

Art Dealer Networks in the Third Reich and in the Postwar Period

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Abstract

This article discusses art dealers who trafficked in looted art during the Third Reich and how they re-established networks and continued their trade in the postwar period. I argue that these dealers worked within a series of overlapping networks. A primary network was centered in Munich, with dealers such as Dr. Bruno Lohse (Göring's art agent in Paris during the war); Maria Almas Dietrich, Karl Haberstock, Walter Andreas Hofer, and Adolf Wüster. These individuals worked closely with colleagues in Austria, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein (states contiguous with Bavaria) in the postwar years. Many of the individuals in outer appendages of the networks had not been complicit in the Nazis' plundering program, yet they trafficked in looted works and formed dealer networks that extended to Paris, London, and New York. Both the recently discovered Gurlitt cache – over 1400 pictures located in Munich, Salzburg, and Kornwestheim – and the annotated Weinmüller auction catalogues help illuminate aspects of these networks. Art dealers played a key role in the looting operations during the Third Reich and in the transfer of non-restituted objects in the postwar period. The current generation of the profession may be the key to advancing our understanding of a still incomplete history.

Keywords

art dealers, Bruno Lohse, Nazi art looting, networks

As with most professions, networks have long existed among art dealers. The ranks of early twentieth century dealers developed an increasingly international orientation, with the linkages between Europe and the United States of America becoming more extensive. What is different about the networks that developed during and after the Third Reich is that the participants became complicit in the plundering of

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European Jews' art and they subsequently concealed and trafficked in this stolen property, thereby profiting personally. These profits could be enormous. The dealers in these networks should not be lumped together in terms of ethical transgressions: to extort a vulnerable Jewish collector in Nazi Germany represented a different kind of behavior than selling a once looted work in the postwar period. It is important to preserve distinctions when considering the moral implications of those active in the art trade.

There are, of course, many different kinds of networks, with varying degrees of cooperation between the members. Networks, in the sense intended here, involve a business relationship, but they are usually more than that. They also include an element of trust: handshake deals, keeping of others' secrets, and proceeding in a way that involves a lack of transparency.¹ A network can extend from being a partner (or co-owner of property) to acting as an agent and brokering a deal, to regular commercial activity, but also to something less than that. It is this end of the spectrum that is subject to differing interpretations – whether, in fact, one can talk of a network in such instances. Over the years, a vast literature has developed on networks and network theory: certain scholars view networks as a key element in social scientific theory and have posited that they are part of an 'ongoing attempt to unite structure with agency.'² This seems a useful notion with regard to the Nazi dealers and the non-Nazi art dealers who conducted business with them. Dealers almost always had a choice about whether to participate in these exchanges (the exception would be Jewish figures caught up by Nazi rule), and some did exercise this agency by not participating in the network: for example, the Duveen brothers in Paris, in the words of Art Looting Investigation Unit officer James Plaut, 'politely but firmly declined to see' certain Nazi art dealers, like Karl Haberstock, during the German occupation.³ Despite this room to maneuver, the dealers' actions, in the words of Jörg Raab, created a 'consistent body of variables about the development, structure, functions, functioning dissolution, and consequences of networks.'⁴ In short, the networks that emerged directly affected the fate of the looted artworks. The structure of these networks, which also included a tendency for opaqueness in business practices (if also for reasons such as tax evasion and the exclusion of rivals), provided a foundation for the dealers, who maintained a considerable degree of agency.

1 The *Oxford English Dictionary's* definition points to another aspect of the network: 'an interconnected group of people... having certain connections... which may be exploited to gain preferment, information, etc. – especially for professional advantage.' Oxford English Dictionary (on-line version) available at <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/126342?rskey=2Mg04j&result=1#eid> (accessed 4 September 2014).

2 J. Raab, 'More than Just a Metaphor: The Network Concept and Its Potential in Holocaust Research,' in G. Feldman and W. Seibel (eds), *Networks of Persecution: Bureaucracy, Business, and the Organization of the Holocaust* (New York, NY 2005), 328, 329, 336.

3 J.S. Plaut, *Consolidated Interrogation Report No. 1: Activity of the Einsatzstab Rosenberg in France* (Washington, DC: OSS, 15 August 1945), Attachment 48.

4 Raab, 'More than Just a Metaphor,' 323.

Before discussing the dealer networks and their significance to the broader history of art plundering and restitution, it is helpful to summarize some of the more specific ways that art dealers proved complicit in the crimes of the Nazi regime. I will provide a few examples along the way utilizing figures familiar to scholars of Nazi art plundering and Allied restitution.

First, complicit dealers in the years 1933 to 1945 bought artworks from Jews under duress. This ranges from individual Jews trying to liquidate their property prior to emigration to the more public *Judenauktionen*, of which there were thousands.⁵ Second, the complicit dealers consulted with Nazi leaders regarding the purging and plundering programs. An apt example would be Karl Haberstock meeting with Hitler in the spring of 1938 to explain that a law was needed in order to sell off the 'degenerate art' from German state collections; Haberstock then went on to recommend specific dealers for the Liquidation Committee [*Verwertungskommission*], as well as the Theodor Fischer Galerie in Lucerne, which sold 125 of the finest pieces in June 1939. Third, the dealers purchased art en masse in the occupied lands, using inflated Reichsmarks (1 RM = 20 French francs); the lop-sided exchange rate gave them such an advantage that these acquisitions are often referred to as 'technical looting.'⁶ Fourth, the dealers helped staff the plundering squads across Europe: from Bruno Lohse and Walter Borchers in Paris, where they effectively headed the ERR (Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg or Special Task Force of Reichsleiter Rosenberg) there for a time, to Himmler's art agent, Wilhelm Vahrenkamp, who selected prized works for the Reichsführer-SS in the East. Fewer dealers were stationed in the East because the objects seized by the invading forces often lacked significant value on the Western art market. Rather, because the Germans stole more in the way of archives, books, folk art, and archeological objects, the looters there were more often academics and museum professionals.⁷ Fifth, the dealer-plunderers embezzled works and profited personally from the entire range of their activities: for example, at war's end the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) documented numerous hiding places containing looted art that the art plunderer Kajetan Mühlmann had established in the Austrian Alps. While they found many of his hidden treasures (as well as liquor, cigars, and other luxury goods), they clearly did not recover them all.⁸ To take another example, how did Bruno Lohse end up with 47 paintings (some in a Swiss bank vault) at the

5 See, among other studies, F. Bajohr, *'Aryanization' in Hamburg: The Economic Exclusion of Jews and the Confiscation of their Property in Nazi Germany* (New York, NY 2002); M. Dean, *Robbing the Jews: The Confiscation of Jewish Property in the Holocaust, 1933–1945* (Cambridge 2008); and P. Hayes and I. Wojak, *'Arisierung' im Nationalsozialismus. Volksgemeinschaft, Raub und Gedächtnis* (Frankfurt am Main 2000).

6 G. Aalders, 'By Diplomatic Pouch: Art Smuggling by the Nazis,' in *The Spoils of War International Newsletter*, No. 3 (December 1996).

7 A. Heuss, *Kunst- und Kulturgutraub. Eine vergleichende Studie zur Besatzungspolitik der Nationalsozialisten in Frankreich und der Sowjetunion* (Heidelberg 2000), 350.

8 J. Vlug, 'Report on Objects Removed to Germany from Holland, Belgium, and France during the German Occupation in the Countries' (Hague 1945), 12, 34, 50, 76, 94–6, 105, and 121.

end of his life?⁹ These works together held a value of tens of millions of dollars. The graft from his wartime activities, I argue, provided the seeds of his collection.¹⁰ These five areas are clearly not exhaustive and comprise just some of the ways in which dealers were complicit in the crimes of the NS regime.

While we have learned a great deal more in the past decade about the activities of art dealers during the Third Reich – and the recent revelations about the Gurlitt cache in Munich and Salzburg, as well as the discovery of the annotated Weinmüller auction house catalogues from 1936 to 1945 have helped in this regard – we are still at an early stage in developing an understanding of the re-emergence of these networks after 1945.¹¹ There is indeed a historiography that forms a basis for this enterprise: the publications of state sponsored historical commissions and museum exhibition catalogues have supplemented more traditional scholarly work, and I endeavor to reference some of this literature in the citations to this article. Archives in both Europe and the United States of America also shed light on how dealer networks that developed before 1945 continued into the postwar period. Many of the key figures in these networks died fairly recently, and because of data-protection provisions, as well as the challenges of cataloguing materials, many relevant documents were not available to scholars. But the situation is changing: the papers of Theodore Rousseau at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (the Met), discussed below, offer an apt example: Rousseau carried on a decades long correspondence with Bruno Lohse beginning in the late-1940s, when Göring's art agent sat in a French prison cell, and the Met just recently completed the cataloguing process and opened his papers. The techniques used in provenance research, including searching databases, combing through *catalogues raisonnés*, and querying current practitioners in the art trade, also comprise part of the methodology associated with this exploration of dealer networks.

Because we are still at an early stage in terms of understanding the trans-Atlantic art market, scholars face many challenges. For one, few art historians or cultural historians have an extensive knowledge of the figures in the profession. My work here builds upon over 30 years of studying the art world in Nazi Germany, yet large gaps still persist. The surviving members of the older generation of art dealers probably have the best knowledge of the figures that constituted the networks. As discussed in the conclusion of this article, many dealer archives remain inaccessible. The art trade is notoriously secretive, with proprietary knowledge, tax issues, and a broader tradition of discretion factoring into this business culture. But the history of art dealers and their networks is important, and in light of generational

9 S. Koldehoff, *Die Bilder sind unter uns. Das Geschäft mit der NS-Raubkunst* (Frankfurt am Main 2009), 108–10.

10 F. Bajohr, *Parvenüs und Profiteure. Korruption in der NS-Zeit* (Frankfurt am Main 2001); and Gerd Ueberschär and W. Vogel, *Dienen und Verdienen: Hitlers Geschenke an seine Eliten* (Frankfurt am Main 2000); and G. Aly, *Hitler's Beneficiaries: Plunder, Racial War, and the Nazi Welfare State* (New York, NY 2005).

11 J. Petropoulos, 'The Polycratic Nature of Art Looting: The Dynamic Balance of the Third Reich,' in G. Feldman and W. Seibel (eds), *Networks of Persecution: Bureaucracy, Business, and the Organization of the Holocaust* (New York, NY 2005), 103–17.

change, urgent, because these figures possessed and trafficked in many of the looted works that were never restituted. Bruno Lohse and Hildebrand Gurlitt were not the only complicit dealers to possess looted works after the war. And because the art trade grew increasingly international in the postwar period, with works initially flowing toward the United States of America, and then, in recent years, to Russia, China, and other parts of the globe, the transnational element to this subject, which is one of the themes of this volume, is of central importance. In light of the aforementioned challenges, it is helpful to proceed in a deliberate manner: I will first provide an overview of the networks, identifying the key figures and areas of activity; I then examine the principles that governed the networks, including the geographic component and the broader effect on the art world; and finally, I reflect on ways to move forward and gain a better understanding of these often elusive structures.

It is helpful to sketch out briefly the dealers that formed the basis of the postwar networks. The dealers and auction houses below include only establishments that I can verify trafficked in or possessed Nazi looted art. The listings are by no means exhaustive, but cover the key figures. I have taken a geographical approach in identifying members of the networks, with Munich serving as the nexus of a larger constellation of relationships. In post-1945 Germany, Berlin suffered from a disadvantageous geopolitical and geographic position: the Cold War undermined the art market there, and the center of gravity shifted to the Bavarian capital, which had enjoyed a vibrant art trade that stretched back into the nineteenth century.¹² Munich, of course, was also *'die Hauptstadt der Bewegung'* ('the capital of the Nazi movement'). After the war, the city proved a kind of magnet for old Nazis, who gravitated to particular areas, such as the villages surrounding Lake Starnberg. But despite its importance in terms of dealer networks, Munich did not comprise an exclusive center: it is not a straight-forward center-periphery dichotomy, but rather, an important hub in a multi-polar market. In this way, the market showed continuities with the pre-First World War and interwar periods, as Robert Jensen and Timothy Benson, among others, have demonstrated.¹³

The art market in Munich did not truly revive until the early 1950s: denazification, the currency reform undertaken in 1948, the licensing of dealers, and the general disrepair of infrastructure delayed the re-emergence of the art trade. But by 1950, one found the following: Karl Haberstock, arguably the most important dealer for the Nazi elite, had relocated to Munich from Berlin, where his gallery had been bombed out.¹⁴ He and his wife Magdalene (who was a quiet partner in his business and continued on as part of the network after his death in 1958) were joined by Walter Andreas Hofer, the 'director' of Hermann Göring's art collection.

12 R. Lenman, 'Painters, Patronage, and the Art Market in Germany, 1850–1914,' in *Past and Present*, 123 (May 1989), 109–40; and R. Lenman 'A Community in Transition: Painters in Munich, 1886–1924,' in *Central European History*, 15, 1 (March 1982), 3–33.

13 R. Jensen, *Marketing Modernism in fin-de-siècle Europe* (Princeton, NJ 1994) and T. Benson (ed.), *Central European Avant-Gardes: Exchange and Transformation* (Los Angeles, CA 2002).

14 H. Kessler (ed.), *Karl Haberstock. Umstrittener Kunsthändler und Mäzen* (Munich 2008).

Haberstock and Hofer lived in the same apartment building overlooking the English Garden (those in the know referred to it as ‘*das braune Haus*,’ a reference to the Nazi Party headquarters that also had been in Munich). Bruno Lohse emerged from a French prison in 1950 and made his way back to Munich, where he worked as an ‘art adviser’ because he sought to maintain a lower profile. But he was a linchpin of the Munich network (even while imprisoned in France, for example, he had written on behalf of Karl Haberstock in the latter’s denazification trial).¹⁵ Julius Böhler, who had helped liquidate the Gutmanns’ art and silver collections among other valuables in Holland during the war (both Friedrich and Louise Gutmann were murdered by the Nazis), reopened his gallery on the fashionable Brienner Strasse, where he remained in business for decades (with the firm taken over by the younger generation).¹⁶ The same thing happened to Maria Almas-Dietrich, who had sold more pictures to Hitler than any other dealer: her gallery stood across the street from Böhler’s in a grand building on the Odeonsplatz. Her daughter, Wilhelmine (‘Mimi’) tho Rahde, continued the business into the 1990s. Both mother and daughter remained close to Lohse.¹⁷ Jakob Scheidwimmer, who had helped ‘Aryanize’ the Kunsthandlung Hugo Helbing (the most important auction house in Munich) and carried out some two hundred valuations of Jewish-owned art (buying some works himself at advantageous prices), continued his business in Munich; the gallery subsequently remained in the family and is still there today.¹⁸ The auctioneer Adolf Weinmüller, who had liquidated an astonishing quantity of plundered art, reopened and continued until Weinmüller’s death in 1958; the auction house was then purchased by Rudolf Neumeister, who changed the name accordingly.¹⁹ Others complicit in the Nazis’ plundering programs who remained active in the Munich art trade included Gustav Rochlitz, who stashed looted art, such as the Master Cross from the Church of San Pantaleone in Venice, in his farmhouse near Füssen (and reportedly shipped 200 cases of looted art to Switzerland during the war – works never found), and Adolf Wüster, the one-time looter who had worked out of the German Embassy in Paris during the war.²⁰

15 Staatsarchiv Coburg, SPK BA Land, H 15, Band 2, Bruno Lohse on behalf of Haberstock (12 January 1948).

16 H. Feliciano, *The Lost Museum: The Nazi Conspiracy to Steal the World’s Greatest Works of Art* (New York, NY 1997 [1995]), 183–89; and H. Trienens, *Landscape with Smokestacks: The Case of the Allegedly Plundered Degas* (Evanston, IL 2000); and the documentary film by Anne Webber, *Making a Killing* (2000).

17 K. Roxan and D. Wanstall, *The Rape of Art: The Story of Hitler’s Plunder of the Great Masterpieces of Europe* (New York, NY 1965 [1964]), 95.

18 Staatsarchiv München, SpKA K 1592 Scheidwimmer, Jakob Spruch of Jakob Scheidwimmer (5 March 1948). More specifically, see the testimony of Max Heiss appended here. See also M. Müller and M. Tatzkow, *Verlorene Bilder, Verlorene Leben. Jüdische Sammler und was aus ihren Kunstwerken wurde* (Munich 2009), 10–27; and M. Hopp, *Kunsthandel im Nationalsozialismus. Adolf Weinmüller in München und Wien* (Cologne 2102), 95–8.

19 Hopp, *Kunsthandel im Nationalsozialismus*, 295–310.

20 National Archives (United Kingdom), FO 837 1154, Douglas Cooper to Commercial Counsellor, British Legation, Bern (2 March 1945). See also P. Harclerode and B. Pittaway, *The Lost Masters: The Looting of Europe’s Treasurehouses* (London 2000 [1999]), 132.

Munich, of course, did not have a monopoly on the art trade, and the network of complicit dealers included Alexander Vömel in Düsseldorf (a member of the Storm Troopers, he had ‘Aryanized’ the founding branch of Alfred Flechtheim’s gallery in 1933).²¹ Not all the figures in the postwar network had been Nazis – in the sense of being a Party member or part of a representative organization (like the SA or SS) – but these non-Nazis helped sustain the core group of the complicit. One did not need to be an ‘ideological dealer’ – either politically or in terms of an advocacy of a certain kind of art – to be a part of these networks. Among those would be the Lempertz auction house in Cologne, which sold looted art in the postwar period, including Albert Speer’s art, which he had stashed with a friend in Mexico while he was in Spandau.²² Roman Norbert Ketterer in Stuttgart, Leo Spik in Berlin, and Carl W. Buemming in Darmstadt were also among the individuals who remained in touch with their Munich colleagues and provided useful outlets. For example, when Halldor Soehner, the General Director of the Bavarian State Paintings Collection (BSGS), decided in the mid-1960s to sell off artworks of lesser quality that had once belonged to Hitler, Göring, Bormann, and other Nazi leaders, he turned to Neumeister, Spik, and Lempertz to help with the sale. Even though these houses (or their predecessors) had realized huge profits during the Third Reich processing the plunder, General Director Soehner engaged these same establishments to sell 113 pictures as part of his efforts to raise new purchasing funds. None of the auction houses in these sales, which took place in 1966 and 1967, revealed to prospective buyers that the works had previously been owned by Nazi leaders.²³ Indeed, the auction houses provided no information about the works’ provenances. The concealment or misrepresentation of provenance had occurred before 1945, but in light of the knowledge of Nazi plundering in the postwar period, such behavior had greater ethical implications.

The networks then extended most notably to what one might call ‘the Golden Quadrangle’: Austria, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein – states contiguous with the center in Bavaria – linked almost organically to the Federal Republic of Germany.²⁴ Austria, which produced a disproportionate number of perpetrators after the Anschluss, allowed many complicit dealers to reestablish themselves.²⁵ Friedrich Welz, who had acquired a Schiele picture from Lea Bondy Jaray when she was under duress, and who bought en masse in France for the regional gallery he was helping set up in Schloss Klessheim, continued on in Salzburg.²⁶

21 O. Dascher, ‘*Es ist was wahnsinniges mit der Kunst: Alfred Flechtheim. Sammler, Kunsthändler, Verleger* (Wädenswil 2011).

22 Koldehoff, *Die Bilder sind Unter Uns*, 176; and S. Koldehoff, ‘Nazi Gemälderaub. Kunst und Kriegsverbrecher,’ in *Spiegel Online* (3 September 2007), at <http://www.spiegel.de/kultur/gesellschaft/0,1518,503001,00.html> (accessed 2 September 2014); and H. Breloer and R. Zimmer, *Die Akte Speer. Spuren eines Kriegsverbrechers* (Berlin 2006), 415–23.

23 J. Petropoulos, ‘For Sale: A Troubled Legacy,’ in *ARTnews*, 100, 6 (June 2001), 114–20.

24 J. Petropoulos, ‘Inside the Secret Market for Nazi-Looted Art,’ in *ARTnews* (January 2014), 84–9.

25 B. Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution: A History of Austrian Anti-Semitism* (Chapel Hill, NC 1992), 275–98; and H. Safrian, *Die Eichmann-Männer* (Vienna 1993).

26 G. Kerschbaumer, *Meister des Verwirrens. Die Geschäfte des Kunsthändlers Friedrich Welz* (Vienna 2000); and F. Koller, *Das Inventarbuch der Landesgalerie Salzburg 1942–1944* (Salzburg 2000).

Franz Kieslinger, who had inventoried ‘Aryanized’ collections of persecuted Jews in Vienna and then worked alongside Kajetan Mühlmann looting art in wartime-Netherlands, became a fixture at the Dorotheum, not to mention the mentor to Rudolf Leopold.²⁷ Because Leopold sold and traded so much art as he upgraded his collection, he counts as a kind of quasi-dealer.²⁸ He certainly trafficked in looted art and worked closely with the networks of complicit dealers.²⁹ But here, one must stress that Leopold was not a Nazi. The same could be said for Wolfgang Gurlitt, a dealer of ‘degenerate’ art purged from German state collections, a procurer of art in Paris for certain German museums during the war, a buyer of looted works by Egon Schiele at the Dorotheum (in 1942), and the cousin of Hildebrand Gurlitt. Wolfgang Gurlitt resettled from Berlin to Bad Aussee in Upper Austria around 1940, and counted as another important figure in this network.³⁰ In 1946, Wolfgang Gurlitt co-founded what is now the Lentos Museum in Linz (he received the post of lifetime director of the museum in exchange for donating much of his collection), but he also remained active in the art trade, with a gallery in Munich in the postwar period. A number of works that passed through his hands have been restituted by the Linz museum since the 1998 Austrian Restitution Law (most recently two works by Lovis Corinth).³¹ The fact that Austrians did not engage their Nazi past in the decades following 1945 helped these complicit dealers to sustain their businesses.

Switzerland sustain to be a clearing house for stolen cultural property, just as it had been during the war when Gustav Rochlitz, Walter Andreas Hofer, and Bruno Lohse had sold and traded looted art to Theodor Fischer and other Swiss colleagues (the latter again not being a Nazi, but part of a ring that emanated from the complicit center). Theodor Fischer, who auctioned off ‘degenerate’ art for the Nazi state in 1939, had traveled to Paris during the war where he acquired ‘hundreds of pictures’ and interacted with Nazi agents.³² He continued to remain in contact with the old Nazi dealers; this, after Hofer and Lohse had been compelled to testify in a 1948–9 trial about the wartime trade looted art.³³ Another key gallery was Gutekunst & Klipstein, which made a fortune selling ‘*Fluchtgut*’ [goods to finance

27 D. Leopold, *Rudolf Leopold, Kunstsammler* (Vienna 2003), 17–18.

28 G. Anderl and A. Caruso (eds), *NS-Kunstraub in Österreich und die Folgen* (Innsbruck 2005); A. Decker, ‘A Legacy of Shame,’ in *ARTnews* 83, 10 (December 1984), 53–76; and O. Rathkolb, ‘From the “Legacy of Shame” to New Debates over Nazi Looted Art,’ in G. Bischof, A. Pelinka and F. Karlhofer (eds), *Contemporary Austrian Studies*, 7 (1999), 216–28.

29 Leopold, *Rudolf Leopold, Kunstsammler*, 91–6.

30 W. Schuster, ‘Facetten des NS-“Kunsthandels” am Beispiel Wolfgang Gurlitt,’ in G. Anderl and A. Caruso (eds), *NS-Kunstraub in Österreich und die Folgen* (Innsbruck 2005), 212–26.

31 F. Foradini, ‘The Other Gurlitt: The Dealer Cherished by “Degenerate” Artists and Nazis Alike,’ in *The Art Newspaper*, 264 (January 2015), available at <http://www.theartnewspaper.com/articles/The-other-Gurlitt-the-dealer-cherished-by-degenerate-artists-and-Nazis-alike/36666> (last accessed 16 January 2015).

32 Feliciano, *Lost Museum*, 156; and Bundesarchiv Bern, Wendland file at E4320 (B) 1990/133, Bd. 1, anonymous memo, Trio Wendland-Fischer-Hofer (3 December 1943).

33 E. Tisa Francini, A. Heuss and G. Kreis, *Fluchtgut-Raubgut. Der Transfer von Kulturgütern in und über die Schweiz 1933–1945 und die Frage der Restitution* (Zurich 2001), 98, 310–26. Of the initial 76 looted works found in Switzerland, 56 went through Theodor Fischer. See also T. Buomberger,

emigration] in the 1930s and was envisioned as the organizer of an auction of the graphic works purged from German museums as part of the ‘degenerate art’ campaign – although the outbreak of war precluded the actual sale. Gutekunst & Klipstein was taken over by Eberhard Kornfeld (another non-Nazi), who trafficked in looted art beginning in the 1950s.³⁴ Fritz Nathan, the German-Jewish dealer who had fled the Reich to re-establish himself in St. Gallen and Zurich, played a key role in the postwar network. Nathan helped arms manufacturer Emil Bührle expand his collection, and some of the works were found to have been previously looted. Other key dealers who traded in looted objects include Christoph Bernoulli in Basel (who sold art from persecuted German-Jewish dealer Alfred Flechtheim), Hans Wendland (a German national and Nazi Party member as of January 1942), and Count Alexander Frey (who, like Wendland, visited the ERR headquarters in the Jeu de Paume during the war to select looted Jewish works for exchange).³⁵ In 1946, Allied intelligence agents Douglas Cooper and James Plaut identified over a dozen Swiss dealers who were suspected of having bought and sold looted art during the war, but there were clearly many more.³⁶ The final OSS ‘red flag list’ of Swiss individuals in the art world suspected of having dealt in looted art consists of 61 names; among the prominent figures identified were dealers Albert Skira (Geneva), Will Raeber (Basel), and Albin Neupert (Zurich).³⁷ But there is still much that we do not know about the activities of Swiss dealers both before and after 1945. The Swiss Independent Commission of Experts noted in 2002, ‘After the war, not a single work was restituted that had not already been tracked down by Cooper.’³⁸ And as popular novelist Daniel Silva quipped, ‘The only thing more secretive than a Swiss bank is a Swiss art gallery.’³⁹

The kingdom of Liechtenstein has more foundations than inhabitants (36,000). The complicit dealers and their partners often created these foundations (*Stiftungen*) in order to hide stolen assets and avoid taxes.⁴⁰ German-Jewish émigré dealer Justin Thannhauser, who was ostensibly based in New York, created his Fondation Les Beaux Arts, where he sold, for example, Picasso’s *Portrait of Madame Soler*, which he had acquired from Paul von Mendelssohn-Bartholdy

Raubkunst-Kunstraub. Die Schweiz und der Handel mit gestohlenen Kulturgütern zur Zeit des Zweiten Weltkrieges (Zürich 1998).

34 M. König and B. Zeuglin (eds), *Switzerland, National Socialism and the Second World War. Final Report of the Independent Commission of Experts Switzerland – Second World War* (Zürich 2002), 360.

35 Bundesarchiv Bern, E 6100A24/1000/1924, Bd. 7 Abhörungsprotokoll of Dr. Bruno Lohse, (4 February 1949).

36 NARA, RG 226, Entry 190, Box 30, James Plaut to Harry Conover (5 January 1946); and NARA, RG 239, Entry 73, box 82, Douglas Cooper, ‘Report of Mission to Switzerland’ (18 October 1945).

37 The OSS ‘red flag list’ for Switzerland is reproduced in N. Yeide, K. Akinsha and A. Walsh, *The AAM Guide to Provenance Research* (Washington, DC 2001), 282–4. See also Francini, Heuss, Kreis, *Fluchtgut-Raubgut*; and Feliciano, *Lost Museum*, 193; and Bundesarchiv Bern, Dossier J.1.269-01#1999/82#16, which includes an undated (but postwar) British report on ‘Looted Art in Neutral Countries and Latin America’: this report lists some 17 Swiss figures engaged in the trafficking of Nazi looted art during the war (as well as a dozen German counterparts).

38 König and Zeuglin, (eds), *Switzerland, National Socialism and the Second World War*, 472.

39 D. Silva, *The Rembrandt Affair* (New York 2011), 152.

40 E. Tisa Francini, *Liechtenstein und der internationale Kunstmarkt, 1933–1945* (Zürich 2005).

under questionable circumstances around the time of the banker's death in 1935. Thannhauser shipped the work from New York to Switzerland in 1964 as part of a sale to the Bavarian State Painting Collections, but attempted to make it appear that the sale was on behalf of the Liechtenstein foundation. The maneuver presumably had implications for taxes that he paid in his country of residence, the United States of America. Thannhauser negotiated the deal with Halldor Soehner, the General Director of the BSGS, who had been a Nazi. Bruno Lohse created a foundation based in Vaduz that he called the 'Schönart Anstalt.' He named it after his Zurich attorney, Frederic Schöni; but it was Göring's former agent who controlled the assets, including the Fischer-Pissarro painting discovered in 2007. The Liechtenstein-based foundations were sometimes only post boxes, and they were sometimes imbedded in larger corporate structures: the Schönart Anstalt was part of an entity called Miselva, thereby making it even more difficult to identify or investigate.

The networks of dealers trafficking in Nazi looted art extended to Western Europe, the United States of America, and even to South Africa (for example, Alois Miedl, who also worked for Göring and 'Aryanized' the Goudstikker collection during the war).⁴¹ Yet it was the USA that emerged as the center of the international art trade in the 1950s because Americans had more money than anyone else in the world in the decades following the Second World War. The influx of European dealers had begun before the war as many fled the Nazis, with New York serving as the center of the market. One example, of course, would be the Wildensteins – today arguably the wealthiest art dealers in the world. This issue of the relationship between the Wildensteins and the Nazis is a controversial and precarious subject: witness, journalist Hector Feliciano spent three years in a French court after he reported, as stated in archival documents, that Georges Wildenstein had met with Karl Haberstock in un-occupied France in 1940 and 1941.⁴² I will therefore proceed here in a very cautious manner. But it bears mentioning that in 2011, some 20 works looted from another French-Jewish family (the Reinachs) were found in a vault at the Wildensteins' rue La Boétie headquarters.⁴³ The Wildensteins engaged attorney Frederic Schöni from the late 1940s until at least the mid-1950s to represent them in Switzerland.⁴⁴ That the Wildensteins worked with Bruno Lohse's partner, or future partner, raises certain questions about networks. There is also a February 1951 letter from Monuments officer Theodore Heinrich to S. Lane Faison, then the Director of the Central Collecting Point, which reports 'a top secret agreement with Wildenstein and that our dear friend

41 N. Yeide, *Dreams of Avarice: The Hermann Goering Collection* (Dallas, TX 2009), 12.

42 A. Riding, 'French Close Case on Art Dealer and Nazis,' *New York Times* (11 October 2003); and C. Dumont-Beghi, *L'Affaire Wildenstein. Histoire d'une Spoliation* (Paris 2012), 189–9.

43 D. Carvajal and C. Vogel, 'Ignorance is Defense in a Case of Lost Art,' in *New York Times* (20 July 2011); and 'The Evilest Art Dealers in the World? A Digest of the Wildenstein Allegations' at <http://www.lootedart.com/news.php?r=OSTKHA326811> (accessed 4 September 2014).

44 For one of many examples of Frederic Schöni representing the Wildensteins in a transaction, see National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), RG 59, Entry Lot 620 D-4, box 9, 'Consular Invoice of Merchandise' (15 November 1949).

K. Haberstock, now in the course of installing himself in new quarters nearly opposite the Haus der Kunst. [Haberstock] is sub-rosa a Wildenstein partner and that their secret go-between is Grace Morley's former protégé Heinz Berggruen.⁴⁵ Heinz Berggruen (1914–2007) was German-Jewish journalist turned art dealer who had been in the United States of America after 1936, but then returned to Europe after the war and created a very successful business, amassing a world class art collection in the process. While many questions remain about the relationships between these well-known figures, the extant evidence speaks to the existence of important transnational networks.

In the USA, one finds an array of non-Nazi dealers who worked with the complicit Nazi dealers. German-Jewish émigré Curt Valentin, who had sold off purged 'degenerate art' through the Galerie Buchholz in New York in the late 1930s (and early 1940s – he sent back the proceeds to Nazi Germany after the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939), continued to traffic in works with problematic provenances. Valentin was at the center of the Grosz v. The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) lawsuit for three works by George Grosz (the case was decided based on the statute of limitations). Austrian dealer Otto Nirenstein-Kallir operated the Galerie St. Etienne in New York where he sold art with a cloudy provenance, including works by Egon Schiele that had belonged to Viennese comedian Fritz Grünbaum (Kallir himself sold many of these work to Grünbaum in the 1920s and 1930s).⁴⁶ Grünbaum was murdered in Dachau in January 1941, but Kallir proceeded to buy over 50 pictures from his collection in 1956 from Eberhard Kornfeld in Bern and then sell them as if there was no problem. Litigation ensued only some five decades later (Bakalar v. Vavra). Even blue-chip firms such as Knoedler trafficked in looted art, including the Cassirer Pissarro (now in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid and the subject of a lawsuit) and the Rosenberg family's Matisse (*Odalesque*), which was discovered in the Seattle Art Museum and returned in the late 1990s.⁴⁷ Whether it was the lure of large profits, the culture of not inquiring about provenance, or some other factor, a number of US galleries did business with the old Nazis.

While we are still early in the process of understanding these overlapping networks, it is helpful to make a few observations that speak to their origins, nature, and consequences. First, the networks took hold because of the shortcomings of the Allies' policy for dealing with complicit art dealers in the postwar period. Few dealers involved with Nazi looting did significant jail time. Bruno Lohse spent the longest time incarcerated: after testifying at the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, he was handed over to the French. Lohse was imprisoned at the

45 NARA, RG 59, Records Central European Division 1944–53, Box 5, Theodore Heinrich to S. Lane Faison (13 February 1951).

46 J. Petropoulos, 'Bridges from the Reich: The Importance of Émigré Art Dealers as Reflected in the Case Studies of Curt Valentin and Otto Kallir-Nirenstein,' published on the internet in *Kunstgeschichte: Open Peer Reviewed Journal*, (2011), 1–41, at <http://www.kunstgeschichte-ejournal.net/142/> (accessed 9 March 2016).

47 Feliciano, *Lost Museum*, 172.

Cherche Midi facility in Paris until he and other ERR staffers were put on trial in the summer of 1950. He was acquitted and released right after the trial (4 August). The OSS Art Looting Investigation Unit (ALIU) members and many other Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives officers (MFA&A) pushed for harsher treatment of the plunderers – Theodore Rousseau, for example, opined in his September 1945 OSS report on Walter Andreas Hofer that the dealer was ‘in every way as guilty as Goering’ and that ‘he [should] be indicted himself as a war criminal.’⁴⁸ But with U.S. leaders focused on the intensifying Cold War, their pleas fell on deaf ears. The trial of the ERR staffers in Paris in 1950 was unusual, but also representative in terms of the lenient sentences. Hans Wendland, the German national who operated largely in Switzerland (but who also traveled to Paris during the war where he trafficked in looted pictures), was also tried by a French Military Court in 1950 and acquitted.⁴⁹

Of course, the OSS and MFA&A officers also often underestimated the perfidy of the dealers. Hildebrand Gurlitt, offers a clear example, as the US not only had him in custody at Schloss Pöllnitz near Bamberg (where they interrogated him at length), but they also secured some 209 pictures that he had stashed at various repositories after his flight from Dresden near war’s end. We now know that some of these works were looted. Yet Gurlitt, who was one-quarter Jewish and not a member of the Nazi Party, lied to the Americans: he misled them as to his importance as a dealer to Hitler (from 1943 onward he sold more art to the Führermuseum than any other single supplier) and, in a document dated 13 December 1950, Gurlitt maintained, ‘None of the pictures came from Jewish owners or abroad.’⁵⁰ All his works in U.S. custody, save three that were lost while being stored by the Americans, were returned to Gurlitt. It is speculative to conjecture what would have happened if Gurlitt and the other dealers had been labeled as criminals and had spent more time incarcerated, but as it was, most had little difficulty integrating back into civil society. In this sense, they were like most other professions in Germany – including physicians, judges, and academics – where former Nazis were rehabilitated and enjoyed successful careers in the postwar period.

The opportunity for profit within these networks created ‘strange bedfellows.’ As indicated above, there were Jewish dealers in this network. Fritz Nathan in Switzerland was far from alone in this regard.⁵¹ As noted previously, the Wildensteins used Frederic Schöni as one of their representatives in Switzerland, and Schöni was (or became) Lohse’s partner and the front for the Schönart Stiftung. While one must take care not to draw too many conclusions from the Schöni connection, the role of the Wildensteins in these postwar networks remains a subject deserving of further study. It is also striking that several individuals close

48 T. Rousseau, Jr., ‘Detailed Interrogation Report No. 9: Walter Andreas Hofer’ (Office of Strategic Services Art Looting Investigation Unit, 15 September 1945), 9.

49 Bundesarchiv Bern, Hans Wendland file at E4320 (B) 1990/133, Bd. 1; and Trienens, *Landscape with Smokestacks*, 54–5.

50 K. Grieshaber and D. Rising, ‘U.S. Documents Raise Questions on Munich Art Hoard,’ Associated Press (7 November 2013).

51 Feliciano, *Lost Museum*, 159.

to Bruno Lohse asserted that the Nazi dealer had excellent relations with an array of Jewish colleagues – a claim also made by Karl Haberstock and Hans Wendland.⁵² Lohse and the Jewish dealers, they reported, liked to conduct business in cash (or with trades) that left no paper trail. They stated that some of the 47 pictures in his possession at the time of his death came from these transactions. The Jewish associates, according to these sources, also evinced a kind of generosity that he appreciated: they would not haggle over expenses (also paid in cash), and they were unabashed in their view that all involved should make a profit. These assertions came in the form of off-the-record interviews that I conducted recently in Munich.⁵³ Acknowledging this caveat, they still ring true.

One other glimpse of the networks comes from the documents associated with Bruno Lohse's appeal to have a prohibition on his travel to Switzerland lifted in the early 1950s. After his release from a French prison in August 1950 when he returned to Munich, Lohse, in October 1950, applied to travel to Switzerland. He discovered for the first time that the Swiss had placed him on a 'Sperrliste' that prevented him from entering the country. This came in January 1950, the result of a February 1949 interrogation by Swiss authorities who had traveled to the Paris prison to ask him about ERR trades and his trips to Switzerland during the war. Lohse had failed to impress them with his answers, and his membership in the SS and connection to the ERR formed the basis of the decision (although a few others, such as Hans Wendland and Walter Andreas Hofer also had travel bans to Switzerland).⁵⁴ Engaging a lawyer named Dr. Albert Steiner, Lohse applied to have the travel ban lifted: more specifically, he stated that he sought to attend a series of auctions at the Galerie Fischer in Lucerne that were to take place between 16 and 24 November 1951. His lawyer explained that Lohse was working as an adviser to the Paris art dealer Victor Mandl.⁵⁵ What is particularly illuminating is the entry for Mandl by scholars Nancy Yeide, Konstantin Akinsha, and Amy Walsh in their guide to provenance research:

Victor Mandl. Paris, 9 rue du Boetie [sic]. German refugee dealer, formerly active in Berlin. Highly important figure in German art purchases in Paris. Close contact with Wendland, Dietrich, Voss, Goepel, Muehlmann, Lohse, Loebel, Perdoux, Birtschansky, and Wuester. Indicted by French Government for collaborationist activity.⁵⁶

52 For Haberstock, see Kessler (ed.), *Karl Haberstock. Umstrittener Kunsthändler und Mäzen*, 22, 24, 34, 42. Note that the business ledgers of Haberstock, which are reproduced here, also speak volumes about dealer networks during the Third Reich. For Wendland's relationship with Jewish dealers, see the letter by Saemy Rosenberg to Dr. Saxer (17 December 1948) in Bundesarchiv Bern, J1.269, 1999/82, Bd. 2.

53 Interviews with C. Grimm (24 September 2014) and P. Griebert (26 September 2014), Munich.

54 Bundesarchiv Bern, E4320B#1973/#1470, Dr. Bürki to Schweiz. Bundesanwaltschaft (17 March 1953).

55 Bundesarchiv Bern, E4320B#1973/#1470, Dr. Bürki to Albert Steiner (8 November 1951).

56 Yeide, Akinsha and Walsh, *The AAM Guide to Provenance Research*, 279. This entry for Mandl is based on the Art Looting Investigation Unit reports.

That Mandl and Lohse had renewed their relationship within a year of the latter's release from prison is striking, as is the fact that they immediately sought to do business with Theodor Fischer. Mandl had a gallery on the rue La Boétie, just down the street from the Wildensteins' famed establishment, but this may simply be a coincidence. Yet clearly, the postwar networks resumed across national borders as soon as it was possible. Munich-based Karl Haberstock wrote Theodor Fischer in Zurich in March 1948, 'we have certainly maintained a pleasant, and for both sides, fruitful business relationship that has lasted decades, and if sooner or later the borders are opened again, I hope to bring the old mutually advantageous relationship back to life.'⁵⁷ It took a few years for Lohse to renew his Swiss relationships: he was repeatedly turned down in his efforts to have the travel ban lifted, but he finally succeeded in 1954 – after a series of appeals, including yet another one based on a request to attend a Galerie Fischer auction.⁵⁸

There also appears to have been postwar contact – that would qualify as part of a network as defined at the outset – between some of the Monuments Men and the complicit dealers. Bruno Lohse reported in numerous interviews that I conducted with him over a 10 year period (1997–2007) that Theodore Rousseau would visit him in the summers during the 1960s. Rousseau was the former OSS/ALIU officer who had interrogated him and went on to become the chief curator for European Paintings and Deputy Directory of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Lohse said he would provide Rousseau with information where pictures could be bought and may have also sold works to Rousseau (although I have not seen evidence connecting Lohse to any picture at the Met). Lohse said he traveled to New York in the early 1970s and visited with Rousseau. The former Nazi claimed to have been chauffeured in Rousseau's mistress's black Bentley, and because this was Madame David-Weill, from the famous French collecting family, he found this particularly piquant. Theodore Rousseau's papers in the Met Archives contain dozens of letters between the curator and Lohse (as well as correspondence between Lohse and other OSS/ALIU officers James Plaut and S. Lane Faison).⁵⁹ They show Rousseau meeting with Lohse in Munich, Paris, and Zurich, and Lohse coming to the Met to see Rousseau. The former Nazi art dealer offered him many pictures, but again, there is no indication that Rousseau bought directly from Lohse.

The purported Lohse-Rousseau meetings took place during a period when American museums were expanding at an unprecedented rate. As is now well known, many leaders of these institutions had served as Monuments Men during the war. At the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Director James Rorimer, curators

57 Bundesarchiv Bern, J.1.269, 1999/82, Bd. 2, Karl Haberstock to Theodor Fischer (9 March 1948). The German reads, 'Wir standen ja Jahrzehnte lang in angenehmer und für beide Teile erspriesslicher Geschäftsverbindung und wenn über kurz oder lang die Grenzen weider offen sind, dann hoffe ich, dass die alten Beziehungen in beiderseitigem Interesse wieder aufleben.'

58 Bundesarchiv Bern, E4320B#1973/#1470, Dr. Bürki to Dr. Steiner (13 June 1953) and Dr. Steiner to Göttler (24 October 1953); and Dr. Mäder to Dr. Steiner (28 April 1954).

59 For the Rousseau-Lohse postwar correspondence, see for example, Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, Rousseau Papers, box 13, folder 22, and box 33, folder 7.

Edith Standen and the aforementioned Theodore Rousseau, as well as trustee Craig Hugh Smyth, had all been Monuments officers.⁶⁰ These individuals understood a great deal about Nazi art plundering and the attendant issues – as well as possibilities for the expansion of their museum’s collections. They knew there were many looted artworks still in circulation: a front page article in the *New York Times* by Milton Esterow in 1964 stated this very clearly (‘Europe is Still Hunting its Plundered Art’).⁶¹ Yet museum officials in this era had little interest in investigating the provenance with regards to acquisitions and gifts. In 1963, then assistant curator Thomas Hoving bought the Cross of Bury St. Edmunds out of a bank vault in the Union Banque de Suisse on the Bahnhofstrasse in Zurich from Ante Topic Mimara – a known thief who stole 147 pictures from the Munich Central Collecting Point in 1948. As Hoving later recounted, if he wanted an artwork, he would have bought it from the devil – with no questions asked.⁶²

The individuals in these networks were largely cognizant that they were trading in looted property and took active steps at concealment. The use of Swiss bank vaults and customs free zones, as well as Liechtenstein foundations, offer indications of their efforts to misrepresent the nature of the chattel. The old Nazis and their associates also falsified paperwork, like Bruno Lohse purporting to show that he sold the Fischer Pissarro to Frederic Schöni in 1957 (even though he kept it for himself with the Schönart Foundation). Those close to Lohse said he almost never produced receipts for his transactions; in this case, he did so, but the intention was to deceive. The destruction of documents – the ‘sanitizing’ of papers – constituted yet another element of this cognizance of guilt. These dealers, as well as their spouses, lawyers, and friends, weeded out compromising documents before handing them over to archives and other repositories. For example, Karl Haberstock’s *Nachlass* in the Augsburg Stadtmuseum was purged by his wife Magdalene, and Curt Valentin’s papers in the Museum of Modern Art in New York are missing key financial records.⁶³ Of course, dealers and others in the networks also would alter a work’s provenance so as to conceal that it had been looted. For example, ‘The very carefully prepared catalogue of 321 works’ in the Bührle Foundation in Zurich, in Hector Feliciano’s words, included ‘paintings from the Kann collection... Their real history is not.’⁶⁴ When Eberhard Kornfeld published the provenance for Egon Schiele’s *Dead City III* in the catalogue for his 1956 sale, the last owner listed was

60 L. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe’s Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War* (New York, NY 1994); and R. Edsel, *The Monuments Men* (New York, NY 2009).

61 M. Esterow, ‘Europe is Still Hunting Its Plundered Art,’ in *New York Times* (16 November 1964), A1.

62 T. Hoving, *King of Confessors* (New York, NY 1981), 112–18; and K. Akinsha, ‘Ante Topic Mimara: The Master Swindler of Yugoslavia,’ in *ARTnews* (September 2001) at http://www.lootedart.com/MFEU4T15383_print;Y (accessed 25 November 2014).

63 N. Doll and C. Fuhrmeister. Review of *Karl Haberstock. Umstrittener Kunsthändler und Mäzen*, edited by H. Kessler, *Kunstchronik* 63, 12 (December 2010), 620–3; and A. Tiedemann, *Die ‘Entartete’ Moderne und ihr Amerikanischer Markt. Karl Buchholz und Curt Valentin als Händler Verfemter Kunst* (Berlin 2013), 239–45.

64 Feliciano, *Lost Museum*, 201.

Fritz Grünbaum.⁶⁵ In that the comedian had been imprisoned since April 1938 and died in Dachau in 1941, there was no way that Kornfeld could have obtained the work from Grünbaum. Decades later, when called to account for the work, Kornfeld said he purchased it from Grünbaum's sister-in-law, Mathilde Lukacs. But there had been no mention of the latter in the 1956 catalogue.

The Gurlitt cache – the some 1300 pictures found in the possession of Cornelius Gurlitt in February 2012 (but revealed publicly only in November 2013), also helps provide a better understanding of these networks. First, Cornelius Gurlitt's father, Hildebrand, clearly fits in with the other dealers mentioned above, including with regard to self-enrichment. His income for 1943 topped 200,000 Reichsmarks (about US\$1.1 million today), as compared to about 10,000 Reichsmarks back in 1934.⁶⁶ The average salary in Nazi Germany was 2500 Reichsmarks per year. Some of his profits would have been realized in the future: for example, he purchased 200 works for 4000 Swiss francs (about US\$930), an average of US\$4.65 per picture (and went back for another 115 that he acquired from Goebbels's ministry in 1941). Most of the profits on these purchases would come after the war. Gurlitt, of course, also engaged in large scale 'technical looting' in occupied France, buying works with the exploitative currency exchange rates.⁶⁷ As we now know, he also purchased works that had been stolen from Nazi victims: the Rosenberg Matisse (*Sitting Woman*) provides the clearest example. The Gurlitt family then sold off works in the intervening years: Hildebrand Gurlitt's widow sold four pictures in May 1960 through the Ketterer Kunst auction house, including the iconic Rudolf Schlichter *Portrait of Bertolt Brecht* (now in the Lenbachhaus) and Max Beckmann's *Bar, Brown* (1944) (now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art), to raise the funds to buy the now-notorious apartment in Munich-Schwabing.⁶⁸

The Gurlitts' relationships with dealers in the above-discussed networks is also illuminating. We know that Cornelius Gurlitt sold some of the artworks to Eberhard Kornfeld in Bern. And, if Cornelius Gurlitt is to be believed, Kornfeld was the source of the 9000 Euros in large bills (500 Euro denominations) that Gurlitt had in his possession when he was stopped by customs' authorities (the dealer denied this, but acknowledged he had bought art from Cornelius Gurlitt in the past). The Swiss dealer, the cash transaction (seemingly intended to circumvent the 10,000 Euro reporting statute), and the geographical dimension (Gurlitt was intercepted on a train coming from neighboring Switzerland), are among the

65 Gutekunst & Klipstein, *Egon Schiele. Katalog zur Ausstellung Gutekunst & Klipstein* (Bern 1956).

66 A. Webb and C. Hickley, 'Nazi Loot Heirs Look to Reclusive Hoarder to Recover Art,' at *Bloomberg* (13 November 2013) at <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-11-13/nazi-loot-heirs-look-to-reclusive-hoarder-to-recover-art.html> (accessed 4 September 2014).

67 In 1939, US\$1 = SF 4.30. See L. Barnett, 'Art Dealer Paid Nazis Just 4,000 Swiss Francs for Masterpieces,' *Telegraph* (12 November 2013).

68 F. Bohr, et al., 'Art Dealer to the Führer: Hildebrand Gurlitt's Deep Nazi Ties, Part III,' in *Der Spiegel* (23 December 2013) at <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/hildebrand-gurlitt-and-his-dubious-dealings-with-nazi-looted-art-a-940625-3.html> (accessed 4 September 2014). See also <http://www.lacma.org/node/11863> (accessed 14 May 2015).

aspects of this case that prove telling. It is also significant that the Deputy Director of the Österreichische Galerie, Dr Alfred Weidinger, stated that Cornelius Gurlitt's collection was known 'to every important art dealer in the southern German area' – adding that this extended to the size of the collection.⁶⁹ If this is true, then it would be fair to say that the Gurlitt collection was known in certain circles of curators and dealers, but not among researchers in the restitution field.⁷⁰ When I went to Germany in January 2014 to investigate the case, I spoke with at least a dozen leading German restitution experts, and not one had ever heard of Cornelius Gurlitt. The art trade protects its secrets. Knowledge is key to the dealers' profits.

The other major revelation that occurred this past year relating to Nazi art looting and restitution was the discovery of 93 annotated catalogues from the Weinmüller auction house for the years 1936–45.⁷¹ In examining the actual catalogues, housed in the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte in Munich, and in light of the scholarly work on them undertaken by Meike Hopp, Christian Fuhrmeister, and Stephan Klingen, the existence of dealer networks during the Third Reich becomes apparent in new ways. Weinmüller worked particularly closely with Kajetan Mühlmann and his cohort of looters in the Netherlands. This included Franz Kieslinger, Eduard Plietzsch, and Bernhard Degenhart (all of them major figures in the art world both before and after the war). A second point concerns the simple fact that the records were found in existence. Right after the war, American Monuments officers received reports that Adolf Weinmüller had burned his business correspondence, which he had evacuated to the town of Heimhausen.⁷² Weinmüller himself (and his successors at Neumeister) always maintained that the firm's records were destroyed during the war. Actually, they sat in an ordinary metal file cabinet in the basement of the premises. Even though the auction house moved to its current location in 1978, no one noticed the original annotated catalogues at the time or in the decades that followed. Fortunately, Dr Meike Hopp and her team have been able to digitize the records, which include over 150,000 'pieces of information' (*Einzelinformationen*), and a system of sharing the results, while preserving privacy, has been developed.

I would venture to say that is remarkably common for dealers complicit in Nazi art plundering to maintain that their records were lost. One can go down the list: the papers of art dealer and plunderer Eduard Plietzsch? (He said that the Soviets

69 See http://diepresse.com/home/kultur/kunst/1473150/Fall-Gurlitt_Sammlung-war-kein-Geheimnis?from=simarchiv (accessed 9 March 2016).

70 K. Terlau, 'Hildebrand Gurlitt and the Art Trade during the Nazi Period,' in American Association of Museums (ed.), *Vitalizing Memory: International Perspectives on Provenance Research* (Washington, DC 2005), 165–71; C. Fischer-Defoy and K. Nürnberg (eds), *Gute Geschäft. Kunsthandel in Berlin 1933–1945* (Berlin 2011); S. Koldehoff, *Die Bilder sind unter uns. Das Geschäft mit der NS-Raubkunst und der Fall Gurlitt* (Berlin 2014), 20–48.

71 J. Michalska, 'Nazi-Era Auction Catalogues Published On-Line,' in *The Art Newspaper* (29 May 2014), at <http://www.theartnewspaper.com/articles/Naziera-auction-catalogues-published-online/32743> (accessed 2 September 2014).

72 The report of Weinmüller burning his business documents from Professor A. Schinnerer is in Staatsarchiv München, SpkA K 1933 Weinmüller Adolf, Edgar Breitenbach to Herr Rae (19 November 1946).

burned them when they entered the cellar of his home in the Meineckestrasse in Berlin); the Dorotheum in Vienna? (They claim their documents were also destroyed during the war).⁷³ Hildebrand and his cousin Wolfgang Gurlitt? (Both claimed that they lost all their documents in the Allied bombing).⁷⁴ The records of the Swiss Art Dealers' Association? (According to its onetime President, Peter Feilchenfeldt, all their records before 1980 simply disappeared – and, he added, ‘no one knows where they went’).⁷⁵ In certain cases, dealer records really were destroyed by bombing and the ground war in Germany, such as with the Kunsthandlung J.P. Schneider in Frankfurt; but in other instances, there was intentional concealment and the records still exist.

The dealer networks actually crossed professional boundaries. For example, in Bavaria, they extended to the broader professional and political spheres. It helped the Munich dealers that the Bavarian State Painting Collections employed many former Nazis – including General Directors Ernst Buchner (1933–45 and 1953–7) and Halldor Soehner (1964–8), who continued to do business with the old Nazi dealers from the 1950s onward. It also helped them to have relationships with influential government officials, bankers, and members of other professions who had previously been Nazis or been complicit in Nazi crimes. In Munich, one found, for example, art historian Dr Erhard Göpel, a former art agent for Hitler in the Netherlands (and a close friend of the artist Max Beckmann). Göpel also worked as a journalist in the postwar period and wrote pieces on art that mitigated against the restitution process. For example, when the Bavarian State Painting Collections acquired Picasso's *Madame Soler* in 1964, Göpel's piece in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* offered an inaccurate provenance that omitted the fact that the painting had been owned by Paul von Mendelssohn-Bartholdy until the banker's death in 1935.⁷⁶ Justin Thannhauser, who as noted earlier, sold the picture to the Bavarians, had made it clear that the Berlin banker had been a former owner, but Göpel, like the Bavarian State Painting Collections (in both internal and public documents), elided Mendelssohn-Bartholdy's name from the provenance. The dealer networks were clearly part of a larger context of historical amnesia. The myriad figures in the state administration and in the financial sector who had once been Nazis facilitated the rise of these dealer networks.⁷⁷

In light of the unresolved issue of looted art – that the dealers in these networks possessed and trafficked in such works in the postwar period – one can talk about the failure of denazification in the art world (and, as studies on disciplines have

73 Vlug, ‘Report on Objects Removed to Germany from Holland, Belgium, and France during the German Occupation in the Countries,’ 13.

74 Foradini, ‘The Other Gurlitt,’ 2.

75 Peter Feilchenfeldt, statement of 1 April 1997 quoted in Buomberger, *Raubkunst-Kunstraub*, 394.

76 E. Göpel, ‘Die Millionendame von Picasso,’ in *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (22 December 1964).

77 For more on the presence of former Nazis in the Bavarian establishment, see the documentary film by Michael Juncker, *Deutschland gegen Deutsch* (2005). See also N. Frei, *Adenauer's Germany and the Nazi Past: The Politics of Amnesty and Integration* (New York, NY 2002 [1997]); and N. Frei (ed.), *Karrieren im Zwielicht. Hitlers Eliten nach 1945* (Frankfurt am Main 2001).

shown, the cultural sphere more generally).⁷⁸ International bodies such as UNESCO long ignored issues relating to Nazi looting and Allied restitution, and the efforts to draw attention to ‘the unfinished business of World War II’ in the cultural sphere, which included the Bard Graduate Center symposium in 1995, the international conferences held in London in 1997, Washington, DC in 1998, Vilnius in 2000, and Prague/Terezin in 2009, could only partially remedy the challenging situation.⁷⁹ The same applies to the international commissions, many of which produced valuable scholarly publications.⁸⁰

I am still considering the different ways as to how we think about these networks. First, would it be helpful to use a Geographic Information System approach? GIS (also known as Geospatial Information Studies) is ‘a computer system designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyze, manage, and present all types of geographical data.’⁸¹ Scholars of the Third Reich have recently been using GIS methodologies to understand topics ranging from child ‘euthanasia’ to the killing operations of the *Einsatzgruppen*.⁸² One GIS-related attempt to map networks has been undertaken with regard to Gerhard Utikal, who served as a senior staffer for Alfred Rosenberg and hence the ERR.⁸³ It certainly represents a step forward. I am not sure there are enough data points regarding dealers to allow one to create a database that can begin to answer all the questions one would like, but mapping the dealer networks, as I am arguing here, seems like a worthwhile project.⁸⁴

Would a series of case studies be most effective? One could examine different individuals who capture the varying facets of this history. This is what I am doing at the moment, focusing on the experiences of Bruno Lohse. By understanding in depth the actions of one particular individual – or a delimited group of individuals – the broader context also becomes more visible. Lohse had contact with an extraordinarily wide array of the figures mentioned here, as well as others whom I have not discussed at any length here (Jan Dik Jr., Roger Dequoy, and Alois Miedl, to mention three well-known figures).

It might be fruitful to look at dealers’ networks from an interdisciplinary perspective. One could bring art historians together with political scientists,

78 See, for example, D. Monod, *Settling Scores: German Music, Denazification and the Americans, 1945–1953* (Chapel Hill, NC 2005); J.-L. Cohen, *Architecture in Uniform: Designing and Building for the Second World War* (New Haven, CT 2011), 383–423; and S. Remy, *The Heidelberg Myth: The Nazification and Denazification of a German University* (Cambridge, MA 2003).

79 S. Eisenstat, *Imperfect Justice: Looted Assets, Slave Labor, and the Unfinished Business of World War II* (New York, NY 2003); and E. Simpson (ed.), *The Spoils of War: World War II and its Aftermath. The Loss, Reappearance, and Recovery of Cultural Property* (New York, NY 1997).

80 See for example, Francini, Heuss, and Kreis, *Fluchtgut-Raubgut*; and Presidential Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States, *Plunder and Restitution: The U.S. and Holocaust Victims’ Assets* (Washington, DC, 2001).

81 See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geographic_information_system (accessed 10 July 2015).

82 See, for example, the panel at the 2013 German Studies Association conference in Denver, Co (No. 162), titled, ‘New Spatial Understandings of the Holocaust: Cartography and Technology.’

83 See <http://de.inforapid.org/index.php?search=Gerhard%20Utikal> (accessed 9 January 2015).

84 Jörg Raab’s reflections on the goals of network theory are also in alignment with GIS approaches. See Raab, ‘More Than Just a Metaphor,’ 324.

anthropologists, psychologists, and of course, economists. It would be very useful to engage in statistical analyses regarding the number of works sold, the profits, and the broader economic context of the art market.

Of course, what is really needed is the cooperation of the current generation of art dealers.⁸⁵ It would be extraordinarily helpful if they opened their records to researchers and participated in scholarly discussions (for example, letting us know at an earlier point about Cornelius Gurlitt). Some dealers do, in fact, cooperate with researchers, and there have been significant advances in our understanding of the art market. The Getty Research Institute sales records for 2000 German auction catalogues from 1930 to 1945, which went public in 2013, is one example.⁸⁶ But the fact remains that the general culture of secrecy that characterizes the profession has mitigated against an understanding of what transpired with regard to Nazi looted art in the postwar period. Regardless, the subject seems rife with possibilities right now. The dealer networks were important both before 1945 and in the decades that followed, and understanding them remains central both to our understanding of this history and to the on-going restitution efforts.

Biographical Note

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85 'German Decries Unhelpful Art Dealers in Search for Loot,' in artnet News (1 July 2014) at <http://news.artnet.com/in-brief/germany-decries-unhelpful-art-dealers-in-search-for-loot-52023> (accessed 4 September 2014).

86 The best overview of dealer archives is in Yeide, Akinsha, and Walsh, *The AAM Guide to Provenance Research*, 214–45.