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“ARCHIVES SHOULD GO HOME FROM THE WAR”

Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, *Trophies of War and Empire. The Archival Heritage of Ukraine, World War II and the International Politics of Restitution*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. USA, 2001, pp. 749+XLVII.

The appeal cited in the title serves the author to close her book on the fortunes of archives during the last war. Not only Ukrainian archives, although Ukrainian matters are a kind of linchpin around which the author (in accordance with her own practice, henceforward called PKG) presents facts and problems, and formulates opinions and suggestions. Among the institutions under whose patronage this publication has appeared, apart from the Institute of Ukrainian Research of Harvard University, for which PKG has worked for years, there is also the Ukrainian State Committee for National Archives, and the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture. To a certain extent, this work can be treated as the recapitulation of several dozen years of the author's very active interest in the archives of Ukraine, Russia, (less so) Byelorussia, and Poland; but also, though to a different extent and with a different scholarly motivation, of Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, Rumania and Hungary. PKG is not a stranger to the Polish historical milieu, she co-operated with Polish historians in their work on *The Lithuanian Registers (Metryka Litewska)* and on register of the Polish Crown Chancellery documents concerning Ukrainian lands; she also, which finds its reflection in her book, co-operated with them in finding out the fortunes of many collections of Polish archival materials and cultural products during World War II. The present author has many times come across repercussions of her work both in Poland, in Moscow and in Kiev. These repercussions were full of admiration for “an

outsider” who was able to reach what even the “natives” were not able to find, but also full of various objections... Perhaps not always springing from the highest motives...

The fact that the notes I made in the course of reading this work run into 60 pages testifies to the dimensions of this book and the wealth of problems discussed. The author’s narration, if one may say so, develops as if at two levels, that of the text *sensu stricto* and the area of footnotes, containing both information on sources and various explanations. What strikes us, is the accuracy of Polish, Ukrainian and Russian surnames, names, titles etc., which is very difficult to achieve in an English transcription. This is a degree of correctness I have never come across... I think I should stress it at the very beginning since, in my opinion, it is one of the proofs of the author’s high qualifications, her accuracy, attention paid to the smallest details. This enhances our confidence in the facts and opinions she presents, and their number is incredible; they are documented, supported by the indication of sources, or based on the results of her own research. The book, very difficult in reading, at the end gives an impression that archival materials, which are the main subject the author discusses, constitute in her opinion an extremely high value in themselves, their content is very important, but not the most essential. Enclosed in thousands of collections and millions of folders, they constitute a condensation of the history of human communities, their life, their problems, communities that inhabit concrete countries and regions; these materials, belonging to the strip of land where they arose, cannot follow “their flag”; their integrity, entirety, the shape in which they have arisen is their absolute, superior right, while the reconstruction of this state after the vicissitudes of war should be imperative to any attempts at restitution. The author, admittedly, in some cases is more tolerant towards accomplished facts. Let us add, they mostly concern Polish matters. In all her opinions we should emphasize her keen sense of the presence of history, its tortuous and dramatic paths, its “objectivity” — hence she is very restrained and careful in her value judgements. The author seems to say — history was as it was, what’s now important is to introduce some order into all that has been done in the area of archives and products of culture, since these matters are interconnected. This concerns everything that happened during the war, after the war

and up to this day inclusive. This order should be dictated not only by a fundamental justice, but also by the understanding of common good, or the interest of the parties engaged. This seems to be a minimal postulate, but, as the author's expositions show, very difficult to realize.

It is very unusual for the name of the author of an introduction to appear, as in this case, on the cover of the book. Charles Kecske méti, an ex-long standing president of the International Council for Archives, the only person in his milieu who knows Russian and Ukrainian and understands the complexity of problems of this part of Europe, was, as can be presumed, the guardian spirit of PKG in her work. While presenting her book he stresses that in the rich western literature on the history of the USSR, the only works concerning the archival system and policy are signed “Patricia Kennedy Grimsted”, and the book in question is a recapitulation of 35 years of her research and “her everyday working contacts with the archives of the USSR and the post-Soviet Ukraine and Russia”; nothing relevant to her field and the geo-political area under discussion has escaped her attention, no event, no publication in any European language. Any reader of this book can fully corroborate this opinion.

Let us say a few words about its structure. Its main bulk consists of two parts. The first has four chapters and discusses the international legal context of the problem of restitution of Ukrainian archival resources and other products of culture seized during the war by German authorities and specialized institutions. After the war, their restitution took place within the framework of general Soviet revindications, which created many additional problems even then, and even more today, when the Russian Federation took over the heritage of the USSR, and Ukraine became one of “successor states” (a situation well-known to history, e.g. after World War I). In this part the author presents “the general potential for restitution”, i.e. the main groups of archival, library and museum collections etc. which changed their place at the time of war and should return to their original homes; she also discusses various legal steps and decisions, made in this matter by the interested states and international institutions, beginning with the ICA (International Council for Archives), and ending with the UNO, or UNESCO in particular. In this part the author approaches in various ways the majority

of problems that she discusses more extensively in the eight chapters of part two, treating of the archives moved during World War II, and the consequences of such moving. PKG uses here the term "Displaced Archives", by analogy with "Displaced Persons" (DPs), applied to the many-million-strong mass of refugees, resettled people or ex-concentration-camps-prisoners, turned out of their native parts during the last war. In the case of some categories of archives, library and artistic etc. collections discussed by PKG we get the impression of something like Bach's fugue, i.e. many topics recur here as a leitmotiv, but in a changing context of problems. This perhaps strengthens the author's argument, although does not, it has to be admitted, help the reader.

I have mentioned earlier the impression of "two levels" in this book, and stressed the role of the "lower level", packed with information concerning the sources, supplementary materials, explanations, less frequently — commentaries. The sources cited, or discussed at this second, "lower" level, as well as archives, libraries, museums etc. where PKG conducted her research, are mentioned, in detail, in her bibliographical index, arranged according to seven thematic groups, from "archival materials" up to "secondary literature", 114 pages altogether. The section of "Documentary Appendices" embraces 11 documents of fundamental character, especially to the legal aspect of her work (UNESCO reports, conventions, international agreements, verdicts of international organizations etc.). Especially interesting among them are the lists, "incomplete" — as it is noted, compiled by the UNO International Legal Commission, of international acts of 1601–1977, 183 items together, concerning the displacement of archives in the context: the former metropolitan state — successor states. This list gives us an idea of the centuries-old presence of these matters in history and their gravity. The book also contains a very detailed and lucid index of subjects and persons, as well as the list of all kinds of abbreviations, abounding in the text. In this context, photographic documentation seems the most scanty: altogether 6 photographs, including the view of the Tyniec Abbey, where in 1944 the Germans placed the archival, library etc. collections evacuated from the East (Lwów included, e.g. a part of the "Ossolineum"). All in all, one can say that PKG's work is perfectly equipped with complete instruments

that make it easy to handle, which is not, unfortunately, the universal practice in scholarly publications. In this case, it is not a question of any editorial “luxury”, but the condition of the general value of her work, without which it would not be a good guide in the subject matter presented. And it should be emphasized, her work is such a guide.

It is practically impossible to discuss the contents of PKG’s work at length, both because of its multiple thematic threads, and the wealth of factual accounts, legal deliberations, references etc., etc. They all make up the picture of what happened to archives, libraries and art collections at the time of war, mainly in the area of Central and Eastern Europe, and what has been happening to them now, after the war. The author is one of the few, perhaps the only expert on these problems with such an amazingly detailed knowledge and orientation in their legal, political, administrative, and personal intricacies; she is also the only one who retains such distance to various trouble spots and conflict situations that occur in this field. So, of necessity, I will confine myself only to a few threads, being fully aware of the imperfection of my choice, and especially of its small representative value. The threads I have chosen are mainly those which, like the above-mentioned motifs of Bach’s fugues, recur in many chapters of this book, testifying to the special importance attached to them by the author.

Thus, in the first place, there is a sequence of problems which could be classified as theoretical, legal. Here, one should ask the fundamental question — on what principle should archives be attributed to particular places, while the boundaries of states, their systems are continually changing, and even the population of a given land *en masse* undergoes resettlement? That is, whether archives “follow the flag”, as PKG says, i.e. are connected with a definite state, or even political organism, or do they belong to the territory, the land from which they have sprung, regardless of changes that occur in it, changes which they happen to be documents of? The author, following in the footsteps of Polish archivists, to whom she frequently refers, is definitely in favour of the second alternative; nevertheless, she is aware that this principle cannot be applied dogmatically, that various accomplished facts are irreversible. In this situation recourse should be sought in “patching up” the gaps with the help of contemporary

microfilm, electronic etc. techniques. Here PKG cites among other things the initiative of the UNESCO (1978) in creating an international fund for the promotion of the microfilm reproduction of archival collections, a fund which was supposed to further this aim. Characteristically, one of the first objects of this action was to be the archives of the Comintern, so important to many countries (p. 93¹). Alas, this valuable initiative fizzled out a few years later, for a reason as simple as the lack of money. The author recalls several other, similar American and British initiatives regarding Russian archives, however, generally not accomplished².

This dilemma of the attribution of archives, which recurs throughout the book, in many cases assuming almost dramatic dimensions, is accompanied by another, no less important and drastic in its many forms, i.e. the attitude to the principle of the indivisibility of archival collections. Little account was taken of this problem during the evacuation in the summer of 1941. The author, while describing its course, focusses on examples from the Ukraine, mainly Kiev; the main object of her concern are archives with an "operational" or political value (materials of NKVD services, party committees etc.). The Germans were directed by similar reasons, and selected the archives and libraries they plundered according to the criteria of their usefulness for the police, as well as for political and ideological purposes (materials concerning German settlers, Freemasons, Jews etc.). It should only be added that this selection, conducted by specialized "commandoes" (e.g. Künsberg Kommando — archival materials, library and museum resources, art collections of historical value; Einsatzstab Reichsführer Rosenberg — materials useful for ideological purposes, "commandoes" that plundered works of art etc.) was going on hand in hand with a total robbery, especially during the withdrawal of the German troops and their evacuation, when everything that could be taken away, suffered such fate. Since even in this chaos there was a certain German order, the author was able to reach some preserved reports, lists, registers etc., which allowed her to establish, more or less precisely, what

¹ Henceforward, in brackets, only the number of the page.

² It seems that the author, generally perfectly informed, did not notice a number of actions of the microfilming of complete archival units, taken within the framework of the "co-operation" of some Russian academic institutes with their American partners.

was taken where, about which she informs the reader. Here again, the author agrees, with some avowed resistance, to the finality of some decisions on selection and the new archival units produced by it. Here she ranks, among other things, documents taken out of their “home” collections and included in the records of Nuremberg trials.

Another kind of selection, in many cases breaking up the integrity of archival, library and museum collections (including those of art), took, and is still taking place due to revindication activities; this embraces not only materials recovered from German robbery, but also, and to a very large extent, constituting “the spoils of war”, trophies³ of the victors, including what the author focusses on, the trophies of the Soviet Army. This, however, will be discussed below, since what is at stake here is one of the most important motifs of PKG’s work, the problem of intersecting or contradictory revindications and turbulences that accompanied them.

The problem of revindication and restitution has appeared since the end of military operations in May 1945, and in fact even earlier, in connection with Soviet declarations concerning the German robbery of goods of culture in the occupied part of the USSR, as well as the destructions brought about by the invader. The author describes very precisely the first post-war stage of revindications, at which the Allies generally acted in concert. In practice this concerned on the one hand independent searches of Soviet teams in the areas, not only German, occupied by the Soviet Army, and on the other the activity of the American special services (the author merely mentions the British, while practically omitting the French), which in several centres, the biggest in the Munich region, assembled the goods of culture robbed by the Germans, including those from the area of the USSR. The latter were subsequently handed over to the Soviet services. It must be admitted, there were some exceptions, including e.g. the archives of the Smolensk NKVD, as well as some archives of party bodies etc., which were retained. Here too, the principle of the “operational” or political usefulness of recovered archives was at play... This first period of massive, but relatively loyal revindication

³ The term frequently used by the author. Among front-line soldiers of the last war it designated some “private” loot, of a very wide range, from a weapon taken from the enemy, up to much more valuable objects, of “civil” character and origin.

actions lasted two–three years, to come to a halt during the “cold war”, when each successive act of return, exchange etc. of those “trophies” was in essence a political act, sometimes a conscious manifestation. Such was e.g. the hand–over of works of art to the Dresden Gallery by the Soviet side. Some revindications were the result of bilateral agreements between interested states, as e.g. between France and the USSR, regarding the archives of the French 2nd Department of General Staff and police, seized by the Germans in 1940 and 1942, which, together with German archival materials found themselves in Soviet hands in 1945⁴. Similar agreements were also concluded between Poland and the USSR.

The problems of revindication and restitution, emerging at various levels of international contacts, especially between archival institutions and organizations, broke out with an unprecedented force in the 1990s. There were two, strongly interconnected reasons behind it. The first was the disclosure (in 1991) of the so–called *Osobyi Arkhiv* (Special Archive), which assembled the archival materials, works of art etc., taken from the enemy (according to the war jargon *trofeynyie*), and brought to the USSR from the areas where the Soviet Army found itself in 1945. The other was the disintegration of the USSR and the emergence, in this connection, of revindications by its “successors”. The author was herself involved in the circumstances of this disclosure, and she writes about it. To the matters of succession, above all in reference to the Ukraine, but not only, she devotes most of her work. At any rate, both these thematic threads are intertwined in various ways, if only because the *Osobyi Arkhiv* also holds materials (archives, books, works of art etc.) from the Ukraine and other Soviet territories occupied by the Germans; some of them concern the Ukraine, as e.g. the archives and library collections of the Ukrainian emigré communities in Germany, France and (former) Czechoslovakia...

⁴ The revindication embracing 6.5 km (*sic!*) of the records of the French 2nd Department and police services, carried out in the 1990s, was cut short by the Russian side, who regarded it as contradictory to the law acts of the Russian Federation. Incidentally, despite the “sacred” principle of integrity, various units and folders were excluded from those archives, previously subjected to special “operational” treatment (the author stresses it with indignance), and transferred to particular archives and institutions of the USSR (e.g. the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and even abroad, among other countries, to Hungary (especially — 286, 296–299, 389, 415–416).

PKG does not hide her sympathies with the Ukraine as well as its revindication postulates, among other things connected with endeavours to rebuild its national identity, reconstruct its history, shape or abolish various myths that remain in the historical consciousness of that nation. The author shows she understands the gravity of these matters for the Ukrainian side, even when she expresses critical opinions about some steps taken in this respect. In one place she writes, ironically, that the West is totally ignorant of the Ukraine. She cites Margaret Thatcher, who was asked, upon the declaration of Ukraine's independence, when she was going to open a British Embassy in Kiev. The answer was: "What's the point? Indeed, I am not going to establish an embassy in Texas..." (138). This, however, does not stop the Author from remarking in another place that the Ukrainians should spend much less energy on battling for some *ucrainica* abroad, and put much more care into their work on those resources, some revindicated or taken from the enemy, which they hold in their archives, libraries, museums, and which have been waiting dozens of years for being set in order and examined (265). And according to the author's opinion, substantiated by many examples, these resources are extremely rich. At the international conference on archives held in Kiev, in 1991, she voiced a definite postulate for the restitution of the products of culture moved during the war, but in both directions, i.e. both the things which Russia, the Ukraine and other Republics should regain from "the West", and those taken from the enemy which both these countries have amassed since 1945 and concealed their existence (180). It was that year that the existence of *Osobyi Arkhiv* was disclosed, with millions of archival, museum, and library items. An exhibition called "The Gold of Troy", with objects coming from German museums, was then organized at the "Hermitage", which caused a shock and rekindled postulates for restitution. The author was one of the first participants in the disclosure of this archive, which in 1992 was renamed as *Tsentr Khraneniya Istoriko-Dokumentalnykh Kollektsey* (The Centre for the Preservation of Historico-Documentary Collections), and later incorporated in the Central Military Archive (313).

The matters of restitution, discussed by PKG, repeatedly refer to this archive, since the majority of collections, the fortunes of which she shows, were or are either held in it, or have passed

through its shelves in their travel. So the author devotes to it much attention, discusses its history, since the foundation in 1946, its structure, with isolated French, German, Polish and Rumanian sections, its resources, containing, among others, important "trophies", the enormous mass of records assembled during the war at Racibórz by Reichsführer Rosenberg's Services (cryptonym "R.E.R."); the latter were elaborated there by 350 German functionaries and archivists with a view to their "operational usefulness" and for ideological purposes (among others, archives of Freemasons' Lodges, Jewish organizations, communities and institutions, religious sects etc.). She also presents the fortunes of some collections, transferred, absolutely arbitrarily, to other Soviet archives and libraries, not always well-prepared for their reception, professionally competent or able to elaborate on them; e.g. the collections of the Amsterdam International Institute of Social History — to the Institute of Marxism and Leninism, Jan Zamoyski's Archive — to Lenin's Library⁵, the municipal archive of Bremen — first to the Central State Archive of Historical Records, and later, some of its parts, excluded from the whole, to the Leningrad Saltykov-Shchedrin Library (nowadays the Russian National Library). The list of archival materials, libraries and collections mentioned by PKG is long. No wonder that, given such practices and such chaos in evidence, there were many cases of wilful destruction of records (for example, the burning, in Kiev, where they were transferred, of 150 kg of records concerning French Jews), disappearance as well as theft, up to smuggling materials abroad or selling them at auctions (307).

The Polish section of this archive was one of especially important; it embraced among others a card index with about 600,000 personal cards, elaborated on the basis of records intercepted by the Soviet organs in 1939; state and military documents taken over in the territory of ex-eastern districts of the Republic of Poland, some confiscated or discovered by the Germans during the occupation of Poland and later stored at the Czech Opava and at Oliwa (Poland), as well as, some, in Vienna, since these lands earlier belonged to the Habsburg Monarchy. The Polish section also includes the records of the Ukrainian

⁵ In 1947 a part of these collections were returned to Poland, however without 78 old state acts of great historical value, which were transferred to the Russian Central State Archives of Historical Records (306).

Scientific Institute in Warsaw, for many years recognized as missing⁶. It should be pointed out here, with some emphasis, that the present author did not try to confront the information concerning Polish archival materials held in Russian or Ukrainian collections and cited by PKG, with the state of knowledge and opinions about them among the Polish archival services.

As I have already mentioned, the resources of this archive allowed the Soviet side to make some gestures showing its good will. Thus, e.g. apart from the former property of Dresden museums and galleries, it handed over to the GDR hundreds of thousands of books (incidentally, Ukraine received about 2.5 million volumes, which she was absolutely unable to cope with), over 2 million archival folders, with documents from the 14th c. up to 1945, and at the end of the 1980s about 40 tonnes of various archival materials. In 1960–1966 France regained archives of great historical value, among others Henry IV's acts (1599 items!). Towards the end of the 1970s, trying to meet the postulates of the International Council for Archives, the Soviet archival services (in the then system subordinated to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the previous NKVD), started returning to some countries their archival materials, however, frequently depleted by previous selections or “operational” endeavours. In 1990 this process quickened its pace. The Hansa cities (Bremen, Hamburg, Lübeck) recovered their historical archives, but... in return for the acts of Tallinn. Poland received then the “death books” of Auschwitz (309). In 1991 the former music collections of Hamburg were handed over to the FRG, and this was the last act of this sort within the framework of the agreement concluded a year before between the USSR and the FRG, which concerned mutual return of goods of culture. Significantly, though, neither of the two countries was very eager to implement this agreement. It was one of the conditions of Russia's entry into the European Council that she should accept the principle of restitution of products of culture. This was based on bilateral agreements between Russia

⁶ The present author was also, once, interested in the access to them. However, he failed in his attempts. Unfortunately, PKG does not say anything about the current fate of these documents. Incidentally, I learned of the existence of the *Osobyi Arkhiv* from Soviet military historians at the turn of the 1950s, however, they did not have access to it, either. According to information I gained from them, this archive was supposed to contain, apart from documents mentioned by PKG, also those of Polish underground organizations, taken over by the Soviet services.

and the interested states, and such agreements were concluded by Holland, Poland and France. In some cases the character of their implementation was peculiar; e.g. Great Duchy of Lichtenstein, in return for its archives, repurchased, at an auction in London, documents concerning the death, or rather the murder of Tsar Nicholas II with his family. The archival materials taken from the enemy etc., among others concerning Halle, Bremen, Magdeburg, Berlin, by order of persons responsible for these affairs at *Osobyi Arkhiv*, went to Georgia and Armenia; these states, having regained their independence, returned them to those cities, however, not forgetting their own interest, i.e. for a financial assistance from the FRG (468).

Particular chapters devoted to various problems contain dispersed, but repeatedly recurring descriptions and discussions of war-time evacuations, robbery committed by various German "commandoes", subsequent evacuations, followed by both chaotic and organized actions (operations?) of restitution, Soviet "reparational" actions that did not differ from robbery at all; finally transportations (only in 1945 about 400,000 goods-train cars!), where the regained objects of culture were mixed with those "taken from the enemy"; this, plus various concentrations and later selections and redistributions of these products by Soviet institutions etc., make up an extremely rich picture of events condensed barely within a decade of years; this picture is packed with facts, detailed data and credible ascertainments of concrete phenomena; it is a picture of a gigantic multidirectional movement of hundreds of thousands of archival items, many millions of volumes, dozens of thousands of museum objects, works of art etc. The author should be admired for her mastery of control over this enormous material which, it should be admitted, gives the impression of a tremendous muddle.

PKG has a profound knowledge of the subject, which she treats with an admirable minuteness of historical detail, but it would be impossible and purposeless here to discuss the fortunes and vicissitudes connected with the restitution of all those archival, library and museum collections, and avoid distortion or simplification, especially because of the complexity of administrative, political and legal considerations involved. I should only like to point out three "motifs" in her dissertation to which the author devotes a lot of attention and refers repeatedly. The first

concerns the fortunes of the Berlin “Sing Akademie’s” collections, that is mainly the heritage of great German composers; the second the vicissitudes of the Russian Historical Archives Abroad in Prague, created by the “white” Russian emigrés in the inter-war period, together with its annexes, and so to say, parallel collections, including Ukrainian; the third, the matters concerning Polish archival, library and museum collections, above all the “Ossolineum” of Lwów.

The collections of the Berlin “Sing Akademie”, considered missing, were disclosed for the first time in Kiev in 1991. PKG took part in their discovery in the local Central Archives and Museum of Literature and Art. According to the initial description they hold the manuscripts of the works of Bach, or more precisely — the Bachs, Handel, Haydn and other, less renowned German composers (275). This turned out to be, however, only a part of these collections. Their large fragments are held in Poland, at the Jagiellonian Library, where they came together with the collections of the Berlin Staatsbibliothek, evacuated to Lower Silesia and taken over by the Polish side. From the “Sing Akademie”, as well as from other collections, come musical materials held in Moscow and Sankt Petersburg, as well as in a few other places. Various attempts at restitution produced little result. In Poland the former collections of the Staatsbibliothek have long been accessible, but their general restitution does not come into play, and here PKG expresses her understanding of the Polish stand. The latter is based on international agreements concerning the fate of the “post-German property” after the end of World War II, as well as on the right at least to a partial recompense for products of culture irretrievably lost by Poland. The access to the Kiev collections, on the other hand, is very limited, while those in the territory of Russia are completely inaccessible (465). The nationalization of all products of culture in the territory of the Russian Federation (1998) and the Ukraine (1999) made their restitution practically impossible. The Russian act cut short any processes of restitution, among others to France, while the Ukrainian one came as a direct reaction to the postulates resulting from the disclosure of the “Sing Akademie’s” collections.

Russian policy of revindication can be much better assessed when we consider the fortunes of the Russian Historical Archives Abroad (*RZAH*), together with the Ukrainian Historical Office and

other archival and library collections that the Russian "white" community in exile managed to create in the inter-war period in Prague. These were the richest and most complete collections of documents, publications, books, papers etc., depicting the life and activity of this community in many countries of the Russian "diaspora" and many fields. During the war these materials found themselves under German control, but apart from military archives, handed over to the military archive in Prague, they were not the object of any serious interference from the German side. In 1945 Russian emigrés tried to take them away to the West, however, they failed. Only the Byelorussians contrived to transfer a small portion of their collections to France. Even in the 1930s the resources of these archives were the object of Russian interest. The then director-general of state archives in the USSR, V. Bonch-Bruyevich, visited them in 1935, appreciated their value and tried to obtain, with the help of Stalin, the consent of the Czechoslovakian president Bene to make microfilms of these collections. However, he failed in his endeavours. So he returned to this problem in 1945 and directed to Stalin an address where he postulated that the Soviet Union should take over this archive as well as all kinds of archival and library collections relating to Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians and "other Slavs", which at that moment could be found in countries reached by the Soviet Army in its westward progress. This was a programme of a total seizure of archival materials of interest to the Soviet side. It gained the support of and was even extended by A. Zhdanov, responsible for cultural affairs in the Politburo, as well as by L. Beria, who appreciated the "operational" importance of this initiative. This programme was implemented on a very large scale. In Prague, there were practically no obstacles. In 1946 the government of Czechoslovakia handed over to the Soviet Union the resources of the *RZAH*, 9 goods-train cars of documents and books, as a "gift" to the Soviet Academy of Sciences, while the Ukraine received only one. These collections never reached the Academy, since in the first place they became the object of "operational elaboration", which produced among other things a card index with 2.5 million personal cards. Some time later these collections were enriched by materials taken from Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia (especially the Belgrade house of Russian culture), and even France (from where they had been earlier taken by the Germans, as e.g.

the collections of the Turgenev Library in Paris). In Moscow the collection from Prague was located mainly in the Central State Archive of the October Revolution (at present the Central State Archive of the Russian Federation), but its various parts were also moved to other archives and libraries, including Kiev, Minsk, Novocherkassk (archival materials of Cossack troops). Not until the end of the 1980s first attempts were made to compile an inventory of these collections, and in the Ukraine not until 1999⁷.

Polish matters figure prominently among the “leading motifs” taken up by PKG. Apart from fragmentary discussions emerging in the context of particular topics, the author devotes to them a separate chapter *Independent Ukraine and Poland: A New Climate for Restitution?* (423–457). In the light of PKG’s expositions, this question mark at the end of the title is quite justified, and I will discuss it below. From among Polish matters taken up by PKG, priority is given to *The Lithuanian Register*, perhaps because of the author’s personal participation in the work of Polish historians on its inventory and partial publication. Confiscated by the Russian imperial authorities after the Third Partition of Poland, this *Register*, divided, went to the archives of Petersburg, Moscow, and other cities. In 1921, when Soviet Russia was returning, in accordance with the Treaty of Riga, various Polish goods of culture, *The Lithuanian Register* was separated from *The Polish Crown Register* and held back, while the fact of its existence was kept secret. Almost half a century later, at the initiative of Polish historians, endeavours were made and work started on setting it in order, microfilming and preparing for publication, jointly with the historians of the ex-Soviet Union. However, according to PKG, this work is limping and there is no prospect of its successful completion. PKG poses among other things an important question — who, in fact, has the right to own the whole of *The Lithuanian Register*. In her opinion, this right certainly belongs to Poland (45).

A drastic matter is one of the fortunes of the art collection donated by the Princes Lubomirski to the City of Lwów and attached, as the Lubomirski Museum, to the “Ossolineum”. The

⁷ More precise data concerning the history, structure and resources of the RZHA, and other archives and libraries of the Russian community in exile, as well as their current location, are given by A. V. P o p o v in his work *Russkoye zarubezhnye arkhivy*, Moskva, 1998.

works of Dürer, held in it, upon the seizure of Lwów by the Germans, in July 1941, were taken away by Hitler's special messengers. After the war, American restitution services handed them over to the Lubomirski family, who sold them out at auctions. Now claims are laid to these works both by the cultural institutions of Lwów (Stefanyk State Library, the Ukrainian successor to the "Ossolineum"), and by Poles ("Ossolineum"), while according to the opinions of American experts cited by PKG, American officers had no right to hand them over to the Lubomirskis, or the latter to sell them (239–240, 481–484).

As we have already mentioned in connection with the *Osobyi Arkhiv*, its resources still contain, according to PKG, many Polish archival collections, or those strictly concerning Poland. The author also points to other places where they are held, including Kiev archives. In some cases she mentions only the kind of documents, but without giving their present "address", such as e.g. the Polish archives of the Teutonic Order (238). However, she devotes most attention to the problems of the "Ossolineum", the history of this institution of supreme importance to Polish culture, which she understands very well; she also presents its importance to other nations inhabiting this region; then she characterizes "Ossolineum" collections, and finally their wartime history and present situation. In her narration and opinions one can sense the personal, and even emotional attitude of a historian, archivist or simply a person who was directly and actively involved in the matters under discussion, and even took part in them, with varying success. Upon the seizure of the ex-eastern regions of the Republic of Poland by the Soviet Union, a number of other cultural institutions of Lwów were included in the "Ossolineum", and it turned into a centre of accumulation of products of culture, art and museum collections, libraries, etc., as well as the property of gentry manors and houses from the whole region. Thus the resources of the former Ossoliński Institute increased considerably, at the same time gaining more importance. The German occupation did not introduce many changes in its situation, until March 1944 when, facing the approach of the Soviet troops, the German authorities ordered evacuation. The successful part of this operation was, at any rate, prepared and carried out with the help of the Polish management. It was under its pressure that the Germans agreed to place the

evacuated collections in Cracow and Tyniec; however, part of them went to Lower Silesia, whence, after the war, they were moved to Warsaw and subsequently to Wrocław, which became the new seat of the Polish half of the “Ossolineum”. These collections were enriched by archival materials, books and manuscripts etc., handed over to Poland by the authorities of Soviet Ukraine as “a gesture of friendship” in 1946–1947. The author also presents the fortunes of the resources of other cultural institutions of Lwów, among others the Baworowski, Czartoryski and University libraries, as well as the *polonica*⁸ from Kiev; then the Polish endeavours to recover them, and, since it was impossible to transfer or make microfilms of them, the work of Polish specialists on their detailed inventory and catalogues. The author clearly contrasts Polish efforts in this respect and the results achieved, with enormous negligence on the part of the Ukrainian side; she points to the “personal” responsibility of the director, Larissa Krushelnitska, for the present state, and even the material degradation of the resources and rooms of the V. Stefanyk Library, formally subordinated to the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. Unlike in other cases, here, exceptionally, PKG expresses a very sharp opinion about the person she mentions in her book. On the other hand, she praises greatly the last director of the “Ossolineum”, Mieczysław Gębarowicz, and his services in rescuing this institution (including his refusal to leave for Poland after the war). He remained till the end of his life (1984) in Lwów, doing his most to help his National Institute, despite its changed character.

While devoting so much attention to the matters of restitution of Polish cultural heritage, the author does not overlook the other side of the problem, i.e. Ukrainian postulates directed to Poland, especially concerning the collections of the T. Shevchenko Ukrainian Learned Society, preserved in the Warsaw National Library. While discussing these matters, the author emphasizes the necessity to settle the problems involved in the upshot of war events, with maximum good will of both sides, and here she refers mainly to the controversies about the “Ossolineum”. It is necessary to

⁸ This relates especially to the remains of the royal library, after the partition of Poland moved by T. Czacki to Krzemieniec, whence they were subsequently moved to Kiev; they are now preserved there in the scientific library of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences.

reject any ambitions, political or nationalistic motivations, and adopt as a basis the realities, i.e. the importance of the collections of this institution to all nationalities inhabiting the lands which earlier belonged to the Commonwealth of Three Nations; these nationalities are now dispersed or rather disintegrated, hence a suggestion of a bilateral renouncement of maximal revindications, and search for methods presented by contemporary technology, to fill the gaps with copies and thus achieve the desirable completeness. The author is an optimist as regards the chances for settling these problems between Poland and the Ukraine, in her opinion better, than for settling those between Poland and Russia.

The author has spent dozens of years working her way through the "wilderness" that arose after the war in large areas of Europe as a result of the gigantic translocations of goods of culture, especially archives; she has gained great experience in research, registry, revindication and publication; she participated in various international conferences, symposia, "round tables" etc., devoted to the post-war migration of goods of culture; therefore she is able to formulate a number of reflections and generalizing conclusions. The most pessimistic is her definition of the present state of affairs as a kind of "cold war" in the field of culture, where the products of culture and especially archives become either war trophies or captives and hostages. Works of art and museum objects can, PKG thinks, fulfil their culture-creative mission also in other places than their "native homes", but this does not concern archives. She is also very sceptical about the effectiveness of various resolutions, recommendations etc., made at the above-mentioned conferences, including UNO or UNESCO ones, and the latest in 1999, which formulates the principles one should follow in respect of the products of culture translocated during World War II⁹. She also rejects, as absolutely unrealistic, those conceptions which allegedly facilitate compromise, as e.g. the thesis of "the common heritage" of archives to which both former metropolitan countries and "separated" (successor) states are entitled. While focussing on situations which emerged during World War II, she perceives, and emphas-

⁹This relates to the *Principles for the Resolution of Disputes Concerning Cultural Heritage Displaced during the Second World War* adopted by the UNESCO in 1999. These *Principles* were also to be adopted by the European Union (487).

izes strongly, their connection with much wider issues including, earlier, events that emerged in the wake of World War I, and more recently, those which arose in the course of decolonization, and finally, the latest, following the disintegration of the USSR and Yugoslavia. Controversies over the resources of *Osobyi Arkhiv* were cut short or frozen by the arbitrary and brutal act of the “nationalization” of all products of culture remaining in the territory of Russia, and the Ukraine. On the other hand, they as if put in the shade the still unsettled rights and restitution claims of the former Soviet Republics, which are now independent states. The real stumbling block here is not only the stand of Russian institutions, but above all the chaos in evidence, the lack of inventories, information materials, guides etc., etc. PKG repeatedly cites the example of Ukrainian services, battling with much enthusiasm for the *ucrainica* abroad, while materials from the archives of Prague, so significant to the history of Ukraine, have not been elaborated to this day¹⁰ (a part of them are decaying, many have disappeared, were stolen or even sold by speculators at auctions) (493).

“**Archives Should go Home from the War**”, they should go to their proper places. This is the final conclusion and appeal of Patricia Kennedy Grimsted. While putting it forward she does not conceal her scepticism, both about its implementation and its realism. The accomplished facts are too strong, various kinds of resistance, grudge, ambition, are too difficult to overcome, there is not enough good will. Nevertheless, she thinks this appeal should be repeated, since archives must return to their natural role in relation to their places of origin, the role of historical sources, and not wartime hostages, “operational sources” or ammunition in political encounters.

Finally, I feel obliged to emphasize again the unusual value, almost the uniqueness of Patricia Kennedy Grimsted’s work. This is a sum of many years of her research, but above all an unmatched compendium of knowledge about the archival materials of many countries of our part of Europe, their wartime and post-war fortunes; an inappreciable guide-book to, I should say, the by-streets and the underground of archives of those countries; an invaluable and irreplaceable manual for any historian

¹⁰ I.e. till the moment that the author wrote her work.

whose research leads him into the areas of the author's interests. At the same time it is a list of sins, cases of negligence and ill-will on one side, and endeavours and strivings for the restoration of some kind of sensible order in this field on the part of various institutions, including international, as well as particular persons. Among them the role of the author, an indefatigable explorer, researcher, when necessary — denouncer, and above all, excuse my grandiloquent expression, a **fighter** for “higher archival causes”, is invaluable. The book which I have tried, with great difficulty, because of the enormity of its substance, and at the same time “the resistance of its matter”, to present to the Readers, is its best material proof.

(Translated by Agnieszka Kreczmar)