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Guide to the Otto G. von Simson Papers 1944-1957



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier ICU.SPCL.VONSIMSONOG

Title Simson, Otto G. von. Papers

Date 1944-1957

Size 1.75 linear feet (4 boxes)

Repository Special Collections Research Center
University of Chicago Library
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract Otto Georg von Simson (1912-1993), historian of medieval and Renaissance art and architecture, served on the faculties of the University of Chicago's Committee on Social Thought and Department of Art from 1945-1957. This collection documents Otto von Simson's work at the University of Chicago as an art historian, administrator, teacher and advocate for German and Austrian scholars. Material in the collection includes correspondence, drafts and proofs of publications and lectures, meeting agendas, research proposals, and course materials.

Information on Use

Access

Series III contains student grades, evaluations and recommendations. This material is restricted for 80 years.

The remainder of the collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Simson, Otto G. von. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

Otto Georg von Simson (1912-1993), historian of medieval and Renaissance art and architecture, served on the faculties of the University of Chicago's Department of Art and Committee on Social Thought from 1945-1957.

Born to a distinguished German family of Jewish and Catholic heritage, Simson grew up in the home of his grandfather, the chemist and industrialist Franz Oppenheim. Simson studied

art history in Freiburg, Berlin, and Munich; his dissertation on Rubens, *Zur Genealogie der weltlichen Apotheose im Barock, besonders der Medicigalerie des Peter Paul Rubens*, was published in 1936. In the same year, he married the princess Aloysia Alexandra von Schoenburg-Hartenstein (known as "Louise" or "Lulix"). He worked at the Courtauld Institute Library, and as an editor of *Hochland*, a Catholic literary periodical published in Munich.

In 1939, Simson fled Germany for the United States, under the pretext of visiting American art museums. His wife and children followed. Simson taught at Marymount College and St. Mary's College before University of Chicago President Robert M. Hutchins offered him a position on the Committee on Social Thought in 1945. He also joined the faculty of the Department of Art. In the interdisciplinary Committee on Social Thought, Simson served as Executive Secretary under the leadership of John U. Nef, and edited *Measure: A Critical Journal*. He became a full professor in 1951.

During his time at the University of Chicago, von Simson produced his two major works: *The Sacred Fortress: Byzantine Art and Statecraft in Ravenna* was published in 1948. *The Gothic Cathedral: Origins of Gothic Architecture and the Medieval Concept of Order* followed in 1956.

In 1946, Simson urged Robert M. Hutchins to assist German and Austrian scholars through the solicitation of donations and distribution of material aid. This proposal led to the formation of the Committee for Aid to German and Austrian Scholars, which Hutchins himself chaired. German and Austrian scholars began to turn to the committee as a means of seeking job opportunities in the United States; this secondary function of the committee evolved into a student and faculty exchange program between the University of Chicago and the University of Hamburg.

In 1957, Simson returned to Germany, where he served in positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the University of Frankfurt, and in UNESCO. He became Director of the Kunsthistorisches Institut of the Freie Universitaet in Berlin in 1964, where he remained until 1979.

Scope Note

This collection documents Otto von Simson's work at the University of Chicago as an art historian, administrator, teacher and advocate for German and Austrian scholars. It includes material related to Simson's work with the Committee on Social Thought, Department of Art, and Committee for Aid to German and Austrian Scholars.

Series I: Correspondence, spans the years 1944-1957. Files are arranged chronologically by year. This series includes incoming and outgoing letters and memoranda, as well as a small number of related meeting minutes, agendas and notes. Von Simson's correspondents includes colleagues

at the University of Chicago and other institutions, university administrators, publishers, editors, students, and professional organizations. Within this series are personal letters from important art historians and theologians, as well as writers and artists, including Marc Chagall. Some of von Simson's early correspondence relates to his work with the Committee for Aid to German and Austrian Scholars; much of this material is in German, and found in one folder of correspondence dating from 1946-1949. Additional German-language correspondence is interfiled with the remaining folders in the series.

Series II: Subject Files, spans the years 1945-1957, with files arranged alphabetically. The subjects reflect a variety of von Simson's research, teaching and administrative interests: This series contains files on seminars and courses, university departments and committees, material related to the University of Frankfurt exchange program, and the research interests of Simson and his colleagues. Also included are files on The Sacred Fortress, The Gothic Cathedral, and Simson's published articles and reviews. Material in this series includes correspondence, drafts and proofs of publications and lectures, publishing agreements, meeting agendas, research grant proposals, and course materials.

Series III: Restricted, contains student grades, evaluations and recommendations from 1945-1957.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html>

Nef, John U. Papers

University of Chicago. Committee for Aid to German and Austrian Scholars. Records

University of Chicago. John U. Nef Committee on Social Thought. Records

Subject Headings

- Simson, Otto Georg von, 1912-
- Committee for Aid to German and Austrian Scholars
- University of Chicago. Dept. of Art
- University of Chicago. Committee on Social Thought
- Art historians

INVENTORY

Series I: Correspondence

Box 1

Folder 1

1944-1946

- Adler, Mortimer J.
- Andreason, David
- Beals, Ralph
- Beard, Charles
- Beichmans, Sister
- Bell, Laird
- Benton, William
- Boeker, Alexander
- Boorstin, Daniel
- Catholic Youth Organization
- Chagall, Marc
- College Art Association of America
- Connerton, Joseph
- Douglas, James H.
- Education for Freedom, Inc.
- Finkelstein, Louis
- Flynn, Vincent
- Gemelli, Agostino
- Gertrude, Madame
- Grabo, Carl H.
- Grene, David
- Hermens, Ferdinand Aloys
- Hutchins, Robert M.
- Kantorowicz, Ernst H.
- Kaufman, Joe
- Kraeuter, Franz
- Kubler, George
- Lang, Reginald D.
- Lee, Rensselaer W.
- Madeleva, Sister M.
- Medieval Academy
- Middeldorf, Ulrich A.
- Morris, Rudolph Edward
- Mueller, Franz
- Nef, John U.
- Office of Military Government, United States (OMGUS)
- Pargellis, Stanley
- Pelligrini and Cudahy
- von Preysing, Konrad
- Regnery, Henry
- Rosaire, Marie
- Rosenstock-Huessy, Eugen
- Rosenthal, Julius
- Sheil, Bernard James

- Strittmatter, Anselm
- United States Department of State
- United States War Department
- University of Chicago, Central Administration
- University of Chicago, Committee on Social Thought
- University of Chicago, Office of the Comptroller
- University of Chicago, Student Art Club
- Wind, Egar

Box 1

Folder 2

German, 1946-1949

- Adolph, R.
- Baumgaertel, D.
- Bergstraesser, Arnold
- Broch, Hermann
- Burckhardt, Henry
- Clemen, Wolfgang
- Eibel, W.
- von Ficker, R.
- Fischer, Max
- Forell, F.J.
- Gschnitzer, Franz
- Hermens, Ferdinand Aloys
- Hoops, Johannes
- Kahler, Erich
- Klingner, F.
- Kraeuter, Franz
- Kretzschmar, Hugo
- von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, Erik
- Lauser, Theodor
- Lotz, Wolfgang
- Martiny, Guenter
- Molden, Fritz P.
- Molden, Otto
- Morper, J.J.
- Nef, John U.
- Palm, Erwin Walter
- Pauck, Wilhelm
- Peterhaus
- Picard, Max
- Rademacher, Ludwig
- Regnery, Henry
- Richter
- Schuchhardt, W.-H.
- Schuwerack, Wilhelm
- Schwietering, Julius

- Sigwart, Hans
- Sydow, Juergen
- Unger, Heinz
- Wenzl, Aloys
- Wotschitzky, Alfons
- Wurthmann, H.
- Unidentified correspondents

Box 1

Folder 3

1947

- Aquinas, Sister
- Berger, Klaus
- Boorstin, Daniel
- Branch, William M.
- Brethren Service Committee
- Bronstein, Beverly
- Chicago Committee to Win the Peace
- Colwell, Ernest Cadman
- Cotton, Albert F.
- D'Arms, Edward F.
- Edelstein, Renate E.
- Erasmus
- Evans, Joseph P.
- Gemelli, Agostino
- Heltzel, Virgil B.
- Hermens, Ferdinand Aloys
- Heywood, Robert
- Hutchins, Robert M.
- Jocelyn, M.
- Kahler, Erich
- Kempner, Frederick
- Ladner, Gerhart
- Lalley, Joseph M.
- Lang, Reginald D.
- Leary, Warren D.
- Lisco, Hermann
- Mallery, Otto T.
- Middeldorf, Ulrich A.
- Munnecke, Wilbur C.
- Nef, John U.
- Palm, Erwin Walter
- Office of Military Government, United States (OMGUS)
- O'Malley, Frank
- Overby, Carl
- Phelan, Gerald B.
- Piper, Otto A.

- Program Information Exchange
- Rado, Mrs. Sandor
- Rich, Daniel Catton
- Riezler, Kurt
- Scheimann, Richard
- Schulz, Ervin M.
- Shils, Edward M.
- Sternfeld, Frederick W.
- Stokowski, Olga
- Thomson, S. Harrison
- University of Chicago, Committee on Social Thought
- University of Chicago, Division of the Humanities
- University of Chicago, Office of the Comptroller
- Weaver, Richard M.
- Wolff, Kurt
- Wright, Louise L.
- Wright, Quincy
- Yankes, Mrs. Peter N.
- Unidentified correspondents

Box 1

Folder 4

1948

- Alciatore, Jules
- Baron, Hans
- Bergstraesser, Arnold
- Bieler, Ludwig
- Branch, William M.
- Bruening, H.
- Charles, Robert J.
- Churchill, Alfred Vance
- Cotton, Albert F.
- Colwell, Ernest Cadman
- Couch, William T.
- Friedmann, Georges
- Friend, A.M., Jr.
- Hamilton, Earl
- Held, Julius S.
- Hermens, Ferdinand Aloys
- Kempner, Paul
- von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, Erik
- Kuhn, Charles L.
- Ladner, George
- Lang, Reginald D.
- Lisco, Hermann
- Madeleva, M.
- McKenzie, Margaret

- Middeldorf, Ulrich A.
- Mohler, O.
- Munnecke, Wilbur C.
- Murphey, Donald W.
- Nef, John U.
- Office of Military Government, United States (OMGUS)
- O'Malley, Frank
- Pauck, Wilhelm
- Peter, Mary
- The Progressive
- Rooney, Donald J.
- Savage, Alma
- Scheffer, Mrs. Paul
- Scheimann, Richard
- Schneewind, Carl O.
- Sheil, Bernard James
- Smith, Lawrence
- Sternfeld, Frederick W.
- Strittmatter, Anselm
- Tyler, Ralph W.
- University of Chicago, Office of the Comptroller
- Weickert, Carl
- Weiss, Paul
- Wieck, Fred
- Wilmeth, Hal
- Unidentified correspondents

Box 1

Folder 5

1949

- Art Institute of Chicago
- Biesel, Frances
- Cardinal, Edward V.
- Christ-Janer, Albert
- College Art Association of America
- Colwell, Ernest Cadman
- Gewirth, Alan
- Held, Julius S.
- Hermens, Ferdinand Aloys
- Heywood, Robert B.
- International StudyTour Alliance
- Ladner, Gerhart
- Lang, Reginald D.
- Lyttle, Charles H.
- Medieval Academy of America
- Molden, Fritz P.
- Nef, John U.

- Perry, Charner M.
- Rich, Daniel Catton
- Ritchie, William
- Scheffer, Paul
- Sweet, Fred A.
- University of Chicago, Central Administration
- University of Chicago, Division of the Social Sciences
- University of Chicago, Office of the Comptroller
- University of Chicago, Office of the Treasurer
- University of Chicago Press
- Weiss, Paul A.
- Unidentified correspondents

Box 1

Folder 6

1950

- Bergmann, John
- Cardinal, Edward V.
- Diamond, Edwin
- Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Harvard University
- Frankfort, H.
- Gilbert, Felix
- Haenel, Joachim A.
- Harrison, R. Wendell
- Held, Julius S.
- Hermens, Ferdinand Aloys
- Heywood, Robert B.
- Hutchins, Robert M.
- International House
- International Rescue Committee
- International StudyTour Alliance
- John Stocks Travel Service
- Jung, E.M.
- Kitzinger, Ernst
- Kraeling, Carl H.
- Lang, Reginald D.
- Marymount College
- Maunoury, Jean
- Meaney, John
- Meyer, Ernst Wilhelm
- Meyer, John H.
- Middeldorf, Ulrich A.
- Moore, Philip S.
- Moser, Simon
- National Catholic Welfare Conference
- Nef, John U.
- Newberry Library

- O'Laughlin, Frank
- Osman, John
- Ostwald, Martin and Lore
- Perl, Carl Johann
- Petersen, William
- Pieper, Josef
- Quiévreux, F.
- Rich, Daniel Catton
- Rinn, Hermann
- Ritchie, William
- Rothfels, Hans
- Soria, Martin S.
- Strittmatter, Anselm
- Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association
- University of Chicago, Central Administration
- University of Chicago, Committee on Social Thought
- University of Chicago, Office of the Comptroller
- Zimmer-Lehmann, Georg
- Unidentified correspondents

Box 1

Folder 7

1951

- Art Institute of Chicago
- American Education Abroad, Inc.
- Colwell, Ernest Cadman
- Delatour, G.S.
- Diamond, Edward
- Friend, A.M., Jr.
- Harris, Cynthia
- Harvard School for Boys
- Hutchins, Robert M.
- Lang, Reginald D.
- Maedebach
- Meyer, John H.
- Middeldorf, Ulrich A.
- Nef, John U.
- Paepcke, Walter P.
- Rich, Daniel Catton
- di Salvatore, Nino
- Shils, Edward A.
- Strozier, Robert M.
- Stumpf, Manfred
- Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America
- Thomson, S. Harrison
- Tselos, Dimitri
- Tyler, Ralph W.

- University of Chicago High School
- University of Chicago, Office of the Bursar
- University of Chicago, Office of the Comptroller
- University of Chicago, Office of the Treasurer
- Unidentified correspondents

Box 1

Folder 8

1952-1953

- Alexander, Paul
- Baron, Hans
- Branch, W.M.
- Cairns, Huntington
- d'Entrèves, A.P.
- Fussler, Herman H.
- Gilchrist, Mrs. John M.
- Grassi, E.
- Hitchcock, H.R.
- Jonas, Hans
- Kimball, Fiske
- Library of Congress
- Maunoury, Jean
- Meyer, John
- Meyer, William H.
- Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio
- Nef, John U.
- Petrone, Giuseppe
- Platt, Robert S.
- Redfield, Robert
- Rich, Daniel Catton
- Ritchie, William
- Schapiro, Meyer
- Sedlmayr, Hans
- Strayer, Joseph M.
- Tyler, Ralph W.
- Weisman, Winston
- White, Alice
- Wilt, Napier
- University of Chicago, General Library
- Unidentified correspondents

Box 1

Folder 9

1954-1955

- American Committee for Emigré Scholars, Writers and Artists, Inc.
- Barrett, John D.
- Bibliothèque Nationale
- Boase

- Bollingen Series
- Branner, Robert
- Cook, Walter W.S.
- Cooperative Bureau for Teachers
- Coremans, Paul
- Dempf, A.
- Dressler, Fridolin
- Druse, Joseph L.
- Educational Exchange Service
- E. Weyhe
- Gargan, Edward
- Gerstenberg
- Grene, David
- Harris, Chauncy D.
- von Hayek, Friedrich A.
- Held, Julius H.
- Hermens, Ferdinand Aloys
- Heydenreich, Ludwig
- Hocking, Richard
- Howerton, Georg
- Howland, Richard H.
- Hutchins, Robert M.
- Janson, H.W.
- Kirk, Russell
- Kwiat, Joseph H.
- Lang, Reginald D.
- Loewith, Karl
- Maunoury, Jean
- McGuire, William
- McRee, James F.
- Middeldorf, Ulrich A.
- Nelson, Benjamin
- Olivetti, Ing. G.
- Porada, Edith
- Quain, Edwin A.
- Regnery, Henry
- Religious Education Association of the United States and Canada
- Rich, Daniel Catton
- Schapiro, Meyer
- Schwietering, Julius
- Shaw, Alfred P.
- Sheed, Frank
- Shuster, George E.
- Singer, Milton
- Speculum
- Urdal, Lloyd

- Weissman, Kurt
- Wilt, Napier
- Wolff, Kurt
- Wornom, Herman E.
- Unidentified correspondents

Box 2

Folder 1

1956

- Bollingen Series
- Clark, Stephen C.
- Fowlie, Wallace
- Franklin, Norman
- Gilbert, Felix
- Ginsburg, Norton S.
- Kahnweiler, Daniel-Henry
- Lang, Reginald D.
- Meiss, Millard
- Miller, Dorothy C.
- Mims, Helen S.
- Museum of Modern Art
- Pantheon Books
- Reaney, John
- Rosaire, Marie
- Rotter, Elfriede
- Schoeningh, Franz Josef
- Scoledes, A.G.M.
- Speaight, Robert
- Wieck, Fred
- Unidentified correspondents

Box 2

Folder 2

1956-1957

- Bachhofer, Ludwig
- Bollingen Series
- Bowen, Carroll G.
- Boyer, Edna D.
- Cox, Leonard
- Eydoux, Henri-Paul
- Harris, Chauncy D.
- Hutchins, Robert M.
- Kim, Chrysostom
- Kirk, Russell
- Krautheimer, Richard
- Lang, Reginald D.
- Levy, Ernst
- Lowry, Bates

- Maser, Edward A.
- Medievalia et Humanistica
- Mims, Helen S.
- Mueller, Franz H.
- O'Connell, John P.
- Pantheon Books
- Regnery, Henry
- Renaissance Society of America
- Rheinstein, Max
- Rimli, Eugen T.
- Scherer, Robert
- Squibb, Francis
- Strittmatter, Anselm
- University of Chicago, Personnel Office
- Weller, Allen S.
- Wieck, Fred

Series II: Subject Files

Box 2

Folder 3-5

Articles and reviews, typescripts and correspondence, 1945-1956

Box 2

Folder 6

"The Art of the Greek Church," lecture, typescript and correspondence, 1954

Box 2

Folder 7

Chicago Fine Arts Program, typescript, circa 1957

Box 2

Folder 8

Committee on Social Thought, seminar proposal

Box 2

Folder 9

Committee on the William Vaughn Moody Lectures, agenda, 1951

Box 2

Folder 10

Gothic architecture, correspondence, 1950-1953

Box 2

Folder 11-13

The Gothic Cathedral, correspondence, drafts, proofs and publishing agreement, 1954-1955

Box 2

Folder 14

Gourevitch, Victor, research proposal, undated

Box 2

Folder 15

Graham Foundation, correspondence, pamphlet and meeting agenda, 1957

Box 2

Folder 16

Islamic Civilization, course and program proposals, 1957

Box 3

Folder 1

"The Medieval Vision," film series, scripts and correspondence, 1957

Box 3

Folder 2

"Partisan Review," statement and prospectus, undated

Box 3

Folder 3

Post office claim, correspondence, 1950-1952

Box 3

Folder 4-5

Research grants, proposals and correspondence, 1947-1955

Box 3

Folder 6

The Sacred Fortress, correspondence and publishing agreements, 1947-1956

Box 3

Folder 7

Schwietering, Julius, recommendation, undated

Box 3

Folder 8

Seminar proposal, undated

Box 3

Folder 9

Shiels, W. Eugene, "History as an Integrating Discipline," typescript and correspondence, 1953

Box 3

Folder 10

University of California, court proceeding, 1951

Box 3

Folder 11

University of Frankfurt faculty exchange program, correspondence, 1948-1953

Series III: Restricted

Box 4

Folder 1

Correspondence and recommendations, 1954-1957

Box 4

Folder 2

Correspondence, 1955

Box 4

Folder 3-4

Correspondence and course materials, 1945-1953