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DIVIDED COLLECTION: HISTORY OF THE INCUNABULA OF THE FORMER MARIAN GYMNASIUM IN SZCZECIN

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ABSTRACT

In 1945, book collections located in the Recovered Territories received the status of abandoned collections. The organised action of securing and taking them over by the state saved most of them from destruction and deliberate devastation. However, subsequent actions, consisting in repartitioning them, led to the dispersion of pre-war provenance sets. This also affected the incunabula of the former Marian Gymnasium (*Marienstiftsgymnasium*) in Szczecin. The school operated under this name in the years 1869–1945, but it was the continuation of the ducal Pedagogium founded in 1543. Its pride was the library (*Bibliothek des Marienstifts-Gymnasiums zu Stettin*), which at the end of the 19th century had over 34,000 volumes, including books, manuscripts, musical items, coins and cartographic materials. It is estimated that at the beginning of the second decade of the 20th century it collected at least 69 volumes printed in the 15th century. The first dispersion of the group took place in 1912, when four of them were sold to a library in Berlin.

The surviving items were dispersed after 1945, among others, as a result of an official action to use the secured collections.

KEYWORDS: Former Marian Gymnasium in Szczecin, Marienstiftsgymnasium, incunabula, dispersion of collections

The Marian Gymnasium (*Marienstifts-Gymnasium*), operating from 1869 to 1945, was a leading educational institution in Szczecin and the Pomerania Province. The school's origins trace back to the ducal Pedagogium launched in 1544, serving as an intermediate stage between a Latin school and a university.¹ Following a crisis in the 17th century, the Pedagogium was revived under the Swedes as Gymnasium Carolinum. Through several restructuring and name changes under Prussian rule in the 19th century, it attained the status of a leading teaching institution specializing in humanities. The school's prized possession was its library (Bibliothek des Marienstifts-Gymnasiums zu Stettin), which, in the late 19th century, housed over 34,000 volumes. In addition to printed books, the Library also contained manuscripts, musical items, old coins, and cartographic materials.²

The formation of the book collection was intertwined with the school's history. Situated in the buildings by St. Mary's Church, soon after its opening, the Pedagogium gained access to the Church *libraria*, which had existed together with the parish school since the latter half of the 13th century. The collecting of printed materials most likely began in the second half of the 15th century by amassing books to be used for priestly ministry and by canons-teachers. Upon being granted access to the ecclesial collection of the new educational institution, the shared library continued to

1 M. Wehrmann, 'Geschichte des Marienstifts-Gymnasiums 1544-1894,' in: *Festschrift zum dreihundertfünfzigjährigen Jubiläum des Königlichen Marienstifts-Gymnasiums zu Stettin am 24. und 25. September 1894*, Stettin 1894, pp. 160-164.

2 M. Wehrmann, 'Geschichte der Bibliothek des Marienstifts-Gymnasiums in Stettin,' *Baltische Studien*, 1894 AF, Bd. 44, p. 224.

grow, now incorporating books reflecting the university curriculum, such as manuals of law, philosophy, and history.³

The history of the initial book collection was affected by a fire in 1579 that damaged the Church tower and the Pedagogium. The inventory, initiated 11 years later and complemented with manuscripts in 1611,⁴ included 320 volumes featuring books printed in the 15th century, such as *Margarita decreti seu Tabula Martiniana*, *Manuale seu Breviarium Dioecesis Caminensis*, and *Corona B. Mariae Virginis*.⁵ Unfortunately, due to the absence of publishing information in the bibliographic descriptions, it is challenging to precisely identify the number of incunabula. In 1643, the Pedagogium received books from the former castle library of the House of Griffin. In their format-classified list (*Catalogus librorum ex Ducali Pomeranorum Bibliotheca... in Bibliothecam Ducalis Paedagogii Stetinisensis... translatorum Anno 1643*), some dozen titles, such as *Mammotrectus super Bibliam*, which might date back to the 15th century, can be identified.⁶ Almost three decades later, during the 1677 siege of the city, the Library collection was once again depleted in a fire.

In subsequent years, the collection was rebuilt mainly through donations from private individuals. Among the late-17th-century donors were scholars affiliated with Szczecin, including Daniel Kandsdorf (1642-1691), a professor of Hebrew and theology, and Andreas Müller Greiffenhagius (1630-1694), an Orientalist. In the following century, the Library received books from Detlev Marcus Friese (1634-1710), a lawyer and counselor, and from city Mayor Matthäus Heinrich von Liebeherr (1693-1749).⁷

3 State Archives in Szczecin (below: APS), Samuel Gottlieb Loeper's Collection, cat. no. 65/11/0/145, document 1.

4 'Catalogus librorum, qui exstant in Bibliotheca publica ad aedem diuae Virginis Anno Iesu Christi 1590. Mense Augusto die sexto,' in: *Inwentarz i akta Biblioteki Publicznej w Szczecinie: Marianańskiej i Gimnazjum Akademickiego*, comp. J.C.C. Oelrichs, Palaeo-Stetini 1768, Index H. Lemcke, 1873, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Toruniu, cat. no. MS 1148, pp. 1-27.

5 Ibidem, pp. 21-24.

6 *Biblioteka Książąt Pomorza Zachodniego: katalog*, comp. U. Szajko, Szczecin 1995, p. [23].

7 Index in: *Inwentarz*, (unnumbered pp.).

In the early 18th century, the book collection boasted over 2,000 volumes. In the systematic catalog from 1780, David Friedrich Ebert (1740–1789), vice-chancellor and librarian, recorded almost 6,000 volumes,⁸ among which 11 incunabula can be found, including two editions of commentaries to the Bible by Nicholas of Lyra from before 1472⁹ and Sunday sermons of Hugo de Prato Florido of Strasbourg (1476).¹⁰

In 1805, the Gymnasium merged with higher Lyceum classes, thus creating the Royal and City Gymnasium (Königliches und Stadt-Gymnasium). Its first vice-chancellor, Johann Jakob Sell (1754–1816), compiled a catalog of the library of the combined schools.¹¹ The latter featured three more incunabula and one co-bound post-incunabulum from 1501.

A significant acquisition of incunabula occurred in 1822 when the School Library was enriched with books from the former Chapter Library in Kamień Pomorski.¹² This collection contained 41 manuscript codices and 49 books printed in 1474–1560,¹³ including 37 15th-century editions in 38 volumes. They were mainly theological works but also included law books and philosophical texts.

The manuscripts and printed volumes from the old Chapter Library held immense value for the school. Identified with special catalog numbers, they were maintained as a distinct set. The incunabula obtained from various sources (donation, purchase) were

8 A. Borysowska, *Kultura książki w dawnym Szczecinie (XVII–XVIII w.): studia z pogranicza bibliologii i literaturoznawstwa*, Szczecin 2018, pp. 310–313.

9 D. F. Ebert, *Catalogus systematicus librorum Bibliothecae aedis Cathedralis Marianae et Regii Gimnasii et academici Sedinensis ...*, Palaeo-Stetini 1780, Biblioteka Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, cat. no. MS 3276, chart. 18v, nos. 34, 35; GW M26493

10 Ibidem, chart 78r, no. 8.; GW 13567/IBP 2878 (*Incunabula quae in bibliothecis Poloniae asservantur*. Moderante Alodia Kawecka-Gryczowa composuerunt Maria Bohonos et Elisa Szandorowska, t. 1, Wratislaviae 1970; t. 2: Addenda. Indices. Moderante Alodia Kawecka-Gryczowa composuerunt Maria Bohonos, Michael Spandowski et Elisa Szandorowska, Wratislaviae 1993).

11 Sell J. J., *Catalogus der Bibliothek des vereinigten königlichen und Stadt-Gymnasii zu Stettin*, [before 1817], Książnica Pomorska, cat. no. MS 5.

12 APS, Gimnazjum Mariackie w Szczecinie (below: GM), cat. no. 65/299/0/1330, pp. 22–23.

13 W. Böhmer, *De Pomeranorum historia literaria*, Berolini 1824, pp. 90–91.

annotated based on the ordinal number within a section aligned with their format. In the early 20th century, they underwent registration by the Prussian committee, which was actively involved in compiling the central incunable catalog for the preparation of the *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke*.¹⁴

Around 1910, the Gymnasium Library housed a minimum of 69 volumes from the 15th century, embodying 67 distinct works.¹⁵ Primarily, these comprised theological texts, encompassing homiletics, biblical studies, and patristics. Additionally, the collection featured studies in canon and civil law, works on history, philosophy, Greek and Romance literature, and texts from the Italian Renaissance. The majority of the incunabula were produced in the 1480s and 1490s, emanating from printing workshops within the German-speaking territory, including 13 from Strasbourg. Anton Koburger's workshop in Nuremberg contributed 9 out of 10 incunabula printed there. Venetian printing was represented by 13 books, including one by Aldus Manutius. Several books were printed by Basel typographers, such as Nicolaus Kessler and Johann Amerbach. The collection also featured three Polonica: *Syntagmata*¹⁶ containing the Statutes of Casimir the Great, a set of canonical law by Marcin Polak,¹⁷ and sermons of Nicolaus Varsaviensis.¹⁸

The first division of the Gymnasium's early printed books took place in 1912. To augment the school's budget, the school's organizer, the Board of Education of St. Mary's Foundation, sold four of them to the Royal Library in Berlin for 845 marks. Among the sold printed materials, two held particular worth to Pomerania: Brev-

14 *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke* (GW) Bd. 1-12, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Leipzig-Stuttgart 1925-2021; <https://www.gesamtkatalogderwiegendrucke.de> [accessed: April 11, 2022].

15 A. Michalska, 'Inkunabuły dawnej biblioteki gimnazjalnej w Szczecinie - próba odtworzenia zasobu,' *Przegląd Zachodniopomorski*, 2020. fasc. 2, pp. 119-141, with a list of incunabula in a table at pp. 127-131 (subsequently cited as "lp.').

16 GW M43621/IBP 5154.

17 GW M21425.IBP 3622.

18 GW M26312/IBP 3933.

iarium Caminense¹⁹ and Missale Basiliense (vel Caminense).²⁰ The first has remained in Berlin until this very day, while the Missale was lost in World War II.²¹ Shortly afterward, in relation to the planned relocation of the school to a new building, it was decided that a part of the oldest book collection would be transferred to the City Library. However, the annual report of that public library does not specify the quantity of the transferred set and whether it contained incunabula.²²

It goes without saying that a new chapter in the Gymnasium's history began in 1945. The fact that the Polish administration covered Farther Pomerania with its jurisdiction and incorporated it into Poland's borders altered the legal status of the assets the Germans left there. In compliance with the Act of 6 May 1945, on Abandoned and Derelict Property, German assets were deemed abandoned property, passing under Polish administration to ultimately become the property of the State Treasury and were protected by state offices.²³ Among the movable assets were book collections, including libraries, lending libraries, and bookshops with their furnishings.²⁴ Their professional preservation and purposeful use were overseen by the Ministry of Education, which, as of November 1944, actively contributed to preserving book collections recovered from the liberated territories of the Polish Republic.²⁵ Printed materials published before 1880 were to be secured with special

19 GW 5298.

20 APS, GM, cat. no. 65/299/0/1354, doc. J. no. 397; GW M24254/IBP 3767.

21 A. Michalska, 'Inkunabuły dawnej...', p. 128 (lp. 16).

22 *Jahresbericht der Stadtbibliothek Stettin 1914: Sonderdruck aus dem Verwaltungsbericht der Stadt Stettin für das Jahr 1914*, Stettin [1915], pp. 2-3.

23 'Ustawa z dnia 6 maja 1945 r. o majątkach opuszczonych i porzuconych,' *Dziennik Ustaw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* 1945, no. 117, item 97.

24 'Zarządzenie Ministra Oświaty z dnia 4 sierpnia w sprawie zabezpieczenia i użytkowania księgozbiorów opuszczonych lub porzuconych,' *Polish Journal of Laws* (below: *Dz. Urz.*) 1945, no. 4, item 115.

25 'Okólnik z dnia 29 listopada 1944 r. (Nr Bibl. IV-W-2195/44) w sprawie zabezpieczenia bibliotek i zbiorów bibliotecznych,' *Dziennik Urzędowy Resortu Oświaty* 1944, nos. 1-4, item 32.

care: they fell under the responsibility of the Old Book Section established for this purpose within the Library Department.²⁶

In the Western Pomerania District and in Szczecin itself, similar activities were additionally undertaken by municipal and voivodeship authorities. The first representatives of the Polish state authorities arrived in Szczecin on 30 April 1945. The challenging living conditions, along with the presence of bands of arsonists and looters, and the uncertain national status of the city (involving two departures of the Polish governorship from Szczecin: in May and June), did not contribute effectively to preservation actions. This can be clearly testified to by the words of Stanisław Siadkowski, Director of the Municipal Library in 1946–1948: “‘The preservation action disperses the most precious collections amassed in the city of Griffin. The same thing happened to ‘Stadtbücherei’... All that was precious disappeared; the rest was scattered around and trampled upon.’”²⁷ Some former German book collections left Western Pomerania only with the military commander’s authorization or were taken without authorization by representatives of libraries and academic institutes from central Poland.²⁸ Despite all the challenges, preservation actions covered all Szczecin institutions collecting books, including academic libraries: the city library, that of the Marian Gymnasium, and that of the Society of History and Antiquities of Pomerania.²⁹ In August, the Szczecin Education Office joined in; they established a Voivodeship Committee for the Care of Books.³⁰ Its responsibilities included collecting informa-

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- 26 ‘Zarządzenie Ministra Oświaty z dnia 27 maja 1945 r. (Nr V-6534/45) w sprawie opieki nad dawną ksiązką,’ *Dz. Urz.* 1945, no. 2, item 56.
- 27 S. Siadkowski, ‘Biblioteka Miejska w Szczecinie,’ *Bibliotekarz*, 1946. 13, nos. 6–7, p. 146.
- 28 Nowicki R., *Działalność Aleksandra Birkenmajera na rzecz odbudowy zbiorów bibliotecznych*, Poznań 2006, p. 187.
- 29 For more on Szczecin’s academic libraries, see J. Kosman, *Z dziejów bibliotek w pruskiej prowincji Pomorze w XIX i początkach XX wieku*, Książnica Pomorska, Szczecin 2013, pp. 83–103.
- 30 Archives of the Poznan University Library, Department of Securing and Segregation of Book Collections (below: ABUAM, RZiSK), Information on book collections from Western Pomerania and Silesia 1945–1946, cat. no. 560, p. 38.

tion on the books abandoned by Germans and managing them.³¹ Unfortunately, due to financial and personnel difficulties in practice, the Committee did not play any significant role in preserving the abandoned book collections.

In early May, a delegation from the neighboring Greater Poland, representing Poznan University, arrived in Szczecin with the goal of securing edifices for a future Polish university. Although the mission was aborted, in the initial months of Szczecin being part of Poland, representatives of Poznan University Library secured and took over Pomerania's book collections. Library Director Aleksander Birkenmajer (1890–1967), formally heading the securing of book collections throughout the Pomeranian and Poznan Voivodeships, displayed particular zeal in this endeavor.³² In March, within the Library structure, he established the Department of Collection Securing and Segregation, led by Michał Wąsowicz, which amassed information on library collections in Greater Poland, Pomerania, and the Regained Territories; the Department also played a crucial role in securing and segregating book collections.³³

On 18 June, a day before the municipal authorities left the city for the second time, Mayor Piotr Zaremba established the Committee to Assist Poles.³⁴ This social organization aimed to implement the tasks of the absent authorities and assist Poles who were in the city. It was dissolved on 5 July when representatives of the Polish state officially took power in Szczecin. Shortly before its dissolution, the Committee, collaborating with A. Birkenmajer's envoys, provided the Poznan University Library with antique books

31 P. Garlicki, 'Ochrona zbiorów bibliotecznych na Pomorzu Zachodnim na łamach prasy lokalnej w latach 1945–1950,' in: *Ochrona zbiorów bibliotecznych: praca zbiorowa*, eds. R. Nowicki, J. Gomoliszek, K. Wodniak, Bydgoszcz 2016, p. 98.

32 'Zarządzenie Ministra Oświaty z dnia 15 lutego 1945 r. w sprawie zabezpieczenia bibliotek,' *Poznański Dziennik Wojewódzki* 1945, no. 3, item 17.

33 M. Głowacka-Helak, 'Rewindykacja księgozbioru Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej w Poznaniu oraz zabezpieczanie zbiorów porzuconych i opuszczonych w latach 1945–1946 na terenie Wielkopolski i Ziemi Odzyskanych,' *Roczniki Biblioteczne*, 1991, vol. 35, fascs. 1/2, p. 278.

34 T. Białecki, 'Pierwsze lata polskiego Szczecina (1945–1949),' in: *Dzieje Szczecina 1945–1990*, vol. 4, eds. T. Białecki, Z. Silski, Szczecin 1998, p. 57.

secured from the former Gymnasium building. Already on 6 July, the Library Management received 43 crates of antique books from the 15th-18th centuries, totaling 1,228 specimens.³⁵ Meanwhile, the list compiled by Marcin Kukuła,³⁶ an employee of the Szczecin School Department, contained 1,211 volumes.³⁷ The descriptions of the antique books, often not free from errors resulting from the incorrect deciphering of inscriptions, provided information on the author, title, and publication year. The discrepancy between the number of books transferred and received may have resulted from the difference in counting either volumes or bibliographical items.

Eleven incunabula³⁸ from the resources of the old Gymnasium were deposited with the Poznan libraries, of which three were bound together with 16th-century books.³⁹ One of the most precious was the rare edition of Lucan's *Pharsalia* (Venezia, January 31, 1493).⁴⁰

The measures intended to secure books, initiated by the Ministry of Education in Western Pomerania in the spring and summer of 1945, were continued by the Branch Office of the Ministry of Education established by that department to secure abandoned and derelict book collections. Stanisław Sierotwiński (1909-1975), heading the securing of book collections in the Kraków, Rzeszów, and Kielce Voivodeships,⁴¹ suggested establishing a separate institu-

35 ABUAM, RZiSK, Report on securing book collections 1945-1947, cat. no. 540, pp. 69, 72.

36 P. Zaremba, *Wspomnienia prezydenta Szczecina 1945-1950*, Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, Poznań 1980, p. 105.

37 ABUAM, RZiSK, Information cards on abandoned and found book collections. Authorisations to release book collections 1945-1946, cat. no. 559, pp. 26-75.

38 Wydra W., *Katalog inkunabułów Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej w Poznaniu*, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, Poznań 2002, nos. 75, 128, 184, 185, 213, 327, 334, 358; A. Michalska, 'Inkunabuły dawnej...', pp. 127-131 (*lp.* 4, 14, 23, 24, 31, 36, 54, 56, 59, 65).

39 J. Łukaszewski, 'Jeszcze o inkunabułach szczecińskiego gimnazjum Mariackiego w zbiorach Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej w Poznaniu ("nowe" egzemplarze i fragmenty)', *Przegląd Zachodniopomorski*, 2020, fasc. 2, pp. 144, 152-153, 156-157.

40 GW M18859/IBP 3455 (+ err.).

41 R. Nowicki, 'Działalność Stanisława Sierotwińskiego w latach 1945-1946 jako delegata Ministerstwa Oświaty do zabezpieczania księgozbiorów opuszczonych

tion preserving collections in the territories incorporated into Poland. Established on 1 December 1945, this branch office operated until 30 April, 1947, headed by the initiator of the project. The territory of the Branch Office was divided into five districts: Kraków, Wrocław, Szczecin, Olsztyn, and Lubusz.

In this respect, mention should be made of an employee of the Branch Office in the Szczecin District, namely Maria Adela Quirini (1895–1975), a librarian and editor.⁴² As of March 1946, she supervised the actions of bringing together the former German book collections from the Szczecin Voivodeship, and from 1 February, 1947, until the end of April 1950, she served as the Head of the Depot of Secured Book Collections in Szczecin, overseeing the segregation and repartition of the books deposited in the storages.⁴³

Decisions on transferring the books were made at the Ministry of Education, and as of March 1946 at the newly established General Authority of Libraries, whose first director was Józef Grycz.⁴⁴

Public and private collections taken over by the state were to be used in the most useful way, considering the cultural interests of the region.⁴⁵ However, the latter condition was not met in the case of books that manifested symptoms of abandoned property. This is confirmed by the appeal made by Pomeranian historians at the 1947 congress in Toruń, asking to leave in Pomerania or return

i porzuconych na Ziemiach Zachodnich,' *Roczniki Biblioteczne*, 2006, vol. 50, pp. 26–29.

42 For more on Quirini and other storage's employees see P. Garlicki, 'Maria Quirini i inni pracownicy Zbiornicy Księgozbiorów Zabezpieczonych w Szczecinie,' *Bibliotekarz Zachodniopomorski*, 2013, nos. 2–3, pp. 69–74.

43 Archives of Pomeranian Library in Szczecin, Storage of Secured Book Collections (below: AZKP, ZKZ), cat. no. 1/5, p. 209: 'Pismo Naczelnej Dyrekcji [Bibliotek Ministerstwa Oświaty] z 25 I 1947 r. w sprawie zorganizowania zbiornicy w Szczecinie i powierzenia M. Quirini funkcji kierownika.'

44 'Zarządzenie Wewnętrzne Nr 3 Ministra Oświaty z dnia 12 marca 1946 r. o utworzeniu naczelnej Dyrekcji Bibliotek,' quoted after: T. Zarzębski, *Polskie prawo biblioteczne 1773–1990*, Warszawa 1991, item 235.

45 Okólnik Nr 29/V–45 Głównego Urzędu Tymczasowego Zarządu Państwowego z dnia 21 czerwca 1945 r., dotyczy: księgozbiorów stanowiących majątek opuszczony lub porzucony,' copy in: see footnote 20.

to its academic and cultural institutions the collections that had been taken away from the region.⁴⁶

The former German book collections became part of two new university libraries established in 1945: in Łódź and Toruń. Thanks to the engagement of Stefan Burhardt (1888–1991), in 1945–1948, Toruń received collections from Warmia, Masuria, and Pomerania,⁴⁷ and in the western section of the region, books left from Koszalin, Starogard, and Szczecin.⁴⁸ Around the same time and later, individual items were also purchased. Thus, in 1949, three incunabula (in two volumes) from the former Gymnasium Library, forming part of the Kamień set, were acquired.⁴⁹ The book collections transported to Łódź in early 1946, among others from the capital of Western Pomerania, contained no printed books of the provenance that are of interest to us.⁵⁰ Meanwhile, some dozen incunabula were found in the book collection of the Bismark-Ostens in the seized Płoty Castle, which housed a 13,000-volume collection dedicated to Pomerania.⁵¹

The acquisition of the secured collections was also of interest to those libraries that had suffered devastating war losses. Among

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- 46 'Protokół II zebrania plenarnego Ogólnopolskiego Zjazdu Historyków Polskich z dnia 20 lutego 1947 r.,' *Zapiski Towarzystwa Naukowego w Toruniu*, 1947, vol. 13, fascs. 1–4, pp. 128–130.
- 47 A. Bogłowska, J. Tondel, 'Księgozbiór Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej w Toruniu jako warsztat badań księgoznawczych,' *Studia o Książce*, 1983, vol. 13, p. 18.
- 48 H. Baranowski, 'Zbiory biblioteki uniwersyteckiej w Toruniu, ich rozwój i kierunki przyszłego kształtowania,' *Studia o działalności i zbiorach Biblioteki Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika*, 1990, part 5, p. 27.
- 49 *Katalog inkunabułów Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej w Toruniu*, comp. M. Strutyńska, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 1995, items 80, 157, 180; A. Michalska, 'Inkunabuły dawnej...', pp. 129–131 (*lp.* 25, 48, 55).
- 50 Z. S. Dylak, 'Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Łodzi w pierwszym okresie istnienia,' *Życie Szkoły Wyższej*, 1980, nos. 7–8, p. 103.
- 51 A. Michalska, 'Inkunabuły bibliotek Pomorza Zachodniego i ich powojenne losy,' in: *Księgozbiory rozproszone: losy księgozbiorów historycznych po II wojnie światowej: materiały z konferencji naukowej zorganizowanej przez Muzeum Zamkowe w Malborku, 19 października 2012 roku*, ed. A. Siuciak, Muzeum Zamkowe w Malborku, Malbork 2015, p. 136; V. de Senarclens, 'Teile einer verstreuten Büchersammlung aus dem 18. Jahrhundert. Die Bibliothek Schloss Plathe und ihre Benutzer,' in: *Unbekannte Schätze. Germanica des 16. Jahrhunderts in der Universitätsbibliothek Łódź*, eds. C. Dieltl, M. Kubisiak, Łódź 2018, pp. 117–135.

them, mention has to be made of two main Warsaw libraries: the University of Warsaw Library (BUW) and the National Library (BN). In August 1941, as a result of the reorganization of Warsaw's libraries conducted by the German aggressors, BUW's incunabula (over 200) were transferred to the Library of the Krasiński Entail. The Krasiński Library, founded in 1844, was located in a new building at 9 Okólnik Street from 1914. From 1941, it housed the special collections of three capital libraries: the National Library, the University Library, and the Library of the Krasiński Entail.⁵² These libraries were devoured by fire after the defeat of the Warsaw Uprising, in the course of the systematic demolishing and burning down of Warsaw conducted by the Brandkommando. In late May 1945, the antique printed books taken by the Nazis, and books and magazines evacuated outside the city, began to return to the Library, while in early September, the secured collections from the Regained Territories started arriving.⁵³

The University authorities insisted on acquiring books for faculty libraries and the reconstruction of the special collections. The 15th-century books that are of interest to us arrived at the Library in 1946. They were two co-bound works by St. Augustine donated to the Gymnasium Library in the late 18th century by Pastor Johann Gottlieb Arnd through the mediation of the Consistory Counsel and Gymnasium Inspector Friedrich Christian Göring.⁵⁴ At about the same time, BUW also took over one of the three aforementioned Polonica: *Syntagmata* from 1488, bound with two 16th-century printed books.⁵⁵

It is likely that the same channel helped BUW acquire the Venetian edition of Rome's history by Julius Pomponius Laetus from

52 'Krasiński Library' w: *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Krasi%C5%84ski_Library [Accessed 29May 2023].

53 *Katalog druków XV i XVI wieku w zbiorach Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej w Warszawie*, vol. 1, part. 1: *XV w.*, comp. T. Komender, Warszawa 1994, pp. 28–29.

54 *Ibidem*, nos. 17, 18; A. Michalska, 'Inkunabuły dawnej...', p. 128 (*lp.* 6, 7).

55 *Ibidem*, no. 29; *Ibidem*, p. 128 (*lp.* 19).

1500.⁵⁶ The permission obtained from the Ministry of Education in 1947 allowed for the continued acquisition of books by faculties and seminars, as well as the main Library. By the end of 1949, Warsaw had received publications on Evangelical theology,⁵⁷ classical and Romance philology, history, philosophy, mathematics, and science, totaling over 2,100 volumes of historical value and antique books. Furthermore, thanks to the efforts of Director Adam Lewak, the prints secured in Wałcz also reached the BUW Print Cabinet.⁵⁸ The remaining two incunabula that came from the Gymnasium (amounting to six in total at BUW) were purchased. These included the Strasbourg edition of Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*, purchased from a private individual in December 1951, and *Casus longi* by St. Bernard of Parma, purchased four years later at *Ars Christiana*.⁵⁹ This enterprise traded in devotional articles, having 60 shops in Poland. Old prints were also sold through *Ars Christiana*'s commission department.⁶⁰

The fact that the books, which by law were protected by state institutions, appeared in sales confirms that a certain portion of secured collections reached private hands. This occurred as a result of punishable acts, such as looting, but not only: Via semi-official channels, they were also presented free of charge to respected and well-known individuals and later entered the book trade.⁶¹

Devastated during WWII, the National Library practically lost its entire incunabula collection from before the war (around 2,250 items)⁶² and its printed 16th-century books, as well as the majority of *Polonica* spanning the 17th-18th centuries. In the aftermath, it embarked on building a new collection of antique books, composed

56 Ibidem, no. 130; Ibidem, p. 131 (*lp.* 53).

57 AZKP, ZKZ, cat. no. 1/8, pp. 161, 633-723.

58 Ibidem, cat. no. 1/9, pp. 370-374, cat. no. 1/6, pp. 411-412.

59 I. Wienczek, *Incunabula accession*, to: A. Michalska, 23 October 2019, e-mail.

60 M. Osuch, *Ars Christiana*, to: A. Michalska, 29 March, 2023, e-mail.

61 AZKP, ZKZ, cat. no. 1/9, p. 620,

62 M. Spadowski, 'Polskie zbiory inkunabułów zniszczone, rozproszone i przemieszczone w czasie i w wyniku II wojny światowej,' *Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej*, 2013, vol. 44, pp. 8-9.

of fragments from Polish collections classified as abandoned, those belonging to no longer extant public institutions, and secured collections from Silesia, Pomerania, and Eastern Prussia.⁶³ Thus, the BN received antique books from the 15th-18th centuries from several Pomeranian institutions: the Gröning Gymnasium in Stargard, the Szczecin pre-war Archives,⁶⁴ and the school that is the subject of the present paper. Notably, these acquisitions were dominated by printed materials from Stargard, constituting around 90 percent of the preserved set.⁶⁵ Currently, BN is home to two incunabula from the Marian Gymnasium resources.⁶⁶ One of them was a donation from the National Museum in Warsaw, reaching the Library in 1979. Besides those already mentioned, the Museum was one of Warsaw's institutions submitting claims to receive secured collections. Others doing so were, for example, the Museum of the Earth, the Central Medical Library, and the Warsaw Public Library.⁶⁷

The largest number of incunabula, once housed in the school library, is now part of the Pomeranian Library in Szczecin.⁶⁸ The oldest of its buildings on Dworcowa Street served as the Storage of Secured Book Collections from 1947 to 1950, managed by the aforementioned Maria Quirini; it also functioned as one of the storage-sorting offices.⁶⁹ In November 1955, the Department of Antique Books was established within the Voivodeship and Municipal Public Library's structure, where the secured former German

63 *Historia zbiorów*, National Library's website, <https://www.bn.org.pl/o-nas/zbiory-bn/zbiory-bn/starodruki/historia-zbiorow> [Accessed: 11 April 2022].

64 For more on the Archive's library see J. Kosman, *Jedna biblioteka - trzy historie. Biblioteka Archiwum Państwowego w Szczecinie. Studium przypadku*, Warszawa-Szczecin 2021.

65 For more on the incunabula amassed in Stargard libraries see M. Spandowski, 'Inkunabuły dawnych bibliotek w Stargardzie,' *Stargardia*, 2013, vol. 8, pp. 41-97.

66 M. Spandowski, *Catalogue of incunabula in the National Library of Poland*, vol. 1, National Library of Poland, Warsaw 2020, nos. 404 and 792 (copy d); A. Michalska, 'Inkunabuły dawnej...', pp. 129-130 (*lp.* 28, 50).

67 AZKP, ZKZ, cat. no. 1/6, pp. 321, 489-493.

68 In July 1945, a Municipal Library was created, renamed Voivodeship Public Library in 1947, and finally Voivodeship and Municipal Public Library in 1955, known under its present name since 1994.

69 AZKP, ZKZ, cat. no. 1/11, p. 67.

collections were relocated. Among the early printed books from various libraries in Szczecin, there are 24 15th-century volumes (23 works) from the former Marian Gymnasium.⁷⁰ The last known location of a 15th-century printed book from Szczecin is the Museum of Cieszyn Silesia in Cieszyn. The incunabulum had belonged to Brunon Konczakowski.⁷¹ Born in the city on the Olza River in 1881, this dealer and collector of militaria and antiques before WWI had become one of the most prominent collectors in Europe. In 1939, he donated his collection of Oriental arms to the Polish Army Museum in Warsaw. Following WWII, he expanded his enormous collection of antique books, totaling several thousand specimens. Among the incunabula he acquired was a 1486 copy of Margarita Decreti,⁷² which, following the collector's death in 1959, was given to the Cieszyn Museum as agreed with the collector's heirs.⁷³

In 1945, the former German collections were classified as abandoned collections. The action of securing and taking them over, organized by the Polish state in the Regained Territories, prevented the majority from destruction and deliberate devastation. However, subsequent actions during their repartition led to the dispersion of pre-WWII provenance sets. This fate did not spare the incunabula collection of the former Marian Gymnasium in Szczecin. The splitting of the secured collection began in the summer of 1945 when 11 printed books were dispatched to Poznan University Library. The instruction of January 25, 1946, on handling the secured book collections⁷⁴ demanded that the book collection forming a coherent provenance group be kept integral, but in practice,

70 *Katalog inkunabułów Książnicy Pomorskiej w Szczecinie*, comp. A. Michalska, A. Łojko, Książnica Pomorska, Szczecin 2016, nos. 1, 2, 5, 8 (copy b)-11, 14-17, 22, 23, 35, 37-39, 41, 44-46, 49, 62.

71 *Internetowy Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, <https://www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/brunon-konczakowski> [accessed: 11 April, 2022]

72 A. Michalska, 'Inkunabuły dawnej...', p. 130 (*lp.* 38); GW M21425/IBP 3622.

73 J. Spyra, 'Zabytkowy księgozbiór Bruno Konczakowskiego,' in: *Cieszyńskie księgozbiory historyczne: materiały z sesji naukowej Cieszyn, 18-20 listopada 1991 r.*, Biblioteka Narodowa, Warszawa 1993, pp. 29-33.

74 'Instrukcja z dnia 25 stycznia 1946 r. w sprawie postępowania z księgozbiorami zabezpieczonymi,' D. Urz. 1946, no. 1, item 13.

it was not obeyed. This resulted from insufficient storage space, forcing the handing out of collections without regard to their integrity.⁷⁵ Additionally, post-WWII dispersion was contributed to by requests from institutions and private individuals to receive particular bibliographical items. Although the incunabula of the formerly prestigious Szczecin school are now divided among six institutionalized owners throughout Poland, the largest number of the collection items remains in Szczecin.

Translated by Magdalena Iwińska

75 R. Nowicki, 'Działalność krakowskiej Delegatury Ministerstwa Oświaty do zabezpieczenia księgozbiorów opuszczonych i porzuconych na Pomorzu Zachodnim,' in: *Ochrona zbiorów...*, p. 93.