

A Silesian Crossroads for Europe's Displaced Books: Compensation or Prisoners of War?

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In trying to unravel the fate of books displaced as a result of the Second World War in Europe, let us turn our focus with a wide-angle lens on Silesia as one of the major crossroads for cultural treasures during and immediately after the war. The area as a whole has received comparatively little attention in international literature, although several publications in the last decade suggest various aspects of the problem. The following analysis summarizes earlier findings with a few examples in a fresh geographic context. It demonstrates the complexities of wartime and postwar library displacements and shows the conjunction and interaction of several factors that determined the fate and disposition of Europe's displaced books.¹

Silesia itself has been a borderland for many centuries, and today it lies across the Czech-Polish border. But in 1938 together with the newly annexed Sudetenland, Silesia was part of the Third Reich. When Allied bombing of Berlin intensified in 1943, Silesia was one the

¹ See Grimsted, "Tracing Patterns of European Library Plunder: Books Still not Home from the War," in *Jüdischer Buchbesitz als Raubgut. Zweites Hannoversches Symposium*, ed. Regine Dehnel (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann 2006); *Zeitschrift für Bibliothekswesen und Bibliographie*, 88, pp. 139–67, and earlier publications listed at http://www.iisg.nl/archives_in_russia/bibliography.html. A more detailed updated survey of the RSHA and ERR library plunder and its fate will appear in the forthcoming Grimsted introductory chapters in the *Fate of Nazi-Looted Books*, eds F. J. Hoogewoud and Patricia Kennedy Grimsted (Leicester: Institute of Art and Law, 2006); see also Grimsted, "Patterns of Nazi Archival Plunder and Soviet Recovery," in *Returned from Russia: Nazi Archival Plunder in Western Europe and Recent Restitution Issues* (Leicester: Institute of Art and Law, forthcoming 2006).

major areas where various German agencies evacuated for safety their own cultural treasures along with those plundered from many countries, including books and archives. Some of them had been earlier looted from Western Europe; others had been confiscated from Austria and the Balkans. Even more came from the Eastern Front, plundered by the Germans from Ukraine, Belarus, and the Baltic countries. Most of them fell victim—or were “saved” a second time—by Soviet trophy hunters, and were taken to Moscow, Minsk, or Kyiv. Frequently, books from historic local collections were seized and transported East with those plundered elsewhere. Others not taken by Soviet scouts were discovered by the Poles and found new homes in Poland.

Most of the territory of Silesia itself changed hands at the end of the war, and many thousands of people were displaced as a result of redrawn boundaries. Many of the Germans who had made the region their home were forced out; many Poles from the East were forced to resettle there, while many of the Jews who had not been lucky enough to flee were killed. Here we focus on the books that shared a comparable fate during and after the war, although with a different fate from that of their owners. As it turns out, most of the books involved were not from Silesia itself, but because they ended the war there, they were subjected to the political and human traumas of the region. Most of the collections that survived the brutal hostilities never went home from the war. As this analysis shows, in trying to locate still lost books, we need to know not only the initial provenance of the books, but by what Nazi agency they were plundered, to what Nazi agency they were destined or “evacuated for safekeeping,” where they ended the war, and who found them afterwards.

I. Evacuation sites for Books Plundered by Major Nazi Agencies

A. The Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR)

We do not know today how many millions of books from European libraries –East and West, North and South—converged during the final years of the war in and near the relatively remote Silesian city of Ratibor (*now Polish Racibórz*, 75 km SW of Katowice). The Germans themselves probably did not know with any precision, because many of the shipments that arrived from Soviet lands, including the Baltic countries, in late 1944 were never unpacked and counted. Starting in May 1943 Ratibor was the key evacuation site for many research and

library units of the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR) Alfred Rosenberg's Special Command.²

The ERR also moved to Ratibor their so-called Buchleitstelle, earlier based in Berlin, the book sorting center for the Central Library of the Hohe Schule (ZBHS)—Rosenberg's projected postwar alternative university for Nazi elite—and its various institutes, including the Institute for the Study of the Jewish Question (IEJ) in Frankfurt am Main. They moved to Ratibor not only the Ostbücherei, the Special Library on Bolshevism and Eastern Affairs, but also the additional massive library materials they had plundered from all over occupied Europe and not yet sorted in Berlin. Starting in the summer of 1943, and almost all subsequent ERR library loot intended for the Hohe Schule and other destinations went first to Ratibor. Documentation has been found for many large shipments to Ratibor, including those from Yugoslavia, Belarus, Ukraine, and the Baltic countries. Even some of the books from France intended for ZBHS (by then evacuated to Austrian Carinthia), first were processed in Ratibor. The ERR spread their operations in some eighteen different buildings within the city and other satellite depots in castles or abandoned cigar factories in the surrounding area, most of which can now be identified precisely from surviving reports. Those operations continued in and around Ratibor until January 1945. Gerd Wunder, in charge of the ERR anti-Bolshevik and other research operations in Ratibor, in a 1960 court appearance in Germany admitted to "several millions." Certainly well over two million volumes had arrived in Ratibor and the various ERR satellite facilities before the ERR retreated from the area in January and early February 1945.

Although Ratibor could boast the largest concentration of Europe's displaced books by the end of the war, little was known about that for half a century. When the Americans interrogated Wunder earlier in preparations for the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials, the question did not arise, because his interrogators were not aware of the massive ERR

² For expanded detail and documentation for this section, see Grimsted, "Roads to Ratibor: Library and Archival Plunder by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 19, no. 3 (Winter 2005), pp. 390–458. My initial exploration of this topic was presented at a 1996 conference in Amsterdam: Grimsted, "New Clues in the Records of Archival and Library Plunder: The ERR and RSHA Amt VII Operations in Silesia," in *The Return of Looted Collections (1946–1946). An Unfinished Chapter: Proceedings of an International Symposium to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Return of Dutch Collections from Germany*, ed. F. J. Hoogewoud, E.P. Kwaadgras et al. (Amsterdam: IISH, 1997), pp. 52–67.

operations and library holdings in Silesia. The British were better informed having learned more about Ratibor when they interrogated the Rosenberg staff for the Central Library of the Hohe Schule (ZBHS) they captured in Tanzenberg (Austrian Carinthia). They even informed the Soviets in September of 1945 "that all books removed from Russia by the EINSATZSTAB ROSENBERG were sent to a clearing centre at RATIBOR in SILESIA. Other books may be found there, together with valuable records and catalogues. If such records are found, it is requested that they may be made available for scrutiny by Major Hayward, the British officer in charge at Tanzenberg."³ However, what the British did not know was that the Germans had already removed most of the books from Ratibor and their surrounding storage sites before their retreat, and that large parts of the city had been destroyed in the bitter fighting in February 1945. Apparently the Soviet never understood the significance of Ratibor, and by the time the British informed them, they were preparing the books found in the region for shipment east. When I last visited Racibórz six years ago, I found no one who knew about the ERR wartime presence or the extent to which the city had served as a centre of ERR research and propaganda work and plundered library holdings. Consideration should now be given to assembling a local exhibit, as suggested by the director of the Racibórz Museum.⁴

One of the major ERR satellite facilities for Ratibor was based in the elegant castle of Pless (*now Polish Pszczyna*, 70 km E). One of the buildings attached to the family castle housed the periodical library, newspaper collections, and several other ERR offices, and there was another depot in what ERR reports refer to as the "barracks." When I last visited in 1999, the elderly castle director had never known that the ERR was there. A local researcher had found evidence that the Rosenberg-led Ministry for Occupied Eastern Territories (RMbO) had negotiated the lease of some rooms in the castle, while the family was required to live on in the castle for cover. Starting in the summer of

³ "Russian books at Tanzenberg, Land Kärnten," ACA (British Element), J. W. Goodison to M. Gavrilov, Public Enlightenment Division, ACA (Soviet Element) (Vienna, 19 September 1945), National Archives (TNA; earlier Public Record Office-PRO), Kew Gardens, FO 1020/2794, doc. 28A. Other British files from Tanzenberg operations include FO1020/2793, 2878, and 2879, among others.

⁴ I appreciate the assistance of Wojciech Kowalski for arrangements in Racibórz and meetings with museum and archive directors. I first visit the city in search of ERR sites with Ukrainian colleagues in 1991.

1944, the final shipments arrived from the Baltic countries. Among others, the ERR group from Vilnius working on the Smolensk Oblast Communist Party Archive arrived in Pless with some five freight train wagons of Smolensk CP records, along with other library materials evacuated from the Baltic countries.

Meanwhile, some 200 km west, the ERR Sonderstab Musik leased space in the Silesian castle of Langenau (*now Polish Czernica*), 12 km N of Hirschberg (*now Polish Jelenia Góra*). That separate facility served as headquarters for Sonderstab Musik director Dr. Herbert Gerigk, as well documented by Dutch musicologist Willem de Vries.⁵ In contrast to Ratibor and Pless, no German documentation from operations or holdings in Langenau has surfaced, except for documents about music shipments, including one from Trieste as late as November 1944.⁶ Neither have any postwar Soviet or Polish sources surfaced to trace the fate of those cultural troves, although local people report the Red Army removed at least four wagonloads of musicalia before the castle of Langenau was turned into a hospital in the spring of 1945.⁷ Willem de Vries identified two music scores by Darius Milhaud in the Biblioteka Narodowa in Warsaw in 1999, scores he knew were in fact confiscated from Paris by the ERR Sonderstab Musik. So far no other materials have been found in Poland, nor has it been possible to follow the trail of any musicalia from Langenau in Russia.

The roads to Ratibor for books plundered from Western European and Balkan collections intersected with those that brought books plundered from occupied Soviet lands. The fact that those roads converged in the ERR Silesian centre determined the postwar fate of those books. According to an ERR report dated the end of January 1945, they had already evacuated their most important records, and

⁵ See Willem de Vries, *Sonderstab Musik: Music Confiscations by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg under the Nazi Occupation of Western Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996); also available in German translation (Koln: Dittrich Verlag, 1998).

⁶ See the Sonderstab Musik reports by Dr. [Max] Unger (Quito near Verona, 10 December 1943) and (Verona, 30 June 1944), and his letters to Dr. Gerigk (Florence and Verona, May and June 1944) together with additional correspondence of Dr. Maier with Dr. Gerigk (April–August 1944) in BArch, NS30/63. The Gerigk note acknowledging the Trieste shipment is dated (Langenau ü. Hirschberg, 13 November 1944).

⁷ See Hugo Weczerka, "Langenau, Ober und Nieder," in *Schlesien: Handbuch der historischen Stätten* (Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1977), p. 266. The present owner of the castle confirmed that account to me during my 1999 visit with Willem de Vries.

they still hoped “it would be possible to take more on open wagons to Castle Banz,” the ERR Bavarian retreat; others were slated for destruction. Fortunately, the ERR decided not to destroy the Ostbücherei, as they still hoped to return and resume its use, “if the war situation improved.” If that was impossible, they assumed the abandoned materials they had collected would be “captured by the Bolsheviks.”⁸ In the course of retreat, the Germans managed to move well over a million books, or perhaps two million, from Ratibor to warehouses in the Kattowicz (*Polish* Katowice) suburb of Myslowitz (*now Polish* Mysłowice), before the Red Army liberated Ratibor in February 1945. A Soviet library brigade discovered the warehouses with “hundreds and thousands of German crates” of books.⁹ They identified over half a million books from Belarusian libraries, but less was reported about another half a million books from Western Europe, confiscated from “enemies” of the Nazi regime.¹⁰

In Pless, a unit from the Main Political Command of the Red Army (GlavPU RKKa) found as estimated twelve wagonloads of materials the ERR had abandoned in the railway station.¹¹ Four and a half freight wagonloads of the Smolensk CP Archive returned home in April 1945 (although that fact was first revealed only in 1991).¹² A July Red Army report (available only in part) confirms that they had transferred the books and periodicals found in Pless to Myslowitz, although the fragments published deal only with the retrieval of books

⁸ ERR Stabsführer Gerhard Utikal to Rosenberg, “Aktenvermerk für den Reichsleiter—“Dienstgut in Oberschlesien” (25 January 1945), BArch, NS 8/261; another copy in NS 30/7.

⁹ See the journalistic memoir of Boris Shipervich, ‘Spasenie knig’, *Al'manakh bibliofila*, 1973, pp. 57–65.

¹⁰ I first described the Soviet discovery of the warehouses of books in Myslowitz, in the chapter “Silesian Sojourns,” in Grimsted, *The Odyssey of the Turgenev Library from Paris, 1940–2002: Books as Victims and Trophies of War* (Amsterdam: International Institute of Social History, 2003); “IISG Research Papers” no. 42; electronic version: <http://www.iisg.nl/publications/respap42.pdf>.

¹¹ See the report by the Deputy Chief of the Chief Political Command of the Red Army (GlavPU RKKa), I. V. Shikin to G. M. Malenkov, TsK VKP(b) (1 March 1945), RGASPI, 17/125/308, fols. 11–12; G. F. Aleksandrov and I. V. Shikin to G. M. Malenkov, TsK VKP(b) (1 March 1945), RGASPI, 17/125/308, fols. 14–17. Major excerpts from the original reports were published by Valerii Shepelev, “Sud’ba ‘Smolenskogo arkhiva’,” *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 1991 (5), pp. 135–36.

¹² See more details in Grimsted, *Odyssey of the “Smolensk Archive”: Communist Records in the Service of Anti-Communism* (Pittsburgh, 1995; = “Carl Beck Occasional Papers in Russian and East European Studies,” no. 1201), pp. 44–48.

confiscated by the Nazis from Soviet libraries. The only foreign books mentioned was the Turgenev Library from Paris, which they described as “Russian.”¹³ Regrettably, the full text and related documents have still not been declassified. Indicative of research problems in Russia on this subject, in reply to my request for a copy of that report, the Central Archive of the Ministry of Defense (TsAMO) in Podolsk claimed “they have no documentation relating to the retrieval of libraries and archives.” A similar request from the Russian State Library was refused.¹⁴ Nevertheless, it has been possible to piece together considerable details about Red Army library operations in Silesia starting in 1945.

Fragmentary Red Army documentation available confirms that the Myslowitz warehouses became a major Red Army library collecting point by the summer of 1945, even if Soviet authorities were not aware that most of the books had come from the ERR Ratibor operations. By March of 1946, the Americans had opened a restitution center at the Offenbach Archival Depot (OAD) near Frankfurt am Main for the over three million plundered books they collected in the western Germany. Similarly the British sorted and returned to their home countries the over half million books that were collected in Tanzenberg (Austrian Carinthia), Rosenberg’s evacuation site for the Central Library of the Hohe Schule (ZBHS). In contrast on the Eastern Front from Silesia, an echelon with fifty-four freight train wagons transported over a million books from Myslowitz to the capital of Soviet Belarus in November 1945.¹⁵

That transport to Minsk can be well documented, although it does not appear on the published list of shipments sent to the USSR from

¹³ Fragments of the report by Major V. Pakhomov (GlavPU RKKA), “O bibliotekakh, obnaryuzhennykh voiskami Krasnoi Armii,” are published as doc. no. 169 in *Biblioteknoe delo v Rossii v period Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny (iiun’ 1941–mai 1945)*, comp. A. L. Divnogortsev, ed. V. A. Fokeev et al. (Moscow: Izd-vo RGB “Pashkov dom,” 2000), pp. 274–75; the archival reference cited is TsAMO, fond 32 (GlavPU RKKA), opis’ 11302/327, fols. 383–384v.

¹⁴ S. Kamenichenko, acting director of the Archival Service of the Ministry of Defense, in an official letter to me (28 June 2002). Presently the records of fond 32 (GlavPU RKKA/SA) and its Trophy Administration are not open for research.

¹⁵ See Grimsted, “The Road to Minsk for Western Trophy Books,” *Libraries and Culture* 30, no. 4 (Fall 2004), pp. 351–404; Russian version: “Trofeinye knigi iz Zapadnoi Evropy: Doroga v Minsk cherez Ratibor (Ratsibuzh). Ograblenie bibliotek ERR (Operativnym shtabom Reikhsliitera Rozenberga),” in *Matieryialy trietskikh mizhnarodnykh knizhaznuchnykh chytanniaiu “Knih Belarusi: Poviaz’ chasoi”* (Minsk, 16–17 verasnia 2003 g.) (Minsk: Natsyional’naia bibiliatieka Belarusi, 2005), pp. 39–90.

Germany under the command of Major Margarita Rudomino, director of the All-Union Library for Foreign Literature in Moscow (VGBIL, now named in her honor). Rudomino was in charge of the library group in a Soviet trophy brigade sent to Germany by the Committee on Cultural-Educational Institutions under the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR (May 1945–October 1946), headed by Aleksei Manevskii, director of the Scientific-Research Institute for Museum and Regional Studies, who also headed the Department of Museums in what later became the Ministry of Culture.¹⁶

Recently it has been clarified that many books plundered from Western European homes traveled the road to Minsk via Ratibor and Myslowitz and remain to day in the National Library of Belarus. Preliminary examination of provenance cataloguing files in the Rare Books Department has revealed over 100 names that correspond to those found on surviving retrospective ERR lists of confiscated libraries in France, Belgium and the Netherlands.¹⁷ Even as their provenance is being revealed, those books held as prisoners of war in Minsk today are still considered "compensation" for the frightful wartime library losses in the Belarusian SSR. They came in the same transport with the returning half a million books from Belarusian libraries that the Nazis had taken to Ratibor. Meanwhile today, a database is being planned to incorporate the names of confiscated collections on such ERR wartime lists found among surviving ERR records in Kyiv and Koblenz, and postwar U.S. and British restitution records in Washington and London.¹⁸ Once that is complete, it will be

¹⁶ Considerable documentation from the Manevskii/Rudomino brigade is preserved among the records of the Committee on Cultural-Educational Institutions in the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GA RF), fond 534, *opis'* 2, files 1–14. German translations of a few sample documents are published by Ingo Kolasa and Klaus-Dieter Lehmann, eds., *Die Trophäenkommissionen der Roten Armee: Eine Dokumentensammlung zur Verschleppung von Büchern aus deutschen Bibliotheken* (Frankfurt am Main, 1996). See also Rudomino's memoir account, *Moia biblioteka*, edited with commentary by Adrian V. Rudomino (Moscow: "Rudomino," 2000), pp. 189–221. Adrian Rudomino kindly showed me additional documents from his mother's papers and recalled her trip to Silesia.

¹⁷ See Grimsted, "The Road to Minsk." My remarks here are based on my own research in the card files in the National Library of Belarus (NBB) in September 2003.

¹⁸ Plans call for the extant ERR lists of confiscated libraries to be incorporated into a database of ERR confiscations being compiled in a project funded by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany based in New York for which I am currently serving as a consultant, in consultation with library specialists in France, Belgium, and eventually other countries.

easier to match names of collections in Minsk with those confiscated in Paris, Brussels, or Amsterdam.

B. The Reichssicherheitshauptamt (RSHA) Amt VII

Silesia was also one of the evacuation havens for the Seventh Office of the Reich Security Main Office—Reichssicherheitshauptamt (RSHA) Amt VII, devoted to ideological research and evaluation (*Weltanschauliche Forschung und Auswertung*). That office had collection an estimated close to two million books in Berlin since the mid-1930s by the SD Hauptamt and the RSHA. Over half a million books collected in Berlin were evacuated to a series of castles and Theresienstadt in the Sudetenland, which will be the subject of a later more thorough investigation.¹⁹ Another close to half a million books, and even more archives, were evacuated in the summer of 1943 to two major Silesian Amt VII sites for research operations and archival storage:²⁰

(a) Most of the Amt VII archival holdings (and many books), including vast Masonic and Jewish materials ended the war in the Amt VII archival center based in the castle of Wölfelsdorf (now Polish Wilkanów), about 8 km SE of Habelschwerdt (now Polish Bystrzyca Kłodzka), the closest railway station. When evacuated from Berlin in 1943, they were initially stored in the impressive Castle of Fürstenstein (now Polish Książ), the largest in Silesia, near Freiburg (now Polish Świebodzice) and Waldenburg (Polish Wałbrzych). The castle was subsequently taken over by other Nazi agencies, and Hitler himself often visited there. In May 1944 the Amt VII archives were moved to Wölfelsdorf.

A Ukrainian trophy scout, CP historian Ivan D. Shevchenko with the Second Ukrainian Front, was the first to have found the cache in Wölfelsdorf in July 1945 and reported the archival treasures from all over Europe to the Communist Party Central Committee in Kyiv.²¹ After finding so many Western European socialist materials, including

¹⁹ Research is still underway regarding the evacuations to the Sudeten castles for a Grimsted introductory chapter in a forthcoming collective volume on *The Fate of Nazi-Looted Books* (Leicester: Institute of Art and Law).

²⁰ See Grimsted, "Twice Plundered or Twice Saved?: Russia's 'Trophy' Archives and the Loot of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 15(2) (Fall 2001), pp. 191–244; and the updated Russian version: "Dvazhdy zakhvachennyye ili 'dvazhdy spasennyye'? Rozysk rossiiskikh 'trofeinykh' arkhivov i dobycha Glavnogo upravleniia imperskoi bezopasnosti," in *Sotsial'naiia istoriia. Ezhegodnik 2004* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2005), pp. 401–455. In both cases, the emphasis is on archives, although there were many books accompanying them.

collections plundered from the Paris Branch of the International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam), he “regretted that there was no airplane to send samples of some of the most interesting documents home to Nikita Sergeevich [Khrushchev],” who was then First Secretary of the Communist Party in Ukraine.²² Shevchenko did manage to send several freight carloads of cultural treasures back to Kyiv before Lavrentii Beria was informed about the cache and ordered them all rerouted to Moscow. Of the 28 wagonloads that arrived in Moscow from Habelswerdt (some via Kyiv) by November 1945, many of the archives have recently gone home to Western Europe. Little is known about the books found with them, however, except that many remain in Moscow or dispersed in the former USSR. Wölfelsdorf was also the source of a major group of RSHA records, a large part of which remain in two funds in the Russian State Military Archive (RGVA) in Moscow.

(b) Meanwhile, the Amt VII Masonic research unit, together with most of the RSHA reference library and Masonic library holdings, ended the war in Schlesiersee (*now Polish Sława*, ca. 100 km SW of Posen (*now Polish Poznań*)). Research operations continued in the elegant lakeside castle, Himmler’s favorite, until January 1945. The records of RSHA operations with some fragments of plundered Masonic archives from France were found by the Poles and were not heard of again before 1990. In 1997 they were transferred to the Bundesarchiv in exchange for a group of German records from the General Gouvernement during the war. While some of the Belgian Masonic books were returned after the war, close to 100,000 Masonic books (mostly German) from Sława remain as “compensation” in the former Czartoryski palace of Ciążżeń (70 km east of Poznań), now a branch library of the University of Poznań.²³

²¹ Shevchenko’s fragmentary incoming original telegrams (dated July and August 1945) describing the archival holdings are all preserved in the former Party Archive in Kyiv, TsDAHO, 1/23/1484, together with his eight-page composite report, “Spravka iz soobshchenii instruktora otdela propagandy i agitatsii TsK KP(b)U tov. Shevchenko, I. D., komandirovannogo v Germaniiu dlia vozvrashcheniia materialov i dokumentov” [n.d.] TsDAHO, 1/23/1484, fols 2–9. Dr Ruslan Pyrih, former director of the Kyiv Party Archive and subsequently chief of the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine, kindly informed me about the Shevchenko file in TsDAHO.

²² Shevchenko telegram, TsDAHO, 1/23/1484, fol. 56.

²³ See Andrzej Karpowicz, “Zbiory masonskie Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej w Poznaniu,” *Ars Regia*, 1:1 (1992), pp. 149–56; English version, “The Masonic Collection of the University Library in Poznań,” pp. 174–80; reprinted in German: “Die Freimaurer Sammlung der Universitätsbibliothek Posen,” in *Jahrbuch Quatuor Coronati* 30 (1993), pp. 111–15. Note the microfiche edition of the catalogue: *Katalog der Masonica Sammlung der Universitätsbibliothek Poznan/Posen* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1989).

II. Evacuation Sites for German State and Private Collections

A. Staatsbibliothek from Berlin

There are several known Silesian evacuation sites for the former Prussian State Library (Staatsbibliothek) from Berlin, which had its own elaborate evacuation plans. Some books confiscated by Nazi agencies were deposited in the Staatsbibliothek before evacuation, which meant that historic German collections on occasion shared the fate with books that had been plundered by other Nazi agencies. In the case of the Staatsbibliothek, Silesia was only one of several destinations—another significant evacuation site was in Western Bohemia.²⁴

The most famous Berlin collections evacuated to Silesia came from the Manuscript and Musicalia Departments of the Staatsbibliothek. For example, many of the extant J. S. Bach scores, along with those of Beethoven, Telemann, and Mozart, went to the Castle of Fürstenstein, and then to the Abbey of Grüssau (now Polish Krzeszów), some fifty km further south.²⁵ Three samples—one manuscript score each of Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven were symbolically returned to East Germany in 1977. Today the rest remain in the Jagellonian Library in Cracow, still considered “compensation” for monumental Polish wartime cultural losses. Many have been reproduced in microform and professional catalogues name their prewar provenance.²⁶

²⁴ See the survey of the evacuation operations for the Prussian State Library in *Verlagert, Verschollen, Vernichtet: Das Schicksal der im 2. Weltkrieg ausgelagerten Bestände der Preussischen Staatsbibliothek* (Berlin: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin- Preussischer Kulturbesitz, 1995). Gudrun Voigt provides capsule reports (with pictures) of known evacuation sites for the Staatsbibliothek, *Die kriegsbedingte Auslagerung von Beständen der Preussischen Staatsbibliothek und ihre Rückführung: Eine historische Skizze auf der Grundlage von Archivmaterialien* (Hannover: Laurentius Verlag, 1995) [=Kleine historische Reihe, 8].

²⁵ See the intriguing account by Nigel Lewis, *Paperchase: Mozart, Beethoven, Bach—: The Search for Their Lost Music* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1981). See also “Bestände aus der früheren Preussischen Staatsbibliothek in Polen,” *Jahrbuch für Preussischer Kulturbesitz* 29 (1995), pp. 339–64; and the earlier account by P.J.P. Whitehead, “The Lost Berlin Manuscripts,” *Notes* 33:1 (September 1976), pp. 7–15.

²⁶ Aleksandra Patalas (ed.), *Catalogue of Early Music Prints from the Collections of the Former Preussische Staatsbibliothek in Berlin/ Katalog starodruków muzycznych ze zbiorów byłej Pruskiej Biblioteki Państwowej w Berlinie. Przechowywanych w Bibliotece Jagiellońskiej w Krakowie* (Cracow: Musica Iagellonica, 1999). See details about the Bach and Beethoven microfiche collections announced by K. G. Saur at <http://www.saur.de/titel/34420.htm>.

Peschke Lists of Evacuations from Berlin

Many major German public and private collections from Berlin were also evacuated to Silesian castles, as part of the extensive program directed by Walther Peschke, who headed the office for preservation and protection of historical monuments in Berlin-Brandenburg. U.S. Monuments Fine Arts and Archives (MFA&A) officers investigated Peschke after the war for his role in art transport. Thanks to a file among OMGUS records in the U.S. National Archives, we now have complete lists are available in the U.S. National Archives indicating the contents of 556 Berlin collections (most of them private) evacuated to approximately 70 sites, most of them in Silesia.²⁷ While most of the treasures were art, some important libraries were included in the program, among other notable public collections, such as the Berlin City Library (Berliner Stadtbibliothek). For example, number 430, was the only significant musicalia entry on the Peschke list indicates that from the Sing-Akademie in Berlin, "14 crates of manuscript music scores were transferred to Schloss Ullersdorf, 31 August 1943."²⁸ The castle of Ullersdorf (*Polish* Ołdrzychowice-Kłodzkie) near Glatz (*Polish* Kłodzko) was owned by the von Magnis family, but today is in ruins. Collections held there in 1945, including the Sing-Akademie Musikarchiv with its over 500 Bach family scores, fell into Ukrainian hands and spent the next half century hidden away in Kyiv, before returning to Berlin in 2001.²⁹

²⁷ U.S. National Archives—College Park, MD (NACP), RG 260, Records of the Office of Military Government for Germany, U.S. (OMGUS), Records of the Property Division, Records Concerning the Central Collecting Points, "Ardelia Hall Collection," Restitution Research and Reference Records, box 191. One of the files in that box has a penciled title, "Art transports—Peschke, Walter."

²⁸ "Verzeichnis der Kunst- und Kulturwerke, die aus öffentlichem und privatem Besitz Berlins nach auswärts verlagert wurden," Peschke file, NACP, RG 260 (see note 27).

²⁹ See Grimsted, "Bach Is Back in Berlin: The Return of the Sing-Akademie Archive from Ukraine in the Context of Displaced Cultural Treasures and Restitution Politics," in *Spoils of War: International Newsletter*, no. 8 (August 2003), pp. 67–104; updating my earlier coverage "Bach Scores in Kyiv: The Long-Lost Sing-Akademie Collection Surfaces in Ukraine," *Spoils of War: International Newsletter*, no. 7 (August 2000), pp. 23–35; both are available electronically at: <http://www.lostart.de/forum/publikationen.php3?lang=english>, and also published by HURI: <http://www.huri.harvard.edu/work2.html>. See also my Ukrainian report—"Odisseia 'Berlin-Ullersdorf-?-Kyiv': Do istorii pere-mishchennia arkhivu Akademii spivu v Berlini pid chas i pislia Druhoi svitovoï viiny," *Arkhivy Ukraïny*, 2001, no. 3, pp. 25–39: <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Publicat/Archives/2001/au2001-3.ua.html#Patricia>. Cf. Christoph Wolff, "Recovered in Kiev: Bach et al. A Preliminary Report on the Music Collection of the Berlin Sing-Akademie," *Notes* 58:2 (December 2001), pp. 259–71.

We do not know how many other holdings evacuated from Berlin to Ullersdorf also went to Kyiv. The Peschke lists, for example, indicate an earlier transport from Berlin to Ullersdorf (17 August 1943) included an unspecified number of crates from the Berlin School of Fine Arts (Hochschule für bildende Künste). Among other institutional collections shipped to Ullersdorf were part of the Arno-Holz Archive and some crates from the Institute and Museum of Oceanography (Institut und Museum für Meereskunde) of Friedrich-Wilhelms University (1828–1946, *now* Humboldt University) and the Berlin City Library. Parts of those two latter collections were sent to the neighboring castle of Eckersdorf (*Polish* Bożków, about 10 km. northwest of Glatz), also owned by the von Magnis family, among five shipments on Peschke's list to Eckersdorf. Other parts of those same collections went elsewhere, as usually the Germans did not send all of a single collection to the same place.³⁰ For example, details about shipments with inventories have recently been published for the Prussian Academy of Art (Preussischen Akademie der Künste), including the materials from the Hochschule für bildende Künste, with mention of shipments to Ullersdorf and other castles in Silesia, although with no specific reference to the Peschke inventories. Some parts of the collections were taken to the Soviet Union, but not all have been returned.³¹ Some of the paintings are known to be held in Kyiv.

The only other significant music collection on the Peschke evacuation lists was 23 crates from the Music School (Hochschule für Musik) in Berlin in the July 1943 transport (no. XVI) to Schloss Friedersdorf (*now Polish* Biedzychowice) near Lauban (*now Polish* Lubań), some 200 km further west, much closer to the present German border. After the war the contents of that castle were seized by Polish authorities, and the important musicalia treasures from the Hochschule, including the Philipp Spitta collection, later surfaced in

³⁰ Evacuation shipments to Ullersdorf were dispatched on 17 August (Transport XIII), 13 September (Transport XXIV), and 28 September (Transport XXXVII). Evacuations to Eckersdorf went from Berlin 5 July (Transport V), 27 August (Transport XVII), 14 September (Transport XXIII), 23 September (Transport XXV), and 14 October (Transport XXX), as indicated in the Peschke files referenced in notes 27 and 28. See also reference to books from the Berlin City Library in Grünberg (fn. 50).

³¹ See *Kriegsverluste der Preussischen Akademie der Künste*, comp. Ingrid Hägele, Gudrun Schmidt, and Gudrun Schneider (Berlin: Akademie der Künste, 2005; Archiv-Blätter 12); this Silesian shipments are mentioned on p. 20.

Łódź.³² A catalogue series was started there.³³ The library of the new university established in Łódź under the Communist regime was also duly enriched by books that had been evacuated from the Berlin City Library (Berliner Stadtbibliothek), the library of the Friedrich-Werdersches Gymnasium in Berlin, and the Lübeck City Library (Stadtbibliothek Lübeck). All of these names appear on the Peschke inventories.

Recently German government restitution offices have been working with the Peschke lists and plan incorporating them to the “lostart.de” database project.

III. Soviet Trophy Brigades

More data has recently come to light about the Soviet trophy brigades operating in Silesia at the end of the war, and we can identify at least five or six major transports to Moscow from Silesia in 1945–1948 with library contents, in addition to several special library echelons. Even before the library group led by Margarita Rudomino arrived in Berlin in early May 1945 (in time for victory celebrations) at least three Soviet trophy brigades were already operating in Silesia. Details are worth repeating here, because little has hitherto been written about these operations.³⁴

A. Filippov Brigade

Best documented is the trophy brigade from the Committee on Arts (predecessor of the Ministry of Culture) that arrived in Silesia in early March 1945, on the heels of the liberation of the area by the Red Army. Konstantin Akinsha and Grigorii Kozlov in their *Beautiful Loot* devote a chapter to Silesian plunder of the brigade led by Colonel Boris Filippov, director of the Moscow Art Theater and art historian Major Andrei Chegodaev from the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts. Filippov’s diary and other documentation from the brigade are preserved in the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGAL). Attached to the First Ukrainian Front, their mission was to search for cultural treasures

³² See Christoph Wolff, “From Berlin to Łódź: The Spitta Collection Resurfaces,” *Notes* 46:2 (1989), pp. 311–27. When Wolff prepared his report he was not aware of the Peschke shipping list for the transport XVI from Berlin that indicates the number of crates sent to Schloss Friedersdorf.

³³ Three volumes have been prepared in the Łódź musicalia catalogue series’ *Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Łodzi, Muzykalia* (Łódź, 1975–1987).

³⁴ Many of these data came to light while I was researching *The Odyssey of the Turgenev Library*; see more details in the chapter “Silesian Sojourns.”

that could be transported to the Soviet Union before the civilian administration in the area was handed over to the Poles. First assigned to the industrial city of Beuthen (*now Polish Bytom*), 14 km. north of Kattowitz, the brigade was attached to the Trophy Administration under Maksim Saburov, representing Stalin's top-secret Special Committee on Reparations, which was already busy appropriating local factories and industrial goods.³⁵ By March 3 Filippov's cultural looting operation moved to Gleiwitz (*now Polish Gliwice*), about 20 km. further west of Kattowitz, where they organized a collecting point for books in the Gleiwitz Public Library.³⁶

Among others, they plundered the castle in Hindenburg (*now Polish Zabrze*, between Beuthen and Gleiwitz) and the castle of Crown Prince Wilhelm in Oels (*now Polish Oleśnica*, 30 km. northeast of Breslau).³⁷ By the second half of April they were several hundred kilometers further northwest in the region of Grünberg (*now Polish Zielona Góra*). Raids included Schloss Sommerfeld (*now Polish Lubsko*, 45 km. southwest of Grünberg) and Schloss Saabor in Fürsteneich (*now Polish Zabór*, 15 km. east of Grünberg). In the latter case, with limited rolling stock available, they took only 33 crates of books (3,106 books), along with furniture and other art treasures. They left 40,000 books from the castle library and 420 crates from the Prussian State Library with the Military Commandant in Grünberg. Many of those books were sent to the USSR, and reportedly some of the books from Berlin were returned to Germany in 1965.³⁸ One of

³⁵ Konstantin Akinsha and Grigorii Kozlov with Sylvia Hochfield, *Beautiful Loot: The Soviet Plunder of Europe's Art Treasures* (New York: Random House, 1995), pp. 105–11—“Radios and Violins,” with several quotes from the Filippov diary in RGALI, fond 3002/1/3 and 4, and other files in RGALI, fond 962 (Vsesoiuznyi komitet po delam iskusstv)/*opis'* 6/1207. I am particularly grateful to Kozlov for advice and sharing more documentation with me; he is now preparing the Filippov diary for publication. Maksim Saburov had earlier headed the State Planning Board, Gosplan, but then he was in charge of the Special Committee under the First Ukrainian Front (Upolnomochennyi Osobogo Komiteta po Germanii pri Pervom Ukrainskom fronte).

³⁶ Akinsha and Kozlov, *Beautiful Loot*, pp. 106–109.

³⁷ Their art loot from Oels is referenced in a transfer “Akt,” (31 March 1945), RGALI, 962/6/1207, fol. 2 (see also fol. 3). Schloss Oels served as a Soviet military base before it was given over to the Poles in 1945.

³⁸ A signed a receipt remains for loot from the castle of Sommerfeld (24 April 1945), RGALI, 962/6/1207, fol. 16; and one from the castle of Fürsteneich (25 April 1945), fol. 14. Confirmation of Fürsteneich as a depository for the Prussian State Library and the 1965 return is found in Voigt, *Die kriegsbedingte Auslagerung von Beständen der Preussischen Staatsbibliothek*, p. 122. Soviet plundering of Schloss Saabor in 1945 is confirmed by Sieber, “Saabor,” *Schlösser in Schlesien*, pp. 180–81.

their last stops at the end of April was the impressive Schloss Moschen (*now Polish Moszna*), 30 km. south southwest of Oppeln (*now Polish Opole*), owned by a German industrialist family. A receipt of “treasures from the castle of Count Tiele-Winckler in Moshen” dated 29 April 1945 is preserved in RGALI. Among the loot were 840 books on art history.³⁹ On the whole, art historian Chegodaev was not impressed with the quality of art found in Silesia, but he recalled that in “deserted villas and castles he found [...] ‘books thrown on the floor; nobody needed them. I exported to the [Pushkin] Museum 40,000 art books, and after forty-five years these books still make up a third of the museum’s library.’”⁴⁰

Incomplete documentation remains for several shipments of cultural property from Beuthen and Gleiwitz between late March and early May 1945. Although the bulk of Filippov brigade transports comprised furniture, musical instruments, and *objets d’art*, many crates of books appear on the shipping lists destined for Moscow.⁴¹ These included belles-lettres, history, and music, as well as art books.⁴² Although Filippov himself visited Ratibor, he did not report finding any of the books looted by the ERR from Ratibor, and apparently did not know about the ERR operations.⁴³ By that time, undoubtedly the Germans had already been moved the books from Ratibor to Mysłowitz.

B. Boris Shiperovich

As mentioned above, that ERR cache in Mysłowitz was found in the spring of 1945 by another high-level Red Army trophy library brigade

³⁹ RGALI, 962/6/1207, fol. 15. The castle is now a psychiatric hospital but is also used for concerts.

⁴⁰ As quoted from an interview with Andrei Chegodaev by Akinsha and Kozlov, *Beautiful Loot*, p. 111, p. 106.

⁴¹ See RGALI, 962/6/1207. 110 crates were shipped from Beuthen (echelon I); echelons II, III, and IV accompanied by Sushchenko (military transport no. 177/3349) went from Gleiwitz. Grigorii Kozlov found elsewhere and kindly shared with me a list of shipments received by the Moscow Museum of Contemporary Western Art in 1945 mentioning “20 pieces from Beuthen,” military transport 117/3339 from Gleiwitz (52 pieces), and transports 117/3339 and 177/3349.

⁴² Inventories of trophy books found in the library of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts (GMII) are preserved in RGALI, 962/6/1242, but the provenance of the books, date of accession, or castle from which they were seized is not indicated. Some of the trophy books from GMII were later transferred to the Lenin Library (24 August 1946), RGB Archive, *op.* 25, *d.* 65, fols. 3–42.

⁴³ Filippov mentioned Ratibor only in passing—RGALI, 3002/1/4, fol. 46; he had also checked off a schematic city plan of Ratibor on pages taken from a printed German regional map—RGALI, 3002/1/3, fol. 101.

reporting directly to Marshal Konstantin Rokossovskii in Silesia. Bibliophile and antiquarian book specialist Boris Ia. Shiperovich claims to have discovered the two huge Kattowitz-area warehouses with “hundreds and thousands of crates” of books with German alphanumeric labels in an elaborate labyrinth; he had “never seen so many books.” Indicative of the importance the army assigned to cultural matters, after reporting his discovery to Marshal Rokossovskii, Shiperovich notes he visited Kattowitz several times with Lieutenant-General Andrei Okorokov, then chief of the Red Army Political Administration (GlavPU RKKa) in Silesia. It is clear from his Soviet-era published memoir that he was “saving” books from other sites as well.⁴⁴ Although not mentioned in his that published memoir, Shiperovich figures prominently in the discovery and fate of the Turgenev Library, 60,000 volumes of which were moved from Myslowitz in December 1945 to the Officers’ Club in the Red Army Headquarters in Legnica (*German Liegnitz*), where Shiperovich by then headed the library.⁴⁵

While files of the Soviet Main Trophy Administration and GlavPU RKKa remain tightly closed to researchers, Shiperovich reveals more details in personal letters to his friend and literary critic Anatolii Tarasenkov. He regrets that he did not discover the books earlier because, “many materials had already been looted, including poetry and manuscripts.” Avoiding names of the Western European trophy books in this published report, he wrote Tarasenkov that he was able to rescue and load “two cars with foreign books, including books from the library of the Rothschilds.” He and his colleagues helping him examine crates found “the library of the Duke of Orleans [duc de Guise], and other important people who knew how to love books.” Further he witnessed the echelon of “54 wagons...steaming away to Minsk.”⁴⁶ An ERR report on seizure of the library of the duc de Guise (heir to the French throne living before the war outside of Brussels) is filed with ERR records in Kyiv.⁴⁷ I have recently seen books from all of

⁴⁴ Boris Shiperovich, “Spasenie knig,” *Al’manakh bibliofila*, 1973, pp. 57–59. Shiperovich later headed the propaganda section of the publishing house “Sovetskii Pisatel’.”

⁴⁵ See details in Grimsted, *The Odyssey of the Turgenev Library*. Moscow colleagues who knew Shiperovich note he was also working with Soviet antiquarian seller.

⁴⁶ Shiperovich’s letters to Tarasenkov during the period February 1945 through 1947 confirm his active involvement with displaced books—RGALI, fond 2587 (Anatolii Kuz’mich Tarasenkov papers)/1/760. The quotes here are from an undated letter [1945], fols. 79–82.

⁴⁷ An ERR file from the Belgian Working Group (HAG Belgien) contains a forty-page confiscation report from the home of the duc de Guise, Manoir d’Anjou, TsDAVO, fond 3674/1/1, fols. 140–88.

the libraries Shiperovich named in the National Library of Belarus (NBB) in Minsk. Indicative of the private dispersal of trophy books found by the Red Army, in several letters to Tarasenkov, Shiperovich mentioned sending him a few interesting books by various couriers.

When in December 1945 60,000 volumes in Russian from the Turgenev Library in Paris were transferred to the Officers' Club in Legnica, the Red Army headquarters in Silesia, Shiperovich was assigned to head the library there. Undoubtedly he was the trusted book specialist under General Okorokov dealing with that library, the capture of which was most prized by Soviet authorities. There is no indication that Shiperovich was working directly with the Rudomino Brigade, although after Rudomino was informed about the Turgenev Library in January 1946, she did follow developments and report on it to Moscow. In fact it is from her report that we learn that Boris Shiperovich made a special trip to Moscow March 1946 to deliver some of the some of the choicest books and manuscripts from the Turgenev Library to the Lenin Library (GBL).⁴⁸ Shiperovich headed the library in Legnica until March 1948, and during that period several small shipments of books went to the Lenin Library in Moscow. This was another indication that not all the books found in Myslowitz were sent to Minsk.

C. Red Army Brigade with G.S. Krasovskii and B. G. Kucherenko

Insufficient military files are available to determine the structure of army library operations, but documents have come to light indicating other brigades at work. Seizure and transfer documents are preserved from two other military library scouts working in Silesia in late April and early May 1945. The background identity of Major G. S. Krasovskii and Lieutenant B. G. Kucherenko (also identified as representing the CP Central Committee) has not been found, but those were at least two of the individuals seizing libraries in Silesia before the arrival of Rudomino in Berlin in May. The fact these documents have surfaced among the files of the Manevskii/Rudomino brigade suggests these scouts were later reporting their Silesia activities to Rudomino, and in fact these same two men were working with her in Germany thereafter. Krasovskii and Kucherenko apparently took some of the

⁴⁸ [Margarita Rudomino], "Turgenevskaiia biblioteka v Lignits (Pol'sha)," in "Spisok bibliotek, obsledovannykh," fol. 137/182 (published in facsimile and English translation in Grimsted, *Odyssey of the Turgenev Library*, appendix 3. Cf. Shiperovich, "Spasenie knig," *Al'manakh bibliofila*, 1973, p. 62.

books the Filippov brigade left behind and visited other castles and libraries that the Filippov group had missed. For example, on 4–5 May 1945, Major G. S. Krasovskii visited the “castle of the Crown Prince” in Oels to arrange removal of the castle library “to be sent by the Chief Political Command of the Red Army.”⁴⁹

Meanwhile, on 5 May, the Military Commandant in Grünberg issued a permit for Lieutenant B. G. Kucherenko to deal with books from the State Library in Berlin, the Berlin City Library, and “the castle of William II,” to arrange for 500 crates of literature selected to be dispatched to the Trophy Administration; presumably those were ones Filippov had left in his charge.⁵⁰ The same date Kucherenko delivered five crates of trophy literature to the Military Commandant in Neusaltz (*now Polish Nowa Sól*, 30 km. southeast of Grünberg) to be sent to the Commissariat of Defense (NKO) Moscow warehouse no. 312. Three days later he and his group were issued a permit by the Military Commandant in Sagan (*now Polish Żagań*; 40 km. south of Grünberg) to send up to 25,000 books (300 crates) to the USSR, including part of the library of the castle of the Duke of Sagan, along with those selected from the City Library and books that had been evacuated from the Berlin Sanitary Administration.⁵¹

Elsewhere, Major Krasovskii had found books from Breslau University Library in a village in the Neumarkt District (*now Polish Środa Śląska*; 30 km. east of Legnica), and on the day before (3 May 1945), further east, he selected 12,500 books from the castle of Oppersdorf-Radziwill in the town of Oberglogau (*now Polish Głogówek*; 60 km. west of Gleiwitz). Also in early May they delivered up to 10,000 trophy books from libraries of museums and the gymnasium in Brieg (*now Polish Brzeg*; 42 km. southeast of Breslau) to the Commandant of that city. Most of the “acts” of transfer or receipt issued to this group give “NKO warehouse no. 312” in Moscow as the designated address for book shipments. Also of special note for later reference, on 28 April 1945, Krasovskii transferred 406 crates of

⁴⁹ See the transfer “akt” (receipt) issued by the Military Commandant in Oels (4 and 5 May 1945), GA RF, A-534/2/8, fols. 42 and 43. Documentation of the Filippov brigade makes no mention of the seizure of books from Oels (see fn. 36).

⁵⁰ See the “akt” issued by the Military Commandant in Grünberg (5 May 1945), GA RF, A-534/2/8, fol. 48. Cf. the reference to books and furniture left under the control of the Commandant in Grünberg by the Filippov brigade (fn. 37).

⁵¹ See the permits issued by the Military Commandant in Neusaltz (4 May 1945), GA RF, A-534/2/8, fol. 49, and in Sagan (7 May 1945), fol. 47. In the case of Neusaltz, the provenance of the books is not identified.

literature (of undesignated provenance) to the Military Commandant in Legnica “for safekeeping” prior to their transport to the USSR.⁵² Later in May those same individuals were working on the Germany side of what was soon to become the new frontier, selecting books for the Manevskii/Rudomino brigade in Berlin and Dresden.

Since only part of the July Red Army report cited above is available, we do not know which Soviet trophy brigade visited Grodziec (*German* Gröditzburg) near Goldberg (*Polish* Złotyja), 70 km west of Legnica, the estate of Ambassador Herbert von Dirksen, one of Hitler’s former envoys to the Soviet Union, which had been a retreat for German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop during the war. Grodziec is confirmed as an active wartime evacuation site under the direction of Breslau museum curator Professor Günther Grundmann: The baroque palace was a deposit for books and other cultural materials from Breslau (Wrocław). The castle sheltered 250 crates of books from the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, deposited there already in September and October 1942.⁵³ The estate was also the evacuation center for the East European Institute (Institut Osteuropa) from Breslau, one of the more serious Nazi institutes involved in anti-Bolshevik research, which the ERR helped stock during the war with some books plundered from the Soviet Union. That may explain why, when a Soviet trophy brigade had plundered the estate in the spring of 1945, they found 32,500 books from Soviet repositories, including some from the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences and the Novgorod Historical Museum.⁵⁴ Details are not available of the extent to which the Soviets seized as trophies in Grodziec some of the books and other cultural treasures from Breslau or Berlin. But the Soviet plunder there in the spring of 1945 would explain the presence in Moscow of additional books and recently identified artwork from Breslau.⁵⁵

⁵² Extant permits were issued by the Military Commandant in Neumarkt (29 April May 1945), GA RF, A-534/2/8, fol. 45; Oberglogau (7 May 1945), fol. 47; and Brieg (May 1945), fol. 46 (in the latter case, the binding of the file has obscured the day of the month). The Legnica “akt” executed with Krasovskii (28 April 1945), fol. 50, was also signed by T. A. Baganov on behalf of the Legnica Military Commandant.

⁵³ Voigt, *Die kriegsbedingte Auslagerung von Beständen der Preußischen Staatsbibliothek*, p. 128. A local website also mentions Soviet plunder in 1945: “Tajemnica ambasadora Dirksena (Tajemnica zamku w Grodziecu)”:

[http://www.turystyka.riders.pl/pl/miejsc/tajemnicze/index.php3?Action=1&nr=10.](http://www.turystyka.riders.pl/pl/miejsc/tajemnicze/index.php3?Action=1&nr=10)

⁵⁴ Pakhomov, “O bibliotekakh, obnaruzhennykh voiskami Krasnoi Armii,” p. 275.

⁵⁵ For example, in the spring of 2003, Polish specialists identified four paintings from the Breslau Museum that were posted on the Russian Ministry of Culture website display of trophy paintings held by the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts (GMII) in Moscow.

D. Rudomino Brigade and Transports from Silesia

While based in Berlin, clearly Rudomino was at least tangentially involved with trophy library operations in Silesia, including the dispatch of at least two major library echelons. Presumably, many of the books collected in Silesia by the Krasovskii and Kucherenko brigades were sent to Moscow in the only 1945 shipment Rudomino recorded from Silesia, dispatched in September from Schwiebus (*now Polish Świebodzin*, ca. 70 km. east of Frankfurt am Oder) to the NKO (People's Commissariat of Defense) with approximately 300,000 volumes "collected during the fighting by the 2nd Trophy Command of the 33rd Army"—both retrieved Soviet books "taken by the Germans from the Soviet Union and also trophy literature collected in Polish territory."⁵⁶ Notably Schwiebus is only 45 km. north of Grünberg (*now Polish Zielona Góra*), where Filippov had left books and where Krasovskii and Kucherenko were working. The shipment addressed to the Committee on Culture was arranged by Major Dmitrii Nikolaevich Chaishanskii, head of the Acquisitions Department and later the Museum of the Book (Rare Book Department) of the Lenin Library (GBL), serving as a member of the Rudomino Library Brigade, as shown in surviving travel orders (*komandirovka*) from the Chief of the Trophy Division of the 33rd Army.⁵⁷ A surviving October 1945 document designating freight cars for the transport of trophy literature from different sites assigned 30 wagons for "Breslau, Sagan, and Schwiebus."⁵⁸ Since no related shipping documents have yet been found, we do not know if that might have been an additional transport or a later reference to the September echelon from Schwiebus reported by Rudomino.

Rudomino visited Silesia herself, as recalled by her son, and among other loot, she reported removal 100,000 volumes from the castle of Fürstenstein (*Polish Książ*), ancestral home of the Counts von Hochberg, Princes of Pless, near Świebodzice (*Ger. Freiburg*).⁵⁹ As noted earlier,

⁵⁶ Rudomino [signed], "Kratkie itogi raboty" (Berlin, September 1946), GA RF, A-534/2/1, fol. 57 (cc fol. 54); German translation in *Die Trophäenkommissionen der Roten Armee*, doc. no. 26, p. 164. That transport is also mentioned in variant extant reports in the same file, fol. 21 (cc fol. 60) and fol. 91.

⁵⁷ Order from Colonel Abzalov, Chief of the Trophy Division of the 33rd Army to the Chief of the 2nd Trophy Command (30 August 1945), GA RF, A-543/2/8, fol. 2. The reference to "Grabov" together with Schwiebus has not been deciphered.

⁵⁸ L. Chekin to A. D. Manevskii (n.d. [October 1945]), GA RF, A-534/2/7, fol. 200.

⁵⁹ The castle of Fürstenstein (sometimes known as Schloss Freiburg, or in *Polish*, Książ or Zamek Hochbergów), one of the largest in Silesia, 5 km. SW of Freiburg (*Polish Świebodzice*). See the brief description with mention of Soviet plundering by Sieber, "Fürstenstein," *Schlösser in Schlesien*, pp. 51–54. See earlier mention above.

that impressive Silesian castle had been initially used for evacuated archives and manuscript treasures by both the RSHA Amt VII and the Staatsbibliothek from Berlin. Those collections subsequently been moved to other evacuation sites, but Rudomino clearly described seizure of the historic castle library. The Library for Foreign Literature (VGBIL) currently reports holdings of 800 volumes from the Fürstenstein collection in its Rare Book Division.⁶⁰ The Lenin Library (GBL, *now* RGB) returned 105 manuscripts from Fürstenstein to Poland in October 1957.⁶¹ In the same report, Rudomino also described books from the German foreign literature exchange collection she and Dmitrii Chaushanskii had found in Lasów (Lissa; then in Poland, 10 km. across the frontier near Görlitz [Zgorzelec]).⁶² In her request for travel orders she explained that on the Lissa estate, “there were 200,000 volumes purchased by the Germans in France for one million marks in 1943,” which would be “of considerable interest to Soviet libraries.”⁶³

The following spring Rudomino reported from Berlin that “in March 1946 the Political Command of the Northern Group under General Okorokov provided assistance in the dispatch of trophy literature in Legnica, Wałbrzych (*German* Waldenburg [i.e. the castle of Fürstenstein]), Lasów (Lissa), and other cities of Poland, and organized an echelon to send the selected literature to Moscow to the address of Gosfond Literatry.” The “total of books sent [was] 200,000 volumes.”⁶⁴ A telegram from Moscow confirms the dispatch of the echelon of ten freight train wagons from Legnica (military transport

⁶⁰ The VGBIL website—<http://www.libfl.ru/restitution/collection.html>), mentions at least 800 books from the Fürstenstein collection. The book stamps and ex libris are reproduced in *Inostrannnye knizhnye znaki v sobranii redkikh knig Vserossiiskoi gosudarstvennoi biblioteki inostrannoi literatury imeni M. I. Rudomino* / *The Foreign Book Signs in the Rare Book Collection of the Library for Foreign Literature (Founder M. Rudomino)*, comp. E. V. Zhuravleva, N. N. Zubkov, and E. A. Korkmazova (Moscow: Rudomino, 1999), nos. 40, 205, and 289.

⁶¹ See the Act of transfer (4 October 1957), RGB-Archive, *op.* 268, *d.* 263.

⁶² Those three sites (including Fürstenstein, listed as the castle of Freiburg—no. 25) are all described in “Spisok bibliotek, obsledovannykh,” GA RF, A-534/2/10: “Biblioteka v zamke Freiburg (Pol’sha),” fol. 181, and A-534/2/1, fol. 136; published in German translation in *Die Trophäenkommissionen der Roten Armee*, doc. no. 20, pp. 138–39.

⁶³ Rudomino’s “Raport” (9 March 1946), GA RF, A-534/2/8, fol. 201.

⁶⁴ “Itogi raboty bibliotechnoi gruppy Komiteta kul’tury pri Osobom komitete Soveta Ministrov SSSR po Germanii, mai 1945 g.–avgust 1946 g.,” filed as part of a larger report, “Otchet o rabote gruppy Komiteta kul’tprosvetuchrezhdenii pri Sovete Ministrov RSFSR za vremia s 6 maia 1945 goda po 1 sentiabria 1946 goda,” GA RF, A-534/2/1, fol. 57 (signed by Rudomino) with an unsigned cc (fol. 54). The “Kratkie itogi raboty” (fols. 55–57) constitutes the final section.

no. 173/9078) arranged by General Okorokov. In a letter from Berlin in May 1946, Rudomino stated that ten wagons, in addition to "literature from the castle of Fürstenstein" also included books from "the castle of William II and others." The latter reference is presumably to some of the books Kucherenko found a year earlier in Oels. Rudomino then explained that "the literature from the German State Exchange Collection in French and English on the estate of Lissa would require an additional 6–8 wagons."⁶⁵

E. Private Initiatives

Not all of the trophy books now in Russia came with major trophy echelons. Rival trophy hunters also picked up and found transport for booty from Silesia, and we will never know how many books various soldiers took or sent to their Soviet homes. On occasion, personal initiative yielded more significant collections, about which only recently learning more.

As one notable example, Lieutenant Colonel Viacheslav Moskvín arranged to bring home to Leningrad close to 1,000 volumes from the historic library of the Yorck von Wartenburg family in their Silesian castle of Klein Oels (*now Polish Oleśnica Mała*). Akinsha and Kozlov highlighted Moskvín's trophies in *Beautiful Loot*, but we are not sure if he found the books in the castle itself, or if they had already been removed. Thanks to transport through the Twenty-First Army 17 crates with 963 volumes arrived at the end of July 1945. Here we are interested in those rare books, as an example of private loot from Silesia, but an even more significant part of Moskvín's booty were 196 crates of paintings from the Polish National Museum (Muzeum Narodowe) in Warsaw, which he had found in late May 1945 in the attic of a house in the Silesian castle town of Kynau (*now Polish Zagórze Śląskie*) near Waldenburg (*now Polish, Wałbrzych*), belonging to General Hans Robert von Seydlitz. The looted "212 canvases by European masters and 290 by Polish painters" were processed in July 1945 by the Central Depository for Museum Valuables (TsKhMF), the cultural property collecting point based in the palace of Tsarskoe Selo

⁶⁵ See the unsigned letter [or draft copy?] (Berlin, 22 May 1946) from Rudomino addressed to Tat'iana Mikhailovna and Ivan Sergeevich, confirming a recent conversation with General Okorokov from the Political Command of the Northern Group (Legnica), and his having shipped the ten wagons by the 16 May, GA RF, A-534/2/8, fol. 127. It is clear from that letter that Rudomino was making the arrangements by telephone from Berlin. No confirmation has been found that the Lissa books were sent later.

in suburban Leningrad.⁶⁶ Quite coincidentally, a year and a half later (December 1946), a library specialist in TsKhMF recorded 962 trophy books—in German (469 vols.), French (152), Spanish (167), Latin (172), and English (39)—the only incoming “trophy” books indicated on that year’s TsKhMF report.⁶⁷ Many of the paintings were returned to Poland following an exhibition in the Hermitage in 1956, but the books presumably still remain in Russia.

Peter Yorck von Wartenburg (1904–1944), it should be remembered, was a hero in the struggle against Nazism, having been put to death by the Nazis soon after leading a notable attempt to assassinate Hitler in July 1944.⁶⁸ That fact should justify restitution of the family library as cultural property plundered from enemies of the Nazi regime, despite the Russian law against restitution to Germany. But so far that has not happened or even been proposed, and only a fraction of the books can be accounted for today. Close to 300 books from the family library have been identified in the Maiakovskii Central City Public Library in St. Petersburg, with professional cataloguing data on the Moscow VGBIL website.⁶⁹ The 1999 VGBIL volume reproducing library markings in trophy books in their collections provides two variant images of Yorck von Wartenburg book stamps from two rare early printed books from Klein Oels—one printed in Strasbourg (1597) and a second in Madrid (1685. VGBIL acquired both in June 1959 and (as noted in the catalogue), they also bear stamps of a Soviet antiquarian bookseller in Moscow, suggesting an example of the sad dispersal of the significant “trophy” collections brought to the USSR after the Second World War.⁷⁰ Meanwhile, Petersburg specialist Natalia

⁶⁶ Akinsha and Kozlov, *Beautiful Loot*, pp. 169–70. Grigorii Kozlov kindly informed me about more details of the transport of this library that he has been able to document, and provided a copy of the newspaper article about Moskvín’s transport by V. Piotrovskaiia, “Eto bylo v 1945 godu,” *Vechernii Leningrad*, 4 August 1956.

⁶⁷ Milosiadova, “Otchet o rabote po inventarizatsii trofeinoi biblioteki,” TsGALI SPb, fond 387 (TsKhMF)/1/21, fols. 56–61. The report does not mention the provenance or book markings, but quite probably this would have been the Yorck library collection. Other books being processed in TsKhMF at the same time were among the hundreds of crates of books from the imperial palaces which the British found in Austrian Carinthia and turned over to Soviet authorities in May 1946.

⁶⁸ See, for example: <http://www.dhm.de/lemo/html/biografien/WartenburgPeter>.

⁶⁹ The catalogue of the Yorck von Wartenburg library from Klein-Oels prepared by the Maiakovskii Municipal Public Library in St. Petersburg is available on the VGBIL website—<http://www.libfl.ru/restitution/york/york.html>; the listing permits browsing and search for individual items, albeit lacking introductory orientation.

⁷⁰ *Inostrannye knizhnye znaki i sobranii redkikh knig Vserossiiskoi gosudarstvennoi biblioteki inostrannoi literatury im. M. I. Rudomino* (Moscow: “Rudomino,” 1999), nos. 197 (p. 235) and 217 (p. 255).

Ivanova has prepared and published privately her own variant catalogue of approximately over 200 books from the Yorck collection now identified in St. Petersburg, together with related data about the family library for the museum devoted to Germans in St. Petersburg.⁷¹

IV. Polish Recovery of Cultural Treasures and Other Displaced Books

Polish scouts and various brigades were also active in Silesia after the war, in some cases involving turf wars for cultural spoils. To be sure the Poles were trying to recover plundered and displaced Polish cultural treasures, but also, they were often finding German cultural property as shown above with the Łódź example, and other materials the Germans had plundered from other parts of Europe. Much more research and open publication is needed about the cultural treasures found and acquired by the Poles in Silesia, or those that Poles specialists have documented that were acquired by others. Here we can only cite briefly a few examples involving different types of acquisitions, as well as Jewish losses from areas in Silesia that definitively became part of Poland after the end of the war.

A. Polish and Ukrainian Materials from Lwów (Lviv)

The Soviet 1939 annexation of Western Ukraine and the new postwar Polish Western border embracing Silesia, as noted at the outset, involved traumatic resettlement of populations and regional cultural reorientation. With the annexation of western Ukrainian lands as part of the Ukrainian SSR came the Soviet policy of “depolonization” with rabid “cultural cleansing” in the area and particularly strong in the city of Lviv itself, earlier the Galician capital of Lemberg (*Polish* Lwów/Lviv). Among the Polish institutions suppressed was the Ossoliński National Institute (Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich), founded in the early nineteenth century as a Polish cultural center, which became the most important library in pre-1939 Western Ukraine. The abolition of the Ossolineum and the incorporation of its library riches into what became the Stefanyk Library of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR as of January 1940 was one of the culturally most symbolic actions on the eve of the war.

⁷¹ Natalia Ivanova, *Die ersten 100 Bücher aus der Museumssammlung “Die Deutschen in St. Petersburg und Umgebung”* (St. Petersburg, 1998). More recently, Ivanova has been supplementing her catalogue coverage of the Yorck Collection, although her efforts have not been coordinated with those of the Maiakovskii Library.

With the turn of the war against the Germans, when the war front grew closer to Lviv in early 1944, the Germans started evacuation of cultural treasures to the Cracow region. The full agreement of Polish directors and their major role in assignment of priorities may explain the inclusion of Polish cultural treasures from the Ossolineum (manuscripts, charters, incunabula, and rare books, along with prints and drawings from the Lubomirski Museum). The second shipment (2 April) left for Cracow a week before a Soviet bomb hit the Ossolineum. As the Germans were retreating further in January 1945, a major library transport with those treasures from the Ossolineum crossed Silesia. Found in the fall of 1945 in a shed on the estate of the Counts von Pfeil in Adelin (*earlier Zagrodno; German Adelsdorf*), close to Złotyja, *German Goldberg*), those materials were moved to Wrocław, when the Ossolineum reestablished there in 1946. More treasures from the Lviv Ossolineum holdings were later transferred to Poland under Soviet orders. The Soviets had also abolished the Ukrainian-oriented Shevchenko Scientific Society (NTSh) in Lviv, and some of most sensitive manuscript and archival treasures were also part of the German 1944 shipment to Cracow and then Adelin. They surfaced at the end of the 1980s and are still held today in the Biblioteka Narodowa in Warsaw. Controversy has raged ever since about the Ossolineum transfers and the unprofessional division of its treasures between Ukraine and Poland. And to be sure, since independence the Ukrainian NTSh manuscripts in Warsaw have likewise been a focus of restitution negotiations between Poland and Ukraine.⁷²

B. Biblioteka Polska and Other Slavic Libraries from Paris

Another library transport moved in the opposite direction along the roads that crossed Silesia during the war. The same Polish library delegation that found the Ossolineum and the NTSh also recovered approximately 110 crates of books from the Polish Library (Biblioteka Polska) in Paris in the same shed on the Adelin estate with treasures from the Ossolineum were found.⁷³ Documentation has not been

⁷² See details and full citations to appropriate sources in Grimsted, *Trophies of War and Empire: The Archival Heritage of Ukraine, World War II, and the International Politics of Restitution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press for the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2001), chapter 11—"Independent Ukraine and Poland: A New Climate for Restitution?"

⁷³ A 25 October 1945 report by Dr Bohdan Horodyski of the Biblioteka Narodowa (Warsaw) lists the materials found on the Adelin estate, including part of the Biblioteka Polska from Paris. The head of the Manuscript Division kindly showed me a copy of the report and inventory in 1989.

found as to how and when the books from the Polish Library in Paris reached Adelin in Silesia, but most of the library had first been moved to Berlin and then evacuated to Bauxten (Saxony). A large part of the Polish Library ended the war in an abandoned brick factory in nearby Neugersdorf (Saxony) near the Polish border, where it was found by Rudomino's library brigade. Sent to Moscow from Dresden in the spring of 1946, it was deposited secretly in the State Public Historical Library (GPIB). Recently opened documentation in Moscow shows that most of those books from Paris were transferred to Poland in 1955 as "compensation for wartime cultural losses and devastation." Those books remain today in the Mickiewicz Museum in Warsaw.⁷⁴

By contrast, the books from the Polish Library recovered by the Poles in Adelin in October 1945 were taken to the Biblioteka Narodowa in Warsaw, although some serials went to the Parliamentary (Sejm) Library. Before imposition of Communist stringencies in Poland, and unlike the Soviet treatment, the Poles understood the importance of the viability of that émigré library in Paris and—approximately 45,000 volumes were returned from Warsaw to Paris in July 1947. Thus the Polish Library is the only one of the three Slavic libraries from Paris that ended the war in Silesia to which a significant quantity of books (approximately one-third) has come home from the war.⁷⁵ Many books and archival materials from the Petliura Ukrainian Library that the ERR had in Ratibor were taken to Minsk from Mysłowitz, and others to Moscow. Approximately 250 are now held by the Parliamentary Library of Ukraine in Kyiv, most of them presented to Ukraine by the library in Minsk in the late 1980s.⁷⁶ Ironically, Adelin, where the Poles found the Polish Library is only 25 km southwest of Legnica, where 60,000 books the Turgenev Library from Paris were transferred a

⁷⁴ See Grimsted, "Twice Plundered, but Still not Home from the War: The Fate of Three Slavic Libraries Confiscated by the Nazis from Paris," *Solanus* 16 (2002), pp. 39–76; and the updated Polish version with newly available documents in Moscow and Warsaw, "Dwukrotnie zrabowane i nadal z dala od ojczyzny. Losy trzech bibliotek słowiańskich przejętych przez nazistów w Paryżu," *Archeion* 106 (2003 [2005]), pp. 47–84. I am grateful to GPIB director Mikhail Afanas'ev for providing me access to the previously secret folder with documentation about the Biblioteka Polska while it was held by GPIB.

⁷⁵ See Grimsted, "Twice Plundered, but Still not Home from the War," *op cit.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*; see also Grimsted, "The Odyssey of the Petliura Library and the Records of the Ukrainian National Republic (UNR) during World War II," [part 1] *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 22 (1999) = *Cultures and Nations of Central and Eastern Europe: Essays in Honor of Roman Szporluk*, ed. Zvi Gitelman et al.

month or two later. Some of the Russian émigré literature that went to Legnica was intentionally burned there in the early 1950s, but other books from the Turgenev Library were transferred to Minsk and Moscow. Later some of the volumes left behind were recovered by the Poles and sent to Moscow much later. Only 219 books out of over 100,000 plundered from the Turgenev Library have returned to Paris.⁷⁷

C. Polish Socialist Receipts from the ERR Ratibor Center

Shiperovich had reported that Marshall Rokossovskii “left some books for the Poles,” and apparently, although full documentation is lacking, Poland did receive some books and archival from Ratibor probably via Mysłowicz. Between August 1954 and January 1955 a secret historical commission under the Institute of Party History of the United Polish Workers’ Party examined a total of 48 tons, with a reported 445 crates of printed and archival materials and 263 bales with issues of various periodicals that had been transferred from Cracow to Warsaw. Presumably they had been collected by the ERR. Most of them were of Dutch and Belgian origin, and hence were known as the so-called “Dutch Collection,” they were distributed to various socialist research institutes, including some 162 dossiers presented to the Institute of Marxism-Leninism in Moscow earlier in July 1949 and more in 1959. That would explain the presence in RGASPI in Moscow today files of the Belgian Labour Party, Belgian peace movements, and part of the papers of Belgian socialist leader Emile Vandervelde (1888–1936). The presence of books from the Vandervelde library in Minsk, heightens the likelihood that those archival materials were also in Ratibor. Belgian specialists also identified Vandervelde papers in the former Special Archive (TsGOA) in 1992, but it was not known if those came to Moscow via Minsk or from Wölfelsdorf. As an exemplary gesture of Polish archival restitution during the Communist period, the Polish Communist Party returned 192 crates of socialist materials to the Netherlands (noting a few of Belgian provenance) in 1956.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ See Grimsted, “Twice Plundered, but Still not Home from the War,” *op cit.*, and Grimsted, *The Odyssey of the Turgenev Library*, epilogue.

⁷⁸ These Polish developments are documented by Jacques Lust, Evert Maréchal, Wouter Steenhaut, and Michel Vermote, *Een zoektocht naar archieven: Van NISG naar AMSAB* (Ghent: Amsab, 1997), pp. 96–101. See also the account by Józef Stępień, “Losy akt Międzynarodowego Instytutu Historii Socjalnej w Amsterdamie w świetle informacji komisji powołanej do zbadania ‘archiwum holenderskiego’ z lutego 1955 r.,” *Teki archiwalne*, seria nowa 3(25) (1998), pp. 317–24. I thank the Belgian authors for alerting me to these developments and publications.

D. Jewish Losses—the Breslau Rabbinical Seminary

We cannot speak of Silesia during the Nazi regime without mention of the fate of cultural property from Jewish communities that were annihilated, such as the symbolic case of Breslau (Wrocław). Since Silesia was already part of the Reich and an additional part annexed in 1938, synagogues, Jewish Communities and other important Jewish institutions felt the brunt of the November 1938 pogrom known to the world as Kristallnacht. Documents in recently processed RSHA records in the Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde record the confiscation of major Jewish library collections by the SD Hauptamt (predecessor of the RSHA Amt VII) and their transfer from Silesia to Berlin. For example, documentation has surfaced relating to confiscated Jewish libraries in Liegnitz, Görlitz, Oppoln, Hindenberg, Beuthen, and Gleiwitz, among other Silesian centers. Although considerable Judaica was destroyed, major Jewish library holdings from those cities were salvaged and sorted out for shipment to Berlin. In some cases lists of chosen books have been preserved, while other documents provide packing lists and plans for shipments, and in some cases reports of transfers, most of them in the spring and summer of 1939.⁷⁹ Choice books were incorporated into the SD Hauptamt Jewish Library (Judischer Bücherei) in Berlin, with an estimated total of 300,000 volumes anticipated during 1939. A series of surviving lists from the spring and summer of 1939 estimate the number of volumes from each of 71 libraries in specific cities throughout the Reich.⁸⁰ The Judischer Bücherei was then held in the cellars of two former Masonic lodges in Berlin that the SD had commandeered in 1936 (Provinzial-Gross Loge von Hamburg—Emserstrasse 12) and 1938 (Grosse Landesloge der Freimaurer von Deutschland—Berlin W 30, Eisenacherstrasse 11/13), and subsequently they were taken over by the RSHA library mentioned above.

⁷⁹ Many examples are now found in BArch, R 58/6380b, fols. 320–428 passim; R 58/6424, Tiel 1.V2 (old sig. ZB1-0648), fols. 255–260; a inventory of books from Beuthen is in R 58/6362 (old sig. ZB1-0365), fols. 1–55. Further analysis of these documents is underway in Poland, after I informed Wojciech Kowalski about the series I had seen in the summer of 2004.

⁸⁰ Figures from a 5 June 1939 list, including 28,000 from the Breslau Seminary and 10,000 from the Jewish Community in Breslau are published with those from other major German cities by Werner Schroeder, “Beschlagnahme und Verbleib jüdischer Bibliotheken in Deutschland vor und nach dem Novemberpogrom 1938,” in *Jüdischer Buchbesitz als Raubgut Zweites Hannoversches Symposium*, ed. Regine Dehnel (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann 2006); *Zeitschrift für Bibliothekswesen und Bibliographie*, 88, p. 35.

Most extensive documentation remains for the SD-plundered library materials from Breslau, including an estimated 28,000 books and 400 manuscripts of the Breslau Rabbinical Seminary, considered one of the most important Jewish collections in Europe. Some of the shipping crate lists were even prepared on blank stationery of the Seminary.⁸¹ Indeed the holdings from the Seminary, while symbolic of the dispersal of the Jewish legacy, are a fitting concluding example of the complexities of Silesian cultural crossroads during the Second World War. They are also an appropriate concluding example for our conference in Český Krumlov, because many of the books and manuscripts plundered from Jewish collections in Breslau ended the war in Czechoslovakia, having been evacuated from Berlin to the series of Sudeten castles mentioned earlier. Several hundred of them still remain in the Czech Republic.

Following the 1998 Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets, and in preparation for a follow-up 2000 conference in Vilnius, funding was proposed by the Commission on Art Recovery and the Jewish World Council in New York, with the endorsement of Christie's, to identify and promote restitution of displaced Jewish cultural assets still hidden away in Eastern Europe. Russia was a particular focus, because Russians had often denied the existence of significant Jewish property among their cultural trophies from the Second World War. Following up on a proposal the Vilnius conference, a Russian-American agreement for the "Research Project for Art and Archives," specifically intended to describe cultural treasure of Holocaust victims, was signed in Moscow with the Ministry of Culture by American project representatives in early December 2001.⁸² With the 150th anniversary of the opening of the Breslau (Wrocław) Rabbinical Seminary approaching in 2004, and when it became known that fragmentary archives and manuscript treasures from the Seminary were held in Moscow, a project was born to describe them.

⁸¹ Those figures come from "Bericht, Zentralisierung der Judenbibliothek," BArch, R 58/6424, Tiel II, fols. 371–373, and several similar reports from the spring of 1939 in the same file. Other documents relating to the Breslau collections are, for example, in BArch, R 58/6380b, fols. 320–321; R 58/6424, Tiel 1.V2 (old sig, ZB1-0648), fols. 262–278, among others.

⁸² The description of the non-profit project, sponsored by Ronald S. Lauder and Edgar M. Brofman, with text of the agreement signed by Lauder in Moscow (4 December 2001) was earlier at the website of the Commission for Art Recovery in New York—<http://www.comartrecovery.org>, under "accomplishments–Russia," but is no longer available.

The first published catalogue in the “Heritage Revealed” series, issued by the All-Russian Library of Foreign Literature (VGBIL), described 43 Hebrew manuscripts and archival documents from the Breslau Theological Seminary, some of them in the Russian State Military Archive (RGVA) and the rest in the Russian State Library (RGB, formerly the Lenin Library, RGB).⁸³ Those manuscript materials had come to Moscow with a trophy echelon from the Silesia town of Habelschwerdt (Bystrzyca Kłodzka), the closest railway station to the RSHA Amt VII archival center Wölfelsdorf (Wilkanów), having been evacuated from Berlin in 1943, as mentioned above. Taken to Moscow by Soviet authorities in 1945, they were first deposited in the Central State Special Archive (TsGOA SSSR, now part of RGVA), where 16 files were processed as part of a large miscellaneous collection of archival materials from Jewish organizations in Germany (fond 1325k).⁸⁴ Some of the manuscripts described had been part of a group transferred from TsGOA to the Lenin Library (GBL) in 1949, described only as being in the “early Jewish language,” but never fully processed before 2002.⁸⁵ Of those covered in 2003, 27 had been described in the catalogue of the collection published in 1965 by D. S. Loewinger and B. D. Weinryb, a large part of which had been prepared before the war, and are designated accordingly. In 1965, however, the compilers were not aware that any of the manuscripts were in Moscow, nor had then know about the RSHA evacuation to Wölfelsdorf.⁸⁶ Those 43 manuscript units described in 2003 all still remain in Moscow, awaiting formal restitution negotiations with Poland.⁸⁷

⁸³ *Katalog rukopisei i arkhivnykh materialov iz Evreiskoi teologicheskoi seminarii goroda Breslau v rossiiskikh khranilishchakh* [Catalogue of Manuscripts and Archival Materials of Jewish-Theological Seminar in Breslau held in Russian Depositories, with a preface by Ekaterina Genieva (Moscow: “Rudomino,” 2003; Proekt “Obretennoe nasledie” / Project “Heritage Revealed”); available electronically (PDF) at

<http://www.libfl.ru/restitution/catalogs/index-eng.html>.

⁸⁴ The presence of 15 files from the Breslau Seminary in the collection was first noted by Götz Aly and Susanne Heim, in *Das Zentrale Staatsarchiv in Moskau (“Sonderarchiv”): Rekonstruktion und Bestandsverzeichnis verschollen geglaubten Schriftguts aus der NS-Zeit* (Düsseldorf: Hans-Böckler-Stiftung, 1992), p. 41.

⁸⁵ A letter of transfer of Hebraic manuscript materials to GBL remains in the RGB Archive, *opis’* 25, *delo* 93, folio 43.

⁸⁶ *Catalogue of the Hebrew Manuscripts in the Library of the Juedisch-Theologisches Seminar in Breslau*, edited by D. S. Loewinger and B. D. Weinryb (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1986; Publication of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York).

⁸⁷ See Ekaterina J. Genieva, “The International Research Project ‘Heritage Revealed’,” in *Jüdischer Buchbesitz als Raubgut (op. cit.)*, pp. 259–64.

The Moscow catalogue did not take into account or reference the detailed correlation tables for Breslau Seminary manuscripts appended to the 1980 account by French Hebraicist Gérard Weill, and hence it did not mention the other parts of the Breslau collection Weill had located in Warsaw and Prague.⁸⁸ Following the Loewinger and Weinryb catalogue introduction, Weill identified the group of Breslau Seminary manuscripts that had been found at the end of the war in the castle of Glatz (*now Polish Kłodzko*, 20 km north of Habelswerdt), which had served as a local Gestapo headquarters, along with some found in a train wagon. Weill was not aware of the RSHA archival evacuations to Wölfelsdorf (about 20 km south of Glatz) and the Soviet seizure, and hence some of his hypotheses about the wartime migration of the manuscripts now need serious revision. He assumed, for example, that the Breslau manuscripts found in Glatz had not left Silesia during the war, but other documentation confirms that they had first been sent to Berlin. The German placement of the Breslau manuscripts in the castle of Glatz has not been documented, so far as is known. In any case, the manuscripts found there were subsequently turned over to Polish authorities and transferred to the Institute of Jewish History in Warsaw (*Żydowski Instytut Historyczny*), where they were partially described by Polish specialists in the 1950s, and then listed by Weill. Benjamin Richler, head of the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts in the Jewish National and University Library (JNUL) in Jerusalem, verified listings on the basis of microfilms obtained for JNUL, as described in his coverage of the Breslau manuscripts, published in his 1994 *Directory of Hebrew Manuscript Collections*.⁸⁹ As of the present time, however, those manuscripts are missing, and the Warsaw Institute does not know what became of them.⁹⁰ Richler and others also list a few Breslau manuscripts in private collections in New York and a few in JNUL.

⁸⁸ Gérard E. Weill, "Sur une bibliothèque systématiquement pillée par les Nazis: Le catalogue des manuscrits et incunables retrouvés de la *Bibliothek des Jüdisch-Theologischen Seminars in Breslau*," in *Hommage_George Vajda*, ed. Gérard Nahon and Charles Touati (Louvain: Éditions Peeters, 1980), pp. 579–604.

⁸⁹ The manuscripts in Warsaw were all listed by Weill, by Loewinger and Weinryb, and were duly referenced by Benjamin Richler, *Guide to Hebrew Manuscript Collections* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1994), pp. 24–26, and 213–17. Richler retired in 2005.

⁹⁰ The deputy director of the Warsaw institute explained to me (May 2003) that they have been unable to locate the manuscripts there. Nawojka Cieślińska-Lobkowicz has confirmed the gaps in the Warsaw institute holdings, "Raub und Rückführung der Leon

Weill identified an additional 33 manuscripts from the Breslau Seminary Manuscripts in the library of Charles University within the Czech National Library (Clementinum) in Prague. These were later also listed by Richler, having been microfilmed in the early 1990s by the JNUL Institute.⁹¹ Most of the early manuscripts and incunabula from the Breslau Seminary were of original provenance in the Leon Vita Saraval Collection from Trieste, which had been transferred to Breslau in 1854. They had come to Prague after the war from the Sudeten castle of Mimoň (*German* Niemes, east of Česka Lípa) where they had been evacuated from Berlin by the RSHA in the summer of 1943. Some of the Judaica from Mimoň was restituted immediately after the war, but the remainder was transferred to the University Library in Prague in 1947/48. It was Weill's 1980 references that led the "Heritage Revealed" project to the Breslau manuscripts in the Clementinum in 2002, where they were then still being held in an unprocessed reserve. Thanks to the efforts of that project under the Commission for Art Recovery in New York, presided over by Ronald S. Lauder, they were fully catalogued. After an exhibition in Prague in 2003, they went home to Poland in December 2004, as a most fitting tribute to Czech restitution efforts.⁹² Digitized copies of the 49 catalogued units of manuscripts and incunabula are now available electronically on the Internet "Manuscriptorium" catalogue of the Clementinum, open for research throughout the world.

The fate of the important Breslau Seminary collection is but one of many blatant examples of the tragic wartime dispersal of Judaica, but nonetheless its survival. The example well demonstrates how international cooperation among scholars and library specialists can result in successful identification and restitution efforts. Additional printed books bearing markings of many Breslau Jewish owners, including the Breslau Seminary, have been identified in the Jewish Museum in Prague (JMP). We learned about those books thanks to Michal Bušek, who reported on the Český Krumlov library panel

Vita Saraval Sammlung der Bibliothek des Jüdische-Theologischen Seminars in Breslau," in *Jüdischer Buchbesitz als Raubgut. Zweites Hannoversches Symposium*, ed. Regine Dehnel (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann 2006), p. 373; *Zeitschrift für Bibliothekswesen und Bibliographie*, 88, pp. 366–78.

⁹¹ Weill, *op. cit.*, and Richler, *op. cit.*

⁹² The full digitized texts are available in the "Manuscriptorium" catalogue at the Clementinum website—<http://www.nkp.cz>. Regarding the transfer to Poland, see Nawojka Cieślińska-Lobkowicz, "Raub und Rückführung" in *op. cit.* (fn. 89).

about the new JMP database of book provenance markings.⁹³ A few additional printed books of Breslau provenance have also recently been reported in the Clementinium. We can only hope that the return from Prague to Poland of the Breslau Hebrew manuscripts and incunabula plundered by the SD/RSMA from the Breslau Rabbinical Seminary, and the Opava restitution example during the opening ceremony at the Český Krumlov conference, will be followed by more examples of restitution of cultural property displaced as a result of the Second World War. Such examples provide symbolic amends for the atrocious wartime losses and displacements, followed by long postwar suppression of information about them.

E. Wrocław Museum Data on Cultural Evacuation Sites

Recently Polish specialists in Wrocław issued a compendium of sites for deposit of cultural treasures that had been compiled after the war.⁹⁴ The modest publication lists German and Polish names of many sites where cultural treasures were stored in Silesia, identifies the buildings and their owners, and many of the institutions in charge of placing their property there. It includes data from the files of Günther Grundmann, the curator in charge of many of the evacuation efforts during the war and the search and recovery missions thereafter. Not all of the sites mentioned above are listed, however, and since only a few examples could be cited here, more deserve attention. Hence, it would be worth expanding that data in electronic form in a cooperative project to identify more of the Silesian crossroads for displaced cultural treasures. To be sure Silesia is only one small geographic area where more international attention is needed. But international cooperative efforts could use the Silesian example to help follow the migration of more lost libraries and identify still displaced collections from many different countries. Eventually such data could be combined and expanded with data from available sources in other countries, but such proposals need to be more thoroughly developed elsewhere.

⁹³ Michal Bušek kindly demonstrated the database to me in October 2006, and subsequently for a group of conference participants in the Jewish Museum. See his report in this volume.

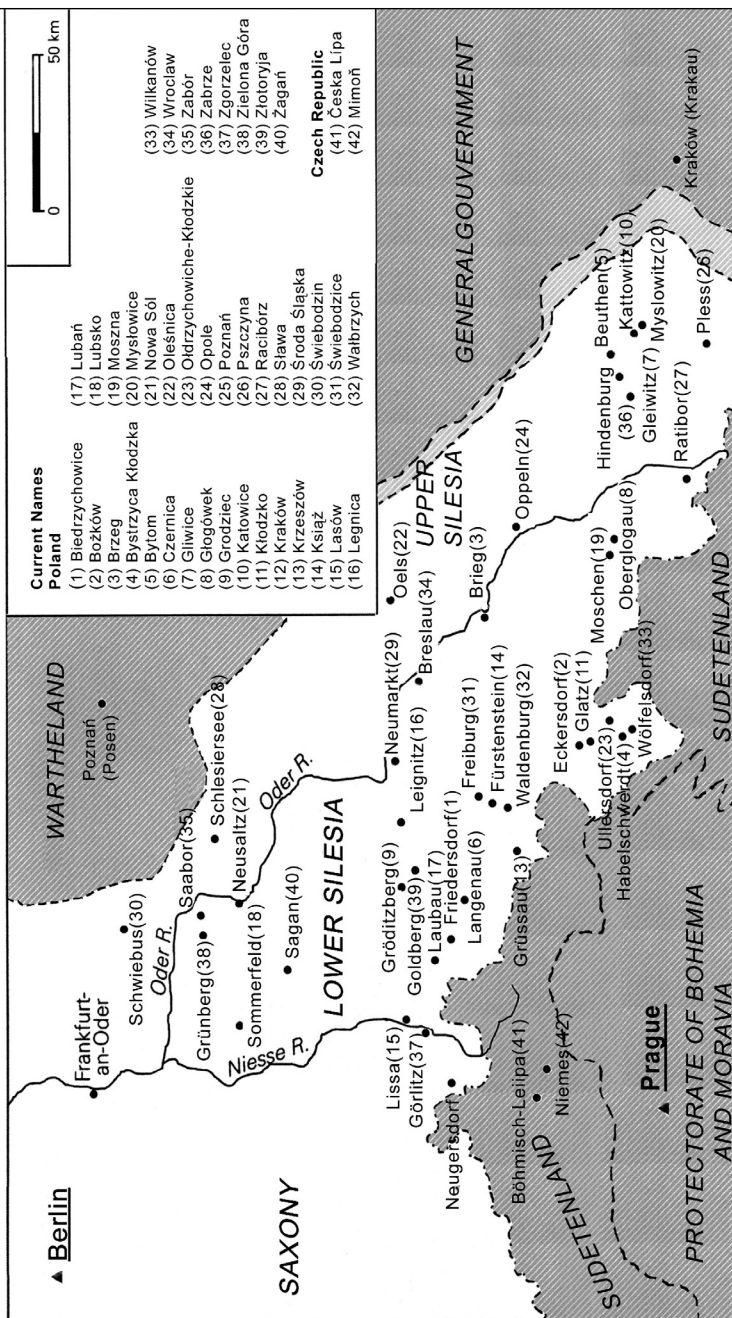
⁹⁴ Józef Gębczak, *Losy ruchomego mienia kulturalnego i artystycznego na Dolnym Śląsku w czasie Drugiej wojny światowej* (Wrocław: Muzeum Narodowe, 2000). I am grateful to Nawojka Cieślińska-Lobkowicz for alerting me about this publication and obtaining a copy for me.

Looking ahead

Today we have been focusing across the Czech border on Silesia, which, unlike its prewar and wartime status, is now part of Poland. Perhaps in considering here some of the factors and agencies involved with library plunder, the transfer mechanisms, and the patterns and complexities of displacement, we may better plan future lines of research that may lead to the identification of more of Europe's displaced books. In the future, it may be helpful to continue this approach, and turn to the Czech side of the frontier. The example of the Breslau Seminary books and manuscripts in Prague is a case in point. As already apparent in other presentations at our conference, and some of my own recent findings relating the Czech Republic, especially focusing on the Sudetenland, more research is needed to unravel similar patterns and identify some of the Czech crossroads of Europe's displaced books and archives.⁹⁵ Then we can eventually address questions in the spirit of many resolutions by the United Nations, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe: Should all those displaced books that have been located in Eastern Europe remain prisoners of war indefinitely? Should all of those identified as plundered still be considered "compensation" for wartime cultural atrocities?

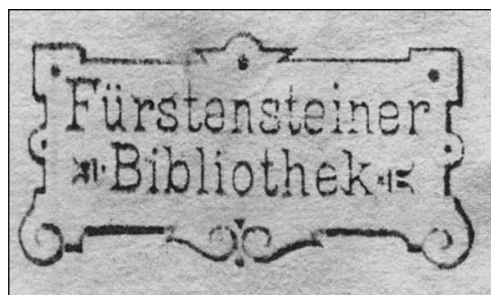
⁹⁵ My findings regarding the fate of Nazi-looted books in the Sudetenland will appear in the forthcoming volume, *The Fate of Nazi-Looted Books*, *op. cit.*

Silesia (Schlesien/Śląsk) at the end of World War II (1943–1945)





Książ (Fürstenstein)



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