

Tracing ‘Trophy’ Books in Russia¹

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Since the issue of ‘trophy’ books from the Second World War became public for the first time in the late 1980s, Russian librarians have faced intense foreign criticism, especially from Germany, whose historic libraries were the source of millions of books transported to the USSR in the immediate postwar years. In reply Russian librarians have understandably emphasised Russia’s monumental book losses resulting from the German invasion, justifying their ‘trophy’ books as appropriate ‘compensation’. Recently, to emphasise Russian losses, the Ministry of Culture initiated an elegantly published series on ‘Lost Cultural Treasures’, with lost books scattered prominently through the initial volumes covering the St Petersburg imperial palaces.² Two volumes have already appeared in the sub-series describing many examples of rarities among the *Lost Book Treasures*.³

During the past fifteen years many more accounts of Soviet wartime losses and trophy receipts have drawn on newly opened sources, and debates in the press have been rampant.⁴ Aleksandr Mazuritskii, the rector of Russia’s most

¹ This paper was the basis for my brief comments at a colloquium with Russian librarians at the New York Public Library, 8 March 2005, for the session entitled ‘Wartime Cultural Losses, Reparations, Restitution’. The data are drawn from my larger ongoing study of cultural treasures in the USSR, see the full bibliography of my writings on the International Institute of Social History website—http://www.iisg.nl/archives_in_russia/bibliography.html.

² *Svodnyi katalog kul'turnykh tselestei, pokhishchennykh i utrachennykh v period Vtoroi mirovoi voiny* / English edition: *Summary Catalogue of the Cultural Valuables Stolen and Lost during the Second World War*, vol. 1: *Gosudarstvennyi muzei-zapovednik ‘Tsarskoe Selo’ / The Tsarskoe Selo State Architectural Palace-Park Museum Zone*, books 1 and 2: *Ekaterininskii dvorets / The Catherine Palace* (Moscow and St Petersburg, Ministerstvo kul'tury Rossiiskoi Federatsii, 1999–2000); vol. 2: *Gosudarstvennyi muzei-zapovednik ‘Pavlovsk’: Pavlovskii dvorets / The Pavlovsk State Museum Zone: The Pavlovsk Palace* (Moscow, 2000).

³ *Svodnyi katalog kul'turnykh tselestei / Summary Catalogue of Cultural Valuables*, vol. 11, book 1: *Utrachemye knizhnye tsennosti / Lost Book Treasures*, and book 2: *Leningradskaia oblast'. Gatchina / Leningrad Region. Gatchina* (Moscow, 2003).

⁴ The most extensive bibliography, which includes some of the press discussion, is ‘Beutekunst’: *Bibliographie des internationalen Schrifttums über das Schicksal des im Zweiten Weltkrieg von der Roten Armee in Deutschland erbeuteten Kulturgutes* (Museums-, Archiv- und Bibliotheksbestände) 1990–2000, compiled by Peter Bruhn, 2nd ed. (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin–Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Osteuropa-Abteilung, 2000), Veröffentlichungen der Osteuropa-Abteilung, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz, 26; Literaturnachweise zu aktuellen Rußland-Themen, vol. 1. Much relevant literature is covered in my own writings. See, for example, the relevant chapters of Grimsted, *Trophies of War and Empire: The Archival Heritage of Ukraine, World War II, and the International Politics of Restitution*, foreword by Charles Kecskeméti (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute, 2001), especially chapters 5–7. See the more recent monograph by Margarita S. Zinich, *Pokhishchemye sokrovishcha: vyvoz Natsistami rossiiskikh kul'turnykh tselestei* (Moscow, Institut Rossiiskoi istorii RAN, 2003).

prominent library school, follows many of his earlier writings on the subject with a 2004 monograph on Russian library losses.⁵ His writings need to be compared to other studies on the subject, especially those from the University of Bremen.⁶

Mazuritskii claims book losses as a result of the war to have been over 100 million volumes, but it is not entirely clear if he means from Russia itself as opposed to the entire Soviet Union. He cited most recently the 100 million figure at a Russian-American colloquium at the New York Public Library, which he earlier stated as having been established by the official postwar Soviet Commission to Investigate War Losses (ChGK). In his 2004 monograph, he first gives the ChGK figure of 100 million but then also cites a 1991 Moscow rhetorical journalistic estimate as high as 200 million volumes for the entire Soviet Union.⁷ Given available Soviet sources and priorities, such statistics will

⁵ Aleksandr M. Mazuritskii, *Knizhnye poteri Rossii v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny. Monografiia* (Moscow, Moskovskii gosudarstvennyi universitetet kul'tury i iskusstv, 2004); those figures are cited on p. 3 and pp. 93–94. Professor Mazuritskii is one of the editors of the Ministry of Culture series mentioned in note 3. His latest brief survey remains superficial and with no bibliography, but does take into account some of the recent Russian discussion in Russia. See also, for example, A. M. Mazuritskii, I. G. Matveeva and G. V. Mikheeva, 'Book Losses in Russia during World War II', *Solamus*, 16 (2002), pp. 27–38; and Mazuritskii's earlier monograph *Knizhnye sobraniia Rossii i Germanii v kontekste restitutsionnykh protsessov* (Moscow, Moskovskii gosudarstvennyi universitetet kul'tury i iskusstv, 2000). My present comments were expanded in response to Mazuritskii's remarks at the NYPL colloquium 8 March 2005.

⁶ See for example, some of the publications from the Bremen University project on German cultural plunder from the USSR: Gabriele Freitag and Andreas Grenzer, 'Der deutsche Umgang mit sowjetischem Kulturgut während des Zweiten Weltkrieges: Ein Aspekt nationalsozialistischer Besatzungspolitik', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 45 (2) 1997, pp. 223–72; Andreas Grenzer, 'Die Evakuierung von sowjetischen Kulturgütern im Zweiten Weltkrieg', *Osteuropa* 47 (1997), pp. 922–31; Wolfgang Eichwede and Ulrike Hartung, eds., 'Betr. Sicherstellung': *NS-Kunstraub in der Sowjetunion* (Bremen, Edition Temmen, 1998); Ulrike Hartung, 'Der deutsche Umgang mit sowjetischen Archiven und Bibliotheken im Zweiten Weltkrieg', in *Displaced Books: Bücherrückgabe aus Zweierleischt. Beiträge und Materialien zur Bestandsgeschichte deutscher Bibliotheken im Zusammenhang von NS-Zeit und Krieg*, 2d ed. (Hannover, Laurentius Sonderheft, 1999), pp. 42–51; Ulrike Hartung, *Raubzüge in der Sowjetunion: Das Sonderkommando Künsberg 1941–1943* (Bremen, Edition Temmen, 1997); Anja Heuss, 'Die "Beuteorganisation" des Auswärtigen Amtes: Das Sonderkommando Künsberg und der Kulturgutraub in der Sowjetunion', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 45 (4) October 1997, pp. 535–56. Heuss has some good chapters on German agencies of plunder in the USSR in her *Kunst- und Kulturgutraub: Eine vergleichende Studie zu Besatzungspolitik der Nationalsozialisten in Frankreich und der Sowjetunion* (Heidelberg, Universitätsverlag C., Winter, 2000).

⁷ Mazuritskii's source for that figure is a three-part rhetorical article by Aleksandr Sherel', 'Kochuiushskie muzy', in the official government weekly newspaper *Rossia*, nos. 39 (47)–41 (49), 2–22 October 1991. Sherel' first gives the ChGK figure of 100 million books lost or destroyed from Soviet libraries in occupied territories, and 200 thousand museum items, but then raises the figure for total Soviet book losses as a result of the war to ca. 200 million volumes (no. 39, p. 3), without indication of how he was arriving at the higher estimate. In the following segment (no. 40, p. 3), a summary headline highlights wartime losses: 'stolen or destroyed more than 100 million books'. Mazuritskii repeats without question Sherel's earlier 200 million figure, but also does not explain the statistical basis.

be difficult to verify today. Admittedly, ChGK figures on which Mazuritskii's total is based frequently gave the highest possible estimates to justify more compensation and, as many have pointed out, ChGK figures fail to distinguish between books plundered from the USSR and those destroyed by bombing and warfare. Once the official ChGK statistics of loss were published, there was little inclination to revise them with details about books retrieved by Soviet library brigades and those that were restituted by the Western Allies.⁸ There have been no attempts in Russia to establish statistics for retrieval. Yet even if estimates were reduced as appropriate for returns, the total figures for losses would still be staggering and make the demand for compensation completely understandable. What follows has no intent to minimise the magnitude of Russian—and indeed Soviet—losses, although sixty years after Allied victory over the Nazi regime, it is perhaps time for more realistic appraisal and more open reporting of returns and trophy receipts.

One major problem arising is that there were many other European victims of Nazi looting, and among the trophy books brought to Russia were many that had been previously plundered from other European countries. With all the revelations about displaced cultural treasures on the Eastern Front, including those 'twice-plundered', there are new demands for accurate appraisal of losses and migration of cultural treasures, including books, often in the context of restitution claims. Such factors augment the incentive for more careful research by all concerned. However, further problems arise in the Russian statistics: retrieved and restituted books often passed through the same facility where trophy books were gathered; many of the 'trophy' echelons arriving in the USSR combined those three categories; and books were frequently not distinguished in numbers of crates for consignments of archives or other cultural treasures. Even today, sixty years after the end of the war, many sources needed remain classified or otherwise unavailable, especially in Russia.

Most (but not all) German wartime reports preserved and open for research today (including those in Moscow and especially Kyiv) indicate many specific details about the number of volumes plundered from different libraries in many countries and where they were sent.⁹ If migration routes are followed

⁸ The official Soviet-style name was the 'Extraordinary State Commission for Establishment and Investigation of Crimes of the German-Fascist Aggressors and Their Accomplices and Appraisal of the Losses Incurred by Citizens, Collective Farms, Social Organizations, State Enterprises and Institutions of the USSR', the records of which are now open for consultation. See my background discussion of ChGK reports in Grimsted, 'Measuring Losses in the World War II context', chapter 5 in *Trophies of War and Empire* (note 4).

⁹ In the case of Kyiv libraries Liubov' Dubrovina and her associates have prepared a detailed guide to sources, predominantly based on documents among the ERR records remaining in Ts-DAVO (fond 3676): *Biblioteki Kyieva v period natsists'koï okupatsii (1941–1943): Doslidzhennia. Anotovanyi pokazhchyk. Publikatsii dokumentiv*, comp. L. A. Dubrovina and N. I Malolietova; ed. O. S. Onyshhenko, H. V. Boriak, L. A. Dubrovina et al. (Kyiv, NBUV, Derzhkomarkhiv, 2004), Biblioteki Ukraïny pid chas Druhoï svitovoï viiny.

through careful research, we can have a better idea of where what collections might have survived. If such data are further combined with postwar retrieval and restitution files, we can begin to trace how many and what books came home. Currently, however, the subject can be traced only with heavy reliance on foreign sources, because openly available Soviet documentation frequently is only fragmentary or at variance with foreign figures.

The whole subject of ‘trophy’ books was taboo during the Soviet period. The furor started in 1990, when Evgenii Kuz’min revealed that several million rare German imprints had been left to rot under pigeon droppings in the Uzko church outside Moscow owned by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.¹⁰ Two years after that scandal, at the Russian-German Round Table on trophy books in Moscow, Kuz’min first revealed a 1948 document from the VGBIL archive estimating shipments of 11 million trophy books to the USSR.¹¹ VGBIL library founder Margarita Rudomino had led the largest trophy library brigade to Germany (May 1945–November 1946), and the unsigned document was attributed to her. Closer examination of the original document shows one figure had been read erroneously, so the total would be only ten million.¹² While Uzko became a symbol of the failures and abuses of the trophy books programme, a decade later we still cannot document even the ten million figure.

German library director Ingo Kolasa’s article ‘Tell me, Where are the books? ...’ became a battle cry to German librarians.¹³ Kolasa included a

¹⁰ Evgenii Kuz’min, ‘Taina tserkvi v Uzkom’, *Literaturnaia gazeta*, no. 38 (18 September 1990), p. 10; English ed.: ‘The Mystery of the Church in Uzko’, *The Literary Gazette International*, 1990, no. 16, p. 20. Kuz’min now heads archival and library programmes in the Ministry of Culture and Mass Communications. See also the earlier report by Nikolai V. Kotrelev, ‘Plach o pogibeli russkoi biblioteki’, in *Redkie knigi i rukopisi: izuchenie i opisanie (Materialy Vsesoiuznogo nauchno-metodicheskogo soveshchaniia zaveduiushchikh otdelami redkikh knig i rukopisei bibliotek vuzov. Leningrad, 24–26 ianvaria 1989 g.)* (Leningrad, 1991), pp. 107–109; or the English version: ‘Lamentation on the Ruin of the Russian Library’, *Kul’turologiia: The Petersburg Journal of Cultural Studies* 1, no. 3 (1993), pp. 147–50. See also the article by Leningrad University librarians Aleksandr Gorfunkel’ and Nikolai Nikolaev, ‘Kak vozvrashchat’ “trofeinye knigi”: Eshche raz o zakhvachennykh vo vremia voiny kul’turnykh tsennostiakh’, *Nevskoe vremia* 8 (163), 14 January 1992.

¹¹ Evgenii Kuz’min, ‘Neizvestnye stranitsy istorii nemetskikh bibliotechnykh kolleksii v gody Vtoroi mirovoi voiny’, in *Restitutsiia bibliotechnykh sobranii i sotrudnichestvo v Evrope: Rossiisko-germanskii ‘kruglyi stol’, 11–12 dekabria 1992 g.* (Moscow, 1994). The proceedings were first published in a much more extensive German version, *Restitution von Bibliotheksgut. Runder Tisch deutscher und russischer Bibliothekare in Moskau am 11. 12. Dezember 1992*, ed. Klaus-Dieter Lehmann and Ingo Kolasa (Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 1993), *Zeitschrift für Bibliothekswesen und Bibliographie*, Sonderheft 56. That document and the Kuz’min article and a few other selections from the 1992 Roundtable are available electronically—<http://www.libfl.ru/restitution>, together with extensive bibliography.

¹² The document in question was found in the VGBIL Archive—‘Spravka o trofeinykh fondakh, privezennykh v SSSR v 1945–1946 gg’. (December 1948 [date pencilled in later]), Arkhiv VGBIL, 1/29–37/20, fols. 29–31 (unsigned carbon copy), where I later obtained a copy.

¹³ Ingo Kolasa, ‘Sag mir wo die Bücher sind ...: Ein Beitrag zu “Beutekulturgütern” und

German translation of the 1948 Rudomino document, but we now know the eleven [ten] million figure does not include transports by other trophy brigades, such as those operating in Silesia, and those intermixed with shipments of archives, or books sent by SVAG from varying sources, much of the documentation for which is still closed to researchers. In 1996, Kolasa and Klaus-Dieter Lehmann published in German translation a collection of significant documents from the Rudomino brigade (under the Committee for Cultural Enlightenment, led by Aleksei D. Manevskii) along with other revealing Soviet-period documents related to trophy receipts.¹⁴ Almost half of those documents were drawn from former Communist Party archives (RGASPI and RGANI), and have since been reclassified.¹⁵ Although the files of the Manevskii/Rudomino brigade have been open for limited research in GARF, the German editors never saw the originals in their Russian archival context.¹⁶

For example, one published document listing over 150 German public and private libraries plundered by the Soviet brigade between 6 May and 31 December 1946 is missing the first 23 pages of the original. The editors note that the initial 55 listings were museums rather than libraries, but it turns out that no. 21 was the Leipzig Museum of the Book and Printing; the 19 crates from that collection sent by air to Moscow included the Gutenberg Bible fragment now in a Russian State Library (RGB) safe.¹⁷ Margarita Rudomino's

"Trophäenkommissionen", *Zeitschrift für Bibliothekswesen und Bibliographie* 42 (4) (1995), pp. 357–60.

¹⁴ Ingo Kolasa and Klaus-Dieter Lehmann, eds., *Die Trophäenkommissionen der Roten Armee: Eine Dokumentensammlung zur Verschleppung von Büchern aus Deutschen Bibliotheken* (Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klosterman, 1996), *Zeitschrift für Bibliothekswesen und Bibliographie*, Sonderheft 64. Lehmann since 1988 has been director general of the Deutsche Bibliothek and president (since 1998) of the Foundation for Prussian Cultural Heritage. I am grateful to Ingo Kolasa, who now heads the Deutsche Musikarchiv (Berlin) for consultations regarding various aspects of the problem.

¹⁵ A 'use slip' for some of the files in RGASPI, for example, shows that the documents had been consulted and copied in 1992, although the documents themselves are now sealed off. Over the years since the publication, I have located original copies or verified archival locations for most of the documents, and for those still classified, I have unsuccessfully filed requests for declassification with the holding archives.

¹⁶ Almost half the documents are from the remaining files of the Rudomino/Manevskii brigade, now in a declassified inventory (opis') of the records of the Committee for Cultural Enlightenment in the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), fond A534, opis' 2. I am grateful to the directors for permitting me to work extensively with these files, so I could compare the originals to the published German versions. Following the German publication, research in the original files requires special permission and is frequently restricted, especially to German researchers.

¹⁷ The original of the document, 'Otchet o rabote Upolnomochennogo Komiteta po delam kul'tprosvetuchrezhdenii pri Narkome RSFSR po Sovetskoi zone okkupatsii Germanii c 6 maia po 31 dekabria 1946 g.' (signed by A. M. Manevskii), GARF, A-534/2/10, fols. 1–69. The published portion (doc. no. 17) includes nos. 58–202 starting with page 23 (fol. 23) of the original report. The reference to the Museum of the Book and Printing (no. 21) with the Gutenberg Bible is on fols. 12–13 where it is described as 'the most valuable book in the world'. More detailed packing lists remain in GARF for the air shipment that contained the Gutenberg Bible.

son Adrian first revealed the existence of the Gutenberg Bible in RGB in 1994, and—for the ‘50th Anniversary of Victory’, a 1995 Russian TV film, ‘By Right of the Victor’, featured his role in its 1945 transport.¹⁸ Tat’iana Dolgodrova subsequently prepared a professional description of the RGB copy.¹⁹ Rare book specialist Aleksandr Gorfunkel’ raised the issue of the second Gutenberg Bible (on paper) from Leipzig, which has since been confirmed as held by the Lomonosov Library of Moscow State University. Gorfunkel’ also provides more examples of unfortunate catastrophes for trophy books that were hidden away, and he appropriately pleads for more open information about many of the rare trophy receipts.²⁰ Catalogues of other rarities from the Leipzig collection in RGB prepared by Tat’iana Dolgodrova are awaiting publication subsidy in Moscow.²¹

In 1999 Adrian Rudomino published from his mother’s papers another list of 88 plundered German libraries,²² but with fewer entries than indicated in reports in the GARF files. In 2000 Aleksandr Mazuritskii published one GARF document listing 92 library collections, each with reference to the echelon number in which it arrived—so far the most extensive list published in Russia.²³ German art historian Regine Dehnel (Magdeburg) in her 2003

¹⁸ Adrian Rudomino, ‘Polveka v plenu’, *Nashe nasledie*, no. 32 (1994), pp. 92–96, and in the segment featuring him in the Russian documentary film ‘Po pravu pobeditelei’ (1995). See also the subsequent German account ‘Wo ist die Gutenberg-Bibel? Die wertvollsten Bestände des Deutschen Buch- und Schriftmuseums in Leipzig als Kriegsbeute’, in *Leipziger Jahrbuch zu Buchgeschichte*, 7 (1997), pp. 247–301.

¹⁹ Tat’iana Dolgodrova, ‘Bibliia Gutenberga, khраниashchaisia v Rossiiskoi Gosudarstvennoi biblioteke, kak vydaishchiiia pamiatnik pečati’, in *Kniga: issledovaniia i materialy* 73 (Moscow 1996), pp. 125–40. See also her dissertation, *Nemetskaia i niderlanskaia kniga XV veka (problemy vzaimovliianiia i natsional’nye osobennosti)*, avtoreferat dissertatsii na soiskanie uchenoi stepeni doktora istoricheskikh nauk (Moscow, Moskovskii gosudarstvennyi universitet pečati, 2000).

²⁰ Aleksandr Gorfunkel’, ‘Bibliia Gutenberga v Rossii’, in *Zapadnoevropeiskaia kul’tura v rukopisakh i knigakh Rossiiskoi natsional’noi biblioteki* (St Petersburg, RNB, 2001), pp. 195–206. Internet lists of the 48 copies of the Gutenberg Bible confirm both locations: <http://clausenbooks.com/gutenbergcensus.htm>; <http://www.gutenbergbible.net/locations.html>.

²¹ See, among Dolgodrova’s published articles: ‘Kollektsiia Nemetskogo muzeia knigi i shrifta v sobranii Rossiiskoi gosudarstvennoi biblioteki’, *Nashe nasledie*, no. 32 (1994), pp. 97–106 (with Oleg Borodin); ‘Unikal’nye zapadnoevropeiskie pechatnye knigi XV–XVI vekov iz trofeinogo sobranii Rossiiskoi gosudarstvennoi biblioteki’, *Nashe nasledie* 42 (1997), pp. 113–19; and ‘Sobranie perepletov Iakoba Krauze v Rossiiskoi gosudarstvennoi biblioteke’, *Nashe nasledie*, no. 49 (1999), pp. 97–102. Recently she has completed three professional descriptive catalogues of the Leipzig collection, all of which still await publication subsidy.

²² Rudomino’s son Adrian was serving in the Red Army in Germany during his mother’s mission—‘Knigi voiny: Pis’mo M. I. Rudomino iz Germanii v 1945–1946 godov i nekotorye dokumenty togo vremeni’, *Nashe nasledie*, no. 49 (1999), pp. 78–96. See also his edition of his mother’s memoirs augmented with extracts of her correspondence, *Moia biblioteka*, compiled with commentary by A. V. Rudomino (Moscow, Rudomino, 2000), with a separate chapter on the German trophy mission, pp. 189–221.

²³ Mazuritskii, *Knizhnye sobraniiia Rossii i Germanii* (note 5), pp. 95–110, on the basis of the original signed by Margarita Rudomino (Berlin September 1946), which he cites as GARF,

English-language article augments the plundered German libraries 'missing' in Adrian Rudomino's list but with references to only to one of the lists published by Kolasa and Lehmann. Consultation of the original archival files in GARF would have significantly augmented Dehnel's number, as well as the accuracy and authority of her publication.²⁴ Yet the comparative data she presents is a step needed in establishing a more complete list of the major foreign libraries represented among the trophy books brought to the USSR.

The crucial point is that we still do not have a full list of the libraries plundered from Germany because the published lists have not been compared one to another or to others available in various archives. Library of the Academy of Sciences director V. P. Leonov published some excerpts from a 1993 report about BAN trophy receipts and returns (mostly the Gotha Library), which provides a starting place for tracing Academy trophy receipts, but there were undoubtedly other institutions involved.²⁵ Nor do we even have a preliminary list of all the German and other libraries plundered by Soviet trophy brigades from Silesia, where many Berlin libraries had been evacuated in 1943. Lists remain from postwar U.S. investigation records for many of those Berlin library evacuations, and some extant documents from Soviet trophy brigades indicate many of those seized in Silesia.²⁶ If we could start with a list of the major private and institutional libraries (with images of their book markings) from which the trophy books came, we could get a better understanding of the receipts in the USSR. Some books were returned to East Germany and Poland in the 1950s, which will also need to be accounted for, but again in many cases, documentation is openly available. The VGBIL has issued a volume with images of markings on their trophy rare book holdings (also available on their

A534/2/1, fols. 21–24. Actually that is a variant of the published document no. 31 in *Die Trophäenkommissionen* (note 14), the original of which appears to be in fond A-534/2/10, fols. 218–234, with variant copies also in A-534/2/1, fols. 102–112 (cc fols. 113–126).

²⁴ Regine Dehnel, 'Books of German provenance in Russian libraries', *Spoils of War: International Newsletter*, no. 8 (2003), pp. 25–44. The English-language translation of this article could have been improved with editing before publication. (The promised Russian translation of that issue has still not appeared as of 2005.) Dehnel's additions are from only one of the 1996 German published lists *Trophäenkommissionen der Roten Armee*, doc. 31, pp. 187–202 (the original is in GARF, A-534/2/10, fols. 218–234; a variant copy with less detail in the last two columns appears in A-534/2/1, fols. 102–112; cc. fols. 113–126). Dehnel told me she had not tried to obtain access.

²⁵ Valerii P. Leonov, *Sud'ba biblioteki v Rossii. Roman-issledovanie* (St Petersburg, BAN, 2000), pp. 357–63—he quotes a special report prepared on his order by Oleg V. Dubrovskii, 'O postuplenii, khranении i otpravke nemetskoii trofeinoi i reparatsionnoi literatury, nakhodivsheisia v Biblioteki AN SSSR v 1946–1958 gg.'. John Simmons kindly alerted me to this publication.

²⁶ See, for example, the preliminary coverage of libraries seized in Silesia in Grimsted, *The Odyssey of the Turgenev Library from Paris, 1940–2002* (Amsterdam, International Institute of Social History, 2003), IISG Research Papers, no. 42, chapter 7. Documentation from the Peschke file in NACP, RG 260, lists many of the Berlin libraries and private art collections evacuated to Silesia.

website), which could be a starting point for coverage of current locations, and the format they have developed for listing foreign collections among their rare book holdings could prove a further point of departure for collection-level listings for other libraries, as they have for the Sárospatak Calvinist College Library from Hungary.²⁷ The University of Voronezh has issued a series of brochures with foreign book markings, another helpful beginning. But now a centralised compendium is needed listing all of the major libraries from which books were seized with available data from many sources.

Shipping lists (including wagon container lists) have been preserved for many consignments. Hence, simultaneously, it would be helpful to compile a content list of major military echelons with trophy books (with citations to available documents), because only fragmentary lists have been published.²⁸ But the published ones do not list those from Silesia, and some of those sent by other brigades from Germany. A major problem with statistics about echelons, however, is that many of the Soviet books retrieved and those returned by the Western Allies came in the same echelons with trophy books.

Scattered details about books retrieved by Soviet authorities have surfaced, but until there is more open archival access to Soviet military shipping records and relevant files from the Chief Political Administration of the Red Army (GlavPU RKKKA), it will be difficult to establish more precise figures of books

²⁷ *Inostrannye knizhnye znaki v sobranii redkikh knig Vserossiiskoi gosudarstvennoi biblioteki inostrannoi literatury imeni M. I. Rudomino / 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). The database of book markings is available electronically—<http://www.libfl.ru/restitution>, as are data about several other collections, including the Esterházy library from Austria. See also *Katalog der Drucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts aus den Beständen des VGBIL / Katalog nemetskoiazychnykh izdanii XVI veka v fondakh VGBIL / Catalogus librorum sedecimi saeculi qui in Totius Rossiae reipublicae litterarum externarum bibliotheca asservantur*, comp. I. A. Korkmazova and A. L. Ponomarev; ed. N. V. Kotrelev (Moscow, Rudomino, 1992; 2nd ed. 1996), and the more recent *Katalog izdanii XVI veka v fondakh VGBIL / Catalogus librorum sedecimi saeculi qui in totius Rossiae Reipublicae litterarum externarum bibliotheca asservantur*, part 2: *Knigi na nozykh evropeiskikh iazykakh (krome nemetskogo) / Libri verba aliarum linguarum vernacularum continent* (Moscow, Rudomino, 2001).

²⁸ One list with train numbers and number of wagons for four 1946 echelons from Berlin and one from Dresden—the last page of a Rudomino report—is published in German translation in *Die Trophäenkommissionen* (note 14), doc. no. 26, p. 170 (the original ribbon copy in GARF, A-534/2/1, fols. 90–96, is signed by Rudomino; cc fols. 21–25 [also signed] and fols. 59–65). A second list (which includes three 1945 air shipments) is published as doc. no. 30, p. 186 (original in GARF, A-534/2/1, fol. 66). Another list in the same file lists contents of two more shipments GARF, A-534/2/1, fol. 69, as does the list in an unpublished September 1946 report by Rudomino, fol. 101. The list with an initial introductory fragment published (without archival citation) by Waldemar Ritter, *Kulturerbe als Beute? Die Rückführung kriegsbedingt aus Deutschland verbrachter Kulturgüter—Notwendigkeit und Chancen für die Lösung eines historischen Problems* (Nuremberg, Verlag des Germanischen Nationalmuseums), 1997, Wissenschaftliche Beibände zum Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums, Bd 13, p. 61, appears to be fragments of document no. 26 in *Die Trophäenkommissionen* from GARF.

retrieved or trophy shipments.²⁹ We know from the few available GlavPU reports that they were active in library reconnaissance. For example, published GlavPU reports that reached the Central Committee reveal one major cache of plundered Soviet books found in one of the satellite ERR centres in Silesia.³⁰ But it turns out that the books from Soviet libraries mentioned there were eventually combined in an echelon of 54 wagon loads with the books found in the nearby Katowice suburb of Mysłowice (German Myslowitz), where many more plundered books from Soviet libraries were combined with a massive cache that the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR) had plundered from occupied countries of Western Europe, totalling between one and two million books.

One GlavPU document regarding that Silesian retrieval released only partially for publication omitted all reference to the trophy books found in the same place. The published portion mentioning six 'Russian libraries' included the Paris 'Turgenev Library' as one of the six.³¹ The available portion of the GlavPU report did not explain that over 100,000 books from that Paris library was in fact plundered by the ERR in October 1940. Rudomino, in another report, confirmed the location of the Turgenev Library 'among the 4,735 crates and 2,305 cardboard containers . . . in a warehouse in Myslowitz (Poland)'.³²

Since the migration route of the Turgenev Library to the ERR centre in Silesia has been established, it has been possible to piece together information from other sources about the military echelon of 54 freight cars, bearing approximately 1.2 million books that arrived in Minsk from Mysłowice in November 1945. It turned out that only half of those books had been plundered from Belarus and other Soviet libraries. The other half million were

²⁹ For example, Mazuritskii told me that he was not admitted for research in those records in the Central Archive of the Ministry of Defence (TsAMO) in Podolsk. I have been refused by TsAMO on several occasions, one time with the unbelievable reply that they 'have no documentation on [my] subject'.

³⁰ 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.

³¹ Fragments of the report by Major V. Pakhomov (of the Chief Political Command [GlavPU]), 'O bibliotekakh, obnaryzhennykh voiskami Krasnoi Armii', are published as doc. no. 169 in *Biblioteknoe delo v Rossii v period Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny (iun' 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 (Chief Political Command RKKa), opis' 11302/327, fols. 383–384v. Notably the fragments published deal only with the retrieval of books confiscated by the Nazis from Soviet libraries. The reference to the Turgenev Library from Paris is the only mention of non-Soviet plundered libraries. RGB was refused a complete copy of the original document by TsAMO.

³² Rudomino's report is published in facsimile and English translation in Grimsted, *The Odyssey of the Turgenev Library* (note 26), appendix. See the details about the fate of the library in that monograph.

books plundered by the ERR from eminent private collections in Western Europe and the Balkans, that ended the war in the same ERR Silesian centre of Ratibor (now Polish Racibórz) and satellite depositories, most of which remained under wraps in Minsk for the next forty years. Most of the Western 'trophy' books still in Minsk from between 60 and 100 private libraries can be matched up with extant ERR lists of confiscated 'Jewish Libraries' in France, Belgium, and the Netherlands.³³

Even many of the books plundered from Soviet libraries that arrived in Minsk were never returned to their originating libraries in other cities, which explains the presence in Minsk today of books from Novgorod, Pskov, and Kyiv collections, to say nothing of former Russian imperial libraries from suburban Leningrad.³⁴ Belarusian and Ukrainian cultural specialists today may complain that they never received cultural property restituted by the Western Allies, which was in fact turned over to Soviet authorities in Germany or Austria. The problem of the books that arrived in Minsk is the other side of the coin. Within the Soviet Union there was no strict policy for sorting and distribution to the home library once books arrived at the major Soviet centres run by the State Book Reserves (Gosfond) or the Central Depository of Museum Fonds (TsKhMF) in suburban Leningrad, let alone the major echelon that arrived in Minsk. The inadequate provisions and questionable practices for postwar distribution of trophy books are now magnified by the loss of Gosfond records. Mazuritskii and others have been searching for them, but so far there is no information about their fate.

Official transfer documents from American restitution centres in Germany to the USSR are now published in facsimile.³⁵ Meanwhile in Russia, we do not even know the whereabouts of the records of the Restitution and Reparations Division of Soviet occupation authorities in Germany (SVAG) and Austria (Soviet Element of CAA) that would contain information about books retrieved by Soviet scouts, books restituted by the British and Americans, as well as trophy books seized and sent back to the USSR. Large files of Soviet claims and restitution proceedings are openly available in American and British records, while library lists and the U.S. albums of book stamps pre-

³³ See more details in Grimsted, 'The Road to Minsk for Western Trophy Books', *Libraries and Culture*, 30 (2004), pp. 351–404, with added details about the ERR lists of confiscated libraries; a Russian version is forthcoming in Minsk. Vladimir Makarov mentions some names in 'Involuntary Journey of Books from Paris to Minsk', *Spoils of War: International Newsletter*, no. 6 (February 1999), pp. 25–27 (also published in Russian); see also his 'Avtografy sud'by', *Evropeiskoe vremia* (Minsk), 1993, no. 10, pp. 12–13.

³⁴ These can be found in the extensive card catalogues indicating library markings and provenance in the Rare Book Division of the National Library of Belarus (NBB).

³⁵ *U.S. Restitution of Nazi-Looted Cultural Treasures to the USSR, 1945–1959: Facsimile Documents from the National Archives of the United States*, compiled with an Introduction by Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, with a Foreword by Michael J. Kurtz (Washington, DC, GPO, 2001).

pared at Offenbach can help identify the collections from Soviet libraries that passed through the British and American restitution centres.³⁶ But then once the books were turned over to Soviet authorities, the trail is lost.

Sometimes careful cross verification of restitution documentation yields surprising discrepancies leading to major misconceptions. For example, documents in files from the Manevskii/Rudomino brigade confirm one Soviet echelon from Berlin with eight freight cars of books from Soviet libraries (1055 cases) restituted from the Offenbach Archival Depot (OAD), the U.S. book restitution centre near Frankfurt am Main. Another Soviet document from Berlin suggests that only 100,000 books were received, although the number of freight cars and cases were the same. According to receipts in U.S. records signed by Soviet restitution officers at Offenbach, 232,000 books in 1055 cases were shipped out of OAD in eight freight train wagons in early August 1946.³⁷ Were over 132,000 books lost from those same 1055 crates in eight wagons between Frankfurt and Berlin? Soviet restitution officers later signed receipts in Offenbach and Berlin for an additional 50,000 books, but recent Russian writings complain that no more than 100,000 books were received from American authorities in Germany.³⁸ To add to the statistical confusion, those books were shipped to the Soviet Union from Berlin as one of the major echelons of trophy books, and hence possibly counted as part of the 'ten million' trophy book figure.

Other Western restitution of Soviet books is often not counted at all or with minimised figures. We now know that one transport of books that were restituted to Soviet officers in Austria from the British and American occupation zones first went to a Gosfond warehouse (probably in Moscow) and then to TsKhMF in suburban Leningrad. By contrast TsKhMF documents refer to the consignment of four or five railroad wagons 'from Germany' or 'from Moscow' when in fact the books were returned by the British in Austria.³⁹ Among that British consignment were close to 7,000 books from Voronezh University Library. Some of the rare books returned by the British are now reported among the published *Lost Book Treasures* from Voronezh. Although we can document the fact that they were turned over to Soviet authorities by

³⁶ Images of the portions of the OAD book stamp albums covering Soviet libraries are included on the Grimsted CD, *U.S. Restitution of Nazi-Looted Cultural Treasures*.

³⁷ See Grimsted, *Trophies of War and Empire* (note 4), pp. 224–29, and related documents in facsimile in *U.S. Restitution of Nazi-Looted Cultural Treasures*, transfer nos. 4 and 5, and explanation in the 'Introduction'.

³⁸ For example, Mazuritskii repeats the 100,000 figure in his *Knizhnye poteri Rossii* (note 5), p. 128.

³⁹ See Grimsted, 'Books from the Library of Tsarskoe Selo Return from the War', forthcoming. Mazuritskii for the first time notes British restitution from Tanzenberg (Austrian Carinthia), *Knizhnye poteri Rossii* (note 5), p. 128, but his figure of 27,000 is half the total indicated in British documents.

the British in Austria, they were never returned to Voronezh.⁴⁰ Such examples highlight the need for more careful research in the mechanics of plunder to determine which German agencies took what books, where they were sent, where they ended the war, and which ones were returned to the USSR, and what happened to those distributed to other Soviet libraries.

Research has shown that some of the scientific books brought as ‘compensation’ from Germany were put to constructive use in Soviet libraries, including VGBIL, in postwar decades.⁴¹ On the other hand, many examples of inappropriate publications transported and the chaotic distribution system are summarised in a 1948 report by Glavlit chief K. Omel’chenko to the CP Central Committee. Even at that time, Soviet librarians were asking, ‘for what purpose was such ‘literature’ brought to the Soviet Union?’⁴² Recently, German librarian director Ingo Kolasa criticised the Gosfond distribution of trophy ‘compensation’ as ‘ending in total chaos’. He cites the example of a consignment of ‘100,000 rain-soaked trophy German books to the Central Library of the Academy of Sciences in Tbilisi in the 1950s’.⁴³ After fifty years in a library cellar, at least 96,000 books were returned from Georgia to Germany in 1996 in a ‘splendid gesture’, paralleling the return of 575 books returned by Armenia in 1998.⁴⁴ Those restitution gestures resulted in significant German library assistance for Georgia and Armenia. In 1992, the All-Russian Library of Foreign Literature (named after Margarita Rudomino) returned 650 trophy Dutch books to Amsterdam University—‘Russia’s only library restitution to the West’—only a symbolic portion of an estimated 30–40,000 Dutch books that arrived in Minsk. They had never passed Soviet-period Glavlit censorship as there was no one competent to evaluate them in Minsk, which kept them out of circulation and had led to their transfer to Moscow. There were some books of Belgian provenance among them, as well as a Dutch-language New Testament with stamps of the Turgenev Library, the first book from that

⁴⁰ See Grimsted, ‘Rare Books from Voronezh in Tartu and Tanzenberg: From Nazi Plunder and British Restitution to Russian “Lost Book Treasures”’, *Solanus*, 18 (2004): 72–107; an updated Russia version is in preparation.

⁴¹ Pamela Spence Richards, ‘Scientific Communication in the Cold War: Margarita Rudomino and the Library of Foreign Literatures during the Last Years of Stalin’, *Libraries and Culture*, 31(1) (Winter 1996), pp. 235–46.

⁴² See Grimsted, *Trophies of War and Empire* (note 4), pp. 259–66. The composite report by Glavlit chief K. Omel’chenko is among Agitprop files (7/8 September 1948), RGASPI, 17/132/97, fols 93–110, large parts of which were published by Pavel Knyshevskii, *Dobycha: taina germanskikh reparatsii* (Moscow, Soratnik, 1994), pp. 110–11, which led me to the original text.

⁴³ *Die Trophäenkommissionen* (note 14), preface by Ingo Kolasa, p. 18. See more details in Grimsted, *Trophies of War and Empire* (note 4), pp. 262–63.

⁴⁴ ‘A Splendid Gesture. Chronology of a Restitution’, part 1 by Ingo Kolasa, and part 2 by Juri Mosidse, *Spoils of War: International Newsletter*, 3 (1996), pp. 53–59; and ‘Books from Armenia Returned to Germany’, *ibid.* 5 (1998), p. 85. See more details in Grimsted, *Trophies of War and Empire* (note 4), pp. 467–68.

Parisian Russian library to return from the war.⁴⁵

Thus in conclusion, we are left with unanswered questions: To be sure it is appalling that the Lenin Library in Minsk (now the National Library of Belarus), for example, lost 1.7 million volumes as a result of the war. But can Dutch books no one can read adequately serve as 'compensation'? Some of them were for seized from the homes of Holocaust victims in the Netherlands and Belgium. Can books dedicated to Léon Blum before he went to Buchenwald, or those with dedications to other prominent French Jews who perished in the Holocaust compensate in good faith for Soviet losses? Why did French victims of Nazi plunder such as twenty members of the Rothschild clan or feminist Louise Weiss never even know that some of their libraries had made an 'involuntary journey' from Paris to Minsk?⁴⁶

Today in Russia or Belarus there may be no thoughts of return of those books to the countries or families from which they were looted. But we still need to know what collections are represented from the European cultural heritage as a memorial to those libraries destroyed or displaced as a result of the most horrendous war in the history of humanity. Even if the Russian Duma has outlawed the return of trophy cultural property to Germany, and insists on nationalising however many millions of 'unneeded' trophy books that may still remain in the former Soviet Union, we need to identify their provenance and where what major portions of what European libraries are still held prisoners of war. Such recognition would be a small tribute to such displaced components of the national heritage of nations and a personal tribute or memorial to those spoliated by the Third Reich.

What is really needed is an international collaborative database to assemble and extend available information about the fate of trophy library collections in Russia, ideally with the participation of Belarus, Ukraine, and Poland, as representing other recipients of significant trophy books of foreign provenance after the Second World War.⁴⁷

In 2001 the Russian Ministry of Culture, now the Ministry of Culture and Mass Communications, was officially delegated the responsibility of publishing an internet register of all Russian 'trophy' cultural treasures.⁴⁸ Fragmen-

⁴⁵ Frits Hoogewoud, 'Russia's Only Restitution of Books to the West: Dutch Books from Moscow (1992)', in *The Return of Looted Collections (1946–1996). 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, 1997), pp. 72–74.

⁴⁶ See Grimsted, 'The Road to Minsk' (note 33), and Makarov, 'Involuntary Journey from Paris to Minsk' (note 33).

⁴⁷ At the request of the organisers, I submitted a proposal for such a database following the Russian German Round Table on Displaced Libraries in Berlin at the time of the 2003 IFLA meeting.

⁴⁸ Details of the 'inventorisation' programme, and the related orders of the Ministry of Culture and discussed in opening sections of Grimsted, 'Russia's "Trophy" Archives: Still Prison-

tary data were posted for only a few libraries on the initial 'lostart.ru' website, while it was functioning through 2003. Emphasis was so far only on the level of individual titles—the State Public Historical Library (GPIB) being the only library to group books by collection of provenance. Since the March 2004 government reorganisation of the Ministry of Culture that website is still 'under reconstruction' (March 2005) and the whole 'inventorisation' project, initially due to be completed by the end of 2002, appears to have run into foul weather.⁴⁹

VGBIL lists a handful of trophy collections on its own website, and their specialists have assisted with descriptions of 'twice-plundered' trophy receipts from several other libraries, such as the valuable rare-book collection from the Sárospatak Calvinist College Library from Hungary now held in Nizhnii Novgorod.⁵⁰ More recently they published an important bilingual catalogue of Hebrew manuscripts from the former Breslau Rabbinical Seminary held by the Russian State Library and the Russian State Military Archive (RGVA).⁵¹ While the format they have developed could prove a further point of departure for collection-level listings for other libraries, they have not had adequate staff and funding to continue the project on a larger scale.⁵²

A more extensive cooperative collection-level database could start by identifying foreign collections of books mentioned in removal/seizure and shipping documents and reports by trophy brigades or other library scouts immediately after the war, with citations of available archival documentation. It could simultaneously work backwards from current library holdings, together with images of book markings of originating libraries of provenance. Such a cooperative database would provide an essential supplement to the Ministry of Culture item-level 'inventorisation' programme. As an essential reference tool for Russian and foreign specialists such a compendium would:

ers of War?', *Electronic version*: Budapest: Open Society Archive (Central European University): <http://www.osa.ceu.hu/publications/2002/RussianTrophyArchives/RussianTrophyArchives.html> (last revised April 2002; an updated version is in preparation for 2005).

⁴⁹ Although the main 'lostart.ru' website homepage has been closed down (as of April 2005), some of the library files can still be accessed through the URL—<http://www.lostart.ru/page3.php>—and subsidiary pages for several of the libraries listed.

⁵⁰ E. A. Korkmasova, E. V. Zhuravleva and N. N. Zubrov, comps., *Trofeinye knigi iz biblioteki Sharoshpatakskogo reformat'skogo kolledzha (Vengriia) v fondakh Nizhnegorodskoi gosudarstvennoi oblastnoi universal'noi nauchnoi biblioteki: Katalog* (Moscow, Rudomino, 1997). Also available electronically on the VGBIL website.

⁵¹ *Katalog rukopisei i arkhivnykh materialov iz Evreiskoi teologicheskoi seminarii goroda Breslau v rossiiskikh khramilishchakh / Catalogue of Manuscripts and Archival Materials of Juedisch-Theologisches Seminar in Breslau held in Russian Depositories*, with a preface by Ekaterina Genieva (Moscow, Rudomino, 2003). The first in a projected series of descriptions of Holocaust-related cultural treasures in Russian sponsored by the Research Project on Art and Archives in New York and the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation.

⁵² See the several collections described on the VGBIL website—<http://www.libfl.ru/restitution>, including the Esterházy library from Austria.

First, help many libraries identify their holdings of foreign provenance;

Second, inform librarians in many countries and private owners anxious to know the fate of their books still held hostage in Russia;

Third, serve as a memorial to Holocaust survivors and their heirs whose libraries ended up in the USSR;

Fourth, assist research, especially abroad, in connection with the recent increased concern about illegally obtained Holocaust-era assets, helping provenance identification of rare books and manuscripts that may have reached foreign libraries, booksellers, and auction houses;

Fifth, help establish more reliable patterns of migration of major collections as a result of war.

Finally, it is to be hoped that such a project would elucidate the wider issue of books as victims and trophies of war, while simultaneously promoting more interlibrary cooperation and international goodwill in the library world.