

In commenting on "The Rape of Europa," it is a struggle to find where to begin. Not only is the film stupendously documented and brilliantly presented, but the careful, chronological approach devoted to the German military campaigns and the Nazis' accompanying art seizures appeals to me as a historian. The background music and, of course, the visuals are compelling. Parts of the film, especially the segments involving the return of the Klimt "Gold Portrait," were suspenseful. The interviews with witnesses and experts, including the Monuments Men, effectively carry the narrative along. As a contributor to the camps encyclopedia, I am impressed with the attention paid to what French scholar Jean-Marc Dreyfus calls "the almost camps" of Paris, in particular the Paris-Austerlitz camp for the processing of stolen Jewish property in France. The small camps in Paris, formed in connection with the "Furniture" operation (Moebel-Aktion) have only begun to receive recent scholarly attention (for a brief overview of them, see Dreyfus' article in John K. Roth and Jonathan Petropoulos (eds.), Gray Zones). The use of combat cinematography in "The Rape of Europa" is judicious: the filmmakers have not used just any stock footage -- as is unfortunately the case with most documentaries of World War II -- but employed film connected with the specific military campaign under discussion. I strongly recommend this film for anyone interested in military or art history, or both. I am planning to take a group to E Street shortly after the 28 September Washington premiere.--Joseph Robert White, Adjunct Associate Professor of History, University of Maryland University College

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