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# Museum Treasures in the Fog of War: a Historical Analysis of Cultural Heritage Protection During a Time of War

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# Museum Treasures in the Fog of War

A Historical Analysis of Cultural Heritage Protection  
During a Time of War

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of the requirements for the degree of  
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## Abstract

The withdrawal of United States military forces from Iraq and the resulting conclusion of the Iraq War have left an indelible impression on Americans concerning the cost of the third-longest war in United States history. Opinions and arguments regarding foreign policy, national expenditures and human rights violations typically dominate conversation, but there is a less mentioned topic regarding damage to Iraqi cultural heritage. In April 2003 Iraqi civilians looted the National Museum of Iraq during the push of Coalition forces through Baghdad. The museum collection suffered from a lack of cultural protection preparedness in military planning. The incident at the museum is a recent reminder that war threatens archaeological, historic and artistic treasures through direct damage and increased exposure to opportunistic looting.

News reports about the ongoing unrest and civil war in Syria revive the importance of establishing cultural heritage protection policies. Lessons in cultural protection exist from previous World War II and Iraq War experiences, but these are not “catchall solutions” that can be applied to any combat situation. Chaos and uncertainty amid the horrors of war make the planning of an all-purpose policy difficult if not impossible. An effective response needs to be fluid to accommodate the changing demands of armed conflict based on the unique conditions of that particular war.

This thesis intends to synthesize a suggested strategy for preserving cultural heritage during a time of war by comparing organized efforts of the *Kunstschutz* and Monuments Men art protection agencies of World War II and antiquities repatriation performed by the Joint Interagency Coordination Group during the Iraq War. The

similarities and differences between these organizations help understand why a single plan may not succeed in every wartime environment.

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## I. "Museum Treasures Now War Booty"

No plan of action can look with any certainty beyond the first meeting with the major forces of the enemy... The commander is compelled during the whole campaign to reach decisions on the basis of situations that cannot be predicted. All consecutive acts of war are, therefore, not executions of a premeditated plan, but spontaneous action, directed by military tact.

General Helmut von Moltke the Elder<sup>1</sup>

On 12 April 2003 staff members of the National Museum of Iraq experienced a dismal sight. The staff had not returned to the museum since soldiers of the Iraqi Republican Guard took up fighting positions in the museum compound four days earlier. The museum is located on the west bank of the Tigris River in Baghdad. Its proximity to the Ministry of Defense, National Bank of Iraq and government buildings of the Oil Ministry caused the museum to be surrounded by heavy fighting during the push of Coalition forces through Baghdad. Once the fighting waned, museum staff returned to find smashed glass gallery displays, ransacked storage rooms and thousands of missing antiquities.

The National Museum of Iraq, also known as the Iraq Museum, experienced a wave of looting by Iraqi civilians between 10 April and 12 April 2003. The thefts occurred during the struggle for Baghdad in the early months of the Iraq War. American forces secured the Iraq Museum compound on 16 April and an anti-terrorist activity group called the Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG) began an investigation and repatriation program on 23 April. By that time numerous media outlets described the story as the greatest loss of cultural heritage in human history, using headlines such as

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<sup>1</sup> Lynn, John A. *Battle: A History of Combat and Culture*. Boulder: Westview Press, 2003, 212.

“Pillagers Strip Iraq Museum of Its Treasure,” “U.S. Blamed For Failure to Stop Sacking of Museum” and “Museum Treasures Now War Booty.”<sup>2</sup>

Exaggerated claims stated that up to 170,000 artifacts had been looted from the Iraq Museum and that its galleries were empty. The investigation of the JIACG team revealed that significant portions of the valuable collection had remained untouched by vandals and the number of missing artifacts was approximately 15,000. The Iraq Museum reports that roughly half that number has been recovered as of September 2010.<sup>3</sup> Yet the successful return of many objects to the Iraq Museum does not mask deficiencies in United States military planning regarding the protection of Iraqi cultural treasures. Precedents exist in which the protection of cultural heritage and repatriation of stolen treasures had been incorporated into army strategies of invasion and occupation. During World War II, German and American armies developed responses to similar issues of cultural heritage protection experienced recently in Iraq. Two separate art protection organizations, the *Kunstschutz* and the Monuments Men, worked to preserve cultural treasures in time of war during the 1940s. If the experiences of these two agencies are documented, why did the Coalition invasion forces of the Iraq War not incorporate the policies and procedures employed by these groups during World War II into their battle plans?

Lessons provided by World War II examples were not entirely compatible with the situation in Iraq. Coalition war planners failed to adequately incorporate the

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<sup>2</sup> Bogdanos, Matthew and William Patrick. *Thieves of Baghdad: One Marine's Passion for Ancient Civilizations and the Journey to Recover the World's Greatest Stolen Treasures*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2005, 110. The article headlines are from *The New York Times*, 13 April 2003, *Independent*, 14 April 2003 and *Associated Press*, 12 April 2003, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> Myers, Steven Lee. “Iraqi Treasures Return, but Questions Remain”. *The New York Times*. 7 September 2010. Web. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/08/world/middleeast/08iraq.html?ref=nationalmuseumofiraq>. Accessed 26 April 2013.

teachings of World War II art protection groups into their invasion strategy, but the lessons learned during the 1940s were not necessarily lost during the Iraq War. The JIACG proceeded to blaze their own trail in post-invasion Baghdad that had parallel similarities to their World War II counterparts. The unpredictability of warfare renders past experiences as indefinite solutions for present problems and prevents the careful planning of an effective response prior to a cultural heritage disaster. As a result, the future of protection plans must be fluid in nature and not bound to absolute properties. That does not mean guidelines cannot exist within the perceived chaos of war. Similar elements present in all three protection agency examples – the *Kunstschutz* in France, the Monuments Men in Italy and France and the JIACG in Iraq – can be used to advise future planning.

Comparing the historical practices of German and Allied forces during World War II with their American counterparts in the Iraq War can isolate the essential needs of an effective protection plan during wartime. Viewing the results side-by-side reveals which practices were successfully replicated and what practices were not applicable in each cultural protection organization. This paper will begin with (1) a look at how the practice of cultural heritage protection evolved in historical perspective, followed by (2) an exploration of recent developments in Iraq. The next section (3) considers these practices vis-à-vis the chaotic nature of war and assesses the problems it causes in the context of protection planning. The last section (4) compiles suggested best practices based on lessons that transcended the wars of the twentieth and twenty-first-century. The incident at the Iraq Museum is a haunting reminder of the direct and indirect threats faced



by museum collections in the vicinity of armed combatants. It simultaneously stresses the need for preventive measures to be reestablished in future theatres of war.

The Iraq Museum's message of vulnerability is currently being revisited by news reports covering the unrest and civil war in Syria. Those of us who are fortunate to not have a conflict brewing in our backyards watch our television screens depict Syrian civilians who are embroiled in the horrors of war. A sense of global community draws our attention to the plight of those caught in the turmoil and to the destruction wrought on the world's cultural treasures. Collectively Syria and Iraq form the Levant and Mesopotamia regions of the Fertile Crescent that fostered the emergence of civilization. They are historically significant sources of archaeological knowledge and contain numerous cultural heritage sites.

Archaeologist Cheikhmous Ali describes damage to Syria's heritage sites as "vandalism," adding, "a whole civilization belonging to all humanity is being destroyed."<sup>4</sup> Dr. McGuire Gibson of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago placed a similar emphasis on Iraq in 2003 – calling it the most important center of ancient culture in the world – when he met with representatives of the Pentagon and U.S. State Department prior to the Iraq War.<sup>5</sup> Ten years separate the looting of the Iraq Museum and the ongoing civil war in Syria, but the threat to cultural heritage – and the resulting need for adequate protection practices – is still a very real and present danger.

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<sup>4</sup> Chivers, C. J. "Grave Robbers and War Steal Syria's History". *The New York Times*. 6 April 2013. Web. [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/07/world/middleeast/syrian-war-devastates-ancient-sites.html?hp&\\_r=1&](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/07/world/middleeast/syrian-war-devastates-ancient-sites.html?hp&_r=1&). Accessed 12 April 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Stone, Peter G. and Joanne Farchakh Bajjaly. *The Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Iraq*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2008, 38.

## II. Lessons Learned

The specialized knowledge needed for delicate military operations concerning cultural heritage objects is most readily available from academic institutions. Scholars, professors and museum specialists are the front-line experts to consult when protecting objects of cultural heritage. These individuals can identify threatened works and know the appropriate responses for their care and preservation. Many have honed their specialized skills during long careers with their associated institutions and are valuable contacts for military planners to keep on hand. Academic institutions for this paper include colleges or universities, museums, art galleries and non-profit learned societies.

During World War II the militaries of Germany and the United States selected individuals from this community of higher learning to staff their art protection agencies. German and American army commanders sought professionals with extensive knowledge on cultural property, how to identify it and how to handle it. Individuals with qualifications that met the demands of cultural protection were selected for service under parent army organizations. Some were assigned officer ranks in their respective militaries to further their leadership capabilities and strengthen the influence of cultural heritage protection policies in military procedure.

### *The Kunstschutz*

The first of these organizations to be established was the German *Kunstschutz*. The *Kunstschutz*, meaning “art protection,” was a German administrative organization born out of the needs of World War I and revived in World War II. It was composed of

art historians, scholars and museum professionals who were determined to preserve the art treasures of Europe. *Kunstschutz* officers worked alongside German Army units to prevent art damage, either through keeping soldiers away from artworks or moving them to safer locations away from combat areas. During World War II the *Kunstschutz* made a notable effort to keep cultural property within the country of origin even as other organizations, such as the *Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg* (ERR) – a subgroup of the Nazi Party Office of Foreign Affairs dedicated to appropriating cultural property – removed artworks to Germany for personal or state collections. Officers such as Count Franz Wolff-Metternich and Bernhard von Tieschowitz made it their personal duty to prevent art looting and deportation to Germany and reverted to toe-to-toe confrontation with high-ranking Nazi officials when necessary to protect the cultural heritage of occupied nations.

An early version of the *Kunstschutz* originated during the adverse conditions of World War I. Following the initial German advances made in 1914, the German military found itself in possession of large areas of France and Belgium until the end of the war in 1918. The *Kunstschutz* were an extension of German policies in action and were created out of a military need for discipline and order in an occupied territory. A concerted effort was made by German forces led by architectural historian Paul Clemen to protect the artworks and architecture of these territories and prevent damage to them whenever possible, thus preserving them for their return to the French and Belgians during peacetime. This included documenting culturally significant structures and publicizing the threats posed to them by being caught in the conflict.

The *Kunstschutz* did not receive the recognition it deserved from the victorious Entente Powers following World War I, but their efforts did not go completely unnoticed by the international academic community. The American *College Art Journal* remarked that the *Kunstschutz* did admirable work for the cultural property of the occupied countries.<sup>6</sup> British archaeologist Leonard Woolley noted that prior to World War I, “no army had thought of protecting the monuments of the country in which and with which it was at war, and there were no precedents to follow.”<sup>7</sup> The actions of the *Kunstschutz* were the first of their kind for treating cultural property and were imitated and expanded by German forces during the next European war.

The invasion of Poland in September 1939 marked the beginning of World War II in Europe and with it a need for academic professionalism. Art scholars and museum specialists were needed in force to reduce the potential damage caused by millions of soldiers marching to war. The policy of *Lebensraum*, or “living space,” promoted by Adolf Hitler’s Nazi ideology encouraged the destruction of Polish culture and led to widespread looting, vandalism and destruction of cultural property in the defeated country. Many German officers of the Armed Forces High Command did not share the same views as Hitler and re-established the *Kunstschutz* to prevent such a disgraceful episode from reoccurring during the next German military campaign in Western Europe.<sup>8</sup>

A directive from the Armed Forces High Command re-created the *Kunstschutz* organization on 11 May 1940, the day after the invasion of the Low Countries and France

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<sup>6</sup> Nathan, Walter L. “Paul Clemen (1866-1947)”. *College Art Journal* 7, No. 3 (Spring 1948), 217.

<sup>7</sup> Lambourne, Nicola. *War damage in Western Europe: the destruction of historic monuments during the Second World War*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001, 124.

<sup>8</sup> Harclerode, Peter and Brendan Pittaway. *The Lost Masters: The Looting of Europe’s Treasurehouses*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1999, 11.

began.<sup>9</sup> *Kunstschutz* units worked in tandem with German Army units and followed them into battle. They were responsible for compiling lists of artworks located within a battle zone so that armies of occupation could protect them from damage. The High Command selected scholars and museum professionals to fill the ranks of the *Kunstschutz* because of their backgrounds in art recognition, handling and preservation. Metternich, the first leader of the *Kunstschutz*, was a distinguished art historian and held the position of Provincial Curator of the Rhineland-Westphalia region of Germany before the war broke out in Europe.<sup>10</sup> His successor, von Tieschowitz, was also an art historian.

The *Kunstschutz* performed a multitude of duties to preserve the cultural treasures of the occupied territories. These included rebuilding damaged property, limiting German Army access to cultural objects, conducting art research and fostering fruitful relations with French museum and art professionals. The actions and accomplishments of the *Kunstschutz* during World War II can be used as a rubric for comparing the similarities and differences of subsequent cultural heritage organizations. Each organization developed their policies and procedures according to the resources they had at their disposal and the wartime environment around them. The *Kunstschutz* policies can be summarized in four main elements: (1) increased awareness, (2) cooperation with the native population, (3) repair and restoration of artifacts, monuments and historic buildings and (4) isolation of protected sites from military and public use.

Increasing awareness draws public attention to objects of cultural heritage that are threatened by war. An informed public that understands how to appropriately react to

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<sup>9</sup> Feliciano, Hector. *The Lost Museum: The Nazi Conspiracy to Steal the World's Greatest Works of Art*. New York: Perseus Books Group, 1997, 34.

<sup>10</sup> Nicholas, Lynn H. *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995, 119.

encounters with cultural property increases the chance that these objects will escape damage or be returned to their original owners in the event of theft. Implementation of such a policy may include publications, meetings, lectures and outreach programs in both civilian and military communities.

The *Kunstschutz* was the first of the art protection organizations to disseminate information regarding cultural heritage and circulate their ideals among soldiers. *Kunstschutz* officers took full advantage of the popularity of propaganda posters to inform German soldiers about the importance of art protection. Posters sanctioned by the officers included messages such as “*Vorsicht beim Heizen! Du zerstörst sonst historische Werte!*” (Caution with heating! It may destroy historic works!) and “*Zeigt Euch als Deutsche und beweist den Franzosen, dass wir als Träger einer eigenen hohen Kultur auch Achtung vor den Gütern fremder Kulturen besitzen!*” (Show yourselves as Germans and prove to the French that we, as carriers of our own high culture, also respect the assets of other cultures!).<sup>11</sup> Posters like these were posted in conspicuous areas throughout the occupied nations of Europe, particularly in places where soldiers were billeted.

Achieving a level of mutual respect between the German occupation force and French civilians was a lofty goal for the second poster example, but fostering relations with the native population was an imperative task for the success of the *Kunstschutz*. Metternich and his officers realized that proactive and positive reinforcement of the local community builds a layer of trust, maintains a higher level of morale among the local

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<sup>11</sup> Karlsgodt, Elizabeth Campbell. *Defending national treasures: French art and heritage under Vichy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011, 40.

population and reduces their view of the *Kunstschutz* as an outside, invasive or unwelcome entity.

Somewhat surprisingly, in the light of the infamous art theft and persecution of occupied peoples at the hands of Nazi Germany, the German officers of the *Kunstschutz* were remarkably successful at maintaining fruitful relations with the citizens of occupied nations, especially the French. Metternich disdained the extremism of Nazi ideology and, like other members of the *Kunstschutz*, believed it was their duty to protect French heritage.<sup>12</sup> The men chosen for the *Kunstschutz* were well-known art historians and usually not members of the Nazi Party.<sup>13</sup> This was a direct consideration of the German Armed Forces High Command to reduce political tensions between *Kunstschutz* officers and the local art officials they would be required to work with in occupied countries.

The *Kunstschutz* helped French professionals evacuate artworks from threatened public museums and protect them from damage during the German occupation of France.<sup>14</sup> Many of Metternich's actions directly assisted French art officials in several important ways. He guaranteed the *Direction des musées*, or "Directorate of Museums," in France that German soldiers would not requisition *chateaux* housing precious art collections. He provided fuel-rationing coupons to enable French authorities to transfer works of art to safer locations. He located more suitable art storage locations when humidity levels endangered their original depots. Lastly, under Metternich the *Kunstschutz* struck an agreement with the *Direction des musées* that cases of artwork could only be opened by French museum personnel in the presence of the art storage or

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 39.

<sup>13</sup> Ross, Marvin C. "The *Kunstschutz* in Occupied France". *College Art Journal* 5, No. 4 (May 1946), 337.

<sup>14</sup> Karlsgodt, 41.

holding facility director and a representative of the *Kunstschutz*. All of these actions gave French museum officials greater control over their art collections during the German occupation period. Metternich's legacy of cooperation with French locals was continued by his replacement von Tieschowitz. Later in the war, when Germany was desperate for workers from the occupied territories, von Tieschowitz exempted French museum personnel from the labor draft until replacements could be found.<sup>15</sup>

The *Kunstschutz* provided some assistance to French civilians that went directly against orders from the Nazi government or directly sabotaged the actions of other Nazi organizations. For example, Metternich countered German orders and allowed French guards at museum art storage depots to bear arms. Additionally, Metternich frequently notified his French contacts in the *Direction des musées* of upcoming ERR raids so that artworks could be removed from their storage facilities and hidden to escape deportation to Germany.<sup>16</sup>

The *Kunstschutz* "on the whole acted well in protecting monuments and acquired goodwill" in such occupied countries as France, Greece and others.<sup>17</sup> The attitudes and agendas of their officers fostered positive relations with local museum officials and the native population. Indeed, one of the reasons Metternich was transferred in June 1942 from Paris back to the German Rhineland was because Nazi party members were discomfited by how much the French favored him.<sup>18</sup> Following the war, the French

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 78.

<sup>16</sup> Nicholas, 132.

<sup>17</sup> Hammond, Mason. "The War and Art Treasures in Germany". *College Art Journal* 5, No. 3 (March 1946), 215.

<sup>18</sup> Hammond, Mason. "Remembrance of Things Past": The Protection and Preservation of Monuments, Works of Art, Libraries, and Archives during and after World War II". *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Third Series* 92 (1980), 89.



government awarded Metternich and von Tieschowitz the Legion of Honor, their highest decoration for individuals who serve France or the ideals it upholds.<sup>19</sup> The positive feedback extended beyond France to other Allied powers. The U.S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS, and predecessor to the CIA) filed a report stating that Metternich was “universally regarded as having acted at all times with complete integrity and having shown the greatest sense of responsibility for the preservation of works.”<sup>20</sup>

Yet it was impossible for the *Kunstschutz* to protect every building or monument in France from the destructive nature of war. The importance of human life will always surpass that of cultural objects and military commanders will not alter their conduct if doing so threatens the lives of soldiers or civilians. This must be universally accepted and cultural protection organizations must be able to respond accordingly. For the *Kunstschutz*, safeguarding cultural objects included repairing or restoring damaged structures as a preservation measure. It also reduced the risk of increased damage if the structures were left unattended.

Five months after the fall of France the *Kunstschutz* received an order from the German occupation commander to investigate important *chateaux* and assess which had sustained damage. The *Kunstschutz* were allowed to order any German soldiers found in these buildings to vacate if repair work was required.<sup>21</sup> This order demonstrates the willingness of German Army commanders to cooperate with the *Kunstschutz* to protect the cultural treasures of occupied peoples. Additionally, the *Kunstschutz* successfully acquired cement, lumber and other building materials through friendly connections in the

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<sup>19</sup> Karlsgodt, 41.

<sup>20</sup> Freeman, Kirrily. “‘The bells, too, are fighting’: The Fate of European Church Bells in the Second World War”. *Canadian Journal of History* 43, No. 3 (Winter 2008), 436.

<sup>21</sup> Ross, 346.

German military logistics system before they became scarce after the Allied invasion of Normandy.

The amount of repairs needed for cultural objects or property can be reduced or eliminated if military forces can arrive in time to secure threatened sites. Isolating protected sites from military and civilian use was a high priority and one of the more difficult tasks for the *Kunstschutz*. Their responsibilities included guarding museum collections, marking designated cultural property and ejecting refugees, squatters or soldiers from important buildings. Initially the *Kunstschutz* assigned German Army units to secure unguarded art holdings to prevent thefts from refugees during the early days of occupation in France.<sup>22</sup> Later Metternich authorized French guards to bear arms in defense of museum collections.

One of the largest tasks faced by the *Kunstschutz* was controlling the billeting of German troops in the occupied territories. Lists of important homes and *chateaux* of outstanding artistic or historic merit were issued to German commanders along with a proclamation stating that these buildings were a “communal possession of all cultured peoples,” and for that reason the advice of the *Kunstschutz* was to be heeded by German military personnel.<sup>23</sup> This demonstrates that the instructions of the *Kunstschutz* carried all the way to the top of the German Army and that art importance could occasionally surpass military necessities.

The fall of France in June 1940 forced the *Kunstschutz* to expand their list of duties to include opposing art theft by Nazi organizations and officials. The difficult

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 345.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 338.

position of Metternich, von Tieschowitz and other *Kunstschutz* officers within an oppressive Nazi-controlled state limited their actions to determined efforts at keeping cultural property within its country of origin and stalling other German administrative departments that tried to remove it to Germany.

These altruistic actions did not please Nazi officials, especially Hermann Göring. Some *Kunstschutz* representatives determinedly stood up to Göring personally, despite his rank as the second most powerful man in Nazi Germany after Hitler. In one incident at the *Quai d'Orsay* museum in France Göring and a representative of the ERR arrived to collect a portfolio of photographed Jewish artworks that Hitler wished to acquire. They were met with a *Kunstschutz* representative who dutifully informed Göring that the French government protested the activities of the ERR. He was silenced by Göring, but spoke up again saying that the legal position of the art transfer was uncertain. Göring promised that he would sort out the issue with Hitler and went about his business of illegally acquiring artworks.<sup>24</sup> This example demonstrates both the inability of the *Kunstschutz* to directly prevent art theft but also their persistence in defending the rights and property of the French people.

In June 1942 Göring removed Metternich from command of the *Kunstschutz* and returned him to Germany. Göring had deemed him “too independent minded” and replaced him with von Tieschowitz.<sup>25</sup> Like his predecessor, von Tieschowitz received the support of the German Army in France and later in Italy. At one point he attempted to move the treasures of Monte Cassino to the Vatican for safekeeping after appealing to

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 349.

<sup>25</sup> Lambourne, 135.

German Field Marshal Kesselring, commander-in-chief of Army Group C in Italy, for assistance.<sup>26</sup> This demonstrates that the *Kunstschutz* made a notable effort to keep artworks in their country of origin rather than shipping them to Germany. Von Tieschowitz knew that he would not be able to protect all Jewish-owned art collections from confiscation since they were private collections and not bound to their countries of origin under ERR policies. Nonetheless, he made a “tiny mark on each piece of looted art that passed through his hands and kept a record of where it was sent, in the hope that one day it could be restored to its rightful owner.”<sup>27</sup>

### *The Monuments Men*

That day came with the arrival of Allied armies first in Italy and then in occupied France. With them came the Monuments Men, the mostly-American equivalent of von Tieschowitz’s German organization. The Monuments Men are famous for their repatriation efforts of ERR looted artworks following the end of World War II, but they engaged in very similar actions to the *Kunstschutz* during their involvement while the war was still raging. Their creation story differs from the *Kunstschutz* in that the Monuments Men were created out of academic petition and government intervention rather than the strictly military involvement seen in the German Armed Forces High Command.

American academic institutions consulted with the United States federal government about vulnerable cultural sites before Americans joined the land war in Europe during World War II. Representatives of the Archaeological Institute of America,

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<sup>26</sup> Hapgood, David and David Richardson. *Monte Cassino: the story of the most controversial battle of World War II*. Da Capo Press, 2002, 67-68.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, 66.

the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Fogg Museum of Fine Arts of Harvard University and the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. met as a single group with the U.S. State Department in the fall of 1942. A committee of the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) further discussed the issue in January 1943.<sup>28</sup> These concerned scholars approached the federal government well before American soldiers landed in Sicily during July 1943 and Normandy during June 1944 as part of European theatre operations.

These individuals realized that artworks and cultural heritage sites in occupied nations were subject to damage during the inevitable invasion of Hitler's "fortress Europe." This outreach from America's major art museums, galleries and intellectual societies gained the attention of President Franklin Roosevelt who authorized the cooperation of academic institutions with the Joint Chiefs of Staff – a composition of senior Army, Navy and Army Air Corps leaders who advised federal departments on military matters.<sup>29</sup> Roosevelt also authorized the creation of the Roberts Commission (officially titled the "American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas") in August 1943.<sup>30</sup> In response to Roosevelt's authorization of the Roberts Commission, the U.S. military created its own organization called the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Service (MFA&A).<sup>31</sup> The famed Monuments Men emerged from this parent organization.

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<sup>28</sup> Cogbill, James B. "Protection of Arts and Antiquities during Wartime: Examining the Past and Preparing for the Future". *Military Review* (January-February 2008), 30.

<sup>29</sup> Nemeth, Erik. "Conflict art: scholars develop the tactical value of cultural patrimony". *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 23, No. 2 (June 2010), 307.

<sup>30</sup> Kunzelman, Charles, J. "Some Trials, Tribulations, and Successes of the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Teams in the European Theatre During WWII". *Military Affairs* 52, No. 2 (April 1988), 56.

<sup>31</sup> Cogbill, 31.

The activities of the Monuments Men were a collaborative effort of Allied nations but a majority of their members were Americans. All together, there were approximately 185 personnel who served with the MFA&A. They included seventeen British personnel, one Norwegian and 155 American civilians, officers and enlisted men from the Army, Navy and Marine Corps. The number of on-duty members never exceeded thirty-five personnel, forcing the Monuments Men to operate in small groups of two or three members to visit each examined site or town.<sup>32</sup> U.S. Lieutenant Colonel Ernest Theodore DeWald, who was an ex-professor of art history at Princeton University, led the Monuments Men.<sup>33</sup> Like their German counterparts, the Allies realized the importance of enlisting academic professionals with a scholarly background in art or other cultural property.

The Monuments Men were incorporated as a section of the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) commanded by Dwight D. Eisenhower.<sup>34</sup> Eisenhower recognized that the advance of Allied troops would threaten shared cultural heritage that belonged to all humanity. He addressed soldiers advancing on Rome, saying "Today we are fighting in a country which has contributed a great deal to our cultural inheritance, a country rich in monuments which...illustrate the growth of the civilization which is ours. We are bound to respect those monuments so far as war allows."<sup>35</sup> As Supreme Allied Commander, Eisenhower increased support for the mission of the Monuments Men following the destruction of the Italian cultural site at Monte Cassino in February 1944 and added protection of European patrimony to the list

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<sup>32</sup> Kunzelman, 57.

<sup>33</sup> "The Venus Fixers". *Time*. 16 April 1945, 65.

<sup>34</sup> Nemeth, 307.

<sup>35</sup> Rose, C. Brian. "From the President: War and Culture". *Archaeology* 62, No. 1 (January-February 2009). Web. [www.archive.archaeology.org/0901/etc./president/html](http://www.archive.archaeology.org/0901/etc./president/html). Accessed 13 April 2013.

of war aims.<sup>36</sup> The Monuments Men arrived in Europe following the 15 August 1944 Allied landings on the southern coast of France.<sup>37</sup> They followed U.S. Army units into liberated towns where they scoured hiding places for stolen artworks that they prepared for future repatriation and stored them in protected locations.<sup>38</sup> Additionally, Monuments Men carried lists of treasures compiled by Western art experts. If a listed building or monument was damaged, they recorded the damage, supervised repair work and prevented further damage to the object of cultural property.<sup>39</sup> The Monuments Men continued operations in Europe following the end of hostilities until the MFA&A was dissolved in June 1946.

The Monuments Men had a similar mission as their German counterparts in the *Kunstschutz* with the addition of repatriation of looted materials. Monuments Men duties included increased awareness and native population cooperation policies like those exhibited by the *Kunstschutz*, but their four main concentrations were (1) repairing damaged monuments in Allied possession, (2) protecting monuments from damage or misuse at the hands of Allied soldiers, (3) protecting monuments in territories occupied by enemy forces from unnecessary damage and (4) recording theft by enemy forces and collecting available evidence to facilitate recovery.<sup>40</sup> They earned their name from their primary role as protectors of statues, historic buildings and cultural landmarks.<sup>41</sup> This

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<sup>36</sup> Allen, Thomas B. "Dying for art and country". *The Washington Times* 29 November 2009, 31.

<sup>37</sup> Kunzelman, 57.

<sup>38</sup> Evans, Richard J. "Art in the Time of War". *The National Interest*. (May-June 2011), 23.

<sup>39</sup> Allen, "Dying for art and country", 31.

<sup>40</sup> Freeman, 437.

<sup>41</sup> Bailey, Ronald, H. "Saving Private Rembrandt". *World War II* 22, No. 2 (May 2007), 50.

was a huge task encompassing 3,415 monuments listed within a 560,000 square mile area of the European continent.<sup>42</sup>

This large geographic challenge required cooperation from a dutifully informed Allied chain of command. The Monuments Men increased awareness by creating several publications to disseminate among officers and U.S. Army leadership. Monuments Men provided Army Air Corps and infantry artillery units with lists of art treasures that must be spared damage when possible to avoid bombing and shelling historic structures during saturation attacks. Each entry was rated with an easily understood star system according to age, preservation condition and reputation among the local or international community. Three out of three stars was the highest ranking available.<sup>43</sup> Another method of increasing awareness adopted by the U.S. military included a series of booklets distributed to civil affairs officers in the European theatre. Each issue provided background knowledge on subjects like the geography, social hierarchy, government and administration, religion and political history of the countries American soldiers were entering.<sup>44</sup>

Those booklets familiarized American Monuments Men with the cultural environment in which they were to work and eased their entrance into building cooperative relations with native populations. Fortunately for the Monuments Men they were not viewed as an occupation force in the same sense as their German *Kunstschutz* counterparts. Like the Germans, the Monuments Men coordinated their efforts with native officials to obtain information and foster good relations, particularly with museum

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<sup>42</sup> Kunzelman, 57.

<sup>43</sup> "The Venus Fixers", 65.

<sup>44</sup> Army Service Forces. "Civil Affairs Handbook: Atlas on Churches, Museums, Libraries and Other Cultural Institutions in Belgium, Holland, and Denmark". *Army Service Forces Manual*. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1944.



professionals. One notable example of cooperation is the exchanges between Rose Valland and U.S. Lieutenant James J. Rorimer of the Monuments Men. Valland was a French museum curator, art historian and member of the French resistance who spied on the Nazi art looters of the ERR and kept track of where the artwork was sent. She worked during the war at the *Jeu de Paume*, a small French museum that served as an ERR collection point for looted art objects.<sup>45</sup> Lieutenant Rorimer, the Curator of Medieval Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art before the war, recognized the importance and value of the information Valland could provide and met with her to obtain details on artwork movements.<sup>46</sup> This cooperation with a native French citizen led to the recovery of numerous art treasures and their repatriation to their country of origin following the end of German occupation.

Another example of cooperation was partnering with French locals to rebuild damaged cultural heritage sites. The Monuments Men actively organized French labor to begin the restoration and repair of badly damaged buildings. This included protecting them with sandbags and other methods from German bombing.<sup>47</sup> The partnering of French workers and Monuments Men officers in restoration projects required significant connections within the logistics system of the Allied militaries. Acquiring building materials for the necessary repairs was not an easy task. Later in the war, United States Army commanders and members of the Allied Monuments Men complained about the difficulties they faced during projects. Shortages of cement, lumber and readily available labor during wartime frustrated American efforts to restore damaged buildings,

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<sup>45</sup> Bailey, 50.

<sup>46</sup> Kunzelman, 58.

<sup>47</sup> Hammon, Stratton. "Memoir of the Ranking Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Officer in the ETO during World War II". *Military Affairs* 52, No. 2 (April 1988), 66.

particularly in Italy.<sup>48</sup> Monuments Men were forced to improvise on various occasions. One example is when Captain Walter I. Farmer, an interior decorator during peacetime, “borrowed” twenty-six tons of glass from an U.S. Army Air Corps base for the art collection point at Wiesbaden, Germany. The buildings there had been bombed and the artworks within suffered from fluctuating humidity without the protection of windows.

Hundreds of structures had suffered damage following the Allied invasion of France and required attention from the architects assigned to the Monuments Men. For the most part, assessment and repair took precedence from 1944 to 1945 for the Monuments Men. The museum aspect of identifying artworks for repatriation would come to its height following the end of the war.<sup>49</sup> When caches of ERR looted art were discovered the Monuments Men assigned armed guards as a means of protection from civilians or refugees until their contents could be moved to a safer location. Occasionally this required the removal of refugees from the area to reduce the risk of art theft. Even the Wiesbaden art collection point required the Monuments Men to remove German squatters living in the rubble of adjacent buildings.

Top military leaders shared the Monuments Men commitment to theft and damage prevention. General Eisenhower commented on “communal possession” of cultural property in Italy and other European nations. In a proclamation on 29 December 1943 to Allied forces he said that Italy had “contributed a great deal to our cultural inheritance,” and that their monuments “illustrate the growth of the civilization which is ours.”<sup>50</sup> The Monuments Men acted accordingly in Italy and other European nations to

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<sup>48</sup> Hammond, “Remembrance of Things Past”, 95.

<sup>49</sup> Hammon, 62.

<sup>50</sup> Army Service Forces, “Civil Affairs Handbook”.

safeguard these works. One of their duties was to identify which buildings could be occupied by military personnel and in what manner they could be used.<sup>51</sup> Signs were posted in English and the local language declaring the historical significance of buildings or monuments. The signs also declared them off limits to military personnel.<sup>52</sup> The Monuments Men forced soldiers and officers found to be in violation of these designations out of the buildings with Eisenhower's proclamation as their proof of action. Some Monuments Men extended cultural property protection to include unorthodox procedures. When Allied troops ignored off-limits signs for historic castles, Lieutenant Rorimer switched to more effective white tape. This may not seem unusual to civilians, but in military circles white tape was the standard procedure for marking areas that contained unexploded munitions and ordnance.<sup>53</sup> Rorimer thus successfully provided protection to cultural heritage sites by tricking soldiers into thinking that the sites were hazardous.

The final responsibility of the Monuments Men was the repatriation of looted cultural heritage objects. Repatriation is a key component of cultural heritage protection that maintains positive relations between the protection agency and the native population, the countries of origin and the global community of public opinion. Looted artwork that had been identified by Monuments Men officers was packed and shipped from the *chateaux*, castle, bunker or mine it had been discovered in and arrived at centralized collections points in Wiesbaden, Munich, Offenbach and several smaller towns in

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<sup>51</sup> Hammon, 62.

<sup>52</sup> Allen, 31.

<sup>53</sup> Bailey, 50.

Germany for cataloguing and assessment before being returned to its country of origin. Operations at these collecting points lasted from May 1945 to 1948.

Like the *Kunstschutz*, the Monuments Men were dedicated to protecting cultural property and keeping it in its country of origin whenever possible. Their dedication was put to the test at the end of the war when a shipment of 202 of the most valuable paintings being held at the Wiesbaden artwork collecting facility in Germany were to be sent to the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. for “safekeeping” and exhibition. Removal of the artworks from Germany would delay their repatriation and put further distance between the works and their countries of origin. More than twenty-five Monuments Men officers drew up and signed the “Wiesbaden Manifesto,” a document condemning the transport and suggesting it closely resembled the same action of looting for which Nazi war criminals were being persecuted. Despite their best efforts, the artwork was sent to the United States and exhibited for three years before being returned to Wiesbaden in 1949. The Wiesbaden Manifesto is believed to be the “only protest of an official order lodged by American officers in the European theatre” during World War II.<sup>54</sup>

The Wiesbaden Manifesto was an act of defiance involving Monuments Men opposing the actions of their superiors in the name of cultural patrimony and is similar to the *Kunstschutz* officer who stood up to Göring and the ERR. Here we find two examples – one American and one German – of military personnel contradicting a hierarchal order of command that had been established in the European theatre of war. This should not be surprising; a common feature of all battlefields is the friction between

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 54.

what appears to be chaos or disorder, and the deliberate planning of commanders. Not all military matters proceed as planned and the evolving nature of the combat situation can alter results. In this case, unfortunately, the protests of dissident groups of Monuments Men and *Kunstschutz* officers were not enough to affect the outcome of art transfer.

Comparing the policies and practices of the *Kunstschutz* and Monuments Men reveals that both organizations found ways to protect cultural heritage from interference, damage and theft even when seemingly at odds with fellow soldiers and administrative officials. The main goals of awareness, cooperation, restoration and isolation resonated strongly within the policies of both agencies. Yet notable differences, including the entity that created them and where they operated, contributed to the overall outcome of each organization.

The Monuments Men were created through a United States federal government mandate and operated as an attachment of SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force). Their association with the command structure of SHAEF gave them the authority needed to acquire needed materials and provide Allied military units with new orders that would protect threatened cultural heritage sites. The German *Kunstschutz* in contrast was created by military intervention and thus received support from military units, occasionally in direct opposition to the Nazi political party. Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces in France, issued directives providing support for *Kunstschutz* art protection policies that prevented art removal and subsequent theft until a directive from Hitler on 17 September 1940 prevented him from providing direct aid through military resources.<sup>55</sup> As a result the

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<sup>55</sup> Nicholas, 125.

*Kunstschutz* frequently found itself at odds with the German Embassy in France and the ERR, who “quite freely violated the Hague Convention to pillage art, furniture, libraries, and musical instruments from the homes of state enemies.”<sup>56</sup> Unlike the Monuments Men – which experienced more cooperation and freedom within Allied armies due to endorsement from the Roosevelt administration and from SHAEF – the government of Nazi Germany allowed the *Kunstschutz* to be bullied by opposing factions in occupied France.

Metternich, von Tieschowitz and other officers in the *Kunstschutz* experienced a situation that bordered on fenced-in containment. The motives, actions and influence of the ERR and Herman Göring limited the extent of cultural heritage protection that could be achieved. The German occupation force in France created a somewhat static environment for the *Kunstschutz* from 1940 to 1944 that further limited their mobility under the watchful eye of Göring. In contrast, the consistent movement of the frontline in Italy and France following Allied breakouts in 1943 and 1944 gave the Monuments Men flexibility in their environment at the cost of increasing the amount of territory they were required to survey.

The stationary nature of the German occupation had one benefit for the *Kunstschutz* through their cultural heritage awareness campaign. The Germans were able to address individual soldiers on a large scale through posters that soldiers would encounter frequently during their stay at various locations throughout France. The Monuments Men, usually faced with a war of offensive movement, were forced to address cultural protection through higher levels of command. The Allied decision

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<sup>56</sup> Karlsgodt, 39.

makers on the battlefield could then incorporate the protection policies into their tactics and, hopefully, see a trickle-down dissipation of awareness in the units they controlled.

Comparing the *Kunstschutz* and Monuments Men reveals that teams of educated, academic professionals recruited by the Germans and Allies implemented similar policies regarding cultural heritage protection. Their unique environments and varying levels of control created separate experiences for each organization, but they managed arguable levels of success based on the resources they had to operate with. Some aspects of their policies overlap when compared side-by-side. This is a remarkable accomplishment considering that the organizations had no contact with each other until the war was nearly over. One of the first instances of *Kunstschutz* collaboration with Allied forces occurred when American soldiers reached the Rhineland region of Germany. Metternich met with an officer of the Monuments Men and presented him with a list of hidden cultural treasure locations to ensure their safety under Allied protection.<sup>57</sup>

It can be argued that the policies of the *Kunstschutz* and Monuments Men, given their simultaneous and separate development by opposing sides during wartime, were a good fit for the specific situations presented by World War II. But what about their application after the war was over? An analysis of the opening days of the Iraq War can reveal if the lessons provided by World War II protection agencies had been adopted – or *could* be adopted – in a twenty-first-century conflict.

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<sup>57</sup> Hammond, "Remembrance of Things Past", 89.

### III. Lessons “Lost”

It is clear that historical precedents had been set by the actions of the *Kunstschutz* and Monuments Men. They outlined how protection agencies should operate during invasions and occupation periods between 1940 and 1948. The invasion of Iraq and the incident at the Iraq Museum raise two important questions when comparing recent events with the actions of the *Kunstschutz* and Monuments Men. First, how many of these past policies transcended to the Iraq War invasion begun in 2003? Second, how many lessons of World War II were applicable to the situation in Iraq, a location that presented remarkable differences in war fighting, armies, cultures and technology compared to their 1940s predecessors? Answers begin with pre-invasion concern for the cultural importance of Iraq in the American academic community.

In late November 2002 Dr. Maxwell Anderson, president of the Association of Art Museum Directors, and Dr. Ashton Hawkins, president of the American Council for Cultural Policy, published an article titled “Preserving Iraq’s Past” in the *Washington Post*. It called for the U.S. government to compile a protection plan for Iraq’s religious and cultural sites, stressing their global importance beyond the Middle East.<sup>58</sup> On 24 January 2003 Dr. McGuire Gibson of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago joined the efforts of Dr. Anderson and Dr. Hawkins and met with Dr. Joseph Collins, the deputy assistant secretary of defense for stability operations at the Pentagon. The Pentagon responded to their suggestions saying that they had a plan for addressing cultural site concerns – which included placing the Iraq Museum as “#3” on the “no-strike list” – but their estimate of the number of vulnerable sites in Iraq was much lower

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<sup>58</sup> Cogbill, 31.



than the amount cited by the academics.<sup>59</sup> Drs. Gibson, Anderson and Hawkins gave a similar briefing to receptive representatives of the U.S. State Department, but the Defense Department in the Pentagon had the lead role in all invasion planning.<sup>60</sup> The academic influence in military operations in Iraq did not progress beyond this point before the invasion began two months later on 20 March 2003.

U.S. Marine Captain Matthew Bogdanos strengthened the focus of the United States on cultural heritage protection almost accidentally in April 2003. A protection agency did not yet exist for Iraq's cultural treasures, but a pre-existing task force was repurposed for the needs of cultural heritage preservation and repatriation at the Iraq Museum. This team, known as the Joint Interagency Coordination Group or JIACG, saw service in Iraq aiding the looted Iraq Museum in Baghdad.

The beginnings of JIACG are traced to the War in Afghanistan and the commitment of the U.S. Department of Defense to fight terrorism abroad. A counterterrorism unit called Task Force Bowie was formed in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. This American unit was unique because it was the first task force with representatives from multiple government agencies to be deployed by a combat commander to a war zone.<sup>61</sup> The purpose of this joint venture was to coordinate the efforts of federal and state law enforcement organizations and military personnel in a single entity. Participating members were individually selected from the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), National Security Agency, U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of the Treasury and the New York

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 31.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 32.

<sup>61</sup> Bogdanos, *Thieves of Baghdad*, 59.

City Police Department. Additionally, Task Force Bowie had ties with the British government agencies MI5 (Security Service), MI6 (Intelligence Service) and Special Air Service (SAS).<sup>62</sup>

Task Force Bowie deployed to Afghanistan with approximately one hundred personnel in November 2001. By September 2002 they had been re-designated as the JIACG and were given a new mission in response to the changing needs of the Pentagon.<sup>63</sup> They were deployed to Iraq following the March 2003 invasion as an investigative unit responsible for U.N. Security Council resolution violations and gathering evidence of terrorist activity in Iraq.

One of the leading officers of JIACG at this time was Captain Matthew Bogdanos. He dispatched a team of JIACG operatives from Basra to Baghdad to investigate and assess the damage done to the Iraq Museum once he learned on 15 April 2003 that it had been looted. Bogdanos believed that the stolen antiquities correlated with their mission to counter terrorist activity. One of primary objectives of the JIACG was to control the traffic of illicit weapons. Coincidentally, the people smuggling weapons were often the same people smuggling antiquities. Tracking down one could lead to the other and aided the Coalition on two fronts.<sup>64</sup> The team lead by Bogdanos totaled fourteen members – nine of whom were Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents familiar with investigations and smuggling operations – and ten additional security personnel who parted ways with the team once they reached Baghdad.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 56-57.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 92.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 20.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 116.

Beginning with their arrival on 20 April 2003, the JIACG team searched the Iraq Museum, conducted a forensic investigation of the ransacked museum galleries and storage areas, conducted outreach programs in the local community to build trust, established an amnesty system for the return of looted cultural property, developed a network of potential informants and protected the remaining artifacts in the museum collection. With little instruction from a higher military or federal government authority, Bogdanos and his team operated relatively freely under their own direction. Despite their success and praise-worthy efforts given the small size of their operation, the JIACG team at the Iraq Museum was told by the U.S. Department of Defense to stop its investigation on 10 September 2003.<sup>66</sup>

Bogdanos was well suited to lead the JIACG team at the Iraq Museum. He had dabbled in Roman, Greek and Mesopotamian archaeology while studying classical literature and philosophy as an undergraduate.<sup>67</sup> As a civilian district attorney, his primary talents concerned law and criminal justice. These were indispensable during the investigation of the missing Iraq Museum antiquities, but his basic knowledge of Mesopotamian cultural objects greatly aided the tasks faced by his team and made him a qualified leader for the operation. The members of JIACG had not been trained in methods of cultural heritage preservation, restoration or repatriation and thus did not have a rubric to follow during their operations. They created their own policies “on the go” that resemble the duties fulfilled by the *Kunstschutz* and Monuments Men sixty years earlier. These duties included (1) raising awareness, (2) cooperation with local populations, (3) isolating protected sites and (4) repatriation. The JIACG adhered to

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 234.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 22.

these duties to the best of their abilities given their available resources and the situation they faced in war-torn Baghdad.

Bogdanos increased awareness for the plight of the Iraq Museum by submitting reports to his superiors in the U.S. Department of Defense and by seeking the assistance of academic and international parties outside Iraq. Bogdanos shared his findings and Iraq Museum experience with archaeologists and other academics in the hopes of building relationships and increasing awareness. Bogdanos addressed three hundred attendees of the 49<sup>th</sup> *Reconstre Assyriologique Internationale*, a meeting of learned individuals gathered to discuss Mesopotamian archaeology, which was hosted by the British Museum on 11 July 2003. Bogdanos understood the importance of bringing law enforcement, art and archaeological communities together and that their cooperation would increase the success of his ongoing investigation in Baghdad. Bogdanos sought their support for the investigation and was not disappointed. He “learned much about art smuggling” as a result of his attendance “and walked away with a list of experts who volunteered to be ‘on call’ whenever law enforcement authorities needed to verify the origin of a seizure or recovery.”<sup>68</sup> Bogdanos expanded his outreach to include other interested institutions and organizations, including the Archaeological Institute of America, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, State University of New York at Stony Brook, University of Cambridge and McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research at Cambridge. He “began to build up a cadre of confidential informants (smugglers, curators, archaeologists and dealers) for the future” needs of JIACG operations in Iraq.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 231.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 238.

The JIACG developed international relations to supplement their academic contacts. With the assistance of the Iraq Museum staff Bogdanos and his team were able to distribute photographs of missing antiquities to customs officials and border officials in the neighboring countries of Iraq. Photographs were shared with the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) who then distributed them to the 182 member countries of that organization. Legal professionals and police departments in major cities like New York and London also received photograph collections.<sup>70</sup> Missing antiquities were likely to turn up at these destinations. Promoting threatened and missing antiquities through documentation and photographs reduced the risk that they would cross the Iraq border, unchecked, into foreign countries, thus keeping them within their country of origin until they could be recovered.

Cooperation with organizations outside military operations in Iraq was certainly beneficial to the efforts of JIACG when they began repatriating artifacts from the Iraq Museum collection, but they also worked continuously to foster relations with the native Iraqi population around them. Bogdanos made it clear from his first meeting with Iraq Museum staff that any efforts to restore the museum must be a joint effort between his team and their personnel. He assured them that “together we can fix this” and “get back the property of the Iraqi people.”<sup>71</sup> JIACG agents spent each morning consulting with museum director Dr. Nawala al-Mutwali and research director Dr. Donny George Youkhanna, as well as State Board of Antiquities and Heritage chairman Dr. Jaber Khaleel Ibrahim. They supplemented the collections knowledge of these individuals with tips from the streets of Baghdad.

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 153-154.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 127.

An "information operation campaign" involved Bogdanos and JIACG members performing daily afternoon excursions into the surrounding community to promote the return of looted antiquities to the Iraq Museum. The JIACG fostered relations with Iraqi citizens by sharing cups of tea and chatting over games of backgammon.<sup>72</sup> As the trust of local Iraqis grew, the number of informants and recovered artifacts increased. Bogdanos had established from the beginning of JIACG operations with the Iraq Museum that their participation was a recovery effort, not a prosecution. Iraqis who had stolen artifacts from the museum for so-called "safekeeping" experienced a change of heart once they realized they were stealing from their own cultural heritage rather than from the Saddam Hussein regime that had mistreated their friends, family and nation.<sup>73</sup>

Unfortunately, the JIACG could not protect the Iraq Museum during the Hussein regime collapse and were not aware its collections were threatened until it was too late. Bogdanos first heard news reports about the looting on 15 April, three days after the looting period ceased.<sup>74</sup> Given the circumstances of the Iraq invasion, the JIACG situation involved mitigating and reversing the damage to the Iraq Museum collection rather than taking precautions to avoid damage in the first place. This was due to the lack of manpower available for securing the Iraq Museum and other cultural heritage sites. The speed with which Coalition forces achieved victory over the Iraqi military contributed to a swift collapse of the security system that had previously existed in Iraq to curb looting. There were not enough Coalition troops in Baghdad to deal with remaining pockets of resistance and simultaneously control the looting. As a result, the "U.S. Army

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 149-151.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 171.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 109.

initially allowed the looting to continue unchecked.”<sup>75</sup> Looting extended beyond Baghdad to hundreds of archaeological sites throughout the whole of Iraq. The United States and Coalition forces simply did not have enough personnel to adequately protect all of them. Bogdanos remarked that they did not even have enough people to conduct the investigation of the Iraq Museum, let alone recover the museum collection and protect the archaeological sites.<sup>76</sup>

The JIACG team was not large enough to care for all of the cultural property of Iraq, but they did strive to protect the remaining collections of the Iraq Museum as soon as they heard of the looting. Once the team arrived at the Iraq Museum they immediately set up camp within the museum compound.<sup>77</sup> Their residence in the museum library ensured that they could have quick access throughout the compound in the event of a threat. Their position enabled them to monitor access to other museum buildings while being physically removed from the museum collections. Their continued presence during their six-month investigation and repatriation efforts was a security measure and deterrent to subsequent thefts.

The JIACG efforts of repatriation acted on a much smaller scale than their World War II predecessors and were limited by their manpower. The JIACG team operated in close proximity to the Iraq Museum in order to continue their investigation while pursuing looted museum artifacts. An amnesty program was established that would not persecute Iraqi citizens for returning stolen museum property. Object recovery began four days after the JIACG team arrived at the museum with their first return occurring on

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<sup>75</sup> Cogbill, 33.

<sup>76</sup> Bogdanos, *Thieves of Baghdad*, 141.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid*, 126.

24 April 2003. Recovered objects continued to be a daily success as Bogdanos and JIACG members made their trips into the surrounding Iraqi community. Here they promoted the amnesty program and ensured those in possession of looted objects that they could safely return them to the JIACG.<sup>78</sup> Many Iraqis complied with the gentle pressure of JIACG agents once they realized that they were benefiting their own cultural heritage and would not be viewed as criminals. As of September 2010, repatriation operations begun by the JIACG have recovered “roughly half” of fifteen thousand artifacts that had been looted from the Iraq Museum collection.<sup>79</sup>

The recovery of thousands of missing objects from the Iraq Museum is an ongoing process, just like the repatriation efforts begun by the Monuments Men sixty years ago. It is estimated that one hundred thousand objects looted during World War II by the Nazi regime have yet to be returned to their rightful owners.<sup>80</sup> Neither war appears to have produced an ideal cultural heritage protection policy given the massive quantities of looted material that remains to be recovered. The policies practiced were developed in mutually exclusive conditions and styles of warfare that explain the differences between the *Kunstschutz*, Monuments Men and JIACG experiences.

Unlike the Monuments Men or their *Kunstschutz* contemporaries of World War II, the invasion of Iraq did not begin with a specific organization purposely designed to protect cultural heritage and staffed by academic that followed soldiers into battle. The *Kunstschutz* and Monuments Men arrived in the European theatre after their respective nations had begun their military operations, but an equivalent organization did not

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid, 149-150.

<sup>79</sup> Myers.

<sup>80</sup> Bradsher, Greg. “Documenting Nazi Plunder of European Art”. *The Record* (November 1997). Web. <http://www.archives.gov/research/holocaust/records-and-research/documenting-nazi-plunder-of-european-art.html>. Accessed 26 March 2013.



materialize during the initial phases of the Iraq War. The JIACG were involved with counterterrorism operations elsewhere in Iraq when they heard of the Iraq Museum looting and decided to relocate to Baghdad as quickly as possible.

The JIACG were a smaller unit than either the *Kunstschutz* or Monuments Men and thus had fewer capabilities. Unlike their World War II predecessors, Bogdanos and his team of JIACG agents were not equipped to repair damage of any kind that had been inflicted on the Iraq Museum. The personnel under his command had specializations in law enforcement and forensic investigations rather than construction or architecture like members of the Monuments Men. Bogdanos worked with limited resources and he did not possess the command authority to divert construction materials or labor from Coalition armies to assist the Iraq Museum. In comparison, the *Kunstschutz* received priority status due to their favor with German Army commanders, notably Field Marshal Keitel in France and Field Marshal Kesselring in Italy.<sup>81</sup> It should be noted that German military forces were much larger in World War II than the invasion force that entered Iraq in 2003. Coalition forces numbered approximately 300,000 during the invasion. The German occupation force of France matched that number but was not occupied with active combat like the Coalition forces in Iraq. The Germans also had access to the resources of a total war economy that supplied millions of soldiers. The German occupation forces were able to mobilize additional resources and labor from the French population, something that was not immediately available to Bogdanos and the JIACG during the disorganization that followed the defeat of Iraq military forces.

World War II was a massive conflict when measured by men and materiel, but the geographic scale of the fighting placed soldiers at considerable distances from home.

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<sup>81</sup> Nicholas, 120.

The war was quite literally an ocean away and limited American academic involvement on the frontline to the specialists selected for the Monuments Men. Today, modern conflicts seem closer to home because of the increased travel and communication capabilities of a globalized society. Academic organizations took advantage of this during the Iraq War and became directly involved by aiding Captain Bogdanos and promoting awareness among troops in Iraq.

Academics who promoted the threatened state of Iraqi cultural heritage did not stop once the JIACG halted their operations with the Iraq Museum. Academic institutions continued efforts of increasing military awareness by extending their target audience beyond the Defense Department to individual soldiers overseas. The Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) has been guest lecturing on military bases in the United States, Iraq and Afghanistan for the last seven years. These lessons provide soldiers with background knowledge of cultural property they may encounter during their deployment to Iraq, Afghanistan or other locations in Central Asia. An emphasis on art basics, archaeology and historic preservation give these soldiers an advantage that can aid recovery and repatriation efforts.<sup>82</sup> Recently a four-day training conference was conducted from 17 to 20 December 2012 by American experts in law enforcement and cultural heritage protection from the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) department of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the same organization that provided agents to Bogdanos' JIACG team prior to the Iraq invasion. The conference discussed methods of identifying cultural heritage sites, preventing looting and investigating looting and illegal trafficking with police investigators from the Iraqi

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<sup>82</sup> Rose, C. Brian. *Art Bulletin* 94, No. 3 (September 2012), 356.

Ministry of Interior. Representatives from U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. National Park Service and Interpol were also present.<sup>83</sup>

These are steps in the right direction for the future of recovery and repatriation operations in Iraq, but the thousands of unaccounted artifacts may continue to sway public opinion. Did the U.S. military learn any lessons from their predecessors in the Monuments Men? The JIACG developed policies of awareness, cooperation, repatriation and protection that had an equivalent in Monuments Men policies. They lacked the capability to repair structures and could not match the commitment level of the Monuments Men in all policies. The changes between the wartime environments of the 1940s and 2000s can rationalize why the practices of World War II did not appear to have a larger influence on military actions of the Iraq War. The contrast between the wartime experiences of the *Kunstschutz*, Monuments Men and JIACG and their resulting policies to the conditions of those experiences can be better understood using the evolution of war as a guide. Viewing the differences of their protection efforts through the lens of evolving warfare emphasizes the need for fluidity in protection planning for any future military confrontation.

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<sup>83</sup> U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. "HSI conducts training conference on countering antiquities trafficking in Iraq". *U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)*. 20 Dec 2012. Web. <http://www.ice.gov/news/releases/1212/121220baghdad.htm>. Accessed 26 April 2013.

#### **IV. Analyzing Policy Planning Through the Lens of Warfare**

It is very easy to view the looting of the Iraq Museum in April of 2003 with pangs of anguish and a concern for what went wrong. Many people asked “How could theft of this scale happen,” considering the capabilities of the United States military as the premier force of organized soldiers in the world. The United States is a global leader in defense spending, technological application and military networked communications. The Pentagon in Washington, D.C. studies numerous scenarios concerning aspects of the battle space and how U.S. forces will respond to threats. How then, with all the technological and strategic benefits of twenty-first-century modern warfare, could the United States military manage to let a destructive blow to global cultural heritage occur at the Iraq Museum?

The simplest answer to this question has two parts: (1) the battlefield is dominated by chaos and complexity and (2) the U.S. military had adopted a decentralized network of units. Warfare is chaotic in nature and quite unpredictable by the best strategists and tacticians. Any premeditated strategies for invading Iraq had to be constantly updated with new information and modified by U.S. commanders. Countless instances occurring simultaneously across the battle space create “noise” that obstructs awareness and slows military action. A top-down military command structure cannot easily respond to all these instances for fear of sensory information overload. That is why the U.S. military adopted a model of non-linear networking during the invasion of Baghdad. The command structure was dispersed horizontally among decentralized units that were responsible for their own objectives and fulfilling an overall mission. One of these units made its own decision when confronted with fighting in and around the Iraq Museum.

A common conception that military forces are well-oiled machines held together by strict adherence to order could cause one to question the extent of unpredictability in warfare. Historian John Keegan explains that the fundamental purpose of military training is “to reduce the conduct of war to a set of rules and a system of procedures – and therefore to make orderly and rational what is essentially chaotic and instinctive.”<sup>84</sup> The battlefield is a jarring combination of numerous events and possible outcomes mixed with confusion and speculation. The role of the military is to assess the situation and attempt to impose order over chaos through regimentation, which is a stark contrast to the unruly nature of battle. Surely a modernized and well-trained force is prepared to meet the challenges that come their way?

Not entirely true, according to General Helmut von Moltke, the famed nineteenth-century Prussian strategist. “The commander is compelled during the whole campaign to reach decisions on the basis of situations than cannot be predicted.”<sup>85</sup> Military commanders need to recognize and adapt to challenges created by battlefield chaos rather than attempt to banish it through training or other preparations. Even a command structure prepared to process battlefield intelligence as fast as it is available and alter orders almost immediately is not guaranteed success. The U.S. military cannot move and act with the precision and quick thinking of a single entity. Nineteenth-century military strategist Carl von Clausewitz argued that the “military machine” must be reduced to basic individuals, each with its own level of friction on the battlefield. Friction is thus

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<sup>84</sup> Keegan, John. *The face of battle*. London: Cape, 1976, 18-19.

<sup>85</sup> Lynn, 212.

introduced everywhere at once rather than in concentrated locations, contributing to numerous incidents that are “impossible to calculate” or prepare for in advance.<sup>86</sup>

During the Cold War a new conceptual framework took hold of U.S. defense thinking in an attempt to reduce unpredictability. The advent of the computer and its incorporation into the military as a data processor and numbers cruncher during World War II led commanders to believe that the uncertainty and unpredictability that defined chaos on the battlefield could be overcome through information technology.<sup>87</sup> Chaos was seen as an information deficiency rather than an inescapable element of warfare. Massive amounts of data were collected and processed in an attempt to reach battlefield clarity and subordinate the theatre of war. The new term “command and control” described the belief that commanders could issue orders, receive new information through feedback of their technology system and adjust subsequent orders accordingly.<sup>88</sup>

This “cybernetic model” was adopted during the Vietnam War and endorsed by General William Westmoreland, leader of United States forces during the conflict. It influenced his vision for the near future of combat. In 1969 he predicted that within ten years the United States could experience an automated battlefield that thrived on information and consisted of “computer assisted intelligence evaluation,” automated fire control and “24-hour real or near-real time surveillance of all types.”<sup>89</sup> Unfortunately, this technologically adept war fighting style was not to be as the debacle of Vietnam

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<sup>86</sup> Clausewitz, Carl von. *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, 67.

<sup>87</sup> Bousquet, Antoine. *The Scientific Way of Warfare: Order and Chaos on the Battlefields of Modernity*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009, 124.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*, 129.

<sup>89</sup> Bousquet, Antoine. “Chaoplex warfare or the future of military organization”. *International Affairs* 84, No. 5 (2008), 923.

shook the scientific fundamentals that backed the cybernetic model of war. Confidence in statistical data returning from the front that indicated success on paper caused commanders to continue feeding the numbers back into the system and exacerbated the real problem. The cybernetic model masked the reality that the United States was losing the war to a less advanced, less trained and more poorly equipped Third World guerilla force.

“Defeat in Vietnam exposed the shortcomings of cybernetic warfare and revealed the inherent limitations of its attempt to make war into an entirely controllable and predictable activity.”<sup>90</sup> Vietnam was a rude awakening that caused a shift from the cybernetic model to what international relations expert Antoine Bousquet refers to as “chaoplexity,” a term combining the chaos and complexity of the modern battlefield. This model retains the technology dependence of the cybernetic model but discards the top-down “command and control” structure for a non-linear network. Computer scientist Christopher Langton supports this method saying “since it’s effectively impossible to cover every conceivable situation, top-down systems are forever running into combinations of events they don’t know how to handle.”<sup>91</sup> In contrast, “decentralized systems of quasi-autonomous units can operate more effectively and with a greater degree of adaptability on the basis of the local calculations of the networked agents constituting them.”<sup>92</sup> This is a solution to the “noise” or “friction” defined by von Clausewitz that permeates the theatre of war. Noise obstructs decision-making and slows down the military machine. Figuring out how to work within the chaos and noise – rather

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<sup>90</sup> Bousquet, *The Scientific Way of Warfare*, 161.

<sup>91</sup> Waldrop, M. Mitchell. *Complexity: The Emerging Science at the Edge of Order and Chaos*. London: Viking, 1992, 279.

<sup>92</sup> Bousquet, *The Scientific Way of Warfare*, 182.

than control or predict it – can be achieved, in theory, by decentralized units fighting within a non-linear network.

The United States forces deployed to Baghdad in April 2003 were decentralized in their organizational nature. Units were connected in a horizontal network of high-speed data links and possessed tactical decision making capabilities traditionally associated with the hierarchical command structure of past wars.<sup>93</sup> A rapid collapse of Iraqi forces in Baghdad was necessary to prevent the battle for the city from turning into a drawn-out siege. “Self-synchronized” units that could move independently and quickly seize objectives negated the need for a top-down chain of command that risked creating a bottleneck of orders and thus bog down American forces in the mire of urban warfare. Armored and high-mobility mechanized infantry units utilizing this tactic successfully completed “thunder runs” through the heart of the city that contributed to the disorganization and fall of Iraqi resistance in Baghdad.<sup>94</sup>

The expedient fall of Baghdad was a signal to Coalition commanders that the network-centric style of warfare adopted by the U.S. military had achieved victory. Yet the looting of the Iraq Museum still resonates as a defeat. It should be noted, however, that the decentralized, non-linear network approach may have saved the Iraq Museum from complete destruction. On 9 April 2003 a tank company from Task Force I-64, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Eric Schwartz, approached the museum compound with a general objective to hold the nearby crossroads. Once there, they began to draw heavy fire from Iraqi Republican Guard forces, some of which had taken up residence in

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>94</sup> Bogdanos, *Thieves of Baghdad*, 204.



the compound. The next day LTC Schwartz decided to pull his forces back rather than risk damaging the museum by engaging the Iraqi troops, which turned out to be a “tactically wrong but culturally brilliant decision.”<sup>95</sup>

No commander told LTC Schwartz “You need to take the museum compound and hold it.” He viewed the Iraqi resistance at the compound, assessed the situation and made a tactical decision to pull his forces back. Logic dictates that this was the right thing to do. If Task Force I-64 and the heavy weaponry of their Abrams tanks had engaged the Republican Guard units, which had fortified themselves in the museum compound, there would have been nothing left of the museum or its collection of Mesopotamian artifacts. Millennia of cultural heritage would have been destroyed and lost to the world. Discussions by retired Vice Admiral Arthur Cebrowski and technology specialist John Garstka at the U.S. Naval Institute confirm the decision-making power of Schwartz. Cebrowski and Garstka maintain that the enormous complexity of military operations dictate a bottom-up approach during the chaos of battle.<sup>96</sup>

If Task Force I-64 made the culturally right choice by not attacking the Iraq Museum compound, who was directly responsible for the protection of its cultural property? It was not intended to be the U.S. military. The quick defeat of Iraqi armed forces led to rapid destabilization in Baghdad. Fifty thousand street criminals were released during the invasion by the Saddam Hussein regime before its collapse.<sup>97</sup> This led to the disintegration of the Iraqi police force and the chief element of order that should have been available to curb looting and protect the Iraq Museum. The stability of

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid, 204-206.

<sup>96</sup> Cebrowski, Arthur K. and John J. Garstka, “Network-Centric Warfare: Its Origin and Future”, *Proceedings of the U.S. Naval Institute* 24, No. 1 (January 1998): 28-35.

<sup>97</sup> Bogdanos, *Thieves of Baghdad*, 14.

the city spiraled into the ground without a police force or justice department and set the stage for widespread theft of private property and the museum collection. Remember that unpredictable chaos is an inescapable element of war.

Traditionally, victory over a military opponent is followed by a “transition or handoff of responsibility from military to civilian agencies.” But the “endemic post conflict violence” and disorganization that prevailed in Iraq ensured that “the burden for providing stability was left to the agency with numbers on the ground: the [U.S. Army].”<sup>98</sup> The void created by the non-existent Iraqi justice department left U.S. forces the responsibility of providing stability in Iraq, a task that it was unprepared for.

Long-term decisions made by American policymakers and army leaders prior to the Iraq War had transformed the U.S. military into a “narrowly but fully capable, combat-centric force” which limited their ability for “organizational adaptation.”<sup>99</sup> The U.S. military is a combat force for a combat situation. It was trained, equipped and prepared for fighting a similar enemy force in Iraq. This did not include policing theft by unarmed looters in a foreign population.

It was a difficult situation, but U.S. forces did adapt to the circumstances in Iraq. The JIACG team of Captain Bogdanos is primarily responsible for launching an investigation of the Iraq Museum and creating a repatriation system for looted artifacts that is still in use by the museum. Their organized response within days of the looting justifies the decentralized non-linear model and that smaller units “tend to be readily

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<sup>98</sup> Serena, Chad C. *A Revolution in Military Adaptation: The US Army in the Iraq War*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2011, 167.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, 7.

capable of making quick adjustments to their immediate organizational inputs and outputs.”<sup>100</sup>

The U.S. military response to museum protection must be as flexible as its troops were required to be in Iraq. It is not easy, however, to draw from the lessons of previous conflicts. Even von Clausewitz noted that every war is unique in that it follows a singular path that cannot be entirely predicted.<sup>101</sup> This is embodied in current United States understanding of war as shown in a U.S. Marine Corps doctrine publication, stating, “it is unreasonable to expect command and control to provide precise, predictable and mechanistic order to a complex undertaking like war.”<sup>102</sup>

Bousquet argues that “a *scientific way of warfare*, understood as the application of the methodological and theoretical frameworks of science to the exercise of military force, established itself at the beginning of the modern era and has since grown in influence to become one of the dominant lenses through which armed conflict is contemplated.”<sup>103</sup> Military minds from Frederick the Great in the eighteenth-century to Westmoreland in the twentieth and General Tommy Franks in the twenty-first have sought to apply technologic theory to their battle plans in order to achieve a successful outcome. The Vietnam War proved that advanced technological capability does not dictate success on the battlefield. It is a tool, but not a cure-all for any problem. The inescapable chaos of the battlefield will cloud judgment and slow reaction time, leaving armed conflict no less predictable than what von Clausewitz observed when he first wrote about the “fog of war.”

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid, 161.

<sup>101</sup> Bousquet, *The Scientific Way of Warfare*, 198.

<sup>102</sup> U.S. Marine Corps. *MCDP 6: Command and Control*. Department of the Navy, 1996, 46-47.

<sup>103</sup> Bousquet, “Chaoplex warfare or the future of military organization”, 917.

## V. The Known and the Unknown

Chaos and unpredictability are unavoidable hurdles of the battlefield but it is possible to navigate around them. Chaos exists within the structures of order and the presence of one defines the other. Order can be achieved by establishing guidelines based on common aspects of World War II and Iraq War cultural heritage protection policies. The availability of these guidelines among military circles and other organizations involved with war planning or training soldiers could help prevent the next cultural heritage emergency from happening.

The requirements for protecting museums, art galleries and cultural sites must be readily understood by all military powers before they become involved in a conflict. Warfare is unpredictable and any plan is subject to change. It is therefore best to have guidelines prepared before the fighting starts rather than during or after the conflict is over. That way military decision-makers can concentrate on how to alter the guidelines to the current battle situation rather than begin from scratch. American academics that convened in 1943 to address the war effort made their assessments eight months before the Allied invasion of Italy and eighteen months before the invasion of France. In comparison, academic meetings with the Pentagon occurred less than three months prior to the Iraq War. A wider window of time is needed to prepare guidelines that consider environmental and cultural conditions soldiers are expected to encounter in a specified theatre of war.

The *Kunstschutz*, Monuments Men and JIACG each developed their own policies concerning awareness, cooperation, isolation and repatriation. These four experiences identify the main requirements needed in the next generation of protection policies and

they must be reestablished for progress to be made. Increasing awareness about the threat to cultural heritage treasures is an effective way to promote heritage protection among military forces, local inhabitants, academic organizations and government institutions. Implementation of an awareness policy can take the form of written documents, lectures, commutative seminars or conferences and should focus on identification, handling and basic care for threatened cultural materials. The target audience should be soldiers, commanders, civilian museum professionals and culture groups that will be directly involved in the theatre of war as well as any organization or institution that may have an interest or specialization in the cultural artifacts located there. These include international bodies such as the International Council of Museums (ICOM), Interpol and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The demands of non-linear warfare stress the importance of the smallest military units operating independently and render trickle-down methods of information interpretation unreliable. For this reason information must be packaged in a way that appeals to individual soldiers and can be understood by people of diverse backgrounds. This delivery method is preferable over targeting commanders and relying on subsequent circulation through their own communication channels.

Any information that is distributed must be shared across the board through local, "in-house" and international cooperation. "Local" may include the native inhabitants of a theatre of war and the soldiers and military personnel deployed there. Interrelated organizations or departments of the same government should form an "in-house" bond such as the American representatives from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Department of Justice who participated in coordinated efforts of Task

Force Bowie in Afghanistan and Iraq. Sharing information with like-minded organizations from other nations – for example the FBI and CIA members of Task Force Bowie and their ties to British MI5 and MI6 agencies – creates a valuable network that can address protection policies from multiple angles. Incorporation of these three types of cooperation creates an all-inclusive horizontal structure of communication. Non-linear warfare favors this pattern and it eliminates information sharing problems associated with top-down hierarchies.

Developing a network for communications can be applied to the isolation and repatriation policies of invasion and occupation military forces. Once a list of endangered buildings, monuments or objects has been created it can be disseminated along these channels to alert soldiers and commanders which structures require their attention. Subsequent action includes sheltering them from damage when possible, marking them as protected sites and preventing their use by soldiers, civilians and refugees. Lists of endangered or missing cultural heritage objects can be distributed locally in the theatre of war and internationally – particularly with border countries and cities with a concentrated market for cultural treasures – using the horizontal communication network to prevent them from leaving the theatre of war or to expedite their repatriation.

The core lessons garnered from the experiences of the *Kunstschutz*, Monuments Men and JIACG on awareness, cooperation, isolation and repatriation during wartime are applicable to any future conflict, yet they serve only as guidelines. A successful cultural heritage protection policy will use knowledge provided by the guidelines to quickly adapt the policy-in-practice to the situation at hand. The result is a fluid policy that is not

bound by definitive properties that may be hampered by the unpredictability of the battlefield. This concept of a written yet unwritten policy may be perplexing, especially to members of the museum field.

Museum professionals, especially registrars who deal with collections management, appeal to established rules and regulations when confronted with a problem. Existing knowledge on legal issues, appropriate humidity, temperature and light levels are based on past experience and not prone to change. It is easy to see how the apparent orderly nature of collections management and the protection of cultural property afforded by a stable museum policy are not applicable when the unpredictability of warfare is considered. The case of the Iraq Museum is an unfortunate instance in which the chaos of warfare dismantled any hopes of saving the collection through pre-meditated action. No one predicted the scale of looting by the Iraqi people, not even the museum staff, and little was done to prevent theft or break-ins. Preparations for protecting the museum collection had been concerned with buffering sensitive artifacts from the vibrations of aerial bombardment. Director of research Dr. Donny George said the museum staff never thought the museum could be looted.<sup>104</sup>

The looting of the Iraq Museum is a prime example of the contradictory relationship between planning and chaos in warfare. It is impossible to calculate and prepare for all conceivable events that could occur at a museum. Even if an outcome is known, the most carefully constructed strategies – created by military commanders and museum staff alike – are not guaranteed to remain intact once the bullets start flying. The key to success in cultural heritage protection during wartime lies in being able to adapt

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<sup>104</sup> Bogdanos, *Thieves of Baghdad*, 202.

quickly to whatever fate may throw your way and to rely less on a regimented action plan. To summarize the words of General Helmut von Moltke appearing at the beginning of this paper, “no battle plan survives first contact with the enemy.”



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