

<b>Institution:</b> University of Cambridge
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> UoA30
<b>Title of case study:</b> Art Looting in the Nazi Era
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Research on Nazi Germany and specifically its appropriation of Jewish-owned art led to Professor Sir Richard Evans's appointment to the Spoliation Advisory Panel of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, which resolves claims for cultural objects lost during the Nazi era. As the only historian on the Panel, Professor Evans has used his research to provide expert advice that has played a significant role in shaping the five reports and recommendations published by the Panel since 2008. This has resulted in the resolution of a number of disputes and played a role in the ongoing process of reconciliation following the Second World War. In 2012 Professor Evans was appointed Deputy Chairman of the Panel. He played a significant part in the deliberations of the Panel that led to the drafting of the Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) Act 2009.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Professor Sir Richard Evans's research project on the history of Nazi Germany was carried out between 1998 and 2008 while he was Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University [in 2008 he was appointed Regius Professor]. It was conducted in archives and libraries in Britain and Germany and based on printed and manuscript sources and secondary literature. The project as a whole aimed to provide a synthesis and interpretation of knowledge of every aspect of the history of Nazi Germany, including literature, culture, music and the visual arts, to which substantial sections of all three main volumes are devoted, alongside case-studies of particular individuals of many kinds, using letters, diaries and memoirs. Original documents used included reports of the SS Security Service (<i>Meldungen aus dem Reich</i>), original catalogues of exhibitions, and similar material.</p> <p>The results of the research were published in three volumes: <i>The Coming of the Third Reich</i>, <i>The Third Reich in Power</i>, and <i>The Third Reich at War</i> [3A, 3B, 3C]. An additional volume, <i>Telling Lies About Hitler: The Holocaust, History and the David Irving Trial</i>, was based on early research for this project and also on discovery documents made available in the defamation action brought by David Irving against Deborah Lipstadt and Penguin Books in the High Court, for which Sir Richard was the principal expert witness for the defence [3D].</p> <p>It is these four volumes that led to the award to Professor Evans of an Honorary Degree of D.Litt. from the University in November 2012 and his appointment as Knight Bachelor for services to scholarship in the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2012. The research also led to the invitation to Professor Evans to deliver the 2006 Raleigh Lecture in History of the British Academy ('Coercion and Consent in Nazi Germany', <i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i> 151 (2006)) and his election as a Founding Fellow of the Learned Academy of Wales in 2010.</p> <p>Further research on the history of art looting and cultural spoliation led to the publication of an article, 'Art in the Time of War', in <i>The National Interest</i> in 2011 [3E].</p> <p>This entire body of research included coverage of the confiscation and 'Aryanization' of Jewish property in Nazi Germany, the cultural looting of Poland, Russia and other countries occupied by the Germans, and the general state of the visual arts in Nazi Germany, including their administration by the Nazis and the changing reputation and value of artworks by different artists and from different periods during the era of the Third Reich. Other areas of direct relevance to the work of the Spoliation Advisory Panel included the state of the financial market and the banking sector in Germany from 1930 to 1945, which underpinned the Panel's decisions on a number of cases involving cultural objects lost by German-Jewish bankers during the Nazi era. Among other findings, the research showed how the Nazis confiscated and destroyed modern ('degenerate')</p>

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artworks, whose market value thus fell sharply, and looted many thousands of artworks from Jewish owners in Germany, and many others outside Germany. By bringing together a number of different areas of investigation (particularly, art history, financial history, and the history of the Jews) the research provided the essential historical context for the work of the Spoliation Advisory Panel. Professor Evans's work as the historian on the Panel also included extensive documentary investigations on the specific cases brought before it.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- [A] Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich* (Penguin Books, 2003) (obtainable from the University of Cambridge)
- [B] Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power* (Penguin Books, 2005) (obtainable from the University of Cambridge)
- [C] Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich at War* (Penguin Books, 2008) (obtainable from the University of Cambridge)
- [D] Richard J. Evans, *Telling Lies About Hitler: The Holocaust, History and the David Irving Trial* (Verso, 2002) (obtainable from the University of Cambridge)
- [E] Richard J. Evans, 'Art in the Time of War' in *The National Interest* 113 (May/June, 2011), 16-26 (available at <http://nationalinterest.org/article/art-the-time-war-5163>)

### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

In 2000 the DCMS established the Spoliation Advisory Panel, a Non-Departmental Public Body that advises the Secretary of State on claims for the return of cultural objects looted during the Nazi era. The Secretary to Panel has stated: *'I write to confirm that Professor Sir Richard Evans, who is the Deputy Chair of the UK Spoliation Advisory Panel, was appointed by Ministers to the Panel in 2000 specifically on the basis of the research he carried out on Nazi Germany. In the case of his initial appointment to the Panel, we took account of his work as the lead expert witness in the High Court defamation case of Irving vs. Lipstadt and Penguin Books. Professor Evans was reappointed for a further two terms and then subsequently as a member of the Panel following its redesignation in 2010 on the basis of his published research on the Nazi period in his three books 'The Coming of the Third Reich', 'The Third Reich in Power', and 'The Third Reich at War', as well as 'Lying About Hitler'. Making sense of events that occurred some 70 years ago represents a considerable challenge and having recourse to Professor Evans' knowledge and published works is an invaluable resource for the Panel and for the Government.'* [5A]

12 reports have been issued by the Panel to date, 5 of them in the period 2008-12. Professor Evans drafted [5F] the *Report of the Spoliation Advisory Panel in respect of an oil sketch by Sir Peter Paul Rubens, The Coronation of the Virgin, now in the possession of the Samuel Courtauld Trust, 2010*, (HC655). The Report recommended rejection of the claim, and the recommendation was accepted by the Secretary of State [5B]. The rejection was based on Professor Evans's finding that the claimant had lost his fortune in the banking crash of 1931, discussed in *The Coming of the Third Reich*. It also depended on a number of findings about the process of 'Aryanization' in the Dresdner Bank, researched for *The Third Reich in Power*.

The *Report of the Spoliation Advisory Panel in respect of fourteen clocks and watches now in the possession of the British Museum, London* (HC1839, 2012) rejected the claimant's case for restitution but recommended that the display in the Museum be accompanied by a plaque recording the original ownership of the watches and the circumstances under which they came into the Museum's possession [5C]. Professor Evans's contribution was on the historical circumstances of the original forced sale of the objects and drew on his work on 'Aryanization' and the confiscation of Jewish property presented in *The Third Reich in Power*.

*The Report of the Spoliation Advisory panel in respect of pieces of porcelain now in the possession of the British Museum, London, and the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge* (HC602, 2008) recommended restitution to the claimant on the basis that there was clear evidence that his collection was seized by the Gestapo. Professor Evans's contribution to the report was on the

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circumstances of the original spoliation. The Secretary of State accepted the recommendation and the porcelain objects were returned.

The *Report of the Spoliation Advisory Panel in respect of a renewed claim by the Metropolitan Chapter of Benevento for the return of the Beneventan Missal now in the possession of the British Library* (HC448) was issued on 15 September 2010 and recommended the return of the Missal to the Benevento Chapter Library [5D] on the basis that it had been illegally acquired by a British officer in 1944 and the British Museum Manuscripts Department knew this at the time. Professor Evans advised on the circumstances of the fighting in and around Naples in 1944, as researched for his book *The Third Reich at War*. The missal was formally returned to the Benevento Chapter Library by the British Library in 2011 [5H].

The *Report of the Spoliation Advisory Panel in respect of eight drawings now in the possession of the Samuel Courtauld Trust* (HC757, 24 June 2009), recommended the rejection of the claim for restitution with the proviso of a plaque accompanying the display of the objects explaining the circumstances of their original sale. Professor Evans advised on the circumstances under which the Gestapo requisitioned the apartment of the owner, and the subsequent sale of the objects, as well as on the owner's German state pension and the blocked account into which it was subsequently paid. His advice drew on the research into the Nazi removal of Jewish civil servants in 1933 presented in *The Coming of the Third Reich*.

The *Holocaust (Restitution of Cultural Objects) Act 2009* was prompted by the Benevento Missal case (see above) and led to the Missal's restitution. The Panel exercised its right, as outlined in its Terms of Reference, to recommend legislation and drafted an initial Bill, which was then scrutinized by Parliamentary Draftsmen and passed through both Houses in 2009 as a Private Member's Bill [5E, 5G].

#### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

[A] Letter from person 1 (Cultural Property Adviser, Department of Culture, Media and Sport)

[B] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/report-of-the-spoliation-advisory-panel-in-respect-of-an-oil-sketch-by-sir-peter-paul-rubens-the-coronation-of-the-virgin-now-in-the-possession-of-the-samuel-courtauld-trust> [This include acceptance by the Secretary of State]

[C] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/report-of-the-spoliation-advisory-panel-in-respect-of-fourteen-clocks-and-watches-now-in-the-possession-of-the-british-museum-london>

[D] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/report-of-the-spoliation-advisory-panel-in-respect-of-a-renewed-claim-by-the-metropolitan-chapter-of-benevento-for-the-return-of-the-beneventan-missal-now-in-the-possession-of-the-british-library>

[E] Person 1 (Cultural Property Adviser, Department of Culture, Media and Sport) can corroborate the claim that Professor Evans has been the historian on the Spoliation Advisory Panel, is now its Deputy Chairman, and that his research on Nazi Germany has contributed to the Panel's reports and recommendations, including the drafting of the Holocaust (Restitution of Cultural Objects) Act 2009.

[F] Person 2 (Chairman, The Spoliation Advisory Panel, DCMS) can corroborate the specific claim that Professor Evans drafted the 2010 report on the claim in respect of the oil sketch by Sir Peter Paul Rubens, *The Coronation of the Virgin*.

[G] Person 3 (The Clerk of the House of Commons) can corroborate the claim that the Spoliation Advisory Panel originated the Private Member's Bill that became the Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) Act 2009 (and can provide a link to the MP who introduced the Bill).

[H] The Press Office, The British Library, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB (press-and-

pr@bl.uk) who can corroborate the claim that the Panel's advice on restitution was followed in the case of the Benevento Missal.