Problems of Post-Communism

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“Trophy” Archives and Non-Restitution

Russia’s Cultural “Cold War” with the European Community

Patricia Kennedy Grimsted

The Russian Communist Party and other nationalist parliamentary factions are using the restitution of European archives as a major political issue to oppose the Yeltsin administration at every turn. Archives deserve to be liberated from the status of “trophies of war,” even if they may have once served military, political, or propaganda purposes.

Although overshadowed by NATO expansion, the matter of Nazi-looted art and archives still held in Russia “has emerged as one of Russia’s most vexing foreign policy quandaries.” Such was a comment in the New York Times in April 1997, with a striking picture of one of the extensive stack areas in the “Special Archive” for captured foreign archives. The article appeared on the same day that Russian president Boris Yeltsin left with a “token archival presentation” for his meeting with German chancellor Helmut Kohl.1 Russian archives may not have resources for retaining or preserving all the records of Russian provenance that constitute the legally defined “Archival Fond of the Russian Federation,” but that has not prevented a nationalist, proprietary embargo on the restitution of “trophy” art and archives that were brought to the Soviet Union from many foreign countries after World War II.

European nations feel very strongly about Russia’s moral and international legal obligation to return their cultural treasures and archives. Among the commitments Russia was required to make to join the Council of Europe in January 1996 was the specific intent:

xi. to negotiate claims for the return of cultural property to other European countries on an ad hoc basis that differentiates between types of property (archives, works of art, buildings etc.) and of ownership (public, private or institutional); . . .

xiv. to settle rapidly all issues related to the return of property claimed by Council of Europe member states, in particular the archives transferred to Moscow in 1945.2

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Since that document was signed, Russia’s parliament has flagrantly disregarded those intents, culminating in May 1997 with a law that provides for the nationalization of all cultural treasures brought to Russia at the end of World War II, passed a second time almost unanimously by both houses of the parliament over President Yeltsin’s veto. Aware of the negative reaction of the European leaders, Yeltsin has refused to sign the law. However, this only prolongs the restitution impasse. A moratorium on restitution passed by the Duma in April 1995 still stands, and a legal deadlock has been created as well. The Constitutional Court cannot consider the unconstitutionality of a law that has not been signed by the president. The foreign policy standoff for Russia vis-à-vis the European community is even more obvious than the potential constitutional issues in the law. Although some categories of restitution, albeit only as “exchange,” are not ruled out for legitimately established claims, the new law so greatly complicates negotiations and adds to the expense that it virtually prevents settlement of many restitution issues.

Plunder, Counter-Plunder, and “Compensation”

In November 1942, a Soviet embassy Information Bulletin condemned the Nazi cultural atrocities and looting on the Eastern front. It reminded the world of Article 56 of the 1907 Hague Convention:

\[\text{[which] forbids the seizure, damaging, and destruction of property of educational and art institutions, and articles of scientific and artistic value belonging to individuals and societies as well as to the State. But the Hitlerite clique in criminal manner tramples upon the rules and laws of warfare universally accepted by all civilized nations.}\]

But that did not stop a victorious Stalin from ordering the seizure of “compensatory reparations” from Germany, estimated at no less than 400,000 railway freight wagons of loot—from dismantled German factories and museum treasures to pianos and wine—during 1945 alone. The official Russian patriotic position today follows Stalin’s decree that “to the victor go the spoils.” Those transfers to the Soviet Union were carried out legally after the war as legitimate compensation, as opposed to Nazi illegal seizure and destruction of cultural property during the war. These spoils of war have today become symbols of victory, which nationalist politicians seek to preserve at all cost. The result is an emotional conflict with Western groups that desire to bring home their “cultural prisoners of war” held captive in Russia.

Today’s conflict stems not only from different conceptions of law and justice between the Soviet Union and Western Europe but from the fundamental divisions among the Allies on the issue of reparations. Many in the West believed that the heavy burden of reparations imposed on Germany after World War I was a major factor in Hitler’s rise to power. Having already flattened Germany to rubble to exact surrender, the Western Allies did not want to repeat the mistakes of Versailles. But, in view of the growing cold war among the victors, there was little possibility of addressing cultural issues. As deputy U.S. archivist Michael J. Kurtz aptly explains, “Serious Allied disagreements on general post-war policy for Germany inhibited the development of a coherent approach to handling cultural objects. Cultural restitution became lost in the maze of other, greater conflicts.” Because the victors were unable to operate on a cooperative or unified basis, there were no Allied agreements on the restitution issue. Hence, cultural restitution, plunder, or non-restitution was carried out on a zonal basis by the four occupying powers. Russians carry that argument a step further, legitimizing the Soviet post-war seizures as “compensatory reparations.”

Fifty years later, Yeltsin told reporters in Baden-Baden that Russia is a “civilized nation and will find a civilized solution” to the restitution issue. But his admission of the need for any restitution of cultural treasures brought to the USSR after the war puts him at odds with the “new” Russian parliament and an estimated “80 percent of the population at large who believe that all cultural treasures should stay in Russia” and are “not about to be convinced otherwise by logic, treaties, or credits.” Those deeply ingrained sentiments helped Nikolai Gubenko, former minister of culture under Gorbachev and now deputy head of the Duma Committee on Culture, as he shepherded through the new law to nationalize all the “spoils of war” still held in Russia. The reconstituted Russian Communist Party and other nationalist parliamentary factions are thus using restitution as a major political issue to oppose the Yeltsin administration at every turn.

Archives have too often been forgotten by politicians, but in May 1994, an angry Russian parliament halted the archival restitution process to France, despite top-level official diplomatic agreements. The recently exhibited “Gold of Troy,” the long-hidden impressionist master canvases, or the two Gutenberg Bibles still held hostage in Moscow libraries may claim more public attention. But the international legal basis and precedents for the restitution of displaced unique official records of state
and private agencies are even stronger than is the case for art. Reinforcing the Hague Conventions of 1907 and 1954, UNESCO in 1976 adopted the position that “Military and colonial occupation do not confer any special right to retain archives acquired by virtue of that occupation.” In October 1994 in Thessalonica, the International Conference of the Round Table on Archives reaffirmed “accepted archival principles, that archives are inalienable and imprescriptible and should not be regarded as ‘trophies’ or objects of exchange.” The resolution passed unanimously, except for abstentions by Russia and two others states.

Russian politicians today also appear unaware of the motives for the Soviet seizure of archives during 1945 and the immediate post-war period. Contrary to political claims made today, most of the archives brought home from the war were never considered “compensation.” Only a few of the trophies represent the archival heritage and manuscript treasures of the German nation, which had been meticulously evacuated from libraries and archives that were otherwise reduced to rubble. Unlike the art and the more than ten million books from German libraries brought to Moscow after the war, relatively few captured archives were designated for transport by Soviet “trophy brigades.” The Soviet Archival Administration Trophy Team that sifted through the German archival stores “in the mines of Saxony, totaling over 300 wagons of materials from the period of the eleventh to the twentieth centuries,” chose for transport “only seven wagons of the most topical fonds presenting interest for Soviet historical sciences and activities of operational organs.” These included the vast medieval city archives of Bremen, Hamburg, and Lübeck, representing “documentation relating to the Hanseatic League with which Novgorod was associated and which is sadly lacking in Soviet repositories.” Another Soviet trophy commission included several collections of Oriental manuscripts, negatives of art and architecture, folklore recordings, and “a collection of charters and manuscript books from the Magdeburg City Archive” among the “8,850 crates of literary and museum collections” they selected for shipment to Moscow. Along with the trophy book and museum transports from Germany came original materials from the Karl Marx House–Museum in Trier and vast collections of manuscript music scores.

In words similar to those used by legislators today, Georgii Aleksandrov explained to Georgii Malenkov in December 1945: “[B]ringing them to the USSR might to some extent serve as compensation for the losses wrought by the German occupiers on scholarly and cultural institutions in the Soviet Union.”

Soviet authorities also retrieved many of Europe’s lost or displaced archives from the various hideouts, intelligence centers, salt mines, and castles where the Nazis had hidden them. Archival specialists were particularly searching for Russian émigré fonds, wanted by Soviet secret police and counterintelligence agencies for identifying “anti-Soviet” or Ukrainian “bourgeois-nationalist” elements abroad, many of which had earlier been seized by the Nazis to be used against the “Bolshevik menace.” Most important was the Russian Foreign Historical Archive in Prague (RZIA), which merited a “special file” to Stalin himself when it arrived in Moscow in nine sealed freight wagons as a highly prized “gift of the Czech government to the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.”

Today these materials are valued as Russia’s lost or exiled émigré culture, but in May 1946, S.N. Kruglov, security chief of the People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD), assured Andrei Zhdanov that “access for scholars would be closed,” and the documents “would be expeditiously analyzed for data on anti-Soviet activities of the White emigration.”

In fact, the vast majority of archives transported to Moscow were brought for obvious “operational” purposes that could hardly be interpreted as cultural compensation. Foreign archival loot assembled by various Nazi research agencies was seized for a second time by Red Army counterintelligence units (SMERSH) and special Soviet NKVD archival commandos in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, and other countries, as well as by the newly established Archival Administration under the Soviet Military Administration in Ger-

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many (SVAG) in the Soviet occupation zone of Germany itself. Many archives were shipped to Moscow under personal orders of Lavrentii Beria; his red-penciled resolutions and shipping instructions appear on numerous top-secret reports. These included twenty-eight freight cars of French intelligence archives found in a Nazi intelligence center in a Czech village, and the twenty-five freight-car loads (plus an additional seven shipped via Kyiv) of European Jewish, Masonic, and socialist files from the Silesian intelligence archival center of the Reich Security Services Headquarters (RSHA—Reichssicherhauptamt) in Wölfelsdorf/Habelschwerdt (now part of Poland). Thirty freight cars of French, Belgian, and other military records shipped to Moscow came from the Nazi military intelligence center under the Heeresarchiv (Military Archive) at Berlin-Wannsee. Indeed, many of the captured records now in Moscow were earlier utilized by Nazi military intelligence, secret police, and racist propaganda units—ranging from national intelligence records, such as the French Deuxième Bureau and Sûreté Nationale, and Cabinet files of Léon Blum, to records of banks and Jewish rescue organizations, to Masonic lodges from almost all European countries, left-wing Socialist parties, and even Dutch feminist organizations.

In some cases, records of Nazi agencies themselves were recovered with the large caches of Nazi-captured European archives. Such was the case of the records of the RSHA, the administrative records of the Heeresarchiv now in Moscow, and the records of the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR) now in Kyiv. Other Nazi agencies succeeded in destroying their operational records, leaving only the foreign loot. Nazi records were also seized from a variety of locations—files from the Reich Foreign Ministry, records of secret police and intelligence units, scientific and technical agencies, fragments of the Reich Chancellery, personal papers of Nazi leaders, including more Goebbels's diaries than had been known in the West, records from Auschwitz and other concentration camps. Another thirty freight train waggons brought back the documentation found in a Prague railway yard of the high-level Nazi technical research institute. The seizure of Nazi records was specifically ordered by Allied Control Commission laws and paralleled similar seizures by the Western Allies. The only difference was that the Western Allies worked together with seized Nazi records, while Soviet authorities refused to cooperate. Russian legislators may duly justify their retention of their captured Nazi records, but by the 1960s, the Western Allies had agreed to return to West Germany almost all the Nazi records they had seized (with the exception of some military and intelligence files), following analysis and microfilming. Soviet authorities, by contrast, never even made known which Nazi records they had retrieved. Many German records were returned to East Germany during the cold war, but most of the Nazi records were retained in Moscow, virtually hidden from scholarship.

The “Special Archive”

The former top-secret “Special Archive” was established in Moscow in 1946 to house the foreign archival loot being put to “operational” use by Soviet security agencies. When the establishment of the archive was under discussion in August 1945, its founders considered that “it would probably exist for only three, four, or maybe at most five years.” As one Soviet archival director appropriately recognized: “Fonds such as those brought from Czechoslovakia [i.e., the French intelligence records]...—we have a right to them only until such time when the international matters are regulated.” Archival leaders then excluded scholarly research and agreed: “There is no need for compiling full inventories, nor is there need for arranging the files [according to archival principles]. The only immediate need is to use the documents there for operational aims.” It is little wonder that some of the fonds were hardly arranged at all, such as those from the Grand Duchy of Liechtenstein.

The trove of captured Nazi records was first publicly revealed in February 1990 by a Moscow journalist’s “Five Days in the Special Archive.” It took another year before the present author’s revelations about the extensive French and other foreign archives held there could be published in the fall of 1991. The archive was euphemistically renamed the Center for Preservation of Historico-Documentary Collections (TsKhIDK) in 1992. Official statistics listed 832 “trophy” fonds with the French section alone running to more than six and a half kilometers (four miles) of shelf space. Those statistics did not take into account the fact that some collections, such as several large ones from Masonic lodges, had never been broken down into fonds according to their institution of provenance. Nor did they include files and documents transferred to other archives and institutions. Regrettably, many of the original bodies of records were broken up and scattered in the process. For example, various French police and intelligence files were turned over to other appropriate agencies, especially files involving the Soviet leadership. Some French security files on the Hungarian Communist leadership were even given to Hungary. Some 334 Jewish Torah scrolls were trans-
ferred to the State Historical Museum in Moscow in 1946, but their subsequent fate has not been determined.21 Most of the émigré materials of political and historical significance were deposited directly in or later transferred to the Central State Archive of the October Revolution (TsGAOR SSSR)—now the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF)—where they joined the RZIA collections, before they were further scattered to more than thirty different archives and library collections in different parts of the Soviet Union.22

One of the most serious problems for those countries with potential claims is the lack of adequate description of the vast trophy holdings in Russian archives. A number of foreign reports about TsKhIDK have appeared in print, including a guide published in Germany late in 1992, with a relatively complete list of predominantly German and Austrian holdings, but that is only about a half of the 870 trophy fonds in the archive.23 No similar listing has appeared of the French- and Polish-language divisions. Only recently did the present author discover important Ukrainian émigré fonds, including long-lost materials from the Petliura Library, seized in October 1940 by the Nazis in Paris.

Now that Russia's captured records are open to world scholarship, and Russia has agreed to the Council of Europe member stipulations, accurate identification of the origin and fate of its holdings has become more essential than ever. Trophy archives in Russia represent the national heritage and legal record of many European nations and organizations, but until their provenance, migration, and whereabouts have been professionally identified, it will be difficult to settle all potential claims. Today, in a spirit of openness and professional international cooperation, a database covering the origins, formation, and migration of the holdings that were held in TsKhIDK could be a preliminary step. Owners in affected countries, as well as researchers throughout the world, need accurate information about just what displaced archives were "rescued" by Soviet agencies, where they were found, the extent to which their provenance has been identified, known facts about their migration, when and to whom they were transferred, whether microform copies are available, and where and to what extent the originals are still preserved.

Such a project, however, is no less than a pipe dream in the archival world of today's Russia. The principal archive that housed the foreign captured records in Moscow had no heat and irregular electricity for most of 1996. Again in 1997, as temperatures reached freezing in October, staff could only work a few hours a day, and researchers who ventured in had to keep on their gloves and overcoats. The few qualified staff who remained received only token salaries, seldom paid on time, as state archival budgets diminished further. In March 1998 TsKhIDK itself was abolished as a separate archive. Its trophy holdings now became part of the neighboring Russian State Military Archive (RGVA), yet another symbol of their wartime fate and ill-defined status.

Soviet Versus Russian Restitution Politics

During post-war decades, particularly after the death of Stalin, Soviet authorities recognized the goodwill and "friendship" engendered by archival and other cultural restitution. Cultural trophies, including many paintings from the Dresden Gallery, were displayed in a prominent exhibition at the Pushkin Museum before they were returned to East Germany. Archival trophies were likewise utilized for obvious political purposes. When the Soviet Union had political reasons to adopt international standards, several million files among the extensive records "rescued by the Soviet Army" were returned to the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and other Eastern-bloc nations. Published accounts positively portrayed the Soviet role of "helping other countries reunify their national archival heritage."24 Public mention was never made of the thousands of files from German Masonic lodges that were returned to the GDR in 1957. Papers of Miklós Horthy were returned to Hungary in 1959. Chinese Communist Party records and some other files were returned to China. Even a few symbolic presentations were made to France and Norway, among other countries, during presidential state visits. As it was officially explained by Soviet archivists at the time, such restitution was "in strict adherence to international legal norms and respectful of the sovereign law of peoples and their national historical and cultural legacy."25

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the new revelations about the extent of "displaced archives" in Russia, however, such internationalist motives have been forgotten or rejected by Russian politicians, despite the more open, democratic attitudes toward other aspects of archival affairs. After the 1991 revelations, the Federal Archival Service of Russia (Rosarkhiv) initially negotiated agreements with many European countries for the return of the trophy fonds in TsKhIDK, bringing both goodwill and much-needed technical assistance for Russian archives. In many cases, Rosarkhiv insisted on barter arrangements involving the transfer of origi-
nal or copies of archival “Rossica” located abroad. The Netherlands was the first to sign an archival restitution agreement in 1992, and Dutch archivists started an extensive program of archival and library assistance in Russia. A bilateral archival agreement was signed with Poland. A general cultural restitution agreement with Hungary in November 1992 extended to archives, although then, the Hungarians did not know the details about trophy manuscript books from Hungary hidden in Nizhni Novgorod.

Restitution to Germany had earlier been assured under the mutual friendship pact of 1990. That same year, remaining treasures from the medieval Hanseatic city archives of Bremen, Hamburg, and Lübeck were finally restored to their proper home in direct exchange for the counterpart Tallinn city archive that was returned to Estonia from the Bundesarchiv (Federal archives) in Koblenz. In 1991, 2,200 music scores and related manuscripts were returned to the University of Hamburg from the Leningrad State Institute for Theater, Music, and Cinematography (now the Russian Institute for the History of Art). Serious negotiations were under way for the return of captured Nazi and other German records in Moscow. Begrudgingly, the German government even came up with half a million deutsche marks (as the first of three promised installments) for microfilming equipment, when Russian archival authorities insisted that the captured records be filmed before their return.

Russian archivists in other repositories—including the former Central Party Archive (now RTsKhIDNI) and GA RF are also now more open about their share of trophy archives. In many cases, however, the archives themselves do not have clear records regarding the trophy materials they received because many had been added piecemeal to earlier existing fonds, and transfer documents provided no indication of their provenance. Many of the files looted by the Nazis during World War II from Belgium and the Netherlands identified in RTsKhIDNI have been microfilmed for their “former” owners, but no originals from that archive have been returned. A comprehensive catalog of the holdings brought to Moscow after the war from RZIA, a large part of which remains in GA RF, is now in preparation. But archivists today are finding it almost impossible to identify all the components. Since the Prague Russian holdings were officially presented as a “gift” to the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, most Russians, including the archival community, do not consider them among the trophy holdings. However, many “trophy” archives have been mixed with RZIA materials.

**The French and Belgian Cases**

By the spring of 1997, France was still the only Western country to have received any of its original archives from Moscow since 1991. According to the high-level diplomatic agreement, the French agreed to pay FF3.5 million ($600,000) for TsKhIDK to prepare microfilm copies for their own retention and approximately US$1 per page for photocopies of the preliminary Russian inventories of the French materials. Paris also agreed to transfer to Russia several significant groups of Russian archival materials held in France. France sent its own container trucks for transport, and four of the six dispatched were filled with approximately 90 percent—the French say no more than 75 percent—of the French records held in TsKhIDK, including most of the military intelligence (Deuxième Bureau) files that Soviet authorities had found in Czechoslovakia in 1945. But then, in May 1994, an angry Russian parliament put a stop to archival restitution to France. In the course of debate, one Duma deputy even suggested that France should be charged storage fees for the materials held secretly in Russia for fifty years. Legislators cited the example of “democratic” America that still holds hostage the “Smolensk archive.” To make the scandalous situation even worse on the Russian side, the money received by Rosarkhiv from France for microfilming had been lost to various speculative investments. TsKhIDK used German equipment to film a portion of the materials that were returned to France before the Duma embargo.

Belgian specialists negotiated the right to receive complete microfilm copies of Belgian holdings in TsKhIDK—filmed at Belgian expense. As a first published reference aid to its holdings, TsKhIDK even issued a short annotated list of thirty-five fonds of Belgian origin (containing 20,154 file units), dating from 1784 to 1940. But, to add insult to injury, in the summer of 1996 Belgian specialists had to pay an unexpected (and unbudgeted) $3,000 customs duty to transport additional film and chemicals to Moscow. The microform copies were officially presented at an April 1997 Ghent press conference and are now accessible to the public at the Archives and Museum of the Socialist Labor Movement. Belgian specialists have prepared a detailed published account of the Nazi seizure of Belgian archives, based in part on Nazi records recently uncovered in Kyiv. Yet the ceremony had the aura of an anti-climax: Why do the originals remain in Moscow, with prospects for their return ever more remote?

Russian legislators, backed by legal specialists, now claim that all cultural treasures “rescued by the Soviet Army” or brought to Moscow under government orders were transferred legally. Stalin or his deputies signed the appropriate orders. On the eve of the fiftieth anniversary victory celebrations in Moscow, the Council of the Federation overwhelmingly adopted a law—“On the Property Rights of Cultural Valuables Displaced to the Territory of the Russian Federation as a Result of the Second World War”—spelling out that legal position, and sent it to the State Duma. As stated in the preamble, the new law aims “to establish a firm legal basis for considering those treasures as partial compensation for the loss to the Russian cultural heritage as a result of the colossal looting and destruction of cultural treasures in the course of the Second World War by the German occupation army and their allies.” In hearings for this law and in the various drafts and proposed amendments, there has been no recognition that archival materials should be treated differently from artistic masterpieces.

The March 1994 definition of the Archival Fond of the Russian Federation extended the legal specifications for the Russian archival legacy to include “archival files of foreign origin legally transferred to the Russian Federation.” Many archivists in Russia are, like their European archival colleagues, committed to professional international archival principles and affirm that archives should be returned to the countries of their creation, as was clear in the official Rosarkhiv statement to the Duma in April 1995. But their advice was ignored when the Duma unanimously halted the archival restitution to France in May 1994 and then, on April 21, 1995, adopted the moratorium on all restitution, which remains in effect. All this needs to be seen in the context of the broader restitution controversy, which became a hot election issue in 1995-96 when the Communist Party and various nationalist factions all joined forces against the Yeltsin administration and condemned its ties with Germany.

Even before the hearings on Russian membership in the Council of Europe, the proposed nationalization law was strongly opposed by the Russian Ministry of Culture. Russian librarians realize that they have much to gain from good relations with their Western colleagues. For example, rare early German imprints have been of little scholarly interest in Moscow, and millions had been left to rot in an otherwise empty church outside the capital. But they could be exchanged for much-needed computer hardware and expensive Western contemporary scientific and scholarly literature, which current Russian state budgets do not provide. This point has been stressed by several Moscow library directors with large trophy collections. Indicative of popular sentiment against any restitution, however, Russian minister of culture Evgenii Sidorov was burned in effigy during one Moscow demonstration by ultra-nationalists. Six months after the Koenigs Collection of master drawings went on display at the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow, a new wave of anti-restitution literature issued by the outspoken opponent of restitution, Vladimir Teteriatnikov (now an American citizen) argued Russian legal rights to the Koenigs Collection with published captured German documentation on the “sale.” He carefully ignored the “Inter-Allied Declaration Against Acts of Dispossession Committed in Territories Under Enemy Occupation or Control” issued in London on January 5, 1943, whereby the Soviet Union and sixteen Allies declared “null and void” Nazi-style wartime “sales” and seizures.

As the legislature turned to its own examination of the proposed law in 1996, the fate of the displaced archives became ever more deeply enmeshed in the broader anti-restitution discussion. Patriotic rhetoric was at such a high pitch that one deputy reminded lawmakers, “We have gathered in the Duma first of all to consider laws, and not to demonstrate which of us has more or less love for the Fatherland.” The Duma passed the law in its first reading on May 17. Teteriatnikov then produced another full-page nationalistic diatribe against restitution in Pravda tendentiously listing many past acts or proposals for restitution. When many in the Yeltsin administration were named as offenders, Deputy Ministry of Culture Shvydkoi sued for slander.

The Duma adopted the law in its second reading almost unanimously and sent it back to the Council of the Federation. Reactions in German and other European media were understandably bitter. Official diplomatic protests registered in Bonn and Moscow may have had a sobering effect on Russian lawmakers. On July 17, the Russian upper house rejected the law, with representatives from the newly re-elected Yeltsin administration emphasizing the extent to which its passage would conflict with numerous international agreements and would compromise “Russian international prestige.” Negotiations were then under way regarding the Tikhvin斯基 “Mother of God” icon, which had been identified in Chicago. “If this law is approved,” one deputy argued, “such a valuable icon of the Russian Orthodox Church will never be returned to Russia.”

Support for the law was nonetheless intense, as apparent when Nikolai Gubenko, who had successfully led
the drive for passage in the lower house, passionately spoke. "The law indeed provides justice" and would be supported by "those who perished" in the war and their loved ones—by "the votes of 22 million, if only they could speak." His position was supported by a third of those who voted, as lawmakers again cried out that Russia had received none of the Nazi loot back from Germany. Subsequent Russian press commentary emphasized German influence in the final July 1996 vote to reject the law, but that was only tangentially apparent in the points raised in the debate. Some stressed that the law would be inconsistent with the constitution. Others emphasized that the government had no right to nationalize materials from private collections and pointed out that the cultural treasures in question belong to many countries, not only Germany and Austria. Archives were never specifically mentioned in the public debate. At the end of July, one historian reasoned that "the thesis 'We owe nothing to no one,' entails grave unpleasant consequences for our country. We do not live on the moon, but rather surrounded by other countries who always owe us something and to whom we have debts ourselves." But his suggestion that Russia's "weakened moral authority" would be restored by its "adherence to generally accepted norms of international law," and that Russia would only gain from better cultural cooperation with Germany, brought strong counter-reaction. Others bitterly denounced the "anti-patriotic and liberal currents of the 1991–93 period," which were favoring restitution of the "spoils of war." Later in the fall of 1996, Deputy Minister of Culture Shvydkoi won his slander case against Pravda. He had not "sold out" to Germany in advocating restitution, but he stressed Russia's right to "compensation" and the need for a "mechanism" of "equivalent exchange" in cases where other countries have a legitimate claim for displaced cultural treasures.

Hearings on a slightly redrafted law were held in January 1997. Minor editorial changes addressed some of the earlier technical criticism, but the only new article was for guaranteed ownership rights for the newly independent states on the basis of their status as former Union republics. On February 5, 1997, by an almost-unanimous vote of 291 to 1 with 4 abstentions, the Duma again approved the law. The day before the law came back to the Council of the Federation, a full-page Nezavisimaja gazeta article tried to demolish the arguments of the opposition. For the first time in press discussion, the French archives, which had been cited by Rosarkhiv opponents of the law, were mentioned. Having earlier been seized by Nazi Germany, the French intelligence archives could hardly be seen as compensation for Russian losses. The author, Emina Kuzmina, quite correctly noted that those French archives were brought to Russia from Czechoslovakia for "political and military interest . . . exactly like the American seizure of the Smolensk Party Archive." However, "they should not be cited" against the law, she argued, "since their restitution was already permitted in 1993–94 after the French had paid $450,000 for micro-filming . . . and 400,000 francs for copies of the finding aids." Kuzmina neglected to mention, however, that not all the French intelligence service archives were returned nor were the vast archives of French Masonic lodges and Jewish organizations still held in TsKhIDK. Moreover, such details did not concern the legislators. The next day, March 5, 1997, the Council of the Federation passed the law by a vote of 140 to 0 with a single abstention. Even Moscow mayor Iurii Luzhkov joined the political bandwagon in favor of nationalization.

Overriding the Presidential Veto: Yeltsin’s Last Stand

Aware of the potential international outcry and undoubtedly with an eye to his upcoming visit to Germany, President Yeltsin vetoed the law on March 18, 1997. In his official message to the Duma, Yeltsin emphasized that the law contradicted the constitution and, among other points, failed to distinguish "between former enemy, allied or neutral nations, and different categories of individuals in respect of their property rights." His arguments fell on deaf ears when the law came back to the Duma on April 4. Antagonism between the Duma and the president was apparent at every turn (even a deputy foreign minister was ruled out of order when he requested the floor to comment against the law).

The Duma was much more prepared to listen to the law's chief patron, Nikolai Gubenko, who symbolically compared the law's passage to the Battle of Stalingrad. Since the Duma had no interest in further technical arguments, "the emotional presentation of Deputy Gubenko" carried the day. The Duma overrode the presidential veto by a vote of 308 to 15 (with 8 abstentions). The law came back to the Council of the Federation on April 16. With dwindling ranks of deputies present, almost on the eve of President Yeltsin’s departure for Germany, a full roll call vote was postponed.

Deputy Minister of Culture Shvydkoi now cites figures about American restitution shipments to the Soviet Union after the war and Russia’s “international obligations, including our admission to the Council of Europe.” But that keeps him in bitter conflict with Gubenko, who thinks only of “the 27 million who perished and the graves
on the Volga” during World War II. To him, even symbolic restitution to Germany would be like “spitting on those graves.” Ultra-nationalists such as Vladimir Zhirinovskii bitterly complained about any prospective Yeltsin restitution to the German “fascist scoundrels.”

Despite the parliamentary prohibition and vocal dias­trips, it was announced that Yeltsin was taking an archi­val restitution gift to Baden-Baden for German chancellor Helmut Kohl in April 1997. Shy­ing away from more disputed art, Yeltsin was supposed to present Kohl with eleven folders from the papers of Walter Rathenau, the Socialist German foreign minister from the 1920s, together with some 24,000 frames of microfilm from records of the now-disbanded East German communist party. The Russian press announcements sharply conflicted with the actual presentations in Baden-Baden: All 910 files of Rathenau papers remain safely ensconced in the TsKhiDK in Moscow. According to German archi­val authorities, the files presented to Kohl came from Soviet Foreign Ministry sources—files relating to Rathenau, but no original “trophy” documents from his papers. None of the microfilms had been received in Germany by May Day 1997, despite a much earlier Russo-German agreement. Besides, the films were only copies of original files held in Germany that were placed on deposit in Moscow for safekeeping in the 1970s! Thus the promised new precedent for restitution was yet another devious political ploy.

The law passed the upper house on May 14, with 141 out of 178 representatives voting in favor of the bill, 22 more than needed to override the presidential veto. The following day, Germany announced the identification of significant mosaics from the long-lost Amber Room from the imperial palace at Tsarskoe Selo. Russian politicians, including Gubenko, immediately accused Bonn of delaying that announcement. Yeltsin defied the legislature by refusing to sign the law, which he was required to do within a week. Instead, he defiantly returned it to the Duma, claiming it contradicted the constitution. In the meantime, Russian politics overshadow any hopes for further restitution.

The Liechtenstein Exchange

Despite the April 1995 moratorium on restitution and its own endorsement of nationalization, in June 1996 the Duma did nevertheless approve provisions for returning a major group of Nazi-looted archival materials to the Grand Duchy of Liechtenstein. The special exception by the Duma involved more than high diplomatic interventions: The royal family of Liechtenstein agreed to barter. At the suggestion of the Russian side, it purchased through Sotheby’s the personal copy of investigator N.A. Sokolov’s original notebooks and assorted pieces of evidence relating to the assassination of the Russian imperial family to be traded for the twice-looted Liechtenstein archives. The official Russian Commission now investigating the 1918 assassination was anxious to acquire the Sokolov papers and lobbied to reverse an earlier Duma refusal. Most vital was the ciphered telegram from Ekaterinburg (July 17, 1918) confirming the assassination of the entire imperial family. As presented in the Duma resolution, the restitution to Liechtenstein is taking place primarily on the basis of “exchange” for “family archives,” which “have no bearing on the history of Russia,” in keeping with the law under consideration. A formal diplomatic agreement was signed in Vaduz, September 3, 1996, by Russian foreign minister Evgenii Primakov and Prince Hans Adam II of Liechtenstein. In announcing the deal, Izvestia inaccurately relied on an unidentified archivist’s disparaging description of the Liechtenstein archive as “seven tons of lard and five tons of candle wax.”

A responding outcry, published by no less than the newspaper of the presidential administration, accused the government of a “monstrous mistake.” Supposedly “three raw notebooks of Nikolai Sokolov” (six are noted in Sotheby’s catalogue) are being exchanged for “more than three tons” of valuable Liechtenstein manuscripts, with historical autographs that would allegedly be “worth a fortune at auction.” Besides, the journalist rather inaccurately claimed, “Liechtenstein willingly transferred the archives to the Third Reich” and hence had no right to expect their return. The Liechtenstein materials, found by Soviet authorities in Vienna in 1945, had been virtually forgotten in Moscow for fifty years. Only when the return was formalized did Russian patriots demand further investigation of the “ill-conceived exchange,” which involves a “tremendous detriment to Russian security, economy, and prestige.”

It may be inappropriate to regard the restitution of the archives of the Grand Duchy of Liechtenstein as an equivalent “exchange” for the Sokolov collection, but if it had not been for the principle of “exchange” for a tantalizing tidbit of imperial Rossica, deputies of the Duma certainly would not have reversed their initial stand against restitution. As the issue dragged on for yet another year, representatives from Liechtenstein were co­incidentally in Moscow for a final round of negotiations in May 1997—the same day the “spoils of war” national­ization law was repassed by the Council of the Federation overriding the presidential veto.

While the fate of the cultural nationalization law re-
mained in abeyance and the Russian parliament was in summer recess, a large Russian cargo plane from the Ministry for Extraordinary Circumstances conveyed all the Liechtenstein archives to Switzerland for transfer in the Russian embassy in Bern, on July 30, 1997. The formal ceremonial delivery by the Rosarkhiv chair and chief archivist of Russia, Vladimir P. Kozlov, marked the only recent significant step forward in the much-disputed cultural restitution process with the European community. Prince Hans Adam II may have had to "purchase back his own property," as a prominent headline in a Liechtenstein newspaper described the transfer, but at the opening of the elaborate exhibit of the Sokolov materials in Moscow in September, the prince expressed tremendous satisfaction in having back his family archive and played down the much-criticized "barter" between Europe's largest and smallest countries.49

The Liechtenstein "exchange" aroused new hopes that other European nations might now be able to retrieve their archives still in Moscow. Restitution issues were on the agenda for many state visits in the ensuing months, and negotiations continued in Moscow with representatives of various countries. The British proposed an interim solution with the purchase of photocopies of their archival files in Moscow. Meanwhile, the Belgians, who had already purchased microform copies of most of their archives in Russia, were pressing for the originals. In September, Belgian foreign minister Erik Derycke proposed a token "exchange" of some pre-revolutionary Russian documentation identified in Belgium from the imperial residence at Tsarskoe Selo. A Belgian newspaper in October quoted Rosarkhiv chair Kozlov as saying that "Moscow could restore Belgian archives within two months." In Paris, at the beginning of November, Le Monde reported a new archival restitution breakthrough, whereby many of the remaining French archives covered by the 1992 agreement would finally be returned to France.50 But, despite some discussion of a more accommodating new Russian law, the stalemate dragged on. King Leopold II of Belgium went to Moscow in February 1998, but he returned home empty-handed.

Views from New York and Amsterdam

A week after the April 1997 Russo-German Summit in Baden-Baden, the proceedings of the Bard Graduate Center for the Decorative Arts 1995 symposium on "The Spoils of War" were published in New York. Essays by lawyers and cultural leaders from throughout Europe, including Russia, offered perspectives on many issues in the continuing "cold war" debate. As volume editor Eliza-
can restitution shipments, all of which are still not publicly accessible.)

Those U.S. property cards do not cover the four freight cars with 1,000 packages of archival material removed by the Germans in 1943 from Novgorod and Pskov, found in Berlin-Dahlem, which constituted the first American restitution transfer in Berlin on September 20, 1945. Russian archivists have been unaware of that U.S. transfer, although presumably the materials were eventually returned to Novgorod.

Nor do people in Kyiv know about the twenty-five freight wagons loaded with archives and museum exhibits from Kyiv and Riga that were turned over to Soviet authorities by the U.S. Army near Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, after they had been found in the nearby castle in Tripty and the monastery of Kladruby. Russians and Ukrainians today repeat the Soviet post-war claim (submitted as a document to the Nuremberg war-crimes trials) that the Kyiv Archive of Early Acts was taken to Germany and the rest was dynamited by the Nazis. Actually, the portions not evacuated by the Nazis were destroyed when the Red Army retook Kyiv in November 1943. Almost all that the Nazis succeeded in evacuating by the Germans in 1943 from Novgorod [and Pskov], cars with 1,000 packages of archival material transferred to Berlin on April 1945. Russian archivists have been unaware of that U.S. transfer, although presumably the materials were eventually returned to Novgorod.

Approximately a quarter of a million books, discovered in and around the monastery of Tanzenberg in the Austrian Tyrol, were returned to the Soviet Union by British authorities—including treasures from imperial palace libraries outside Leningrad, which the Russians claim were never returned. Other major library treasures from the Russian imperial palaces were soled by Soviet authorities for hard currency in the 1920s and late 1930s, as demonstrated in the recent exhibit at the New York Public library, "The Romanovs, Their Empire, Their Books."

Wolfgang Eichwede, the director of the Forschungsstelle Osteuropa of the University of Bremen, assured the Bard symposium that "Germany today holds almost no treasures from the Soviet Union and possesses nothing (or very little) that it could return." Yet he agonizes to find a creative solution to the restitution impasse between Bonn and Moscow:

It is true that Russia has the German "trophies" to make up for its losses, but at the same time it knows that it is operating outside of international norms... What is needed here is a "new thinking": gestures of reconciliation instead of a mutual standoff, a willingness to embark upon joint projects, instead of reviving the cold war on the cultural front.

The Russian representative in the concluding session of the Bard symposium, Ekaterina Genieva, director of the Library of Foreign Literature in Moscow, suggested that, if restitution issues for art were going to leave the European continent still divided, perhaps the further restitution of library books, such as being planned by her library, could "make us friends." Indicative of the bitterness of alternative Russian attitudes against all restitution, a full-page Teteriatnikov diatribe on the Bard symposium in the Russian Communist Party newspaper Pravda considered Genieva's "anti-Russian rhetoric" a disgrace to the Russian delegation.

Proof of the prospective friendship and goodwill engendered for Russia by even small-scale restitution efforts was demonstrated at an Amsterdam symposium in April 1996. Genieva was invited to hear a movingly appreciative report on the fate of the 600 books symbolically returned by her library to the University of Amsterdam in 1992. Ironically, the Amsterdam conference "On the Return of Looted Collections," honoring the fiftieth anniversary of the restitution of Dutch and other European collections from the U.S. occupation zone in Germany, opened the same day that the "Trojan Gold" went on display in Moscow. Many of the Dutch archives now in Moscow were seized during the period when Stalin was still allied with Hitler. Yet, as was reported again at the symposium, the Dutch have returned to Germany all the Nazi archival records found in their country. But who in Moscow will ever read, or let alone appreciate, the long-lost records of the Dutch feminist movement that remain sequestered there?

Even more significant to the identification and retrieval of displaced cultural treasures and archives are the Nazi records in Moscow and Kyiv that describe their cultural plunder. The RSHA files that came to Moscow with the West European archives held by the RSHA Intelligence Division archival unit in Silesia retain numerous files about their seized archives, including their Berlin archival accession register covering their many receipts, such as the Sûreté Nationale and Trotsky correspondence pit. The large complex of records in Kyiv from the ERR Silesian operations in and near Ratibor (now Polish, Racibórz) include seizure reports from various work brigades in the Netherlands and Belgium, as well as western regions of the USSR. But until those displaced Nazi files are brought together with the even larger groups of ERR and RSHA records in the Bundesarchiv in Berlin (which were much earlier returned to Germany from the United States) and those in Kyiv more professionally described, many facts and clues they contain about the displacement of cultural treasures during the war will remain hidden from the world.
The View from Moscow: Retrieval of Archival Rossica Abroad

In November 1995, the Duma passed a resolution calling for international negotiations for the return to Russia of three private archives of émigré Russian jurists located abroad. Most of the personal papers involved were not even created in Russia and are now being well cared for in archives in New York, Prague, and Warsaw. But when will Russian politicians be ready to adhere to international agreements, resolutions, and conventions that the unique archives of foreign community, religious, and private bodies now held in Moscow should be restored to their appropriate home? The 1997 Russian law (still in abeyance) provides a lengthy process for the restitution of personal or family archives held in Russia, requiring the payment of their “full worth, as well as the costs of their identification, appraisal, storage, restoration, and transfer costs (shipment and others)” [Art. 1, § 2].

Meanwhile, the United States still holds more than 500 files from the Communist Party archive in Smolensk oblast, which had been removed from one of the American restitution centers in Germany by U.S. intelligence agents in 1946. Those files are only a small fraction of the archive that had been seized from Smolensk by the Nazis in 1943. Four railroad freight cars were returned to Smolensk from Silesia in the spring of 1945, although that fact was not published until 1991. Nonetheless the Smolensk files now in Washington also remain a symbol of “non-restitution.” They were all microfilmed, and copies are available commercially, so there was never a question of asking the Soviet Union to pay for filming. Researchers in the National Archives never see the originals. They were twice slated for return—first in the early 1960s and then again in 1992. The first time, the Communist Party Central Committee decided it inappropriate to claim them as originals, given their disparaging revelations about collectivization in the 1920s and 1930s that had already been published in America. Most recently, the U.S. Senate intervened by linking them to an “exchange” demand from the heirs and followers of the Lubavitcher Hasidic Rabbi Mendel Menachem Schneerson in Brooklyn to retrieve a prerevolutionary collection of their books that had been abandoned and then nationalized after their forebears emigrated from Russia in 1918 and that are now held in the Russian State Library in Moscow. The two cases are hardly similar from a legal standpoint: Because the Schneerson Collection—not technically an archive, although many of the books bear marginalia—is of Russian provenance, its export would be prohibited under present Russian law. Coincidentally, it was brought together in the village of Lubavichi, which is now in Smolensk oblast, and a file among those from Smolensk in Washington demonstrates the severe anti-Semitism there during collectivization under Stalin. Perhaps today, “democratic” American politicians can provide a better example for Russian legislators by returning the symbolic “Smolensk Archive” to its original home.

A much more positive American restitution effort was seen in October 1997, when Harvard University returned the archives of the Georgian government-in-exile that had been held on deposit since their rescue in France several decades ago, with significant Georgian Menshevik documentation. Harvard had microfilmed preservation copies at its own expense, and there was no request whatsoever for reimbursement. The genuine goodwill engendered was much more impressive than that shown in any of the compensatory or barter arrangements that have characterized recent Russian negotiations. Professor emeritus Richard Pipes, who had engineered the return, was voted an honorary citizen of Georgia, as a token of the country’s appreciation, when he accompanied the archives back to Tbilisi. As an earlier example, in 1989, the U.S. government returned a large collection of original pre-revolutionary Russian consular records that had long been displaced in the U.S. National Archives, at a quiet, but moving ceremony in Moscow.

Perhaps Russian legislators who are lobbying to bring home more émigré archival Rossica should consider the goodwill and friendship that might make such returns more likely if they took a more generous attitude toward the return of archives legitimately claimed by foreign countries. Indeed such restitution should be viewed as a normal and appropriate return to their point of creation, rather than as barter or an “exchange”—which has been denounced in numerous UNESCO and International Council on Archives resolutions. Archives deserve to be liberated from the status of trophies or prisoners of war, even if they may have once served adversary intelligence, political, or propaganda purposes. Fortunately, there are some Russian leaders who envisage a new and more open Russia that, as a member of the European community of nations, recognizes the inalienable right of individuals, organizations, and other governments to the archival records they have created in the course of their life, activities, or functions of state. But today those voices in Russia have been shouted down by another brand of patriots who are more anxious to promote the spoils of war as symbols of victory, rather than to celebrate the end of war and restitution of the national heritage of other
nations. In the meantime, hundreds of thousands of displaced files from all over Europe remain in the former Special Archive in Moscow (now part of RGVA), alongside the records of Soviet NKVD/MVD administration of prisoner-of-war and detention camps from a war that ravaged the world more than half a century ago.

Notes


7. As noted by Boris Piuk, “Ty mne–la tebe” (You Scratch My Back and I’ll Scratch Yours), logi, no. 16 (49) (April 22, 1997): 14.


10. Gelubtsev to I.A. Serov, “Dokladnaya zapiska o rezul’takh obsledovaniya dokumental’nykh materialov germanskikh arkhivov, evakuiruemykh v ukrytykh v shakhakh Saksonii” (Reporting Memorandum Concerning the Results of Investigation of the Documentary Materials of German Archives, Evacuated and Protected in the Mines of Saxony) (Berlin, October 24, 1945), GA RF, 5325/1126, fol. 216.

11. G. Aleksandrov, N. Zhukov, and A. Poryvayev to TsKh VPK(b) Secretary G.M. Malemov, TsKhIDNI, 17/125/308, fol. 41.


13. G. Aleksandrov to TsKh VPK(b) Secretary G.M. Malemov, TsKhIDNI, 17/125/308, fols. 49–51 (the quotation is from fol. 51).

14. NKVD Secretariat to Stalin, GA RF, 9401/2/134, fols. 1–2. See the official protocol of transfer (Prague, December 13, 1945), GA RF, 5325/10/2024.

15. Kruglov to Zhdanov (May 15, 1946), GA RF, 5325/10/2023, fol. 46.


17. “Protokol soveschaniia pri zam. nachal’nika Glavnogo arkhiivnogo upravleniia NKVD SSSR—Izuchenie voprosa o soezdaniia Osobogo Tsentral’nogo gosudarstvennogo arkhiva” (Protocol of the Meeting Under the Deputy Chief of the Main Archival Administration of the NKVD SSSR—A Study of the Question of the Creation of the Special Central State Archive) (August 21, 1945), GA RF, 5325/2/3623, fols. 2–3, fol. 8.


19. See the interview with the author by Evgenii Kuzmin in Literaturnaia gazeta (October 2, 1991), and the confirmation by Ella Maksimova in Izvestiia (November 3, 1991); and Anatolii S. Prokopenko, “Dom osobogo raznachineniia (Otkretye arkhiivy)” (The House of Special Purpose [Archival Revelations]), Rodina, no. 3 (1992): 40–51.


22. Many of the emigrated materials were listed in a “secret” guide—Tsentral’nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Otkrytoi’i sovietskoi revoliutsii i sotsialisticheskogo stroitel’stva. Putevoditel’ (Central State Archive of the October Revolution and the Development of Socialism: A Guide), vol. 2 (Moscow: GAU, 1952).


24. See, for example, E.G. Baskakov and O.V. Shavlovskii, “Vozvrashchenie arkhiivnykh materialov, spasennykh Sovetskoi Armiei” (Returning Archival Materials Rescued by the Soviet Army), Istoriiskii arkhiv, no. 5 (1958): 175–79; S.L. Tikhvinetskii, “Pomotch’ Sovetskogo Seiia sa drugim gosudarstvam v vossozdanii national’noi arkhiivnogo dostoinstvnia” (Help by the Soviet Union to Other Governments in Reunifying Their National Archival Heritage), Sovetskie arkhivy, no. 2 (1979): 11–16.


26. According to TsKhIDNK of the 1,100,00 French files held there, 995,000 were dispatched to Paris before the Duma action. The French side claims about 15 to 20 percent less, but the French lists and analysis have not been published.

27. See the transcript of the State Duma session, Federal’noe Sobranie, parlament Rossiskoi Federatsii, Biuleten’ (Federal Assembly, Parliament of the Russian Federation, Bulletin), no. 34, “Zasedaniiia Gosudarstvennoi Dumy, 20 mai 1994 goda” (Sessions of the State Duma, May 20, 1994) (Moscow, 1994), pp. 4, 26–33. See also Izvestiia (September 8, 1994).


30. See Literaturnaia gazeta (September 18, 1990).


36. Nezavisimaja gazeta (July 26 and September 14, 1996).
37. Rossiskie vesti (October 26, 1996).
38. Nezavisimaja gazeta (March 4, 1997).
40. Excerpts of the president's message to the Duma were quoted in Segodnia (March 19, 1997).
41. Gosudarstvennoi Duma: Stenogramma zasedanii, Biuletten' (State Duma: Transcripts of the Session, Bulletin), no. 89 (231) (April 4, 1997), pp. 14-19. Although that vote represented only eight more votes than were needed, 119 deputies did not vote. See Rabochaya tribuna (April 9, 1997) and Associated Press (April 4, 1997).
42. Fragments of the press conference were reported by Piukh, "Ty mne—la tebe," pp. 13-14. See the comments of Shvydkoi in Kul'tura (April 17, 1997).
43. See for example, Piukh, "Ty mne—la tebe," pp. 13-14. The ITAR-TASS article in Rossiskiaia gazeta (April 19, 1997) does not mention the microfilm.
44. Details were reported to the author by archival directors in Moscow and Koblenz.
45. The Sokolov materials, described in the catalogue The Romanovs (London: Sotheby's, 1990), were initially offered at auction in London, April 5, 1990. According to Sotheby's press office, the advertised reserve price of £350,000 was not met at the time the collection was first offered at auction, and a private contract sale was arranged with an anonymous buyer several years later. Newspapers alternatively quote the selling price as £500,000 or £500,000; Sotheby's press office was unwilling to disclose the sale price, although one quotation given was just under £100,000.
Nikolai Alekseevich Sokolov (1882-1924) had been an official local court investigator for the fate of the imperial family, but later emigrated.
46. See the transcript of the Duma session of June 13, 1996 (p. 59), and the official "Poslanovlenie Gosudarstvennoi Dumy—Ob obmenе arkhivnykh dokumentov Kniazheskogo doma Likhteinstein, peremeshhnykh posle okhanchanii Veroi mirovoy voiny na terytorii Rossi, na akhivnye dokumenty o rasledovaniia obstoiatel'i svy' gibeli Nikolaiia II i chlenov ego sem'i (arkhiv N.A. Sokolova)" (Resolution of the State Duma—On Exchanging the Archival Documents of the Royal House of Liechtenstein, Displaced After the Conclusion of the Second World War onto the Territory of Russia, for Archival Documents on the Investigation Concerning the Death of Nicholas II and His Family [N. A. Sokolov Archive]), June 13, 1996 (no. 465-II GD).
47. Investitsia (September 4, 1996).
48. Rossiskie vesti (October 2, 1996).
49. Patrik Schädel, "Fürstliches Hausarchiv und Sokolov-Archiv/Gestern begun der Austausch: Fürst Hans-Adam 'kauft' sein Eigentum zurück" (Royal Family Archives and the Sokolov Archive / Yesterday Began the Exchange: Prince Hans-Adam "Buys Back" His Property), Liechtensteiner Vaterland, no. 172 (July 31, 1997): 1. See, for example, the brief press interview by Konstantin Pribytkov in Obshchaia gazeta (September 11-17, 1997). The opening of the exhibit at the Pushkin Museum's Gallery of Private Collections on September 10, 1997, was widely reported on Russian television.
50. Le Monde, November 13, 1997; reports of Foreign Minister Derycke's Moscow negotiations appeared widely in Belgium: Le Soir (September 4, 1997); De Standaard (September 4, 1997); De Financielle-economische lJune (September 9, 1997); De Standaard (October 27, 1997).
51. Elizabeth Simpson, "Introduction," The Spoils of War, pp. 12-13 (see n 5).
55. The German-language CD-ROM version of the data files (issued in early 1996) is available from the Forschungstelle Osteuropa an der Universität Bremen.
56. The American returns were included in U.S. Army list cited above (note 54).
58. Wolfgang Eichwede, "Models of Restitution (Germany, Russia, Ukraine)," in The Spoils of War, pp. 216-20.
60. Pravda (March 29, 1995).
64. See Grimsted, The Odyssey of the Smolensk Archive: Plundered Communist Records for the Service of Anti-Communism (Pittsburgh: Center for Russian and East European Studies, University of Pittsburgh, 1995; Carl Beck Papers in East European Studies, no. 1201). The present author recently recommended reconsideration of this matter to U.S. vice president Albert Gore and Archivist of the United States John Carlin. An answer dated April 9, 1997, signed by the vice president gave no tangible encouragement, although Carlin (in a letter of August 1997) at least "hoped that the matter would be satisfactorily resolved."

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