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What happened to chests 1a–3a? The fate of collections and documents of the Upper Silesian Library in Katowice under occupation¹

Summary: The Silesian Library (Silesian Public Library), in the interwar period (1922–1939), was one of the youngest and most dynamically developing research libraries in Poland at that time. It was possible, inter alia, thanks to the special political status of the Silesian Voivodeship, the autonomous status of which (the treasury, the police and partly legislation) created exceptionally favourable conditions for the functioning of cultural institutions. In 1939, its book collection consisted of about 104.000 volumes, including many valuable collections (old prints, *silesiaca*² and magazines). The outbreak of World War II put an end to the further expansion of the library. The subject of the article is the fate of 3 out of 32 chests taken from Katowice to Lwów in the first days of the war. The author deals with the history of chests marked with reference numbers 1a–3a. He tries to reconstruct the next stages of the odyssey in Lwów, until 1946, when the “trail” breaks off. The text describes post-war attempts undertaken by the director of the Silesian Library, Paweł Rybicki, to find the lost chests. For the first time in professional literature, an attempt was made to reconstruct the fate of the lost shipment with boxes 1a–3a, along with the general characteristics of its contents. Its uniqueness lies in the fact that the catalogues and library inventories that could help to establish what the Library actually lost have been misplaced. In this context, the author comments on the chances of finding the lost chests after nearly 80 years and addresses the research prospects.

Key words: Silesian Library – Germany – World War II – Katowice – Lwów – history – Poland – Silesia – book collections – evacuation – research library

1 In the title and the text, with exceptions, the Library in question will be referred to by its current name, although during its nearly 100-year history, it has changed several times: Biblioteka Sejmu Śląskiego (Library of Silesian Parliament; 1922–1936); Śląska Biblioteka Publiczna im. Józefa Piłsudskiego (Józef Piłsudski Silesian Public Library; 1936–1939); Oberschlesische Landesbibliothek (Upper Silesia National Library; 1939–1945); Śląska Biblioteka Publiczna (Silesian Public Library; 1945–1951); Biblioteka Śląska (Silesian Library; 1952–).

2 Collections concerning Silesia.

Introduction

Even though more than 80 years have passed since the outbreak and nearly 80 years since the end of World War II, many matters still remain unclear or only partially explained. There are many puzzles waiting to be reconstructed and solved; in all likelihood many of them are undertaken in vain, considering the departure of most of witnesses from the world of the living, and the destruction or scattering of documents, especially archives. There are also difficulties in accessing the survived archives, which results from the change of state borders and the incorporation of part of the former Polish territories to other countries (the Ukraine, Lithuania, and Belarus). Even if most of these puzzles are not solved, it is worth investigating such issues. By searching selected materials that are often only indirectly related to the events, we may try to come to conclusions that will bring us closer to reaching the whole truth in the future. As it seems, it is the case of the Silesian Library in Katowice and its history prior to and during the time of the German occupation. We will deal with a fairly narrow period in its history, marked by the following dates: May 1939 to 1946³. We will actually go beyond these chronological limits, reaching 1938, and a few years into the future, to better learn and understand the essence and consequences of the war episode of the Silesian Library.

The main subject of this study is the history of a fragment of collections and documents of the Silesian Library, which, like thousands of Poles, were condemned to wandering during the war, for fear of robbery, and perhaps destruction by Nazi Germany preparing for a war with Poland. We will try to trace the war history of the chests with books, leaflets, maps and library documentation shipped from Katowice to Lwów (Lviv; Lemberg), locating them in time and space in subsequent stages of their journey. Our goal is to determine what was actually taken out of Katowice, whether any of the so far undiscovered chests have had their contents returned to Katowice, and whether there is any chance that such contents will return. To reach these goals, we will refer to rather scarce and selective literature, as along with the preserved archival sources, which will be subjected to critical analysis and evaluation. The biographical and statistical methods were used to find the research material.

The state of research

The history of the Silesian Library under German occupation is disappearing, poetically speaking, in the darkness of history and, in fact, has not been fully nor seriously elaborated on thus far. A bit of light, illuminating this darkness, on the surrounding war history of the Libraries of Darkness (the poorly understood fate

3 The main subject was presented and discussed from the moment of preparing and sending the chests with books to Lwów up until the end of the official search for the lost parcel in 1946.

of the library) is provided by fragmentary studies, most often articles and chapters in monographs. Literature on the war fate of the Silesian Library is relatively small and, above all, is treated as a subplot of more general considerations on the history of Upper Silesia under occupation, as in Ryszard Kaczmarek's publications on Upper Silesia during World War II⁴. It is worth emphasizing that this subject has been described many times in the daily press, which is scrupulously noted by subsequent bibliographic lists devoted to the Silesian Library, published in the journal "Biuletyn Informacyjny Biblioteki Śląskiej"⁵.

In fact, the first noteworthy study on this subject is the collective work, edited by Jan Kantyka, and published on the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Silesian Library (1972)⁶. The article by Helena Materla, presenting the history of the Silesian Library under occupation, recreated on the basis of sources and the German press published in Katowice in 1939–1945, appeared in the "Biuletyn Informacyjny Biblioteki Śląskiej"⁷. The Silesian Library itself devoted relatively little attention to this fragment of its history, apart from the otherwise valuable memoirs by Paweł Rybicki⁸ and Franciszek Szymiczek⁹, which will be discussed in more depth below. The symbolic breakthrough of a certain powerlessness or reluctance in unveiling this dark fragment of the history of the Library is the year 1989. What is symptomatic and somewhat strange is the fact that in the only monograph on the Silesian Library written by Henryk Rechowicz, which was published, twice in 1990 and 1992, not a single sentence is devoted to the times of war, even in the epilogue of his text¹⁰. Rechowicz wrote about it in the article

4 See R. Kaczmarek, *Górny Śląsk podczas II wojny światowej. Między utopią niemieckiej wspólnoty narodowej a rzeczywistością okupacji na terenach wcielonych do Trzeciej Rzeszy*, Katowice 2006, pp. 41, 348; idem, *W granicach III Rzeszy*, [in:] *Katowice. Środowisko, dzieje, kultura, język i społeczeństwo*. Vol. 1, ed. A. Barciak, E. Chojecka, S. Fertacz, Katowice 2012, pp. 380–381; idem, *Katowice – stolica pruskiej prowincji w czasie II wojny światowej*, [in:] *Katowice w 136. rocznicę uzyskania praw miejskich*, ed. A. Barciak, Katowice 2002, pp. 105–125.

5 Z. Biedrzycki, S. Popiel, *Z dziejów książki polskiej na Górnym Śląsku. Biblioteka Śląska. Zarys dziejów i bibliografia*, "Biuletyn Informacyjny Biblioteki Śląskiej" 1959, No. 4(16), pp. 155–165; T. Snopek-Bąba, *Biblioteka Śląska na łamach prasy w latach 1945–1982 (Przegląd bibliograficzny. W wyborze)*, "Książnica Śląska" 1983–1984, Vol. 22, pp. 96–110; D. Tamiola, *Zestawienie materiałów bibliograficznych dotyczących historii i działalności Biblioteki Śląskiej w Katowicach (wybór). Uzupełnienia za lata 1971–1982*, "Książnica Śląska" 1983–1984, Vol. 22, pp. 111–127; J. Sitko, *Zestawienie materiałów bibliograficznych dotyczących historii i działalności Biblioteki Śląskiej w Katowicach (wybór)*, [in:] *Biblioteka Śląska 1922–1972*, ed. J. Kantyka, Katowice 1973, pp. 285–302.

6 *Biblioteka Śląska 1922–1972*, op. cit.

7 H. Materla, *Z dziejów Górnośląskiej Biblioteki Krajowej*, "Biuletyn Informacyjny Biblioteki Śląskiej" 1972, No. 2, pp. 28–40.

8 P. Rybicki, *Garść wspomnień o Bibliotece Śląskiej*, [in:] *Biblioteka Śląska 1922–1972...*, pp. 264–278.

9 F. Szymiczek, *Rok 1945 – pierwsze tygodnie i miesiące*, [in:] *Biblioteka Śląska 1922–1972...*, pp. 279–284.

10 H. Rechowicz, *Poprzedniczki Biblioteki Śląskiej i ich rola w życiu umysłowym województwa śląskiego*, Katowice 1990. H. Rechowicz, *Poprzedniczki Biblioteki Śląskiej i ich rola w życiu umysłowym województwa śląskiego*, Katowice 1992.

*Powojenne początki Śląskiej Biblioteki Publicznej (Post-war beginnings of the Silesian Public Library)*¹¹. An extremely valuable source of knowledge about the post-war beginnings of the Silesian Library is the report by Szymiczek from 1945. To be exact, after 1989, smaller or larger biographical texts associated with the library in the pre- and post-war times, were published mainly in biographical articles¹². Among them, we can distinguish a collection of biographical articles, developed by Rechowicz¹³ and published in the *Stowarzyszenie Bibliotekarzy Polskich* (Association of Polish Librarians) series: *Bibliotekarze Polscy we Wspomnieniach Współczesnych* (Polish Librarian in the Memories of Contemporaries), a collection of biographical texts about people, books of the Silesian Voivodeship¹⁴.

It was not until the turnover of the first and second decades of the 21st century that publications concerning this topic were mentioned. Sebastian Rosenbaum opened a new chapter in the history of research on this period with the text from 2006 devoted to Szymiczek, associated with the Library before and after World War II¹⁵. Three years later (2009) Alfred Puzio outlined the profile of Szymiczek¹⁶. Two important texts on this subject appeared in print in 2017. The text of Weronika Pawłowicz from 2018 devoted to the history of the Silesian Library should be added to this group. However, it does not add anything new to the previous findings on the fate of the Silesian Public Library before the outbreak of the war and during World War II¹⁷.

This review should include biographies of librarians from the Silesian Library in the general *Polski słownik biograficzny* (the *Polish Biographical Dictionary*); *Śląski słownik biograficzny* (the *Silesian Biographical Dictionary*)¹⁸ and subject-

11 H. Rechowicz, *Powojenne początki Śląskiej Biblioteki Publicznej*, “Książnica Śląska” 1983/1984, Vol. 25, p. 6.

12 D. Musioł, *Paweł Hieronim Rybicki (1902–1988)*, “Książnica Śląska” 1988–1994, Vol. 25, pp. 115–120; P. Bruski, *Feliks Dłubek*, „Biuletyn Informacyjny Biblioteki Śląskiej” 1968, No. 3/4, pp. 50–51.

13 H. Rechowicz, *Suum cuique. W dziewięćdziesięciolecie. Sylwetki pracowników Biblioteki Śląskiej*, Katowice 2012 – H. Rechowicz included the biographies of the following librarians who worked in the Silesian Library before the outbreak of World War II and immediately after its end in his work: Feliks Dłubek, Piotr Pampuch, Roman Lutman, Jacek Koraszewski, Kazimierz Hartleb, P. Rybicki, Regina Boguszczyk, Józef Mayer, F. Szymiczek, Janina Berger-Mayerowa, Grzegorz Groebl.

14 In the book *Bibliotekarze i pracownicy książki województwa śląskiego*, ed. M. Kycler, J. Sadowska, Warszawa 2021 (series: *Bibliotekarze Polscy we Wspomnieniach Współczesnych*, 7) has been published some articles about pre-war librarians from Silesian Library: Ludwik Brożek, J. Berger-Mayerowa, J. Mayer, P. Rybicki.

15 S. Rosenbaum, *Bibliotekarz, historyk, agent. Casus Franciszka Szymiczka*, “Studia Śląskie” 2009, Vol. 68, pp. 138–141. See also B. Maresz, *Franciszek Szymiczek*, [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny*. Vol. 50, Warszawa 2015, pp. 237–239.

16 A. Puzio, *Dr. Franciszek Szymiczek (1911–1987)*, “Forum Bibliotek Medycznych” 2012, Vol. 5, No. 2(10), pp. 412–419.

17 W. Pawłowicz, *Biblioteka Śląska w Katowicach – jej dzieje, zbiory i działalność*, [in:] *Śląska Republika Uczonych*, ed. M. Hałub, Wrocław 2018, pp. 383–416.

18 B. Maresz, *Franciszek Szymiczek...*, op. cit.; A. Brożek, *Szymiczek Franciszek*, [in:] *Słownik historyków polskich*, ed. M. Prosińska-Jackl, Warszawa 1994, p. 514.

oriented biographical dictionaries: *Słownik pracowników książki polskiej* (the *Dictionary of Polish Book Workers*)¹⁹.

From the point of view of the subject of the article, however, the most important texts are those devoted to the war fate of the Library. Sylwia Grochowina, in her dissertation on the cultural policy of the German occupation authorities in the Polish territories incorporated into the Third Reich, described, next to other Polish libraries in areas incorporated by the Third Reich, the war episode of the Silesian Library, which is important because the analysis and characteristics were based on Polish and German archival sources²⁰. The second important study dealing with this issue is included in two texts by Zdzisław Gębołyś. The first one presents the occupation history of the Silesian Library in the light of the archives of that period²¹. Gębołyś supplemented and even expanded this topic in another publication devoted to the history of the Silesian Library under occupation, this time focusing on collections and librarians. Regretfully, the 90th anniversary of the Library was celebrated in a dignified manner, but it hardly contributed to expand the knowledge on this subject²². This text presents the activities of the Silesian Library before the outbreak of World War II and the fate of the book collection evacuated to Lwów and the one that remained in Katowice, condemned to the grace and exile of the German occupier. It is undoubtedly related to the subject of this dissertation. However, it is limited primarily to the subject of consideration (the library), but not to the collections, because we only want to address a small part of it (3 evacuated chests) in this text, while the previous publication²³ concerned all the collections evacuated to Lwów. However nevertheless, there is a fundamental difference between the two texts, i.e., the depth of the analysis. Our intention is to present the first discussion of the detailed history of the collection lost in the years of World War II, while in the text of the conference in Poznań (13–15.11.2019), entitled “Wojna i książka” (War and book)²⁴, it is a review presenting what happened with

19 A. Puzio, M. Sitek, *Szymiczek Franciszek*, [in:] *Słownik pracowników książki polskiej. Suplement IV*, ed. M. Rzadkowska, Warszawa 2016, p. 263.

20 S. Grochowina, *Polityka kulturalna niemieckich władz okupacyjnych w Okręgu Rzeszy Gdańsk-Prusy Zachodnie, w Okręgu Rzeszy Kraj Warty, w Rejencji Katowickiej w latach 1939–1945 = Kulturpolitik der deutschen Besatzungsmacht im Reichsgau Danzig-Westpreussen, im Reichsgau Wartheland und im Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz in den Jahren 1939–1945 = Cultural policy of the Nazi occupying forces in the Reich district Gdansk-West Prussia, the Reich District Wartheland and the Reich District of Katowice in the years 1939–1945*, Toruń 2013, pp. 111–112, 140–142.

21 Z. Gębołyś, *Biblioteka Śląska (Górnośląska) Katowice – Bytom podczas II wojny światowej. Rozznanie wstępne*, “Śląskie Studia Historyczno-Teologiczne” 2017, Vol. 50, pp. 329–342.

22 Z. Gębołyś, *Biblioteki mają swoje losy. Okupacyjne dzieje Biblioteki Śląskiej i jej zbiorów*, [in:] *Księgozbiory, biblioteki, wydawnictwa i twórcy podczas konfliktów zbrojnych i politycznych. Stan i perspektywy badawcze*, ed. M. Chrzastowska, A. Łuczak, Poznań 2021, pp. 127–151.

23 Ibidem.

24 Ibidem, see: Konferencja międzynarodowa “Wojna i książka”, [online] <http://lib.amu.edu.pl/konferencja-miedzynarodowa-wojna-i-ksiazka/> [accessed 02.10.2021]. The international confer-

the collections of the entire Library during World War II, both those evacuated and those which had remained in Katowice. The state of the research also includes literature on the very important context in which the main topic is researched and discussed. We think of Lwów as a place where the collections of the Silesian Library were transported, where they were stored until 1942, and from here, apart from the lost chests marked with numbers 1a–3a, returned to Katowice. Here, first of all, two basic works attract our attention. The first is a book by the Ukrainian scientist Roman Dziuban about the displacements and losses of cultural property in Lwów in 1939–1953²⁵. The second book by a German researcher, Stefan Lehr, deals with the policy of the German occupation authorities towards cultural goods, including library, archival and museum collections in Lwów and more broadly in Ukraine, the paradigm of which was plunder, relocation, sharing, contrary to any conventions and rules for this type of collection²⁶. Neither one nor the other book contains any information about the Silesian collections we are interested in, but they contain many important facts about the Soviet and later German orders in Lwów in this field, about direct performers on the German side and about Polish and Polish attempts. Ukrainian archivists, museologists and librarians to counteract or at least minimize the negative effects of this barbaric practice. We must also not forget about the fundamental Polish works of Maciej Matwijów in relation to saving Polish cultural goods in Lwów, although the Silesian theme does not appear in them either²⁷. The review of the state of research also includes information on German archives in Katowice, in particular two works: Marek Stażewski on German archival policy and Antonina Staszaków on archives, library and museum collections of Upper Silesia in 1939–1945²⁸. The monograph of the State Archives in Katowice was the subject of Tomasz Hajewski's doctoral dissertation, unfortunately not published²⁹.

ence “War and Book”. On November 13–15, 2019, at the Działyński Palace and the University Library in Poznań, the conference “War and Book, Book collections, libraries, publishing houses and authors during armed and political conflicts. State of research and research perspectives”.

25 R. Dziuban, *Kul'turni cinnosti ustanov L'vova y 1939–1953-ch rr.: peremeishchenija i vtratti*, L'viv 2020.

26 S. Lehr, *Pewna prawie zapomniana “akcja na Wschodzie”*. *Niemieccy archiwiści w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie i Komisarjacie Rzeszy Ukraina*, transl. M. Gąsowska, Warszawa 2014. S. Lehr, *Ein fast vergessener “Osteinsatz”*. *Deutsche Archivare im Generalgouvernement und im Reichskommissariat Ukraine*, Dusseldorf 2007.

27 M. Matwijów, *Walka o lwowskie dobra kultury w latach 1945–1948*, Wrocław 1996.

28 M. Stażewski, *Niemiecka polityka archiwalna na ziemiach polskich włączonych do Rzeszy 1939–1945*, Warszawa 1991; idem, *Poszukiwania ewakuowanych akt polskich, prowadzone przez niemieckie władze okupacyjne w czasie II wojny światowej*, “Archeion” 1984, Vol. 78, pp. 209–229; A. Staszaków, *Działalność niemieckiej służby archiwalnej w Katowicach w latach 1939–1945*, “Silesia Superior” 1994, Vol. 1, pp. 9–20.

29 T. Hajewski, *Archiwum Państwowe w Katowicach w latach 1932–1990*, Toruń 2013. Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu. Wydział Nauk Historycznych. Promotor: K. Kozłowski.

Research material

In the reconstruction of the history of the Silesian Library under occupation, it is necessary to refer to archival materials, both Polish and German. The validity of this thesis is confirmed by research carried out in the Bundesarchiv (Federal Archive) in Koblenz and Berlin and in Archiwum Państwowe w Katowicach (State Archive in Katowice)³⁰. The material constitutes an important source of knowledge; however, in the fragment of interest to us, i.e., the fate of the displaced collection on the eve of World War II, the source does not provide information that would significantly contribute to unravelling numerous mysteries and ambiguities. The most important materials illuminating the events of the pre-war months, from May to September 1939, are documents from the action of securing collections in 1945–1947, stored in the Archiwum Zakładowe Biblioteki Śląskiej (AZBS – the Department of Archives of the Silesian Library) in Katowice³¹.

It is possible that the evidence on this subject should also be found in the archives of Lwów, given that, in 1939, the chests with treasures of the Katowice library were to be found there. The chests constituted a valuable source of knowledge about the war history of the displaced collections. Apart from the memories of librarians³², the materials also include studies about librarians of the Silesian Library of Katowice: Szymiczek³³, Rybicki³⁴, Józef Mayer³⁵, Jacek Koraszewski³⁶ and Roman Lutman³⁷.

30 In Bundesarchiv Berlin/Koblenz there are documents, from II World War – see S. Grochowina, *Polityka kulturalna...*; State Archive in Katowice contains many archival volumes with materials about Silesian Library – see Z. Gębołyś, *Biblioteka Śląska (Górnośląska)...*

31 Department Archives of the Silesian Library. Particularly valuable is the “Securing collections” team – see AZBS 11/6, *Zbiory ewakuowane w 1939 i ich rewindykacja 1944–1946 (Collections evacuated in 1939 and their recovery)*, pp. 11–102.

32 P. Rybicki, *Garść wspomnień o Bibliotece Śląskiej...*, pp. 264–278; F. Szymiczek, *Rok 1945...*, pp. 279–284; G. Groebel, *Habent sua fata bibliothecari*, “Biuletyn Informacyjny Biblioteki Śląskiej” 1970, No. 1–4, pp. 58–78.

33 A. Puzio, *Dr. Franciszek Szymiczek...*, pp. 412–419; S. Rosenbaum, *Bibliotekarz, historyk, agent...*, pp. 135–169; I. Antonów-Nitsche, *Franciszek Szymiczek – historyk i działacz śląski*, “Książnica Śląska” 1988–1994, Vol. 35, pp. 121–129; H. Rechowicz, *Franciszek Szymiczek*, [in:] H. Rechowicz, *Suumcuique...*, pp. 83–94.

34 D. Musioł, *Paweł Hieronim Rybicki...*, pp. 115–116; H. Rechowicz, *Paweł Rybicki*, [in:] H. Rechowicz, *Suumcuique...*, pp. 45–64.

35 J. Mayer, *Śląska Biblioteka Publiczna*, “Bibliotekarz” 1946, No. 5, pp. 115–116; H. Rechowicz, *Józef Mayer*, [in:] H. Rechowicz, *Suumcuique...*, pp. 69–81.

36 H. Rechowicz, *Jacek Koraszewski*, [in:] H. Rechowicz, *Suumcuique...*, pp. 29–42; J. Madeja, *Doc. dr Jacek Koraszewski (1908–1969)*, *Dyrektor Biblioteki Śląskiej*, “Biuletyn Informacyjny Biblioteki Śląskiej” 1969, No. 1/4, pp. 115–119.

37 H. Rechowicz, *Roman Lutman*, [in:] H. Rechowicz, *Suumcuique...*, pp. 23–28.

The Silesian Library until May 1939

The J. Piłsudski Silesian Public Library in Katowice, next to the Muzeum Śląskie (Silesian Museum), the Instytut Śląski (Silesian Institute) and several other minor cultural and scientific institutions, were the pride and flagship of the Silesian Voivodeship in the Second Polish Republic. Until 1922, there was no modern research library in Upper Silesia, belonging to the Prussian state, which would serve the region a culture-forming and scientific institution. It should be noted, however, that, from the end of the 19th century, there was an extensive network of German folk libraries in Prussian Upper Silesia, with which weaker Polish folk libraries competed³⁸. Neither German nor Polish educational libraries could play this role under any circumstances. The advancement of Upper Silesia, after its most industrialized part having been incorporated to Poland, was reflected in granting it special rights (autonomy) and conditions for a dynamic development³⁹.

Biblioteka Sejmu Śląskiego (Library of Silesian Parliament) was originally conceived as a parliamentary institution. Soon, thanks to the interest and commitment of legislative and executive authorities of the Silesian Voivodeship, it evolved into a general-research library, placing it at the center of the region's activity, both in a historical and contemporary dimension⁴⁰. In 1936, the Silesian Public Library received a fully-fledged status corresponding to this practice, becoming, in accordance with the statute of that year, a regional institution serving scientific and general education purposes meeting the needs of the administration and the Silesian Parliament⁴¹.

The Silesian Library, according to the state specified in the report of 1938, reached the size of 103.796 volumes plus 14.700 doublets⁴². The library's

38 J. Wróblewski, *Polskie biblioteki ludowe w zaborze pruskim i na terenie Rzeszy Niemieckiej w latach 1843–1939*, Olsztyn 1975, pp. 90–115.

39 A. Drogoń, *Ustrój samorządny województwa śląskiego czy autonomia? Spór doktrynalny czy też różne instytucje ustrojowe?*, "Z Dziejów Prawa" 2018, Vol. 11 (19), No. 2, pp. 121–138.

40 H. Rechowicz, *Poprzedniczki Biblioteki Śląskiej...*, pp. 43–50. See *Śląska Biblioteka Publiczna imienia Józefa Piłsudskiego w Katowicach. Przewodnik wraz z regulaminem dla publiczności*, Katowice 1938, pp. 10–13; D. Musiołowa, T. Szwałek, *Pół wieku w służbie kultury i nauki polskiej*, "Przegląd Biblioteczny" 1975, No. 1, pp. 83–102; J. Kantyka, *Z kart historii*, [in:] *Biblioteka Śląska 1922–1972...*, pp. 13–33; B. Zajączkowska, *Charakterystyka dorobku i działalności Biblioteki Śląskiej*, "Książnica Śląska" 1983–1984, Vol. 22, pp. 10–11.

41 *Rozporządzenie Śląskiej Rady Wojewódzkiej z dnia 8 czerwca 1936 r. o statucie organizacyjnym Śląskiej Biblioteki Publicznej imienia Józefa Piłsudskiego*, "Dziennik Ustaw Śląskich" 1936, No. 16, pp. 171–174.

42 *Sprawozdanie Dyrekcji Śląskiej Biblioteki Publicznej imienia Józefa Piłsudskiego z działalności Biblioteki w roku 1938*, [online] <https://www.sbc.org.pl/dlibra/publication/31617/edition/28468> [accessed 02.10.2021]; F. Szymiczek, *Śląska Biblioteka Publiczna w gestii Śląskiej Rady Wojewódzkiej. Lata 1936–1939*, "Książnica Śląska" 1983–1984, Vol. 22, pp. 59–65; "Śląskie Wiadomości Statystyczne" 1938, No. 1, p. 152.

importance is measured by its increase in book collections. It should be remembered that, at the end of the 1920s, the Library only had 11.610 volumes, including 9277 books and 2333 volumes of periodicals⁴³. Five years later (1934), it reached 39.875 volumes (33.306 books + 6569 journals). The book collection had almost doubled, reaching 79.120 volumes in 1935⁴⁴. It was possible thanks to fundamental changes in the functioning of the library. In 1934, the Silesian Library moved to Dom Oświatowy (House of Education) at 12 Francuska Street. In the same year, Rybicki from the University Library in Lwów, became the head of the library⁴⁵. In 1934, the Silesian Library was awarded a regional legal deposit, and gained a highly valuable donation, which was the collection of the Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk na Górnym Śląsku (Society of Friends of Sciences in Upper Silesia)⁴⁶, consisting of 10.520 volumes⁴⁷. As a result of the undertaken efforts and activities, the Silesian Library offered a collection of historical books and contemporary literature, mostly consisting of the *silesiaca*, followed by publications concerning law, social sciences and economics (theology and philosophy), and the humanities (history, literature and ethnography), and, to a lesser extent, natural and technical sciences⁴⁸. One of the library was the section of periodicals, which comprised the most important general, literary and humanistic journals from the 19th and early 20th centuries, as along with subscribed periodicals (1937 – 567 titles). The smallest and, at the same time, the most valuable part of the collection of the Silesian Library were special collections, including early printed books, manuscripts and maps, with many *silesiaca* included⁴⁹.

Thus, the pre-war Silesian Library was a modern institution with an exquisite, carefully completed collection of books, from its very beginning, bearing a strong “Silesian” character, compiling, first of all, works published in Silesia and those published beyond the boundaries of the region, but still closely related to it. The library in Katowice could also be the object of envy of the German part of Upper Silesia and a direct inspiration for the establishment of the Oberschlesische Landesbibliothek (Upper Silesian State Library) in 1931

43 H. Rechowicz, *Poprzedniczki Biblioteki Śląskiej...*, p. 162.

44 “Śląskie Wiadomości Statystyczne” 1935, No. 9, p. 269.

45 H. Rechowicz, *Poprzedniczki Biblioteki Śląskiej...*, pp. 141–148.

46 W. Jabłońska, *Biblioteka Polska w Rumunii i jej wpływ na powstanie Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk na Śląsku*, “Roczniki Biblioteczne” 1960, Vol. 4, No. 3/4, pp. 477–520; K. Poida, *Powstanie i organizacja biblioteki naukowej w Katowicach w latach 1920–1939*, “Biuletyn Informacyjny Biblioteki Śląskiej” 1967, Vol. 12, No. 4, pp. 25–38.

47 P. Rybicki, *Śląska Biblioteka Publiczna*, “Zaranie Śląskie” 1936, No. 2, pp. 77–82.

48 *Śląska Biblioteka Publiczna...*, pp. 14–22; P. Rybicki, *Biblioteka Sejmu Śląskiego*, „Komunikat Instytutu Śląskiego w Katowicach” 1934, No. 9, pp. 1–4.

49 Idem; *Katalog systematyczny. Wykaz działów wraz z indeksem alfabetycznym*, Katowice 1939.

in Ratibor (Racibórz)⁵⁰. The German library, conceived as a counterbalance to the Silesian Library, with similar, outlined tasks, was unable to compete with the latter, which was determined by the historical profile of the book collection. In the intention of the founders, the government of the Upper Silesian Province, the library was to fill the gap existing in German librarianship, consisting in a lack of a public, generally accessible library east of the Szczecin – Zgorzelec line, not including Wrocław. The political motive of placing the library's activity in the broader context of the German cultural policy in the East was also important. The library was to be a kind of outpost of Germany, which was to strengthen it, being an element of the so-called border librarianship (*Grenzbüchereiwesen*) at the same time. In 1931, the library consisted of about 60.000 volumes, which were collected over the course of 3.5 years. In 1933, after Hitler came to power, the provincial government was liquidated, which deprived the library of financial funds and forced the library to be moved to Beuthen (Bytom)⁵¹.

The fate of the Silesian Library in 1939 (May–September 1939)

In May 1939, at the request of provincial authorities, the Silesian Library began preparations to evacuate the most valuable books, journals, and other documents from its collection. The moment of the decision was not accidental. Let us recall some political facts. In March 1939, Poland rejected Hitler's offer to conclude an anti-Soviet alliance at the cost of making concessions to Gdańsk and facilitating communication in the "corridor". On April 7, 1939, the bilateral declaration on mutual guarantees was signed between the Polish and British governments. Thus, the prospect of normalizing the Polish-German relations was receding, bringing the prospect of an armed conflict between the two countries closer. The termination of the non-aggression pact between Germany and Poland on April 18, 1939, placed the Polish state under the threat of war, forcing it to undertake preparations to defend itself against the expected German aggression⁵². Military preparations were accompanied by activities aiming at securing Polish cultural heritage against the consequences of destruction in the course of military actions. What is more, Poles expected the aggressor to perpetrate the acts of robbery.

50 H. Materla, *Z dziejów...*, pp. 28–40; H. Oehlke, *Aus der Geschichte der Oberschlesischen Landesbibliothek*, "Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Breslau" 1959, Vol. 4, pp. 280–288; S. Pioskowiak, *Oberschlesische Landesbibliothek*, [in:] *Streifzüge durch Oberschlesien*, Katowice 2017, pp. 381–388, [online] <https://sbc.org.pl/dlibra/publication/294031/edition/277824/streifzuge-durch-oberschlesien-pioskowiak-stefan?language=de> [accessed 02.10.2021].

51 Z. Gębołyś, *Biblioteka Śląska (Górnośląska)...*, pp. 329–342.

52 M. Kornat, *Polityka zagraniczna Polski 1938–1939. Cztery decyzje Józefa Becka*, Gdańsk 2012, pp. 320–378. See to R. Kaczmarek, *Górny Śląsk...*, pp. 21–63.

In connection with the anticipated threats, various activities were carried out, ranging from moving particularly valuable collections to more secure places, hiding them or taking them deep into Poland or abroad⁵³. In the Silesian Voivodeship, the latter option was chosen, ordering the shipment of the particularly valuable library and archival collections to the East, to Lwów. Unfortunately, we do not know what the preparations for the evacuation of the most valuable parts of the Silesian Public Library's collection to Lwów looked like, although we can make guesses by studying incomplete bibliographic descriptions, which reflected the rush, and perhaps also the hope that this was only a temporary solution.

We do not know the exact calendar of events. Supposedly, no documents on this subject have survived. Nevertheless, between May and June 1939, the cultural heritage preserved in the pre-war Silesian Library in Katowice was packed into 29 chests. The entire operation had to last several weeks, bearing not only its technical aspect in mind, i.e., putting documents into chests, closing them, sealing and transporting – presumably to a railway station. The majority of work was connected with deciding what to choose, and then making lists of documents selected for removal. The documents selected for evacuation call for a separate study. Here, we will focus on the characteristics of the “shipment”. In total, there were 1.345 library units in 29 chests⁵⁴. The contents of the chests consisted of four main types of documents: books; journals and newspapers; manuscripts, early printed books and maps. Noticeably, most of the evacuated documents were *silesiaca*, and a small part of them were Upper Silesia plebiscite prints and bibliographic works (see List 1).

Why Lwów? What made target place of refuge? Why was the Library of the Biblioteka Uniwersytetu Jana Kazimierza (Jan Kazimierz University Library) chosen⁵⁵, and not, for example, the Ossolineum Library? As is known, Lwów was the evacuation site of many Polish institutions from various places in Poland, including the Silesian Voivodeship.

As it was suggested by Barbara Maresz, Lwów ties of the fact that the director of the Silesian Public Library, Rybicki, former librarian of the

53 D. Matelski, *Ewakuacja i straty dóbr kultury zachodniej i centralnej Polski w 1939 roku*, “Zapiski Historyczne” 2003, Vol. 68, No. 1, pp. 59–78.

54 AZBS 11/6, pp. 18–96.

55 See K. Korzon, *Rudolf Kotula – dyrektor Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej we Lwowie (1923–1939)*, “Roczniki Biblioteczne” 1977, Vol. 21, No. 3–4, pp. 801–847; *Biblioteki na wschodnich ziemiach II Rzeczypospolitej. Informator*, ed. B. Bieńkowska et al., Poznań 1998, pp. 346–354; *Losy zbiorów bibliotecznych Uniwersytetu Lwowskiego (I Działu Staatsbibliothek Lemberg) w czasie II wojny światowej*, [online] https://www.academia.edu/36775957/Losy_zbior%C3%B3w_bibliotecznych_Uniwersytetu_Lwowskiego_I_Dzia%C5%82u_Staatsbibliothek_Lemberg_w_czasie_II_wojny_%C5%9Bwiatowej [accessed 30.11.2021]; M. Wilczyńska, *Biblioteka Naukowa Lwowskiego Państwowego Uniwersytetu im. Iwana Franki*, “Biuletyn Biblioteki Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej w Lublinie” 1971, Vol. 19, No. 2–3, pp. 3–16.

University Library in Lwów, was somehow associated with the Lwów Library probably determined this choice⁵⁶. The decisive factor was the considerable distance from the anticipated theatre of hostilities in which Katowice, *nolens volens*, was to find itself shortly after the start of the war. The choice of the place of refuge was also a manifestation of realism and rationality. The chosen institution was not only a library, but also a library with a scientific profile, having storage space and also staff, which was to guarantee the adequate protection of collections against undesirable effects. In 1939, it was difficult to predict whether the decision was right or not. What happened next proved that the decision had been correct. In any case, the transport with the chests arrived in Lwów intact and was deposited in the storage space of the Library of the University of Lwów.

At the end of August or at the beginning of September 1939, the second Lwów evacuation of *cimelia*⁵⁷, belonging to the Silesian Library, was carried out. Six chests were selected for expedition and marked with numbers 1a–6a. The chests with numbers 1a–3a were packed with library inventories, library catalogues and important library documentation (bills, books of influence and personal details), a dozen or so maps, a dozen or so leaflets from the times of the Silesian Uprisings and the Upper Silesia plebiscite, along with selected information and bibliographic works⁵⁸ (see Lists 2–4). Chests with numbers 4a–6a consisted of more diversified content. Presumably, in a hurry, they had been packed with works from a different periods, of a different value such as manuscripts, letters, early printed books, encyclopaedic and bibliographic works, silesiaca, and others. The transport was to be handled by the Silesian Voivodship Office. The chests were probably attached to a larger shipment containing office documents. The transport probably set off on August 30 or 31, 1939. However, it did not include boxes 4a–6a, which, according to one of the witnesses, were still in the Library building on September 1 and remained there, given that on September 2, the Library staff almost entirely joined officials and policemen evacuated from Katowice⁵⁹. According to war oral accounts of librarians and archivists staying in Lwów

56 B. Maresz, “Silesian library collections in Lwów and Lwów theater items in Katowice. War stories”. Paper was delivered during a scientific seminar at the Silesian Library in Katowice on September 17, 2019: “September 17 in Lwów. Causes, course, effects” – see also B. Maresz, *Ze Lwowa do Katowic. Przedwojenne księgozbiory lwowskie i kresowe w Bibliotece Śląskiej*, Katowice 2002, pp. 7–12.

57 Cymelia or cimelia (Greek: κειμήλιον *keimēlion* “property, valuables, treasure, jewel”) – collections or objects of special value, adequately protected and stored; the most valuable prints and manuscripts in the library, separated from the resources and specially protected; less frequently banned letters and prints, the so-called prohibita. See [online] <https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cymelia> [accessed 02.10.2021].

58 AZBS 11/6, pp. 11–13.

59 R. Kaczmarek, *Górny Śląsk...*, p. 41.

during the war, chests 1a–3a reached Lwów. Those librarians did not work in the Silesian Library prior to the war, except Janina Berger and Mayer⁶⁰, but still they were keen on following the fate of the transported collections and provided their own reports (Michał Wąsowicz⁶¹, Stanisław Rachwał⁶² and Ksawery Piwocki⁶³). It is quite possible that it took place between September 6–10⁶⁴.

Let us remember that war transport was carried out in extremely unfavourable conditions, presumably mainly in the evening and at night, exposed to German bombing, derailment, etc., at best with many stops⁶⁵. It is proven that the chests did not reach the University Library in Lwów. Perhaps the explanation for this state of affairs, i.e., information that the evacuated chests had been placed in a barrack in Persenkówka were obtained, among others, by Rybicki, after the war⁶⁶. In another note from the same year, Rybicki reported, referring to the testimony of an archivist from the Archiwum Miejskie (Municipal Archive) in Lwów, Wąsowicz, that the chests had been placed in a barrack in Skniłów⁶⁷. In both cases, according to the account, a crowd surrounded the chests. Believing that the chests included the immensely valuable content, people opened them and then destroyed or stole their content. Not without significance in these investigations is the fact that Rybicki, not being in Lwów during the war, gave all this information having heard the accounts of witnesses⁶⁸.

60 H. Rechowicz, *Suum cuique...*, pp. 69–81, 95–103.

61 M. Wąsowicz (1905–1983) – historian, archivist, employee of the archives of Lwów, Kraków and Warsaw. See M. Wąsowicz, *Ze wspomnień archiwisty (1929–1953)*, “Miscellanea Historico-Archivistica” 1982, Vol. 1. pp. 87–104; *Listy Michała Wąsowicza do Witolda Suchodolskiego i inne źródła archiwalne 1945–1954. Rzecz o archiwach, archiwistach i archiwaliach na Dolnym Śląsku*, ed. G. Trzaskowska, I. Laborewicz, Wrocław 2016, pp. 41–48.

62 S. Rachwał (1884–1956) – literary historian and librarian. Already during his Polish studies, he started working in the municipal archives and the library of the Museum of Art Industry, later also the National Museum and the Orzechowicz Collection. In 1938, he was entrusted with the Municipal Library, which had a scientific status (A. Czołowski started organizing it with 12 books!). After 1945, Rachwał acted as the director of the Museum of the Sądecki Region in Nowy Sącz. See B. Mansfeld, *Dwa zjazdy muzealne we Lwowie*, “Muzealnictwo” 1993, Vol. 35, pp. 8 [6–17].

63 Franciszek K. Piwocki (1901–1974) – art historian, director of the Museum of Art Industry in Lwów, ethnologist, professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, director of the State Ethnographic Museum. See R. Kasperkiewicz, *Ksawery Piwocki*, “Rocznik Historii Sztuki” 2001, Vol. 36, pp. 103–112; A. Konopczyńska-Iracka, *Wspomnienia pośmiertne*, “Ochrona Zabytków” 1975, No. 28/2, p. 145.

64 Letter from the director of the Silesian Library to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – see AZBS 11/6, p. 9.

65 M. Graff, *Komunikacja kolejowa na wschodnim pograniczu (1). Uwarunkowania historyczne*, „Systemy Transportowe 2017, No. 5, s. 38–45.

66 Lwów district. See *Persenkówka*, [in:] G. Rąkowski, *Lwów*, Pruszków 2008, p. 303.

67 Within the borders of Lwów. See P. Włodek, A. Kulewski, *Lwów. Przewodnik*, Pruszków 2006, pp. 299–300; AZBS 11/6, pp. 11–13.

68 Rybicki, fearing arrest by the Germans, left Katowice for Kraków, where he spent the entire occupation. See D. Musioł, *Paweł Rybicki...*, p. 118.

The displaced collections of the Silesian Library in Lwów (1939–1941)

On September 23, 1939, the Lwów garrison surrendered to second aggressor, the Red Army, standing at the gates of Lwów on its eastern side. The Polish commander General Władysław Langner believed it to be “lesser evil”. From today’s perspective, this decision, in virtually every respect, including political and military ones, is regarded to have been wrong, considering the enormous losses suffered by Poland under the communist terror. It was the proverbial choice between a hammer and an anvil, as the Poles found out less than two years later, when the Soviets were replaced by the German occupying forces. The common goal of both totalitarianisms was the annihilation of Poland and Polishness. What differed those two systems were the methods and the scope of extermination. This can be clearly seen in the attitude of the two invaders towards Polish cultural heritage. Both treated them as spoils of war, both robbed and destroyed them, taking what they considered important and useful from their point of view. Similar conclusions can be drawn by looking at the fate of the boxes with documents of the Silesian Library in Katowice.

Today, more than 80 years after the transport arrived to Lwów, it may seem of secondary importance to determine where the evacuation train stopped, in Persenkówka or in Skniłów? In history, however, even the smallest detail has its own meaning. There was a train station both in Persenkówka and Skniłów, where the evacuation echelon could stop. According to the information from Professor Dariusz Matelski⁶⁹, the train with the Silesian files stopped on one day in September in Równe, in the Wołyń Voivodship, where it was detached at a siding. As Matelski claims, no more have been heard of the transported content ever since.

Thus, should we look for the chests in Równe? Other findings indicate that rather not, as the files found in Równe had no connection to the Silesian Library – they were files of the Zakład Ubezpieczeń od Inwalidztwa in Chorzów (Disability Insurance Institution)⁷⁰. In Matelski’s article, the Russians deposited some of the materials from the Lwów Archive in Równe. Generally speaking, Matelski’s texts do not contribute much to our librarian “investigation” for

69 Message from Dariusz Matelski to Z. Gębołyś, 9.08.2021; D. Matelski, *Ewakuacja...*, p. 72; idem, *Losy polskiego dziedzictwa kultury w przededniu wojny i we wrześniu 1939 roku*, [in:] *Problemy historii wojskowości w kraju i na obczyźnie po wrześniu 1939 roku. Studia historyczne i politologiczne. Tom dedykowany pamięci nestora historyków polskich profesora Józefa Jasnowskiego (1906–2009)*, ed. L. Nowak, M. Szczerbiński, G. Wieczorek, Gorzów Wlkp. 2010, p. 417.

70 D. Matelski, *Losy polskiego dziedzictwa kultury na radzieckiej Ukrainie (1922–1991). Część 1: 1922–1945*, “Nowa Polityka Wschodnia” 2015, No. 1(8), pp. 110–111 – it refers to the deposit of materials in Równe by the Soviet authorities of some of the archives.

at least two reasons. First of all, Matelski does not even mention a word, in any of the texts, about the evacuation of the collections of the Silesian Public Library, focusing on archives and the documentation of offices. Secondly Matelski repeats the earlier findings of Staszaków and Stażewski. The studies by Staszaków and Stażewski also fail to mention Równe, while the materials found in Równe indicate that with all likelihood, this is a false trail. In both texts, Staszaków writes about the search for files conducted by the Germans, about the fact that they found files at the stations in Chrzanów and Bohumín, and that they were also looking for archives in the areas occupied by Russia, e.g., in Równe⁷¹. The most valuable in this context, however, is Staszaków's introduction to the thematic summary of working teams in the Archiwum Państwowe w Katowicach (State Archive in Katowice), where she presents a specific calendar of searches for Silesian archival materials by the Germans⁷². M. Stażewski describes Karl Bruchmann's⁷³ search for Silesian files in Upper Silesia and then in Lwów⁷⁴.

The displaced collections of the Silesian Library in Lwów (1939–1944)

On September 4, 1939, Katowice was seized by the Wehrmacht. On September 16, at the request of the head of the civil administration, the director of Oberschlesische Bibliothek Beuthen, Karl Rother and Viktor Kauder, the pre-war chairman of the Verband deutscher Volksbüchereien

71 A. Staszaków, *Działalność niemieckiej służby archiwalnej...*, pp. 9–20; idem, *Losy dokumentów pergaminowych na Górnym Śląsku od końca XVIII w. do 1945 r.*, "Archeion" 1998, Vol. 99, pp. 75–92.

72 A. Staszaków, *Archiwalia, zbiory biblioteczne i muzealne Górnego Śląska w latach 1939–1945. Sumariusz tematyczny do zespołów w Archiwum Państwowym w Katowicach – Staatsarchiv Kattowitz (Archiwum Państwowe w Katowicach) (1931) 1939–1945, Archivberatungsstelle Oberschlesien Kattowitz (Górnośląski Urząd Porad Archiwalnych w Katowicach) (1935) 1942–1945*, Katowice 2007, pp. 15–38. See also: M. Antonów, *Dwudziestopięćlecie Wojewódzkiego Archiwum Państwowego w Katowicach (1932–1957)*, "Archeion" 1958, Vol. 28, pp. 31–45. See to S. Krupa, A. Staszaków, *Personel Staatsarchiv Kattowitz w latach 1939–1945 w świetle akt osobowych*, "Szkice Archiwalno-Historyczne" 2010, No. 6, pp. 101–116.

73 K. Gustav Bruchmann (1902–1967) was a German historian, archivist and director of the Federal Archives from 1961 to 1967. After the conquest of Poland in 1939, he was appointed representative of the State Archives Wrocław for the annexed Katowice administrative district. In 1940 a branch (department) of the State Archives Wrocław was set up in Katowice, which was converted into an independent State Archive in 1941 (State Archive Katowice). Bruchmann was entrusted with the management – W. Leesch, *Die deutschen Archivare 1500–1945*. Bd 2: *Biographisches Lexikon*, München 1992, p. 84. See also: T. Hajewski, *Archiwum Państwowe...*

74 M. Stażewski, *Niemiecka polityka archiwalna...*, pp. 78–102; idem, *Poszukiwania ewakuowanych akt polskich, prowadzone przez niemieckie władze okupacyjne w czasie II wojny światowej*, "Archeion" 1984, Vol. 78, pp. 209–229.

in Polen (German Union of People's Libraries in Upper Silesia, Poland)⁷⁵, were authorized to review the library's book collection. The report by Rother, which was based on the inspection carried out from September 18 to 23, shows that the majority of the book collection had been preserved. Rother only noted the absence of administrative, personal and financial records. He also noticed a lack of catalogues, except an alphabetical card catalogue. The most valuable manuscripts, which he must have found on the spot, had been taken to the Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich in we Lwowie (Ossoliński National Institute in Lwów)⁷⁶. At least that is what Rother stated, though it cannot be ruled out that it was deliberate disinformation on the part of Poland, which could have been passed on to the Germans by the janitor who was guarding the library.

The Germans quickly realized what had been taken to Lwów, and in 1939 they intervened with the Soviet authorities in this matter. However, their attempts turned out to be unsuccessful. In the period 1939–1941, Bruchmann led the search in the territory of Poland occupied by the Germans. He started it right after arriving in Katowice on October 20, 1939. As a result of orders and personal efforts, files of various offices from the area of the Silesian Voivodeship, in Chrzanów and Bohumin were found. Only after capturing Lwów, in June 1941 having found out that the chests were in their place, did they decide to transport them to Katowice without opening and checking the contents first. However, it seems that quite the opposite happened, as evidenced by the discovery of the files left in Lwów by Erich Randt (the head of the Archives Department at the "Government" of the General Government in Kraków). The material found there included files and books evacuated from Katowice in the summer of 1939. They were sent back to Katowice in the years 1942–1943⁷⁷. Randt, after moving to Lwów at the end of June 1941, soon (between July 1 and 7) found the Silesian files, in a very bad condition; they were damp, dirty and partly thrown out of the chests⁷⁸.

It seems that the main merits in this regard are due to Bruchmann, the head of the Staatsarchiv Kattowitz (State Archive in Katowice), who searched for lost documents in Upper Silesia between 1939 and 1941, and then in Lwów,

75 Z. Gębołyś, *Biblioteki mniejszości niemieckiej w II RP*, Katowice 2012, pp. 140–141.

76 State Archive in Katowice, 189/118, Zarząd Prowincjonalny Górnego Śląska w Katowicach, pp. 6–9.

77 E. Randt (1887–1948) was a German archivist and historian. In the years 1939–1944 he was the director of the Archives Office in the government of the General Government – K.G. Bruchmann, *Erich Randt (1887–1948)*, „Zeitschrift für Ostforschung” 1957, Vol. 6, pp. 403–411.

78 Files found by Randt in Lwów: Upper Silesia plebiscite files of the Silesian Voivodeship Office; files of the Silesian Sejm. Archives of Dukes of Pszczyna, files of the police and education authorities, files of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Katowice; Postal files? Kasa Oszczędności in Katowice; insurance files from Chorzów, see M. Stażewski, *Poszukiwania...*, pp. 209–229.

after the city had been taken over by the Germans⁷⁹. Bruchmann, having after arriving in Lwów in August 1941, took a closer look at the discovered files. On August 18, 1942, Bruchmann completed the recovery of the Silesian files. Most of the files were sent back to Katowice by road and rail but, in fact, in 1944, small parcels continued to be sent there. From the point of view of the topic of the dissertation, the most important fact is that almost all files of the documents evacuated from the Silesian Public Library, except for chests 1a–3a, including chests 1–29, were sent back to Katowice⁸⁰.

The preparation of the Silesian collection for transport lasted until August 1942, when presumably both archival files and chests with the collections of the Silesian Public Library, marked with numbers 1–29, returned to Katowice.

In 1944, some of the collections of the Silesian Library, found in Lwów and brought to Katowice, upon the order of the German occupation authorities, were set off on another journey. The prospect of the inevitable defeat forced the Germans to evacuate the political party's particularly valuable collections; they were obliged to do it pursuant to the fire ordinance of the Minister of the Reich, on August 28, 1942. According to Rybicki, in May and August 1944, the Germans took 818 works (3.183 volumes to the castle in Frączków – German: Franzdorf), including the content transported in 1942 from Lwów⁸¹. Among them there were old prints, Silesian books and prints from the 19th and 20th centuries, source publications, encyclopaedias, bibliographies and basic works within particular fields of knowledge. According to other materials, part of the Katowice collection was moved to Bytom, where it survived until the end of the war. On the basis of the inventory carried out after the war, it is estimated that the Silesian Library lost about 10% of its collection⁸². How many losses were caused by the war, and how many by robberies and plunder, will probably never be established. It was possible to recover some of the collections, while for the others mentioned in the Polish and German lists, one can hardly hope that at least some of them will still be recovered.

79 T. Hajewski, M. Węcki, *Karl Gustaw Bruchmann jako zwierzchnik niemieckiej służby archiwalnej na Górnym Śląsku w latach 1939–1945*, "Szkice Archiwalno-Historyczne" 2008, No. 4, pp. 75–95.

80 M. Stażewski, *Poszukiwania...*, pp. 213–214, 220, 227; A. Staszków, *Losy dokumentów pergaminowych na Górnym Śląsku...*, pp. 84–91; H. Materla, *Rozwój księgozbioru Biblioteki Śląskiej*, [in:] *Biblioteka Śląska 1922–1972...*, pp. 90–91.

81 See AZBS 5/4, p. 19 – This information is in the letter of Rybicki to the Staroste of the Nissa Poviát of 30 April 1945.

82 F. Szymiczek, *Sprawozdanie z działalności Śląskiej Biblioteki Publicznej w Katowicach za czasokres od 1 lutego 1945 do dnia dzisiejszego*, [online] <https://www.sbc.org.pl/dlibra/publication/384669/edition/362515> [accessed 02.10.2021], p. 8.

Chests 1a–3a

We left chests 1a-3a in the barracks in Persenkówka or in Skniłów. On the basis of the notes of Rybicki, who informed, after the war the chests had been seriously damaged by the local population, and their contents had been partially stolen, we conclude that the chests were not properly secured, or secured only temporarily, i.e. until Lwów was taken over by the Soviet army. The local population, probably lured by the information about the chests left in the barracks, and no longer guarded, decided to take them over, expecting that they might contain some treasure. Disappointed with their content, they either destroyed or stole the materials, because allegedly in November 1939 or in the spring of 1940 upon the order of the Soviet authorities, these chests were to be transported to the basement of the Bernardine Church in Lwów, next to the building of the State Archives⁸³. This information, in turn, would indicate that someone perhaps informed the army or the NKVD about the robbery, as a result of which a patrol appeared on the spot, securing the surviving remains and passing them on.

Rybicki tried to find out what the fate of the lost chests in Lwów was, shortly after taking the post of the director of the Silesian Library on March 9, 1945. In a letter to the Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of March 16, 1945, sent there by the Urząd Wojewódzki Śląski (Silesian Voivodship Office), Rybicki wrote about Persenkówka as the last place where the chests had been last seen. He repeated the news he had heard about the chests being smashed by the crowd, about the destruction of their compactness and the preservation of what had been left from by the Soviet troops notified about this fact. In a reply from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dated April 30, 1945, addressed to the Ministerstwo Administracji Publicznej (Ministry of Public Administration), the trip was considered pointless. Signed under the letter, the director of the Minister's Cabinet, Aleksander Jackowski, states that the matter, being part of the project of the general recovery programme was referred to as settled⁸⁴.

P. Rybicki reported that the chests were probably transferred to the Muzeum Przemysłu Artystycznego (Museum of Industrial Art)⁸⁵. In this letter, Rybicki states that, according to his information, the transport with the chests reached Lwów, where it was directed to this Museum and attached there to the Archives of the Silesian Province. It was supposed to take place at the end of 1939 or the beginning of 1940. From the fact that the chests 1a–3a in transport did not reach Katowice from May 1942, Rybicki concludes that they must have

83 Ibidem, pp. 5–6, 9.

84 Ibidem, p. 1.

85 AZBS 11/6, p. 9; M. Matwijów, *Muzea lwowskie wczoraj i dziś*, “Niepodległość i Pamięć” 2006, Vol. 13, No. 3(24), pp. 182, 184.

remained in Lwów, either in the Museum of Industrial Art, or in the Muzeum Akt Dawnych (Museum of Data Files). In an undated note, written in 1945 or a year later, P. Rybicki explains the origin of his information and informants⁸⁶.

This is what Mayer said, who had learned about it from Rachwał, the Head of the library at Archiwum Miejskie (Municipal Archive). Rachwał himself, having no access to the chests, could not, however, say anything about their contents. They were supposed to have been transferred to the Archives of Old Files in Lwów⁸⁷. Unfortunately, despite all the efforts, Rybicki did not find out how it actually had happened. He was even ready to go to Lwów to look for the chests there. In the aforementioned letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he argued that the contents of the chests (inventories and catalogues) were indispensable for the Library, and did not have any value if separated from those collections⁸⁸. He also pointed out that other materials in the boxes (leaflets, maps and bibliographic publications) had a strictly local, Silesian significance⁸⁹.

Unfortunately, this did not happen, as evidenced by the letter of the Director of the Silesian Library of August 31, 1946⁹⁰. Rybicki's efforts lead to further conclusions regarding the occupation (Lwów) fate of the documentation of the Silesian Public Library, in which the theme of the German occupation of Lwów (June 1941 – June 1944) cannot be ignored.

Sources, witnesses to history, including scrupulous Germans, remain silent about this. The Germans had to look for these chests after capturing Lwów. After all, they knew that they had already been there in 1939. If they had found chests 1–29, why had they not found the other chests (1a–3a) they must have known about. Earlier, they found chests 4a–6a in the Silesian Public Library. It is possible that these chests were no longer in Lwów, because they had been taken away, unpacked, by the Red Army troops escaping from the Germans. But why, then, did they find 1–29, which the Germans had found, left in their place? B. Maresz suggests that perhaps still closed, they lie somewhere in the basement of one of the Lwów archives⁹¹, which is denied by Lwów archivists⁹².

As always, so also this time, the principal trust and test should be applied. Many more unanswered questions arise. Why were the Soviet occupying forces, very meticulously taking over Polish cultural assets by plunder, not interested

86 AZBS 11/6, pp. 2–3.

87 Ibidem, p. 9.

88 Ibidem.

89 Ibidem.

90 Ibidem, p. 9.

91 B. Maresz: *Śląskie zbiory biblioteczne we Lwowie...*, pp. [2–4].

92 The correspondence was directed at the beginning of July 2021 to the largest archives and libraries in Lwów. Unfortunately, apart from the National Library of Stefanyk (no archives of any kind) remained unanswered.

in the chests from Katowice and their contents?⁹³ Why did they fail to even open them? Can the efforts focused on the propaganda action be an explanation, or maybe the reason was the terror against the Polish population, as a result of which there was no time to search and take over cultural items? It is hard not to be surprised, given the very extensive appropriation of the Polish cultural heritage carried out by the Soviets. Did the news about the chests reach the librarians of the Ossoliński Institute, which was then headed by Mieczysław Gębarowicz?⁹⁴ Or perhaps it took place during the times when Jerzy Borejsza, the all-powerful Soviet apparatchik, was in charge of Lwów culture in the Soviet-occupied Lwów?⁹⁵

Further doubts are raised by the information provided by Rybicki stating that, after the occupation of Lwów in 1944 by the Soviets, the army and the NKVD searched the building of the Museum of Industrial Art several times in search of chests 1a–3a, which means that they were not there, perhaps they were no longer in Lwów. The Germans did not bring them back to Katowice. So, what happened to them? Were they transported to Moscow by the Russians fleeing Lwów?

Rybicki suggests seeking explanations from Piwocki, who managed the Museum of Industrial Art in Lwów, and, in 1945, worked at the Ministry of Culture and Art⁹⁶. Unfortunately, it is not known whether his advice was followed. Like other suggestions provided by Rybicki, this one was also ignored by the new authorities of Poland. Good relations with the USSR, based on submission and servility, were more important than the chests.

For the sake of fairness and research honesty, it should be noted that efforts to return Polish cultural items were repeatedly undertaken by the communist authorities through official diplomatic channels, by Polish librarians and archivists in Warsaw and Lwów, numerous examples of which are provided by both Matwijów⁹⁷ and Matelski⁹⁸. Another thing is that most of them were ineffective, and if they were successful, the consent of the authorities in Lwów

93 The mechanisms of Soviet looting in the eastern territories of the Second Polish Republic are described in detail in his book by Matelski. See D. Matelski, *Anatomia grabieży. Polityka Rosji wobec polskiego dziedzictwa kultury od XVII do XX wieku*, Kraków 2021.

94 Matwijów does not mention any involvement of Gębarowicz with regard to the protection of the evacuated Silesian collections in September 1939 and later. As it seems, Gębarowicz must have known about them. Lack of interest can be explained by the absorbing duties in the Ossoliński Library. See M. Matwijów, *Mieczysław Gębarowicz (1893–1984). Uczony i opiekun narodowych dóbr kultury*, Warszawa 2013, pp. 155–168.

95 M. Matwijów, *Walka o lwowskie dobra kultury...*, pp. 42, 43, 45; idem, *Zakład Narodowy imienia Ossolińskich w latach 1939–1946*, Wrocław 2003, pp. 41–46.

96 AZBS 11/6, pp. 2–3.

97 M. Matwijów, *Walka o lwowskie dobra kultury...*, pp. 71–114; idem, *Zakład Narodowy imienia Ossolińskich...*, pp. 262–283.

98 D. Matelski, *Losy polskiego dziedzictwa kultury na radzieckiej Ukrainie (1922–1991). Część II: 1945–1991*, “Nowa Polityka Wschodnia” 2015, nr 2 (9), pp. 106–136.

was an act of “grace”, the donated collections, which in fact constituted the property of the Polish state and society, were referred to as the donations of the Soviets (Ukrainians) for the Polish nation.

This is a very strict assessment, probably not entirely fair, bearing in mind the efforts to return Polish cultural heritage remaining outside the Yalta borders of post-war Poland⁹⁹. This comment in no way applies to Rybicki, or other librarians of the then Silesian Public Library, who tried to explain what had happened to the lost collections of the Library. In fact, Rybicki should be particularly admired for his civil courage in writing to the Ministry of Foreign Office on this matter. These efforts on the part of the state authorities in the times of the Polish People’s Republic lacked determination, regularity and, above all, courage. Courage returned after 1989, in the Third Polish Republic, but to this day there is no systematic and determined search for the lost collections.

A balance – is everything lost?

Chests 1a–3a “fell like a stone into water”. All traces of them were lost. The futility of the search was recognized, as it seems, by the employees of the Silesian Library, headed by its director, Rybicki, after his subsequent letters to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1946) on this matter did not bring any results. Perhaps, somewhere in the “depths” of the archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there is an answer to the question concerning whether the Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials undertook any search activities at all, or perhaps they intervened with the Soviet authorities. It is likely that they found the matter too trivial to be dealt with. Such a conclusion could be led by the arguments put forward by Rybicki about the close relationship between the materials sought with the Library’s collections, and about their worthlessness in isolation from the collections¹⁰⁰. The argument that the lost leaflets, Silesian maps and encyclopaedic publications had strictly local, Silesian significance could strengthen their conviction of the futility of further research even more¹⁰¹. In this situation, the quite dramatic conclusion of Rybicki that especially a lack of inventories and catalogues makes it almost impossible for the Library to work normally could have remained without any response¹⁰². Or maybe they decided that the undoubted loss was compensated by profits brought almost entirely by the acquired Oberschlesische Landesbibliothek, not to mention the court collections, which were also taken over by the Library?

99 D. Matelski, *Anatomia grabieży...*

100 AZBS 11/6, p. 9.

101 Ibidem.

102 Ibidem.

Rybicki had to cease further efforts aimed at recovering the lost chests, convinced by the authorities to do so upon the force of identical arguments. It is quite probable that he came to this conclusion after realizing the fact that most of the lost works could be recovered in a different way, e. g. through scattered post-German collections, or perhaps through the replacement restitution from collections of German libraries.

Chests – a short characteristic of contents

The librarians of the Silesian Public Library packed books, magazines, old prints, manuscripts, and some library documentation into chests 1a–3a. The detailed content is mentioned in the lists attached to the text. Chest 1a mainly contained library documentation, including personal files, books of receipts, inventories and budget reports. Each of them is of great importance for the history of the Silesian Library. Two manuscripts and one map were also attached to the files. In chest 2a, there are alphabetical and systematic catalogues of the Library in the form of clamp books, which explained the homogeneity of the contents of this box. Chest 3a is filled with three basic types of documents. The first group included valuable Polish and foreign bibliographic publications. The second group consisted of Upper Silesia plebiscite leaflets, and the third group – maps of Silesia and Poland. Here, we would like to draw your attention to the contents of the chests and the importance of the loss for the Library. On the list, providing the contents of chest 3a, there are later notes in pencil – signatures, an expansion of titles – traces of checking the collection. Years later, this way of reasoning found confirmation, insofar as most of the books were actually recovered from other sources, most likely as gifts or antique purchases. The evidence for this is provided by the overview of catalogues of the Silesian Library and resources of the Śląska Biblioteka Cyfrowa (Silesian Digital Library, see List 4). The biggest loss was recorded by the Library, considering the map collection. The Library only recovered 6 out of 23 maps stored in chest 3a, through purchasing or donating. From among the leaflets, 4 out of 18 titles have been recovered so far. Information publications have been recovered relatively most often (6 out of 11).

Due to difficult access to the collections of the Silesian Library, the lists were checked by librarians of the Dział Zbiorów Specjalnych Biblioteki Śląskiej (Special Collections Department of the Silesian Library), Pawłowicz and Elżbieta Tyrna-Danielczyk, with the kind support of the Head of the Department of Special Collections Department of the Silesian Library, Maresz. It is worth noting, however, that the purpose of this text is not a detailed provenance analysis of the lost documents and their “substitutes” currently in the Silesian Library. A separate study should be devoted to this. Incomplete descriptions

do not allow to conclude that such maps are in other libraries. Besides, the work may have survived as such, but only in individual copies. Difficulties in establishing how many of the missing documents were returned to the Library's collection more precisely are caused by an incomplete bibliographic description, probably prepared in a hurry in the spring of 1939. However, this is not an irreparable loss. Even if most of the maps cannot be redeemed, it is not irretrievably lost for several reasons. Firstly, the maps are preserved in other Polish libraries. Secondly, most of these maps remain in the possession of foreign libraries and archives. This gives us quite reasonable hope that if it has not already happened, these maps can be recovered in the digital format, after their previous digitization.

Conclusion – clues, traces, guesses, inspiration for further research

We have not been able to find a satisfactory answer to the title question. This is by no means a research failure. In many detailed issues we have either come closer to solving the mystery related to the fate of chests 1a-3a, or to bringing this moment closer by indicating the search paths, or perhaps by dispelling doubts, clarifying some circumstances. It is also worth finding out which losses have been compensated. There are further tedious searches ahead of us and other researchers, sometimes reminiscent of a detective investigation, following the traces of transports with evacuated library treasures¹⁰³. Exploration in Lwów, in local libraries and archives, also seems indispensable. Or maybe what we are looking for is somewhere nearby, in other Polish libraries or archives? However, provenance research is needed for this. While assessing the chances of finding some items placed in chests, it is necessary to be realistic. The catalogues placed in chests 2a and 1a were in the form of a so-called sheaf catalogue. It consisted of cards in the format of 75×165 mm¹⁰⁴. It was the most popular library catalogue in pre-war libraries. Its advantages, as Jadwiga Bornsteinowa described it in her guide for school and home libraries¹⁰⁵.

The Silesian Library suffered relatively little losses during World War II (10% of the entire collection)¹⁰⁶. However, the loss of catalogues and inventories

103 *Kolejnictwo w polskich przygotowaniach obronnych i kampanii wrześniowej*. Vol. 1. Part 1: *Opracowania i dokumenty*, ed. A. Wesołowski, N. Bujniewicz, Warszawa 2011; P. Sękowski, *Akcja „wycofania”: Ewakuacja wybranych grup Polaków z polsko-niemieckiego obszaru przygranicznego w 1939 roku*, „Bezpieczeństwo. Teoria i praktyka” 2017, No. 1, pp. 212–214, 216.

104 Z. Rytel, *Katalogi biblioteczne*, [in:] *Bibliotekarstwo powszechne*. Vol. 2: *Księgozbiór biblioteczny. Praca zbiorowa*, [ed. E. Pawlikowska], Warszawa 1958, p. 77; *Podręczny słownik bibliotekarza*, ed. G. Czapiński, Z. Gruszka, H. Tadeusiewicz, Warszawa 2011, p. 141.

105 J. Bornsteinowa, *Jak urządzić bibliotekę szkolną i domową*, Warszawa 1927, p. 29.

106 F. Szymiczek, *Sprawozdanie z działalności Śląskiej Biblioteki Publicznej...*, p. 8.

is extremely painful, as it prevents the complete reconstruction of the pre-war collection of the library, and thus the determination of what books, journals and other documents have been lost¹⁰⁷. Perhaps the solution to this puzzle is much simpler, and the crowd in Persenkówka (Skników) opened the abandoned chests. Having found out that they were worthless, that there was no money or other valuables inside, the contents were thrown out, or perhaps burnt. It is worth drawing the attention of future researchers to the railway track. It is worth following railway transports before and in September 1939, running from Katowice to Lwów. Maybe the answer to the question of where chests 1a–3a had been eventually sent lies there.

Today, the state of research in this field does not make it easier. Sources on this subject have either been destroyed or dispersed, and the literature on the subject contains very little information¹⁰⁸. Unfortunately, it is impossible to make up for the lost decades (especially until 1989) that could and should have been used to recover lost collections, including years of neglect on the part of the Silesian Library itself, also on the part of the National Library, and perhaps, above all, on the part of the state authorities. We would like to emphasize that we do not blame the rank-and-file librarians for these negligence, nor the decision-makers who carried out the top-down orders of the authorities. In the years 1947–1989 here was no room, not only to search for lost collections in the Soviet Union, but also to inspect lost collections in the Soviet Union¹⁰⁹. Nevertheless, it is still possible to restore the lost cultural property, if not completely, then at least partially, if not in a “paper” version, then in the digital form. The greatest joy, after more than 80 years, would be to regain the lost catalogues and inventories and place them back in the Silesian Library.

107 Ibidem.

108 AZBS 5/16, Odzyskanie wywiezionych zbiorów pp. 3–4; Handwritten collections of the Silesian Library (Zbiory Rękopiśmienne Biblioteki Śląskiej), R 2570 III, Pismo dr. P. Rybickiego z dn. 16 III 1945 r. do Urzędu Wojewódzkiego Śląsko-Zagłębiowskiego, p. 1.

109 Z. Gębołyś., *Straty wojenne zbiorów bibliotecznych w Polsce widziane z państwowej perspektywy. Pomiędzy organizacją, polityką a etyką*, “Heteroglossia. Studia kulturoznawczo-filologiczne” 2020, Vol. 10, pp. 207–229.

Addition

List 1¹¹⁰

List of chests evacuated from the Silesian Public Library in May 1939

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Silesiaca ¹¹¹ | Dr. Olszewicz's ¹¹³ portfolio numbering 40 |
| 2. Silesiaca | |
| 3. Silesiaca | 23. Dr. Olszewicz's files in the number of 42 |
| 4. Silesiaca | |
| 5. Journals | 24. Dr. Olszewicz's files in the number of 75; portfolios; |
| 6. Journals | Dr. Frąckiewicz ¹¹⁴ in the number 86 and newspapers |
| 7. Journals and newspapers | |
| 8. Newspapers and old prints | 25. Old prints, Acta Tomiciana and newspapers |
| 9. Newspapers and old prints | |
| 10. Newspaper | 26. Old prints and silesiaca |
| 11. Newspapers and old prints | 27. Monumenta Germ. Historiae (vol. 26) (Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Bd. 26) |
| 12. Newspapers | 28. Monumenta Germ, Historiae (vol. 6 and bibliographies) |
| 13. Newspapers | 29. Newspapers |
| 14. Newspapers | 1a. Inventories, folders, antique books catalog, bills |
| 15. Newspapers | 2a. Bracket catalog: alphabetical and systematic |
| 16. Newspapers | 3a. Books and maps |
| 17. Newspapers | |
| 18. Newspapers | |
| 19. Manuscripts and old prints | |
| 20. Old prints | |
| 21. Old prints | |
| 22. Plebiscytoria, maps, excerpts of the province. Malhomme ¹¹² , | |

110 Source: AZBS 11/6, p. 11.

111 Detailed lists are provided in separate lists.

112 Leon Malhomme de la Roche (1881–1940) – Polish consular official, diplomat and politician of the interwar period. See M. Masnyk, *Konsul Leon Malhomme wobec głównych problemów polskiej mniejszości narodowej w rejencji opolskiej w latach 1929–1932*, [in:] *Edukacja historyczna a współczesność. Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana profesorowi dr hab. Adamowi Suchońskiemu w czterdziestolecie pracy dydaktycznej i naukowej oraz z okazji siedemdziesiątych urodzin*, ed. B. Kubis, Opole 2003, pp. 37–48.

113 Waclaw Olszewicz, historian and cultural historian. See J. Babicz, Z. Wójcik, *Waclaw Olszewicz (1888–1974)*, „Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki” 1975, No. 20/1, pp. 97–103.

114 Wincenty Frąckiewicz. Information about it is included in the Introduction to the catalog, *The Great War of Words. Fleeting prints from 1914–1918 in the collection of the Silesian Library compiled by B. Maresz and M. Ściążka* (Katowice 2014). Frąckiewicz's biography is available on the website of the Museum in Czeladź: [online] https://muzeum-saturn.czeladz.pl/whoswho/frackiewicz_wincenty/ [accessed 30.12.2021].

List 2¹¹⁵

Chest 1a – list of contents

1. Old inventories 1–29.200, 36.001–38.400, 46401–50800¹¹⁶
2. Current inventories without continuators and without endings
3. Folders: personal matters (without the list)
4. Folders: military matters (without the last act)
5. Folders: budget matters (without the budget 1940/1941)
6. Book of Influences 1934–1938
7. Book of fees for library cards, April 1, 1936 – March 31, 1939
8. Bills
9. The rest of the systematic catalog clamps that did not enter box 2a
10. List of chests 1–29
11. Old prints catalog for the National Library (1 copy)
12. 2 documents from 1736 and 1739
13. **Map of the Duchy of Racibórz 1736¹¹⁷**
14. Casualties from 1919 and 1929
15. 4 folders of political clippings
16. Kocynder – a memorial notebook
17. Manuscripts of Ligoń¹¹⁸ and Kudera¹¹⁹
18. 3 engravings: Kłodzko, Nissa and Polna
19. Reverses¹²⁰

List 3¹²¹

Check 2a – list of contents

Brace and systematic catalog (the rest of the systematic catalog in chest 1a)

115 Source: AZBS 11/6, p. 11.

116 Items are not numbered in the original inventory.

117 Items that have been recovered by the Library through purchase or as a gift have been marked in bold.

118 Julius Ligoń (1823–1889) – Polish social activist of Upper Silesia, Silesian folk poet, see *Literatura polska. Przewodnik encyklopedyczny*. Vol. 1, ed. J. Krzyżanowski, C. Hernas, A. Hutnikiewicz, Warszawa 1984, p. 568.

119 Jan Kudera (1872–1942), dean of the parish priest of Myslowice, historian, dean and parish priest of Myslowice, historian, in: *Encyklopedia wiedzy o Kościele katolickim na Śląsku*, [online] https://silesia.edu.pl/index.php/Kudera_Jan [accessed 02.10.2021].

120 According to B. Maresz, the Silesian Library is in possession of the following documents from this list: Map of the Duchy of Racibórz 1736 – map from the Silesian atlas; Kocynder – a memorial notebook; The manuscripts of Ligoń and Kudera there in the BS, but mostly from post-war purchases – letter B. Maresz to Z. Gębołyś, 17.08.2021.

121 Source: AZBS 11/6, p. 12.

List 4¹²²

Check 3a – List of contents

1. Graesse [Johann Georg Theodor Graesse, *Tresor de livres rares et precieux*, t. 1–7, Dresden, 1859–1869].
2. Christian Gottlob Kayser, Vollständiges Verzeichnis der von 1750 bis zu Ende des Jahres 1832 in Deutschland und in den angrenzenden Ländern gedruckten Romane und Schauspiele: 2 Teile, 1836)¹²³
3. Estreicher (Bibliografia Polska?)
4. Jocher (A. Jocher, Obraz bibliograficzno-historyczny literatury i nauk w Polsce, od wprowadzenia do druku po rok 1830 włącznie, z pism Janockiego, Bentkowskiego, Ludwika Sobolewskiego, Ossolińskiego, Juszyńskiego, Jana Winc. i Jerz. Sam. Bandtków i t.d. T. 1–3. Wilno 1840–1857).
5. “Przewodnik Bibliograficzny”
6. Jüdisches Lexikon (Judisches Lexikon: Jüdisches Lexikon : ein enzyklopädisches Handbuch des jüdischen Wissens in vier Bänden, Bd. 1, A–C, Begr. von G. Herlitz und B. Kirschner. Berlin 1927)
7. Bibliographie universelle
8. Psalterz floriański (Psalterz Florjański łacińsko-polsko-niemiecki: rękopis Biblioteki Narodowej w Warszawie. Wyd. R. Ganszyniec, W. Taszycki, S. Kubica; studja o oprawie i piśmie Psalterza napisał A. Birkenmajer, o miniaturach W. Podlacha; staraniem i pod red. L. Bernackiego. Lwów 1939)
9. Querard vol 3rd *Dictionnaire des ouvrages-polyonymes et anonymes de la littérature française, 1700–1850* (1846–47)
10. Keys for chests 1–29, 1a-2a
11. Case:
Spett J.: Nationalitätenkarte der östlichen Provinzen des Deutschen Reiches nach dem Ergebnissen der amtlichen Volkszählung vom Jahre 1910 entworfen vom Ing. J. Spett, 1910
Map 764/38
Map 767/38

122 Ibidem, p. 13.

123 Identical books found in the Silesian Library in brackets next to bibliographic descriptions.

Leaflets¹²⁴

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Krzyżak leży powalony
(The Teutonic Knights lie down) | 12. Nie bądźcie niewolnikami
(Don't be slaves) (38) |
| 2. Matko Boska Częstochowska
(Mother of God of Częstochowa) | 13. Ziemia Górnego Śląska
(The land of Upper Silesia) (39) |
| 3. Tydzień Obrony Kresów (Borderlands Defense Week) (4) ¹²⁵ | 14. Ratujmy Górny Śląsk (Let's save Upper Silesia) (40) |
| 4. Głosuj za Polską (Vote for Poland) (18) | 15. Idziemy do Polski
(We're going to Poland) (42) |
| 5. Matko, pamiętaj o mnie (Mother, remember me) (19) | 16. Rodacy. Polski Komisariat Plebiscytowy (Compatriots. Polish Plebiscite Commissariat) (108) |
| 6. Na obronę Kresów Zachodnich (For the defense of the western borderlands) (21) | 17. Rodacy. Prastara dzielnica Śląska (An ancient province of Silesia) (109) |
| 7. Wszyscy wszystko dla Górnego Śląska (Everyone and everything for Upper Silesia) (29) | 18. Ich stimme deutsch (I vote German) (111) |
| 8. To wy ze swoimi milionami uciekacie (It is you who run away with your millions) (32) | 19. An die Deutschen Schlesiens (To the German of Silesia) (116a) |
| 9. Co Czesi robili przed głosowaniem (What the Czechs did before the vote) (35) | 20. Nur die allerersten Kalber (All service calves only) (116b) |
| 10. Czeska żaba (Czech frog) (36) | 21. Die Schicksalsstunde (The fateful hour) (117) |
| 11. Się śniło Pepiczekowi (Pepiczek demand) (37) | 22. Oberschl. Frontblatt (120) ¹²⁶ |
| | 23. "Im Koeln. Tageblatt" ¹²⁷ (121) |
| | 24. Lebo Cechy lebo Polacy (Either Czechs or Poles) (124) ¹²⁸ |

124 Irena Antonów-Nitscheand, Ewa Chlebowczyk-Szweda, among others, wrote about the leaflets from the period of the Upper Silesia plebiscite and the Silesian uprisings in the collections of the Silesian Library, but none of these texts mention the losses caused to this party by the German occupier. See I. Antonów-Nitsche, *Druki ulotne z okresu plebiscytu i powstań śląskich w zbiorach Biblioteki Śląskiej*, "Biuletyn Informacyjny Biblioteki Śląskiej" 1971, Vol. 16, pp. 46–60; E. Chlebowczyk-Szweda, *Druki plebiscytowe na Śląsku Cieszyńskim (1918–1920)*, "Książnica Śląska" 1979–1982, Vol. 21, pp. 5–34; A. Duda-Koza, W. Pawłowicz, *Tylko z Polską druki ulotne z okresu powstań śląskich i plebiscytu w zbiorach Biblioteki Śląskiej*, Katowice 2008.

125 Numbering given in the original bibliographic list in brackets.

126 "Oberschlesisches Frontblatt" 1921, Jg. 1, Nr. 1 (15 V 1921). An insurgent combat letter, issued in German for technical reasons (no Polish typesetter). The messages in a pompous and exalted tone are interwoven with verse appeals calling for a fight.

127 "Kölner Tageblatt. Amtliches Kreisblatt für den Landkreis Köln".

128 Our collection includes most of the leaflets listed in the list, some in several copies. Some of them (items 2, 18, 19, 32, 38, 39, 40, 116a and b) come from the old stock, others were purchased

Maps

- Partie meridionale du Duché de Silesie. Probably: *Partie meridionale du Duché de Silesie*, [in:] *Novissimum Silesiae Theatrum id est : Exactissimum Superioris et Inferioris Silesiae, Comitatus Glacensis, et confinium regionum schematismus...*, [Covens et Mortier], J. Condet f[ecit], Amsterdami 1748.
- Partie septentrionale du Duché de Silesie. Probably: *Partie Septentrionale De Duché De Silesie*, [in:] *Novissimum Silesiae Theatrum id est : Exactissimum Superioris et Inferioris Silesiae, Comitatus Glacensis, et confinium regionum schematismus...*, [Covens et Mortier], J. Condet f[ecit], Amsterdami 1748
- Gordrecio W.: Poloniae finimarumque locorum description. See: Waclaw Grodecki, *Poloniae finimarumque locorum descriptio*. The first edition in 1562 in Basel. It was included in the Ortelius atlas in the years 1570–1592.
- Polonia Regnum et Silesia Ducatus. See: Matthäus Merian, *Polonia Regnum et Silesia Ducatus*, [Frankfurt a/M] : [sumptibus Matthaeu Meriani], [1638].
- Polonia Regnum et Silesia Ducatus*, included in subsequent editions of Gerard Mercator's Atlas.
- La Huute et la Basse Silesia – Lotter Conrad. Probably: *La Haute Et La Basse Silesie, Divesée En XVII Principautés Et VI Seigneuries...* Faite Par Tobie Conrad Lotter, Augsburg [1750–1777], [online] <https://www.oldmapsonline.org/map/cuni/1049414> [accessed 02.10.2021].
- Inv. No. 44594 – Atlas. Unidentified.
- Ravenstein's Spezialkarte d. Regierungsbezirkes Oppeln. See: Hans Ravenstein, *Ravenstein's Spezialkarte des Regierungsbezirkes Oppeln für Reise, Bureau u. Verkehr*, Frankfurt am Main : Verlag Ludwig Ravenstein, [ca. 1921].
- Statua Rerum Europaeorum. Unidentified.
- Regni Bohemiae Duc. Silesiae, Marchionatum Moravia et Lusatiae. See: Johann Baptiste Homann, *Regni Bohemiae, Ducatus Silesiae, Marchionatus Moraviae et Lusatiae tabula generalis*, Norimbergæ [post 1715].
- Regni Bohemia, Ducatus Silesiae... Perhaps a second copy of the previous map.
- Le Royaume de Boheme... See Nicolas Sanson d'Abbeville, *Le Royaume De Boheme Duché De Silesie, Les Marquisat De Moravie Et De Lusace...*, a Amsterdam : chez Pierre Schenck, [ca. 1640], [online] <https://www.bibliotekacyfrowa.pl/dlibra/publication/20477/edition/2893> [accessed 02.10.2021].
- Mapa Geographica totius Regni Bohemiae. Probably: *Mappa Geographica Totius Regni Bohemiae in XII Circulos divisæ annexis Comitatu Glacensi Et Districtu Egerano nec non aliis*

in later years (items 1, 4). Some prints were not found, especially those related to the Upper Silesia plebiscite in Cieszyn Silesia (after 22, 35, 36, 37, 42, 109, 117, 120, 121, 124). Some of the descriptions are incomplete and do not allow for the exact recognition of the print (items 4, 29, 108) – letter B. Maresz to Z. Gębołyś, 17.08.2021.

- principatib[us] finitimis*. Noviter et exactissime elaborata cura et sumptibus Tobiae Conradi Lotter Calcogr., Aug. Vindel. : sumptibus Tobiae Conradi Lotter Calcogr., [ca. 1758–1777].
- Germaniae nova et accurata delineation. See: Henricus Hondius: *Germaniae nova et accurata delineation ... 1631*, Amsterdam 1636.
- Polnische Reisekarte. Probably: *Polnische Reisekarte über die vornehmsten Passagen von Dresden nach Warschau auf zweyerley Wegen*. Carte Itineraire depius Dresde à Warsowie 1751.
- Vindelitz, Imperii Moscovitici Pars Australis. Perhaps: Matthäus Seutter, *Imperii Moscovitici pars Australis*, in *Lucem edita per Guillelmum de l'Isle, celeberr Regis Galliae Geographum, nunc excusa et venalis exposita per ... Sculpt.*, Augustar Vindelic. [Augsburg ca. 1730], [online] https://kolekcijos.biblioteka.vu.lt/en/islandora/object/atmintis%3AVUB01_0003572 [accessed 02.10.2021].
- Nova Poloniae delineation. Perhaps: *Nova Poloniae delinatio*, Amstelodami : ex officina et sumptibus Iudoci Hondii, [non ante 1620], [online] <https://polona.pl/item/nova-poloniae-delineatio,Nje4NzkwOA/1/#info:metadata> [accessed 02.10.2021].
- Magni Ducatus Lituaniae. Probably: Mikołaj Krzysztof Radziwiłł, Tomasz Makowski, *Magni Ducatus Lithuaniae, caeterarvmqve regionvm illi adiacentivm exacta description*. First edition – Amsterdam : Willem Janszoon Blaeu, 1613.
- Mappa geographica trium insularum incrusia. Probably: Iohannes Fridericus Endersch, *Mappa geografica trium insularum in Prussia, quae Poloniarum regi serenissimo paret, accuratissima in qua Gedaniensis emporii longitudo 36 gradus et 21 minuta ab insula Ferro connumeratur*, Elbing : J.F. Endersch, 1753.
- Seutter, Poloniae Regnum ut et Magni Ducatus Lituaniae. Probably: Matthias Seutter, *Poloniae Regnum ut et Magni Ducat. Lithuaniae Accuratis s. Delin. opera et studio...*, Tob. Conr. Lotter sculpsit, Augsburg [1750].
- Uebersichtskarte des weltlichen Sprachgebiets ... Unidentified.
- Carte des Pays Slavo-Polonais – Chodzko Leonard. Probably: *Carte des pays Slavo-Polonais aux VIII et IX siècles avant l'envahissement des Warègues sous Rurik en 862 du côté du nord est, avant les empiètements des Allemands du côté de l'Ouest*, [Paris] [1861].
- Monumentalplan der Königl. Haupt- u. Residenzstadt Breslau. See: *Monumentalplan der Königl. Haupt. u. Residenzstadt Breslau*, Breslau : Verlag von Eugen Boronow, [1908].
- Karta Dawnej Polski. See: Wojciech Chrzanowski, *Karta dawnéj Polski z przyległemi okolicami krajów sąsiednich według nowszych materyalów na 1:300000*, Paris 1859.

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- State Archive in Katowice, 189/118.

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