Richard L. Merritt, “American Influences in the Occupation of Germany,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 428:1 (1976): 91.



in Germany was a priority for the Office of Military Government — US Zone (OMGUS). Re-education in cultural matters required close coordination between the Information Control Division (ICD) and cultural institutions (churches, museums, etc.).<sup>52</sup> Initiatives begun in the American zone in 1945 included information centres, libraries, and other programs like “Amerika-Häuser.”<sup>53</sup>

Outside of official occupation measures, day to day communications between Americans and Germans also influenced “cultural transmission.” Values were transmitted from Americans to Germans regardless of official policy, simply based on shared cultural interests and personal contacts. Much research has been conducted on the immediate postwar fraternization between American GIs and Germans, especially German women, but GIs were not the only people involved in American-German occupation relationships. The American interest in re-establishing cultural institutions in Germany through occupation involved groups like the MFAA and the ALIU. The unit worked alongside German staff after the war who handled some of the Nazis’ documentation at the CPPs. Wittmann, during his time researching at the Munich CPP developed friendly relationships with the German staff, some of which lasted throughout his career.<sup>54</sup> Faison also noted that the German staff worked hard, and that they had been “vetted as to their political sympathies.”<sup>55</sup> The ALIU men in Europe should be placed in this occupation context. They were “agents of cultural transmission” who were “academics with expertise and experience

---

<sup>52</sup> Reeducation was the term used to describe American cultural occupation policy developed to instill democratic ideals within the German popular. This policy was to essentially reverse the authoritarian teachings imposed on Germans before and during the war. Boehling, “The Role of Culture in American Relations with Europe,” 58-59.

<sup>53</sup> America-Houses were developed in the US zone by private groups and were eventually overseen by ICD. They acted as “windows to the West” for Germans, and purposefully curated American-German cultural relations. Ibid, 66.

<sup>54</sup> Wittmann, interview by Richard Cándida Smith.

<sup>55</sup> Faison, interview by Richard F. Brown, 12.

in Germany, who had considerable appreciation for German culture” but also awareness of how culture had been abused by the subjects of their investigations.<sup>56</sup>

### **Interrogations**

Theodore Rousseau was the first ALIU agent in the field. From December 1944 until May 1945, Rousseau travelled throughout Spain and Portugal — Safehaven intelligence had flagged illegal activity in the region — investigating the location and status of looted property.<sup>57</sup> In Madrid, Rousseau interrogated Göring’s “banker, speculator and financial agent” and Linz project planner Alois Miedl.<sup>58</sup> Although Rousseau spent considerable time interrogating Miedl, a DIR was not produced, despite Miedl’s extensive connections within the illegal art trade.<sup>59</sup> Miedl was only detained until February 1945.<sup>60</sup> Spanish authorities allowed Rousseau to see and photograph twenty-two smuggled paintings in Bilbao, however.<sup>61</sup>

James Plaut travelled to Italy on 10 March 1945 to investigate art looting activity in the Mediterranean theatre, and to oversee the interrogation of German spy Wilhelm Mohnen, though this interrogation produced little information.<sup>62</sup> Shortly thereafter, the MFAA took over investigations in Italy in collaboration with British investigators looking into the German Kunstschutz.

On 20 May 1945, Plaut, Rousseau, Faison and Jan Vlug ventured to the US Third Army area in Germany to begin detailed interrogations of those on the priority list. Third Army

---

<sup>56</sup> Boehling, “The Role of Culture in American Relations With Europe,” 63.

<sup>57</sup> Petropoulos, *Göring’s Man in Paris*, 198.

<sup>58</sup> This interrogation led to further art looting investigations in the Netherlands. Hussey, et al., “OSS Art Looting Investigation Unit Reports”; Jonathan Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*, 142.

<sup>59</sup> Reporting on Miedl is located within “Unit files.” Identifying the location and access to these files requires further research. Fold3, “ALIU, *Final Report*,” 3.

<sup>60</sup> It is possible that DIRs were not planned for early interrogations.

<sup>61</sup> Rothfeld wrote extensively on Miedl’s culpability in looting for Göring in her PhD dissertation. Rothfeld, “Unscrupulous Opportunists,” 138.

<sup>62</sup> Fold3, “ALIU, *Final Report*,” 3.

facilitated interrogations at House 71 in Alt Aussee, Austria on behalf of the War Crimes division of the Twelfth Army Group, and in conjunction with US Chief of Council, MFAA, and the US Twelfth and Seventh Armies.<sup>63</sup> Alt Aussee is located near the salt mine where the Nazis hid much of the art plundered from Western Europe.<sup>64</sup> Faison called this Austrian region the “last redoubt” for Nazis fleeing east.<sup>65</sup> The detainees and the unit members stayed in a “beautiful summer house” near the salt mine.<sup>66</sup> The detainees each had their own room and were not allowed to speak to one another, but could venture outside in the “little military garden.”<sup>67</sup> Plaut described the interrogations as intense, and that the Americans closely monitored the captured.<sup>68</sup> Besides the Americans, Vlug, and the accused, British, French and Dutch agencies were invited to conduct their own interrogations at Alt Aussee.<sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup> Fold3, “ALIU, *Final Report*,” 6; Petropoulos, *Göring’s Man in Paris*, 150.

<sup>64</sup> Thomas Howe wrote to Theodore Heinrich, “I’ll go back to Lane [Faison] again: he is absolutely first class. During the postwar period he was Navy OSS and was with Ted Rousseau and Jim Plaut in the Investigation Unit at Alt Aussee (that luxe little set-up ... which had more than just the comforts of home!).” University of Regina, Archer Library, Archives and Special Collections, Theodore Allen Heinrich Collection, box 46, “Thomas Howe” (21 October 1950); Hussey, et al., “OSS Art Looting Investigation Unit Reports.”

<sup>65</sup> Faison, interview by Richard F. Brown, 18.

<sup>66</sup> In his postwar *Atlantic* article, “Loot for the Master Race,” Plaut described the same summer house as “modest.” Plaut, “Loot for the Master Race,” 62; Faison, interview by Robert F. Brown, 7.

<sup>67</sup> Faison, interview by Robert F. Brown, 7.

<sup>68</sup> Plaut, “Loot for the Master Race,” 62.

<sup>69</sup> Hussey, et al., “OSS Art Looting Investigation Unit Reports.”

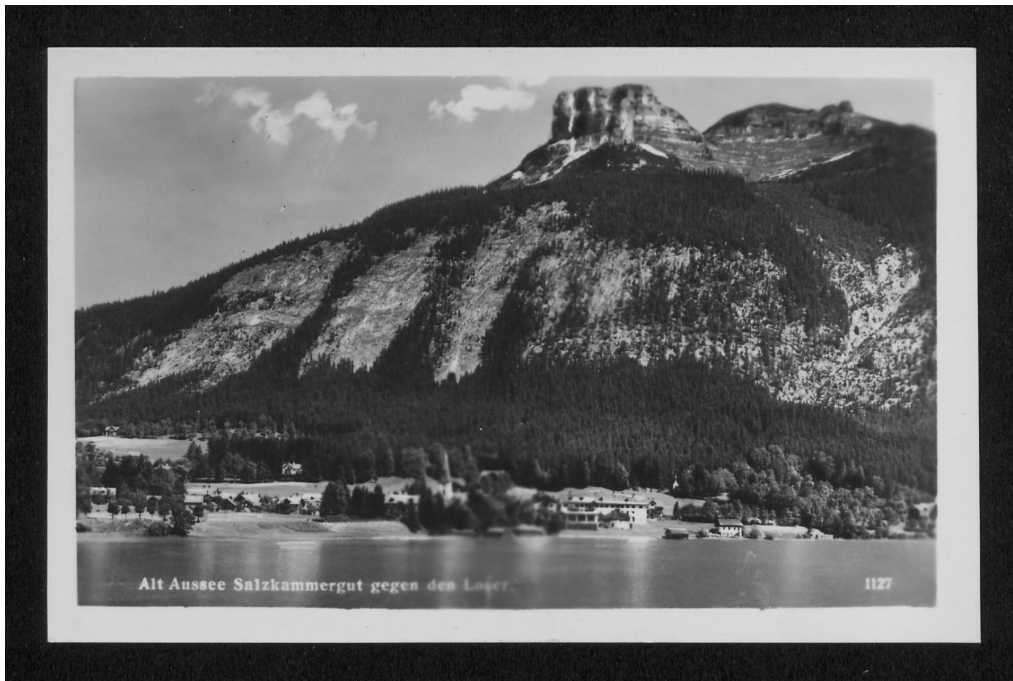


Figure 3. Lake Alt Aussee. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, Gallery Archives. RG28MFAA-B, S. Lane Faison, Jr. Papers, Photographs.

The ALIU also investigated illegal activities in Switzerland, the unit's second largest territory of interest. Safehaven's intelligence sparked serious concern over the movement and concealment of assets in Switzerland, encouraging the ALIU to explore this matter.<sup>70</sup> Plaut and Rousseau conducted Swiss interrogations from 20 November 1945 to 10 January 1946, with the support of the Economic Counsellor to the American Legation at Bern.<sup>71</sup> Together with American diplomats, Plaut and Rousseau acquired information about German looting activities in Switzerland from the Swiss Federal Government. Information collected was handed to federal customs and the Office of Compensation.<sup>72</sup> Instead of compiling a single report on the Swiss

---

<sup>70</sup> Fold3, "ALIU, *Final Report*," 5.

<sup>71</sup> See Elizabeth Simpson, "The Spoils of War: World War II and Its Aftermath: The Loss, Reappearance, and Recovery of Cultural Property" (New York: H.N. Abrams in association with the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, 1997); ALIU, *Final Report*, 5.

<sup>72</sup> Fold3, "ALIU, *Final Report*," 5.

operation, the ALIU Final Report indicates that those details could be found in Safehaven Reports No. 148 and 229.<sup>73</sup>

The unit's interest in Swiss operations persisted until the end of the program. During the ALIU's final mission to Europe from June until September 1946, Otto Wittmann and MFAA investigator Bernard Taper travelled to Berlin to interrogate Hans Wendland, a major suspect in connection with Swiss art networks and an associate of Theodore Fischer,<sup>74</sup> a notorious Swiss auctioneer and art dealer involved in Nazi art transactions, who had also worked directly with Karl Haberstock.<sup>75</sup> The Wendland interrogation and the report Wittmann and Taper produced is excluded from the official list of DIRs because it came after they completed the Final Report. Wittmann's "Final Mission to Europe" report highlights that "Switzerland still remains the most important unsolved problem in the 'Safehaven' aspects of enemy looting of art."<sup>76</sup> Wittmann expressed hope that the Wendland report would "assist in the clearing up of some of the remaining problems regarding this subject and that it may lead to the recovery of certain other objects of art."<sup>77</sup>

If the ALIU had more resources and time, Wittmann's call for further investigation of the Swiss operation may have yielded significant results. The unit's limited resources also prevented it from compiling an official DIR on Kajetan Mühlmann, leader of the German looting operations in Poland and the Netherlands.<sup>78</sup> Following interrogations in Austria in August 1945, Vlug wrote a joint US/Dutch document on Mühlmann.<sup>79</sup> According to the Unit's *Final Report*, a

---

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 6, folder 4.

<sup>75</sup> See Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*, 25; Petropoulos, *Göring's Man in Paris*, 203.

<sup>76</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 3, folder 20, 11.

<sup>77</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 3, folder 20.

<sup>78</sup> Fold3, "ALIU, *Final Report*," 8.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. See Petropoulos' *The Faustian Bargain* for a full account of Mühlmann's wartime activities.

published version of Vlug's work was anticipated, but it never materialized.<sup>80</sup> According to Petropoulos, however, Vlug's report was flawed and contained inaccuracies.<sup>81</sup> Mühlmann was later banned from entry to the US for his art looting activities, likely based on the ALIU's recommendation.<sup>82</sup> Other interrogations that remained unpublished were those of the art dealer Maria Almas-Dietrich, and Mühlmann's secretary, Rose Bauer.<sup>83</sup>

Plaut and Rousseau, specifically, used ambush strategies to “obtain — and then test out — the credibility of the information disclosed during their extensive questioning.”<sup>84</sup> Rousseau would push for honesty on questions he already had answers to and follow up if discrepancies were revealed. In turn, the results would “establish their comparative credibility in relation to other areas of criminal investigative interests, where they could later provide genuinely new and desired information.”<sup>85</sup> Rousseau and Plaut would also compare one detainee's word against another, at times by interrogating them in the same room.

## Reports

The Reports were compiled with the evidence collected through documentary research and interrogation. Each published report is formatted in the same way — the cover page gives the subject's name, the interrogator's name, a date of publication, and a list of organizations and people to whom the unit circulated the report.<sup>86</sup> Each DIR provides personal background information on the subject, their role within Nazi Germany and, if applicable, their relationship

---

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Jonathan Petropoulos, “The Importance of the Second Rank: The Case of the Art Plunderer Kajetan Mühlmann,” in *Austro-Corporatism: Past-Present-Future*, eds., Günter Bischof and Anton Pelinka, (New York: Routledge, 1995), 197.

<sup>82</sup> Other DIR subjects like Bruno Lohse, Karl Haberstock and Walter Andreas Hofer were also banned from entry. Petropoulos, *Göring's Man in Paris*, 176-7.

<sup>83</sup> Fold3, “ALIU, *Final Report*,” 8.

<sup>84</sup> Salter, “A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence's Investigation of Nazi Art Looting,” 266.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Fold3, “ALIU: DIR number 1: Heinrich Hoffmann,” 1.

with Nazi regime. The other consistent feature of the reports is the “recommendation for action” section at the end, where the author proposes penalties for the accused. Mühlmann’s case is an example of a practical outcome from the unit’s recommendations and reports. So is Lohse’s incarceration after the war. Apart from gathering general personal information, the field officers had no fixed script or set of questions, and instead asked whatever questions they deemed appropriate based on their subjects’ connection to art looting schemes. ALIU officers conducted interrogations in English, through a translator, regardless of the subject’s fluency in English or the interrogators’ fluency in German, per a “fixed American policy.”<sup>87</sup> The DIRs are all different lengths: the shortest is Kress’ at three pages, and the longest is the 35-page report on Bornheim. Reports on Buchner, Hofer, Bornheim and Voss included indexes.<sup>88</sup> The three CIRs are significantly longer than the DIRs, each over one-hundred pages with indexes. In a postwar interview, Faison explained that collectively the reports were supposed to provide a history of Nazi art looting policies and individual involvement in these initiatives.

## **Contributions**

Since the 1990s, provenance researchers and historians have been interested the ALIU’s interrogation reports. In a 2008 article on Faison’s wartime work, Nancy H. Yeide and Patricia A. Teter-Schneider claimed that the primary sources Faison, Plaut, and Rousseau created (leaving out Wittmann’s and Vlug’s reports) are vital for art provenance researchers: “the Monuments Men continue to merit the gratitude of those families and countries whose property

---

<sup>87</sup> Faison, interview by Robert F. Brown, 7.

<sup>88</sup> The index attachments include the subject’s correspondence regarding transactions and also various lists of personal acquisitions and acquisitions for Linz, the ERR, and Göring’s personal collection. Fold3, “ALIU: DIR number 2: Ernst Buchner”; Fold3, “ALIU: DIR number 9: Walter Andreas Hofer”; Fold3, “ALIU: DIR number 11: Walter Bornheim,” (September 15, 1945). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231996673/11> (accessed 15 November 2023); Fold3, “ALIU: DIR number 12: Hermann Voss,” (September 15, 1945). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231997047/12> (accessed 15 November 2023).

they preserved.”<sup>89</sup> Yeide and Teter-Schneider claimed that “the men’s assignment turned out to be of central importance to Allied restitution efforts.”<sup>90</sup> It has also been argued that the investigations “exposed massive collaboration... and instances of greed, knowing deception and interpersonal betrayal...”<sup>91</sup> Michael Fitzgerald, former chairman of the Fine Arts Department of Trinity College in Hartford, went so far as to say that the reports were “marvels of exhaustive research, in-depth analysis and sophisticated judgement. They simply have not been surpassed.”<sup>92</sup> The unit’s reports and investigations continue to promote further restitution attempts, as well as providing insightful information about collaborators and culprits like Alois Miedl and Bruno Lohse, for example.

Apart from barring Nazi criminals from entering the US, the ALIU’s interrogations and investigations revealed incriminating information about those in the unit’s custody, but also hundreds of other people involved in illegal schemes. The unit was primarily interested in evidence that incriminated subjects in larger Nazi looting activities, including the ERR, any relationship to Göring’s actions, and participation in the Linz project. The subjects’ responses also pointed to people outside of US custody. Karl Kress, for example, submitted details on the activities of Gerhard Utikal, Bruno Lohse, Hermann von Ingram, and Walter Andreas Hofer. Evidence from major culprits like Maria Almas-Dietrich was critical in tracing the networks of art looting, traffic, and dealing for the Linz Museum in particular. The evidence also revealed how Almas-Dietrich and her co-conspirators manipulated and abused the art market to satisfy Hitler, Göring, and other high-level Nazis.<sup>93</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup> Nancy H. Yeide, and Patricia A. Teter-Schneider, “S. Lane Faison, Jr. and ‘Art Under the Shadow of the Swastika,’” *Archives of American Art Journal* 47:3/4 (2008), 33.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, 28.

<sup>91</sup> Salter, “A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence’s Investigation of Nazi Art Looting,” 267.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid*, 270.

<sup>93</sup> Rothfeld, “Unscrupulous Opportunists,” 97.



An important result of this evidence was a deeper understanding of the relationship between German art looting operations and the Holocaust, particularly in France and the Netherlands.<sup>94</sup> CIRs number one, two, and four revealed the systematic ways in which Göring, the ERR, and Linz collection amassed vast quantities of art from Jewish people through criminal, coercive means. This connection to the Holocaust was especially prevalent through the ERR, which became a “central agency in antisemitic art looting by members of repressive agencies.”<sup>95</sup> CIR number four detailed how ERR functionaries raided over 70,000 residences and transported nearly 30,000 railway cars of loot to occupied territory.<sup>96</sup> Faison, in CIR number one, further demonstrated the genocidal elements of the plundering organization through evidence that looting from Poles and other groups was planned following the invasions of other countries.<sup>97</sup> The ALIU’s interrogations and investigations were consequential for Nuremberg prosecutors, including Justice Robert H. Jackson, for war crime prosecution based on evidence presented in the DIRs and CIRs.<sup>98</sup> CIRs number one, two, and four were used as evidence against Hermann Göring and Alfred Rosenberg, especially regarding the former’s hoard of thousands of cultural objects.<sup>99</sup> The unit’s DIRs were, to some extent, effective in charging and prosecuting their subjects. Lohse, for example, was incarcerated for five years for his involvement with Nazi looting activities.<sup>100</sup> Others, like Haberstock, Buchner, Voss, and Hofer did not see prosecution.

## **Limitations**

---

<sup>94</sup> Salter, “A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence’s Investigation of Nazi Art Looting,” 267.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 272.

<sup>96</sup> Fold3, “ALIU: CIR number 1: The Activity of the Einsatzstab Rosenberg in France,” 15.

<sup>97</sup> Salter, “A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence’s Investigation of Nazi Art Looting,” 275.

<sup>98</sup> See Salter, “A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence’s Investigation of Nazi Art Looting”; Yeide and Teter-Schneider, “S. Lane Faison, Jr. and ‘Art Under the Shadow of the Swastika’”.

<sup>99</sup> Salter, “A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence’s Investigation of Nazi Art Looting,” 271

<sup>100</sup> Petropoulos, *Göring’s Man in Paris*, 3.

Ultimately, however, the ALIU failed to fulfill its goals.<sup>101</sup> In his *Final Report*, Wittmann highlighted many outstanding problems that the unit was unable to address. Some examples included its inability to compile CIR number three on German methods of acquisition; insufficient exploration of the ERR's actions in Belgium, Holland, and Eastern Europe, and the failure to include more information on the Göring collection because there were no interrogations with Josef Angerer, Eric Gritzbach, Wendland, and others.<sup>102</sup> Many of the unit's subjects also returned to dealing after the war because of a lack of oversight from occupying governments.<sup>103</sup> The unit faced two kinds of limitations, which often coincided with one another. One kind of limitation was practical, directly related to the logistical problems associated with the OSS, the MFAA, and the US occupation.<sup>104</sup> The other kind of limitation was inherently linked to the unit personnel's decision-making and actions, context and worldview. The assumption of America's role as the saviour of Western culture existed within the context of the OSS, the MFAA, and American occupation policy. In turn, Plaut, Faison, Rousseau, and Wittmann acted on their inherent understanding that they were agents of Civilization, and therefore conducted themselves as such.

Following the end of hostilities in Europe, the OSS and the MFAA faced disorganization which led to inefficiencies. By 1946, the OSS ceased to exist and the MFAA also faced serious personnel cuts.<sup>105</sup> By 1 October 1945, the US Army, Navy, State Department, and the Federal

---

<sup>101</sup> Salter, "A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence's Investigation of Nazi Art Looting," 277.

<sup>102</sup> These are only three major examples Wittmann listed. However, the *Final Report* has several more pages with problems the unit was unable to address. Wittmann's *Final Mission to Europe* also details art looting related problems outstanding in France, England, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, and Denmark. Fold3, "ALIU *Final Report*," 9-11.

<sup>103</sup> Rothfeld, "Project Orion," 104.

<sup>104</sup> See Michael Salter's analysis of the "frustrations" faced by the unit for an understanding of challenges related to legal institutions, and the lack of cooperation from neutral countries. Salter, "A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence's Investigation of Nazi Art Looting," 276-279.

<sup>105</sup> Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*, 428.

Bureau of Investigation forced Director Donovan to disband the OSS.<sup>106</sup> Counterintelligence fell under the oversight of the Strategic Services Unit (SSU) of the War Department, while R&A moved to the State Department.<sup>107</sup> The Roberts Commission, another organization with strong connections to the ALIU, also terminated operations by June 1946.<sup>108</sup> This multitude of offices and jurisdictions had the consequence of institutional disorganization for the ALIU.

Throughout its existence, the ALIU lacked human resources. In the *Final Report*, Wittmann attributed the unit's shortcomings to "serious limitations in time and personnel."<sup>109</sup> A primary consequence of scarce resources was the inability to produce more interrogation reports, for example on German art historian and Nazi art-looter Hildebrandt Gurlitt.<sup>110</sup> The unit also failed to retain the few personnel they did have. Coyne, who in Spring 1945 had assisted Lambie in Washington and was assisting with interrogations in Austria, was called home to the US due to the death of his baby and his wife's illness.<sup>111</sup> Sawyer joined the unit in November 1944 but had moved to the MFAA by March 1945.<sup>112</sup> Replacing lost personnel was a challenge. On 19 April 1946, the director of the SSU, Colonel William W. Quinn, issued a memo questioning why an ALIU representative would not be on the European continent for the foreseeable future. Quinn noted that the ALIU had "rendered considerable assistance to the personnel not only in the Economic Security Controls Division but also to the various European missions" in London,

---

<sup>106</sup> The National WWII Museum, "Secret Agents, Secret Armies: The Short Happy Life of the OSS," 14 May 2020. <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/wwii-secret-agents-the-oss>. (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>107</sup> R&A became an important branch during the postwar period, especially for its development of denazification programs. William Mikkell Dack, "Questioning the Past: The Fragebogen and Everyday Denazification in Occupied Germany" (Doctoral Thesis, University of Calgary, 2016), 29.

<sup>108</sup> Roberts Commission records were sent to the Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs of the State Department. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*, 428.

<sup>109</sup> Rothfeld explained that by spring 1945, Plaut had expressed concern that the unit was only conducting investigations in one country at a time, with Rousseau in Spain and himself in Italy. He also believed that the Unit's successes could have been greater if the interrogations had begun a year before they did. Rothfeld, "Project Orion," 77; Fold3, "ALIU, *Final Report*," 9.

<sup>110</sup> Salter, "A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence's Investigation of Nazi Art Looting," 277.

<sup>111</sup> Bradsher, "Terence A. Coyne: An Office of Strategic Services' Art Looting Investigation Unit Monuments Man."

<sup>112</sup> Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, BHL, University of Michigan, box 4, "Miscellaneous, 1943-1947."

Bern, and Paris.<sup>113</sup> Quinn called for the return of an ALIU member to Europe, stating that this would “enable the project to be concluded in an orderly manner satisfactory to the governments concerned.”<sup>114</sup> In response, Wittmann was directed to return to Europe to finish the report on his final mission, and to continue with his investigation of Wendland.<sup>115</sup> To what extent the unit personnel had control over the completion of their missions is unclear from the available resources. What is apparent, however, is that by the time Wittmann travelled to Europe in June 1946, the rest of the members had returned to the US.

In his report on his final mission to Europe, Wittmann stressed that Switzerland remained a central concern for both American and British organizations. Despite his extensive efforts, Swiss neutrality prevented Wittmann from achieving his goal of locating further concealed art in the country. The ALIU was not the only group that conducted investigations into assets concealed in Switzerland. In November 1944, Douglas Cooper, a British art historian and collector, was assigned the role of Special Intelligence officer for the MFAA British Element.<sup>116</sup> Cooper worked in the same London office as Phillips and Sawyer, and he had begun investigations in Switzerland by September 1945, having initially been there in February 1945.<sup>117</sup> Cooper’s December 1945 report on his mission to Switzerland stated, however, that “the OSS interrogation reports can only be accepted with reserve as not only have the subjects (perhaps [deliberately]) told a number of untruths, but also the fantasy of the interrogators is often apt to

---

<sup>113</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 6, folder 16.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> From June to September 1946, Wittmann was tasked with an overwhelming amount of work, having to assess the problems associated with enemy art looting in France, England, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, and Denmark. Among that he was also instructed to continue collaboration with OMGUS and the State Department, with foreign government organizations, and to conclude any necessary investigations. GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 3, folder 20.

<sup>116</sup> “Douglas Cooper (1911-1984),” *Monuments Men and Women Foundation*, <https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/cooper-sqn-ldr-douglas>. (accessed 26 March, 2023)

<sup>117</sup> The National Archives’ Catalogue, FO 371: Foreign Office: General Correspondence from Political and Other Departments, FO 371/53104, Restitution of Looted Works of Art, code 77, file 12, FO-371-53104-6.

obscure the facts. This is especially noticeable in the Rochlitz report and in the section dealing with Switzerland in the Göring report.”<sup>118</sup> Cooper further criticized the Americans’ hesitation to properly distinguish the ownership of looted art across the continent.

Despite similar upbringings, sources suggest that Cooper and the ALIU personnel did not get along.<sup>119</sup> Sawyer accused Cooper of being “standoffish.”<sup>120</sup> Plaut also noted Cooper’s reluctance to cooperate. In an 8 November 1945 cable from Plaut to Wittmann, Plaut complained that Cooper had “been sending out rather frantic calls for one of [them] to [go] down at the earliest possible moment” to Switzerland. Plaut continued that “this [had] become clearly a case of pulling his chestnuts from the fire, as his attitude in Alt Ausse[e] was hardly ‘Come alone, and we will share the spoils.’”<sup>121</sup> Surprisingly, Plaut then explained that he would refrain from sending any team members to Switzerland until Cooper had left the country. Plaut believed that Cooper was stalling on his mission, and in return they would do the same.<sup>122</sup> Whether the Cooper-ALIU conflict stemmed from personal, professional, or diplomatic tensions, it reflects a challenge that the ALIU faced: the need to cooperate with other Allied nations. Considering that Wittmann raised significant concern over Switzerland in his final trip to Europe, Cooper was probably correct in his assertions that urgent attention should be directed toward the neutral state.

In Germany and Austria, the unit faced limitations related to occupation policies.

Effective communication was a necessity for the unit members to properly interview subjects,

---

<sup>118</sup> The National Archives’ Catalogue, FO 371: Foreign Office: General Correspondence from Political and Other Departments, FO 371/53104, Restitution of Looted Works of Art, code 77, file 12, FO-371-53104-6, 2.

<sup>119</sup> He studied at elite institutions like the Sorbonne and Cambridge, he worked in the museum field before the war and came from a wealthy family. “Douglas Cooper (1911-1984),” *Monuments Men and Women Foundation*.

<sup>120</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 7, folder 10.

<sup>121</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 6, folder 4-5.

<sup>122</sup> Cooper’s grievances to some extent reflected the greater Anglo-American tensions with X-2 in London but it is obvious that certain countries, like Switzerland and Sweden were not interested in helping the Americans, as reports and postwar revelations demonstrate. Wittmann claimed a barrier existed between the Americans and Sweden specifically, because the latter felt they would be doing business with Germans in the near future. Wittmann, interview by Richard Cándida Smith, 109.

but also interpret documents to build their cases. Proper communication was also necessary to ensure trust between interrogator and subject, but also for accuracy. An article on the British language policies for occupation gives insight into how language policies had functional needs but were simultaneously “products of politics and ideology” and “were embodied in those who set up the postwar occupation machinery.”<sup>123</sup> Opportunity for “linguistic space” was concerning for occupation governments because of the potential for “compassion and generosity toward their defeated enemy.”<sup>124</sup> Further, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) believed that German resistance would happen through troop-civilian communications.<sup>125</sup> The British occupation government decided on a policy where official business was conducted in English, which therefore left “the onus of translation and interpretation on the shoulders of those whom they governed.”<sup>126</sup> This policy further established the power structure between the occupiers and the occupied, and reflected colonial inclinations.

Although I was unable to locate secondary material on any OMGUS English language policy, it is likely that the Americans adopted a similar position. Faison certainly alludes to this, noting that ALIU officers conducted interrogations in English regardless of the subject’s fluency, per a “fixed American policy.”<sup>127</sup> Plaut was already conversant in German before the war, and improved his skills during his time interrogating captured German U-boat crews.<sup>128</sup> Coyne attended German classes as part of his ALIU training, although Faison stated that he himself

---

<sup>123</sup> Hilary Footitt, “The British in the Second World War: Translation, Language Policies, and Language Practices,” in *The Palgrave Handbook of Languages and Conflict*, eds., Kelley, Michael, Hilary Footitt, and Myrian Salama-Carr (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019) 281, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-04825-9> (accessed 10 November 2023).

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 381.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 284.

<sup>127</sup> Faison, interview by Robert F. Brown, 7.

<sup>128</sup> Plaut, interview by Robert F. Brown, 17.

barely spoke the language.<sup>129</sup> Sawyer also had a limited ability to read German.<sup>130</sup> Faison explained that their interrogations needed to be conducted in English, through an interpreter,<sup>131</sup> to minimize the opportunity for error or misinterpretation.<sup>132</sup>

But Faison also pursued another avenue for translation: employing Göring's personal secretary, Gisela Limberger, to translate ALIU interrogations. In Alt Aussee, Limberger helped translate the ALIU's interrogations of other suspects (certainly a conflict of interest), after which Faison escorted Limberger to Bavaria to be interned. An interrogation subject herself, Limberger was the focus of DIR number seven. Before 1942, Göring had assigned Limberger to administrative tasks like arranging exhibitions, and listing and recording entries of his acquisitions.<sup>133</sup> In 1942, Ursula Grundtmann, the secretary who dealt with Göring's confidential matters, died leaving Limberger to replace her until Hofer took over that role in 1944.<sup>134</sup> For two years, Limberger oversaw the care and condition of art, received, examined and answered correspondence relating to art, and collected and listed artworks acquired throughout the war.<sup>135</sup> Limberger was probably more knowledgeable about Göring's collection than the Reichsmarschall himself, and was thus an important source for the ALIU. Much of her testimony is integrated into CIR number two on the Göring Collection.<sup>136</sup>

---

<sup>129</sup> Faison, interview by Robert F. Brown, 8; Bradsher, "Terence A. Coyne: An Office of Strategic Services' Art Looting Investigation Unit Monuments Man."

<sup>130</sup> Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, BHL, University of Michigan, box 4, "Miscellaneous, 1943-1947."

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Rothfeld explains that Rousseau's investigation into Alois Miedl was more focused on recovering looted works than on gaining information on his subject. As a result, he missed that Miedl was supporting his family by providing artwork to Göring. Whether this is an example of a language barrier is unclear, however it does demonstrate that Rousseau was misguided and there were consequences for his actions. Miedl thus became a person of secondary interest for the unit. Rothfeld, "Unscrupulous Opportunists," 174.

<sup>133</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 7: Gisela Limberger," 1.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid 1-2.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>136</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: CIR number 2: The Goering Collection."

Although DIR number seven is among the shortest, at five pages, it reveals confusing perceptions toward complicity in Nazi art looting, from the point of the interrogator. Rousseau explained that Limberger was not a Nazi party member (because party membership was not required in order to work for Göring). Apparently, Limberger was also not paid directly by Göring and was only his personal secretary in title. The report repeatedly stressed that Limberger “was in no sense an art historian. She had never studied history of art, nor taken any interest in the subject before she was assigned to do the job.”<sup>137</sup> Because she was not a party member, not a formal employee of Göring (despite working as his secretary), and not an art expert, Rousseau stated that her “activities with regard to the collection were limited purely to administrative matters” and that she was “essentially a functionary of the German State and that the work that she did for [Göring] was carried out strictly within these limits.”<sup>138</sup> Therefore, Rousseau concluded that she was not complicit in art looting. Rousseau explained that “Fraulein [Limberger] has never given the impression of being a Nazi,” yet she was loyal to Göring, though recognized his faults. The report continued that Limberger’s recognition of her employer’s faults is “the logical result of the evidence against him, not because it now appears the political thing to do.”<sup>139</sup>

Rousseau’s concluding remarks on Limberger are sympathetic and excuse her wartime role (as well as being deeply gendered).<sup>140</sup> The content of DIR number seven, however, clearly shows that Limberger was a critical player in Göring’s art collecting enterprise because of her importance of tracking his acquisitions and keeping them organized. Rousseau consistently

---

<sup>137</sup> Fold3, “ALIU: DIR number 7: Gisela Limberger,”1.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid, 1-2.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Furthermore, Rousseau stated that Limberger was “treated as a member of the [Göring] family and lived for a time with [Göring’s] sisters.” Ibid, 1.



downplays Limberger's culpability in Göring's art looting. Petropoulos discusses "Göring's coterie" including Limberger, or "Limmi" as she was called by most of her circle.<sup>141</sup> According to Lohse's description, Limberger "was a tall, elegant woman, and clearly very discreet – if not focused on ethical issues. How else could she have worked for Göring all those years (1935-1945)? She clearly had attractive personal qualities."<sup>142</sup> Faison also spoke favourably of Limberger and even engaged her secretarial help. When Faison was escorting Limberger to prison, Petropoulos describes how "at the sight of the facility and the women inmates in prison garb, [Limberger] broke down and cried. [Faison] then offered to take her elsewhere – to the home of art dealer and ERR official Walter Borchers, who was living in a villa on Lake Starnberg."<sup>143</sup> Faison went to such lengths to protect Limberger from prosecution that he recommended her to Craig Hugh Smyth for work at the MFAA's Munich Central Collecting Point. Rousseau's denial of Limberger's ideological involvement, and Faison's more personal relationship with her, suggest sympathies for Göring's secretary within the ALIU and a clear denial of her complicity or culpability.

Faison and Rousseau's dismissal of Limberger's role as an accomplice to Nazi looting, specifically with the Göring Collection, is alarming. Limberger was to Göring what Lambie, Sillcocks, and Whitney were to the ALIU's functioning and successes: critical to the maintenance and organization of their respective groups. In historical interpretations of Nazi perpetration, German women's roles have been excluded, ignored, or downplayed until relatively recently. The perception that German women were only victims and not collaborators was widespread for a long time.<sup>144</sup> Historian Wendy Lower points out that "the entire population of

---

<sup>141</sup> Petropoulos, *Göring's Man in Paris*, 150.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid; Rothfeld, "Project Orion," 95.

<sup>144</sup> Wendy Lower, *Hitler's Furies: German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2013), 14.

German women (almost forty million in 1939) cannot be considered a victim group. One-third of the female population, thirteen million women, were actively engaged in a Nazi Party organisation...”<sup>145</sup> Lower also explains that “just as the agency of women in history more generally is under-appreciated, here too ± and perhaps even more problematically, given the moral and legal implications — the agency of women in the crimes of the Third Reich has not been fully elaborated and explained.”<sup>146</sup> Rousseau’s report on Limberger and Faison’s caring treatment of her both assume she was a victim, and simultaneously remove her agency as a key player in the Nazi art looting machine. Indeed, secretaries and administrators were the second largest contributors to the operation of Hitler’s Germany after nurses.<sup>147</sup>

The ALIU investigated two other women, Mühlmann’s secretary Rosa Bauer and art dealer Maria Almas-Dietrich. Almas-Dietrich, a direct seller to Hitler and “the most prolific dealer” discussed in CIR four, would have faced considerable consequences had she been charged.<sup>148</sup> An interesting theme arises in assessing the unit’s interpretation of women, and it relates to their perceived level of education and intelligence.<sup>149</sup> In his report, Rousseau explains that Limberger has no professional, intellectual training in the arts.<sup>150</sup> Almas-Dietrich also had no formal art history or collection training.<sup>151</sup> And Bauer was perceived as unimportant enough to be excluded from scrutiny. Limberger was kept as a “voluntary witness” pending the Göring trial based on her value as a source, and Rousseau did acknowledge her role, but did not blame her.<sup>152</sup>

---

<sup>145</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid, 53.

<sup>148</sup> Fold3, “ALIU: CIR number 4: Linz: Hitler’s Museum and Library,” 49.

<sup>149</sup> It is worth noting that Ivy League universities did not formally admit women until the 1960s. Women joining the universities was sometimes equated to the disintegration of civilized higher education. Nancy Weiss Malkiel, “‘Keep the Damned Women Out’: The Struggle for Coeducation in the Ivy League, the Seven Sisters, Oxford, and Cambridge 1,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 161:1 (2017): 36.

<sup>150</sup> Fold3, “ALIU: DIR number 7: Gisela Limberger.”

<sup>151</sup> Rothfeld, “Unscrupulous Opportunists,” 54.

<sup>152</sup> Fold3, “ALIU: DIR number 7: Gisela Limberger,” 3; Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*, 382.

Faison recommended that Almas-Dietrich's business license be suspended, but she was neither charged nor prosecuted.<sup>153</sup>

The ALIU interrogators treated their female subjects differently: they dismissed the women's culpability and intellectual or professional capacity. It is possible that Faison and Rousseau perceived Limberger and Almas-Dietrich as less harmful because they had not received formal, university level education in their professional discipline. This tendency has also been recognized in the MFAA sphere: monuments officer Charles Parkhurst is described as having a similarly sympathetic approach when interviewing Hans Posse's wife. He concluded the interview when she began to cry.<sup>154</sup>

Conversely, the ALIU's feelings professional esteem towards some of their subjects also influenced interrogators' attitudes. Just as MFAA officer Craig Smyth found it disheartening to arrest Hermann Voss — Nicholas notes that Smyth "found it difficult to treat so eminent a scholar as a criminal and had him report daily to someone else" — Plaut, Faison and Rousseau appear to have developed a professional relationship with Bruno Lohse. Jonathan Petropoulos, in his account of interviewing Lohse, explains that "Lohse maintained a fondness for the Harvard-educated art historians who comprised the ALIU," and that "the Americans and Lohse had found a modus vivendi that helped lead to the restitution of thousands of works, and the ALIU agents had treated him respectfully as a professional counterpart."<sup>155</sup> Petropoulos further notes that his own PhD from Harvard rendered him worthy of Lohse's time — in other words, Petropoulos' Harvard affiliations put him on par with Plaut, Faison, Rousseau, and the ALIU whom Lohse esteemed. From their 1998 meeting onward, Petropoulos became a messenger of greetings

---

<sup>153</sup> Rothfeld, "Unscrupulous Opportunists," 96.

<sup>154</sup> Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*, 381.

<sup>155</sup> Petropoulos, *Göring's Man in Paris*, 3.

between Faison, Plaut, and Lohse, sometimes hand delivering letters. However, out of the three unit members, Lohse was closest to Rousseau.<sup>156</sup> Such relationships between the occupying forces and the occupied, though perhaps inevitable, may have become a limitation to the unit's effectiveness because it clouded their judgment and prevented them from maintaining objectivity.<sup>157</sup>

The unit was instructed to remain objective throughout its reporting, but the extent to which this was possible is unclear.<sup>158</sup> Apart from brief navy or OSS training, and a few months during the war, these men were limited by their inexperience.<sup>159</sup> Plaut, Faison, Rousseau, Wittmann, and Coyne also had different first languages than the subjects, making their judgement even more challenging and the ability to detect or identify lies a struggle.<sup>160</sup> These subjects also knew what the interrogators were looking for generally, and as Petropoulos claims, “the culture of secrecy can lead to inaccurate or dishonest statements” — especially when the people involved were personally invested in the art at stake.<sup>161</sup>

The contexts in which the ALIU personnel worked, especially those in the field, reinforced the perceived pragmatism of their Western worldview. Moreover, the ALIU's limitations were products of the environments in which the unit personnel were trained, as

---

<sup>156</sup> Petropoulos argues that the friendly relationship between Lohse and the three men was an outcome of the boys' club that was the museum and art world. He noted that “the art world often features fraternal feelings – people feel they are members of ‘the same club’ – and they could rationalize the relationship by noting that Lohse had done his time in jail.”<sup>156</sup> In other words, Plaut, Faison, and Rousseau were not alone in their postwar relationships with former Nazis. Even in the unit's recommendations for Lohse, Plaut acknowledged that if it be proven that Lohse did not profit from working for Göring, his role should be understood as “the performance of an assignment under orders.” Petropoulos, *Göring's Man in Paris*, 4, 123, 189.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid, 286.

<sup>158</sup> Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, BHL, University of Michigan, box 4, “Miscellaneous, 1943-1947.”

<sup>159</sup> Allegedly, Miedl found Rousseau to be unfair and subjective in his reporting on him. Rothfeld also noted the existence of subjective comments in the CIRs, but suggested that the unit personnel's perspective was “misled by the Nazis' own propaganda and the traditional reputation of the efficiency of the Germans.” Rothfeld, “Unscrupulous Opportunists,” 175; Rothfeld, “Project Orion,” 100-101.

<sup>160</sup> Petropoulos explains that the unit men were “constantly frustrated by the lies of their subjects and complained to one another in memo after memo.” Petropoulos, *Göring's Man in Paris*, 287.

<sup>161</sup> Petropoulos, *Göring's Man in Paris*, 287.

articulated in chapter one, and the contexts of the war. The contexts of the OSS and the MFAA were part of a larger situation of conquest and occupation. At Alt Aussee and elsewhere, there existed a clear power structure where the American figures were in control. The environment of the OSS and MFAA reinforced the idea that Americans were meant to be in Europe, carrying out their duty to protect art, and thereby civilization.

This perceived duty to protect European art, however, did not mean that Plaut, Rousseau, Faison, Wittmann and others were well-qualified to carry out their tasks. It is evident that the OSS provided limited, if any, training for these men. Because intellectuals and people of certain social class did not consistently receive training, the ALIU personnel without it likely held the assumption that they were simply qualified for the task at hand based on their elite university training, and minimal wartime interrogation experience, not their qualifications to interrogate war criminals. The MFAA, which collaborated closely with the ALIU, held similar, if not exact, justifications for carrying out their work in occupied Germany and elsewhere. Furthermore, the context of occupation was the overarching environment in which with ALIU functioned. There existed within this context a power structure where the US was at the top. Importantly, this power structure did not fall away once the ALIU was dissolved. When the ALIU men returned to their civilian work, the worldview that America was the rightful guardian of European culture was no longer a theory, but a reality for those in the US cultural bureaucracy.

### Chapter Three: The Postwar Period until the Present

By 1947, all ALIU personnel had left Europe and resumed their civilian roles in American museums, apart from Faison who returned to Munich in 1950.<sup>1</sup> During their time in Europe, ALIU personnel had seen masses of displaced art, and compiled hundreds of pages of research on Nazi art looting schemes. The ten ALIU members intimately understood the movement and provenance of thousands of valuable cultural objects. Their efforts were praised as remarkable by the Roberts Commission, especially considering the short amount of time in which they accomplished their work.<sup>2</sup> Their work was celebrated as a heroic contribution to American art repatriation efforts.<sup>3</sup> The ALIU personnel and their MFAA colleagues were lauded for saving Europe's art for "Western civilization" as a whole.

In recent years, however, journalists and historians have raised the fact that some ALIU personnel did not always act in ways that meet current ethical museum standards.<sup>4</sup> These practices include the postwar exhibition of 202 German paintings in the United States, controversial art deals involving pieces looted from victims of Nazi persecution, and the destruction of cultural property. This chapter argues that in these instances, ALIU members' behaviour, which at first appears hypocritical or contradictory, was nevertheless reflective of the same worldview that inspired their wartime work. Petropoulos writes that "history rarely plays

---

<sup>1</sup> Faison, interview by Anna Swinbourne, 29.

<sup>2</sup> Salter, "A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence's Investigation of Nazi Art Looting," 268.

<sup>3</sup> Yeide and Teter-Schneider, "S. Lane Faison, Jr. and 'Art Under the Shadow of the Swastika,'" 28.

<sup>4</sup> Catherine Hickley, "Has New York's law aimed at identifying Nazi-looted art in museums worked?" *The Art Newspaper*, April 7, 2023. <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2023/04/07/new-york-nazi-looted-art-museums-setbacks>; Petropoulos, "Five Uncomfortable and Difficult Topics,"; Benjamin Sutton, "Did the Metropolitan Museum cover up its acquisition of a Nazi-looted van Gogh? A new lawsuit alleges so," December 20, 2022. <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2022/12/20/hedwig-stern-heirs-lawsuit-van-gogh-metropolitan-museum-basil-elise-goulandris-foundation>. (accessed 15 November 2023).

out in black-and-white terms. The gray area of mixed motives, inconsistent behavior, self-interest, and expediency often prevails.”<sup>5</sup> This chapter aims to fill in, and perhaps explain, some of that gray area. The first part of this chapter details the confiscation and transfer to the United States of 202 masterpieces from Germany after the war, and ALIU members’ involvement in the subsequent controversy and the touring exhibition of these masterpieces. It then discusses a recent restitution case filed in California that implicates Rousseau and Faison in the sale of a looted painting in the 1950s, discusses Faison’s involvement in the burning of Nazi artwork at the Munich Central Collecting Point after the war, and calls attention to Wittmann’s relationships with museum professionals accused of unethical practices. Finally, this chapter considers the confluence of opportunism and ideology in these scenarios.

### **German Masterpieces in the US**

At the end of the Second World War, significant quantities of artwork were found across Germany. Some was loot stolen from across Europe, and some was art from the collections of German museums, which had been transferred to mines and other repositories for safekeeping. The work in American custody — works discovered in or moved to the American zones of occupation in Germany and in Austria — was classified as follows: A) works confiscated by Nazis with identifiable owners, B) works of art from occupied countries that were sold to the Nazis for an amount less than their value, and, C) works placed in the US Zone by Germany for safekeeping which were “bona fide property of the German nation.”<sup>6</sup> With this volume of cultural material in American hands, certain US government officials contemplated using “Class C” art, works from the collections of German museums, as a source of reparations for the United States. In 1945, with the understanding that the United States was the “custodian” of artwork in

---

<sup>5</sup> Petropoulos, “Five Uncomfortable and Difficult Topics,” 140.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

its occupation zone, General Lucius Clay, Deputy Military Governor of Germany, called for the removal to the United States of 202 paintings from the collections of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum and the Berlin Nationalgalerie which had been stored in the Wiesbaden Collecting Point.<sup>7</sup> Clay, along with supporters including President Truman himself, overruled the objections of MFAA personnel such as Walter Farmer and Edith Standen (both directors of the Wiesbaden Collecting Point), the ALIU's James Plaut, and the British. The paintings, mostly selected by Francis Henry Taylor, included a Caravaggio, fifteen Rembrandts, a Tintoretto, a Vermeer, and an Edouard Manet among works by other great masters.<sup>8</sup> Two-hundred paintings originated from the Kaiser Frederick Museum in Berlin, two were from the Nationalgalerie in Berlin. During the war, they had been stored in Merkers salt mine for safekeeping. On 7 December 1945, the 202 paintings travelled under armed escort to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC.<sup>9</sup>

The 202 paintings were stored at the National Gallery under the pretense that the US Zone in Germany lacked adequate space to house them. The paintings were kept in the basement of the National Gallery until early 1948, when a hearing was held before a Senate subcommittee to consider Arkansas Senator William Fulbright's bill S. 2439, "to Provide for the Temporary Retention in the United States of Certain German Paintings."<sup>10</sup> The true interest in retaining the paintings in the US was to circulate them to various museums across the country and, according to some critics at the time, to add them to the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the National Gallery in Washington DC. Of all the testimony presented during the hearing, each was overwhelmingly in favour of keeping the paintings in the United States for an

---

<sup>7</sup> Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*, 385.

<sup>8</sup> Marion Deshmukh, "Recovering Culture: The Berlin National Gallery and the US Occupation, 1945-1949," *Central European History* 27:4 (1994): 411-439.

<sup>9</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 4, folder 9.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*



extended period.<sup>11</sup> Senator Fulbright gave passionate remarks, asserting that “the American people, whether they like it or not, have the responsibility to preserve these paintings until order is restored” and that his bill “expressly guarantees the ownership of the German people,” although “in a broader sense the German people were trustees of these paintings for all of the western people.”<sup>12</sup>

Fulbright’s account is filled with language that centres America at the heart of civilization, with the paintings as a physical embodiment of this civilization, which it was the United States’ duty to protect. He contended that “these paintings are a part of our own history, since they were created in those countries from which many of our people come, and from which we derive so much of our religious and cultural background.”<sup>13</sup> The bill further proposed that all proceeds from admission to the travelling exhibit would be donated to the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund. The contributors to this hearing tried to ensure that the removal of these works was not equated to Nazi looting.

Critics, however, made exactly that equation. On 7 November 1945 more than thirty MFAA specialist officers signed a document they called the “Wiesbaden Manifesto.”<sup>14</sup> The manifesto claimed that the removal of the 202 paintings from Germany by “the United States Army, upon direction from the highest national authority, establishe[d] a precedent which is neither morally tenable nor trustworthy.”<sup>15</sup> The signatories made the point that the United States was in the process of prosecuting Nazis for following military orders to loot artwork from

---

<sup>11</sup> Statements were given by Colonel Theodore Riggs, CAD, Department of the Army; J. W. Fulbright, William H. Draper, Charles E. Saltzman, David E. Finley, John Walker, William Bullitt, Perry T. Rathbone, Dudley T. Easby, Horace H. F. Jane, Murray Pease, Robert Sugden, Peyton Boswell, Alonzo Lansford, Alexander Boeker, Arthur Ringland, and Emily Genauer. GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 4, folder 9, III.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 15.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>14</sup> Walter I. Farmer, et al., *The Safekeepers: A Memoir of the Arts of the End of World War II* (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2000), 147.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

countries they occupied. The War Crimes trials were based on the idea that a higher ethical law should have prevented Germans from looting cultural treasures. Here, the signatories argued, the United States was behaving no better than Nazis. The manifesto made the rounds of the MFAA in Europe and their art history colleagues in the United States. For many critics, the US seizure of German art was the height of hypocrisy.

Because of this outcry, the paintings gained considerable attention in the American press from the time of their arrival in the United States, through their exhibiting, up until their eventual return to Germany. Newspaper articles relayed a range of opinions, most of them putting pressure on the White House and State Department to tour the paintings across the country. One 30 January 1946 article reads “the White House and State Department, as well as the National Gallery have never passed up an opportunity to declare that the paintings are not ‘war loot.’ Since the government has undertaken the responsibility of protecting these paintings for German posterity, it is only fair that the people of this country be given the opportunity to view them.”<sup>16</sup> Some papers supported the manifesto’s arguments.<sup>17</sup> Other accounts contrasted the American “safekeeping” of the 202 and the decision to return the paintings to Germany, with Russian and German wartime looting activities. The *Milwaukee Journal* wrote that “instead of [a] grasping, imperialistic Uncle Sam, who exists only in hostile fiction, we see a victor who refuses to loot, tries to stop individual Americans from looting, refuses to accept reparations, and spends hundreds of millions of dollars to keep the conquered Germans from starving.”<sup>18</sup> The public met the news of the paintings’ US tour with enthusiasm. The touring exhibition of the 202 paintings

---

<sup>16</sup> Jack Stinnett, *The Messenger*, January 30, 1946, 4.

<sup>17</sup> *The Brooklyn Citizen*, March 7, 1946, 4.

<sup>18</sup> Several versions of this article circulated. A May 1948 version stated, “despite all the criticism of Uncle Sam as being a ‘sucker’ and a fool, this is the way we want him to be – neither a sucker nor a fool, but honest with himself and the world, generous in the name of humanity’s welfare and willing always to help others help themselves.” *Tucson Daily Citizen*, March 22, 1948, 16; *The Decatur Daily*, May 3, 1948, 6.

within the US was advertised as a once-in-a-lifetime event<sup>19</sup> and millions of people went to see the masterpieces.<sup>20</sup>

The ALIU's engagement with the 202 paintings happened when the artwork toured the United States and ended up on display at museums under the direction of former ALIU personnel. Two of the stops on the tour were the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and Toledo Museum of Art where Rousseau and Wittmann worked, respectively.<sup>21</sup> The paintings also visited the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, where Plaut was assistant curator before the war. The exhibit opened at the Toledo Museum on 22 March 1949, when Wittmann was the assistant director. An announcement in the monthly bulletin for the Toledo chapter of the Reserve Officers Association stated that "the discovery of the masterpieces by elements of the 90<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division of the US Third Army in a salt mine at Merkers, Germany, is one of the great stories of World War II. Major Wittman will tell this story."<sup>22</sup> In the 8 March 1949 issue of the Toledo Times, Wittmann is quoted as saying the paintings were "definitely not loot," revealing his awareness of the ambiguous tone of this exhibit.<sup>23</sup> Wittmann continued to say that the collection was "the greatest single exhibit ever to be shown in the United States," that "the United States is the first conquering nation in history voluntarily to return objects of art to defeated countries," and that the collection "belong[ed] to the old, respectable, progressive people of pre-1914 Germany."<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 7, folder 14.

<sup>20</sup> Minneapolis Institute of Art, "Saved from the Salt Mines: Part II of rediscovering an incredible 1948 exhibition of art stolen by Nazis," March 16, 2014, <https://new.artsmia.org/stories/saved-from-the-salt-mines-part-ii-of-rediscovering-an-incredible-1948-exhibition-of-art-stolen-by-nazis/>. (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 7, folder 14.

<sup>23</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 7, folder 14.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

When the paintings visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rousseau was associate curator of paintings.<sup>25</sup> Rousseau's eagerness to obtain German paintings was illustrated in a 1948 *New Yorker* article:

America has a chance to get some wonderful things here during the next few years.

German museums are wrecked and will have to sell. They have always sold anyway. If a museum has a hundred Rubenses, as the Munich Museum has, why shouldn't it sell one or two? The Louvre can show only a small fraction of what it owns, but French state laws prohibit it from selling. The capital levy in England is beginning to cause surprising things to come out of private collections.

Rousseau continued:

Italy is full of privately owned, well-stocked cloisters, the contents of which are just rotting away. I think it's absurd to let the Germans have paintings the Nazi bigwigs got, often through forced sales, from all over Europe. Some of them ought to come here, and I don't mean especially to the Metropolitan, which is fairly well off for paintings, but to museums in the West, which aren't.<sup>26</sup>

Rousseau and Wittman's perspectives echoed the Fulbright commission's: they assert an American entitlement to European works both as the victors of the war and as the heirs of Western civilization.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> "Theodore Rousseau," *The Los Angeles Times*, January 2, 1974.

<sup>26</sup> Geoffrey T. Hellman, "Curator," *The New York Times*, 28 August 1948, 14-15.

<sup>27</sup> On 4 September 1948, Calvin Hathaway, former MFAA officer and curator at the Cooper Union in New York, wrote to the author of the *New Yorker* article regarding Rousseau's words. Hathaway wrote, "Your report of the recent remarks of Mr. Theodore Rousseau, Jr., new curator of the Metropolitan Museum's department of paintings, must have been written under a misunderstanding. At least, I am afraid that it is likely to create a misunderstanding of the actual status of works of art in Germany." Columbia University Archives, Calvin Sutliff Hathaway papers, Series I: Correspondence, box 2.

When the Wiesbaden Manifesto was drafted in November 1945, Rousseau, Plaut, Wittmann, and Faison were each conducting their respective operations in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland.<sup>28</sup> None of the unit members signed the manifesto, likely because the document was not presented to them.<sup>29</sup> However, a 9 May 1946 resolution — written by Dr. Frederick Clapp, Director of the Frick Collection and sent to Dean Acheson, Undersecretary for the Secretary of State — was signed by ninety-five American museum professionals and called for the immediate return of the 202 paintings to Germany and the prevention of their exhibition in the United States. Among the signatories were Plaut, Faison, Sawyer, and Phillips. Wittmann and Rousseau’s signatures were notably absent.<sup>30</sup>

The 202 paintings situation highlights the malleability of the ALIU personnel’s worldview. Wittmann and Rousseau supported the paintings coming to the US and being exhibited. Phillips, Sawyer, Faison, and Plaut signed the 1946 resolution opposing the 202’s presence and exhibition in the United States. Perhaps Rousseau and Wittmann were more pragmatic and opportunistic, while their colleagues were more idealistic. Or perhaps the same ideals supported opposing perspectives: those in favour of keeping the paintings in the US were driven by the view that the United States and its citizens had the right to them, as part of their own national history. As Wittmann highlighted, the Americans were the victors, and yet still cared for the cultural heritage of their defeated enemy because this custodianship was in the broader best interest of humanity.

---

<sup>28</sup> Hussey, et al., “OSS Art Looting Investigation Unit Reports.”

<sup>29</sup> Charles Parkhurst, presentation at the National Arts Journalism Program’s “Who Owns Culture?” Conference. Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, April 1999.

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/najp/publications/conferencereports/058-071%20War%20and%20Cultural%20Property.pdf>. (accessed 15 November 2023).

<sup>30</sup> Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, S. Lane Faison Papers, series 4.1, box 3, folder 23, “Return of German-Owned Art Stored at the National Gallery, 1970, 1946-1959.

On the other hand, those who demanded that the paintings be returned to Germany accused the US government of acting immorally, couching their greed and self-interest in language of “protective custody” just as the Nazis had done.<sup>31</sup> Both the Wiesbaden Manifesto and the 1946 resolution, however, also rejected the confiscation of the 202 because this action undermined the work of US monuments officials. American MFAA personnel had been deployed to Germany specifically to secure, care for, and repatriate art: “since the beginning of United States participation in the war, it has been the declared policy of the Allied Forces...to protect and preserve” objects of cultural, historical, artistic, and archaeological value.<sup>32</sup> Claims that German artwork was not safe in US custody in Germany undermined the whole monuments program. The signatories viewed the removal of the paintings as an insult: it ignored their hard work, negated their expertise, and undermined their specific roles as saviors of civilization. The signatories also found the confiscation of German masterpieces undemocratic. One even wrote to the President on the matter, stressing that they were “following the time-honored American custom” by bringing to the government’s attention “a consensus of opinion on the part of those who have special practical familiarity with old pictures and personal, sometimes long, acquaintance with European history and culture in its emotional and intellectual aspects.”<sup>33</sup>

Charles Sawyer, in his capacity as Assistant Secretary of the Roberts Commission, found himself right in the middle of the matter. In a 1946 speech to the Worcester Rotary Club, Sawyer expressed his reservations about the government’s decision and its impact on how Americans would be viewed on the world stage:

---

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 60.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 61.

<sup>33</sup> Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, S. Lane Faison Papers, series 4.1, box 3, folder 23, “Return of German-Owned Art Stored at the National Gallery,” June 3, 1946.

In the first place, [is] the unspoken but clearly implied implication that we did not trust one of our major allies and that they would take [the paintings] if we didn't. ... It is [also] too much to expect a Europe still shell-shocked from five years of destruction and undernourishment to take our assurances and our intentions at our own face value. That is the tragedy of a unilateral action such as this. We need to be, as a nation, politically brighter and not involve ourselves in a procedure for which we can get no credit and only condemnation.<sup>34</sup>

Rather, Sawyer argued, the monuments officials' broader work more fully illustrated American intentions of preserving European culture:

To construct and heal in the middle of destruction is the role of the priest, the minister, the doctor, the nurse. Our Arts and Monuments officers performed a similar function in connection with the protection of the visible and physical remains of European civilization and in doing so they contributed their share to the reconstruction in body and spirit of a badly shattered world.<sup>35</sup>

Nicholas notes in *Rape of Europa* that Sawyer doubted the government's promise that the paintings would be returned to Germany.<sup>36</sup> By 1994, however, he believed he had perhaps overreacted in 1946 because he "was concerned at the time by the rather smug attitude on the homefront that we were 'the good guys' rescuing European civilization from itself."<sup>37</sup>

Interestingly, Sawyer sticks out as an ALIU member perhaps conscious of his and his colleagues' worldview and its impact on their work. His perspective on the 202 paintings is important because it reflects the complexity of the situation and the worldview of the ALIU men.

---

<sup>34</sup> Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, BHL, University of Michigan, box 4, "Miscellaneous, 1943-1947."

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*, 388.

<sup>37</sup> Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, BHL, University of Michigan, box 4, "Miscellaneous, 1943-1947."

Ultimately, Phillips, Sawyer, Faison, and Plaut's opposition to the confiscation of the 202 German paintings and Rousseau and Wittmann's support of the paintings' presence in the United States are two sides of the same ideological coin: an American duty to safeguard Western culture and a right to determine how that safeguarding will take place. Whether the paintings were in the continental US or the US Zone of occupation, they remained under American oversight. The fact, however, that 202 paintings made it to Washington, and some 150 toured the US highlights the power and entrenchment of the worldview through which the pieces' removal was justified.

National exhibitions, such as that of the 202 German paintings, invariably carry a major message or theme, according to Kathleen Berrin.<sup>38</sup> Exhibitions represent political power, and demonstrate cultural control and expertise: "they measure current foreign policy interests and dimensions – they are an official indication of how Americans were encouraged to embrace the foreign at a particular time and place."<sup>39</sup> Berrin's idea that exhibitions are a form of politics and communication is an excellent framework to approach an interpretation of the exhibition of the 202 German paintings. The 202 exhibition sent the message that the United States had control over cultural affairs in Europe, but also power over Europe more broadly. Thus, it was through their worldview that the American personnel at hand justified their unquestioned regulation of European art, both abroad and in their own country. This justification for control carried on throughout the century.

### **Trading Looted Art**

During his time at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Theodore Rousseau was involved in the sale of artwork looted from a victim of Nazi persecution, Hedwig Stern. In 1938, the Nazis seized

---

<sup>38</sup> Kathleen Berrin, *Exhibiting the Foreign on U.S. Soil: American Art Museums and National Diplomacy Exhibitions Before, During, and After World War II* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2021), ix.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, x.



Van Gogh's *Olive Picking* and several other paintings, including a Renoir, from Stern because she was Jewish. Stern and her family fled Germany in 1938 and settled in Berkeley, California, however Stern was never able to locate her van Gogh painting after the war.<sup>40</sup> In September 1972, the *New York Times* revealed that the Metropolitan Museum of Art had sold Van Gogh's *Olive Picking*,<sup>41</sup> a sale the museum's director, Thomas P. F. Hoving, defended claiming that the proceeds had been used to improve the balance of the museum's collections.<sup>42</sup> The buyer turned out to be the Marlborough Gallery in Liechtenstein. At the time of sale, Theodore Rousseau was chief curator of the Metropolitan Museum. In December 2022, the heirs of Hedwig Stern filed a lawsuit alleging that the painting was grossly undersold — in secret — by Rousseau and Hoving.<sup>4344</sup>

The painting's provenance reflects the experience of a family victimized by Nazi art looters, the very people interrogated during the ALIU's investigations. According to Petropoulos' research, *Olive Picking* was probably sold on consignment by Galerie Thannhauser to Hedwig Stern in 1935, who owned it until 1938. Kurt Mosbacher, a "trustee" who confiscated and then sold paintings on behalf of the Third Reich, ensured that the Aryanized Thannhauser Gallery re-acquired Stern's van Gogh and a Renoir. At the time of the transaction, the Thannhauser Gallery was run by Paul Roemer who, according to the ALIU's CIR number four,

---

<sup>40</sup> For further coverage on this case, see Sarah Cascone, "The Heirs of a Jewish Art Collector are Suing the Metropolitan Museum for Selling a Van Gogh Painting They Say Was Plundered by Nazis," December 19, 2022, <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/jewish-heirs-sue-met-over-van-gogh-2232324>; Martin Bailey, "Was Van Gogh's olive grove landscape another Nazi-era 'forced sale'?" January 27, 2023, <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2023/01/27/van-gogh-olive-grove-landscape-nazi-forced-sale>.

<sup>41</sup> "Metropolitan Sells Two Modern Paintings in an Unusual Move," *The New York Times*, September 30, 1972.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Kohn, "Complaint for Restitution," 1-4.

<sup>44</sup> Kohn, "Complaint for Restitution"; Alexandra Bregman, "The van Gogh Wars: Part 3: The Olive Picking (1899) Belonging to Holocaust Escapees Ends up in Greek Shipping Magnate Museum," *Forbes* online, December 25, 2022, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/alexandrabregman/2022/12/25/the-van-gogh-wars--part-3-the-olive-picking-1889-belonging-to-holocaust-escapees-ends-up-in-greek-shipping-magnate-museum/?sh=2fbc8bbd29e5>. (accessed 15 November 2023).

had at one point sold artwork to the Linz collection.<sup>45</sup> In 1938, the painting ended up back in Galerie Thannhauser, which in the same year sold it on consignment to Theodor Werner in Potsdam, who kept it until 1948. In 1948, *Olive Picking* was sold to Justin K. Thannhauser<sup>46</sup> who took it to New York, and then sold it to Vincent Astor. Astor owned the painting until 1955, when he sold it to Knoedler & Co.<sup>47</sup> in New York, who sold it to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1956. The Metropolitan Museum kept it until 1972, when Marlborough Fine Art in New York bought it. That same year, six months prior to Rousseau's death, it was sold on consignment to the Basil and Elise Goulandris Foundation, and they remain its owners.

Petropoulos concluded that, in the face of Nazi persecution, Stern and her family were victims of the forced sale of *Olive Picking*. The painting was sold well under its market value because of its stigmatization as modern art in Nazi Germany (and Stern may not even have received payment). Petropoulos classified the painting as Nazi looted art because Stern parted with her painting under duress.<sup>48</sup>

Stern submitted claims for the painting in 1948 and 1951. She also met with and wrote to Faison with a claim for her stolen paintings in 1951 when he was director of the Munich Central Collecting Point.<sup>49</sup> Petropoulos argues that, upon acquiring the painting in 1956, Rousseau could have contacted Faison regarding the painting's provenance. Alternatively, Faison could have informed Rousseau about the claims.<sup>50</sup> Petropoulos noted that they also could have contacted

---

<sup>45</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: CIR number 1: The Activity of the Einsatzstab Rosenberg in France," attachment 54, 1.

<sup>46</sup> Justin Thannhauser was the German Jewish owner of the Thannhauser gallery. He moved the majority of his collection to Switzerland before the war, and eventually much of it ended up in the United States. Interestingly, the Thannhauser collection makes up a significant portion of the Guggenheim Museum. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*, 237.

<sup>47</sup> Knoedler & Co., closed in 2011 amidst an art fraud scandal. M.H. Miller, "The Big Fake: Behind the Scenes of Knoedler Gallery's Downfall," *ARTnews*, April 25, 2016.

<sup>48</sup> Jonathan Petropoulos, *Preliminary Research Report of Jonathan Petropoulos Concerning Vincent van Gogh, "Olive Picking" (1889), previously in the Collection of Hedwig Stern*, (15 December 2023), 27.

<sup>49</sup> Kohn, "Complaint for Restitution," 5.

<sup>50</sup> Petropoulos, *Preliminary Research Report*, 49.

Justin Thannhauser who lived near the Metropolitan Museum.<sup>51</sup> Faison himself wrote CIR number four, the report that implicated Roemer in dealing confiscated paintings. Did Rousseau and Faison (and also the Metropolitan Museum's Director, former MFAA officer James Rorimer), know about Stern's claims in 1948? Drafters of the suit claim that these men did, and that Rousseau's knowledge that the van Gogh was likely a Nazi-confiscated work was his reason for selling in secret.<sup>52</sup> The lawsuit asserts that Rousseau and Faison had the skills and knowledge to do detailed provenance research on the van Gogh. A 1967 catalogue raisonnée describes *Olive Picking* as potentially a Nazi-era looted painting, though the description omits any of Stern's restitution requests.<sup>53</sup>

The Stern case puts Rousseau and Faison in a negative light, especially considering their work with the ALIU. The skills and specialized knowledge for which Rousseau, Faison, and others were selected for the Art Looting Investigation Unit, and the information they acquired during their work in the unit, should have been used to repatriate Stern's painting.<sup>54</sup> Instead, Rousseau and Faison seemingly used their skills for the benefit of American art institutions. Petropoulos questions why a concern for Nazi looted property was overlooked in this case and notes that restitution had become somewhat passé in the 1950s, which was coupled with a lack of accountability generally in museums. Some of this behaviour changed in the 1960s. And yet, the Metropolitan Museum's archives related to this case are sealed until 2073.<sup>55</sup> Rousseau and Faison used their knowledge and position to bolster the collection of a significant American

---

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Kohn, "Complaint for Restitution," 6.

<sup>54</sup> Although restitution was not a formal part of the ALIU's role, it was a significant part of Faison's role at the Munich CCP. The MFAA policy was to return looted property to the country of origin, rather than to individual claimants. The consequences of forced sale and Aryanization of property owned by German Jews were not accounted for in this policy. Faison, interview by Robert F. Brown, 11.

<sup>55</sup> Petropoulos, *Preliminary Research Report*, 67.

museum.<sup>56</sup> Again, Rousseau never shied away from expressing his desire to enrich American museum collections, as he publicly articulated for the *New York Times*.<sup>57</sup>

Faison's activity at the Munich Collecting Point was concerning in other respects highlighted by Petropoulos. During the war, German and Nazi artists created works, often "National Socialist in character, [which] formed a kind of subcollection within the Munich CPP."<sup>58</sup> This included work owned by Alfred Rosenberg, Baldur von Schirach, and Julius Streicher, among others.<sup>59</sup> By 1949, the US government encouraged the directors of the Wiesbaden and Munich collecting points (MFAA officer Theodore Heinrich and Faison respectively) to close their operations (Appendix 1). According to Petropoulos, they burned some 500 pieces of Nazi art that remained at their Collecting Points. Petropoulos notes that "the decision to destroy cultural property seems shocking, considering the world condemnation of the Nazis for their burning of books in May 1933... [For] US authorities to destroy any cultural property showed a lack of historical awareness and may have been in violation of the 1907 Hague Agreement."<sup>60</sup> Heinrich's direction and Faison's compliance in burning the artwork also contravened US procedures to deal with such art. Petropoulos explains that, upon discussing the situation with Faison in the 1990s, the latter expressed regret for his actions. Despite that acknowledgement by Faison and the pressure the men were under at the time to close the Collecting Points, their actions reflect a confidence in their own expertise, authority and political superiority.

---

<sup>56</sup> In a 1994 interview, MFAA officer Edith Standen commented on the suspicious nature of the sale of the Stern paintings, stating that "it seemed awfully queer that one year it's a masterpiece and the next year it's unneeded." In the same interview, Standen mentioned that she did not have a good relationship with Rousseau. Edith A. Standen, interview by Sharon Zane. *Metropolitan Museum of Art Oral History Project*, 6-13 January 1994, 38.

<sup>57</sup> Hellman, "Curator," 14-15.

<sup>58</sup> Petropoulos, "Five Uncomfortable and Difficult Topics," 128.

<sup>59</sup> See Jonathan Petropoulos, *Artists Under Hitler*.

<sup>60</sup> Petropoulos, "Five Uncomfortable and Difficult Topics," 128.

Another figure who warrants further investigation is Wittmann who maintained a friendship and personal relationship with the prominent Dutch museum official, Robert de Vries, whom he had met during the war.<sup>61</sup> Wittmann explained that de Vries informed him of a Dutch work by Jan van de Cappelle, *Shipping off the Coast*, that had come up for sale. Wittmann purchased it for the Toledo Museum. In an article on the state appropriation of Nazi plunder, Elizabeth Campbell describes de Vries' fraudulent claims to French and American authorities. De Vries was also alleged to have improperly returned thirty-two paintings to Nathan Katz, a figure implicated in the Göring Collection.<sup>62</sup> In the same year, he was arrested on fraud and embezzlement charges. He was acquitted in 1951, but with a stained reputation.

Rousseau was likewise instrumental in informing Wittmann on the location of paintings in the United States. When Rousseau did not have permission from the Metropolitan Museum of Art to purchase pieces he wanted, he would direct Wittmann to them.<sup>63</sup> One significant instance was Wittmann's acquisition of Peter Paul Rubens' altarpiece, *The Crowning of Saint Catherine*. This piece had been in Göring's collection, but in 1950 was returned to its owner in Canada. Petropoulos noted two concerning factors about Wittmann's acquisition of the painting: first, it is striking that Rousseau would direct a painting with Nazi-era provenance issues to his counterpart in Toledo, especially considering his direct reporting on the Göring collection; second, Lohse may have had some involvement with this painting in 1950, as he travelled to Canada in the same year and had contacts there, including MFAA officer Theodore Heinrich.<sup>64</sup> Rousseau,

---

<sup>61</sup> Wittmann, interview by Richard Cándida Smith, 192.

<sup>62</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: CIR number 2: The Goering Collection," index – vii.

<sup>63</sup> Petropoulos, "Five Uncomfortable and Difficult Topics," 130.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 129.

through his correspondence with Lohse, knew that Nazi-looted paintings were being trafficked through North America in the 1950s.<sup>65</sup>

The postwar Western art world presented opportunities for museum professionals to enrich their collections. Petropoulos noted that “93 percent of American museums were created after 1945,” which related directly to the United States’ accumulation of wealth during the war.<sup>66</sup> The circulation of the 202 German paintings, Rousseau’s comments about the movement of art from Europe to the United states, and Wittmann’s conclusion that the upheaval of European private collections meant that art would inevitably end up in the wealthiest country in the world after the war should be placed in this context. The ALIU members understood this context better than most.<sup>67</sup> For Petropoulos, the ALIU’s most significant failure was its inability to prevent Nazi art dealers from dealing again.<sup>68</sup> Worse is that they themselves continued to deal with them.<sup>69</sup> Petropoulos contends that these interactions, although technically legal and professional in nature,

are a chapter of the history of the art officers that has not been acknowledged, let alone written. The fact that these individuals, who knew the history of the people with whom they were dealing, still transacted business with them, speaks to the overriding ambition with which many museum officials in postwar America built their collections.<sup>70</sup>

Petropoulos’ invitation of criticism is critical to start the process of acknowledging that the history of the “Monuments Men,” which scholarship, conferences, media, and fictional dramas

---

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 131.

<sup>66</sup> Petropoulos, “*Göring’s Man in Paris*,” 188.

<sup>67</sup> Wittmann, interview by Richard Cándida Smith, 217.

<sup>68</sup> Petropoulos, *The Faustian Bargain*, 110.

<sup>69</sup> Petropoulos notes that Plaut and Rousseau were not alone in maintaining relationships with compromised individuals like Lohse. MFAA officer Thomas Howe befriended and likely dealt with César Mange de Hauke, a dealer listed as having sold art to the Nazis. Petropoulos, *Göring’s Man in Paris*, 189; GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 4, folder 11.

<sup>70</sup> Petropoulos, “*Göring’s Man in Paris*,” 189.

romanticize, is not as unambiguously glorious as it appears. The men of the ALIU, in their roles as American cultural officials both during and after the war could not have been ignorant of the unrestituted art which circulated through their markets.<sup>71</sup>

While working with former Nazi art dealers, supporting the exhibition of confiscated German artwork, and purchasing artwork with problematic provenance seems contradictory to the ALIU's wartime efforts to protect and return Europe's art, these men's worldview meant they did not necessarily see a conflict of interest. The belief that the United States was the protector and successor of European civilization inspired the work that Phillips, Sawyer, Wittmann, Faison, Rousseau, Plaut and their colleagues did in Europe, and continued to do in the US.

Art professionals from other countries also found the opportunity to manipulate their collections because of the war, whether for malicious purposes or not. Anne M. Rothfeld details the opportunistic collaboration of four German art dealers, Hans Wendland, Maria Almas-Dietrich, Alois Miedl, and Gustav Rochlitz.<sup>72</sup> These four figures were also ideologically driven, and collecting and selling for the Reich amplified their prestige and acted as an opportunity to survive the war. Though not through common ideology or worldview, both the Americans and Germans believed the same paintings to be integral to the development of their cultural ideas.<sup>73</sup> Elizabeth Campbell similarly addressed the state appropriation of Nazi plunder in France, Belgium, and the Netherlands after the war. She noted that "the cache of unclaimed artworks recovered from the Third Reich provided an unusual opportunity for these states to enrich their cultural patrimony during postwar reconstruction at little cost to the public treasury but at the

---

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Rothfeld, "Unscrupulous Opportunists," ii.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 64.

expense of despoiled collectors and their heirs.”<sup>74</sup> This action of “state appropriation in the name of national cultural patrimony” was widespread, according to Campbell.<sup>75</sup> It has become increasingly apparent that this state appropriation of art also happened in the US after the war, sometimes under the guise of custodianship, sometimes in an effort to build cultural institutions.

This chapter highlighted several ways in which the particular worldview inculcated in ALIU personnel carried over into their postwar careers. This translation happened in times of opportunity — when the museums they worked for had the chance to improve their collections, or when their professions were seemingly challenged by government control of art. From the war until the end of their careers, the ALIU personnel acted in ways that underlined America’s image as the custodian of Western culture.

---

<sup>74</sup> Elizabeth Campbell, “Claiming National Heritage: State Appropriation of Nazi Art Plunder in Postwar Western Europe,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 55:4 (2020): 797.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.



## Conclusion

The Art Looting Investigation Unit and its members — primarily James Sachs Plaut, S. Lane Faison, Theodore Rousseau Jr., Otto Wittmann, Jr., Charles Sawyer, and John Phillips — have been portrayed as heroic figures of the Greatest Generation. Popular depictions of this unit, which often incorrectly place it within the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives program, claim that these men were “heroes of civilization.”<sup>1</sup> Works like Robert Edsel’s *The Monuments Men* propagate the view that the American personnel who sought to protect art during the Second World War were heroic saviours of American and Western culture. Labeling the men of the ALIU as “heroes of civilization” removes them from scrutiny or close attention in historical accounts, romanticizes their wartime work, and obscures controversies in which they were involved. This thesis is a response to the lack of scholarly attention to the ALIU but, more importantly, seeks to contextualize the work of individual personnel to highlight their collective experiences and reveal the worldview that was a driving force in all aspects of the unit’s work including its romanticization and its controversies.

In reassessing how we interpret wartime organizations like the Art Looting Investigation Unit, the first challenge is one of demystification. Rose’s *Myth and the Greatest Generation: A Social History of American in World War II*, challenges the narrative that the wartime generation was ultimately greater and more heroic than any generation before or since. Rose notes that in recent times, North American society has imagined the Second World War “not as it was but as it should have been.”<sup>2</sup> Rose adds that “believing that something must have been so does not make it so, and the positive spin that World War II romantics have put on military life and the

---

<sup>1</sup> Edsel, *The Monuments Men*, 421.

<sup>2</sup> Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 6

American home front disguises the fact that” most aspects of the conflict caused social and moral disintegration.<sup>3</sup> This perspective is useful in considering the Art Looting Investigation Unit’s legacy, not only in the outcome of its wartime work, but its members’ positioning as American heroes and saviours of Western Civilization. Elizabeth Campbell acknowledged this mystification as the main theme in the *Monuments Men* film which deeply romanticized American efforts in “their triumphant rescue of ‘civilization’ and ‘history.’”<sup>4</sup>

The second task, and the goal of this thesis, has been to understand and reconcile the motivations that shaped the unit members’ wartime and postwar work, especially the factors that shaped the men’s experiences and worldview. These factors included the belief that the United States was the rightful guardian of European culture and, by extension, art. This perception was presented during their formative years in private schools and Ivy League universities, particularly in “Western Civ” courses. The men’s travel abroad also exposed them to the wonders of the European cultural landscape, which fueled their passion and determination to study and protect it. Plaut, Faison, Rousseau, Wittmann, Sawyer, and Phillips carried this determination throughout their lives. Six of the ALIU men and many of their MFAA colleagues have overwhelmingly similar biographies; they were born into white, affluent families, received quality primary education, attended Ivy League schools, travelled extensively, and were employed in important cultural positions. This trajectory that Phillips, Sawyer, Wittmann, Faison, Rousseau, and Plaut followed was a major factor in inculcating the worldview shared among the American elite, which saw the US as the custodian of Western civilization.

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth Campbell Karlsgodt, “What’s Wrong with This Picture: Casual Disregard for History in George Clooney’s *The Monuments Men* (2014),” *Historical journal of film, radio, and television* 36:3 (2016): 405.

Chapter one presented important biographical details about each ALIU member, including its administrators. Using genealogical research, newspaper articles, and various sources from personal archival collections, chapter one demonstrated that the six investigators in the unit had remarkably similar upbringings, education, social status, and career paths. All these things led them to work in the ALIU, and to their postwar careers. But they also shaped a worldview that would have significant consequences for that work.

Chapter two focused on the ALIU itself, and its role in the American art protection efforts of the Second World War. It was necessary to situate the unit among its Allied collaborators, like the Roberts Commission and the MFAA, because the men of these adjacent groups — such as Francis Henry Taylor and Paul Sachs — were fundamental in bringing the ALIU together. After describing the unit's mandate, the chapter summarized its work, particularly the Detailed Interrogation Reports. Most importantly, the unit's work was analyzed within the three contexts that reinforced the nature of their worldview: the OSS, the MFAA and the American occupation of Germany. This chapter also addressed the limitations and the contributions of the unit.

Chapter three discussed the beliefs that led some unit members, Rousseau, Faison, and Wittmann in particular, to engage in problematic activities in their postwar professional lives, activities that drew from, but appear to contradict the spirit of, their wartime work. The first situation was their involvement in a controversial exhibition that featured paintings removed from occupied Germany and brought to the United States after the war. The second instance involved a Nazi looted painting acquired in the 1950s and sold in the 1970s by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. This case — which has just resurfaced — implicated both Rousseau and Faison.

Professional opportunities were present among the ALIU's personnel, just as they were for many others throughout the war. Each of the men demonstrably accelerated their careers, but the three women also became involved in work which may have been impossible without the war. Lambie, Sillcocks, and Whitney's opportunity meant contributing to the American intelligence structure, a male dominated system that was nevertheless strengthened by their contributions. Sillcocks later pursued a career at Princeton, perhaps as a consequence of her ALIU or OSS connections. Coyne was a working-class, publicly-educated man, someone whose "background was basically that of clerical work before becoming a member of the Office of Strategic Services' Art Looting Investigation Unit."<sup>5</sup> Although the six main figures were on successful career paths before the war, their time with the ALIU presented them the opportunity to further develop professional connections. Opportunity for elite socialization also arose. During his time in London, Phillips was invited to join the prestigious Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths of London as a Liveryman, an opportunity only the most elite Americans, like J.P. Morgan, shared.<sup>6</sup> During the war, Sawyer joined Washington's Cosmos Club, which was founded as a private gentleman's social club for the academic and social elite.<sup>7</sup> These social experiences were further opportunities for the men to entrench their values, worldview, and status.

Key to the controversies outlined in this thesis is the fact that the ALIU members' experiences and elements of their worldview were, in fact, a significant point of similarity between American cultural professionals and their German counterparts. Americans and their allies were not the only ones who believed they were saving Western civilization. The Nazi elite

---

<sup>5</sup> Bradsher, "Terence A. Coyne: An Office of Strategic Services' Art Looting Investigation Unit Monuments Man."

<sup>6</sup> Sizer, "John Marshall Phillips, 1905-1953," 9.

<sup>7</sup> Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, BHL, University of Michigan, box 4, "Miscellaneous, 1943-1947."

believed possessing European masterpieces, in private and public collections, solidified Germany's status as a world leader.<sup>8</sup> Both the Americans and Germans saw European cultural objects as physical manifestations of their aspirations for Western hegemony. Nazi officials like Albert Speer claimed Germans were creating a "civilized human society" and protecting Western culture.<sup>9</sup> That American and German cultural officials had fundamentally similar views of the preservation of Western culture, and the measures that were appropriate to preservation, were rooted in their common training in history and art history. These common views also inspired relationships of respect and esteem. Wittmann "[had] sympathy for a lot of the minor German officials who worked at the collecting point in Munich... they were not involved in the looting... Some of the German curators who accompanied the Berlin pictures exhibited in American museums before their return to Germany became excellent art professors in American universities."<sup>10</sup> Petropoulos documents that Rousseau, Faison, and Plaut were quite sympathetic towards Lohse in particular, perhaps because he had a similar background to the American men.

Another uncomfortable area of similarity between US and German approaches — one that illustrated the contours and malleability of the unit members' worldview — was the confiscation and exhibition in the United States of 202 paintings from German collections. Phillips, Sawyer, Wittmann, Faison, Rousseau, and Plaut all agreed that the US had the responsibility to safeguard this artwork. Wittmann and Rousseau, who supported the confiscation and exhibition, expressed an entitlement to having the paintings in the United States. Sawyer,

---

<sup>8</sup> Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*, 14-15.

<sup>9</sup> Gitta Sereny's biography of Albert Speer considers why the Americans and British were so lenient on his sentencing, as in not sentencing him to execution. Sereny makes the interesting point that "when Speer was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment, many people attributed the court's leniency toward Speer to a kind of "old school tie" sympathy, particularly on the part of the British American judges," mostly because of apparent anti-Russian sympathies. This is an extreme but illuminating example of the influence of the "old boys club" during and after the war, and how quickly priorities shifted to anti-Russian initiative. Gitta Sereny, *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* (New York: Random House, 1995), 29.

<sup>10</sup> Wittmann, interview by Richard Cándida Smith, 125.

who opposed it, feared this initiative would tarnish America's image as democratic protector of culture.

This thesis has aspired to a more nuanced understanding of the role of the ALIU. It revises the narrative that the "Monuments Men" of the Second World War were heroic protectors of Western culture and asserts that the men of the Art Looting Investigation Unit were complex people, sometimes driven by self-interest, but whose work was also shaped fundamentally by a worldview which saw little contradiction between prosecuting Nazis for looting artwork, and then confiscating and dealing in art with problematic provenance themselves. A collective biography of the Art Looting Investigation Unit shows how this worldview was acquired. It reveals deep similarities between men who have played a significant role Allied efforts to protect art in war-torn areas. Further critical research is necessary, however, to understand the extent to which former ALIU personnel were involved in acquiring problematic work for American collections.

A 2023 article in the *Art Newspaper* details a New York State law of May 2022 which requires museums to label Nazi looted art.<sup>11</sup> While "recognising the good intentions of the new law," Agnes Peresztegi, a lawyer specialising in Nazi-looted art and the former president of the New York-based Commission for Art Recovery, "doubts it will spark a new transparency drive at museums."<sup>12</sup> The Metropolitan Museum of Art has apparently listed fifty-three restituted works: it is striking that the Metropolitan Museum acquired this much Nazi looted art in the first place, considering that its postwar directors were ALIU and MFAA members, intimately familiar with Nazi art looting and postwar art restitution. More research and extreme diligence will be

---

<sup>11</sup> Hickley, "Has New York's law aimed at identifying Nazi-looted art in museums worked?"

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

required to bring greater transparency to museum practices, and greater justice for the heirs of the rightful owners of these works.

The ongoing issue of repatriation of Nazi looted artworks in American museums is symptomatic of the larger imperial worldview. Stern's heirs' lawsuit illustrates that seventy years ago, when Faison and Rousseau felt empowered to decide the fate of a victim's artwork, they were contributing to the systematic victimization of people impacted by Nazi looting. Even today, the Metropolitan Museum's response to questions of restitution echoes the earlier imperial tone. In May 2023, the director of the Metropolitan Museum, Max Hollein, announced the development of a task force of curators, conservators, researchers, and other professionals equipped to deal with "increased scrutiny from political groups, criminal investigators, and media outlets."<sup>13</sup> Their initiatives will include increased research into the provenance of works acquired after 1970 which came from flagged dealers, hiring a provenance manager and three researchers, and increasing public discussion of cultural property.<sup>14</sup> Hollein also posted a public response on the museum's website that notes that the Metropolitan Museum "has always been and will always be a premier collecting institution... [it] began with neither art nor a building, just the aspiration to become a world-class institution reflecting the broader ambitions of the

---

<sup>13</sup> Taylor Dafoe, "The Met Museum Plans to Hire a Team of Provenance Researchers Amid Increased Scrutiny Around Its Collections," 11 May, 2023. <https://news.artnet.com/news/the-met-provenance-researchers-collecting-practices-2299992>. (accessed 27 November, 2023).

<sup>14</sup> On 3 October 2023, Hollein with French Director Marina Kellen provided an update on these initiatives, some of their digitization efforts with Nigeria's National Museum in Lagos, and the agreement with the Republic of Yemen to transfer the title of two objects back to the country. They also announced that their revised Collection Management Policy now required "loans of antiquities should have provenance dating back to 1970, the date of the UNESCO convention, as has been required for our acquisitions." Max Hollein and Marina Kellen, "Updates on the Met Collection and Cultural Property," 3 October, 2023. <https://www.metmuseum.org/perspectives/articles/2023/9/updates-on-collection-and-cultural-property>. (accessed 19 November, 2023). See the Met's Collection Management Policy: The Met Board of Trustees, "Collections Management Policy: The Metropolitan Museum of Art," 9 May, 2023. <https://www.metmuseum.org/-/media/files/about-the-met/policies-and-documents/collections-management-policy/Collections-Management-Policy-May-2023.pdf>. (accessed 19 November, 2023).

country.”<sup>15</sup> This statement suggests the Metropolitan Museum has always claimed a duty to acquire art in order to reinforce American national culture and identity. Hollein continues, “unlike the great museums of Europe, most of which began as royal collections, our museum, since its inception, was built by and for the public” mostly through gifts and market purchases, further emphasizing the museum’s democratic and capitalist foundation. Notably, Hollein reflected that the Metropolitan Museum’s

predecessors built a museum that today is one of the world’s premier custodians of art, both of the world and for the world, a sanctuary, accessible to anyone, where these works can be cared for, studied, and preserved for future generations. In our collecting, we are guided by the laws and practices of our time and more broadly by our ideals of the contributions that a museum can make to society.<sup>16</sup>

In response to the changing legal landscape, which calls museums to account, Hollein states that recent developments like the Stern case have caused a shift in practices which

reflects changing legal perspectives both in this country and overseas; evolving contemporary views of important ethical issues; and, in some cases, political sentiment. On the latter, we live in a time when the idea of a cosmopolitan, global society is being challenged, and some, more nationalist voices embrace cultural artifacts less as ambassadors of a people but more as evidence of national identity. This creates its own dynamic and also a complex revisiting of cultural history. For others, it is also a time of

---

<sup>15</sup> Max Hollein and Marina Kellen, “Reflections on the Met Collection and Cultural Property,” 9 May, 2023. <https://www.metmuseum.org/perspectives/articles/2023/5/collection-and-cultural-property>. (accessed 19 November, 2023), paragraph 2.

<sup>16</sup> Hollein and Kellen, “Reflections on the Met Collection and Cultural Property,” paragraph 3.



reckoning with history, and museum collections have become icons and emblems in this struggle.<sup>17</sup>

Elements of Hollein's statements are strikingly similar to the outlook of the museum professionals studied here. It has been over seventy years since the ALIU personnel carried out their mission in the name of American custodianship of art and the political stance that art "belongs to everyone". Hollein demonstrates the continuity of this worldview. Only with increased transparency through provenance research, public discourse, and cooperation between museums, courts, victims, and nations, will we be able to tell a more accurate story about groups like the ALIU.

---

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, paragraph 9.

## Appendix 1 – Biographies of Non-Unit Members

### Sumner Crosby

Sumner McKnight Crosby was born in Minnesota in 1909. Crosby studied at Phillips Academy, Andover before continuing his graduate education at Yale University. There, he completed his PhD in 1937, and became a medievalist and architectural historian. After the Second World War, Crosby chaired Yale's Department of Art History (1947-1953). Though the war impeded his research on the Abbey of St. Denis in France, Crosby served as Special Advisor to the Roberts Commission, advising the US State Department on restitution issues.<sup>483</sup>

### Walter Farmer

Walter Farmer, born in 1911 in Ohio, attended Miami University and graduated with a bachelor's degree in Architecture. Farmer worked at A.B. Closson Company and taught at the Cincinnati Art Museum, and the University of Cincinnati. After the war he co-founded Houston's Contemporary Arts Museum before returning to Cincinnati in 1949. During his time as an MFAA officer, Farmer directed the Wiesbaden Collecting Point, and spearheaded the Wiesbaden Manifesto.<sup>484</sup>

### David Finley

David Edward Finley was born in South Carolina in 1890. Finley worked as an attorney before serving in the First World War in the Army Signal Corps. Subsequently, he became a tax attorney and later worked for the federal government in the War Finance Corporation and in a series of government jobs both in the United States and abroad. While in England, Finley found himself working with art dealer Joseph Duveen, which was the beginning of Finley's aspirations for the National Gallery, of which he became the first director. From 1943 until 1946, Finley served as vice-chairman of the Roberts Commission.<sup>485</sup>

### Ardelia Hall

Ardelia Ripley Hall was born in Massachusetts in 1899. Hall earned her MA at Columbia University in Chinese Art while working at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in the 1920s. Before the war, Hall worked at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, until 1941 when she resigned to be married (the wedding never happened). During the war, Hall worked for the OSS. From 1946 until 1962, Hall served as the Fine Arts and Monuments Advisor to the US Department of State. Upon her retirement from the State Department, Hall continued her mission to protect the world's art by petitioning for an embargo to be placed on the importation of Cambodian art into the US. Hall died in 1979.<sup>486</sup>

---

<sup>483</sup> Dictionary of Art Historians, "Crosby, Sumner McKnight," <https://arthistorians.info/crosbys>. (accessed 8 August 2023). (Appendix 1)

<sup>484</sup> Trisha Brockmeyer and Geoff Edwards, "Walter Farmer: Cincinnati's Own "Monuments Man," 8 June 2021. <https://cincinnatiartmuseum.org/about/blog/walter-farmer-cincinnati-own-monuments-man/>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>485</sup> Dictionary of Art Historians, "Finley, David," <https://arthistorians.info/finleyd>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>486</sup> Victoria Reed, "Ardelia Hall: From Museum of Fine Arts to Monuments Woman," *International Journal of Cultural Property* 21:1 (February 2014): 80-89.

### **Mason Hammond**

Mason Hammond, born in Massachusetts in 1903, was a Rhodes scholar and prominent Harvard University Classics professor.<sup>487</sup> Hammond began his Second World War military career as Captain in Air Force Intelligence before beginning work with the MFAA in 1942. In 1943, he was the first American Monuments officer to enter the field in North Africa. He worked closely with Francis Henry Taylor, vice-chairman of the Roberts Commission, in drafting the handbooks for the Military Government in Germany. After the war, Hammond received numerous accolades for his MFAA work.<sup>488</sup>

### **Theodore Heinrich**

Born in Tacoma, Washington in 1910, Theodore Allen Heinrich studied Philosophy, Art, History, and English at the University of California. After graduating, Heinrich travelled extensively in Europe and the Mediterranean. He later graduated with an MA in art and architectural history from King's College at Cambridge University. In 1943, Heinrich went through the Military Intelligence Training Centre at Camp Ritchie, Maryland. After serving as Deputy Chief for the Enemy Communications Section of G-2, Heinrich stayed in Germany at the Wiesbaden Central Collecting Point until 1950, where he worked with German authorities on cultural rehabilitation. After the war, Heinrich worked at the Huntington Library in California, then as Associate Curator of Paintings and Curator-in-charge of drawings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, as Director of the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, and as a professor at the University of Saskatchewan and York University in Toronto.<sup>489</sup>

### **Bancel LaFarge**

Louis Bancel LaFarge was born in Massachusetts in 1900. LaFarge graduated from Harvard and Yale and later worked as an architect in New York, South Carolina, and the Virgin Islands, among other places. During the Second World War, LaFarge was the Chief of the MFAA section of the Seventh Army under General Lucius Clay. In his position as Chief, LaFarge established the Munich Central Collecting Point and carried out numerous other undertakings with the MFAA in Europe. LaFarge played an ambiguous role with regard to the 202 German paintings, claiming that he supported the sentiments of the Wiesbaden Manifesto, but he declined to forward it to the military leadership.<sup>490</sup>

### **Lamont Moore**

Lamont Moore was born in New Jersey in 1909. During his education at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania, Moore received a Carnegie fellowship, through which he travelled to Holland, France, Switzerland, and England to study. Moore worked as curator of the National Gallery of

---

<sup>487</sup> Harvard University Department of History, "Mason Hammond," <https://history.fas.harvard.edu/people/mason-hammond>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>488</sup> The Monuments Men and Women Foundation, "Mason Hammond (1903-2002)," <https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/hammond-lt-col-mason>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>489</sup> University of Regina Library, "Theodore Allen Heinrich," <https://www.uregina.ca/library/services/archives/collections/art-architecture/heinrich.html>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>490</sup> AskART, "Louis Bancel LaFarge," [https://www.askart.com/artist/Louis\\_Bancel\\_LaFarge/11241250/Louis\\_Bancel\\_LaFarge.aspx](https://www.askart.com/artist/Louis_Bancel_LaFarge/11241250/Louis_Bancel_LaFarge.aspx). (accessed 8 August 2023); The Monuments Men and Women Foundation, "Louis Bancel LaFarge (1900-1989)," <https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/lafarge-maj-l-bancel>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

Art's educational department during and after the war. In 1945, Moore was commissioned to the MFAA section of the US Ninth Army. During his time with the MFAA, he travelled extensively throughout Germany to assist in the evacuation of artworks looted by Nazis. Moore was a signatory of the Wiesbaden Manifesto, but curated the 202 German paintings during their time in the United States. During the early postwar period, Moore acted as Administrative Officer and Assistant Secretary-Treasurer for the Roberts Commission, before starting a career at Yale.<sup>491</sup>

### **Norman Holmes Pearson**

Norman Holmes Pearson was born in 1909 in Massachusetts. After attending Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, he began studies at Yale, where by 1941 he had received an undergraduate degree and PhD. In the 1930s, Pearson worked toward a Master of Arts from Oxford. Pearson also co-founded the American Civilization program at Yale.<sup>492</sup> During the Second World War, Pearson directed the X-2 London branch of the OSS.<sup>493</sup>

### **Owen J. Roberts**

Justice Owen Josephus Roberts was born in Pennsylvania in 1875.<sup>494</sup> Roberts graduated with an undergraduate degree from the University of Pennsylvania, and in 1898, graduated from its law school. After a thirty-year career, President Herbert Hoover nominated Roberts to be a Supreme Court Justice. During the war, Justice Roberts chaired the commission on the attack on Pearl Harbour, and the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas. He resigned from the supreme court in 1945.<sup>495</sup>

### **James Rorimer**

James Rorimer was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1905. Rorimer studied at private schools in the United States and in Europe, before entering Harvard University in 1923. In 1927, Rorimer started at the Metropolitan Museum as assistant in the department of decorative arts, and by 1929 was promoted to assistant curator. He played a significant role in the medieval department of the museum, particularly with the Cloisters, of which he became associate curator in 1932. By 1938, he became curator of the Cloisters, which included the role of seeking further monetary donations from J. D Rockefeller. In 1943 Rorimer became head of the MFAA of the US Seventh Army, Western Military District. One of his responsibilities included the seizure of the Goring, Goebbels and Rosenberg art collections. After the war, Rorimer directed the Cloisters.<sup>496</sup> After Francis Henry Taylor's resignation, Rorimer became director of the Metropolitan Museum until his death in 1966.<sup>497</sup>

### **Paul Joseph Sachs**

---

<sup>491</sup> The Monuments Men and Women Foundation, "Lamont Moore (1909-1988)," <https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/moore-lt-lamont>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>492</sup> American Studies Association, "Carl Bode – Norman Holmes Pearson Prize," <https://www.theasa.net/awards/asa-awards-prizes/carl-bode-%E2%80%93-norman-holmes-pearson-prize>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>493</sup> See Winks, *Cloak and Gown*, 247-321.

<sup>494</sup> Brian P. Smentkowski, "Owen Josephus Roberts: United States jurist," *Britannica*. 13 May 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Owen-Josephus-Roberts>.

<sup>495</sup> Richard D. Friedman, "Owen J. Roberts," *Yale Biographical Dictionary of American Law*, 461:2 (2009): 462.

<sup>496</sup> Arthur Houghton, et al., "James J. Rorimer," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 25:1 (Summer 1966): 44.

<sup>497</sup> Dictionary of Art Historians, "Rorimer, James," <https://arthistorians.info/rorimerj>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

Paul J. Sachs was born in 1878 into New York's German Jewish community. Paul's father, Samuel Sachs married Louisa Goldman. Together, Samuel Sachs and his father-in-law started the investment banking firm Goldman and Sachs. Paul Sachs attended Harvard, and though he worked for his father's firm for a short period, ultimately chose art collection and art history. Sachs has become well-known for his museology course at Harvard and his contributions to the Harvard Fogg Museum. Students in the museum course emerged at the most prominent American cultural officials, before, during, and after the Second World War. Sachs' extensive knowledge of art history made him a central figure in the American Defense – Harvard Group and the Roberts Commission.

### **Craig Hugh Smyth**

Born in 1915 in New York, Craig Hugh Smyth received an undergraduate degree, a Master of Fine Arts, and PhD from Princeton University. Smyth held teaching positions at New York University, Princeton, the National Gallery of Art, and Harvard. Smyth also chaired the J. Paul Getty Research Institute for the History of Arts and Humanities. During the Second World War, Smyth was drafted to the US Naval Reserve, served with the MFAA and directed the Munich Central Collecting Point. Smyth received a US Army Commendation medal.<sup>498</sup>

### **Edith Standen**

Born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1905, Edith Appleton Standen frequently moved countries throughout her formative years because of her father's job as a British Army Officer. After graduating from Somerville College at Oxford, Standen moved to Boston, began working with the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, and volunteered at Harvard's Fogg Museum. She worked as art collector Joseph Widener's secretary, and in 1943 she enlisted in the Women's Army Corps, with the Women's Army Air Force. By 1945, Standen worked as a Fine Arts Specialist Officer for the MFAA. Standen was a central figure in the 202 German painting controversy. After the war, Standen worked as assistant curator and then curator of textiles at the Metropolitan Museum.<sup>499</sup>

### **George Leslie Stout**

George Leslie Stout was born in 1897 in Iowa. After serving in the First World War, Stout attended the University of Iowa, and graduated in 1921. Stout began a Master of Art at Harvard in 1926, graduating in 1929, and immediately began lecturing and working as a conservator at the Fogg Art Museum until 1947. During the war, Stout was appointed to the MFAA Section for the Twelfth Army Group and eventually became Section Lieutenant Commander. He played a significant part in the recovery of Nazi looted art from Merkers salt mine, Ransbach in Thuringia, and Alt Aussee. Later in 1945, Stout became the Chief of the Arts and Monuments Division at Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Tokyo. After the War, Stout directed the Worcester Art Museum and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.<sup>500</sup>

### **Bernard Taper**

---

<sup>498</sup> Dictionary of Art Historians, "Smyth, Craig Hugh," <https://arthistorians.info/smythc>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>499</sup> National Museum of the United States Army, "Edith A. Standen," <https://www.thenmusa.org/biographies/edith-a-standen/>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>500</sup> Archives of American Art, "George Leslie Stout Papers, 1855, 1897-1978," <https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/george-leslie-stout-papers-13421/biographical-note>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

Born in Scotland to Eastern European Jewish immigrant parents, Bernard Taper grew up with his grandparents in Los Angeles, California. Taper attended the University of California at Berkeley, and graduated with a degree in creative writing. After being drafted into the US Army in 1942, Taper filled served several positions in an anti-aircraft battalion and later, simultaneously became an Infantry Officer and a US citizen. Taper was discharged from the Army to begin work with the MFAA in 1946, where he conducted investigations similar to those of the ALIU. Taper worked closely with Otto Wittmann in his interrogations of Hans Wendland. He carried out his investigative work until mid-1948.<sup>501</sup>

### **Francis Henry Taylor**

Francis Henry Taylor was born in Pennsylvania in 1903. After studying at University of Pennsylvania, Taylor travelled across Europe, attended the Sorbonne, and eventually went to Europe as a Princeton Carnegie fellow before dropping out of graduate school to begin working. Taylor began his directorship of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1940 and carried out this role until 1955. He died in 1957.<sup>502</sup>

### **Robert de Vries**

Ary Robert de Vries, born 1905 in Amsterdam, was an expert in Dutch masterpieces. de Vries worked at the Rijksmuseum until he was forced to leave in May 1940 after the German occupation of the Netherlands. Considered a “Monuments Man,” after arriving in London, de Vries compiled lists of cultural objects across the Netherlands based on his memory, which greatly assisted in the Dutch restitution efforts. After the war, de Vries directed the Dutch Mauritshuis, and served as Director of the Rijksmuseum Mesdag (the Van Gogh Museum) and the Netherlands Institute for Art History. De Vries died in 1983.<sup>503</sup>

---

<sup>501</sup> The Monuments Men and Women Foundation, “Bernard Taper, (1918-2016),” <https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/taper-lt-bernard>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>502</sup> Dictionary of Art Historians, “Taylor, Francis Henry,” <https://arthistorians.info/taylorf>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>503</sup> *The Monuments Men and Women Foundation*, “Ary Robert (Bob) de Vries (1905-1983),” <https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/de-vries-maj-a-b>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

## Appendix 2 –Interrogation Report Subjects

### Hermann Göring/The Göring Collection

Hermann Göring was one of the highest-ranking Nazis during the Third Reich, as Commander in Chief of the *Luftwaffe*, Director of the Four-Year Plan, and for a period, Hitler's successor. The International Military Tribunal charged him with crimes against peace, crimes against humanity, and conspiracy to commit crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.<sup>504</sup>

Göring amassed an art collection of more than one-thousand items, collected through illegal methods, such as forced sales.<sup>505</sup> To attend to the collection, Göring had two groups working for him: civilian staff, who focused on administrative matters, and purchasing agents. The ALIU CIR number two gives details on the Göring Collection, with particular attention to the other figures involved in the elaborate and resource-heavy scheme.<sup>506</sup>

### Alfred Rosenberg/ Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR)

Born in Russia in 1893, Alfred Rosenberg was an early Nazi Party member and fanatical antisemite, known for his strong ideological beliefs. In the 1930s, Rosenberg worked for the Nazi Party's foreign policy office, and later oversaw the party's ideological training. Part of Rosenberg's ideology was that the "Jewish conspiracy" was being transmitted globally through archival sources and literature. This idea led to the institutionalized confiscation of Jewish property across Europe, and in 1940 the creation of the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR).<sup>507</sup> The ERR proved to be the Nazis' most extensive art looting operation. In 1940, Göring ordered the ERR to confiscate "ownerless" Jewish art collections in occupied France, and to make that their priority. ALIU CIR number one is dedicated to detailing the activities of Rosenberg's ideologically driven organization.<sup>508</sup>

### Heinrich Hoffmann

Heinrich Hoffmann, born in 1885 in Bavaria, was a German photographer, art magazine publisher, and close acquaintance of Hitler. Hoffmann introduced Hitler to his partner, Eva Braun. After the Nazis rose to power, Hoffmann became a leading figure in the degenerate art campaign. Through this role, Hoffmann also became heavily involved in the Reich's public art activities, personally advising Hitler on the Linz Museum.<sup>509</sup> According to ALIU DIR number one on Hoffmann, he made a huge amount of money off his wartime work, but his relationship with Hitler deteriorated as the years went on. Bernard Taper met with Hoffmann after the war and published an article about his experiences, Taper stated that "it was pretty much through the lenses of Hoffmann's cameras that the world saw Hitler."<sup>510</sup> Henry Picker's 1974 book *The*

---

<sup>504</sup> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Hermann Göring," *Holocaust Encyclopaedia*. <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/hermann-goering>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>505</sup> "The Hermann Goring Collection," Smithsonian, <https://www.si.edu/spotlight/monuments-men/hermangoring>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>506</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 2: Ernst Buchner," 1-5.

<sup>507</sup> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Alfred Rosenberg," *Holocaust Encyclopaedia*. <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/alfred-rosenberg-biography>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>508</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: CIR number 1: The Activity of the Einsatzstab Rosenberg in France," 3.

<sup>509</sup> Bernard Taper, "Hitler's Photographer: An Intimate Friend of the Führer," *The New Yorker*, 27 October 1950. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1950/11/04/hitlers-photographer>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

<sup>510</sup> Ibid.

*Hitler Phenomenon: An Intimate Portrait of Hitler and his Entourage* featured hundreds of Hoffmann's photos.<sup>511</sup>

### **Ernst Buchner**

Ernest Buchner, born in 1892 in Munich, was a museum director at the Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne, and the Bavarian State Paintings Collection. He joined the Nazi Party in 1933, and during the Second World War served in France for one year. In 1940, he returned to civilian work at the Bavarian Academy of Learning and as professor at the University of Munich. By 1943, Buchner, as a leading authority on German paintings, assisted in choosing the storage locations for the ERR and Linz collections. Because of his expertise, Buchner was frequently consulted on authentication, collecting, and preservation.<sup>512</sup> Buchner is the subject of ALIU DIR number two.

### **Robert Scholz**

Robert Scholz was an Austrian-born artist and art critic. After joining the Nazi Party in 1935, he filled several cultural positions before being appointed Director of the Mortizburg Museum at Halle in 1939. By 1940, Scholz was made Director of the ERR's Office of Pictorial Arts. In his capacity as Director, Scholz advised Alfred Rosenberg on all artistic matters, and eventually controlled much of the ERR's Paris operations.<sup>513</sup>

### **Gustav Rochlitz**

Gustav Rochlitz, born in 1889, was a German painter and art dealer. During the First World War, Rochlitz worked as an illustrator for a German army journal in Belgium. Before the Second World War, Rochlitz worked as a dealer, travelling throughout Europe, mainly in Italy, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. In 1924, he opened an art gallery in Berlin. At the outset of the Second World War Rochlitz was captured by the French. Upon release, he returned to art dealing, most notably to Haberstock and for the Linz collection. In 1944 he was called to military duty.<sup>514</sup>

### **Gunther Schiedlausky**

Born in Berlin in 1907, Gunther Schiedlausky studied at the Universities of Berlin and Vienna before completing a PhD in Art History at the University of Marburg. After becoming a Nazi Party member in 1931, Schiedlausky worked as a research assistant in the Department of Sculpture of the State Museums in Berlin. He later received a fellowship to study in Florence. Until he was drafted in 1940, Schiedlausky worked to protect and conceal paintings at Berlin museums. When not on active military duty, Schiedlausky mainly worked to curate exhibitions for the ERR, including specific exhibits for Rosenberg's visits. Towards the end of the war, Schiedlausky oversaw the transfer of ERR objects to the deposits at Neuschwanstein, Buxheim, and Chiemsee.<sup>515</sup>

---

<sup>511</sup> Henry Picker and Heinrich Hoffmann, *The Hitler Phenomenon: An Intimate Portrait of Hitler and His Entourage* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1974).

<sup>512</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 2: Ernst Buchner," 1-2.

<sup>513</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 3: Robert Scholz," 1-3.

<sup>514</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 4: Gustav Rochlitz," (August 15, 1945). EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946, <https://www.fold3.com/image/231995954/4> (accessed 15 November 2023), 1-3.

<sup>515</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 5: Gunther Schiedlausky," 1-3.



### **Bruno Lohse**

Wilhelm Peter Bruno Lohse was born in 1911 in Westphalia. From 1930 until 1932, Lohse studied Art History, Philosophy, and Germanic Culture at the University of Berlin. In 1933, Lohse studied languages in France. In 1936, he completed graduate studies in Art History, and in 1939 finished a PhD in Fine Arts from the University of Frankfurt.<sup>516</sup> Lohse became a Nazi Party member in 1937, and briefly taught sports for the Schutzstaffel (SS). In 1941, Lohse began working for the ERR in Paris where he was tasked with cataloguing the recently confiscated Kann Collection before being assigned to work as Göring's special agent. In August 1944, Lohse avoided being sent on active military service to the Eastern Front based on his work for Göring, and some health concerns.<sup>517</sup> Throughout the war and after, Lohse was actively involved in an array of art deals, across a number of European countries and in North America as well.<sup>518</sup>

### **Walter Andreas Hofer**

Walter Andreas Hofer was born in 1893 in Berlin. After serving in the First World War, Hofer worked for his brother-in-law, an art dealer, before returning to Berlin to study art.<sup>519</sup> Hofer directed Göring's art collection during the war, acting as his personal agent and curator.<sup>520</sup> In 1936, Hofer met Göring and by 1939 was the latter's primary dealer. Throughout the war, Hofer travelled to the Jeu de Paume in Paris to make selections for Göring's collection from plundered art. He was also involved with many coercive dealings in Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, where it was likely he gained considerable personal wealth. By 1944, Hofer was stationed at Carinhall, Göring's residence, where he could carry out his curatorial duties.<sup>521</sup> Despite Hofer's criminal responsibility in Göring's art collection, Hofer avoided incarceration by the French Military Tribunal, which sentenced him to ten years in prison.<sup>522</sup> After the war, Hofer returned to dealing on a small scale, and he died in the 1970s.<sup>523</sup>

### **Karl Kress**

Karl Kress was born in 1900 in Wiesbaden, Germany. From 1918 until 1930, Kress served in the German army and in 1931, became the technical assistant to the State Art Collections at Kassel. He worked as a photographer, eventually for the Luftwaffe. In 1940, Kress travelled to the Jeu de Paume to photograph art objects. By 1941, he began full time work as an ERR photographer under Bruno Lohse and others. Later in the war, Kress took various photographic missions around occupied territory.<sup>524</sup>

### **Herman Voss**

Born in Hanover in 1884, Hermann Voss studied Art History at Heidelberg and Berlin. He received a PhD from Heidelberg in 1906. Voss travelled widely to Italy, France, and Holland to work, volunteer, and study. During the First World War, Voss served in political intelligence. Between 1918 and 1933, Voss published two books. During this period, he also travelled to the

---

<sup>516</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 6: Bruno Lohse," 1.

<sup>517</sup> Ibid.

<sup>518</sup> See Petropoulos, *Göring's Man in Paris* for a detailed account of Lohse's activities throughout and after the war.

<sup>519</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 9: Walter Andreas Hofer," 1.

<sup>520</sup> Petropoulos, *Göring's Man in Paris*, 25; Plaut, "Loot for the Master Race," 62.

<sup>521</sup> Petropoulos, *The Faustian Bargain*, 128-130.

<sup>522</sup> Ibid, 130.

<sup>523</sup> Petropoulos, *The Faustian Bargain*, 93, 131.

<sup>524</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 10: Karl Kress," 2.

US, including to Washington, Boston, Cambridge, and Princeton, among other locations. After becoming director of the Wiesbaden Museum in 1935, Voss travelled to Paris and London.<sup>525</sup> Voss was appointed director of the Dresden Gallery and as Special Commissioner for the Linz project in 1943.<sup>526</sup> According to ALIU DIR twelve, Voss held anti-Nazi beliefs, and tried to maintain isolation from any Nazi activities.<sup>527</sup> The interrogation report also indicates that Voss' primary role in Linz and Dresden was to protect the collections and acquisitions from physical harm.<sup>528</sup> However, his significant roles with the Linz collection and Dresden Gallery also suggest that he prioritized his professional ambitions over his moral and political views.<sup>529</sup> The ALIU recommended Voss be tried as a war criminal, but he did not see such charges. Voss died in 1969.<sup>530</sup>

### **Karl Haberstock**

Karl Haberstock was born in Augsburg in 1878. Despite becoming one of the most successful art dealers of the Third Reich, Haberstock had no university education. Rather, he was a businessman, having become a bookkeeper and clerk in 1896. Haberstock started dealing art as a business opportunity. His "picture shop" in Berlin grew considerably before the First World War, and he gained a loyal, upper-class clientele, many of whom were right-wing and antisemitic.<sup>531</sup> Haberstock himself played off people's biases to gain business. Before the Second World War, Haberstock sought out opportunities to further educate himself, and he travelled abroad to study major museums and cultural institutions.<sup>532</sup> Haberstock joined the Nazi party in the early 1930s. Throughout the war, Haberstock dealt with prominent dealers such as Georges Wildenstein and Theodore Fischer. His connection to the Linz project was as chief advisor to Hans Posse, the first Linz museum director. Haberstock's role was significant enough to have multiple agents working under him across occupied territories.<sup>533</sup> After the war, Haberstock returned to the art world. He died in 1956.<sup>534</sup>

### **Hans Wendland**

Hans Wendland was born in 1880 in Neu Ruppin. From 1901 until 1906, Wendland studied at the University of Berlin and received his PhD in Art History in 1906. During the First World War, Wendland was injured and returned to Berlin to continue dealing art.<sup>535</sup> After the war, Wendland moved to Switzerland, and later to Paris. Anne Rothfeld notes that "Wendland owed his success" to Theodore Fischer with whom he had a strong business partnership.<sup>536</sup> During the Second World War, he again lived in Switzerland. Wendland's involvement in dealing and trading on the Swiss market were of considerable interest for the ALIU and the Allies. His case was complicated by Swiss neutrality, but also by the fact that Wendland travelled throughout the

---

<sup>525</sup> Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 12: Hermann Voss," 1-2.

<sup>526</sup> Ibid, 2-3.

<sup>527</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>528</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>529</sup> Petropoulos, *The Faustian Bargain*, 73.

<sup>530</sup> Ibid.

<sup>531</sup> Ibid, 96.

<sup>532</sup> Ibid, 99.

<sup>533</sup> Haberstock's wartime activities are elaborated upon in Petropoulos' *The Faustian Bargain*, chapter 2; Fold3, "ALIU: DIR number 13: Karl Haberstock," 2-7.

<sup>534</sup> Petropoulos, *The Faustian Bargain*, 122.

<sup>535</sup> GRI, SC, Otto Wittmann Papers, series II, box 3, folder 19.

<sup>536</sup> Rothfeld, "Unscrupulous Opportunists," 192.

war, especially to Paris where he set himself up as a dealer out of the Ritz Hotel.<sup>537</sup> Rothfeld noted that “Wendland capitalized on the Nazi expropriation and confiscation machinery and, in turn, assisted in the transformation of the postwar international art market.”<sup>538</sup>

### **Kajetan Mühlmann**

Kajetan Mühlmann was born in 1898 in western Austria. After serving in the First World War, Mühlmann began studying Art History in Vienna and Innsbruck, before receiving his PhD in 1926 from the University of Vienna.<sup>539</sup> Mühlmann maintained friendships with Göring and his sister Olga. Initially, Mühlmann kept his membership in the Austrian Nazi Party quiet, but by the late 1930s, Mühlmann became a liaison between leading Austrian Nazis and Hitler. Throughout the war, Mühlmann traded on these relationships, which in turn allowed him to rise to great power within the regime. Seized Jewish artwork became a primary focus of Mühlmann’s.<sup>540</sup> Whether in Austria, Polish territory, or the Netherlands, Mühlmann’s primary occupation was the plundering, sorting, and cataloguing of Jewish assets. Mühlmann was captured by the Americans in June 1945, and remained in a prison camp until 1948.<sup>541</sup> In February 1948, he escaped and lived the rest of his life in hiding, until his death from stomach cancer in August 1948.<sup>542</sup>

### **Maria Almas-Dietrich**

Maria Dietrich was born in 1892 in Munich to a middle-class family. Her father owned and ran a butcher shop, where Dietrich eventually worked and in doing so, developed a strong business sense. She married a Turkish Jew, Ali Almas-Diamant, a rug expert. Before their separation and later divorce, they ran a rug shop and art gallery in Munich. After Almas-Diamant left Germany for France, Almas-Dietrich carried on with the business and developed a successful art gallery, that specialized in German landscape artists.<sup>543</sup> By the mid-1930s, Almas-Dietrich’s shop was labelled as Jewish and began to be a target of antisemitism. Almas-Dietrich and Heinrich Hoffmann developed a business relationship, which led to transactions with Hitler. Despite her inclusion within Hitler’s circle because of her importance in obtaining artwork, Almas-Dietrich was labeled as an amateur by people like Haberstock. Hitler continued to purchase often falsely-attributed work from Almas-Dietrich throughout the war, especially as his collection grew.<sup>544</sup> By 1944, her business started to dwindle, as Posse, Voss, and Hitler were purchasing less.<sup>545</sup> Almas-Dietrich was not charged or prosecuted for her wartime work.

### **Alois Miedl**

Alois Miedl, born in 1903 in Munich, was a banker who moved to Amsterdam in the 1930s. Before the war, Miedl and Göring developed a friendship, however, Miedl did not join the Nazi party because his wife was Jewish. In the 1930s, began dealing art, and benefited from Göring’s

---

<sup>537</sup> Ibid.

<sup>538</sup> Ibid, 195.

<sup>539</sup> Petropoulos, *The Faustian Bargain*, 203.

<sup>540</sup> Ibid, 217.

<sup>541</sup> Ibid, 234.

<sup>542</sup> Ibid, 240.

<sup>543</sup> Rothfeld, “Unscrupulous Opportunists,” 55-56.

<sup>544</sup> Ibid, 71.

<sup>545</sup> Ibid, 91.

financial and personal support.<sup>546</sup> By the late 1930s, Miedl was Göring's primary art dealer in the Netherlands, while maintaining the status of an independent agent. Göring provided protection from deportation for Miedl's Jewish family in exchange for the acquisition of artwork.<sup>547</sup> Miedl, however, took advantage of other fleeing Dutch families by purchasing their assets upon their departure from the Netherlands. Miedl also purchased artwork through the Netherlands alongside Linz director, Hans Posse, for Hitler's collection. A particular interest for the Allies was Miedl's travel to Spain and Switzerland during and after the war. Miedl never faced war crime charges, and never openly admitted to Nazi collaboration. He died in 1990.<sup>548</sup>

---

<sup>546</sup> Rothfeld, "Unscrupulous Opportunists," 142.

<sup>547</sup> Ibid, 143.

<sup>548</sup> Ibid, 182.

## Bibliography

### Primary Sources

#### Archival Sources

Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, S. Lane Faison Papers, series 4.1.

Columbia University Archives. Calvin Sutliff Hathaway papers. Series I.

Getty Research Institute (GRI), Special Collections (SC), Otto Wittmann Papers, series II.

National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, Gallery Archives. RG28MFAA-B, S. Lane Faison, Jr. Papers, Photographs.

The National Archives Catalogue. FO 371: Foreign Office: General Correspondence from Political and Other Departments. FO 371/53104. Restitution of Looted Works of Art.

University of Michigan. Bentley Historical Library (BHL). Charles Henry Sawyer Papers.

University of Regina. Archer Library. Archives and Special Collections. Theodore Allen Heinrich.

#### Interviews

Faison, S. Lane. *Save America's Treasures Program of the National Park Service*. By Robert F. Brown. December 14, 1981.

Faison, Lane. *Art History – Oral Documentation Project*. By Richard Cándida Smith. October 27-29, 1992.

Faison Jr., S. Lane. *The Museum of Modern Art Oral History Program*. By Anna Swinbourne. December 5, 2001.

Plaut, James Sachs. *Archives of American Art Smithsonian Institution*. By Robert F. Brown. June 29 – July 13, 1971.

Standen, Edith A. *Metropolitan Museum of Art Oral History Project*. By Sharon Zane. January 6-13, 1994.

Wittmann, Otto. *Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities*. By Richard Cándida Smith. 1995.

#### Electronic Database

Fold3, EU OSS Art Looting Investigation Reports, 1945-1946.

Fold3, EU Roberts Commission – Protection of Historical Monuments, 1943-1946.  
<https://www.fold3.com/image/270235244>.

### **Other Sources**

Kohn, Robert E. “Complaint for Restitution, Injunctive Relief, Damages, and Punitive Damages, For: 1. Recovery of Personal Property: 2. Restitution of Unjust Enrichment; and 3. Conversion; and Demand for Jury Trial, Case 3:22-cv-08924-SK, Santa Monica, CA, 2022.

Petropoulos, Jonathan. *Preliminary Research Report of Jonathan Petropoulos Concerning Vincent van Gogh, “Olive Picking” (1889), previously in the Collection of Hedwig Stern*. 15 December 2023.

### **Secondary Sources**

Akinsha, Konstantin, Grigorii Kozlov and Sylvia Hochfield. *Beautiful Loot: The Soviet Plunder of Europe’s Art Treasures*. New York: Random House, 1995.

Akinsha, Konstantin and Grigorii Kozlov. “Spoils of War: The Soviet Union’s Hidden Art Treasures.” *ARTnews*, April 1991.

Allardyce, Gilbert. “The Rise and Fall of the Western Civilization Course.” *The American Historical Review* 87:3 (1982): 695-725.

Alford, Kenneth D. *The Spoils of World War II: The American Military’s Role in Stealing Europe’s Treasures*. New York, N.Y: Carol Publishing Group, 1994.

American Council of Learned Societies. “ACLS and the Monuments Men,” 2023.  
<https://www.acls.org/acls-and-the-monuments-men/>. (accessed 7 August 2023).

American Studies Association. “Carl Bode – Norman Holmes Pearson Prize.”  
<https://www.theasa.net/awards/asa-awards-prizes/carl-bode-%E2%80%93-norman-holmes-pearson-prize>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

Archives of American Art. “Walter Horn Papers, 1908-1992, bulk 1943-1950.”  
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/walter-horn-papers-9658/biographical-note>. (accessed 19 November 2023).

Archives of American Art. “George Leslie Stout Papers, 1855, 1897-1978.”  
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/george-leslie-stout-papers-13421/biographical-note>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

- AskART. "Louis Bancel LaFarge."  
[https://www.askart.com/artist/Louis\\_Bancel\\_LaFarge/11241250/Louis\\_Bancel\\_LaFarge.aspx](https://www.askart.com/artist/Louis_Bancel_LaFarge/11241250/Louis_Bancel_LaFarge.aspx). (accessed 8 August 2023).
- Bailey, Martin. "Was Van Gogh's olive grove landscape another Nazi-era 'forced sale'?" January 27, 2023, <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2023/01/27/van-gogh-olive-grove-landscape-nazi-forced-sale>. (accessed 15 November 2023).
- Berrin, Kathleen. *Exhibiting the Foreign on US Soil: American Art Museums and National Diplomacy Exhibitions Before, During, and After World War II*. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2021.
- Boehling, Rebecca. "The Role of Culture in American Relations With Europe: The Case of the United States Occupation of Germany." *Diplomatic History* 23:1, (1999): 57-69.
- Bowie, Theodore ed. *Langdon Warner through his letters*. London: Indiana University Press, 1966.
- Bradsher, Greg. "Monuments Man Charles H. Sawyer, part I: Member of the U.S Army, the Office of Strategic Services, and the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas." 21 July 2014. National Archives and Record Administration. <https://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2014/07/21/monuments-man-charles-sawyer-i/>. (accessed 19 November 2023).
- Bradsher, Greg. "Monuments Man Charles H. Sawyer, part II: Double Duty for the Roberts Commission and the OSS." 22 July 2014. National Archives and Record Administration. <https://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2014/07/22/monuments-man-charles-sawyer-ii/>. (accessed 19 November 2023).
- Bradsher, Greg. "Terence A. Coyne: An Office of Strategic Services' Art Looting Investigation Unit Monuments Man." 2014. National Archives and Record Administration. <https://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2014/07/24/monuments-man-terence-coyne/>. (accessed 15 November 2023).
- Bregman, Alexandra. "The van Gogh Wars: Part 3: The Olive Picking (1899) Belonging to Holocaust Escapees Ends up in Greek Shipping Magnate Museum." *Forbes* online, December 25, 2022, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/alexandrabregman/2022/12/25/the-van-gogh-wars--part-3-the-olive-picking-1889-belonging-to-holocaust-escapees-ends-up-in-greek-shipping-magnate-museum/?sh=2fbc8bbd29e5>.
- Brockmeyer, Trisha and Geoff Edwards. "Walter Farmer: Cincinnati's Own 'Monuments Man.'" 8 June 2021. <https://cincinnatiartmuseum.org/about/blog/walter-farmer-cincinnati-own-monuments-man/>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

- Brush, Kathryn. "German Kunstwissenschaft and the Practice of Art History in America after World War I: Interrelationships, Exchanges, Contexts." *Marburger Jahrbuch Für Kunstwissenschaft* 7:36, (1999): 7-36.
- Campbell, Elizabeth. "Claiming National Heritage: State Appropriation of Nazi Art Plunder in Postwar Western Europe." *Journal of Contemporary History* 55:4 (2020): 793–822.
- Campbell, Elizabeth. "Monuments Women and Men: Rethinking Popular Narratives via British Major Anne Olivier Popham." *International Journal of Cultural Property* 28:3 (2021): 409-424.
- Cascone, Sarah. "The Heirs of a Jewish Art Collector are Suing the Metropolitan Museum for Selling a Van Gogh Painting They Say Was Plundered by Nazis." December 19, 2022, <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/jewish-heirs-sue-met-over-van-gogh-2232324>. (accessed 15 November, 2023).
- Central Intelligence Agency. "The "Glorious Amateurs" of OSS: A Sisterhood of Spies, 6 April 2023. <https://www.cia.gov/stories/story/glorious-amateurs-of-oss-sisterhood-of-spies/>. (accessed 7 August 2023).
- Chambers II, John Whiteclay. "Instructing for Dangerous Missions." In *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*. Washington: U.S. National Park Service, 2008.
- Clooney, George, dir. *The Monuments Men*. 2014; Berlin, Germany; Columbia Pictures and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Monuments\\_Men](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Monuments_Men).
- Cowman, Krista. "Collective biography." In *Research Methods for History*, edited by Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire, second edition. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2016.
- Curtis, Simon, dir. *Woman in Gold*. 2015; Berlin, Germany: BBC Films. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2404425/>.
- Dack, William Mikkel. "Questioning the Past: The Fragebogen and Everyday Denazification in Occupied Germany." Doctoral Thesis, University of Calgary, 2016.
- Dafoe, Taylor. "The Met Museum Plans to Hire a Team of Provenance Researchers Amid Increased Scrutiny Around Its Collections." 11 May, 2023. <https://news.artnet.com/news/the-met-provenance-researchers-collecting-practices-2299992>. (accessed 27 November, 2023).
- Dean, Robert D. *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001.
- Deshmukh, Marion. "Recovering Culture: The Berlin National Gallery and the U.S. Occupation, 1945-1949." *Central European History* 27:4 (1994): 411–439.



Deshmukh, Marion F. "The Visual Arts and Cultural Migration in the 1930s and 1940s: A Literature Review." *Central European History* 41:4 (2008): 569–604.

Dictionary of Art Historians.

<https://arthistorians.info/plautj#:~:text=Plaut%20received%20an%20honorary%20D.F.A.,world%20artisans%20market%20their%20wares>. (accessed 8 August, 2023).

Duncan, Sally Ann. *Otto Wittmann: Museum Man for All Seasons*. Toledo: Toledo Museum of Art, 2001.

Duncan, Sally Anne and Andrew McClellan. *The Art of Curating: Paul J. Sachs and the Museum Course at Harvard*. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2018.

Editor, "The Walpole Society," <https://www.walpolesociety.org.uk>. (accessed 19 November 2023).

Edsel, Robert. *The Monuments Men: Allied Heroes, Nazi Thieves and the Greatest Treasure Hunt in History*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2009.

Faison Jr., S. Lane. "Forty Years Later: Memories of Orion." Lecture, Art Department, Williams College, Williamstown, MA, January 21, 1986.

Farmer, Walter I., Klaus Goldmann, and Margaret Farmer Planton. *The Safekeepers: A Memoir of the Arts of the End of World War II*. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2000.

Feliciano, Hector. *The Lost Museum: the Nazi Conspiracy to Steal the World's Greatest Works of Art*. New York: Basic Books, 1997.

Find a Grave, "Lcdr Theodore Duncan Rousseau Jr," <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/121545173/theodore-duncan-rousseau>. (accessed 17 November 2023).

Flanner, Janet. "Annals of Crime: The Beautiful Spoils." *The New Yorker*, March 1947.

Flanner, Janet. *Monuments and Men*. New York: Books for Library Press, 1970.

Footitt, Hilary. "The British in the Second World War: Translation, Language Policies, and Language Practices." In *The Palgrave Handbook of Languages and Conflict*, edited by Michael Kelley, Hilary Footitt, and Myrian Salama-Carr, 373–394. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-04825-9>.

Freeman, Kirrily. "Saving Civilization: The 'Monuments Men' in History and Memory." *Journal of Women's History* 33:2 (2021): 85–110.

- Friedman, Richard D. "Owen J. Roberts." *Yale Biographical Dictionary of American Law* 461:2 (2009): 462.
- Givens, Seth A. "Liberating the Germans: The US Army and Looting in Germany during the Second World War." *War in History*, 21:1 (2014): 33–54.
- Goodwin, George M. "A New Jewish Elite: Curators, Directors, and Benefactors of American Art Museums." *Modern Judaism* 18:2 (1998): 119–152.
- Graham, Elyse. "Princeton Portrait: A Hunter of Lost Art and Lost Alumni." November 2021. Princeton Alumni Weekly. <https://paw.princeton.edu/article/princeton-portrait-hunter-lost-art-and-lost-alumni>. (accessed 19 November 2023).
- Griffith, Aline. *The Spy Wore Red: My Adventures as an Undercover Agent in World War II*. New York: Random House, 1987.
- Hartmann, Celia and Karol Pick. "Theodore Rousseau Records, 1928-1974 (bulk 1960-1974)." 2014. [https://www.libmma.org/digital\\_files/archives/Theodore\\_Rousseau\\_records\\_b18461839.pdf](https://www.libmma.org/digital_files/archives/Theodore_Rousseau_records_b18461839.pdf). (accessed 15 November 2023).
- Harvard University Department of History, "Mason Hammond," <https://history.fas.harvard.edu/people/mason-hammond>. (accessed 8 August 2023).
- Hellman, Geoffrey T. "Curator," *The New Yorker*, 28 August 1948.
- Hersh, Burton. *The Old Boys: The American Elite and the Origins of the CIA*. Don Mills: Maxwell Macmillan Canada, 1992.
- Hickley, Catherine. "Has New York's law aimed at identifying Nazi-looted art in museums worked?" *The Art Newspaper*, April 7, 2023.
- Hollein, Max and Marina Kellen. "Reflections on the Met Collection and Cultural Property." 9 May, 2023. The Met. <https://www.metmuseum.org/perspectives/articles/2023/5/collection-and-cultural-property>. (accessed 19 November, 2023).
- Hollein, Max and Marina Kellen. "Updates on the Met Collection and Cultural Property." 3 October, 2023. The Met. <https://www.metmuseum.org/perspectives/articles/2023/9/updates-on-collection-and-cultural-property>. (accessed 19 November, 2023).
- Houghton, Arthur, Sherman E. Lee, Edouard Morot-Sir, and Theodore Rousseau. "James J. Rorimer." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 25:1 (Summer 1966).

- Hoving, Thomas and Margaretta Salinger, "Theodore Rousseau, 1912-1973," *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, 8 (1973): 5-6.
- Howe, Thomas Carr. *Salt Mines and Castles: The Discovery and Restitution of Looted European Art*. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1946.
- Hussey, Michael, Michael J. Kurtz, and Greg Bradsher. "OSS Art Looting Investigation Unit Reports." 15 August, 2016. National Archives and Records Administration. <https://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/art/oss-art-looting-investigation-unit-reports.html>. (accessed 15 November 2023).
- "James Sachs Plaut Society." Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, <https://www.icaboston.org/page/james-sachs-plaut-society>. (accessed February 16, 2023).
- "John Marshall Phillips," U.S., World War II Draft Cards Young Men, 1940-1947, Ancestry.com, accessed February 17, 2023.
- Karlsogdt, Elizabeth Campbell. "What's Wrong with This Picture: Casual Disregard for History in George Clooney's *The Monuments Men* (2014)." *Historical Journal of Film, Radio, and Television* 36:3 (2016): 392-414.
- Katz, Barry M. *Foreign Intelligence: Research and Analysis in the Office of Strategic Services, 1942-1945*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989.
- Kurtz, Michael J. *America and the Return of Nazi Contraband: The Recovery of Europe's Cultural Treasures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- LaFarge, Bancel. *Lost Treasures of Europe*. New York: Pantheon, 1946.
- Lower, Wendy. *Hitler's Furies: German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields*. London: Chatto & Windus, 2013.
- Malkiel, Nancy Weiss. "'Keep the Damned Women Out': The Struggle for Coeducation in the Ivy League, the Seven Sisters, Oxford, and Cambridge 1." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 161:1 (2017): 31-36.
- Martin, Douglas. "S. Lane Faison Jr., Dies; Art Historian and Professor." *The New York Times*, November 14, 2006.
- McIntosh, Elizabeth P. *Sisterhood of Spies: Women of the OSS*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1998.
- Merritt, Richard L. "American Influences in the Occupation of Germany." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 428:1 (1976): 91-103.

- “Metropolitan Sells Two Modern Paintings in an Unusual Move.” *The New York Times*, September 30, 1972.
- Minneapolis Institute of Art. “Saved from the Salt Mines: Part II of rediscovering an incredible 1948 exhibition of art stolen by Nazis,” March 16, 2014. <https://new.artsmia.org/stories/saved-from-the-salt-mines-part-ii-of-rediscovering-an-incredible-1948-exhibition-of-art-stolen-by-nazis/>. (accessed 15 November, 2023).
- Miller, M.H. “The Big Fake: Behind the Scenes of Knoedler Gallery’s Downfall.” *ARTnews*, April 25, 2016.
- Mills, Laura and Chris Schunter. “Charles Henry Sawyer Papers, 1930-1997.” 2011. <https://findingaids.lib.umich.edu/catalog/umich-bhl-89146>. (accessed 15 November, 2023).
- Naftali, Tim. *U.S. Intelligence and the Nazis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- National Archives and Records Administration, “Records of the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas (the Roberts Commission), 1943–1946.” 2007. <https://www.archives.gov/files/research/microfilm/m1944.pdf>. (accessed 7 August 2023).
- National Archives and Records Administration. “OSS Records.” 2021. <https://www.archives.gov/research/military/ww2/oss#:~:text=In%201980%2C%20the%20CIA%20began,sensitive%20documents%20withdrawn%20before%20transfer>. (accessed 7 Aug. 2023).
- National Museum of the United States Army. “Edith A. Standen,” <https://www.thenmusa.org/biographies/edith-a-standen/>. (accessed 8 August 2023).
- Nicholas, Lynn H. *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.
- OSS Assessment Staff. *Assessment of Men: Selection of Personnel for the Office of Strategic Services*. New York: Reinhart, 1948.
- Panofsky, Erwin. “Three Decades of Art History in the United States: Impressions of a Transplanted European.” *College Art Journal*, 14:1 (1954): 7–27.
- Parkhurst, Charles. Unnamed presentation at the National Arts Journalism Program’s “Who Owns Culture?” Conference. Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, April 1999. <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/najp/publications/conferencereports/058-071%20War%20and%20Cultural%20Property.pdf>. (accessed 15 November, 2023).

- Petropoulos, Jonathan. "Art Dealer Networks in the Third Reich and in the PostWar Period," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 52:3 (2017): 546-565.
- Petropoulos, Jonathan. *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
- Petropoulos, Jonathan. *Artists Under Hitler: Collaboration and Survival in Nazi Germany*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014.
- Petropoulos, Jonathan. *Göring's Man in Paris*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021.
- Petropoulos, Jonathan. *The Faustian Bargain: The Art World in Nazi Germany*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Petropoulos, Jonathan. "The Importance of the Second Rank: The Case of the Art Plunderer Kajetan Mühlmann." In *Austro-Corporatism: Past-Present-Future*, edited by Günter Bischof and Anton Pelinka, (45 pages). New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Petropoulos, Jonathan. "Five Uncomfortable and Difficult Topics Relating to the Restitution of Nazi-Looted Art." *New German Critique*, 44:1 (2017): 125–142.
- Petropoulos, Jonathan. "Five Uncomfortable and Difficult Topics Relating to the Restitution of Nazi-Looted Art." Paper presented at *Nazi Looting, the Monuments Men, and Art Restitution today*. University of Vermont, 20 April 2015.
- Picker, Henry and Heinrich Hoffmann. *The Hitler Phenomenon: An Intimate Portrait of Hitler and His Entourage*. Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1974.
- Plaut, James Sachs. "Hitler's Capital." *The Atlantic Monthly*, October 1946.
- Plaut, James Sachs. "Loot for the Master Race." *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 1946.
- Plaut, James Sachs. "Retrieving the Loot: The Story of the Nazi Art Thieving Machine." *ARTnews*, August 1946.
- "Princess Married at Church in Paris; Widow of Prince Albert de Broglie Wed to Theodore Rousseau, Banker, *The New York Times*, 18 March, 1937.
- Reed, Victoria. "Ardelia Hall: From Museum of Fine Arts to Monuments Woman." *International Journal of Cultural Property* 21:1 (February 2014): 80-89.
- Rorimer, James. *Survival: The Salvage and Protection of Art in War*. New York: Abelard Press, 1950.

- Rothfeld, Anne. "Project Orion: An Administrative History of the Art Looting Investigation Unit (ALIU): An Overlooked Page in Intelligence Gathering." M.A. thesis, University of Maryland Baltimore County, 2002.
- Rothfeld, Anne Michele. "Unscrupulous Opportunists: Second-Rate German Art Dealers as Nazi Functionaries During World War Two." PhD dissertation, American University, 2016.
- Rose, Kenneth D. *Myth and the Greatest Generation: A Social History of Americans in World War II*. New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Salter, Michael. "A Critical Assessment of US Intelligence's Investigation of Nazi Art Looting." *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, 13:2 (2015): 257-280.
- "Sawyer, Charles H." *The New York Times*, March 3, 2005.
- Sereny, Gitta. *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth*. New York: Random House, 1995.
- Simpson, Elizabeth. *The Spoils of War: World War II and Its Aftermath: The Loss, Reappearance, and Recovery of Cultural Property*. New York: H.N. Abrams, 1997.
- Sizer, Theodore. "John Marshall Phillips, 1905-1953." FamilySearch, FamilySearch International, July 9, 1953.  
<https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/records/item/832801-redirect#page=20&viewer=picture&o=&n=0&q=>.
- Smentkowski, Brian P. "Owen Josephus Roberts: United States jurist" *Britannica*. 13 May 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Owen-Josephus-Roberts>.
- Smith, Bradley F. *The Shadow Warriors: O.S.S. and the Origins of the C.I.A.* London: Andre Deutsch, 1983.
- Smithsonian. "The Hermann Goring Collection." <https://www.si.edu/spotlight/monuments-men/hermangoring>. (accessed 8 August, 2023).
- Smyth, Craig Hugh and Peter M. Lukehart, eds. *The Early Years of Art History in the United States: Notes and Essays on Departments, Teaching, and Scholars*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Steury, Donald P. "The OSS and Project Safehaven." 2007. CIA/CIS Publications. <https://www.cia.gov/library/centerfor-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/summer00/art04.html#rf129>. (accessed 19 November 2023).
- Stinnett, Jack. *The Messenger*, January 30, 1946.
- Sutton, Benjamin. "Did the Metropolitan Museum cover up its acquisition of a Nazi-looted van Gogh? A new lawsuit alleges so." December 20, 2022.

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2022/12/20/hedwig-stern-heirs-lawsuit-van-gogh-metropolitan-museum-basil-elise-goulandris-foundation>. (accessed 15 November 2023).

Taper, Bernard. "Hitler's Photographer: An Intimate Friend of the Führer." *The New Yorker*, 27 October 1950.

*The Brooklyn Citizen*, March 7, 1946.

*The Decatur Daily*, May 3, 1948.

The Met Board of Trustees. "Collections Management Policy: The Metropolitan Museum of Art." 9 May 2023. The Met. <https://www.metmuseum.org/-/media/files/about-the-met/policies-and-documents/collections-management-policy/Collections-Management-Policy-May-2023.pdf>. (accessed 19 November, 2023).

The Monuments Men and Women Foundation. "The Heroes." <https://www.monumentsmenandwomenfnd.org/>. (accessed 2 August 2023).

The National WWII Museum. "Secret Agents, Secret Armies: The Short Happy Life of the OSS." 14 May 2020. The National WWII Museum New Orleans. <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/wwii-secret-agents-the-oss>. (accessed 15 November 2023).

"Theodore Rousseau." *The Los Angeles Times*, January 2, 1974.

Troy, Thomas F. *Donovan and the CIA: A History of the Establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency*. Frederick: Aletheia Books, 1981.

*Tucson Daily Citizen*. March 22, 1948.

University of Regina Library. "Theodore Allen Heinrich." <https://www.uregina.ca/library/services/archives/collections/art-architecture/heinrich.html>. (accessed 8 August 2023).

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Hermann Göring," *Holocaust Encyclopaedia*. <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/hermann-goering>. (accessed 8 August, 2023).

Weber, Eugen. "Western Civilization." In *Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret the Past*, edited by Anthony Molho and Gordon S. Wood, 206-221. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.

Wheaton College Massachusetts. "James Sachs Plaut, Honorary Degree Recipient." <https://collegehistory.wheatoncollege.edu/twentieth-century/1970s/james-sachs-plaut/>, (accessed 19 November 2023).

Winks, Robin W. *Cloak & Gown: Scholars in the Secret War*. New York: William and Morrow Company, 1987.

Yeide, Nancy H. and Patricia A. Teter-Schneider. "S. Lane Faison, Jr. and 'Art Under the Shadow of the Swastika.'" *Archives of American Art Journal* 47:3/4 (2008): 24-37.