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REVIEW OF THE BOOK: *VERBOTEN, BESCHLAGNAHMT, GERAUBT. NS-BIBLIOTHEKSPOLITIK UND -PRAXIS IN EUROPA. BANNED, CONFISCATED, LOOTED. NAZI LIBRARY POLICY AND PRACTICE IN EUROPE.* HERAUSGEGEBEN VON/EDITED BY CLAUDE D. CONTER & JEAN-MARIE REDING, HARRASSOWITZ-VERLAG, WIESBADEN 2024 (=BIBLIOTHEK UND WISSENSCHAFT 56/2023-24)

DOI: 10.36155/PLib.14.00015

INTRODUCTION

The discussed publication, available also in the open-access format,[1] was published in late 2024 in the prestigious librarianship series 'Library and Science' ('Bibliothek und Wissenschaft') released by the Harrassowitz Publishing House as an outcome of a conference mounted by the National Library of Luxembourg on 27–29 October 2022. It departed from the observation that the Nazi library policy, in which libraries and books were the key tool of the propaganda of the ideology of National Socialism, caused deep changes in the structure, role, and resources of libraries, both in

1 Https://www.harrassowitz-verlag.de/titel_7604.ahtml (accessed: 17 May 2025).

the Third Reich itself and in all the annexed and occupied territories, though to an extremely varied degree.[2] As much as what could be observed were the same ways of a destructive interference in the existing libraries and their operation and collections: from restructuring, dismissing employees, through book confiscation and relocation, up to destroying the collections, their precise implementation and size took on various forms and proportions in different parts of Europe. It was these issues that were the topic of the papers delivered at the Conference and those later compiled into the discussed volume. Its editors: Claude Dario Conter and Jean-Marie Reding (both associates of the National Library of Luxembourg and contributors to the Conference organization) intended to at least partially fill in the existing void in the research into the Nazi library policy and its effects in Europe. Since although the issue is relatively well researched and described, what is missing, as the Editors argue in the introduction to the book, are more thorough analyses and studies focusing on the annexed and occupied territories. This diagnosis seems very accurate: many authors emphasize in their papers that they consider their work merely a point of departure for further research, defining the potential areas for study.

It would be stating the impossible if someone claimed that one conference or one volume could exhaustively study and discuss such an extensive issue as the Nazi policy library in various European countries. However, it must be emphasized that the discussed publication constitutes a promising step in this direction, since all the papers it encompasses are based on extensive archival and library studies, often resorting to source materials previously unused in the research into the Nazi library policy. Those taken into account are of the most varied character: from official documents to personal texts, additionally including newspapers and weeklies from the time of WW II, the latter gradually more readily

2 Call for Papers available at: https://bnl.public.lu/fr/a-la-une/actualites/articles-actualites/2021/cfp-ns-bibliothekspolitik.html (accessed: 12 May 2025).

available thanks to the advancing digitizing, this also emphasized by the publication's Editors. Many of these materials can be found in the form of reproductions within respective papers, which undoubtedly works to the readers' great benefit. I sincerely believe that the extensive source basis constitutes the greatest value of this publication. Its other advantage is the comparative perspective it provides: this is the one Conter and Reding assumed, and it is the one which allows to better understand what the Nazi library policy was in different European countries. According to the Editors, in order to better understand intricate processes what we need less are general theses and more detailed studies of the same or similar issues and questions.

PUBLICATION'S STRUCTURE

The main issues being the departure point for the papers collected in the volume *Forbidden, Confiscated, and Looted. Nazi Library Policy and Praxis in Europe* (*Verboten, beschlagnahmt und geraubt. NS-Bibliothekspolitik und -praxis in Europa*) have been discussed by the Editors in detail already in the Introduction, which helps orientate readers quickly and effectively. It is of basic importance that very few studies dedicated to the Nazi library policy and its definite effects in the annexed or occupied countries by the Third Reich have been written outside Germany. Since the discussed volume is to constitute the first major attempt to fill in this gap, we will find in it articles concerning 12 countries, some of them, like the Third Reich, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, being dedicated two or even three papers. However, Conter and Reding emphasize that they had been unable to find papers dedicated to Albania, Denmark, Yugoslavia, Lithuania, and Norway, while the papers from Russia and Belarus submitted for the Conference were withdrawn due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. What seems most disappointing from the Polish perspective is the lack of articles dedicated to Lithuania, Russia, and Belarus, since it was with these countries that Polish library collections were historically most bonded with; moreover, during the Soviet occupation

of eastern Poland there were some collection relocations towards Russia, which has not been well identified as a topic. Furthermore, not all the papers delivered at the Conference were later included in the publication, e.g., Jürgen Warmbrunn's one on the Prague 'Slovanská knihovna' as a victim of the Nazi library policy; the one by Dimitrios Varvaritis on the confiscation of Jewish libraries in Greece; and that by Markus Stumpf on Austrian libraries under the Nazis.[3] I believe these could have been mentioned in the Introduction with the explanation why the speakers did not submit their papers for publication, since it would have shown that the Conference's perspective had been even wider than it is presented in the discussed volume.

The volume opens with the papers dedicated to the situation in the Third Reich; they are followed by those tackling respective countries in the alphabetical order, this resulting most likely from a certain pragmatism. In my opinion, the approach adopted could have either been: regional-political (taking into account the political status of a given region), thematic (public libraries, private collections, etc.), or even by putting together papers on those countries in which the Nazi library policy showed a similar approach, since this would have allowed to better present certain issues that they had in common.

As for the language in which the papers are published about a half (8) are in English with the rough remaining half (7) in German. They all deal with the Nazi library policy implemented in a diverse manner: differently in Germany and differently in each of the annexed or occupied countries. What can thus be observed are different solutions and practices, sometimes adapted from German models and in other cases worked out anew. The Editors explain that this results from the legal status of a given territory: whether it was incorporated into the Reich, administered by

3 Michael Knoche, ‚Nationalsozialistische Bibliothekspolitik in Europa. Eine Tagung an der Bibliothèque nationale du Luxembourg', *o-bib. Das offene Bibliotheksjournal* no. 10 (2023), available at: https://www.o-bib.de/bib/article/view/5984 (accessed: 13 May 2025).

the military or civilians, or operated as the Reich's protectorate or commissariat ('Reichsprotektorat' or 'Reichskommissariat'). Additionally, the status and importance of the German language and culture in a given country were of certain significance, and so was the place the population of a given region occupied in the Nazi racial ideology's hierarchy. It was particularly in Poland that a systematic and large-scale purposeful devastation of books or lack of the protection of cultural institutions during bombardments that resulted after all from the Nazi ideologized cultural policy, which assumed no access of Poles to cultural goods nor the existence of higher-profile Polish culture. According to Conter and Reding, what can also be observed is the typical of the Nazi administration competence competition among various dignitaries or units, which also had an impact on the ununiform policy with respect to books and libraries. However, regardless of all the differences, the Nazi library policy was revealed all over Europe with similarly devastating results, sometimes maybe only to a more acute or less severe effect.

ARTICLES AND TACKLED ISSUES

When briefly characterizing respective texts from the volume let me draw readers' attention to certain aspects constituting an essential element in the overall picture of the Nazi library policy. It must be emphasized that all the articles have been extremely meticulously studied and documented, presenting their topic exhaustively. Almost half of them concern the implementation of the Nazi library policy in a given country, with their authors showing the major changes introduced there and the effects they produced in libraries, actually giving an overall picture, though also focusing on several detailed issues.

The first of the papers from this group deals with the overall situation of libraries in Belgium in 1940–1944. Michel Fincœur tackles many aspects in it, from the destruction of libraries and book collections, e.g., during military attacks, through purposeful and systematic confiscations: following appropriate lists, up to looting

and plundering of collections, both institutional and private. The name that appears in this context is Alfred Rosenberg whose 'Reichsleiter Rosenberg Taskforce' ('Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg') acted throughout almost whole Europe. We also learn that, following the German model, a chain of German libraries (so-called folk libraries: 'Volksbüchereien') to Germanize the population and to supplant the French influence was founded; furthermore, we read about the resistance of Belgian librarians' associations and the librarians themselves. The Brussel's Royal Library, whose collection as a national library was excluded from revision, found itself in a peculiar situation: following the closure of other large libraries, e.g., university ones, the number of its readers increased. However, despite all the interventions, as the Author sums up, the continuity of Belgian libraries was not interrupted, particularly as the Belgian librarians, in a part collaborating with National Socialism, though partly also opposing it, had a say in all the introduced changes.

In Estonia, too, as presented by Piret Lotman, the effects of the Nazi library policy were generally benign, as distinct from the years 1940 and 1941 when the country was occupied by the Soviets; this resulting from the fact that Germans regarded Estonians as a nation close to German culture. Rosenberg himself, namely the leading ideologist of National Socialism, born in Tallin (Reval in German) did not rank Estonians among the 'Untermenschen' like Slavs and Jews. The German invaders, actually welcomed with joy by a great number of Estonians, tried to be liked by the local population, therefore Estonians could freely enjoy Estonian literature, differently than under the Soviet occupation when attempts were made to eradicate the Estonian identity, while as of 1942 it was permitted to reopen public libraries. In a Tallin German bookshop there were books and magazines available from France, Switzerland, or Italy. Nonetheless, also in the case of Estonia there were some destructive procedures, such as collection revisions in search of so-called undesirable books, which, however, were not destroyed, but sent to the dissolved National Library of Estonia;

this continued to operate as part of the Central Archives administered by the Estonian self-government. The relocation of some dozen thousand of precious books and manuscripts towards Germany took place in 1943 and 1944, together with the approaching of the front, however, in the article there is no information on how many books exactly were relocated and how many returned to Tallin or Tartu.

A slightly broader time perspective can be found in the paper by Eva Semeratzaki and Giorgos Glossiotis on libraries and the Nazi library policy in Greece, since what was taken into account here were the years preceding the Nazi occupation from 1936, namely the times of the dictatorship of Ioannis Metaxas. He introduced a system of a severe censorship and propaganda, thus implementing certain solutions which were later simply resorted to, e.g. in the reorganization of the libraries' structure, involving removal of the so-called undesirable books by the authorities from the collections, which, however, were not destroyed. Nonetheless, during the occupation: first Italian and then German, Greek libraries suffered the greatest damage, beginning with those resulting from warfare, through other destruction and looting, which is described on the example of some case studies. The damage to Greek libraries was enormous: the paper quotes the figure of losses at 3.9 million euros in their 1946 value. On the other hand, there are no precise lists of the damaged or relocated collections; additionally, the piece of information missing is whether the Germans relocated books and other precious printed matter to Germany.

One of the goals of the Nazi cultural policy in occupied Luxembourg was, similarly as in Belgium, its Germanization and the eradication of the French influence, for which reason much emphasis was put on creating folk libraries, which is described by Jean-Marie Reding, one of the volume's Editors, in his article on Luxembourg libraries in 1940–1944. Although the Nazis created 101 of such libraries, they also closed down 50 existing public ones. In Luxembourg, too, many books were removed from the collections, however, librarians frequently managed to simply hide them, of-

ten in e.g., monasteries and some academic libraries, this helping to preserve the publications. The next great advantage of Reding's paper is taking into account the operations and influences of various agents of the Nazi library policy, thus demonstrating their typical competence jostling.

It is Lisy Kuitert who writes about Dutch public libraries and extremely popular commercial ones, so-called libraries for reading ('Leesbibliotheek'). Similarly as in Luxembourg, Germany installed civil administration in occupied Netherlands joined by many of the local supporters of National Socialism, and which attributed high ideological value to books. That is why attempts were made to take control over libraries, a difficult task with respect to the commercial ones, actually unsuccessful until the end of the war, as the appropriate law was adopted only in 1944. Meanwhile, it was quite common in the Netherlands, e.g., among members of the Central Association of Public Libraries, to show loyalty to the new administration demonstrated in the e.g., preventive withdrawal from the circulation of all the books which could arouse doubts in the invaders' authorities. On the other hand, the Author emphasizes that those running or owning a library could have had severe problems if the authorities had found questionable books in their collection. She describes a case when a reader left some critical reading notes in a borrowed book which the police found, consequently forcing the library owners to reveal names of all the library borrowers.

A reliable and comprehensive overview of the situation of libraries in Poland: both in the territories incorporated into the Reich and those in the General Government, is presented by Jacek Kordel, who justly places the Nazi library policy within the context of cultural policy, since this allows to better understand its excessively devastating dimension and destruction volume. I believe that there is no need to recall and quote respective examples discussed by the Author, yet the fact that Kordel's paper was published in German undoubtedly extends its international reach and the awareness of the fate suffered by Polish libraries and book col-

lections during WW II. The intention to deprive Poland of its cultural goods can be also seen in systematic looting and relocation of collections, in the course of which in Poland, too, competence jostling and games of the German administration could be observed. As for the very library policy and its implementation, Kordel shows its effects on several examples: from a strong Germanization of the University Library in Poznan through the formation of the Central Library Authority ('Hauptverwaltung der Bibliotheken') in the General Government, up to the restructuring of libraries and creation of four state libraries, including an enormous relocation of collections, whose aftereffects were disastrous for Warsaw, as is generally known. In several places of his text Kordel points to the need of further research with the use of to-date little-known sources and materials for the purpose, with this claim staying perfectly in harmony with the intention of the whole book.

The last article from this group comes from Viktoria Soloshenko and concerns Ukraine. It serves as an important complement to the remaining papers, since it draws attention to the questions of restitution, which on the example of Ukraine shows the overall character of this issue throughout whole East-Central Europe. What we mean here are, first of all, new borders in this part of the continent following 1945 and the fact that it was often the change of the borders that caused some cultural goods to remain outside the frontiers of a given country. The restitution itself in the post-WW II period could have proven questionable, as, for example, some returned Ukrainian artefacts given back to the Soviet Union ended up not in Kyiv, but Moscow, where they have remained to this very day. The Author also speaks of paintings and books relocated by the Germans from Lviv to e.g., Silesia, this, in turn, being an important and complex issue from the Polish perspective. Basing herself on such examples, Soloshenko formulates some reflections of a methodological character, analysing the possibility of creating a contemporary system of identification and restitution of cultural goods, today often owned illegally. According to the Author, the issue of restitution should be approached as an interna-

tional one, therefore she proposes a more extensive cooperation in this respect following the model of e.g., already existing bilateral commissions, like the Polish-Ukrainian one.

The next group of papers is dedicated to definite library issues or respective libraries. The restitution question is tackled by Martine Poulain speaking of German looting of French private, mainly Jewish libraries, whose owners suffered most severely the effects of the German occupation, as distinct from public libraries, which were not Germanized in France, contrary to many remaining countries. In her paper the Author presents an extremely interesting database she contributes to creating of the books looted from French private collections, encompassing over a million books, manuscripts, and other printed matter from 2,260 individuals and 410 institutions returned after the war to their rightful owners. The Author reflects how tedious and challenging the identification and restitution of the books looted during WW II have been, owing to, among others, the lack of respective and full archival documentation, and she describes the attempts made in France immediately following WW II. Martine Poulain admits, however, that up to this day in e.g., collections of French public libraries books looted during the war can still be found.

In her article Poulain speaks of the aforementioned Rosenberg's Taskforce which confiscated a great number of books and dispatched them to Germany, from France also to the Institute of Research into the Jewish Question ('Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage') in Frankfurt. Rosenberg and his Taskforce as well as their operations in Latvian libraries in 1941–1944 are the topic of Jana Dreimane's article. She argues that Rosenberg's Staff had broad competences in Latvia, where it operated in two units: firstly, it was to verify collections in view of undesirable literature, whose definition it could freely formulate; secondly, it identified books useful for Nazi research concerning enemies, understood as e.g., Jewish or Bolshevik literature. These books were to reach the library of the Nazi university, so-called High School ('Hohe Schule') or the aforementioned Frankfurt University. For the purpose, 159

crates with books were transported from Riga. Many books were also supposed to remain in the country, since Rosenberg was planning to create so-called Library of the East ('Ostbücherei'). Similarly as in Estonia, in the summer of 1944, together with the approaching of the front, the evacuation of the most precious objects from Latvian libraries to Germany began.

The next paper authored by the second Editor of the publication Claude Conter deals with the National Library of Luxembourg, which during the Nazi occupation was transformed into the Land Library ('Landesbibliothek') for the Mosel Land ('Moselgau'), this implying thorough changes in its operation. In this case as well personal and competence jostling could be observed; these games were often accompanied by inter-human animosities and the desire to achieve one's individual goals. A telling example could be, for instance, the fact that the lists of books to be removed from the confiscated library holdings owing to personal conflicts were not revealed to the individuals who were supposed to identify the books and withdraw them. Apart from the local jostling there was competition from Berlin. Numerous confiscations in the dissolved Luxembourg libraries which were to enrich the Land Library were thus conducted chaotically, with the Nazi authorities sometimes losing control over them, this decisively hampering the books' post-war restitution.

The paper by Klaus Kempf and Susanne Wanninger is dedicated to the State Library of Bavaria and its collecting praxis in 1933–1945. As this was a German institution, its situation completely differed from those libraries discussed in the previously tackled papers, since the Munich library wanted, first of all, the books confiscated in other European countries, including the Polish ones, to enrich its own holdings. The Authors demonstrate how important personal contacts with the highest-profile agents were within the Nazi library policy, since those offered the possibility for action. The State Library of Bavaria did not take as much advantage of the books confiscated in the occupied territories as Vienna's National Library of Austria or the Prussian State Library in Berlin did, de-

spite its Director Rudolf Buttmann actively trying to: e.g., already in November 1939, he requested books from occupied Poland. The Authors account for this situation with the fact that despite Buttmann being a devout Nazi (his NSDAP membership card bore no. 4), he was not ruthless enough in action, as many others were being promoted within the system, that is why he did not hold an important position within the library connection network in the 1930s.

The last of the papers dedicated to a single library is authored by Gérard Houllard and discusses the Library of the Chamber of Workers and Employees in Styria ('Bibliothek der Kammer für Arbeiter und Angestellte Steiermark') for whose holdings the results of the Nazi library policy were as painful as for the large libraries described above. This provides an interesting and instructive case study perfectly in line with all the other papers and their goal. Being a union library it was closed down in 1938 and transferred under the administration of the German Labour Front ('Deutsche Arbeitsfront'). The latter's inspector came specially from Berlin and selected about 8,000 books, which were transferred to the Berlin research institute of the Labour Front ('Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut'). So far two books have been recovered for Styria, as it has turned out that the majority of those seized publications were transferred by the institute to other libraries, e.g., in exchange, this demonstrating once again how complicated the problem was. The Author also mentions the reopening of the library in autumn 1938, when it formed part of the above-mentioned network of folk libraries, already popular throughout the whole Reich as a propaganda instrument; he also mentions the Library's Director Franz Schönbacher who saved many forbidden books from destruction by hiding them and lending illegally. This case thus serves as another example of librarians' resistance to the regulations of the Nazi library policy, known from many other countries.

The fate of librarians in the Nazi-administered territories is tackled in many papers, yet only in one it constitutes a separate topic: I mean here Mark Decker's article about the Jewish librarians

from Dutch public libraries dismissed during the occupation. In the Netherlands, already in autumn 1940, librarians were obliged to declare whether they were of Jewish descent, and those who were, were first suspended, and as of spring 1941, dismissed. Regrettably, in this respect too the Dutch Union of Public Libraries we have spoken about proved to be overzealous, since it supported the elimination of the Jewish employees, fearing negative consequences for the libraries themselves. The Author describes the fate of some of the fired librarians, the majority of whom were murdered in Auschwitz. This particular paper is an important complement to the whole context of the Nazi library policy seen from the microhistorical perspective, since, as observed by the Author, it is always people who pay the price for the effects of a given policy, this time dramatically with their own life.

The last two papers are dedicated to a peculiar librarian's praxis, namely cataloguing, and they refer to the German Library ('Deutsche Bücherei') in Leipzig, which at the time boasted the status of Germany's National Library. The first of them written by Michael Knoche describes how the German Library tried to capture so-called undesirable writing of Luxembourg in the German language during the Nazi times. One of the statutory tasks of the German Library was to amass works written in German and published outside Germany: this was precisely the purpose of Albert Paust's trip to Luxembourg in 1937. He attempted, to little avail, to persuade publishers from there to voluntarily send German books to Leipzig. His second trip took place in 1941. By that time the German Library had already been receiving legal deposits from the occupied duchy, however, Paust was interested, first of all, in acquiring books and printed matter released by the underground and thus fulfilling the concept of so-called undesirable writing. The Author attaches to his paper a list of bookshops or offices Paust visited on the trip, together with the list of all bookshops operating in Luxembourg during the Nazi occupation, admitting, however, that it is hard to estimate the publishing output in the country during that time, as this would require a more thorough research.

A close topic is that tackled by Jörg Räuber's paper on Czech books and magazines in the German Library. It concerns the collection of 14,500 books in Czech from 1939–1945, which ended up there despite not complying with the library's amassing profile. This had to do with the efforts of a relatively new Leipzig library wanting to assume an important position as a national library among the traditional German libraries; such a procedure was facilitated by the favourable conditions created by the Nazi library policy as well as the introduction of new structures and regulations. The Leipzig library insisted on extending the right of legal deposit to all the Third Reich's occupied and annexed territories. It argued that in compliance with its collecting mission it should amass all the publications released within the boundaries of the Third Reich. In relation to the above-mentioned collection of Czech books, the Author points to another aspect, namely whether they should be subject to restitution. If, as he argues, dividing Czechoslovakia by the Third Reich in the 1930s violated the international law, then hence resulting legal regulations can also be questioned. The issue still remains open, yet, in my view, it demonstrates once again that the problems related to the restitution of cultural goods, including books, and compensation for material and moral harm, are complex.

Both papers dedicated to the German Library pose the question whether it also attempted to overtake, e.g., Polish books? We mean here the first printed materials in German from before 1939 published in Poland, but also the books published during the occupation in the Polish annexed territories and in the General Government. This issue seems not to have been studied to-date, just like many others that the papers in the discussed volume point to, in a way delineating new research prospects.

What I consider the greatest advantage of the present publication is that it consistently makes one look at the Nazi library policy from a comparative perspective. Although the policy was not homogenous throughout whole Europe, and the applied solutions differed dramatically, it remained rooted in the same ideo-

logical basis, this meaning that its devastating effects are shown repeatedly in the articles contained within the book while affecting different countries. Almost all of them speak of plundering and destroying libraries, as well as of collection relocation, often resulting from the fact that the libraries were given a new organizational structure (e.g., Poland, Estonia, Styria, or Luxembourg). Sometimes, the solutions introduced were modelled on those from Germany, e.g., so-called folk or German libraries, forming an important Germanizing tool (e.g., Luxembourg, Belgium, Poland, Estonia) or the regulations related to legal deposit meant to be delivered to Germany (e.g., Luxembourg, Czechy, or Estonia). An interesting aspect is the use of libraries: in some countries they were open to the local population (e.g. in Belgium, where a high number of users was recorded, and also in Estonia), while in others it was not; furthermore, we often read about some forms of the librarians' resistance to the regulations in place conducted through e.g., sharing the forbidden literature from under the counter or hiding the books designated to be destroyed (e.g., Belgium, Poland, Luxembourg, Styria). Many of the articles also describe activities of the Rosenberg Taskforce who systematically plundered all the countries occupied by the Nazis of cultural goods. Another topic, common for many texts, are bans on literature and lists of so-called undesirable books issued as a consequence (e.g., Belgium, Poland, Estonia, the Netherlands, or Latvia), and although these always included Jewish or Communist writers, or those who were critical of National Socialism, there were some differences among the lists, which could constitute an interesting topic of a comparative analysis. Interestingly, not in all the countries the confiscated literature was destroyed straight away (e.g. Estonia or Luxembourg). Furthermore, what can be found characteristic of the Nazi administration in general, and also in the area of libraries, were the unclear competence scopes and competition among different agents, who sought additional benefits for themselves (e.g., Luxembourg, Poland, or Ukraine). Many papers emphasize how important the human aspect was, since it was particular individuals who imple-

mented the Nazi library policy proportionally to their abilities and ambitions. This, however, also implied personal purges in many libraries (e.g., Belgium, the Netherlands, or Styria). Finally, the papers also often speak of a complicated and complex matter that the restitution of the relocated books and book collections is and of the solutions applied in this respect following WW II (e.g., Poland, Ukraine, France, or Styria).

To sum up: not only does the discussed publication present the Nazi library policy in an exceptionally wide perspective as implemented in the very Third Reich and in all the occupied and annexed territories, but it also shows what further research could look like and which direction it would be interesting to follow. First of all, for this purpose it would be necessary to use varied archival sources in different languages, as has been consistently done by the authors of the respective papers, these materials allowing to formulate new conclusions being more and more easily available thanks to digitization. Obviously, one publication is unable to exhaustively describe and study such a complex and multifaceted issue as the Nazi library policy and all its effects, including the questions of restitution following 1945. The respective articles, however, create a relatively coherent and to a degree complete image of the problem. In my view, speaking particularly from the perspective of Poland, whose libraries suffered incomparable devastation from the Nazi library policy, the discussed publication may encourage tackling some of the topics which have not as yet been at all or have been partially studied and described.

Translated by Madgalena Iwińska