Nazi art looting and repatriation have been topics of research and publishing interest for the past twenty years, however, not from the vantage point of a trained art historian or someone with an art-history appointment (Rorimer’s military memoir the exception). Initially driven by estate hunters and more recently by museum provenance requirements, the literature has now been subsumed into the greater field of the history of collections. Books of how the Axis governments envisioned their histories of art and how the Allies dealt with the post-war dismantling of it are essential parts of even modest art libraries. This year, however, was a banner one for the subject, with the appearance of Ilaria Brey’s *The Venus Fixers: The Untold Story of the Allied Soldiers Who Saved Italy’s Art During World War II*, the translation of Laurence Bertrand Dorléac’s *Art of Defeat*, and Robert Edsel’s *The Monuments Men*, in addition to Yeide’s inventory.

The history of Reichsmarschall Goering’s assemblage of an art collection is fascinating, but sad to say, not accomplished by this book. Yeide, Head of the Department of Curatorial Records at The National Gallery of Art, has scrupulously researched and documented this one-time collection, a task requiring the cross-checking of many inventories and the two previous books on Goering’s collection. Provenance researcher that she is, each work is documented in fastidious detail: which collaborationist dealer sold it, the years of Goering’s ownership, its present venue and physical description. This catalog is the raw material of the mind of the totalitarian—a key to the thinking that set out to reorder not just the art world, but the world itself. Catalogues raisonnés frequently afford their authors a place for unusual insights. Unfortunately, for all its wealth of facts, Yeide’s book contains no analysis and only pedestrian conclusions. The eighteen pages of text she devotes to the history of all of Nazi art collecting are a pallid summary of other books. She hardly mentions the tension between Goering’s collecting and his direct competitor, Hitler’s own *Führermuseum*. She smugly belabors Goering’s dupe by master forger Hans van Meegeren of the fake Vermeer *Christ and the Woman Taken into Adultery* when nearly all Vermeer specialists of the time considered it genuine. The book’s layout is also rather dismal, small monotone photos of every work with distractingly large provenance numbers next to each, perhaps to mimic a military inventory, the kind to which the works were ultimately subjected.

*Beyond the Dreams of Avarice* is an important book for those serious art research libraries that must own everything on art reparation. There’s just not enough new significant information to make this a must-have for many undergraduate institutions or smaller art libraries, particularly given the $250 price.

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