

THE PATHS OF BOOKS OF LATVIAN JEWS DURING WORLD WAR II

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The aim of the research is to find out the influence of the Nazi regime on preservation of historical book collections, which were established in Jewish societies, schools, religious organizations and private houses in Latvia until the first Soviet occupation (1940/1941). At the beginning, libraries of Jewish associations and other institutions were expropriated by the Soviet power, which started the elimination of Jewish books and periodicals published in the independent Republic of Latvia. The massive destruction of Jewish literature collections was carried out by Nazi occupation authorities (1941-1944/45), proclaiming Jews and Judaism as their main “enemies”. However, digitized archives of Nazi organizations (mainly documents of the Reichsleiter Rosenberg Taskforce) shows that a small part of the Latvian Jewish book collections was preserved for research purposes and after the Second World War scattered in different countries. Analysis of archival documents will clarify the Nazi strategy for Latvian Jewish book collections. It will be determined which book values survived the war and what their further fate in the second half of the 1940s was.

KEYWORDS: *Jewish libraries of Latvia, Nazi regime, The Reichsleiter Rosenberg Taskforce (Einsatzstab Reichleiter Rosenberg), Holocaust, displaced books.*

INTRODUCTION

The history of Latvian ethnic minorities, including that of Jewish libraries, has so far been studied in a fragmented way. In the last twenty years, the Jewish Holocaust during the Nazi occupation has been the subject of in-depth study, whereas expropriation and further use of Jewish property related thereto has been addressed only in a few minor articles, as there are not many original sources of these processes in Latvia.¹ The studies on the expropriation of Latvian Jewish property are mainly based on documents of the

Soviet power: files of Committee for State Security concerning persons accused of particularly anti-state crimes (National Archives of Latvia, State Archives of Latvia, Collection № 1986), as well as materials of the Extraordinary State Commission for Ascertaining and Investigating Crimes Perpetrated by the German-Fascist Invaders and their Accomplices (National Archives of Latvia, Latvian State Historical Archives, Collection № P-132), but they often include casual and tendentious information. There are not many original documents of the Nazi authorities on the seizure of Jewish property². The confiscation, relocation and destruction of Latvian Jewish cultural values, including book collections, during Nazi occupation have not attracted the attention of researchers, possibly due to the scarcity of primary sources in Latvia.

In other countries, such as Lithuania, Germany, Austria, France not only academic volumes and monographs³, but also a range of popular science publica-

1 EZERGAILIS, Andrievs. Ebreju īpašums [Jewish property]. In Ezerģails, Andrievs. *Holokausts vācu okupētajā Latvijā, 1941–1944*. Rīga: Latvijas Vēstures institūts, 1999, p. 395–397.

URTĀNS, Aigars. Ebreju īpašumu ekspropriācija Ludzas un Madonas apriņķī vācu okupētajā Latvijā=Expropriation of Jewish Property in Ludza District and Madona District in the German-occupied Latvia. In *Holokausta pētniecības problēmas Latvijā = Problems of the holocaust research in Latvia*. Rīga : Latvijas vēstures institūta apģāds, 2008. Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti= Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, vol. 23, p. 118–136. [accessed 3 September 2018]. Access through Internet: <https://www.president.lv/storage/items/PDF/item_1788_Vesturnieku_komisijas_raksti_23_sejums.pdf>.

TREIĢE-TREIDE, Eva, PROKOPOVIČS, Ēriks, JĒKABSONS, Andis. Valdemārpils ebreju kopienas liktenis un ebreju īpašuma ekspropriācija = Destiny of the Jews Community and Expropriation of Jews' Property in the Town of Valdemārpils In *Holokausts Latvijā = Holocaust in Latvia*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apģāds, 2006. Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti = Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, vol. 18, pp. 137–161. ĒRGLIS, Dzintars. Holokausts un ebreju īpašumu ekspropriācija Krustpīlī=The

Holocaust and Expropriation of Jewish Property in Krustpils. In *Holokausta izpēte Latvijā = The Holocaust research in Latvia*. Rīga : Latvijas Vēstures institūta apģāds, 2004. Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti= Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, vol. 12, p. 60–81. [accessed 3 September 2018]. Access through Internet:<https://www.president.lv/storage/items/PDF/item_1969_Vesturnieku_komisijas_raksti_12_sejums.pdf>. Dean, Martin C. Seizure, Registration, Rental and Sale: the Strange Case of the German Administration of Jewish Moveable Property in Latvia (1941-1944). In *Latvija otrajā pasaules karā = Latvia in World War II*. Rīga: Latvijas vēstures institūta apģāds, 2000. Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti = Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, vol. 1, pp. 372–381.

2 URTĀNS, Aigars. Ebreju īpašumu ekspropriācija Ludzas un Madonas apriņķī vācu okupētajā Latvijā=Expropriation of Jewish Property in Ludza District and Madona District in the German-occupied Latvia, pp. 118–120.

3 POULAIN, Martine. *Livres pillés, lectures surveillées : Les Bibliothèques françaises sous l'Occupation*. [Paris]: Gallimard, impr. 2013. 768 p. ADUNKA, Evelyn. *Der Raub der Bücher: Über Verschwinden und Vernichten von Bibliotheken*

tions have been dedicated to the destinies of Jewish libraries looted by Nazis⁴. In a number of Western European countries, databases of cultural values expropriated by Nazis are created, where art items taken from Jews are included as priorities. The creators of databases often also added reviews of Nazi cultural policies in the occupied territories.⁵

The aim of this study is to assess the activities of Nazis with the libraries of their main “enemies” – the Jews – in Latvia in order to determine how they affected the preservation of local Jewish book collections. The study outlines changes within the library system during the first year of Soviet occupation, which also affected Jewish libraries. Their situation at the beginning of Nazi occupation and relocation/destruction in the following years has been reviewed in detail. In the end, the paths of Jewish books after World War II are outlined, highlighting the main challenges while exploring them. The basis of the study are publications in press and books about Jewish life in the independent Republic of Latvia and during the first year of Soviet occupation (1940/1941). The Nazi politics was explored using document collections of the Reichsleiter Rosenberg Taskforce (*Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg*, ERR), the main supervisory authority of the cultural values of the occupied territories, available digitally online. These collections, offered by the German Federal Archives⁶, as well as by the Central State Archive of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine⁷ include materials on the activities of the ERR and thus allow to reconstruct the situation of local Jewish libraries during the Nazi occupation.

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN THE INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

In the 1930s, Jews were among the most active ethnic groups in the independent Republic of Latvia. Two thirds of Jews (over 66%) lived in the largest cities of Latvia: Riga, Daugavpils and Liepāja, where they enjoyed an intense cultural and religious life, and a vast network of educational institutions.⁸ Even after the coup d'état of Kārlis Ulmanis (1877–1942) in May 1934, followed by restrictions on the freedom of expression and assembly, Jewish social, cultural and educational activities were not much affected. However, due to the international economic crisis and the rapid spread of the nationalist-socialist ideas, financial support from abroad declined, and Latvian organizations were forced to restrict aid. In Riga, where almost half (more than 43,000) of the Latvian Jews lived, approximately 60 different Jewish associations were active in 1935-1936 – in the education sector, social care, sports, defence of inter-

ests of separate professions.⁹ In the School Year 1939/1940, 60 Jewish schools, 11 secondary schools and five vocational schools operated in Latvia.¹⁰ In almost every city, even in some parishes, there was a synagogue or Jewish prayer house – about 170 in total.¹¹ Especially intensive religious life was observed in Daugavpils, with more than 42 synagogues, prayer houses, as well as Judaica studying institution Yeshiva.¹² Being active readers of public libraries¹³, Jews

in der NS-Zeit und ihre Restitution nach 1945. Wien: Czernin, [2002]. 309 p. ROSE, Jonathan (ed.). *The Holocaust and the book: destruction and preservation*. Amherst : University of Massachusetts Press, c2001. VI, 314 p.

4 RYDELL, Anders. *Book thieves: the Nazi looting of Europe's libraries and the race to return a literary inheritance*. New York: Viking, 2017.

XIII, 352 p. FISHMAN, David E. *Book smugglers: partisans, poets, and the race to save Jewish treasures from the Nazis*. Lebanon, NH : ForeEdge, an imprint of University Press of New England, [2017]. XV, 322 p. GLICKMAN, Mark. *Stolen words: the Nazi plunder of Jewish books*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, [2016]. x, 327 p.

5 COHEN, Julie-Marthe, HEIMANN-JELINEK, Felicitas, WEINBERGER, Ruth Jolanda. *Handbook on Judaica Provenance Research: Ceremonial objects*. Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, 2018. [accessed 3 September 2018]. Access through Internet: <<http://art.claimscon.org/wp-content/uploads//2018/02/Judaica-Handbook-2.20.2018.pdf>>.

Plundered, But By Whom?: Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and Occupied Europe in the Light of the Nazi-Art Looting: Proceedings of an international academic conference held in Prague on 21–22 October, 2015. Prag: Documentation Centre for Property Transfers of Cultural Assets of WWII Victims, p.b.o, 2015. [accessed 3 September 2018]. Access through Internet: <<http://www.cdmp.cz/wp-content/uploads/Sbornik2015.pdf>>.

GRIMSTED, Patricia Kennedy. *Reconstructing the Record of Nazi Cultural Plunder: a Guide to the Dispersed Archives of the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR) and the Postwar Retrieval of ERR Loot: Revised and Updated Edition*, 2015. [accessed 3 September

2018]. Access through Internet: <https://errproject.org/guide/ERRguideINTRO_10.15.2015.pdf>.

6 Bundesarchiv, Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg NS 30 [accessed 3 September 2018]. Access through Internet: <<https://inventio.bundesarchiv.de>>.

7 Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv vyshchykh orhaniv vldy ta upravlinnia Ukrainy (TsDAVO), Shtab imperskogo rykovoditelya (reihlsyaitera) Rozenberga dlya okkypirovannih vostochnih oblastei, g. Berlin, g. Kiev [Reichsleiter Rosenberg Taskforce for the Eastern Occupied Territories, Berlin, Kiev], Coll. 3676, [accessed 3 September 2018]. Access through Internet: <<http://err.tsdavo.gov.ua>>.

8 Žīdi. Juifs. [Jews] In *Ceturā tautas skaitīšana Latvijā*. [Fourth census of population in Latvia]. Rīga:Valsts Statistiskā pārvalde, 1939, p. 318–321. Information on Jewish societies, religious organizations and enterprises: SALNAIS, Voldemārs, MALDUPS, Aleksandrs.Pilsētu apraksti: [Description of cities]. Rīga: Valsts statistiskā pārvalde, 1936.

9 Rīga. In SALNAIS, Voldemārs, MALDUPS, Aleksandrs. Pilsētu apraksti. 3. daļa. Rīga: Valsts statistiskā pārvalde, 1936. p. 7.-105.

10 Izglītība [Education]. In LATVIJAS PSR TAUTSAIMNIECĪBAS STATISTIKAS PĀRVALDE. *Latvijas PSR statistikas tabulas 1940*. g. Rīga, 1940, p. 36.-63.

11 Latvija: sinagogas un rabīni, 1918–1940 = Латвия : синагоги и раввины, 1918–1940 = Latvia : synagogues and rabbis, 1918–1940. Rīga : Rīgas un Latvijas ebreju reliģiskā draudze “Šamir”, 2004, 292, [2] p.

12 Ibid, pp. 40–67.

13 For example, Jews were the second largest

developed collections of books in their societies and schools, where literature in Yiddish and Hebrew was concentrated. These libraries were maintained from contributions and donations from members and subscribers, they were supported by local governments (e.g. Riga), and the Cultural Foundation. The oldest organizations had developed extensive collections. For example, the Library and Reading Room of the Jewish Education Society, founded in Riga in 1898 (opened to members in 1900), contained more than 13,000 volumes in 1930, mainly Jewish research literature.¹⁴ The largest Jewish libraries were well-organized: they had their own budget, alphabetical and systematic catalogues and a reading room. Although, according to statistics, there were only 11 Jewish institutional libraries in Latvia, in fact there were significantly more – in schools where Yiddish or Hebrew was taught, as well as in major congregations.¹⁵ Jews also maintained commercial libraries, offering topical literature in Latvian, German, Russian, English, Hebrew and Yiddish. In 1935, “Padežina library”, inherited from predecessors by Daugavpils’ bookseller Sholom Adelberg (1896-1941), stored 7,000 volumes.¹⁶ The bookstore-library of Esther Ettinger (1885-1941?), situated at the centre of Riga, Brīvības Street, attracted readers with foreign publications in psychology, pedagogy, law, art and history.¹⁷ Already in 1930 her library contained almost 10,000 volumes.¹⁸ Due to the owner’s belief or in order to attract new clients, “reliable readers” were also offered illegal literature from the Soviet Union.¹⁹ Thanks to regular advertising in the press, attractive show-windows and systematically renewed collections, the largest Jewish commercial libraries were popular. For example, one of E. Ettinger’s libraries had 5,400 readers in 1930.²⁰

JEWISH LIBRARIES DURING THE YEAR OF SOVIET OCCUPATION

Mass relocation of Jewish book collections started in the first year of Soviet occupation, when all societies and private schools, also those of Jews, were liquidated and companies, including bookstores and commercial libraries, were nationalized. Legal press, books and other literature issued in the independent Republic of Latvia, which was not acceptable for the new regime, had to be removed from Jewish libraries and bookstores, and disposed of as waste paper. All Jewish educational institutions had to switch from Hebrew to Yiddish, which resulted in the decline of demand for literature in Hebrew.²¹ The aggressive campaign against Judaism in the press caused decrease in attendance of synagogues; some of them were closed.²² For example, in Jēkabpils, one of

three synagogues was given to the town for setting up of flats.²³ The collections of books of liquidated institutions went under the control of municipalities or the state. The main recipient of the Jewish libraries was the State Library (now the National Library of Latvia), which had been granted the rights to books of liquidated organisations since 1922.²⁴ The State Library received the Library of the Jewish Education Society.²⁵ It was also officially entitled to the Library of the Riga Jewish Social Society.²⁶ However, at the beginning of the Nazi occupation it was still located at Skolas Street 6, which was why the Nazis could freely assess and distribute it as they wished.²⁷

readers group of the State Library (the present National Library of Latvia) behind the Latvians in 1938/39. See: Statistical Review of the State Library, 1938/39. Latvijas Nacionālā bibliotēka [National Library of Latvia], Reto grāmatu un rokrakstu fonds [Collection of Rare Books and Manuscripts], Valsts Bibliotēka [State Library] RXA 164, № 17.

14 Iesniegums Kultūras fondam 1930. gada 30. aprīlī [Application to the Culture Foundation on April 30, 1930]. Latvijas Nacionālais arhīvs (LNA) [The National Archives of Latvia], Latvijas Valsts vēstures arhīvs (LVVA) [Latvian State Historical Archives], Collection (Coll.) 2016, Inventory (Inv.) 1, File (F.) 9, page (p.) 3.

15 Latvijas bibliotēku skaits Rīgā un apriņķos [The number of libraries in Riga and districts]. *Audzinātājs*, 1937, № 12, p. 746.

16 Daugavpils bibliotēkas [Daugavpils libraries]. In SALNAIS, Voldemārs, MALDUPS, Aleksandrs. Pilsētu apraksti. 3. daļa. Rīga: Valsts statistiskā pārvalde, 1936, p. 144.

17 S. B. Modernā verdzība [The modern slavery]. *Londonas Avīze*, 1957, № 592, p. 5.

18 Bibliotēku saraksts 1930. gada 1. janvārī [List of libraries on Januar 1, 1930]. *Latvijas Bibliotēku padomes gada grāmata II*. Rīga: Kultūras fonds, 1932, p. 47.

19 GORDONS, Franks. *Latvieši un žīdi* [Latvians and Jews]. Stokholma: Memento, 1994, p. 82. See also: In STRANGA, Aivars. *Ebreji Baltijā* [Jews in the Baltic States]. Rīga: Nodibinājums "LU

žurnāla "Latvijas Vēsture" fonds, 2000, p. 503.

20 Bibliotēku saraksts 1930. gada 1. janvārī [List of libraries on Januar 1, 1930]. Latvijas Bibliotēku padomes gada grāmata II. Rīga: Kultūras fonds, 1932, p. 47.

21 Mācību valodas ebreju skolās [Teaching languages at Jewish schools]. *Jaunais Komunārs*, 1940, Nr. 35, p. 4.

22 GORDONS, Franks. Maldīgu priekšstatu traģēdija [The tragedy caused by illusions]. In *Okupācijas varu nodarītie postījumi Latvijā 1940–1990*. Stokholma: Memento, 2000, p. 86.

23 Ebreju draudzes piemērs [Sample of the one Jewish parish]. *Brīvā Venta*, 1940, Nr. 26, p. 3.

24 Likums par Valsts bibliotēku [Law on the State Library (May 24, 1922)]. In *Latvijas Nacionālās bibliotēkas Raksti*, 1994, vol. 19, p. 119.

25 The liquidation was announced on February 12, 1941. The Society was liquidated within a month. See: 3644 lēmums. ВѢДОМОСТИ Президиума Верхнего Совета АССР=LPSP AP Prezidija ziņotājs, 1941, № 43, p. 4.

26 Valsts bibliotēka Rīgas žīdu saviesīgās biedrības likvidācijas komisijai 7.09.1940 [The State Library to the liquidation commission of the Riga Jewish Social Society on September 7, 1940]. LNA, Latvijas Valsts arhīvs (LVA) [Latvian State Archives], Coll. 235. (Latvijas Nacionālā bibliotēka) [National Library of Latvia], Inv. 1, F. 190, p. 99.

27 Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg für die besetzten Ostgebiete. Hauptarbeitsgruppe Ostland.

JEWISH BOOK COLLECTIONS DURING
NAZI OCCUPATION

The Nazi Army crossed the Latvian border on 22 June 1941. In July, the entire territory of Latvia came under Nazi rule, which lasted four years in Riga – until 13 October 1944, while in the western part of Latvia – until 8 May 1945.

On Hitler's order from 17 July 1941, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and part of Belarus were joined in one administrative unit, called Ostland. It was administered by Ostland State Commissariat (*Reichskommissariat Ostland*) under the control of the former Schleswig-Holstein Gauleiter Hinrich Lohse (1896–1964). The chief body of civil administration in the Latvian General District (*Generalbezirk Lettland*) was Commissioner General (Generalkommissariat in Riga). Its head was the former Lübeck City Mayor Otto Drechsler (1895–1945).

Looting of Jewish private property began with the extermination of Jews²⁸ and creation of ghettos (only personal accessories, clothes and simplest furniture were allowed to be brought to the ghetto)²⁹ immediately after the occupation in July 1941. The property of Jews who supported the Soviet regime and had fled to Russia was also expropriated. Therefore, until September 1941, when the civil administration was established in the whole territory of Latvia, research libraries were allowed to acquire some book collections that were left without an owner.³⁰ So, in August 1941, the unified Land Library in Riga, which included the former State Library, Misiņš Library, the Library of the Society for the Research of History and Antiquity in Riga (Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde zu Riga) and the remainder of the Library of Riga City, which had almost completely burned down on 29 June, received the collections of communists, including Jews, that had fled to Russia. In this way, 11,000 volumes were collected.³¹ In some places Jewish book collections were discarded, partly sold or even destroyed. For example, in Liepāja, part of Jewish private book stocks was sold to an antiquarian, who had lost his shop in a fire.³² Jewish literature in Madona, Balvi and Valmiera was completely liquidated without the order of the competent authorities.³³ In its turn, literature from many Jewish apartments in Riga had disappeared, as the apartments were already taken over by the Nazi institutions.³⁴ This can be explained by the fact that at the beginning the Nazis did not have a clear cultural policy. Hitler planned to blow up the Soviet Union in a short “lightning war” (*Blitzkrieg*) and celebrate Christmas in Moscow.³⁵

In the autumn local librarians' access to the “enemies” collections was blocked, as inspections, transfer and destruction thereof could only be carried

out by the ERR. Upon Hitler's order on 5 July 1940, it was allowed to search libraries, archives, as well as the property of Jews in the occupied lands, to loot literature that was necessary for the scientific and political activity of the Nazi party, and for the central library of the "higher school" of the party (*Zentralbibliothek der Hohen Schule der NSDAP*). In practice, ERR took over all collections left without an owner and determined their fate quite freely, respecting only the demands of other Nazi authorities. Armed with special powers, the

An die Stabsführung Berlin. Abteilung Auswertung. Den 5. März 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 233, p. 377.

28 URTĀNS, Aigars. Ebreju īpašumu ekspropriācija Ludzas un Madonas apriņķī vācu okupētajā Latvijā=Expropriation of Jewish Property in Ludza District and Madona District in the German-occupied Latvia. In *Holokausta pētniecības problēmas Latvijā = Problems of the holocaust research in Latvia*. Rīga : Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, 2008. Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti= Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, vol. 23, p. 118–136. [accessed 3 September 2018]. Access through Internet: <https://www.president.lv/storage/items/PDF/item_1788_Vesturnieku_komisijas_raksti_23_sejums.pdf>.

29 EZERGAILIS, Andrievs. *Holokausta vācu okupētajā Latvijā, 1941–1944* [The Holocaust in Latvia, 1941–1944], p. 395.

30 For example, in Liepāja. See: Der Gebietskommissar an den Herrn Generalkommissar Riga. Libau, den 29. Oktober 1941. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 128, p. 40.

31 Zemes bibliotēkas revīzijas akts 1941. gada 15. decembrī [Audit Act of the Land library on December 15, 1941]. LNA, LVVA, Coll. P-949 (Izgītības un kultūras ģenerāldirekcijas Vispārīgais un zinātnu departaments) [Department of General Matters and Sciences of the Directorate-General for Education and Culture], Inv. 1, F. 46, p. 4. After the Soviet re-occupation of Latvia, at least a part of this collection had to be returned to former owners. See: Valsts bibliotēka darbinieku atmiņās [The State Library in memories of employees]. In V. Lāča Latvijas PSR Valsts

bibliotēka. *Raksti IV*. Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1973, p. 373.

32 Reichardt [Waldemar]. Bericht über Libau: der Bericht enthält die Ergebnisse der Dienstreise des Pg. Reichardt am 2. und 3. Oktober nach Libau. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 145, p. 288.

33 Hauptarbeitsgruppe Ostland. Arbeitsgruppe Lettland [Straube Eberhard]. Dienstreise der Pgg. Straube, Kutschera nach Modohn, Schwanenburg und Marienburg vom 21.-26.9.1942. Riga, den 29. Sept. 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 145, p. 122.; Der Kreisalteste von Abrene.

An das Herrn Gebietskommissar Dünaburg. 13. November 1941, Abrene. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 128, p. 79.; Der Gebietskommissar in Wolmar. An den Herrn Generalkommissar, Abteilung Kultur. Wolmar, den 21. November 1941. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 128, p. 92.

34 Leiter der Arbeitsgruppe I des Sonderstabes Musik [Dr. Killer Hermann]. Kurzer Bericht der Arbeitsgruppe I des Sonderstabes Musik über die erste Reise in die Baltischen Länder. Riga, d.23. Nov.1941. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 153, p. 205.

35 KANGERIS, Kārlis. Nacionālsociālistiskās Vācijas plāni Baltijā un to izpaušme Latvijas ģenerālapgabala kultūrpolitikā [The plans of the National Socialist Germany in the Baltics and their impact on cultural policy in General District of Latvia]. In *Sarptautiska konference "Bibliotēka, grāmatniecība, ideoloģija Otrā pasaules kara laikā, (1939–1945)*, 8.10.1996.-12.10.1996., Jūrmala (1999). Rīga: Latvijas Nacionālā bibliotēka, 1999, p. 26.

Taskforce undertook the evaluation the collections held in research and public libraries, as well as other institutions, identifying the literature of the “enemies to world beliefs” and creating resource catalogues useful to the “higher school” and other Nazi institutions.³⁶ In Riga, as administrative centre of Ostland, two ERR units were established: the Main Working Group for Ostland (*Hauptarbeitsgruppe Ostland*) and the Working Group for Latvia (*Arbeitsgruppe Lettland*). Both operated in the same building on Vilhelms Purvītis Street 6a (now *Ausekļa* Street), which was located in the Riga Art Nouveau quarter. Thus, they had more staff and material resources than other groups in the eastern regions and could carry out the processing and transfer of book collections not only from Ostland but also from the occupied part of Russia and Ukraine.

In August 1941, an order was issued for the removal of Jewish literature from circulation, which applied to publications of any content in any language.³⁷ Libraries had to compile lists of removed books, which were sent to the Wehrmacht Propaganda Department, Commander in Ostland (*Propaganda-Abteilung beim Wehrmachtbefehlshaber Ostland*) through Latvian self-administrations, and became the basis for published lists of removed books that came out in 1941-1942.³⁸ The literature of Jews and other “enemies” of Nazis from bookstores and libraries was to be concentrated in each district in one place and, as far as possible, transferred to Riga, to a special collection point at Wolter von Plettenberg avenue 22 (now Elizabethes Street) or handed over to local collection centres until ERR would review it.³⁹ Since one storage was not enough, “harmful” literature was placed in another building at Skolas Street 10. After the first sorting, the looted literature was transferred to ERR basements at V. Purvītis Street 6a. This way Nazis came into possession of those bookholdings that had been stored at state and municipal institutions during Soviet occupation or remained in synagogues and prayer houses.

According to reports from provincial officials, collections of Jewish literature in the countryside were in a bad state. For example, in Daugavpils (Latgale) book collections had been preserved only in 15 out of 27 synagogues, in total over 1,300 volumes.⁴⁰ The largest number (300 books) was found in a small wooden Traders’ synagogue, and about 100 books in four more synagogues. Daugavpils Music School was established in a prayer house, whose management had preserved Jewish books in a separate box.⁴¹ Jewish literature had also been gathered by Daugavpils City Library and bookstore. It was intended to take this “harmful” book collection to Riga, but it was difficult to obtain transport of adequate capacity during the war.⁴² The array of books came to the capital only in the summer of 1942.

ERR showed particular interest in the Ludza Rabbinical Library, which was still publicly available at the beginning of the Nazi occupation. It contained not only a spectacular collection of literature in Hebrew, but also extensive rabbinical correspondence.⁴³ It seems that the owner of the collection was the last rabbi of Ludza Benzion Donchin (1968-1941), a well-known researcher of Jewish history and publisher. Unfortunately, the further path of these valuable items is unknown.

Book collections of other rabbis of Latgale were also looted, more than 600 volumes were taken from the rabbi of Viļāni and Jewish Elementary School, whereas from the library of Varakļāni rabbi almost 1,200 books were looted.⁴⁴ However, Nazis kept the copies of only about twenty libraries of rabbis and synagogues.⁴⁵ It should be noted that not quite the entire Jewish spiritual literature was shredded or taken out of Latvia. For example, the equipment and prayer books of Tukums synagogue in Kurzeme had survived the war in a

36 See, for example: ERR Sonderstab Bibliothek – Hohe Schule, Arbeitsgruppe Ostland [Gottlieb Ney]. Arbeitsbericht für den Zeitschnitt vom 1.Nov.1941 bis 30.Jan.19[42]. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 136, pp. 240–241.

37 Izglītības un kultūras lietu ģenerāldirekcija visiem bibliotēku vadītājiem 1941. g. 1. augustā: [Order of the Directorate-General for Education and Culture to all librarians, issued on 1 August 1941], in: LNA, LVVA, Coll. P-1489 Coll. P-1489 (Rīgas pilsētas Izglītības valde) [Education Department of Riga City], Inv. 3, F. 1, p. 1.

38 No latviešu tautas bibliotēkām un antikvariātiem izņemamo grāmatu saraksts = Liste des aus den lettischen Volksbüchereien und Antiquariaten zurückzustellenden Schrifttums. Rīga, 1941, 164 p. No latviešu grāmatu tirdzniecības izņemamo grāmatu 1. saraksts = 1. Liste des aus dem lettischen Buchhandel zurückzustellenden Schrifttums. Rīga, 1941. 28 p. Liste der aus dem lettischen Notenhandel und Notenverleih zurückzustellenden Noten und Schallplatten. Rīga, 1942.

39 Izglītības un kultūras ģenerāldirekcija. Mākslas un kultūras departaments [Directorate-General for Education and Culture, Department of Arts

and Cultural Affairs]. Visiem pilsētu un pagastu vecākiem 1941. gada 25. novembrī [For all elders of cities and parishes on November 25, 1941]. LNA, LVVA, Coll. 946 (Department of Arts and Cultural Affairs), Inv. 1c, F. 36, p. 226.

40 Dünaburger Stadtverwaltung über Sicherstellung von Kulturgütern aus jüdischen Besitz usw., den 12. November 1941: Abschrift, in: TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 128, p. 72–74.

41 Ibid, p. 73.

42 Daugavpils pilsētas vecākā ziņojums 1941. gada 22. janvārī [Report of Daugavpils city elder on January 22, 1941]. LNA, LVVA, Coll. 946, Inv. 1c, F. 36, p. 155.

43 [ERR]. Lagebericht am 19.11.1941. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 145, p. 233.

44 Landrat des Kreises Rositten an den Herrn Gebietskommissaren in Dünaburg, Rezekne, 7. November 1941 : Abschrift. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 128, p. 69.

45 OAD OMG Greater Hesse 31 May 1946 Monthly Report: List of Library Collections Which Have Gone through The Sorting Process: XIV. Latvia. The National Archives (NARA), Ardelia Hall Coll.: Offenbach Administrative Records, pp. 18.–21.

warehouse, although rabbi Levi Lichtenstein had died in 1941 along with other Jews.⁴⁶ One representative of the synagogue also appealed to the Land Library to save manuscripts and ancient books from Jewish shrines.⁴⁷ Since the National Library of Latvia holds several Torah and other Jewish religious manuscripts (without any proprietary marks), this appeal was most likely to be fulfilled. However, illegal retention of books in the libraries of Riga was a difficult task, as there were many employees of the ERR: local libraries were often controlled, their collections thoroughly purged from “harmful” literature.

ERR was greatly interested in the Land Library, since it was clear that a part of the collections of the liquidated Jewish organisations were now in the possession of the library.⁴⁸ Despite the protests of the Director, ERR representatives stayed in the library for a prolonged period of time and reviewed its book collections, looting the necessary printed works, which mainly consisted of unprocessed holdings.⁴⁹ Only the officially allowed number of copies of “unwanted” printed works was to remain at the Library (two copies per edition).

In the autumn of 1941, following the guidelines⁵⁰ of ERR Sonderstab Bibliothek representative and former Director of the State Library of Estonia Gottlieb Ney (1881–1973), processing of collected materials, which included “(..) scientific works of older and recent times, as well as fiction of all times and folks” began.⁵¹ Jewish book holdings were divided into several categories. Thus, politically neutral printed works, such as German classics whose authors, publishers or editors were not Jewish, were generously given to other ERR units, research institutes and libraries, as well as schools, soldiers’ headquarters, hospitals.⁵² Literature in Jewish languages (in Yiddish, Hebrew and Aramaic script) was separated and stored in a basement. Only those who mastered these languages were allowed to process them, as the title of each work was to be transcribed in accordance with “Prussian instructions”⁵³ and translated into German. It was expected that most of the literature would go to the first branch of the Party’s Hohe Schule – the Institute for Research of the Jewish Question (*Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage*), which was officially opened on 26 March 1941 in Frankfurt am Main by A. Rosenberg.⁵⁴ Its library, which was mainly made up of Jewish property looted in the occupied territories, was to become the most complete Judaica collection not only in Europe, but throughout the world.⁵⁵

As about half of the Jewish literature collection stored in ERR’s basement was Talmud commentary and prayer books in Aramaic, but there were no experts of this language in the ERR Riga units, the former Director of the Kurzeme Province Museum, ERR employee Herbert Gotthard (1899–1983?) suggested that Jews from Riga Ghetto be involved in the processing of collected materi-

als.⁵⁶ However, this proposal was rejected. An indirect explanation comes from a letter by Gerhard Wunder (1908-1988), head of the Main Working Group for Ostland, to ERR's leadership in Berlin.⁵⁷ G.Wunder pointed out that, although it would certainly be possible to find proficient users of the Aramaic language within the Ghetto, their involvement in translation would not be desirable, as some books would disappear or be concealed, and false translations would be provided on purpose. This letter was apparently based on Nazi experience, as contemporary research on the collections of Lithuanian Jewish books during the Nazi occupation suggests that Jewish intellectuals risked their lives and used every opportunity to save cultural heritage from destruction and harm the regime.⁵⁸ It should be emphasized that the ERR units did not reject the labour force of "the enemy" – by March 1943, 20 Jews were employed by them.⁵⁹

46 OZOLA, Agrita. *Tukums*. Tukums: Tukuma muzejs, 2007, p. 129.

47 JANSONS, Aleksandrs. Bibliotēka kultūras sardzē [Library in the preservation of culture]. *Dzimtenes Bals*, 1959, № 71, p. 2.

48 Bibliothek der Hohen Schule in Vorbereitung 29. September 1941. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 136, p. 422.

49 UNĀMS, Ž. *Karogs vējā : kara laika atmiņas 2 sējumos* [Flag waving on the wind: war-time memories in two volumes], [Waverly, Iowa] 1969, pp. 76.–90.

50 [ERR]. Sonderstab Zentralbibliothek der Hohen Schule, Zentralleitung, Berlin. Richtlinien zur Bearbeitung der Bücherbestände in den Arbeitsgruppen des Einsatzstabes RR: Abschrift 12.3.42. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1., F. 46 b, pp. 1–2.

51 ERR. Sonderstab Bibliothek Hohe Schule. Arbeitsgruppe Ostland [Ney, Gottlieb]. Riga, den 7.12.41. Arbeitsbericht für die Woche vom 1. bis zum 6.12.41. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1., F. 136, p. 309.

52 ERR. Hauptarbeitsgruppe Ostland. An den Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg Stabsführung Abtlg. Auswertung. Deutsche Bücherbestände in Riga. Riga, den 28.12.42. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 233, p. 7.

53 Instruktionen für die alphabetischen Kataloge der Preussischen Bibliotheken und für den

Preußischen Gesamtkatalog [Instructions for the alphabetical catalogues of the Prussian libraries and for the complete Prussian catalogue].

54 [ERR]. Hauptarbeitsgruppenleiter Ostland [Wunder, G.] Aktennotiz über die Behandlung von gegnerischem Schriftum, Riga, den 11. Juni 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 145, p. 135-139, here p. 137.

55 Pohl, [Johannes]. Die Bibliothek zur Erforschung der Judenfrage, 29. April 1943. BAarch, Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg, NS30/19.

56 [ERR]. Gotthard, [Herbert]. Vorschläge über Arbeiten, die in Einsatzstab RR besonders dringend sind [jüdisches Büchermaterial]. Riga, den 18.1.1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 145, p. 193.

57 [ERR]. Hauptarbeitsgruppenleiter Ostland [Wunder, G.]. An den Stabsführer Berlin. Übersetzungsbüro in Riga. Riga, den 16. März 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 118, pp. 461–462.

58 FISHMAN David E. *Embers Plundered from the Fire: The Rescue of Jewish Cultural Treasures in Vilna*. In ROSE, Jonathan (ed.). *The Holocaust and the book: Destruction and Preservation*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, c2001, pp. 66–78.

59 ERR Hauptarbeitsgruppe Ostland. Arbeitsgruppe Lettland [Maier]. An das Wehrmachts-

They, like other representatives of the “lower” nations, were involved in technical work, such as re-writing catalogue cards.⁶⁰ The work of both Latvians and Jews were monitored by the Germans.⁶¹

Johannes Pohl (1904-1960), a senior researcher at the Institute for Research of the Jewish Question, was expected to assess the Judaica collection. As an expert of Judaism, he evaluated Jewish books in all occupied eastern territories, including Latvia, and wrote anti-Semitic propaganda brochures.⁶² J. Pohl spent two to three weeks in the March of 1942 for assessment of the holdings of Riga. Half of 35 thousand volumes were selected as waste paper, including not only volumes with defects, but also “redundant” copies of the Talmud, prayer books and the Bible.⁶³ J. Pohl selected 17 thousand volumes for transportation to the Institute for Research of the Jewish Question, including at least 500 old prints (issued in 15th-18th century). Only “special” editions (200 volumes) were selected from prayer books. Periodicals of Latvian and foreign Jews and 100 manuscripts were also prepared for the Institute. The first shipment – 108 boxes – was ready on 27 April.⁶⁴ Another 21 boxes followed in May 1942.⁶⁵ J. Pohl assessed the first shipment for 96,000 reichsmarks, stating that the next would be even more valuable.⁶⁶

In April 1943 the Institute for Research of the Jewish Question had already gathered 550,000 volumes, about half were sent from the occupied eastern territories, including those of Riga, Vilnius, and Kaunas.⁶⁷ The stock received from Riga was arranged on the shelves, while more than half of the volumes of the library were still in the boxes.⁶⁸

ERR DISCUSSIONS ON JEWISH LITERATURE

ERR did not have a common view on further activities of looted literature. G. Wunder, head of the Main Working Group for Ostland, proposed almost complete elimination, leaving in the occupied eastern areas only as much Jewish literature as is necessary for local studies, as well as for the Institute for Research of the Jewish Question in Frankfurt.⁶⁹ Like many other ERR ideologists, he put the sign of equality between Jews and Bolshevism⁷⁰, therefore, he considered the Jewish literature of the the occupied eastern territories to be as harmful as the Bolshevik literature.

In turn, Karl Brethauer (1906-1992), Head of the ERR Assessment Unit, felt that elimination should not be rampant, as the collections could prove to be useful. He, along with A. Rosenberg, supported the idea of establishing museums of “Supranational powers” (*Überstaatliche Mächte*) in every district, which

would provide access to the materials on Nazi opponents: Bolshevism, Freemasonry, Atheists, but mainly – Jews. For this purpose, Jewish materials should be preserved in large quantities. He stressed that handing over for processing is always an option.⁷¹

Indeed, the number of institutions that wanted to obtain the “harmful” Jewish literature grew. It was compiled by the Antisemitic Institute organised in August 1941, which was officially under the authority of the Latvian self-government, and the staff was selected from the “local” population, but in practice it received instructions from the Nazi authorities.⁷² Its official task was to investigate the role of Jews in Latvia, but the actual one – to prepare antisemitic propaganda materials: brochures and various types of information

quartieramt Riga. Zuweisung der Wohnung Wilhelm Purvitis Str.6a/1 an Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg 2.3.43. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 143, p. 290.

60 ERR Hauptarbeitsgruppe Ostland. Arbeitsgruppe Lettland [Maier]. An den ERR Stabsführung. Abt. Auswertung. Ostbücherei RR. Riga, am 29. August 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 233, pp. 441.

61 ERR Sonderstab Bibliothek. Arbeitsgruppe Ostland [Ney, Gottlieb]. Arbeitsbericht für die Woche vom 15.-20.12.41. Reval, d.21.12.41 TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 136, p. 301.

62 FISHMAN, David E. Embers Plundered from the Fire: The Rescue of Jewish Cultural Treasures in Vilna. In ROSE, Jonathan (ed.). The Holocaust and the book : Destruction and Preservation. Amherst : University of Massachusetts Press, c2001, p. 68.

63 [ERR]. Pohl, [Johannes]. Bericht über die Verarbeitung der hebräischen Bücher. Riga, den 21.3.1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 128, p. 152.

64 ERR Hauptarbeitsgruppe Ostland. Arbeitsgruppe Lettland [Maier]. An die ERR Stabsführung. Judaica für Judeninstitut Frankfurt,Riga, am 27. April 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 233, p. 323.

65 ERR Hauptarbeitsgruppe Ostland. Arbeitsgruppe Lettland [Maier]. An den ERR Inventarisierungsabteilung. Riga, am 6. Mai 1942.

TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 233, p. 471.

66 ERR. Stabsführung Abtlg. Sonderaufgaben [Lommatzsch, Herbert]. Vierteljahresbericht vom 1. Juli - 30. September. Berlin, den 9. Oktober 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1., F. 228, p. 179.

67 [ERR]. Pohl J. Die Bibliothek zur Erforschung der Judenfrage. 29. April 1943. BArch, Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg, NS 30/19.

68 Ibid.

69 [ERR]. Hauptarbeitsgruppenleiter Ostland[Wunder, G.] an die Stabsführung, Abt. Osten und Auswertung. Gegnerisches Schriftum, Riga, den 27. Mai 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 118, p. 394-396., here p.396. See also: Pg. Reichardt zum Schreiben Dr. Wunder vom 27.5. 42.Berlin, den 4. Juni 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 118, p. 389.

70 [ERR]. Wunder, Gerd. Die Mauer fällt. Das wahre Gesicht des Bolschewismus: Manuskript [1944]. BArch, Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg, NS 30/108, Vol. 1.

71 ERR. Die Stabsführung, Abt. Auswertung [Brethauer, Karl] an der ERR Hauptarbeitsgruppe Ostland. Dortiges Schreiben vom 11.6.1942. Berlin, den 20. Juni 1942. Gegnerisches Schriftum, Riga, den 27. Mai 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 118, p. 370.

72 ERR Rundschreiben vom 19.2.1942 an alle Arbeitsgruppen im Ostland. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 147, p. 328–329.

for press, broadcasts, as well as exhibitions.⁷³ For this purpose, the Institute asked for Jewish books from the storages of “harmful” literature created by the Latvian self-government. In January 1942, the press reported that the Institute had already acquired 10,000 volumes, including the ones looted from apartments and ghettos of Jews, to form a “(..) vast library of different languages with studies and articles on Jews, (..) as well as literature written by Jews themselves.”⁷⁴ However, in March J. Pohl received information that some hundred volumes from Riga libraries were selected for the Institute, some of which would be returned to ERR.⁷⁵ Apparently, the Institute manipulated with information depending on the profitability of each situation.

Reichskommissariat Ostland demanded one copy of each looted edition⁷⁶, although the local library of ERR in Riga was wide open to it.⁷⁷ Left-oriented and Communist Jewish literature in local languages was transferred to the Rosenberg Eastern Library (*Ostbücherei Rosenberg*), where literature on Bolshevism and the occupied eastern regions was compiled.⁷⁸ Its basic collection was in Berlin, but duplicate holdings were stored in Riga, Kiev and Minsk. In the second half of 1943, the Berlin collection was evacuated to Ratibor (Poland), where the duplicate holdings gradually ended up. While some Jewish bibliophile collections from Lithuania and Estonia were kept apart from other stocks⁷⁹, printed works of Latvian Jews were obviously not considered so valuable to be separated from the entire collection of the library.

In November 1942, upon the instructions of ERR, Jewish literature not yet destroyed was to be reserved for the Reich Main Security Office (*Reichssicherheitshauptamt*), which formed a collection of materials on Jews of the occupied eastern regions.⁸⁰ As the printed works and manuscripts on this topic were also of interest to the Institute for Research of the Jewish Question, not much material could have been sent from Latvia – when allocating printed works, ERR preferred party institutions and subordinate institutions of A. Rosenberg.⁸¹

Despite the great demand for Jewish literature, the opinion of G. Wunder prevailed, as he was promoted in August 1942 to the Head of ERR Selection and Assessment Unit. The Rosenberg Eastern Library operated under his supervision.

In January 1943, Reichskommissariat Ostland in its communication with ERR issued a new order on harmful literature detailing the preservation instructions for Jewish literature.⁸² Jewish literature and agitation compilations (*Hetzschriften*), “secret science” publications (*Geheimwissenschaftlichen Schriften*) were to be retained only in four libraries of Reichskommissariat Ostland: the Land Library in Riga, Tartu University Library, Central Library in Kaunas (now the Lithuanian National Library) and the former Library of Lenin in Minsk (now the Belarusian National Library). Only two copies for each edition were to be preserved. Jewish

scholarly publications were to be kept in the closed sections of other scientific libraries. The order basically showed the actual situation, therefore, already in the second half of 1943, ERR was able to report that the “cleansing” (*Reinigung*) of the Baltic States from Jewish literature had been completed, with the exception of some cities in Estonia and Lithuania, as well as rural parishes.⁸³

JEWISH BOOK COLLECTIONS AFTER WORLD WAR II

After World War II, when the U.S. Military Government in Occupied Germany took over the library of the Institute for Research of the Jewish Question (in autumn 1943 it was evacuated from Frankfurt to Hungen), it

- 73 [ERR]. Pohl J. An die Stabsführung, Politische Auswertung. Lettisches “Antisemitisches Institut”, Riga, Jura Allunana 7. Riga, den 13. März 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 233, pp. 369–370.
- 74 Antisemitisma institūta darbs [The work of the Institute for Antisemitism]. *Tēvijā*, 1942, №18, p. 3.
- 75 [ERR]. Pohl. J. An die Stabsführung, Politische Auswertung. Lettisches “Antisemitisches Institut”, Riga, Jura Allunana 7. Riga, den 13. März 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 233, p. 370.
- 76 Der Reichskommissar für das Ostland. Abt. II Pr [Zcheile]. An die Direktion für Kunst und Kulturangelegenheiten Riga 15.12.1941 : Abschrift. LNA, LVVA, Coll. 946 (Mākslas un kultūras lietu direkcija) [Department of Arts and Cultural Affairs], Inv. 1c, F. 36, p. 178.
- 77 [ERR. Hauptarbeitsgruppenleiter Ostland] Wunder. [G]. Informationsmaterial über die Sowjetunion, Riga, den 3. Juli 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 152, p. 80.
- 78 ERR. Die Stabsführung, Abt. Erfassung und Sichtung. Arbeitsplan für die Ergänzung der Ostbücherei. BAarch, Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg, NS30/55.
- 79 ERR transferred from Estonia and Lithuania several important private collections, for example, collection owned by the Lithuanian lawyer

- Viktoras Cimkauskas (1896–1944) and the books of the Estonian Jewish art critic Julius Genss (1887–1957). See: Ostbücherei: Stand von 1.12.1944: Zahl der aufgestellten, katalogisierten und verleihbaren Bücher und Zeitschriften. BAarch, Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg, NS 30/58; ERR. Die Geschäftsführung. Aktenvermerk. Gennss'sche Bibliothek, Libau. Ratibor, den 4. September 1944. BAarch, Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg, NS30/21.
- 80 ERR. Die Stabsführung, Abt. Auswertung [Wunder, G.]. [An die] ERR Hauptarbeitsgruppe Ostland. Judenbücher für SD. Berlin, den 20. November 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 118, p. 87.
- 81 [ERR]. Komm. Hauptarbeitsgruppenleiter [Nerling Otto] an den ERR Stabsführung, Abt. Auswertung. Judenbücher für SD. Berlin, den 9. Dezember 1942. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 118, p. 48.
- 82 Der Reichskommissariat für das Ostland. Abt. I Kult[ur] an die Herren Generalkommissare in Reval, Riga, Kauen, Minsk. Schädliches Schriftum. Riga, am 10. Februar 1943. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 151, p. 218–219.
- 83 [ERR]. Stand der Arbeit der Hauptarbeitsgruppe Ostland 9.8.43. TsDAVO, Coll. 3676, Inv. 1, F. 146, p. 186.

was transferred to Offenbach, along with the stock of other Nazi institutions. A storage was established in the former I. G. Farben factory complex (Offenbach Archival Depot, OAD) for the compilation of collections displaced by Nazis, identification of former owners and preparation of materials for repatriation to the country of origin.⁸⁴ The literature looted by the Nazis came in from Frankfurt, Hirzenhain, Hungen, and other storage facilities.⁸⁵ Each page of every volume was turned over, features of provenance were photographed and collected in special albums. More than two hundred Latvian Jewish organizations and individuals were identified, whose property had come at the disposal of the Institute.⁸⁶ The Latvian collection was rather selective – mostly, less than ten volumes were preserved from each collection; however, from some schools, societies and even individuals, as many as several hundred or thousand volumes were selected. The largest amount – 2,000 volumes – was obtained at Riga City Jewish Primary School, more than 500 printed materials were stocked up at the Library of Riga Jewish Social Society. The Latvian stock confirmed the memories of Ž. Unāms, the Director of the Land Library, regarding the arbitrary embezzlement by ERR from the collections of the liquidated organisations – books from the libraries of both the Jewish Education Society and Baltinava Jewish Cultural Promotion Society were found at the Institute for Research of the Jewish Question. A strict removal of “harmful” literature was also taking place in other libraries: this is evidenced by the stamps in the books of the Institute’s Library from the public libraries of Rīga, Daugavpils, Liepāja. It is believed that the array of Jewish literature from commercial libraries had been destroyed in paper mills, since copies from only a few libraries (for example, S. Adelberg) have been discovered.

As the local Jewish community was almost completely destroyed (about 70,000 Latvian Jews died), and Latvia was under the Soviet occupation, which was not recognised by the United States, it was decided not to repatriate the Baltic Jewish property. In February 1949, the U.S. Military Government in Occupied Germany concluded a memorandum of agreement with the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization and the “Jewish Cultural Reconstruction” which was entrusted with further searches for the owners of the values from the Baltics and distribution of the property of non-owners. Already in September part of the stock was taken to Israel.⁸⁷ The remaining Baltic Jewish books were transferred to the “Jewish Cultural Reconstruction” warehouse in Paris, and a new trusteeship was announced. In 1951, books that remained ownerless or whose owners were unidentifiable, were distributed to Israel, Western

Hemisphere and other countries (to the 40:40:20 ration). Unfortunately, there are no exact data on further paths thereof. Jewish stock looted by the Nazi are scattered around the world: a part of the books can be found at the Library of the United States Congress, the Harvard University Library, the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem, and others.⁸⁸ The United States alone has 48 organisations that received Jewish books from the “Jewish Cultural Reconstruction”.⁸⁹ Although the ex libris of the “Jewish Cultural Reconstruction” was to be attached to the books, in many cases this was not done; the books were released in other stocks or even sold.⁹⁰ Their identification and research on provenance is difficult.

In 1945, compensating for the loss of Belarusian libraries during the years of Nazi occupation, the Communist authorities sent to Minsk 54 wagons of literature from the Rosenberg Eastern Library, which by the end of the war was located in Ratibor.⁹¹ This literature was included in the Belarusian scientific libraries, mainly in the current National Library of Belarus (NLB). Encouragingly, NLB carries out provenance research of the copies and includes information about their previous owners in electronic catalogue. Its preliminary research suggests that NLB also keeps Jewish literature from Latvia.

84 HOOGEWOU, F. J. The Nazi Looting of Books and Its American ‘Antithesis’. Selected Pictures from the Offenbach Archival Depot’s Photographic History and Its Supplement. *Studia Rosenthaliana*, 19–170.

86 OAD OMG Greater Hesse 31 May 1946. Monthly Report: List of Library Collections Which Have Gone through The Sorting Process: XIV. Latvia. The National Archives (NARA), Ardelia Hall Coll.: Offenbach Administrative Records, pp. 18.-21.

87 Heirless Assets and the Role of Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Inc. In *Plunder and restitution: Findings and Recommendations of the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States and Staff Report*, 2000. [accessed 3 September 2018]. Access through Internet: <<https://govinfo.library.unt.edu/pcha/Plunder-Restitution.html/html/StaffChapter6.html>>.

88 CONFERENCE ON JEWISH MATERIAL CLAIMS AGAINST GERMANY, WORLD JEWISH RESTITUTION ORGANIZATION. Holocaust-Era

Judaica and Jewish Cultural Property: A World-Wide Overview. Presented by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany. Prague, 2009 [accessed 3 September 2018]. Access through Internet: <<http://www.claimscon.org/forms/prague/Judaica.pdf>>.

89 The Dispersion of Jewish Ceremonial Objects in the West after 1945: Jewish Cultural Reconstruction. In COHEN, Julie-Marthe, HEIMANN-JELINEK, Felicitas, WEINBERGER, Ruth Jolanda. *Handbook on Judaica Provenance Research: Ceremonial objects. Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany*, 2018. [accessed 3 September 2018]. Access through Internet: <<http://art.claimscon.org/wp-content/uploads//2018/02/Judaica-Handbook-2.20.2018.pdf>>.

90 Ibid, p. 59.

91 GRIMSTED, Patricia Kennedy. The Road to Minsk for Western ‘Trophy’ Books: Twice Plundered but Not Yet “Home from the War.” *Libraries & Culture*, 2004, Vol. 39, №4, p. 351.

During World War II Latvia lost almost all the Jewish book heritage. By handing over library stock of Jewish societies, private schools and companies to state and municipal authorities upon closing many synagogues, the Communist authorities did a favour to the Nazi power by launching a concentration of the property of Nazi “enemies”. The same is true for recycling Jewish non-communist publications issued in the free Republic of Latvia, leaving only a limited number of copies of each edition in restricted collections. Although the detailed Nazi reports on Jewish libraries of Latvia have not been found in the archives, the available documents make it possible to draw conclusions about the general Nazi guidelines and activities on book heritage of their main “enemies”. Their strategy was the same as in the other occupied territories: the non-Jewish literature was distributed to different institutions upon request; while Jewish publications were kept in a limited number of copies only for Nazi research and propaganda purposes. Access of local readers (with certain exceptions) to the “enemies” literature was not planned. Thus, the Nazis continued and expanded the relocation, division and destruction of Jewish libraries, subjecting private book collections to this process as well. From the massive pre-war Jewish book stocks mainly local editions have remained in the major scientific libraries of Latvia, but they are not kept together; instead, they have been grouped into different sub-collections.

Therefore, the study of publishing activities and other aspects of cultural history of Latvian Jews, based on local Jewish publishings and historical collections, is very limited. It would be desirable for libraries that have taken over the Baltic Jewish collections to carry out in-depth studies of provenance and updated databases with information about the former owners of printed works and manuscripts. This would allow for the enrichment of historic sources of Jewish books and libraries, at the same time strengthening the memory of the Holocaust victims.

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LATVIJOS ŽYDŲ KNYGŲ KELIAI ANTROJO PASAULINIO KARO METU

Jana Dreimane

Santrauka

Žydai buvo viena iš aktyviausių etninių grupių nepriklausomoje Latvijos Respublikoje. Jie buvo susibūrę į daugiau nei šimtą draugijų, užsiimančių švietimo, socialinės rūpybos, sporto ir atskirų profesijų interesų gynimo klausimais. Beveik kiekviename didesniame ir mažesniame mieste (net ir keliose parapijose) veikė sinagoga, t. y. žydų maldos namai. Žydų draugijos ir mokyklos buvo sukaupusios literatūros kolekcijas jidiš ir hebrajų kalbomis. Didžiausią biblioteką turėjo Rygos žydų švietimo draugija – jos fonduose 1930 m. buvo sukaupta daugiau nei 13 000 knygų.

Masinis žydams priklaususių knygų kolekcijų perkėlimas prasidėjo pirmaisiais sovietinės okupacijos metais (1940–1941 m.), uždarius visas draugijas ir privačias mokyklas bei nacionalizavus įmones. Teisinė spauda, knygos ir kita naujam režimui nepriimtina Latvijos Respublikoje išleista literatūra turėjo būti pašalinta iš žydų bibliotekų ir knygynų bei paversta makulatūra.

Kai Latvijoje įsigaliojo nacių režimas (1941–1945 m.), visos žydų knygų kolekcijos, įskaitant ir privačias, kaip priešingos nacių pasaulėžiūrai, buvo konfiskuotos, surinktos ir surūšiuotos. Neutralūs spaudiniai, kurių autoriai, leidėjai ar redaktoriai – ne žydai, buvo dosniai dovanojami mokykloms, kareivinėms, ligoninėms, mokslinių tyrimų institutams ir bibliotekoms. Visų darbų, kurių autoriai – žydai, buvo paliekamos tik kelios kopijos – tiek, kiek jų reikėjo nacių institucijoms (daugiausia Žydų klausimo tyrimo institutui Frankfurte prie Maino ir Rosenbergo Rytų bibliotekai) ir tam tikroms kitoms bibliotekoms, įskaitant Žemės biblioteką Rygoje. Perteklinės kopijos buvo likviduojamos, o bendras nacių planas buvo išrauti su šaknimis žydų literatūrą iš viso okupuoto rytinio regiono.

Pasibaigus Antrajam pasauliniam karui, toliau buvo dalijamos nacių užgrobtos ir kitur perkeltos žydų kolekcijos. Sovietų kariuomenės taryba didžiąją Rosenbergo Rytų bibliotekos dalį perkėlė į Minską ir perdavė ją didžiausioms Baltarusijos mokslinėms bibliotekoms. Kadangi visa žydų bendruomenė Latvijoje buvo išnaikinta Holokausto metu, pagal susitarimo memorandumu-

mą, kuri pasirašė JAV karinė vyriausybė okupuotai Vokietijai, Žydų turto restitucijos ir Žydų kultūros atkūrimo organizacijos, literatūra, priklausanti Žydų klausimo tyrimo instituto bibliotekai, buvo išdalyta įvairioms bibliotekoms, universitetams, religinėms organizacijoms Izraelyje, JAV ir kitose šalyse. Nors visos šios knygos turėjo būti pažymėtos „Žydų kultūros atkūrimo“ ekslibrisu, daugelis bibliotekų šio reikalavimo nesilaikė. Dėl šios priežasties sudėtinga nustatyti šių knygų nuosavybę.

Antrasis pasaulinis karas ir okupaciniai režimai visiškai pakeitė Latvijos bibliotekų tinklą ir struktūrą. Dėl bibliotekų perkėlimo, cenzūros ir niokojančių karo veiksmų buvo prarasta daug istorinių kolekcijų, įskaitant ir Latvijos žydų sukauptas kolekcijas.

REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: Latvijos žydų bibliotekos, nacių režimas, Reichsleiterio Rosenbergo operatyvinio štabo okupuotoms sritims (Einsatzstab Reichleiter Rosenberg) Darbo grupė, Holokaustas, perkeltos knygos.

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Priimta 2018 m. spalio 31 d.