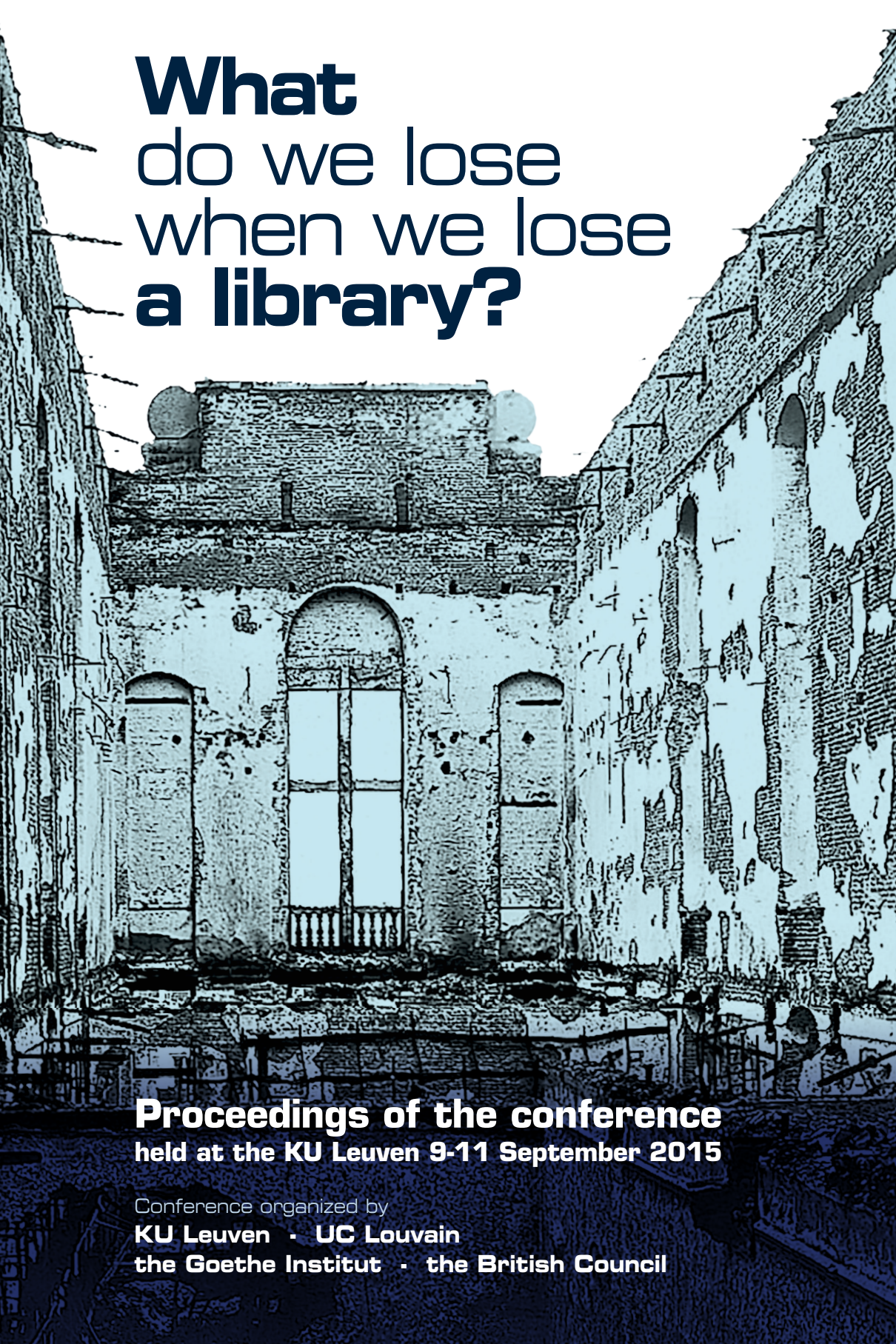




What do we lose when we lose a library?

**Proceedings of the conference
held at the KU Leuven 9-11 September 2015**

Conference organized by

KU Leuven · UC Louvain

the Goethe Institut · the British Council

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**Conference Chair: Lieve Watteeuw
Proceedings Editor: Mel Collier**

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What do we lose
when we lose a library?

Introductory

Editor's introduction

To commemorate the centenary of the destruction of the KU Leuven Library in 1914, the Goethe-Institut Brüssel, the British Council Brussels, the University of Leuven (KU Leuven) and the Université catholique de Louvain (UCL, Louvain-la-Neuve) organised a three day international conference on the challenging topic: *What do we lose when we lose a library?*

The burning or destruction of books—and material heritage—is a symbol of so much more. What does a community lose, what does a city or country lose, when a library is turned to ashes? Examples come from all times and places. We can think for example of the destruction of a library in Alexandria in the far past, the demolition of a library of the Jesuits in China, the library fires in Leuven in 1914 and in 1940, the destruction of manuscripts in Chartres and Warsaw during the Second World War and the ruined libraries in Croatia and Sarajevo at the end of the twentieth century. The threat to the library in Timbuktu in 2012 and the very recent destruction of books and archives in Mosul, Aleppo and Sanaa complete this sad list. The worldwide protection of libraries will therefore stay one of the biggest challenges for the conservation and spread of knowledge.

For three days, more than thirty speakers from a range of countries looked closely into the historical facts and the methods and strategies on how threatened book collections can be protected. What are the traumas from the past? What can we learn from these for the future? How can libraries strengthen their position? How can they protect their collections? In addition, the conference also looked ahead to also explore the digital challenge for libraries in this context namely: how can digital technology and advanced imaging techniques help preserve the traditional documentary heritage and moreover, how can the born digital heritage itself be protected for future generations?

The programme comprised a range of distinguished keynote speakers together with a wide variety of presenters who responded to the call for papers. The programme can be found in the appendix. We are grateful to the 23 colleagues who formed the Scientific Committee. The Guest of Honour was Wolfgang Schivelbusch (1941), the first person to publish a detailed study of the destruction of the library of Leuven in 1914: *Die Bibliothek von Löwen. Eine Episode aus der Zeit der Weltkriege* (1988). He participated in a public discussion with Professor Aleida Assmann, from the University of Konstanz, moderated by Professor Luc Draye of the KU Leuven. The great majority of the speakers agreed to participate in this volume by preparing a version of their presentation for publication.

It was agreed by the organizing committee that the proceedings should be published as an e-book in Open Access, available from the repository of the KU Leuven Library, together with a print-on-demand version. We were delighted that the German UNESCO

Editor's introduction

Commission and the Goethe Institut kindly offered to sponsor the cost of publication. The text was prepared for publication by Leuven University Press.

Organisation board of the conference:

Lieve Watteeuw, Chair, KU Leuven
Mel Collier, KU Leuven
Pierre Delsaert, University of Antwerp
Sonja Griegoschewski, Goethe-Institut Brüssel
Andrew Murray, British Council
Charles-Henri Nyns, UC Louvain
Hilde Van Kiel, KU Leuven
Garrelt Verhoeven, KU Leuven

Foreword by Marc Vervenne

The present proceedings of the international conference on the theme “What do we lose when we lose a library?” are published with the support of UNESCO, since both the contents and the form of this online open access publication are of vital importance for this specialised United Nations agency.

UNESCO is primarily known to the public because of the World Heritage List. However, the scope of this international institution, which was created on 16 November 1945, is not limited to the field of heritage. The acronym ‘UNESCO’ stands for *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. This clearly reflects the broad mission and the very wide field of operation of the institution.

The essence of UNESCO is clearly set forth in the preamble to the Constitution of 1945: “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed”. The principal goal of UNESCO is to accomplish *peace*. All its actions are aimed towards that purpose. In order to achieve its objectives, UNESCO is constantly committing itself to various fields of society that mutually interact and which are essential for sustainable peace-building as a condition of prosperity and well-being for all of humankind. This concerns not only culture and heritage, but also education and science, as well as media and communication.

Today, the key words that underlie the founding of UNESCO are still very relevant. As a matter of fact, the dangers to global peace are still there, just as they were in 1945. The awareness of the vulnerability of humankind and the planet we live on has grown. Let me mention just a few of these present-day threats: climate change, loss of biodiversity, water-related issues, spread of pandemics, diminishing quality of education and training, growing nationalism and regionalism, erosion of solidarity, loss of societal and intellectual memories, ideological and religious fanaticism. These are global issues from which no country or community can escape, and for which no solution can be found if we lock ourselves up in our own ‘closed’ ideas and ‘protected’ comforts.

Against this background, UNESCO aims at initiating peace-building processes and enhancing social awareness of problems and solutions. Striving after quality education for all, preserving humanity’s material and immaterial heritage, caring for the diversity of cultural expression and the promotion of freedom of speech, encouraging the dialogue between peoples and cultures: these are only a few of the numerous actions undertaken by UNESCO on a global and national scale.

The theme of the Leuven 2015 conference and the accompanying exhibition endorse the above mentioned mission and vision of UNESCO by focusing on the destruction and constant threat to libraries as “Memory of the World”. On 25 August 1914, at the very beginning of the First World War, the Leuven/Louvain University Library was deliberately set aflame by the German occupying forces. The intellectual heritage this institution had built up for over five centuries was lost forever. The commemoration of this traumatic event in 2014 has induced the organizers to bring experts together to reflect

on the historical, societal and cultural significance of the destruction but also the revival of libraries as places of knowledge and memory. The latter is particularly emphasized by UNESCO that inscribed in 2013 the archives of the Ancient University of Leuven (1425-1797) to the Memory of the World Register. By a fortunate coincidence, these extremely precious records escaped the 1914 calamity since they were deposited in 1797 in Brussels and Paris after the abolition of Leuven University by the French occupier.

Both the conference and the exhibition on the Leuven/Louvain case have included the promising contemporary example of the “*Timbuktu Renaissance*”. Leuven and Timbuktu: two renowned places of reason and dialogue, bridging Europe and Africa with their universities that flourished in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Timbuktu manuscripts that have been saved from destruction reflect Africa’s literary heritage. In addition, they represent how conflicts and blind ideological violence continue to threaten the “Memories of the World”. It goes without saying that the case of Leuven and Timbuktu as presented in the conference and the complementing exhibition go to the heart of the UNESCO matters.

Finally, the open access publication of the conference proceedings is also in line with the UNESCO philosophy and actions. The organization underlines that “universal access to information is one of the fundamental conditions to achieve global knowledge societies. This condition is not a reality in all regions of the world. In order to help reduce the gap between industrialized countries and those in the emerging economy, UNESCO has decided to adopt an **Open Access Policy** for its publications by making use of a new dimension of knowledge sharing —Open Access.”

It only remains for me to show the appreciation of the Flemish UNESCO Commission in Belgium to those who took the initiative for organizing this scholarly event as well as to those who actively supported carrying out the ideas. Professor Lieve Watteeuw and Professor Mel Collier deserve special mention, together with the Staff at the University Library. Particular acknowledgments should be addressed to the Goethe Institut Brussels and the British Council and other sponsors for supporting the conference and to the German Commission for UNESCO and the Goethe Institut Brussels for supporting the present publication. BOZAR deserves our gratitude for cooperating with the inclusion of the Timbuktu project.

Foreword by Susanne Höhn

The Goethe-Institut Brussels is proud to have been one of the organizers of the international conference “What do we lose when we lose a library?” hosted by the University of Leuven in the fall of 2015. Many contributions by librarians, archivists and scientists made it clear that in our digital age libraries remain of the utmost importance as depositories of media and access accelerators to a multitude of information.

For their part modern public libraries have become spaces for users. They open up to a wide range of cultural activities, to formal and informal education: creative spaces and co-working areas, digital studios and exhibition areas link media and users through activities only libraries can provide.

When we lose a library we also lose an essential element of what cultural understanding is all about. This goes for Europe and the so called developed world, but even more so for those regions where spaces for real encounters, for intellectual and creative exchange are few and far between, where access to information may be censored or limited to only those who can afford it.

We hope that the conference and this ebook resulting from it add another element to the fabric of our cultural understanding, exchange, heritage and creativity.

The Hydra library: destroy it and you will get two of them ...

Charles-Henri Nyns

The burning of the Louvain library was certainly not the first destruction of a library, it was probably not the most momentous one and definitely alas not the last one. But 100 years after the sack of Louvain, it is still a trauma of both of the Louvain universities and we felt the need to commemorate it in expositions and a conference about “what do we lose if we lose a library”.

As we have been directly affected in the past we certainly can bear witness to what it means to lose a library. More than this: it is our duty. The Louvain library burned twice, set on fire more or less intentionally. But burning a library means not just the destruction of a collection of books, which in most cases can be replaced. Burning a library and destroying material heritage are aimed at obliterating the culture and the memory of the opponent and touch the heart of the society. The methodical way this was organized—and still is, all over the world—is chilling. How defenceless is paper, and even hard stone, and how blind is the hate of the men who light the pyres and hold the hammers?

The destruction of libraries is a never-ending story. Lucien Polastron wrote a 400 page book on the topic managing just to enumerate the most important losses, starting with the Egyptian library of Thebes in 1358 BC and ending in 2003 with the destruction of almost all Iraqi libraries and museums. His book dates from 2004. We know since then that the Iraqi cultural heritage was far from being the last one lost for mankind and when starting to prepare the conference, we could not imagine the topicality the theme would have again in September 2015 in this endless chain of burning and destruction with the loss of irreplaceable cultural heritage in Palmyra and elsewhere in Syria.

The destructions of cultural heritage during WWI, for which Leuven and its university library became a symbol, awoke the consciousness of many. Not only Louvain University benefitted from a vast manifestation of solidarity from all over the globe, but people also started to reflect on how to better protect cultural heritage and avoid similar disasters caused by armed conflicts or natural phenomena. But it was only after WW II that those reflexions could be concretized by The Hague convention in 1956 and the creation of Blue Shield in 1966. History teaches us however that important as those initiatives are, they couldn't preclude new losses and destruction.

The conference aimed to discuss the traumas of the past and the lessons learned, the methods and strategies on how threatened cultural heritage can be better protected. But it was not only directed to the past, it addressed also digital cultural heritage, a topic of increasing importance with the growing number of born digital objects which cannot be “just digitized again”. What do we need to do to avoid that our times end as electronic Middle Ages from which only sparse surviving—and sometimes manipulated—sources will remain for future generations?

The conference took place in Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve and, besides the main organizer, the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, it was co-organized by the Université catholique de Louvain. This means more than just the usual collaboration between

neighbouring universities. We have to remember that after the burning in WW I and WW II, the Louvain library had to suffer what some called the third destruction of the Louvain library. The rise of consciousness of the Flemish language community resulted in the splitting of the former unitary university in 1962 into two autonomous establishments, a Dutch speaking and a French speaking one, both located in Leuven. But in 1968, out of political reasons and to avoid major conflicts, it became necessary to move the French speaking university. This was the date of birth of the new town of Louvain-la-Neuve, a project that many considered utopian but turned out rather successful and which now stimulates the economy of the whole region.

Moving the university meant also splitting the library, which had remained a shared service until then. How do you split a library? An impossible task. And however it was accomplished, as was the move of the university itself: not without problems and anger, but without any violence and without too much bitterness.

The fact that this conference was organised together (and it's far from being the only or first collaboration between the two sister universities) proves again, if still necessary, that it always is possible to find peaceful solutions and that after difficult periods it is possible to live together again if there is a will. To work for this is the duty of the academic world, and for this also Louvain can be a symbol. Was it not rector Monseigneur Ladeuze who in the early 20's already fostered again the collaboration with German scientists? Chancellor Konrad Adenauer was given an honorary doctoral degree by the Louvain University in 1958, together with Robert Schuman. And quite naturally, the Goethe Institute joined the British Council and the French and American embassies in sponsoring the conference. So, if it is possible to reach good friendly partnerships after disastrous struggles, how much better and easier should it not be to avoid armed conflicts in the first place? This is what both of the Louvain universities have to stand for and fight for.



This installation by Eric Van Hove (Brussels, 2010), entitled *Exonymie*, consists of the reconstruction of a shelf from the original Louvain library. This shelf was re-stocked by reuniting 1000 books from each library, bringing together the previously separated even and odd labelled volumes.

The flames of Louvain: a library as a cultural icon and a political vehicle

Mark Derez

The fourteenth century University Hall is the very place where the iconic book gallery of the former library used to be. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, a new wing was added specially destined for a library, not in combination with an anatomical theatre, which had been the original intention, but a library in combination with an academic beer and wine cellar. This would soon prove to be a more lucrative set up. The more the academic community consumed downstairs in the cellar, the more books could be bought for the library above. Architecturally, the book gallery was the most sumptuous library in the Low Countries. Unfortunately, it was not there to stay. In fact, this venue, in *diesen Heil'gen Hallen*, could be described as the scene of a war crime, of a cultural atrocity.

The sack of Louvain

On the night of August 25th to 26th 1914, German soldiers set fire to the University Hall and the library building, where in the winter of 1913-1914 German technicians had installed new metal bookshelves. It rained fragments of charred paper as far as the surrounding countryside. The arson was part of the punishment of Leuven (*Strafgericht*), pure terrorization in repayment for what the occupying forces believed to have been a snipers' attack.¹ As a result, more than 2000 houses were reduced to ashes and 248 persons died—most of them were executed, but some of them were burnt in their houses, recalling the words of Heinrich Heine: “where they burn books, they will also burn people”.

This was the toll exacted by *Le sac de Louvain* (The sack of Louvain), which had great repercussions on international public opinion, particularly in England and the Netherlands, to which countries a great many refugees had fled. Journalists had much to do with this. One such was the novelist and playwright Richard Harding Davis, a star in the Milky Way of American war correspondents, as he was termed by Barbara Tuchman.² As early as August 27th, this frenzied reporter had penetrated into Leuven, travelling in a German troop train. From his compartment, locked in by the Germans (embedded journalism!), he witnessed the arson which had reached the area near the station. The smoke which he saw rising up from the citizens' houses would fill the columns of *The New York Tribune* the very next day.

German propaganda tried to play down the harm that had been caused by their original exultation over the punishment meted out to Leuven. The Germans lashed out against the so-called *franc-tireurs*, citizens of Leuven who, hoping for a swift liberation, were supposed to have shot at the occupying troops after consultation or in concert with the Belgian military leaders. This story was officially placed on record in a German White Book of 1915. The systematic manipulation of German public opinion by official propaganda did not stop at the end of the War.³ This explains why, though the German

White Book had been unable to produce any names, the snipers of Leuven continued to haunt the imaginations of German veterans. This legend of the *franc-tireurs*, though continuously rejected and definitively refuted by German historians in recent decades, has demonstrated its persistence by turning up in (German) publications, for instance in the *Brockhaus* edition of 1996.

Barbara Tuchman, in any event, is certain that Leuven was not destroyed as a reprisal for snipers' attacks, but as pure intimidation, terror as a means of securing minimum civilian resistance during the invasion and maximum civilian cooperation under the occupation. Her conviction was confirmed by the forceful statement which a German officer made on August 28th to an American diplomat.⁴ It was necessary, he said, that Leuven be made into a warning, a deterrent example for generations to come, so that all would learn to respect Germany. *Wir werden aus diesem Ort eine Wüste machen*. We shall make this place a desert. The lapidary threat, *Nicht ein Stein auf dem anderen*, not one stone left upon another, was carried out; yet the deterrent example of Leuven backfired.

Instead of exacting respect, Germany reaped nothing but world-wide indignation. From Copenhagen to Rome, protests flooded the German embassies. The Belgian government sent a delegation to Washington. The German emperor tried to ward them off by sending a telegram to President Wilson lamenting the fate of Leuven, and by way of excuse alluding to the atrocities which Belgian women and priests had supposedly inflicted on German soldiers. The Belgian envoys were received in the White House with all due ceremony, but in New York's City Hall, and at the Harvard and Columbia University their reception was absolutely enthusiastic. President Wilson may have remained non-committal and wanted to keep his options open, but the American public had no doubts as to who the 'good guys' and the 'bad guys' were. 'Poor little Belgium' became a moral argument in which 'the flames of Louvain' (Barbara Tuchman) were prominent.

German disinformation notwithstanding, little Belgium continued to arouse pity and sympathy. *Louvain! shall be our Battle Cry* became the name of a popular march in England. The town's name became so famous at the time that not only ships but also baby girls born in England in 1914 were given the name 'Louvain'. A stone from the University Hall was later shipped to Canada where it was reverently inserted in a war memorial. In the States, knives and forks and tea-sets were sold under the popular trademark 'Louvain'.

The Oxford of Belgium

Leuven's fate was by no means unique. In four Belgian provinces, 18,000 houses were destroyed and 5,000 citizens were killed from the time the invasion started on August 4th until the Western offensive was bogged down in the mud of Flanders fields. In Leuven's case there was an emotional element at work, stressing the town as a center of knowledge (*une ruche de la pensée*). In the rhetoric of war, Leuven was 'The Oxford of Belgium', as *The Times* dubbed it on August 29, 1914, a historic university town now violated by the Huns.⁵ The burning of Leuven reportedly led to the poem by Rudyard Kipling *For All we Have and Are*, a popular call to arms with its urging warning 'The Hun is at the gate'. Edward Elgar evoked the Belgian martyred towns in a symphonic poem *Carillon*, in which 'Louvain' in the French lyrics rhymes with 'Berlin'. In the London music halls

it was a great success. For the occasion, the wife of the socialist Minister Vandervelde, Lala Vandervelde, lady Lala, starred, draped in a Belgian flag.⁶ Kipling and Elgar featured as cultural exponents of the British empire and of British imperialism. In Belgium and Leuven they found an argument, charged with sentiment, for a just war on the continent.⁷

The image of the Huns also occurred to the French writer, Romain Rolland, who was in neutral Switzerland, and who wrote an open letter to Gerhart Hauptmann on that same 29th of August. Hauptmann was Germany's leading literary figure, and he supported the war-making. In Leuven, wrote Rolland, it could be clearly seen that the Prussian war-machine was not only aimed at enemy forces, but also against the civilian population and the cultural heritage, in breach of the Hague Convention, of international and martial law. Rolland desperately begged Hauptmann to choose sides with the spiritual heirs of Goethe, not with those of Attila the Hun. Hauptmann answered that Germans would rather be seen as sons of Attila, than have sons of Goethe (*Söhne Goethes*) engraved on their tombstones. Before the war, Hauptmann and Rolland had been each other's peers, equals and counterparts.⁸ Rolland, who would be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1915, had been France's most outspokenly *deutschsfreundliche* intellectual. Hauptmann, before the war, was known to be critical of Prussian nationalism. When a university town was ablaze, intellectuals could hardly remain aloof. Now they too joined the fray, they entered the arena and the war acquired a cultural dimension. Leuven became the Sarajevo of European intellectuals as Wolfgang Schivelbusch wrote.⁹ The library of Sarajevo would be torched on another 25 August—an ominous date—on 25 August 1992, the tragic twentieth century ending where it had begun in 1914. This lends an unexpected connotation to the Schivelbusch's striking image.

Leuven suddenly found itself at the center of a genuine culture struggle. British and German and French intellectuals rushed to join it. This War of Minds, *Krieg der Geister*, *guerre des mots* seemed to be fought out on a second front, resulting in a veritable *orage de papier* (an allusion to *Orage d'acier*, the French translation of Ernst Junger's *Stahlgewitter*).¹⁰ Manifestos rained down. Under the heading of *Louvain*, English universities and institutions of higher learning gave written voice to their disgust. In October 1914, German intellectuals published their reply in the German newspapers. This now infamous manifesto, *Aufruf an die Kulturwelt*, was signed by ninety-three leading figures in the arts and sciences (Röntgen and Max Planck, Karl Lamprecht and Wilhelm Wundt...) with a nice selection of Nobel Prize winners.¹¹ These intellectuals declared unanimously: *Es ist nicht war, dass unsere Truppen brutal gegen Löwen gewütet haben...* (It's not true that our troops have acted with undue force in Leuven). They unreservedly confirmed the German *franc-tireur* hypothesis and the right to reprisal, and they concluded that if it had not been for German militarism, German culture would long ago have been swept away. Remarkably, the Leuven library was not mentioned in the manifesto.

Crying over books

Of all the atrocities committed, the devastation of Leuven's university library captured the imagination, for in no way could it have been considered a military target. Hence, what appealed most to the public opinion was a cultural atrocity. A famous anecdote concerns

the rector of the American College in Leuven, Mgr. Jules de Becker, who had been forced to leave Leuven, and who was describing the destruction of the city to the American diplomat Brand Whitlock. The houses of his father and brother were burnt, a cousin was shot. But when he came to the burning of the library he could not bring himself to utter the French word for library (*la bibliothèque*). He kept on stumbling over the first syllables, '*la bib...*', and burst into tears.¹²

Did the rector cry louder for burnt books than for people who had lost their lives? This recalls Syrian refugees today, on their way to generous Germany (*helles Deutschland*) who wonder whether the West is more concerned with the destruction of antiquities than with the safety of human beings. The moral balance between the destruction of heritage and the loss of human life remains a delicate one. Weighing human suffering and personal tragedy against collective loss and cultural damage is always painful.¹³ The dominant impression, however, is that the further one is removed from the scene of the crime, whether geographically or in time, and once the suffering is past, the greater the weight that tends to be placed on the loss of heritage. Attacks on cultural goods continue to burn in people's minds and to precipitate into the collective memory. The symbolic order ultimately outweighs individual tragedy. Cultural atrocities inflict permanent injury for generations to come.¹⁴

The Leuven library, founded in 1636, which had been the repository of the university's Foundation Charter of 1425, of a thousand manuscripts, eight hundred incunabula and more than a quarter of a million books, all now in ashes, became *pars pro toto* symbolic of the threat to Europe's cultural heritage.¹⁵ Apart from the university library, the private libraries of over twenty professors vanished in fires as well. Professor Henry de Vocht, the historian of Humanism, managed to escape carrying letters from Erasmus and Thomas More while the bullets whizzed past his ears.¹⁶

What do we lose when we lose a library?

As the actual value of what was lost could never be measured, it was at times somewhat overestimated in the hyperbole of Allied rhetoric. The Germans, conversely, systematically undervalued it. The Leuven library was obviously not a treasure-house on the scale of the great national libraries. In the domain of cultural history, however, it was of tremendous importance for the Low Countries. Apart from one bout of plundering during the French revolution, it had been handed down virtually intact: the French *commissaires* had only scraped the icing off the cake. The Academic Collection contained the complete printed production of the Leuven professors' guild. The collection had grown organically in close connection with the university, mirroring its development. The library was the reflection of the intellectual history of the Low Countries with its various movements and controversies such as Humanism, the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation and Jansenism.

German scholars not only underestimated the value of the collection but also the value of the building. A German art historian briskly observed that the loss of the University Hall (combining a baroque storey with a gothic ground floor) was not a real loss 'due to reasons of taste' (*aus geschmackliche Gründen*). As for the symbolic value, it can hardly be overestimated. Set side by side, the photos before and after the fire of the magnificent

eighteenth-century library gallery were a wartime propagandist's dream.¹⁷ Reproduced on postcards they went the world around. Here was an archetype that raised the age-old spectre of library burning. The analogy with the destruction of Alexandria's library by the 'Saracens' was obvious to the classically trained intelligentsia.¹⁸ A young Jesuit in Leuven, Eugène Dupierreux, is said to have been shot by a firing-squad on 27th August because he had written this comparison in his notebook.¹⁹ As time went on, this simile would keep recurring, as in the statement by American President Warren G. Harding, 'The burning of this ancient and distinguished library was like the burning of the great library in Alexandria an irreparable loss to scholarship.'

Clash of civilizations

In the meantime, the Germans had proceeded to shell Rheims cathedral on September 20, 1914. Henceforth, Leuven and Rheims would form the line of demarcation between the spheres of influence of Western European civilization and a German *Kultur* which attached little importance to monuments, heritage and artistic treasures.²⁰ Leuven and Rheims were the main divas on the cultural scene. In England at that time one could buy pieces of soap sold for the benefit of the Belgian refugees: one side of the soap showed the ruins of Leuven in fine relief, the other these of Rheims (using the soap caused the sacred ruins to fade away). Importantly, even in popular culture and everyday life Rheims cathedral and the university library of Leuven stood for the victimization of the French and Belgian nation and for the endangered cultural heritage of Europe.²¹ Louvain and Rheims became a current collocation, enabling Allied propaganda to portray Germany as a nation of barbarians. The war which until then had been perceived principally as a political-military conflict, then changed into a real battle of cultures, a clash of civilizations.²²

In the Belgian context, this conflict between 'culture' and civilisation was complicated by two local components, the religious and national lines of demarcation. The University of Leuven was seen as an outpost of Western civilisation, all the more since the university town was likened to a Latin island in a Germanic sea, *une île latine dans une mer germanique*, as the American architect Whitney Warren later said. In this perception, the Walloons belonged to the Latin civilisation, while the Flemish were on the wrong side, on the side of Germanic *Kultur*. Even after the war and despite extensive American involvement, the new library was still considered a French-Belgian joint venture, to the displeasure of Flemish public opinion.

Apart from the national interpretation there was a religious one. Filled with polemic zeal, those defending the cause of Leuven went so far as to equate civilisation with a Latin and Catholic Western Europe as opposed to the Middle Europe of the Reformation. Such ideas did not sit well with sympathisers in America, who were mainly of the Protestant persuasion, starting with the principal benefactor, Herbert Hoover, a Quaker. It must be said that the Germans themselves had contributed to the religious interpretation and prompted this *Kulturkampf*. Among the standard ingredients in the legend of the *franc-tireurs* there were not only women who poured boiling oil on the Germans and castrated the wounded, but also Catholic priests, the *enragés en soutane*. Such anti-popery, with its roots in Prussian Protestantism, may well have contributed to the victimization of the *Pfaffenuniversität*, or clerical university, of Leuven.

The problem for the academic authorities was that the invaders and perpetrators of war crimes were Protestants, while after the war the benefactors were Protestants as well. Later on, in 1928, at the moment of the opening of the new library, the American diplomat Brand Whitlock wondered (in his diary): “And why should American Protestants build up a Roman Catholic seat of learning, even though it were destroyed by the *Furor Germanicus*? Did Roman Catholics anywhere on this planet, ever give a penny towards building up a protestant institution?”²³

Kultur versus Civilization

The religious interpretation apart, the partition of civilisation and culture seemed to fit in with the legacies of the Enlightenment and Romanticism. Thomas Mann sketched this pair of controversial concepts in his *Gedanken im Kriege* (Thoughts during War) (1914), presenting them as opposite poles, with *Kultur* standing for magic, genius and art, and civilization signifying reason, scepticism and morality. The concept of morality brought an ethical dimension to this somewhat academic discussion. The democracies of Western Europe prided themselves on a political discourse in which moral values were pre-eminent, quite in line with the traditions of the Enlightenment. In stark contrast, the amorality of *das Militär* not only survived the war but re-emerged in the Weimar Republic, only scantily disguised as *völkisch* anti-humanism. The debate needs to be integrated in the wider war of cultures between 1914 and 1918 and even beyond.²⁴ The Leuven library would prove to be a strong political motif and a vigorous symbolic vehicle.

In any event, following the notorious manifesto in which German intellectuals justified the devastation of Leuven, it did seem as though the entire German cultural world was defending Prussian militarism. The traditions of German intellectual life were tarnished thereby, and *Kultur* became a sarcastic slogan in Allied propaganda. The elite of Western Europe seemed to be taking its revenge on the German intelligentsia who had swaggered about on the European cultural stage, flaunting self-assured superiority, in the years of *la belle Époque* prior to the war. A wedge had been driven into the European cultural world. The burnt-out library of Leuven exemplified the tragic dichotomy.²⁵ *Kultur*, it was said in so many words, has destroyed Leuven. In Leuven itself, quite early on, someone had devised the chronogram, ICI FINIT LA CVLTVRE ALLEMANDE (here ends German culture), and after the German withdrawal in 1918 it was affixed as a slogan to the ruin that had been the University Hall. Illustrious visitors such as President Wilson, who came to Leuven in June of 1919, and the Japanese Crown Prince Hirohito, in 1921, passed reverently beneath it.

A double stream of books

The outrage at the burning of the Leuven library, at this assault on an irreplaceable cultural patrimony and on academic immunity produced a warm Gulfstream of solidarity. While the war was still on, twenty-five committees were formed in neutral and Allied countries to collect money and books. Concurrently, humanitarian programs for food aid and for

sheltering orphans were started. The Dutch took the lead with their *Leuvensch Boekenfonds*. In Paris the *Oeuvre internationale pour la reconstitution de l'Université de Louvain*, a coordinating committee, was set up in 1914.²⁶ This international committee was officially inaugurated during a solemn academic session in Le Havre on 26 August 1918, exactly four years after the destruction of the library.²⁷ The Allied High Commanders, General Pershing, General Haig and Maréchal Pétain, were busy with military actions in the field, but they formally expressed their full support for this undertaking. By the end of the war, hundreds of institutions and personalities were cooperating, and in this manner an international floodtide of books began, giving Leuven university's library one of the richest collections in the period between the two World Wars, and also one of the most curious.

As for Germany, article 247 of the Treaty of Versailles stipulated that the Germans were to supply the University of Leuven with books and manuscripts. The Belgian delegation to the Peace Conference had first insisted that a clause be inserted into the Treaty obliging the Germans to provide manuscripts and incunabula of a value equal to those that had been burnt in 1914. During a tea-break, a member of the delegation suggested to the British delegate that books should be added to 'manuscripts and incunabula' because of their importance for academic research.²⁸ The Englishman, one John Maynard Keynes, who was to acquire fame as an economist after the Wall Street Crash, made the addition and added 'and prints'. It was the American delegate, John Foster Dulles, later Secretary of State and prominent in the Cold War who put the final touches to Article 247, including the clause on the books. It had been a question of a minor addition, but for Leuven's library it was of major importance.

Thanks to Versailles, Leuven could replace books for a sum of a good four million gold marks. From 1920 to 1933 almost forty German private libraries (of first-rate scholars and scientists) were purchased and sent to Leuven.²⁹ In addition, it was possible to draw on precious duplicates from German libraries, including the *Bayerische Staatsbibliothek* in Munich, which in the nineteenth century, as a result of the secularisation of monasteries, had received richly stocked old libraries. The Germans admirably carried out the duty imposed on them, *gründlich und pünktlich*. They only interrupted deliveries of books in 1923 as a protest against the occupation of the Ruhr by Belgian and French troops. In fact, monthly book deliveries continued right up to 1943, when most of the reconstituted collection was again obliterated.

French idea realized by American means

Of all the supporting committees, the National Committee of the United States for the Restoration of the University of Louvain attracted the most attention. The Americans stole the show by offering a new library building. The idea of reconstituting the library had arisen in Paris, within the *Institut de France*. It was one of these brilliant French ideas, but the French were so gallant as to leave the execution and the financing to the Americans. Construction and fundraising were completely in American hands, hence the flying of the Stars and Stripes from the library tower each year on Independence Day. The connecting link was the American architect Whitney Warren (1864-1943), a colourful figure, who was a personal combination of French culture and American

capital.³⁰ A member of the reputable *Institut*, he was also an admirer of d'Annunzio, and a self-proclaimed Francophile. Warren shared not only his Parisian mistress, a celebrated theatre actress, with d'Annunzio, but also political views that were as confused as they were reactionary.

In the United States, Warren was recognized as an exceptionally successful architect who knew how to turn his artistic talents to financial advantage. He had made his name by building the gigantic Grand Central Station in New York which, in its time, was the world's largest and costliest railway terminal.³¹ He accepted the invitation extended by the French Institute which was looking for American financing to bring into being what had originally been a French project. Warren came from the land of libraries, where at a stone's throw from his railway station the New York Public Library, completed in 1912, was considered the *nec plus ultra* of library buildings. The elongated form of the grand reading-room Warren borrowed from the New York model.

Furore Teutonico: a war memorial

Also from the outside Warren's architecture made an impact because of its site, size and style. In fact, Warren built quite a modern library building, with a functional distribution of accommodation for books, readers and staff, but in a double disguise: namely a Flemish Drapers' Hall in neo-renaissance style referring to the golden age of the university and a war memorial referring to the Allied solidarity, the final victory and American generosity.³² It came with a menagerie of ornaments: American and Serbian eagles, Belgian and Rumanian lions, the French cockerel, a Scottish unicorn representing the United Kingdom (!), a Russian bear, the Italian she-wolf, and the Japanese lion of Fo are all to be found on the stepped gables. Political and religious symbols intermingled in an almost blasphemous combination, a pantheon or a pandemonium of the Great War. Take for instance the infamous Madonna in the central niche of the peaked gable: the Queen of Peace has become Our Lady of Victory wearing the helmet of a French or Belgian soldier and with her sword she is piercing the head of a Prussian eagle. The generosity of America was certainly not to be overlooked. The walls and pillars of the ground floor contain commemorative stones bearing the names of more than 300 donors, primarily American educational institutions, but also the police department of New York (it must have harboured many book lovers at that time). The carillon in the tower is a memorial to the American engineers who died on the European battlefield. (After its restoration, this carillon with its sixty-three bells was even the largest in Europe. In 1987, Berlin outstripped Leuven with a carillon of sixty-eight bells.

The monumentality of the library building is further enhanced by the Latin inscriptions. The ultimate inscription, the one that was to express in the most explicit wording what lay behind the whole project, was never put in place. It would castigate the arson committed by the Germans, just as a large commemorative tablet on the ruins of Heidelberg Castle censured the French villains of 1693.³³ Architect Warren intended to place this inscription on the balustrade, running like a banner along the whole length of the facade. The text in question was: *FURORE TEUTONICO DIRUTA, DONO AMERICANO RESTITUTA*, freely translated: 'Demolished by German fury, reconstructed with American gifts'.

In diesen heil'gen Hallen kennt man die Rache nicht

The years passed, however, and in Locarno in Switzerland a gentle breeze began to blow. At the peace conference there, in October of 1925, a relaxed atmosphere developed between neighbours, and it was stimulated by American diplomats. Dawes, an American banker, had managed to soften the reparations payments required of the Germans. The Dawes Plan included conditions with regard to the Leuven library that were favourable to both sides. In August of 1928, at about the time that the library was completed, the Briand-Kellogg Pact had outlawed war. By then the university's rector, Mgr. Paulin Ladeuze, had long abandoned the idea of following Warren's proposal, for it would stand in the way of resuming normal relations with German universities.³⁴ The rector could not allow German guests to bump their heads against this stone inscription for ages to come.

As for the American donors, they wanted not so much an anti-German monument as a memorial that would highlight America's friendship. The Americans proposed that the inscription be softened to read: *IN BELLO DIRUTA, IN PACE RESTITUTA*, roughly, 'destroyed in wartime, reconstructed in peacetime'. For the rector this did not match the facts. Leuven was not destroyed in a battle; the burning of the library was not collateral damage; it was no *accident de parcours*, and the war in general was not a natural catastrophe in which there was no difference between attackers and victims.

A Belgian patriot found no better inscription to adorn the library than the bilingual national motto of Belgium, *L'UNION FAIT LA FORCE. EENDRACHT MAAKT MACHT* ('Unity produces strength'). Much later, in the sixties, while the university was being split in two, if that motto had then featured on the library building, it would have made the proceedings going on inside, the dividing up of the books, even more farcical. Eventually, it was the rector who had the last word: there would be no inscription and a blank balustrade was to retain its neutrality. During the inauguration ceremony of the so-called American library on the 4th of July 1928, a small plane circled above the scene of the celebration and was dropping pamphlets. The leaflets it released, and that fluttered down on the assembly, bore the forbidden text *FURORE TEUTONICO* Two weeks later, Felix Morren, a construction worker who was in charge of the workmen, smashed the neutral balusters down to the pavement. Morren was a rebel with a cause: he had been wounded at age sixteen when the invading Germans entered Leuven, and he had witnessed the (German) acts of brutality in August of 1914. Five years passed and then, in June of 1933, Morren repeated his stunt. This time he was protesting against the persecution of the Jews then beginning in Germany, and he smashed the balustrade, now termed the Hitler balustrade, to smithereens. Three years later in 1936, it was at last possible for Felix Morren to erect with his own hands the rejected first part of the inscription. *FURORE TEUTONICO* went to Dinant, where it was incorporated into a memorial for the 674 citizens shot by German soldiers on 23 August 1914.³⁵ Four years later, in May of 1940, the *Wehrmacht* blew the monument and its inscription to pieces.

Lightning strikes twice

The library in Leuven did not fare any better, even without the inscription. According to one story, at the time of the 1940 invasion, German officers were said to be making

inquiries about the American library and its anti-German inscription. In any case, the library was shelled on 16 May 1940, and when German troops overran the city the next morning the library and its books, nearly a million of them, were all ablaze. Perhaps the controversial inscription on Teutonic violence and American money was the cause, for it had created much bad feeling in Germany as well. Less than twelve years after the library had been reopened, it was once again devoured by flames. The morale of the story: it is probably not such a good idea to disguise a library as a war memorial.

Another 'War of Books' was considered. However, an international campaign to restore the labor of scholarship and culture was no longer appropriate. During the *Blitzkrieg* in 1940 dozens of libraries in Great Britain had been set aflame, and during the *Bombenkrieg* in 1945 hundreds of libraries and millions of books in Germany were set on fire.³⁶ The burning of a library in 1914 had after all been a scandal; some called it a hecatomb, or an autodafé and even a holocaust. Unlike in 1914, however, a campaign on behalf of heritage now seemed futile. Intellectuals were more reluctant than they had once been to talk about 'civilization' and the burning of a library paled into insignificance in the face of the new Holocaust.

Notes

- ¹ Recent publications on the terror in Belgium: Horne, J. and Kramer, A. (2001), *German Atrocities. A History of Denial*, Yale University, London/New Haven; Zuckerman, L. (2004), *The Rape of Belgium. The Untold Story of World War One*, New York University Press, New York; Lipkes, J. (2007), *Rehearsals. The German Army in Belgium, August 1914*, Leuven University Press, Leuven; Kramer, A. (2007), *Dynamic of Destruction. Culture and Mass Killing in the First World War*, Oxford University Press, Oxford. And also: Derez, M. and Tixhon, A. (eds) (2004), *Villes martyres. Belgique août-septembre 1914*, Presses Universitaires Namur, Namur.
- ² Tuchman, B. (1962), *The Guns of August*, Ballantine Books, New-York (see chapter *The Flames of Louvain*); Crozier, E. (1959), *American Reporters on the Western Front*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- ³ Wieland, L. (1984), *Belgien 1914. Die Frage des Belgischen Franktireurkrieges und die Deutsche öffentliche Meinung von 1914 bis 1936*, Lang, Frankfurt am Main/Bern/New York.
- ⁴ Gibson, H. (1917), *A Journal from our Legation in Belgium*, Doubleday, Page & Company, New-York, p. 162.
- ⁵ "The March of the Huns", *The Times*, 29 August 1914, p. 9.
- ⁶ Derez, M. (2009), *The Land of Chimes. De overzeese promotie van de Belgische beiaard*, in: Beyen, M., Rombouts, L. and Vos, S. (eds), *De beiaard een politieke geschiedenis*, Leuven University Press, Leuven, pp. 185-196.
- ⁷ See also De Schaepdrijver, S. (2005), *Champion or Stillbirth. The symbolic uses of Belgium in the Great War*, in: *How can one not be interested in Belgian History: War, language, and consensus in Belgium since 1830*. Trinity College/Academia Press, Dublin/Gent.
- ⁸ Gilleir, A. (2014), *Literary Voices on War and Culture*, in: Tollebeek, J. and Van Assche, E. (eds), *Ravaged. Art and Culture in Times of Conflict*, Mercatorfonds, Brussels, pp. 100-103.
- ⁹ The best book about the twentieth-century history of the Leuven library is the brilliant study by Schivelbusch, W. (1988), *Die Bibliothek von Löwen. Eine Episode aus der Zeit der Weltkriege*, Hanser, München/Wien.
- ¹⁰ *Orages de papier 1914-1918. Les collections de guerre dans les bibliothèques* (2009), Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris (catalogue of the exhibition *La Grande Guerre des*

- médias* in Musée de l' Armée, Hôtel des Invalides).
- ¹¹ Von Ungern-Sternberg, J. and W. (1996), *Der Aufruf 'An die Kulturwelt'*, Steiner, Stuttgart; Chagnon, M.E. (2012), *Le Manifeste des 93. La mobilisation des académies françaises et allemandes au déclenchement de la Première Guerre mondiale (1914-1918)*, *French Historical Studies*, vol. 35, pp. 123-147.
 - ¹² Whitlock, B. (1919), *Belgium under the German Occupation. A Personal Narrative*, Heinemann, London, pp. 102-105 ('Monseigneur and the Library').
 - ¹³ Derez, M. (2014), "Furore Teutonico. De brand van een bibliotheek", *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie*, Vol.76, pp. 672-673.
 - ¹⁴ Kramer, A. (2010), *The First World War as Cultural Trauma*, in: Bosworth, R.J.B. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Fascism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, p. 36.
 - ¹⁵ Coppens, C., Derez, M. and Roegiers, J. (2005), *Leuven University Library 1425-2000*, Leuven University Press, Leuven.
 - ¹⁶ De Vocht, H. (1928), *Literae virorum eruditorum ad Franciscum Craneveldium 1522-1528. A Collection of Original Letters edited from the Manuscript sans illustrated with Notes and Commentaries*, Librairie Universitaire Uystpruyst, p. VIII.
 - ¹⁷ Derez, M. (2008), *Bayar à Louvain. La bibliothèque disparue*, in: Toussaint, J. (ed.), *Actes du colloque autour de Bayar / Le Roy, Société Archéologique de Namur*, Namur, pp. 161-180.
 - ¹⁸ Bertti, M. (2014), *The Library of Alexandria*, in: Tollebeek, J. and Van Assche, E. (eds.), *Ravaged. Art and Culture in Times of Conflict*, Mercatorfonds, Brussels, pp. 60-65.
 - ¹⁹ Grondijs, L.H. (1914) *Een Nederlander in geteisterd België*, Mij. Voor Goede en Goedkope Lectuur, Amsterdam, pp. 39-40.
 - ²⁰ Robida, A. (1914), *Les Villes martyres. Lithographies originales*, Baudelot, Paris; *Les Allemands destructeurs de cathédrales et de trésors du passé*, (1915), Hachette, Paris, p. 52.
 - ²¹ Derez, M. (2014), *Reims.. The Bombarded Cathedral*, in : Tollebeek, J. en Van Assche, E. (eds), *Ravaged. Art and Culture in Times of Conflict*, Mercatorfonds, Brussels, pp. 88-91.
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 - ²³ Nevins, A. (ed.) (1936), *The Letters and Journal of Brand Whitlock*, D. Appleton-Century, New York/London, p. 697.
 - ²⁴ *About the cultural conflict*: Mommsen, W.J. and Müller-Luckner, E. (1996), *Kultur und Krieg. Die Rolle der Intellektuellen, Künstler und Schriftsteller im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Oldenbourg, München; Flasch, K. (2000), *Die geistige Mobilmachung. Die deutschen Intellektuellen und der Erste Weltkrieg*, Fest, Berlin; Boterman, F. (2013), *Cultuur als macht. Cultuurgeschiedenis van Duitsland 1800-heden*, Arbeiderspers, Utrecht/Amsterdam/Antwerpen; Piper, E. (2013), *Nacht über Europa. Kulturgeschichte des Ersten Weltkriegs*, Propyläen, Berlin.
 - ²⁵ Kott, C. (2014), 'Kultur' / 'Zivilisation', in: Tollebeek, J. en Van Assche, E (eds), *Ravaged. Art and Culture in Times of Conflict*, Mercatorfonds, Brussels, pp. 92-99. Fonsegrive, G. (1916), "Kultur" et Civilisation, Bloud & Gay, Paris/Barcelona.
 - ²⁶ *Bulletin de l'Oeuvre Internationale de Louvain*, 1919-1928.
 - ²⁷ *La Bibliothèque de Louvain. Séance commémorative du IV^e anniversaire de l'incendie* (1919), Perrin, Paris.
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What do we lose
when we lose a library?

Destruction of libraries

Récit du sauvetage des manuscrits de Tombouctou

Abdel Kader Haidara

Un jour, suite à l'arrivée des djihadistes qui venaient d'occuper Tombouctou, je suis sorti pour sillonner la ville. J'ai constaté un désordre consternant partout dans la ville. Le quartier administratif était particulièrement détruit: bureaux saccagés, documents et outils de travail administratif dévastés et éparpillés partout dans les rues sous l'œil impuissant des habitants. Face au désastre constaté, j'ai longuement médité sur le sort des manuscrits qui avaient déjà été une cible de plusieurs événements historiques : la conquête marocaine, la colonisation française, diverses invasions tribales, etc. Je me suis posé une série de questions parmi lesquelles:

- Si ces occupants (djihadistes) s'attaquent aux bibliothèques de manuscrits, qui les en empêchera ?
- Que faire pour protéger les manuscrits contre la destruction et le pillage en l'absence de l'État, sans force publique ni moyens financiers ?

Je me suis alors hâté de contacter les détenteurs de manuscrits pour échanger sur la situation chaotique que je venais de constater comme tous les habitants de la ville. Je leur fis part de mes craintes, de l'imminence du danger qui menaçait les manuscrits dans cette situation. Je leur ai proposé de s'organiser discrètement pour procéder au déplacement de tous les manuscrits des bibliothèques vers des lieux séparés au sein des familles. Les détenteurs adhèrent à cette proposition qui fut réalisée de manière très discrète durant environ un mois. Les manuscrits furent mis dans des caisses métalliques et placés dans différentes familles avec l'espoir que cette occupation cauchemardesque arriverait rapidement à son terme. Mais hélas.

Après la réussite de cette opération, j'ai décidé de partir à Bamako pour rejoindre mes collègues : Dr. Abdoukadi Maiga, directeur général de l'institut Ahmed Baba et M. Ismail Diadié Haidara, directeur de la Bibliothèque Fondo Kati. Avec eux, j'ai entrepris des démarches de recherche d'aide auprès d'organisations et institutions afin d'évacuer les manuscrits ou de les protéger à Tombouctou. Ainsi, nous nous sommes déplacés auprès de plusieurs ambassades au Mali, plusieurs ministères et organisations étatiques dont les premiers responsables nous étaient très souvent inaccessibles, cela a fait que nos demandes déposées auprès de ces structures n'ont reçu aucune suite. Au ministère de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche scientifique, nous avons obtenu une rencontre avec son secrétaire général, Monsieur Barthelemy Togo, le directeur National de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche scientifique, Mohamed Keita et le conseiller technique chargé des questions relatives à l'Institut Ahmed Baba auprès du ministre en la personne du professeur Drissa Diakité. Au cours de cette rencontre, qui s'est déroulée au bureau du secrétaire général, nous avons informé les trois responsables du danger et des menaces qui planaient sur les manuscrits. Le secrétaire général prenant la parole s'est dit préoccupé par la situation et a exprimé sa compréhension du danger qui menaçait le patrimoine documentaire. Mais, il a reconnu qu'en raison de grandes difficultés de l'Etat absent de

Tombouctou à ce jour-là, son département ne pouvait apporter aucune assistance: ni financière, ni politique, ni administrative. Néanmoins, il nous a demandé de faire tout ce que nous pourrions pour sauver ce patrimoine. Le département ne pouvait être que de cœur avec nous et souhaitait être informé de l'évolution.

Nous avons ensuite été reçus au ministère de la culture par son secrétaire général qui nous a tenu le même discours. En réalité, nous nous attendions à ces réponses, mais notre démarche avait pour objectif d'avoir leur adhésion à l'opération que je voulais mettre en place avec mes collègues. La caution de l'État malien était importante pour moi dans ce genre d'opération qui n'était pas sans risque pour les documents et pour nous-mêmes. Lorsque j'ai vu que le problème au nord du Mali s'aggravait de jour en jour, j'ai décidé de prendre contact avec un de mes amis diplomates en dehors du Mali. Je lui ai décrit la situation et sollicité son aide. Dans sa réponse, il m'a exprimé son désarroi face au fait de ne pas disposer de ressources pour nous venir en aide. Mais il m'a conseillé d'adopter une stratégie de travail basée sur le contact direct et individuel, à travers lequel je pourrais mobiliser les donateurs et les bonnes volontés autour de moi, en faveur du patrimoine. Je l'ai remercié pour ces précieux et sages conseils et lui ai assuré que je les suivrais.

C'est partant de là que j'ai établi des contacts individuels à l'endroit des partenaires à l'intérieur du Mali comme à l'extérieur. Ainsi je suis allé à Genève pour rencontrer des amis et solliciter leur soutien à l'initiative que j'avais prise d'exfiltrer les manuscrits du foyer de conflits. Durant ce voyage, j'ai pu rencontrer des personnes qui ont participé au sauvetage du patrimoine en Afghanistan et en Iraq. J'ai reçu des conseils importants de leur part pour mener à bien une telle initiative. Quelques jours après mon retour de Genève, je suis allé à Doubaï pour rencontrer le directeur général du Centre Juma Almajid, Shaykh Juma Almajid. Je lui ai exposé la situation que nous vivions et l'initiative que je souhaitais mettre en œuvre. Il m'a, à son tour, donné des conseils soutenus par des stratégies pour entamer ce travail le plus rapidement possible et dans la plus grande discrétion possible. Il a immédiatement mis à ma disposition un fond pour démarrer l'opération.

Dès mon retour à Bamako, j'ai mis en place deux commissions de travail dont une à Bamako et l'autre à Tombouctou, ainsi que des commissaires pour assurer la navette entre Tombouctou et Bamako. Nous avons pris les dispositions suivantes :

- Achat d'un téléphone portable de travail avec dotation en crédit de communication journalière pour chaque personne impliquée dans l'opération,
- Repérage et choix de maisons d'accueil pour les manuscrits dans plusieurs quartiers de Bamako.

C'est ainsi que nous avons commencé à transporter les premières caisses de manuscrits à Bamako. Cependant, nous avons continué à multiplier les contacts avec l'aide d'autres partenaires dont je tais les noms à leur demande. Ils ont servi d'intermédiaires entre nous et d'autres partenaires. Ainsi, les organisations suivantes ont répondu à nos demandes:

- La fondation Prince Claus des Pays-Bas,
- La fondation DOEN des Pays-Bas,
- Le ministère des affaires étrangères des Pays-Bas,
- Et l'ambassade d'Allemagne à Bamako.

Par la suite, j'ai effectué un déplacement à Lagos, au Nigéria. J'ai rendu visite au siège de la fondation Ford, bureau de l'Afrique de l'ouest où j'ai eu un entretien avec la responsable du bureau, Dr. Adiambo Odaga. Je lui ai fait part de ce que nous avions accompli jusqu'alors

grâce aux apports des différents partenaires et de ce qui restait à faire. Le bureau a répondu à notre sollicitation en subventionnant l'exfiltration des caisses restantes. Ce sont là les partenaires qui ont soutenu l'opération d'exfiltration des manuscrits du début à la fin. Qu'ils reçoivent l'expression de notre profonde reconnaissance.

Les opérations se sont déroulées dans un contexte extrêmement difficile dans lequel l'insécurité avait gagné tout le Mali, au nord comme au sud. Mais nous avons su maintenir un rythme de travail qui nous a permis d'atteindre les objectifs souhaités. Les véhicules transportaient deux à quatre caisses camouflées par voyage et arrivaient jusqu'à Ségou où d'autres véhicules étaient loués pour continuer le trajet jusqu'à Bamako. C'est ainsi que nous avons opéré jusqu'en fin décembre 2012. Lorsque les djihadistes ont commencé à gagner du terrain vers le centre du pays, nous avons été contraints de laisser les routes principales menant à Douentza en raison de leur fréquentation par les groupes armés dans leur avancée. Nous avons continué le travail en empruntant la voie fluviale à partir des villages aux alentours de Tombouctou. Ainsi, les caisses étaient chargées dans les pirogues et transportées jusqu'aux environs de Djenné où les véhicules les acheminaient jusqu'à Bamako. Ces opérations se sont déroulées dans la discrétion totale durant six mois (du début août 2012 à fin janvier 2013).



Après l'évacuation des manuscrits à Bamako, nous avons été confrontés au problème d'humidité pendant l'hivernage 2013. Nous avons contacté des partenaires pour nous aider à mieux loger les manuscrits. Nous avons loué des maisons intermédiaires entre le rez-de-chaussée et d'autres niveaux afin de protéger les dépôts de manuscrits contre l'écoulement d'eau des toitures et d'éventuelles inondations par le bas. Ces maisons ont été dotées d'appareils de contrôle d'air et de déshumidificateurs. Ces actions ont été rendues possibles grâce aux soutiens des partenaires comme la fondation Ford, la fondation Prince Claus, le ministère fédéral allemand des affaires étrangères et la coopération Suisse au Mali. De même, nous avons bénéficié de l'appui des partenaires pour inventorier l'ensemble des manuscrits évacués, tous formats et tous thèmes confondus : petites, moyennes et grandes tailles ; petits, moyens et grands volumes, livres thématiques, correspondances, actes et archives diverses. L'ensemble des manuscrits est totalisé à 377 491. Ce travail fut réalisé avec le concours des partenaires de l'évacuation et la coopération Mali-Luxembourg à travers le projet Mali/015.

Perspective de retour des manuscrits à Tombouctou

Dans la perspective d'un retour des manuscrits à leur lieu d'origine (Tombouctou), la SAVAMA-DCI a conçu un programme quinquennal de travail allant de 2013 à 2018. Ce programme a été mis en place avec l'appui du bureau d'étude CERCAD (Centre d'étude, de communication et d'animation pour le développement) et le concours financier de la Coopération Suisse au Mali. Ce programme fut élaboré au cours d'un atelier tenu à Bamako en octobre 2013 avec la participation des bibliothécaires et des experts maliens et néerlandais. Le programme vise :

- le stockage correct des manuscrits de Tombouctou évacués à Bamako ;
- leur conservation physique ;
- leur conservation numérique ;
- l'élaboration de leur répertoire et de leur catalogue ;
- la rénovation, la réhabilitation et la reconstruction des bibliothèques à Tombouctou et dans sa région ;
- et la conduite de travaux de recherche et d'édition critique sur les manuscrits.

Entre octobre 2013 et maintenant, la SAVAMA-DCI a déployé des efforts considérables et soutenus sous ma direction pour réaliser les projets inscrits dans ce programme 2013-2018.

L'ONG a pu réaliser jusqu'en juin 2015 :

- La location de dix maisons pour le stockage des manuscrits et d'un siège servant de bureaux et d'ateliers pour les travaux des manuscrits ;
- La rénovation/reconstruction/réhabilitation de 22 bibliothèques à Tombouctou et dans sa région afin de les rendre opérationnelles ;
- L'élaboration du répertoire en arabe et en français de 78 028 manuscrits dans 09 bibliothèques ;
- La conservation de 55 524 manuscrits dans 5 820 boîtes confectionnées ;
- La numérisation de 16 000 manuscrits dans 3 bibliothèques ;
- La formation d'agents aux techniques de numérisation, de conservation, de restauration et d'élaboration d'inventaire.

Ces actions ont été réalisées avec l'appui financier des partenaires suivants que nous remercions :

- Fondation Ford, États Unis d'Amérique
- Ministère des Affaires Étrangères de la République Fédérale d'Allemagne
- Université de Hambourg, Allemagne
- Hill Musuem & Manuscripts Library, États Unis d'Amérique
- Bureau de la Coopération Suisse au Mali (DDC)
- Fondation Gerda Henkel, Allemagne
- Coopération Mali-Luxembourg
- Fondation Prince Claus des Pays Bas
- T160K – Crowdfunding positive change in Africa

Il est évident que beaucoup reste à faire quand on considère les résultats chiffrés que nous souhaitons atteindre dans cinq ans :

- 90 000 boîtes confectionnées
- 100 000 manuscrits numérisés
- 40 000 manuscrits restaurés
- 50 000 manuscrits catalogués
- 15 manuscrits édités et publiés
- 25 thématiques de recherche traitées sur les manuscrits
- 25 étudiants soutenus pour des fins de recherches sur les manuscrits
- 26 bibliothèques reconstruites
- Et 19 bibliothèques rénovées

Mais nous restons optimistes quant à la réalisation de ce programme dans les meilleures conditions possibles grâce aux appuis multiformes de nos partenaires.



Participation de l'Unesco

En tant institution spécialisée des Nations Unies, l'UNESCO s'est beaucoup préoccupée de la situation des patrimoines matériel et immatériel pendant la crise au Mali et l'occupation du Nord du pays. Elle a lancé plusieurs appels à la retenue et la protection des biens culturels du nord du Mali. Suite à ses appels médiatisés en faveur de la protection des biens culturels, les envahisseurs ont répondu par des actes de vandalisme contre les mausolées et les monuments de la cité des 333 saints. Face à cette situation répétitive, nous avons décidé d'arrêter temporairement toute opération pour ne pas mettre les manuscrits et leurs travailleurs en danger. Ensuite, j'ai contacté l'UNESCO au sein duquel j'ai échangé avec un des responsables que je connaissais sur la situation, Monsieur Lazare Assomo Eloundou. Je lui ai exposé nos inquiétudes face aux apparitions

et déclarations médiatiques de l'UNESCO qui pouvaient pousser les envahisseurs à détruire davantage le patrimoine culturel au nord du Mali. Je lui ai fait savoir que nous recommandions à l'Unesco d'arrêter cette campagne médiatique et surtout d'éviter de parler des manuscrits. Surpris, Monsieur ELOUNDOU qui pensait que l'UNESCO tenait son rôle me demanda pourquoi? Je l'ai rassuré concernant notre compréhension de la bonne intention de leur agissement qui risquait de mettre en péril tout ce que nous étions entrain de faire pour préserver les manuscrits. N'ayant pas compris mon point de vue, il m'a demandé d'être plus explicite avec lui. J'hésitais à lui révéler nos travaux d'évacuation des manuscrits, mais j'ai finalement choisi de lui révéler le secret tout en lui demandant d'être discret sur la question de même l'ensemble du personnel de l'UNESCO. Comprenant bien la situation, Monsieur Eloundou est revenu le lendemain avec la proposition qu'ils étaient prêts à arrêter toute communication médiatique sur la question à condition que j'accepte de leur fournir, tous les jours, des nouvelles qu'elles soient bonnes ou mauvaises. Ayant convenu cela, nous avons continué à travailler en collaboration étroite jusqu'à la fin des opérations d'exfiltration. Ces échanges et cette collaboration avec l'UNESCO nous ont été salutaires pour la poursuite de notre initiative de sauvetage des manuscrits de Tombouctou. Et cela fut une contribution inestimable de la part de cette institution onusienne.

Bombs on books: allied destruction of German libraries during World War II

Jan L. Alessandrini

Books were undeniably part of the collateral damage of World War II. However, libraries closely linked with universities were also directly targeted by Allied air raids.¹ The brunt of destruction and dispersal was borne by Hamburg, Göttingen, Munich, Bonn, Frankfurt, Leipzig, Giessen, Münster, Würzburg, Breslau, and Kiel, to name a few.² The whole German library system was brought to its knees. Figures for the total number of German books lost by the end of WWII based on scholarly and UNESCO sources range widely from one-quarter to a third to one-half.³

Much attention has rightly focused on the artistic diaspora and problems of restitution, but dislocation and destruction of library collections as a consequence of Allied war operations has received very little scholarly interest. While the more familiar narrative of book destruction in Germany in WWII, at least to non-German speakers, is that of Nazi attacks on 'degenerate art' (*Entartete Kunst*) and 'un-German literature' in the build up to WWII (1933) and during the war;⁴ book plundering by the Third Reich across Europe; expropriation of Jewish libraries, from which German libraries profited, prior to and after their destruction, German libraries destroyed by Allied air raids, and the administrative and practical procedures undertaken by them to rescue their holdings during the Second World War are still rather neglected by scholarship.⁵

Many libraries still restrict access to their archives, which makes a hard task of reconstructing wartime administrative procedures.⁶ A handful of useful case histories of the official safeguarding measures adopted by German libraries during WWII, such as a comprehensive study of the destruction of Berlin Library by Werner Schochow, are isolated exceptions to the paucity of research in this field.⁷ Art historians and musicologists have undoubtedly been more successful at reconstructing the wartime history of losses, ostensibly because looted artworks and musical notation of famous composers now in places like Russia make better headline news for the media and the public than rare manuscripts or books strewn across the world.⁸

Bearing all of this in mind, this article seeks to first highlight the devastation caused to German libraries by Allied aerial warfare, and to discuss some of the wartime measures adopted by German libraries to rescue their holdings and secondly, to trace the further dispersal and depredation of German book stocks during post-war occupation, transforming those that had not been casualties of WWII into pawns of the Cold War.

Wartime Devastation of German Libraries

The destructiveness of aerial warfare was greatly underestimated by German libraries at the onset of war. This was exposed by the bombings of German cities and towns. Library evacuations started as early as September 1939, and although this may appear defeatist, it

was in line with the aerial defence-raid provision issued on 26th August 1939, demanding that 'downright irreplaceable works of culture' should be brought to fire-proof air-raid shelters.⁹ The provision was an almost verbatim reproduction of an Italian circular of three and half years earlier (no. 7774, 15.12.1936). Italy's centrally administered libraries began implementing pragmatic rescue plans based on hard lessons learned from recent wars fought out on her soil. Germany, having had no experience of war theatre on her soil, appears to have taken a different approach greatly underestimating modern aerial warfare. The death toll in many German cities and towns like Hamburg and Berlin was so high that inner-city bunkers intended to provide human shelter were used for the storage of books. Surviving rare and modern books were salvaged to such air-raid shelters, precariously safeguarded, sometimes in vain, from aerial warfare that had been intensifying since 1940.

	German Library Losses in Volumes	Totals
Berlin	State Library: 2 million University Library: 20,000 Ratsbibliothek: 1,5 million City Library & Library of the Reichstag + many other specialist libraries almost completely destroyed	3,580,000
Frankfurt a.M.	City and University Library: 550,000 750,000 patents; 440,000 doctoral dissertations	1,740,000
Munich	Bavarian State Library: 500,000 University Library: 350,000 (=one third of collection) City Library: 80,000 The Benedictine Library: almost all 120,000	1,050,000
Hamburg	City and University Library: 600,000 (=two thirds) Commerzbibliothek: 174,000 of 188,000 Nigh on all catalogues and reference works	884,000
Giessen	University Library: 500,000; 300,000 dissertations (=nine tenths)	800,000
Darmstadt	Hessian Provincial Library: 760,000 2,217 incunabula; 4,500 manuscripts Technical University Library: two thirds	767,000
Stuttgart	Provincial Library Württemberg: 580,000 Technical University Library: 50,000 of 118,000 Stuttgart Music Academy: destroyed	630,000
Dresden	Sächsische Landesbibliothek: 300,000 Stadtbibliothek: 200,000 Library of Verein für Erdkunde: 12,000 (card catalogues partially lost)	512,000
Kassel	Provincial Library: 350,000 of 400,000 Murhardsche Bibliothek: 96,400 of 241,000 (=two fifths)	446,400
Würzburg	University Library: 200,000 of 550,000; 230,000 doctoral dissertations	430,000
Karlsruhe	Provincial Library Baden: 360,000 Technical University Library: 63,000	423,000

Munster	University Library: 360,000 (=two thirds) Entire reference collection lost Library of the Fürstenbger-Stammheim Family: 22,000 old imprints; catalogues lost	382,000
Leipzig	University Library: 3-5,000, including incunabula Municipal Library: 175,000 of 181,000 (oldest catalogues lost) Library of the German Museum of the Book; 60,000.	270,000
Dortmund	Municipal and Provincial Library: 250,000 of 320,000	250,000
Kiel	University Library: 250,000 Provincial Library Schleswig-Holstein: lost reference collection & catalogue.	250,000
Bonn	University Library: 25% of its collections.	207,000
Bremen	State Library: 150,000	150,000
Magdeburg	Municipal Library: 140,000 of 180,000	140,000
Essen	Municipal Library: 130,000 (=three quarters), including parts of the catalogues.	130,000
Hannover	Municipal Library: 125,000	125,000
Nurnberg	Municipal Library: 100,000; parts of the catalogue	100,000
Aachen	Library of the Technical University: 50,000	50,000
Marburg	University Library: 50,000	50,000
Greifswald	University Library: 17,000; 1,900 manuscripts	18,900

Overview of volumes lost by German libraries during WWII

The retrieval of salvaged books after the war is a tale with two endings. Precious books that had withstood the firestorms in those air-raid shelters close to the respective libraries were often the only books to return in the immediate aftermath of war or during the early years of occupation.¹⁰ Other books evacuated to remote Eastern regions like Saxony, Pomerania, Upper and Lower Silesia, Lusatia, or the remote Ore Mountains, and stored in castles, churches and mines, however, most frequently suffered further dispersal. Those not damaged in transit, fell victim to water or salt damage, or plundering in places of safekeeping, especially when once secluded areas turned into frontlines.

With hindsight, the new guidelines for aerial-protection issued on 28th August 1942 that shifted the focus from safeguarding single significant items to entire collections, to be brought to areas less susceptible to aerial attack, like remote castles or cloisters, seem more ill-conceived.¹¹ Yet these guidelines were partly inspired by severe British bombardment of Lübeck in March 1942, which must have convinced even the most dogged researchers and readers that it was time to renounce access to collections in favour of preservation.

Many libraries, however, closed the stable door after the proverbial horse had bolted. Operating under severe financial and personnel constraints, they attempted larger scale salvage operations, and in some cases like Hamburg these were accounted for by detailed lists that recorded contents of evacuated crates, known as *Fluchtgutlisten*. Although the accuracy of such inventories of books carried to bunkers or remote locations is at best questionable, and at worst, when compared with lists of returned items, quite indicative of library staff susceptibility to kleptomania. Bremen sent 100,000 volumes to a mine

in Bernburg an der Saale in autumn 1942 but none of them returned, instead parts reappeared in the National Library in St Petersburg. 20,000 of Lübeck's rare books suffered a similar fate.

A major problem was that there was no centralized coordination of evacuations. While German archives had become centrally administered during the war, the German library system stayed decentralised overall as well as in its three main constituent parts:¹² firstly, research or university libraries (which were 'remarkable for their decentralization' and 'rarely, if ever, recorded [stock] in the catalogue[s]';¹³ secondly, *Staatsbibliotheken*; and finally, *Stadtbibliotheken* and *Landesbibliotheken*. Yet correspondence and departmental memos throw a new light on the debatable issue of whether the decentralised nature of German libraries and museums was the cause for the often late and consequently chaotic library evacuations in contrast to France and Italy, as has been argued recently.¹⁴ Decision-making seems to have been driven primarily by ideology, and financial limitations. Memos also show that without hesitation libraries turned to insalubrious offers from the Reich's Exchange Office (*Reichstauschstelle*) in Berlin, which had intensified its redistribution of Gestapo-confiscated material, mainly forcefully expropriated Jewish libraries (*Judenbibliotheken*), to 'donate' to German libraries that had suffered severe losses during the war.¹⁵

Past scholarship may have oversimplified matters by suggesting that German libraries rescued their collections at the height of WWII in two principal ways, either salvaging only single items of significance, as in the case of Leipzig, or alternatively, safeguarding entire collections, as Dresden did, where many of the old books were saved, despite infamously destructive blanket bombings. Books left on shelves in Breslau and Danzig, however, were spared for different reasons, as one German book historian reminds us:¹⁶ annexed on 2nd September 1939, the Free City of Danzig survived relatively unscathed because of Hitler's assurance to the United Kingdom and France that he would withdraw from Poland if allowed to keep Danzig and the Polish corridor.

Contemporary sources illustrate the devastation of the German library systems at the end of WWII. A report of state libraries in Berlin by Leroy H. Linder commissioned in 1946 contains phrases such as 'completely bombed out. No trace remains'; 'Completely burned out'; 'Completely destroyed during the battle of Berlin'; 'destroyed during an air raid'.¹⁷ The *Preussische Staatsbibliothek*, one of the two biggest libraries, lost an estimated two million books. The *Ratsbibliothek*, which at the start of the war held four million books, listed one and a half million books destroyed and an additional 1.1 million evacuated books yet to be recovered. Allied bombardments completely destroyed 18 of the 64 libraries studied by the report.¹⁸ Georg Leyh, director at Tübingen University Library, carried out another extensive contemporary study of German libraries in 1947.¹⁹ This study, including correspondence from all the directors of key German libraries, distinguished between the destruction of library infrastructure (i.e. buildings and storages) and holdings, and made it very plain that the greatest destruction and losses were inflicted by Allied bombings. Library buildings destroyed include Bonn, Frankfurt, Giessen, Hamburg, Würzburg and Münster; 6/7 of Bavarian State Library in Munich was destroyed, while only the administrative part of provincial library in Stuttgart survived; provincial libraries in Darmstadt, Karlsruhe and Kassel were completely burnt down; Göttingen University Library lost its administrative block and reading rooms; 4/5 of Munich University Library buildings were destroyed; some medium-sized university libraries such as Erlangen, Freiburg, Heidelberg (founded 1386), Cologne (founded

1388) and Tübingen survived more or less intact.²⁰ New post-war library buildings were constructed in Stuttgart, Cologne, Münster, Hanover and Frankfurt a.M.

Post-War Dispersal and Depredation

If one part of the story of lost books in Germany is that of devastation through aerial warfare previously unseen on German soil, and hasty evacuations to ill-advised places of safekeeping, then the other dominant narrative of lost books in Germany, especially East Germany, was that of widespread plunder, both private and official, during and after the war. The book losses recorded by contemporary reports mentioned above were in no way final, because policies to exact reparations by the Allies were only just beginning. The dust had barely settled on the rubble when in 1946 the Soviet Trophy Commission began to load 1.2 million books looted from various locations in the Russian-occupied zone on to trains destined for Moscow, St Petersburg and deeper into the Soviet Union's hinterland. Perhaps the books were intended to line the shelves of a 'super museum' the Soviets had planned for artworks received from defeated Axis countries in Moscow, itself akin to the Führermuseum that Hitler had planned for Linz.²¹ The military trains leaving in the hazy heat of August 1946, spirited away spoils of war that also included 200,000 works of art and 3km of archives.²² Scholars estimate that between 5.5 million and 11 million German books were removed during the occupation, although sparse contemporary Soviet records and historical distaste for complete transparency muddle actual figures.²³ Eastern Germany bore the disproportionate brunt of the policy of so-called *démontage* at the hands of the Soviet Trophy Commission which removed technical and cultural artefacts as reparations for extensive German war damages.²⁴

However, as far as East Germany is concerned, this is only half the story. As one German scholar, Hans Joachim Koppitz, highlights, the libraries in the German Democratic Republic suffered not only under Soviet occupation, with its confiscations and spoils of war, but also under the administrative measures of the German potentates ideologically aligned with the East. The war was just the beginning of a protracted erosion of curated information systems in what was to become the German Democratic Republic, contrasting the post-war fate of libraries in the Federal German Republic.²⁵ Another scholar, Eileen Brown, rather starkly remarked in 1975 that:

War damage to the public libraries destroyed completely a basically mediocre system which had, if anything, been leading people astray since 1933.²⁶

This study, one of the few to assess pre-war library stocks, wartime losses, and post-war reconstruction of stocks (1958), shows how quickly West German libraries restored and outgrew their pre-war holdings, arguing, not without some ideological bias, that although,

Federal Republic library systems were brought to a standstill, the end of the war renewed contact with the outside world, [i.e. the Western Allies,] and reconstruction gave opportunity to creating a vastly improved public library system [...].²⁷

Whilst in the West a rigorous and fundamental revamp of the whole library system was thought to have taken place through the establishment in 1969 of the West German *Bibliotheksplan* (Library Plan), approved at the Hamburg conference in 1973, Eastern libraries went on to not only weed out duplicates, but also sell rare or valuable items in exchange for hard foreign currency (contradicting their ideological stance on capital markets), and even went as far as destroying books in so-called cost-saving measures.²⁸ It was certainly no boon that following the Potsdam Agreement (1945) two of the three pre-1939 German national libraries, the *Preussische Staatsbibliothek* in Berlin and the *Deutsche Bücherei* in Leipzig found themselves in the GDR, while the *Bayerische Staatsbibliothek* closed 1943 and would not reopen until 1950. In 1946 the *Deutsche Bibliothek* in Frankfurt was founded to resume the operations of the *Deutsche Bücherei* in Leipzig, now in the GDR; the *Westdeutsche Bibliothek* was formed in 1946 in Marburg from the stock of the *Preussische Staatsbibliothek* that had been stored in West Germany during the war, and in 1962 this would become part of newly-founded *Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz*, known today as the *Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz*.²⁹

Furthermore, de-nazification and demilitarisation of libraries appears to have been disproportionately greater in the East than the West.³⁰ The Soviets, who after all had systematically purged their own libraries, first published an index of tens of thousands of prohibited books in 1946, including fascist, militarist, and racist books as well as books potentially subversive of the military government.³¹ While the western zones experienced no retributive restitutions as such, there the Soviet Index was used as a research tool—Lester K. Born noted in 1950 the difference between Western and Eastern Germany as “purification in the west... purge in the east.”³²

Many of the old *Landesbibliotheken* in the East, such as Altenburg, Neusterlitz and Sonderhausen, disappeared completely as a consequence of the redrawing of maps of the Soviet Occupied Zone into smaller precincts in the 1950s. In numbers, the closure of *Landesbibliotheken* in 1950s resulted in losses of c. 120,000 volumes, 150 incunabula and 75 mss at Altenburg; 80,000 volumes at Neusterlitz; 30,000 volumes and 90 mss at Sonderhausen. *Landesbibliotheken* that suffered the largest dispersals include Dresden with 220,000 holdings still in Moscow; the Fürstlich Stolberg–Wernigeroderische Bibliothek which was forced by the Trophy Commission to pay 60,000 marks to ship its own books to Soviet Union; the Herzöglliche Öffentliche Bibliothek Meiningen of which the majority of holdings are believed to still be in church stores on Moscow’s outskirts. It needs to be borne in mind however that these closures had been preceded by the liquidation of hundreds of castle, school and local authority libraries in what became the GDR.³³ Lack of catalogues makes it extremely hard to deduce how much stock from the old Eastern *Landesbibliotheken* was actually redistributed among research libraries as was intended and how much was sold via the *Zentralantiquariat* in Leipzig to the West.³⁴ Ordinances that prohibited the antiquarian bookselling of anything save items intended for research purposes could be circumnavigated if the material in question was deemed ideologically irreconcilable with socialist ideals. There was a marked contrast between the notion of the GDR as a self-proclaimed protector of cultural heritage, which, as a nation, supposedly shunned the morally corrupt book-auctioneering of advanced western capitalist markets except for valuable items of national interest, and its own wholesale participation in such markets to sell items that did not showcase the progressiveness of the dictatorship of the proletariat.³⁵

We are still waiting for a systematic study, which compares the destruction carried out by the GDR state against smaller collections with that of the Soviet Trophy Commission against large library collections.³⁶ Such a study would shed light on other neglected chapters of book losses in Eastern Germany including, for instance, the fact that the GDR regime also oversaw the dissolution of old law and local authority libraries. Especially lamentable was the dissolution of Leipzig's *Reichs-Court* library, containing 300,000 volumes, 300 mss and 240 incunabula. Most of that library ended up in the library of the High Court in East Berlin which was then assimilated into the library of the *Bundesgerichtshof* in Karlsruhe.³⁷ Likewise, such a study would highlight consequences of the closure of school libraries especially gymnasia, some of which were older than universities, and almost all without surviving catalogues, including Berlin, Hamburg, Dresden, Leipzig, Gotha, Magdeburg (sold in the 1960s), Chemnitz, Eisenach, Freienwalde/Oder, Fürstenwalde/Spree, Grimma, Haldensleben, Halle (most of its stock was sent to the *Antiquariat* Leipzig, but the rest was used for paper recycling), Meiningen, Mühlhausen (Thuringia), Parchim, Plauen, Rostock, Schneeberg (sold in 1960s to *Antiquariat* Rostock), Torgau (brought to the *Landesbibliothek* in Dresden), Weimer, and Wernigerode.³⁸ The GDR regime also disbanded old historical associations in Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Mecklenburg, such as those in Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, and Meiningen.³⁹ and closed and dispersed hundreds of seminary libraries. Not to mention the example of tens of thousands of French dissertations recycled at paper mills, because, as the then director of the Humboldt University Library would go on to state nonchalantly, they could, after all, be ordered through inter library loan.⁴⁰

West German antiquarians certainly share the blame for the depletion of stocks in the GDR. Questions about the confiscation of books in the wake of the war have also to be asked about books taken by American librarians back to the United States. These books and their histories as they moved from Germany to American research universities, represent another fascinating facet of book dispersal in Germany during and after World War II. The narrative of American 'Bookmen' is too long and intricate to be told here, but will be addressed in an upcoming monograph-length study of the far-reaching consequences of Allied bombings and post-war occupation for the dispersal of German books, which bear upon especially convoluted, on-going challenges of restitution.⁴¹

Notes

- ¹ Hilda Urén Stubbings, *Blitzkrieg and Books: British and European Libraries as Casualties of World War II* (Bloomington, Ind.: Rubena Press, 1993), p. 386.
- ² For a more detailed case study of the destruction and reconstruction of Hamburg library during WWII see Jan L. Alessandrini, 'Lost Books of Operation Gomorrah: Rescue, Reconstruction, and Restitution of Hamburg Library after WWII', in: *Lost Books: Reconstructing the Print World of Pre-Industrial Europe*, ed. by Flavia Bruni and Andrew Pettegree (Brill: Leiden, 2016), pp. 441-461.
- ³ Hans van der Hoeven and J. Van Albada, *Memory of the World: Lost Memory: Libraries and Archives Destroyed in the Twentieth Century*, CII-96/WS/1 (Paris: General Information Programme and UNISIST, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1996).

- ⁴ On Nazi plundering see Cornelia Briel, *Beschlagnahmt, Erpresst, Erbeutet: NS-Raubgut, Reichstauschstelle und Preussische Staatsbibliothek zwischen 1933 und 1945* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2013). On acquisitions of former Jewish libraries, see Ernst-Otto Krawehl, 'Erwerbungen der "Bibliothek der Hansestadt Hamburg" aus ehemals jüdischen Besitz (1940 bis 1944)', *Auskunft*, 22 (2002), pp. 3-17. For a comprehensive study of the comparable wartime destruction of the Berlin Library, see Werner Schochow, *Bücherschicksale: die Verlagerungsgeschichte der Preussischen Staatsbibliothek: Auslagerung, Zerstörung, Entfremdung, Rückführung: dargestellt aus den Quellen* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003).
- ⁵ These should not be confused with the measures for the protection of valuable national patrimony, including both physical library sites and holdings, which were slowly being enshrined in international law since the end of the nineteenth century. For more on this see Stanislaw Edward Nahlik, *La protection internationale des biens culturels en cas de conflit armé*, Académie de droit international. Recueil des cours, 120, 1967-I, (Leiden: Brill, [1967] 2008), p. 110; Lynn H. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War* (New York: Knopf, 1994), pp. 214-215. For useful studies of wartime protection plans at libraries across Europe (especially Italy), as well as differences between Allied (US and UK) handling of cultural patrimony in German-occupied European territories, see Flavia Cristiano, 'I piani di protezione: le origini' and Ruggero Ranieri, 'Il ruolo degli alleati nella preservazione delle biblioteche e degli archivi durante l'esperienza di liberazione/occupazione, 1943-1946', both in: Andrea Capaccioni, Andrea Paoli and Ruggero Ranieri (eds.), *Le biblioteche e gli archivi durante la seconda guerra mondiale: il caso italiano* (Bologna: Pendragon, 2007), pp. 1-32 and 167-209, respectively.
- ⁶ Renate Decke-Cornill, *Repertorium bibliotheksgeschichtlicher Quellen: Archivalien bis 1945 in bundesdeutschen Bibliotheken und Archiven*, Repertorien zur Erforschung der frühen Neuzeit, 11 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992).
- ⁷ Werner Schochow, *Bücherschicksale: die Verlagerungsgeschichte der Preussischen Staatsbibliothek: Auslagerung, Zerstörung, Entfremdung, Rückführung: dargestellt aus den Quellen* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003); Nicola Schneider, 'The Losses of the Music Collection of the Hessische Landesbibliothek in Darmstadt in 1944', Leiden 2013; Nicola Schneider, 'The Losses of the Music Collection of the Hessische Landesbibliothek in Darmstadt in 1944: A Case Study on the Failure to Safeguard Historical Library Holdings', in: Anja-Silvia Goeing, Anthony Grafton, Paul Michel and Adam Blauhut (eds), *Collectors' Knowledge: What is Kept, What is Discarded* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 381-414, at p. 384.
- ⁸ For case studies of dispersed German music in other locations including Kraków, Kiev, Moscow, and St Petersburg see Schochow, *Bücherschicksale*; Dieter Kirsch and Lenz Meierott, *Berliner Lautentabulaturen in Krakau: beschreibender Katalog der handschriftlichen Tabulaturen für Laute und verwandte Instrumente in der Biblioteka Jagiellońska Kraków aus dem Besitz der ehemaligen Preussischen Staatsbibliothek Berlin* (Mainz: Schott, 1992); Aleksandra Patalas, *Catalogue of Early Music Prints from the Collections of the Former Preussische Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, Kept at the Jagiellonian Library in Cracow* (Kraków: Musica Jagellonica, 1999); Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, *Bach is Back in Berlin: The Return of the Sing-Akademie Archive from Ukraine in the Context of Displaced Cultural Treasures and Restitution Politics* (Washington, D.C.: National Council for Eurasian and East European Research, 2003), pp. 1-45; Viacheslav Kartsovnik and Nina Rjazanova, *Handschriften aus deutschen Sammlungen in der Russischen Nationalbibliothek Sankt Petersburg: Musikmanuskripte und Musikdrucke des 17.-20. Jhs. (Signaturgruppe "Fond 956, opis '2")* (Berlin: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, 2004).
- ⁹ Viz. 'Durchführung des Luftschutzes in Museen, Büchereien, Archiven und ähnlichen Kulturstätten', L. Dv., 755/6, Richtlinien für die Durchführung des erweiterten Selbstschutzes im Luftschutz, [Der Reichsminister der Luftfahrt und Oberbefehlshaber der Luftwaffe] (Berlin: Deutschland Reichsluftfahrtministerium, 1939); Hubert Darsow, Berthold Fokken, and Friedrich Nicolaus, *Kommentar zum Luftschutzgesetz und den Durchführungsbestimmungen*

- nebst den einschlägigen Erlassen, Dienstvorschriften und polizeilichen Bestimmungen* (München: Beck, 1943), vol. 1, Appendix 2, 'Dienstvorschriften', no. 6, pp. 45-6.
- ¹⁰ Krawehl and Neubacher, 'Rückgabe', 133; Hamburg Library Letter, Reincke to Office for Cultural Administration, 19.6.1945.
- ¹¹ These guidelines, known as 'Richtlinien zur Durchführung des Luftschutzes in Bibliotheken: IV–Schutzmassnahmen an Bergunsorten', published by the Reichsminister für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung' (Hamburg State Archive, HE II, 4), were partly prompted by severe British aerial attacks on Lübeck at the end of March 1942, and followed the doctrine that protection should override access and use.
- ¹² Dr. Ernst Zipfel, General director of Prussian archive administration, played a key role in this regard; cf. Astrid M. Eckert, *Kampf Um Die Akten: Die Westalliierten Und Die Rückgabe Von Deutschem Archivgut Nach Dem Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2004), p. 127; Matthias Herrmann, *Das Reichsarchiv (1919-1945): Eine Archivische Institution Im Spannungsfeld Der Deutschen Politik* (unpublished doctoral thesis, Humboldt-University, Berlin, 1994), pp. 287, 338-40 and 444-46; Wolfgang Leesch, *Die Deutschen Archivare: 1500-1945*. (München: Saur, 1985), p. 695; Torsten Musial, *Staatsarchive Im Dritten Reich: Zur Geschichte des Staatlichen Archivwesens in Deutschland, 1933-1945* (Potsdam: Verlag für Berlin-Brandenburg, 1996), pp. 40f. and 94-96; 172f.; Markus Pöhlmann, *Kriegsgeschichte Und Geschichtspolitik: Der Erste Weltkrieg: Die Amtliche Deutsche Militärgeschichtsschreibung 1914-1956* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 2002), p. 127; Johanna Weiser, *Geschichte der preußischen Archivverwaltung und ihrer Leitung. Von den Anfängen unter Staatskanzler von Hardenberg bis zur Auflösung im Jahre 1945*, Veröffentlichungen aus den Archiven preußischer Kulturbesitz, 7 (Böhlau, Köln 2000), pp. 144-46.
- ¹³ Eileen Brown, 'War Damage, 1939-1945, and Post-war Reconstruction in Libraries of the Federal German Republic and England: a Comparison', *Journal of Librarianship*, 7 (1975), pp. 288-308: 290: 'Taken together, in 1939 there were 40 research libraries in what is now Germany. In 1945, 29 were located in Western Germany. Out of these 29 libraries, 12 were totally destroyed, 9 damaged and only 8 escaped intact or with minor damage like broken windows'.
- ¹⁴ Cf. Andrea Capaccioni et al (eds), *Le biblioteche*; Andrea Paoli, Giorgio De Gregori, Andrea Capaccioni, and Mauro Guerrini (eds), "*Salviamo la creatura*": protezione e difesa delle biblioteche italiane nella seconda guerra mondiale (Rome: Associazione Italiana Biblioteche, 2003).
- ¹⁵ On Nazi plundering see Cornelia Briel, *Beschlagnahmt, Erpresst, Erbeutet: NS-Raubgut, Reichstauschstelle und Preussische Staatsbibliothek zwischen 1933 und 1945* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2013). On acquisitions of former Jewish libraries, see Ernst-Otto Krawehl, 'Erwerbungen der "Bibliothek der Hansestadt Hamburg" aus ehemals jüdischen Besitz (1940 bis 1944)', *Auskunft*, 22 (2002), pp. 3-17.
- ¹⁶ Klaus Garber (ed.), *Das alte Buch im alten Europa: auf Spurensuche in den Schatzhäusern des alten Kontinents*, Munich, 2006.
- ¹⁷ Leroy H. Linder, 'Berlin: Its Postwar Library Resources', *Library Journal* 71 (15 October 1946), pp. 1439-43.
- ¹⁸ See Matthew Fishburn, *Burning Books* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 150-152.
- ¹⁹ Georg Leyh, *Die deutschen wissenschaftlichen Bibliotheken nach dem Krieg* (Tubingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1947).
- ²⁰ Leyh, p. 137.
- ²¹ For more on the so-called 'super museum' Irvine Wayne Sandholtz, *Prohibiting Plunder: How Norms Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 159; Konstantin Akinsha and Grigorii Kozlov, *Stolen Treasure: The Hunt for the World's Lost Masterpieces* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1995).

- ²² See Ingo Kolosa, 'Sag mir, wo die Bücher sind... Ein Beitrag zu 'Beutekulturgütern' und 'Trophäenkommissionen', in *ZfBB*, 42 (1995), pp. 339-45; cf. Herbert Güttler, *Beutekunst? Kritische Betrachtungen zur Kulturpolitik* (Bonn: Bouvier, 2010), p. 26. For more on these figures as well as figures originally published by the Soviet regime in 1957, see Elena Syssoeva, *Kunst im Krieg: eine völkerrechtliche Betrachtung der deutsch-russischen Kontroverse um kriegsbedingt verbrachte Kulturgüter*, Schriften zum Völkerrecht, 152 (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 2004), p. 54.
- ²³ Cf. Fishburn; for range of figures see Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, 'Twice Plundered, but Still Not Home from the War', *Solanus* 16 (2002), p. 41; Armin Hetzer, 'The Return from the States of the Former Soviet Union of Cultural Property Removed in the 1940s', *Solanus* 10 (1996), pp. 17-18.
- ²⁴ Cf. Fishburn, p. 152.
- ²⁵ Hans Joachim Koppitz, 'Verschlept, zerstört, zerteilt. Ein vorläufiger Überblick über die wissenschaftlichen Bibliotheken auf dem Gebiet der DDR nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg', *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* 67 (1992), pp. 383-96.
- ²⁶ Eileen Brown, 'War Damage, 1939-1945, and Post-war Reconstruction in Libraries of the Federal German Republic and England: a Comparison', *Journal of Librarianship* 7 (1975), pp. 288-308: 305.
- ²⁷ Cf. Brown, p. 298.
- ²⁸ Cf. Koppitz, p. 384.
- ²⁹ Cf. Brown, p. 296.
- ³⁰ Cf. Koppitz, p. 384.
- ³¹ Cf. Fishburn, p. 152.
- ³² Lester K. Born, 'The Archives and Libraries of Postwar Germany', *American Historical Review* 56 (October 1950), p. 46; cf. Fishburn, p. 152.
- ³³ Cf. Koppitz, p. 384.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 385.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 385.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 386-87.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 388-90.
- ³⁸ Cf. Koppitz, pp. 391-95.
- ³⁹ Cf. Koppitz, pp. 393-94.
- ⁴⁰ Cf. Koppitz, p. 395.
- ⁴¹ Jan L. Alessandrini, *Bombs on Books. Germany's Lost Libraries of WWII*.

War and post-war trauma: lessons for cultural heritage today?

Claudia Fabian

This is a personal reflection from the Bavarian State Library—a hundred years after an event, which even today is so thought-provoking that a special conference has been dedicated to it.

The power of a lost library in the civilised world

German troops occupied Leuven, a town in neutral Belgium, only three weeks after the beginning of the First World War. On 25/26 August 1914, the ‘flames of Leuven’, torched by German soldiers, destroyed the hundreds of thousands of books, along with the library catalogue, the building, paintings and the furniture of a library that had been a central university library since 1636. The reaction was swift and devastating. As the French academic Frédéric Masson stated, this attack excluded Germany from civilization. A second similar outcry followed, when three weeks later, on 19 September 1914, German troops destroyed Reims Cathedral. Even the German military government reacted more or less immediately: a librarian, Dr Richard Oehler (a cousin of Nietzsche), was appointed to protect Belgian libraries as centres of cultural heritage. Oehler remained in Brussels until November 1918, and had an important role in the post-war negotiations with Leuven.

The destruction of Leuven’s library made its way into the Treaty of Versailles, where Article 247 stated that Germany had to make restitution to the University of Leuven for ‘manuscripts, incunabula, printed books, maps and objects of the value equal to what has been destroyed through the fire’. The Article even gave a timetable: ‘within three months after the request’. Three months became more than six years. The restitution came to an end around 1924, and slowly ran on until 1927. The final documents in the archives of the Bavarian State Library¹ already begin to show a new nationalist language, a questioning of the very restitution. A contemporary reader can glimpse the foreshadowing of even more dreadful events to come.

The symbolism of Leuven and its impact was tragically deepened by a second destruction of the Library in 1940 by German soldiers, at the beginning of the Second World War. We can ask ourselves why this second destruction was not followed by the same outcry as the first: was it because of a lack of the same interest in the newly assembled collection, which had not been in place long enough to build up a tradition, or was it a consequence of the overall disaster of the first half of the twentieth century which entangled tradition, history, culture and people everywhere—an experience where only despair and silence seemed an appropriate response?

In 2014, in his commemorative address on the centenary of the destruction, the President of Germany stressed that 209 civilians had been killed and 650 had been

deported. “Books are one thing, people another”, he commented². It surprises people of my generation that the loss of a library or a cathedral provokes greater emotion than human suffering and loss. But here we are in the realm of symbols, memorials. Both libraries and cathedrals are intrinsically linked to people; they serve people, network with people, and attract them with a single or multiple purposes. In this way, they transcend the individual to become a focal point for a community, for a society: they can even reach further than a nation, implying a community of values, ideas and ideals. Deploring the loss of a library involves grieving for the loss of so many people, their thoughts and their individuality in a sense of collective mourning.

Libraries are both *Gedächtnisorte* and *Gedächtnishorte*³, places and treasure houses of memory. During recent centuries libraries are perceived as places which make cultural heritage in a broad sense meaningful for research, for a national, regional or local community, and today for a growing broader audience. We are familiar with thinking about libraries as places of continuity, of tradition, of maintaining and keeping alive the fruits of thought and creativity. As such, they play an important role in the collective memory of their constituencies, a role which is celebrated in numerous anniversaries.⁴ For Leuven, the appalling destruction of its library led to a new interest in its history and to a greater awareness of the unique nature of its collection. Leuven teaches us with impressive force that tradition only exercises its value when past and present promise a future of relevance and importance, when history is perceived as a continuous, unthreatened stream towards the future, towards ‘immortality’. This was cruelly interrupted for Leuven in 1914, and yet there was a powerful institutional identity, which pressed for continuity.

Restitution

The professional diplomatic approach: libraries and librarians

In autumn 1919, Belgium started the process of restitution for the Leuven library. In Germany, the Prussian Ministry of Culture was involved by the Foreign Office. Librarians were needed and were sought as experts. The German librarians’ group was headed by Dr Richard Oehler, and comprised famous German librarians: Fritz Milkau (Breslau University Library), Professor Dr Wilhelm Degering (Preußische Staatsbibliothek Berlin) and Dr Emil Gratzl (Bavarian State Library, Munich). They first met in Berlin at the beginning of 1920, and then travelled to Brussels where they met Louis Stainier, the Belgian responsible for the restitution, and Professor de Ghellinck, a specialist in manuscripts and incunables. This was a diplomatically difficult meeting. The German librarians, coming from different backgrounds, feared for their collections. Dr Oehler was considered a friend of Belgium. These men were far from having the kind of easy co-operation and ongoing communication which unites our libraries today. There was unfamiliarity with speaking foreign languages and travel was politically and practically complex, uncommon and expensive.

It was really by chance—but not atypical for librarians—that the people who formed this group saw themselves not as enemies but as colleagues and specialists in their own fields. They started working on a common project, as we do today in so many contexts. A project gains its own dynamic and character, each party invests its pride and

professionalism, and tries to get the maximum benefit from it. This was true both for Germans and Belgians involved in this restitution project. The papers I have only been able to browse in our archives show that the restitution was handled with a high degree of professionalism and serious purpose, and also with increasing pleasure in meeting one another and travelling together to inspect the different collections. A thorough appraisal of these documents which illustrate a unique cultural process and the constitution of a new collection which—tragically—was to last only for two decades would allow interesting insights into a short period of German-Belgian history between the two World Wars.

Appraisal of content

The really difficult and scene-setting event was the first meeting. It was vital that the German group found the right words and that they were accepted by the Belgians as sincere and trustworthy. The carefully prepared report of this meeting conducted in French began by stating that the German experts had the best intentions and were ready to follow Leuven's wishes, a not unreasonable attitude for representatives of a defeated country. They then stated that they were sufficiently familiar with research to understand and appreciate fully the losses occurred. This was the important step from politics to the appraisal of professional librarians. The statement contained the key word for a university library collection: 'research'. The Belgian representatives stressed that in regard to the modern collection it was not their intention to deprive German libraries in order to reconstitute their own.

The Belgian Louis Stainier explained why the loss of the Leuven Library was so particular: because of its historic age, and because of the loss of those traditions which had been piously cultivated throughout centuries: a perfect description of what makes a library a unique cultural asset. This was not just a loss for Leuven and Belgium but a loss for the world, a loss for humanity. This sounds familiar to us today in the echoes of many recent initiatives, among them UNESCO's Memory of the World. The two aspects of the collection were then differentiated: the modern and the historical. A major difficulty in establishing the Library's contents was the loss of the library catalogue. An important lesson for all libraries is that there is nothing better than the library catalogue to understand what the Belgians then called the 'physiognomy' of the library. The catalogue can also serve to build up a collection again quickly from scratch.

An important topic of conversation at the first meeting was the value of the lost library. It was compared with the library in Darmstadt, a library whose value had been assessed in 1902. The Darmstadt library comprised 454,000 books, and was one of the nine biggest libraries in Germany, but it was not a university library. This value, although considered somehow too high for Leuven (with only ca. 300,000 books), was nevertheless agreed upon. This sum was the target value of what would be bought for Leuven. The restitution was intelligently handled through a contract between the Reich and the Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels, signed on 15 April 1920. Both Leuven and Germany profited from the deal, and the antiquarian book trade flourished.⁵ A second approach, less feasible today, was the acquisition of the private libraries of university professors. For publications connected with the University of Leuven, an extensive pre-war exchange programme involving 458 institutions allowed the reconstitution of a substantial part of this material which was so particularly precious for the particular identity of this university.

The reconstruction of the cultural heritage

Irreplaceable were the manuscripts (somewhere between 200 and 800⁶), the incunables (number unknown), 30 professorial libraries, 158 portraits of Leuven professors and collections of maps, medals and bindings. Stainier described the collection as ‘a family collection’, intimately linked to teaching and research at Leuven. It was clear that no equivalents could be found for the manuscripts. In terms of restitution, the Belgians asked for Belgian manuscripts or manuscripts of particular usefulness for Belgium, which could also imply manuscripts in the collections of German libraries. There was some disagreement on this issue. The German representatives argued that manuscripts should not be displaced, and that their value and interest was always more at an international rather than a national level—a correct and astute argument.

The Germans identified manuscripts which were available on the market, and indeed they were very successful with this approach. An agreement was reached that German library collections would not be touched, as an acceptable solution for the academic world. Over the following years, the group⁷ visited numerous libraries—examining manuscripts, incunabula, individual items offered by sellers and private collections, among which that of Freiherr von Fürstenberg-Herdringen being particularly important.⁸ Of the 50 private libraries given to Leuven after the war, 37 came from Germany.

Duplicates

Lists of duplicates for historical holdings, and, in particular, for incunables in German libraries were required and prepared. The books were sold for Leuven at the market value. This was also financially very advantageous to German libraries. It was a highly organized and detailed system; German libraries offered and Leuven selected. In this way, the new library collection was built up with care and discernment, on the dual principles of what had been in the collection before, and what would be useful for the collection in the future.

An important lesson from Leuven is the uniqueness of a manuscript, a copy of an historical printed book, of a collection as a whole. Immediately after the library was destroyed in 1914, Henry Guppy from the John Rylands Library in Manchester issued a first call for books to be donated to Leuven. Ever since, we have heard this desperate call after numerous library disasters. This call is an understandable humanitarian approach: it is a signal, expressing a wish for a fresh start. Dealing with this kind of help is a huge task in itself though: not everything is useful, and books alone do not help, since a library is more than a random quantity of books.

The Janus face of war: BSB manuscripts lost in Leuven

The Bavarian State Library also shared in the distress for the loss of the Leuven library in an unspectacular but characteristic way. Two Latin medieval manuscripts, Clm 19134 and Clm 3873, had also been destroyed in the flames at Leuven. These Canon law texts had been sent to Leuven on 7 July 1914 for the use of Fr Ghellinck. Only three weeks before war, this form of international inter-library lending of manuscripts was quite normal in the academic world: ‘for research purposes’ was a powerful argument. Today,

manuscripts only travel abroad for exhibitions, and great care and investment are needed. Internationally agreed procedures and stringent demands make this an exceptional procedure.

Remember-remind!

Through their collections, libraries conserve and transmit the past in order to give it a new value in making it relevant for the present and future. As buildings, libraries have a physical presence; in active libraries, there is vitality and life. We see an increasing interest in historical locations and their libraries. They are visited by tourists, for whom they are eager to create and communicate a library atmosphere which is not only composed of rooms and furniture, but of real books to convey authenticity, emotion and ambiance. Books and libraries not only speak to our minds, but also to all of our senses. Libraries have narrative power in the same way as churches, museums, monuments.

What constitutes a library? It consists of collections of books of different origins, individual libraries of collectors and institutional libraries: the collection of a library is never a random gathering of books. The collection grows by choice and agreement, and thus allows insights into the history of the institution, its links to history in general and to the history of science and culture in particular. Provenance studies looking into the details of collections are very much on the agenda in today's humanities. We may ask ourselves how much our libraries of today still reflect the history of collecting, and what our strategies for collection building are.

A library's 'fingerprint' is usually in rare, single or very valuable unique items. They have a dual role: they are a monument—*Denkmal*—inviting us to note the value, impact and uniqueness of this material, but they are also a—*Mahnmal*—a warning against oblivion, reminding us of dangerous situations in the past and the risk of loss of identity. In the loss of its collection, Leuven lost the physical presence of this tradition, which has gone forever. Nevertheless, the fact of the restitution, and the care with which it was carried through, has ensured that Leuven's past is extremely well described, documented, reflected upon, and that it maintains a research and cultural impact. With a newly-created collection, a new tradition was born, one that related to the past by the way it was defined and formed, but which also had a new history, a new context. Taking in collections from elsewhere—private, institutional, religious libraries—and integrating them into a meaningful bigger context is an important task and adds to the impact of the library.

Even today, despite our awareness of cultural heritage, we cannot protect every library at risk. In such situations, we are reminded of the importance of a comprehensive library catalogue, a careful, scholarly description of the collection, transcriptions, exhibition catalogues and historical essays. A library catalogue is not only for access and use; it also has a descriptive power as the document which best describes a library's content independently of its physical existence. Today, digitization is an important asset in retaining the memory of documents no longer in the collection. Collected books show a lot of individual characteristics: traces of use, stamps, etiquettes, ex libris, signatures and bindings. Before discarding a library, taking digital evidence of these marks ensures the description and maintenance of some characteristic individual features. The same is true for documents based on use: exhibition catalogues, readers' registers, correspondence,

etc. These should be collected and maintained by a regionally or thematically responsible central library or archive.

Looking at library collections—and remembering Leuven—we immediately appreciate that one location is not enough, and that we profit from a multiplicity of collecting points, their different strengths and contexts, national and international, domestic and foreign. This is particularly true in the case of printed books—we welcome the existence of multiple copies, and increasingly appreciate the copy specific features of early printed books. It is not only a question of transmission of texts but of materiality.

With the digitization of physical collections, and the increase in born-digital collections, we are able to transcend spatial (and temporal) limitations in accessing collections. We live in extremely stimulating times for new—immaterial—collection-building. The potential of digitization with the benefits of time-independent ubiquity and democratic access for all, the challenges of dematerialization, loss of uniqueness and identity building, might even be an incentive to let go of physical objects once digitized and long-term archived. Today, something that is not present on the Internet can be thought not to exist.

We are becoming more aware of how much of our born-digital content is daily at risk: hidden on local servers, badly-catalogued or simply not catalogued at all in repositories, threatened by software changes, without long-term preservation and easily discarded without regard for the considerable investment. Careful collecting and description, long-term care for databases and research projects and appraisal of ‘grey material’ are on today’s agendas. The care for our collections is now dual: physical and digital.

Leuven makes us remember that libraries are places *of* history and *in* history: they have a birth and a passing, foundation and destruction, growth and decline, acquisition and loss. It is impossible to keep everything—something that was true in the past as well as in today’s digital world. It is not only impossible, it would also be senseless. Keeping books and caring for digital content and access constitutes a living collection on which to work. Libraries are therefore places for people, and we should gratefully recognize how much libraries owe to all those librarians, researchers and users who keep them functioning, today as much as in the past.

A hundred years is such a short time in library history.

Notes

- ¹ Archival documents of the Bavarian State Library concerning Leuven: BayHStA, Generaldirektion Bayer. Staatl. Bibliothek 552/553/554/555.
- ² <http://www.bundespraesident.de/SharedDocs/Reden/DE/Joachim-Gauck/Reden/2014/08/140804-Gedenken-Loewen.html>.
- ³ Osterhammel, Jürgen, *Vergangenheiten. Über die Zeithorizonte der Geschichte*. Rede gehalten am 17. Juli 2014 im Konrad-Adenauer-Haus anlässlich des 60. Geburtstags von Frau Bundeskanzlerin Angela Merkel. <https://www.cdu.de/system/tdf/media/dokumente/rede-osterhammel-berliner-gespraech-spezial.pdf?file=1>.
- ⁴ Fabian, Claudia, *Institutionelles autoreferentielles Feiern: das 450-jährige Jubiläum der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek als geschichtliche Herausforderung*. In: *Information, Innovation, Inspiration: 450 Jahre Bayerische Staatsbibliothek*, München: Saur, 2008, pp. 93-125
- ⁵ Einkaufsgesellschaft Löwen GmbH.

- ⁶ Figures were—as often in these contexts—floating, in the Versailles treaty, 300 manuscripts, 1000 incunables and 300.000 books were mentioned. An evaluation of Wilhelm Degering (which for diplomacy reasons was not made publicly available) put the manuscript figures at 85 (medieval), 200 modern, the incunables about 350, 400, the books around 230.000. In September 1940 a list of Oehler drawn for Leidinger states that there are 245 manuscripts in Leuven (19 saved), 675 incunables (1 saved), 700.000-800.000 books among them 10.500 restituted by Germany.
- ⁷ Dr Georg Leidinger, head of manuscripts in the Bavarian State library, was part of this group. His diary (*Leidingeriana* III.b.1) is in the library's archival collections.
- ⁸ Among them 59 manuscripts from St Jacques in Liège.

The case of Jesuit libraries in Qing China (17th-18th centuries)

Noël Golvers

The story of the Jesuit libraries in China and Beijing, direct witnesses of the intense missionary and scholarly presence of the Society of Jesus in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is the story of several successive partial destructions and tentative temporary restorations, until the first decades of the nineteenth century.¹ At that time almost all the regional Jesuit residences or colleges with their libraries, such as Hangzhou and Shanghai had already been lost, mostly by destruction, leaving only a handful of books in Beijing. Complete disappearance had also been the fate of the Jesuit library of the *Colégio Madre de Deus* in Macau—in a certain sense the ‘mother-college’ of all the Chinese residences: its holdings were sold in one day (June 1762), and left behind almost no traces.² Of the last three Jesuit collections left in Beijing about 1800, that of the Portuguese ‘Eastern residence’ called *Dongtang* was destroyed by a fire in 1812, leaving only some 9 books. In the early 1820s followed the rich library of the French residence, ‘Beitang’, which was buried—to save it from confiscation by the Chinese authorities—in the Christian cemetery of Zhengfusi, but literally rotted in the ground. What remained ca. 1820 was the collection of the Portuguese college *Nantang*, also the oldest one, the direct successor of the residence Matteo Ricci had bought in Beijing in 1601. It was saved thanks to the secret transfer to the Russian diplomatic-ecclesiastical mission of Peking, which protected what remained of this prestigious collection, and entrusted it in 1860—with the exception of a series of mathematical books sent to the Observatory of Pulkovo—St. Petersburg³—to Mgr. Mouly, CM, of the new Lazarist mission in Peking, which re-used the old name of the French residence, Beitang.⁴ The Lazarist Fathers not only accepted, but also continued and extended the collection, until it was confiscated in 1949 by Maoist troops; afterwards, these books were brought to the National Library of Beijing, where they are until now, stored in boxes.⁵

All these libraries and book collections were the result of a systematic policy of acquisition based on a ‘master plan’, in 1611 developed by the Jesuit Niccolo Longobardo (1565-1655), which intended to provide to the missionary-scholars a ‘complete’ or at least representative Western library in Beijing, ‘flanked’ by reference libraries in some 20 other residences spread over China, all together laying the basis for an ambitious program of translation and propagation, research and teaching, the so-called “western learning” (*xixue*), summarized in the term “apostolate of the press”.⁶ An investigation of the surviving evidence—both books and archival documents—has demonstrated that this acquisition had been continued until the very last decades of the eighteenth century, though not as a linear process, but with ups and downs, and several interruptions following the irregular dynamics of the mission itself, the policy of the Chinese (central or provincial) authorities towards the mission (e.g. persecutions), and internal Chinese affairs (such as rebellions).

Rather than describing the different steps and scenes of the process of construction, decay and destruction, I would like to present in this contribution some elements to show

'*what we really lost*'. Therefore I start from a **reconstruction**, the only way to guess the real volume and variety of these extensive collections, and the scale of the losses. Even if the number of '10.000' books in a report of a Korean visitor to the French residence in Peking in 1720 is only speculative, other indications give a clear idea about the scale of the losses. To mention only some of these indications: of the 330 separate titles, which Nicolas Trigault and Johan Schreck Terrentius bought—during their European journey (1616-1618)⁷—in one day in December 1616 in Antwerp, only nine are preserved until now, i.e. less than 3%, even though these belonged to the 'central' collection of the Portuguese college (Xitang, later Nantang in Beijing). This very high rate of loss may be due to the fact that they were part of the oldest layers of this collection which arrived in Macao in 1619 and in Beijing in 1625. On the other hand, it should be said that more than 500, often composite volumes of this oldest collection are still extant, recognizable by the physical characteristics of this original nucleus, viz. the red Moroccan binding, made by Horace Cardon in Lyon ca. 1616 and the personal coat of arms (*supralibros*) of Pope Paul V, a member of the Borghese family, which combines the well-known dragon with the papal insignia, a tiara and St. Peter's keys. Moreover these are all the mere residue of the '7,000 Western books', which according to contemporary Chinese sources were once brought to China.⁸

Another indication of the scale of losses dates back to almost one century later: of the 11 Western books which we know the Chinese Emperor Kangxi (1652-1722) offered to Kilian Stumpf, SJ in 1711—in all probability as a (Chinese) New Year present—only 6 (or 54%) are preserved. Indications such as these suggest that the number of 4,100 extant items is only a fraction of the total of books once present in the Jesuit libraries in China.

In order to **calculate** these losses, and to better understand what had been the real holdings of these collections and their impact, we should use other approaches than only the extant books. Therefore I used 3 types of **archival testimonies**:

(a) quite naturally, and first of all, the rare extant **inventories**: one of the private library of Bishop Diogo Valente, SJ (1568-1633), who died in Macao in 1633, of which we have a complete inventory.⁹ As after his death his books were added to the Jesuit collection of the local *Colégio Madre de Deus*, which was publicly sold in one day in 1762.¹⁰ Nothing of this survives, except probably one book, which arrived in Beijing, namely a copy of João Sardinha Mimosa, *Relacion de la real tragicomedia con que los Padres de la Compañia de Jesus en su Colegio de S. Anton de Lisboa recibieron...Felipe II de Portugal*, with the inscription: "*Do Bispo de Japão 1621*"¹¹. Yet an analysis of this 'room collection' of 290 titles is very revealing for what a bishop in the Portuguese periphery needed, and really used, and what he certainly did not use, such as books on Western science, except a medieval medical work of Mesua.

Another personal collection is that of Jean-François Foucquet, SJ (1665-1741), who made in a hurry—when he received the order to leave Beijing as soon as possible—a preliminary inventory of the ca. 300 Western books he had '*in cubiculo*' and which he had collected with his private funds, and by gift etc.¹² The profile of this library, mainly collected between 1710 and 1720 is almost the reverse of that of the bishop of Macao: it consists mainly of books on contemporary mathematics, pure and applied, including especially astronomy, but also Bible exegesis and esotericism; the latter was in line with his personal, if not idiosyncratic and certainly highly controversial research project, searching

for echoes of an alleged Proto-Revelation hidden in ancient, native Chinese sources, through an in-debt-reading of Chinese Classics and their commentaries, classified under the term ‘figurism’.¹³ A comparison of both collections immediately reveals also how *different* Jesuit book collections were, and how various their holdings, shaped in accordance to the personal interests and commitments of their ‘owners’.

Another characteristic is the relatively up-to-date character of these collections, which fits the endlessly repeated request for new, recent (“*novissimi*”; “*recentissimi*”; “*moderni*”) books, returning as a refrain throughout the Jesuit correspondence from China up to the very end of the eighteenth century. This we also recognize in some other episcopal libraries from Peking, which were afterwards incorporated in the college library and can partially be recognized thanks to inscriptions and stamps, such as that of Policarpo de Sousa, SJ (1697-1757), bishop of Beijing (98 items) and that of Alexandre de Gouveia, OFM (1751-1808), the last of his successors, a Franciscan who resided in the Portuguese college between 1782 and his death in 1808. Of his collection 215 titles survive, which reflects the typical ‘accents’ of a scholar, educated within the context of the Enlightenment at the College of Coimbra, after Pombal’s institutional reforms.¹⁴

The variety of composition and the different individual selections and focuses in these and other personal room collections accounted for—after they were posthumously assimilated into the general library of the college or residence—the heterogeneity and bibliographical wealth of these libraries, confirming amongst the Chinese literati the conviction that one could find in the Western libraries of Beijing an answer on every possible question, substantially contributing to the social and intellectual prestige of the Jesuits and their mission.¹⁵

(b) While—strictly speaking—these inventories witness only the *presence* of books on the shelves, a second type of indication I use for this reconstruction demonstrates that these were not ‘sleeping’ nor ‘show’ collections (although this aspect is also present, as we will see *infra*), but to a high degree ‘*livres actifs*’.¹⁶ I refer to the many textual quotations and numerical references spread over almost all the letters and manuscript treatises the Jesuits produced in China and sent to Europe. Although it can in principle not be denied that some of these textual quotations are in fact reading reminiscences stretching back as far as the European education of the Jesuits, and other citations derive from private lists of reading annotations (“*adversaria*”) or from intermediary sources, the massive body of mostly precise and even literal quotations, with their numerical references—in my documentation now totaling approximately 1,400 different titles—were derived from a *direct consultation* of the books quoted. In the first place for their precise and mostly literal form; in the second for the many other ‘authorial’ references to the way the Jesuits ‘worked’ with these texts, by summarizing, collating, excerpting, reviewing, etc., often showing how readers became writers, either for a European public (in the domains of science and polemics) or the Chinese (science and religion) and finally, also for the battery of multi-language dictionaries (Latin-French; French-English; Latin-Chinese, etc.), which would be incomprehensible and senseless, unless we assume that they used them, when reading the books in 8 different European languages in their Chinese libraries in China. All together these references and quotations constitute an impressive corpus of testimonies, which can only be understood as the reflection of physically present books, which were on hand for the authors at the moment and place of authorship, in a visible, direct relation with their own research and activities.

(c) A third and last instrument in the reconstruction are the lists of *books they 'wanted'* to acquire and read, which we find not only in several "want lists" (Golvers 2012, 45-87), but also in many passages spread over the correspondence between China and Europe: although we often cannot demonstrate that these books really were sent and arrived in China, these titles certainly speak of the real interests, and (more than once) urgent 'needs' of the Jesuit missionaries in China.

From this combined evidence—i.e. books extant and this threefold archival documentation—it emerges also that many books *circulated in several copies*, and the libraries—even in Peking—preferred to acquire their own copies although mutual consultation, borrowing and exchange between the French and the Portuguese libraries is well documented. Many titles are also present in consecutive editions; many multi-volume books also were incomplete, or re-constituted with volumes of different editions; all this is the consequence of the different—parallel and cumulative—ways of acquiring books, of which many had originally been the supernumerary 'doubles and triples' in ecclesiastical, scholarly and other private libraries spread over (especially) Catholic Europe, which arrived for a 'second' life on the shelves of Jesuit libraries in China. This corresponds to the 'policy of acquisition' suggested by some Jesuits from China and followed by many 'provincial *procuratores missionum*'. These procurators had the not easy assignment of acquiring these books, with their manifold specializations within the limits of their annual budget. For that reason, looking for book donations, including complimentary copies, dedicated by their authors—as an '*eleemosyna*' (i.e. an alms) to the mission—was therefore a frequent practice. This explains also the presence of many *book inscriptions*, either owner's names, library marks or other annotations, which 'cover' about 52% of the extant books.

As a complement to the fragmentary information on these collections, I refer to *two source texts* I can mention here as mere examples, but which give a coherent and 'lively' picture of the life of a particular Jesuit library in China:

(a) a long letter of 1732 by Antoine Gaubil, in which he makes a '*tour d'horizon*' of the stacks of the French Jesuit library in Beijing (as far as Western books are concerned), section after section, apparently on the occasion of a kind of stocktaking, referring to the titles that were on hand, mentioning those which were 'missing' or worn, and the desiderata;¹⁷

(b) the other is a long letter of Cyr de Contancin from Canton in 1730, now in the *Observatoire de Paris*, in which he reflects with his correspondent in Paris, Etienne Souciet (1671-1744), the librarian of the Jesuit *Collège de Clermont* (Louis-le-Grand) in Paris, on which titles to buy, which was the best acquisition in terms of price and quality for various domains.

Arriving at the end of my overview: an evident 'lacuna' in our evidence is the *Chinese books*, which from the outset constituted a parallel collection, either within the same room facing the Western books—as Matteo Ricci's personal library, in the Nanking residence library in 1616,¹⁸ and one century later in Foucquet's library, with 1,100 Sinica,¹⁹ or in a separate room. While the Western books were the basis for the Jesuits' teaching and preaching and their Chinese publications, the Chinese books were the basis of their European publications on 'Sinological' questions (history; chronology;

geography, medicine, philosophy, etc.). Both together (i.e. European and Chinese libraries) constitute—over two centuries—the ‘working libraries’ and the ‘work field’, where the meeting between Classical Chinese culture and Western humanistic culture really happened. On this occasion I can only show the general lines, but the whole process of ‘confrontation’ and its manifold and various forms needs to be described through a detailed analysis of copies and translations of individual titles (e.g. Agricola’s *De re metallica*, the basis of a recently re-discovered Chinese translation / paraphrase;²⁰ Only this will show what we lost, and what we still can recuperate of these testimonies of what was a unique ‘project’ of cross-cultural meeting, unique in its aims, its extension and in its abundant documentation.

Notes

- ¹ Golvers 2012.2013.2015.
- ² Di Fiore 1995, p. 71.
- ³ Struve 1860, p. V.
- ⁴ Verhaeren 1949, pp. XXIX–XXX.
- ⁵ Cummins 1967.
- ⁶ Bettray 1955, p. 181 ff.
- ⁷ See the (partial) report in E. Lamalle 1940.
- ⁸ On the number of “7,000” mentioned as a ‘topos’ in the Chinese sources, see, e.g., the publications of Mao Ruifang, 2006
- ⁹ Golvers 2006.
- ¹⁰ Di Fiore 1995, p. 71.
- ¹¹ Verhaeren 1949, no. 3864.
- ¹² Golvers 2010.
- ¹³ von Collani 1985.
- ¹⁴ Beckmann 1968.
- ¹⁵ Golvers 2015.
- ¹⁶ Julia 1997.
- ¹⁷ Dehergne 1669.
- ¹⁸ Dudink 1996.
- ¹⁹ Standaert 2015.
- ²⁰ Vogel 2015.

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The destruction of the Library of Alexandria as myth and metaphor

Colin Higgins

The Library of Alexandria has few equals as myth or metaphor. The application of history spoils both—the myth fractures and the metaphor crumbles for lack of foundation. Rubbing away the fictions and wish fulfilment leaves almost nothing. The Library, both in reality and in the imagination, has largely been constructed upon speculation and presumption. This paper will argue for a sceptical reading of the history of the Library of Alexandria, and question the metonymous use of its destruction. It mines the earliest descriptions of the institution to establish what, if any, facts we may claim of the Library, and shows how accounts of its end have often served as a colourful shorthand for an author's prejudices. Modern assumptions about the destruction of the Library of Alexandria are tested against ancient texts, to show how re-imaginings of the library have been mapped onto contemporary concerns. While not wishing to underplay the overlapping tragedies of library destruction, my paper warns the academic and library communities against historical misrepresentation and invalid comparison.

Sources

The city of Alexandria was founded in 331 BC on the site of the Egyptian port of Rhacotis. It was one of approximately twenty Greek colonies in Africa, Anatolia, the Middle East, and Central Asia founded by, and bearing the name of, Alexander the Great. From the start it was intended to be the new centre of Greek power and culture in Egypt, taking the place of the earlier Greek colony at Naucratis. This claim was realized by Alexander's childhood friend Ptolemy, who claimed the city, and Alexander's body, in the dynastic struggle following Alexander's death in 323. For 250 years, Ptolemy and his successors ruled an empire stretching from Libya to Palestine. But it was a slowly shrinking realm. Under ever-increasing Roman influence, Alexandria fell under full Roman control in 80 BC. The fabled Cleopatra VII, last of the Ptolemies, died in 30 BC.

For our knowledge of the physical structures of Ptolemaic Alexandria, we rely almost entirely on ancient sources, as nearly all the wreckage of the Ptolemaic city is underground or underwater. We can only speculate where the Library might have been. Contrary to episodic news reports, Alexandria's ancient Library has never been located. To complicate matters, authors ancient and modern tend to conflate several different buildings and institutions: a site dedicated to the Muses, a warehouse for books by the sea, the temple of Serapis, and an institute founded by Emperor Claudius. As for archaeological evidence of the Library's contents, no papyrus fragment has ever been found in any dig in the city.¹ The literary evidence is not much more substantial. Not a single contemporary description of the Library during the Ptolemaic dynasty (305 BC to 30 BC) has come down to us. The later sources are contradictory, and frequently copy, or respond to, one another. Greek

and Roman sources are both silent on the Library's structure, contents, organization, and what scholars actually did there. The oft-repeated descriptions of scholarly activity, and associations between the Library and major intellectual figures of antiquity, are drawn from Byzantine sources and medieval manuscript glosses.

The earliest post-Ptolemaic account is that of Strabo, the Greek geographer and historian, who travelled to Egypt in about 25 BC, accompanying his friend and the new Roman prefect Aelius Gallus. In his *Geography*, which survives almost complete, Strabo described what he called a Mouseion, which may or may not have been coterminous with the Library, in two lines of Greek: 'The Museum is a part of the palaces. It has a public walk and a place furnished with seats, and a large hall, in which the men of learning, who belong to the Museum, take their common meal. This community possesses also property in common; and a priest, formerly appointed by the kings, but at present by Caesar, presides over the Museum' (*Geography* 17.1.8, tr. Hamilton and Faulkner). Strabo did not mention books or shelves, and it is unclear whether, in the Greek of this time, the word Mouseion had any educational associations. In Classical and Hellenistic Greek, a Mouseion (from which our 'Museum' is derived) was a shrine to the Muses. Though associated with poetry and music, only later did it have an explicitly educational connotation—it is possible that this association itself originates in Strabo.

Strabo stayed in Alexandria for four years, and described the city's temples, other major buildings, and geographical features in some detail (*Geography* 17.1.6-13). Yet he never once wrote about a library. Nor did the Graeco-Roman historian Plutarch, in his account of a visit to Alexandria in the late first century (*Quaestiones Convivales* 5.5.1). Nor did Appian, a Graeco-Roman historian who was actually born and raised in Alexandria, writing about the city in the 150s AD (*The Civil Wars* 2.13.89-90). Two hundred years after Strabo, the Greek rhetorician Athenaeus, satirizing the chattering classes, wrote that there was no point in describing Alexandria's books and libraries, since they were in all men's memories already (*The Deipnosophists* 5.203D). Was the Library—or perhaps libraries, since Athenaeus uses the plural—already a thing of the past? Was it so well known that nothing needed to be said about it? Or was it even then a semi-mythical reference point for comparison and contrast? Whatever Athenaeus's intention might have been, his subject was not the Library itself, but its supposed benefactor, Ptolemy II Philadelphus, son of the dynasty's founder. By the time of writing, almost five hundred years had since passed since Ptolemy's enthronement.

The Library's Destruction

Without a doubt, Alexandria had a significant library. It would be absurd to deny it. Alexander had been tutored by Aristotle. Hellenistic culture was an intellectual and literary one. Pergamum's library, linked to the Alexandrine institution in manuscript sources from late antiquity onwards,² is connected to its Museum in the substantial archaeological remains. A second-century AD papyrus fragment found at the Egyptian archaeological site of Oxyrhynchus lists Alexandrine library directors of the second and third centuries BC.³ A couple of Ptolemaic inscriptions record men as being *ton en toi mouseioi sitoumenon atelon* (those fed in the Museum and exempt from taxation).⁴ Another inscription, this time in Latin, and discovered in the Greek city of Ephesus in western Anatolia, notes

that Tiberius Claudius Balbillus, prefect of Egypt from AD 55 to 59 (Tacitus, *Annals* 13.22) was director of the 'ALEXANDRINA BYBLIOTHECE'.⁵ Many Greek cities had libraries. In the Greek-speaking world outside Egypt, archaeological remains of this period show the existence of libraries in gymnasia at Athens, Kos, and Tauromenion, among other places. In the second century BC, the Greek historian Polybius wrote that: 'Inquiries from books may be made without any danger or hardship, provided only that one takes care to have access to a town rich in documents or to have a library near at hand' (*Histories* 12.27, tr. Paton). As one of the major centres of intellectual life of Hellenistic Greece, Alexandria would have been such a town. And, had it not existed, the Library of Alexandria could not have been destroyed. Most of the extant literary evidence about the Library concerns its destruction. But which destruction, of which library, to what end, and by whom? These questions are profoundly problematic. Below, I offer three popular accounts of the Library's end—and there are more than three—each of which seems to approach the destruction of the Library of Alexandria not as a subject for historical enquiry, but as a colourful hook for a broader historical narrative.

Julius Caesar, 47 BC

In Plutarch's *Life of Caesar*, written a century and a half after the event, the Library of Alexandria became an accidental victim of Caesar's intervention in the Alexandrine Civil War. During the Battle of the Nile, which secured the throne of Egypt for Caesar's ally and lover Cleopatra VII, Caesar seems to have ordered the burning of the Egyptian navy. This led to the combustion of the Alexandrine docks, and the spreading conflagration, in Plutarch's words 'destroyed the great library' (49.6). Plutarch's was not the first account of the battle, but it is the earliest to mention the destruction of a 'bibliothèque'. Somewhat earlier, the Stoic philosopher and dramatist Seneca, quoting a lost work of the historian Livy (*Periochae* 112) had written about the destruction of a collection of books ('libri'). Plutarch's biography, along with that of Suetonius, who does not mention the Library, was the most important account of Caesar's life in antiquity, and many later writers drew upon it.

As in Plutarch's time, biblioclasy in the modern age has strong associations with wartime: his is a simple and appealing story, and the earliest. It benefits from being familiar, since it has since been repeated by many authors, Roman, medieval, and modern, and visually stimulating—a vision helped by its melodramatic cinematic recreation.⁶ But its use as a metaphor and its metonymy with the Library of Congress in 1814, Bebelplatz in 1933, and the Iraqi National Library in 2003 is questionable, if not entirely invalid. Caesar's destruction, if it happened at all, was unintentional. Caesar was a soldier, but also an intellectual, and perhaps even a champion of libraries. Shortly before his murder, he arranged for the scholar and author Marcus Terentius Varro to found Rome's first public library, which was to contain both Greek and Latin works, carefully classified (Suetonius, *Life of Julius Caesar* 44). In any case, the Library may have escaped the Alexandrine flames. The early Christian author Paulus Orosius, who visited Alexandria, wrote that books were destroyed during the battle because they happened to be in a warehouse nearby the burning docks (*Historiarum Adversum Paganos Libri VII* 6.15.31). This echoes Galen, who claimed that books which arrived at Alexandria were put in storehouses first, not in the Library (*Commentary on the Epidemics of Hippocrates* 3).

Theodosius and Theophilus, 391 AD

A second account of the Library's destruction was popularized through its promotion by Edward Gibbon in his *Decline Fall of the Roman Empire*. Liberally interpreting early Christian historians such as Socrates of Constantinople (*Historia Ecclesiastica* 5.16) and Paulus Orosius (*Historiarum Adversum Paganos Libri VII* 6.15.32), Gibbon blames the Christian Emperor Theodosius and Patriarch Theophilus (Gibbon's (1897, p. 200) 'perpetual enemy of peace and virtue') for the destruction, carried out during their enthusiastic demolition the dissolving Empire's remaining pagan structures. Gibbon assumes, as earlier writers such as Ammianus Marcellinus had (*Res Gestae* 22.16.12-13), that the Library was within, or annexed to, Alexandria's Serapeum. This was the city's largest and most magnificent temple, built by Ptolemy III, and dedicated to Serapis, the syncretic Hellenistic-Egyptian god whom Ptolemy had made protector of Alexandria. This version of the Library's destruction appeals to Gibbon, and others of his age, because of their anti-clerical prejudices. It is depicted in the 2009 blockbuster flop *Agora* (dir. Alejandro Amenábar), in which the Library is portrayed as a secular and humanist institution par excellence. Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Egyptian Christians all study there in harmony. The sacking of the Library is the film's turning point. Contemporary debates pitting science against religion are thus pitched into fourth-century Alexandria, with the Library as a none-too-subtle totem of the director's hardened rationalism.

Arab Conquest, Mid-Seventh Century

In his *Account of Egypt*, Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi, a late twelfth-century historian and physician, notes a rumour that the Library was destroyed on the orders of the Caliph Omar, following his annexation of Egypt in the 640s. The lateness of the source, the speculative way Abdul proffers it, and Omar's reputation for tolerance, all cast doubt on the story. Several thirteenth-century authorities, and not insignificant ones, added colour to Abdul's rumour. But it is easy to imagine, six hundred years after the fact, that they merely accede to both historiographical convention and recent memory. Contemporary accounts describe the destruction of the library of the famous Bayt al-Hikma (House of Wisdom) during the Mongol sack of Baghdad in 1258, and Tripoli's Dar al-Ilm (House of Knowledge) when the Crusaders took the city in 1109. The account has no credit among historians, but in recent years it has circulated and propagated among those who see in Islam a threat to Judeo-Christian values and the Classical inheritance of the Western world. The first page of my Google search on the subject returned pseudo-historical descriptions on the websites *Gates of Vienna*, *American Thinker*, *Islam Watch*, and *4Freedoms*. The political prejudices of these sites, and their motives for ascribing the Library's destruction to militant Islam, are plain. But pietistically and historically, much separates the Caliph Omar from ISIS/Daesh. The Mosul Museum and the Library of Alexandria are not really comparable.

Why should we care?

Since we know so little about it, any comparison between the Library of Alexandria (or its destruction) and any modern foundation (or its destruction) should be regarded with scepticism. Most of the things we have compared the ancient library to are not like it at all. But because we want to believe so much about it, the *myth* of the library remains a powerful draw for a miscellany of television producers,⁷ utopians who dream of a universal library,⁸ and designers of contemporary library buildings.⁹ At one time or another, Google, Wikipedia, and Amazon have all been imagined to be constructing digital Libraries of Alexandria. Robert Darnton (2013), whose goals are always more eminently practical, has warned how “we can easily get carried away by utopian rhetoric about the library of libraries, the mother of all libraries, the modern Library of Alexandria.” But what’s wrong with getting carried away? What’s wrong with aspiration? What’s wrong with using a semi-mythical version of the Library of Alexandria as a metaphor? To conclude, I wish to give two reasons why the use of the Library of Alexandria as an over-imagined myth and shaky metaphor might be a danger to contemporary libraries.

In *The Concept of Mind*, the British ordinary language philosopher Gilbert Ryle (1949, p. 16) describes a first-time visitor to Oxford or Cambridge. His guide shows him ‘a number of colleges, libraries, playing fields, museums, scientific departments and administrative offices.’ The visitor is puzzled. “But where is the University?” he asks. Ryle calls this a category mistake, born of Cartesian thinking. The visitor assumes the University is a unit of physical infrastructure when, in fact, it is part of a complex, abstract category. Significant intellectual activity did take place in Ptolemaic Egypt. But it is a type of category mistake to think that it must have taken place in a single location. Knowledge communities are not like that. As described above, a number of ancient authors appear to have thought of the Library of Alexandria not as a single building, or a discrete collection, but as something less centralized and more organic. Indeed, second and third-century Roman authors actually mention other, smaller libraries in their writings (e.g. in the Portico of Octavia (Dio Cassius, *Roman History* 66.24.1) and the Temple of Augustus (Pliny, *Natural History* 12.94)). These libraries have no explicit connection with Alexandria’s Museum but were, co-incidentally, also supposedly destroyed by fire during the early period of Roman rule.

It is naïve to imagine a library to have been a physical embodiment of the sum of ancient learning. To do so betrays a teleological misreading of history and a reduction of cultural complexity. Imagining a single, perfect moment of intellectual knowledge is to misimagine libraries, and to risk overreach. Alexandria was no apogee of Greek culture and civilization, merely part of its history. Town planners and local governments have a habit of making this category mistake when, in consciously borrowing from a supposed vision of Alexandria, they build large libraries in the expectation they will provide a fulcrum for civic regeneration or a catalyst for cultural expression. Birmingham, Britain’s second city, opened a new public library at a cost of £189 million in 2013. Only a year later, they made half the staff of the new library redundant, while threatening branch libraries with closure. The library is currently asking users to donate their unwanted books, so perilous are their finances. Rumours persist that the Library of Birmingham is about to be privatized.

Finally, as the other chapters in this volume detail, many of the armed conflicts of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have caused libraries to be damaged or destroyed,

as has the turmoil preceding conflict, and following it. The burning of books for fuel is a repeated motif in Hollywood imaginings of dystopic reality. We have been primed to believe that the Library of Alexandria ended with a bang. But what if it ended with a whimper? It is possible, and in this author's opinion likely, that the library or libraries of ancient Alexandria literally crumbled away, a victim of the humid and variable littoral climate, budget cuts, and administrative disinterest. A project of the Ptolemies, a diminished Library of Alexandria could not survive being passed to the Romans, who had their own libraries to fund.

Perhaps it is as questionable as some of the other metaphors I have described, but this proposed history seems to have unhappy contemporary parallels. In thinking about libraries today, we should remember that not all libraries end in a conflagration. While not ignoring libraries in conflict zones, we should also worry about the public library closures happening in most countries of the English-speaking world. We should worry that some academic librarians, carried away by technological determinism, are neglecting their print collections, the core skills, and the values, of their profession. And we should worry about the steady reconfiguration, commercialization, and slow dismantling of all types of libraries. It is worth remembering that most library destructions are actually deaths by a thousand cuts.

Notes

- ¹ Carbonized papyri were allegedly discovered by a German engineer working at Kom el Dikka, site of Alexandria's Roman amphitheatre, in the nineteenth century. At the time, they were completely unreadable, and disposed of. The climate of Alexandria is not conducive to the preservation of papyri: though many papyrus fragments are found on an annual basis, these discoveries mostly take place in Egypt's deserts. See Empereur (2008, p. 77).
- ² And the somewhat unbelievable claim by one of Mark Anthony's enemies that in 41 BC "he had bestowed upon [Cleopatra] the libraries from Pergamum in which there were two hundred thousand volumes" (Plutarch, *Life of Antony*, 58.5, tr. Perrin).
- ³ P.Oxy.X 1241. Grenfell and Hunt (1914).
- ⁴ Fraser (1972, p. 317).
- ⁵ Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut (1923, p. 128).
- ⁶ As when Elizabeth Taylor tells Rex Harrison: "How dare you and the rest of your barbarians set fire to my library! Play conqueror all you want, Mighty Caesar! Rape, murder, pillage thousands, even millions of human beings! But neither you nor any other barbarian has the right to destroy one human thought!"
- ⁷ In the first episode of his hugely successful television series *Cosmos*, Carl Sagan claimed of the Library: "Here... began the intellectual adventure that has led us into space."
- ⁸ In a lecture to the Long Now Foundation, Brewster Kahle, founder of the Internet Archive, claimed of his project: "We're building the Library of Alexandria, version 2. We can one-up the Greeks!" Available at: <https://archive.org/details/brewsterkahlelongnowfoundation>.
- ⁹ Most obviously, in the hubris of Alexandria's new Bibliotheca Alexandrina, which opened in 2002. Despite its noble mission and extravagant cost, this metaphor in glass and stone remains a mostly-empty white elephant. It relies on donations for most of its acquisitions.

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What did the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina lose after 25/26th August 1992?

Ismet Ovčina

It is my honor and pleasure to bring greetings from Sarajevo and the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the organizers and participants of this meeting. The subject that I will discuss today comprises military-political, cultural, historical, social, legal, economic, and psychosocial determinants. Although there is an apparent discrepancy and dissonance between them, the terms *war and culture* are often combined in the same discourse. The wars themselves inevitably bring suffering, destruction and eventually havoc. In contrast, culture, in each of its aspects (architectural, literary, musical, artistic and other) brings spiritual enjoyment and enrichment. Every form of cultural heritage (tangible or intangible), in any civilization, requires a certain period of time to develop. Cultural heritage, which according to the Hague Convention of 1954, should be protected, often has been the direct target of aggression. The Convention, among other things, prohibits the use of monuments and cultural heritage for military purposes. However, despite all the conventions that protect cultural heritage, we are witnessing a flagrant violation of the provisions of these documents.

National and University Library 1992.



In Sarajevo, in the period 1992-1995, in full view of the world's public, heavy weapons were targeted against civil and cultural facilities such as museums, libraries, institutes, mosques, churches, cemeteries, old bridges, hospitals, schools, Olympic sports facilities and so on. In fact, the targets were the whole city and its starving and suffering residents. An illustrative example is the shelling of the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 25th/26th August 1992, which was almost completely destroyed, including the "Vijećnica" building and about 90% (from approximately 3 million volumes) of library collections. Three employees of the Library were inside the building of Vijećnica during the shelling, one of whom was killed.

Only about ten percent of the collection that remained from the war destruction was preserved by the efforts of conscientious and dedicated volunteers, especially library and cultural workers, as well as a number of citizens and friends from the world of librarians, forming the core of what the Library is today.

The building which housed the library, known as the "Vijecnica", built in 1894, in a pseudo-Moorish appearance, was targeted by incendiary projectiles, with a clear strategic goal: the destruction of the cultural and historical heritage which bears witness to the centuries-old coexistence and identity of the multiconfessional and multicultural Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnian-Herzegovinian multiculturalism is a reality witnessed by the content of NULB&H's collections, which, among many others, include documents written and printed in the languages and fonts of the Eastern civilizations: Latin, Greek, Turkish, Old-Slavic, Arabic, Persian and Hebrew, as well as the Western ones: Italian, French, Russian, German, Hungarian and many other languages.

Attempts to save the priceless library materials, primarily the old, rare and unique periodicals were unsuccessful. For days after the horrific fire, there were "Black Butterflies" fluttering over Sarajevo, fragments of burned books turned into ashes. The beautiful building "Vijećnica", turned into an empty shell within which walls collapsed and one could hardly make out the decorative stained glass, painted with geometric and floral designs. The passage of time and exposure to rains, snows, extreme heat or cold caused further deterioration. It was only after the war that the first actions were taken to prevent further damage to the building, which in 2006 was declared a national monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Reconstruction of the building was carried out in stages and finally completed in May 2014, with financial support of donors from around the world but mainly financed from the EU Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance funds. The National and University Library still has not moved into the "Vijecnica" building because of ownership questions (even though at the Land Registry the owner of the building being the State, and the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina being the user, have been registered for more than 50 years.)

However, the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina, immediately after the devastating fire in 1992 started reconstitution and reconstruction of the destroyed library holdings. Aid was provided by libraries and librarians from Europe and around the world. The activities and functions of the Library have been rehabilitated, a significant part of the library collection has been replaced, procedures and equipment have been streamlined, and staff trained to modern professional standards. Despite apocalyptic damage, the Library today retains the most precious specimens of the Bosnia and Herzegovina treasury: manuscripts, incunabula, rarities, graphic and cartographic collections, whose preservation is the pride and huge responsibility of the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These include the archive of documents, written in Bosančica, of the Republic of Poljice, the archives of Silvije Strahimir Kranjčević, Mehmed-bey Ljubušak and Jovan Kršić. Some of the saved items from the manuscript collections are in oriental languages, including the Kur'an of Husein Bošnjak. Some of the saved items from the collection of rare books are: incunabula, works of Bosnian Franciscans from the seventeenth century onwards (Matija Divković and others), the Gospel from Mrkša's church (sixteenth century), Srbulje, publications printed in Sopron's printing house, and the Vilajet printing house (the first textbooks, official publications, periodicals etc.), the first Bosnian-Herzegovinian journals (Bosanski prijatelj, Bosanski Vjestnik, Sarajevski cvjetnik, Bosna, Neretva and others). The cartographic collection was

partially saved. In all, 19700 manuscripts and rarities, irrefutable testimonies of the state and the cultural, especially multicultural, identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina through the centuries, have been saved. These collections alone, according to international standards, give us the status of the national library as is recognized throughout the world.

This year NULB&H is in its 70th anniversary year and as the central State library represents Bosnia and Herzegovina in numerous international vocational, cultural, informational, scientific and educational organizations and has the opportunity to participate in the creation of professional standards in Europe and internationally. NULB&H contributes to the development and enhancement of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian academic and cultural community through every aspect of its operation, especially through international cooperation.

Basement
Book number I 37.500 - 75.000 -- preserved 100%
Book number II 45.000 - 60.000 -- preserved 100%
Book number X about 1.500 unit -- preserved 100%
Book number I 130.000 - 156.000 -- preserved 100%
Book number 104.000 - 120.000 -- preserved 100%
Dissertation 10.000 units -- preserved 100%
Gift of Gagra 2.000 units -- preserved 100%
Library Prosvjeta and Library Napredak about 50.000 units -- preserved 100%
Collection of geographic maps (4 packages) -- preserved 100%

First floor
Warehouse 1
Book number I 1 - 37.500 -- burned 100%
Book number V 1 - 52.000 -- burned 100%
Book number III 1 - 4.000 -- burned 99%
Book number 75.000 - 86.000 -- burned 100%
Book number 60.000 - 78.000 -- burned 100%
Book number IV 1 - 9.000 -- burned 100%
Archival unit of B&H book- - 50.000 units preserved about 22.000 or 44%
Book number II 79.000 - 89.000 -- burned 100%

Warehouse 2
Book number II 1 - -45.000 -- burned 100%
Book number I 86.000- 100.000 -- burned 100%

Floor between first and second floor
a) Warehouse of archival unit of B&H serials
About 625 titles of journal-- burned 100%
More than 1.500 titles of newspapers-- burned 100%
More than 15.000 titles of newspapers and journals from Yugoslavia and the world (more then 300.000 volumes) burned 100%
Backup storage for Exchange
50.000 volumes -- burned 100%

Monographs in process for cataloguing--- 24.000 volumes.-- burned 100%
Backup storage for Exchange
650 volumes-- burned 100%
b) Warehouse of legal deposit in process of cataloguing: 180 volumes --- burned 100%
1.000 of monographs from Serbia -- burned 100%
1.000 volumes of serials from Serbia -- burned 100%
3.500 manuscripts of scientific works -- preserved about 98%
Floor between first and second floor
a) Warehouse of archival unit of B&H serials

First floor
More than 4.000 encyclopedias, dictionaries, lexicons, referative journals and other handy material in the reading rooms, and the Department of Information -- burned 100%
15 manuscripts of research papers in the Referral Centre -- burned 100%

Second floor
About 4.000 dissertations -- burned 100%
Parts of cartographic and graphic collection and other items, 50.000 unit -- burned
100% Collection of documents in Development Service about 1.000 unit -- burned 100%

The rest of the special collections
In the music, graphics, archival, and manuscript collection of rarities and in the cartographic and other parts of the collections were about 120,000 units of which:
collection of manuscripts and other manuscripts were over 3,000 units, rescued about 2,600 units or about 87%
collection of rare books and magazines 4,000 units - rescued 3,870 or about 85%.

Part of lost units from 1992 (Kalender, 1996)

After the destruction of Vijećnica on the night between 25th and 26th August 1992, NULB&H "like a refugee in its own town", was housed in the Temple—now the Bosnian Cultural Center, where a part of the library holdings had been earlier housed. NULB&H has since changed its "temporary accommodation", being now accommodated from 1997 in the former Marshall Tito barracks at the campus of the University of Sarajevo. Although the Library is in inappropriate space, it functions following high professional standards in accordance with its dual purpose. However, Vijećnica is a very delicate topic. The NULB&H staff attitude towards the destiny of Vijećnica building is very clear: its owner is Bosnia and Herzegovina which as the main authority must define its future purpose.

During the period of almost 50 years, many generations of NULB&H users, especially students, spent the most beautiful part of their life forming friendships and studying for exams in Vijećnica. Ambitious high school pupils, assistants and university professors, curious persons, scientists, artists and bohemians—all of them were coming to Vijećnica to learn what was unknown and discover what was hidden. The exams, master's and doctoral theses were prepared in Vijećnica. Young people were meeting here. Many friendships were formed here; many relations and loves were born in the halls of

Vijećnica. It is the part of Sarajevo which reflects a certain period of its time. With the regard to its library holdings and other sources, Vijećnica was among the most respectable libraries in the former Yugoslavia. It was a significant initiator of educational, scientific and cultural development in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It can be said that the biggest part of Bosnia and Herzegovina's intellectualism was born in the pseudo-Moorish building—Vijećnica or the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

However, NULB&H has been almost completely excluded from activities related to the reconstruction of Vijećnica building. The City Government and its administration manage all the money that the donors gave for the reconstruction of the Library. According to our information, donors that gave money for the reconstruction of the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina—Vijećnica are: Austria, the European Commission, Spain, Hungary, the National Library of Austria, the National Library of France, the National Library of Norway, the National Library of Cyprus, the National Library of the Netherlands and the National Library of Serbia, and also some European cities, and local institutions. But we know precisely that all six mentioned libraries gave the amount of 50.000 € in the name of library solidarity, through the Association for reconstruction of Vijećnica based in Vienna. These funds were very important support for the work of the NULB&H on its path of reconstruction. Also, out of a total of 7.700 m² of Vijećnica only 2.247,20 m² are planned for the Library, and the rest for the City administration and other public activities. The NULB&H has sued the city government of Sarajevo, so the case *Vijećnica building* is at the Court.

Besides membership of the most important European and world library associations, organizations and consortia, NULB&H has become a member of the World Digital Library in 2011. The goal of the World Digital Library project is to enable access via Internet to digitized material that is culturally diverse, multilingual and thus interesting to professors, students and, of course, the general public. The initiators of the Project were UNESCO and the Library of Congress (USA), and the mission of the Project is the promotion of intercultural understanding and expansion of the diversity of cultural heritage context. The first online collection, which contains five items from the Special Collections of NULB&H, has been available to the public from November 2011. The number of these items will increase. Unfortunately, without adequate financial support and lack of staff we will not have enough resources to build electronic collections as much as we would want.

The National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a guide through national documentary heritage, a center for heritage promotion and one of the main components constituting the identity of this country. We hope that a new Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina (established at the beginning of 2015) will positively solve this problem, meanwhile questions remain.

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What do we lose
when we lose a library?

Social and cultural impact

The burning of books as an assault on cultural memory

Aleida Assmann

The tradition of 'libricide'

The term 'libricide' literally means 'the killing of books'. (Bosmajian 2006, Knuth 2003, Knuth 2006) It is a term created in the paradigm of 'homicide', 'infanticide', the killing of infants, 'genocide', the killing of an ethnic group, 'mnemocide', the killing of memory, and 'urbicide', the killing of cities. If we consider the term in this list, we immediately recognize that the suffix '-cide' implies more than pure material destruction; it also evokes a notion of killing, implying human agency and responsibility on one side and human suffering on the other. The English poet John Milton was perhaps the first who created a direct link between libricide and homicide in a speech addressing the English Parliament in London in 1644 during the civil war. The context is his famous speech against censorship. On this occasion, Milton did not focus on a concrete event but built up an argument against imminent and future violence against books, anticipating and dissuading potential censors from destroying books in any way by declaring them to be sacrosanct objects:

“who kills a Man kills a reasonable creature, Gods Image; but hee who destroyes a good Booke, kills reason it selfe, kills the Image of God, as it were in the eye.” (Milton 1963)

Milton's description of books as animate beings sounds surprising. His background is the widely shared notion of early modern humanists that the spirit of a human being may be expressed in writing and preserved in (printed) books. The high value of books was backed up by the hope that the spirit thus materially inscribed can be resuscitated after dark ages of forgetting and ignorance. The name of the period that was later called 'the Renaissance' symbolizes this deep conviction that there is not only a biological life but also an afterlife preserved in material cultural objects such as books, and it is this second life of a person that is targeted by censorship and any other assault on books and libraries.

The German poet Heinrich Heine also made the connection between libricide and homicide. His famous line: "Where books are burnt, human beings will be the next victims" was taken up by Leo Löwenthal in an illuminating essay. (Löwenthal 1987) Löwenthal reconstructed the long historical record of book burning, beginning with the founder of the Chin-Dynasty in China in the third century BCE and the absolutist Roman emperors through the medieval and early modern Roman and Spanish inquisitions up to nineteenth and twentieth century acts of German anti-Semitic terror. In his overview, Löwenthal distinguishes three main aims and functions of book burning:

- *the extinction of history*. After a political regime change, there is often the desire to eliminate the past and to replace it by a new foundational narrative. As history is always composed of different strands and layers, it is also polyvocal and complex, undermining the construction of a single legitimizing narrative. For the new political power to start over and to present itself as new, it has to wipe the slate of history

- clean, creating a tabula rasa to prevent contradictions and claims to another reality.
- *acts of purification*. This involves ongoing acts that persecute and destroy any opinion or idea that jars with the obligatory truth of the regime in the present. It is the practice of censorship and *damnatio memoriae* that has been fostered by all regimes built on absolute truth and totalitarian power.
- *the liquidation of the subject*. Löwenthal lived as a German Jew through the Third Reich and witnessed the symbolic acts of book burning on May 10th 1933 in German cities. For him, the violence against books was only a premonition of the violence to follow against individuals of endangered minorities. He understood all too well that the violence committed against books is ultimately directed against human beings if their existence jars with the violent plans of totalitarian power. The independence of Jewish intellectuals, for instance, cultivating a sense of independent citizens making use of their critical intellect, became the target of their forceful exclusion from the German Bildungsbürgertum and later the German Volksgemeinschaft, turning them into an object of eliminatory racist politics. For every totalitarian state, Löwenthal writes, “individuality and the idiosyncratic quality of the critical subject is untenable”. (Löwenthal 1987, p232)

In his essay on book burnings, Löwenthal does not mention the library of Leuven and the First World War. This case is obviously different and does not fit into the long tradition of violence that he has reconstructed. This does not mean, however, that we cannot apply some of Löwenthal’s insights also to a description and understanding of the case of Leuven. But Leuven confronts us with a scenario that clearly goes beyond the familiar contexts of censorship, or intellectual persecution, or claims of absolutist truth and totalitarian power. In order to better understand the circumstances of the tragedy of Leuven, we have to focus on the question of the role of culture in war.

Culture and War

The role of culture in war is complex and changing, but it is always implicated in one form or another. Every war involves not only the homicide of combatants and civilians, but also massive damage and destruction of cultural heritage. Imperial wars were aimed at conquering other countries and incorporating the culture of the other as a trophy into one’s own treasure, exploiting and exposing it symbolically as a representation of the superior power. Religious wars aimed at destroying the culture of the other as a blasphemous contradiction to one’s own beliefs. In colonial wars, what was called the ‘civilizing mission’ played an important part, not only in camouflaging the scramble for new territories and material resources, but also for forcefully exporting religion and culture.

The background of the First World War, however, was very different. The European empires that went into the battle shared more or less the same religious traditions, a common civilization and strong ties in terms of their dynastic genealogies. The question therefore is: what mobilized these troops, what did they fight for when marching into the lethal adventure of the First World War? There was obviously a growing competition among the imperial nations for hegemony both on the level of global influence and of dominance in Europe. But this traditional aim of increasing one’s power would not have

mobilized a belligerent spirit and strong participatory commitment among the diverse populations. This required a strong patriotic identification within the various nations for which *differences* had to be invented, emphasized and magnified. Nations had been built and rebuilt throughout the nineteenth century as 'imagined communities', which meant to a large extent that they were inventing, discovering and highlighting their respective differences. To become a nation in the modern sense required not only a new political constitution and infrastructure, but also the creation of distinct national cultures with specific national characters. A new sense of being a member of one's own nation was enhanced by a new collective self-image based on a shared history. Under these circumstances, national identities became sanctified, instilling a new sense of pride based on the consciousness of a distinct cultural heritage.

The rise of the concept of 'cultural heritage'

A new concept of 'cultural heritage' emerged in the European nations in a process throughout the long nineteenth century. It is important to briefly recall this history here, which created important though still largely unacknowledged preconditions for the First World War. Heritage consciousness was a growing occupation throughout the nineteenth century, involving official administrative efforts from above as well as civic movements from below. The concept ranged from simple retro-fictions and mythical fantasies to modern endeavors valuing 'authenticity' and guarding the monuments of the past. It was rooted in the spirit of historicism, a new branch of historical scholarship established at nineteenth-century universities including the disciplines that we sum up today under the label 'humanities'. Within the context of historicism, an empirically grounded interest in and investigation of a nation's culture emerged, becoming the object of scientific scrutiny that was focused on topics such as the nation's history, its art, landscape, local traditions and folklore. This academic interest in one's own culture transcended the elitist aesthetic canon and included more and more local and vernacular elements. It soon spilled over and reached a growing public through popular novels, local commissions, exhibitions, courses and excursions. The forces behind the growing interest in cultural heritage were not only scholarship or measures of public education. It had been propelled by violent ruptures starting with the French Revolution and continuing with radical measures of modernization. In combination, both phenomena forcefully contributed to swiftly abolishing the past and radically changing traditional forms of life and local milieus.

The concept of cultural heritage is complex, involving a number of tensions and paradoxes. There is

a tension between top down and bottom up processes,

a tension between modernist and traditionalist interests and

a tension between the national and the international.

While the nineteenth-century concept of heritage helped to invent, demarcate and highlight national differences, it also turned into a common European and even global project built on a consensus and rules that quickly transcended the aims and purposes of the national collective. National heritage was particular in character, but the claim to such distinctive cultural symbols was acknowledged to be universal.

In a recent comparative study Astrid Swenson has reconstructed the transnational origins of the concept and practice of national cultural heritage in the nineteenth century. (Swenson 2013) The preservation of cultural heritage became a common European concern and project that was developed in different countries, producing different institutions, discourses and terminologies. Aesthetic and historical interest did not stop at the borders of one's country but fed into a new historical sensibility shared in many nations. The rise of modern institutions of professional preservationism culminated in the last decades of the nineteenth century in international networks and standards promoting new values through a new discourse, an effective rhetoric and codified legislation. From its very beginning, it was a process that developed on a local, a national and an international level. From this point of view, it was not only a European but also a global movement, creating transnational networks that promoted common standards on the basis of shared values and concerns. In other words, there is such a thing as a common culture of heritage that is only being discovered and historicized today.

A first manifestation of this universalizing spirit was the term 'vandalism' as coined by Henry Grégoire during the French Revolution. It summed up a new historical sensibility, criticizing violent acts against material monuments, irrespective of national points of view. Two new ideas became influential after the French Revolution that developed in co-evolution: "that nations had a heritage" and "that preservation was a sign of civilized governance." (Swenson, p46) National heritage, in the long run, came to be seen as the particular share of a common world heritage, owned, valued and protected by 'mankind'. Thus patriotism and internationalism were intimately linked in the creation and promotion of this new concept, in which the respect for time and the past became a new universal religion, promoting "peace and goodwill among the nations".¹ Among artists and scholars, politicians and local activists, this phrase soon became a European commonplace, promoting a rhetoric of family relations and brotherhood across national borders.

Against this background of a new culture of heritage, we can better assess the assault on the Leuven library. The German attack was launched in a spirit of hatred and revenge. This destruction of cultural heritage did not serve any strategic or military purpose. The traumatic blow was aimed directly at the identity of the city and the country as a whole. It was immediately condemned by other nations as the work of 'barbarians'. Only "barbarians and slaves", Grégoire had written, "hate the sciences and destroy the monuments of art. Free men love them and conserve them." (Swenson, p34). This act of vandalism was understood as a lapse from the new shared principle of the sanctity of cultural heritage as internationally ratified. Violent seizures of monuments and works of art had been condemned as 'crimes against humanity' as early as 1800. (Swenson, p39) To consciously act against these standards meant a serious breach in the common bond of civilized nations 'Kulturstaaen', (Swenson p195). Thus from the very beginning of the First World War, the burning of the library of Leuven and the bombing of the cathedral of Rheims became international symbols of German atrocities deviating from the European path.²

Whose cultural heritage?

What do we lose if we lose a library? For me, the most important word in this question is the simple personal pronoun 'we'. How exclusive, how inclusive do we make this 'we'? Within the long history of imperial, religious and colonial warfare, the destruction of material culture had mostly been seen only from two perspectives: the perspective of the offender and the perspective of the victim. Within such a constellation of intentional destruction on the one hand and passive experience of loss on the other, the memory of the event was bound to remain local and particular, confined to a group, a city, a nation. The moment we introduce the third party of an empathic and affected observer, however, the quality of the violent act changes considerably. A more comprehensive awareness of loss and a broader and more lasting memory only became possible with enlarging the bounds the affected subject. For this important shift in perspective, an inclusive and integral concept of 'humanity' had to be construed. Already in the eighteenth century the terms 'mankind' and 'humanity' were invoked as a verbal trope. It started as a rhetorical figure with an appellative drive that eventually became the name of an 'imagined moral community' with a common set of values, purposes, networks and legislation. From early on the discourse emphasized that material culture and heritage was not an exclusive property of a particular person, a class or a nation but belonged to mankind as a whole, referring not only to the spatial dimension of global participation but also to a temporal dimension involving future generations. (De Vettel 1758, 221) It was from this point of view that the age-old tradition of vandalism and libricide could be officially condemned and the perpetrators could be publicly stigmatized as 'enemies of mankind' (Svenson, p221).³ The concept of universal humanity as invented by the preservationists and heritage makers clearly differs from the cosmopolitan concept of humanity at the end of the eighteenth century. Instead of being posited as a metaphysical essence, it had to be created as an agent with responsibilities and liabilities, an institutional transnational actor with official status and governmental and civic support. This agent representing humanity found its constitution in the Geneva Conventions of 1899 and 1907 and in the preamble of the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954. The resolution holds that:

"damage to cultural property belonging to any people whatsoever means damage to the cultural heritage of all mankind, since each people makes a contribution to the culture of the world. (...) The preservation of all cultural heritage is of great importance for all peoples of the world and (...) it is important that this heritage should receive international protection."⁴

The burning of the library of Leuven in European and German memory

The German invasion of troops into the neutral country of Belgium and the attack on the city of Liège on August 5th 1914 became the first iconic incident of traumatic violence experienced in the Great War. The mass killings of civilians, the deportation of Belgian women and children in cattle cars and their detention in camps, the looting of

cities and the burning down of their houses and the historic buildings of Leuven with its Gothic monuments including St. Peter's Church and the University Library became immediately inscribed into the European memory of this war as 'German atrocities'. Especially the destruction of the University Library of Leuven became an iconic incident burnt into the European memory. Although historians describe this series of traumatic events less as an intended and clearly aimed military strategy and more as a concatenation of violent retaliations stimulated by misapprehension, panic and loss of control, it stigmatized German warfare from the first month of this war. Writers and historians such as Wolfgang Schivelbusch and Alan Kramer have retold the story in detail, reminding us of its various stages during the fatal days in late August and September 1914. They have also included in their reports the contemporary reactions that emphasized the horror and tragedy of this war crime. It soon became evident that German violence in this case had not only damaged the city, its inhabitants and its treasures, but also the reputation of Germans. It was lamented that "the Oxford of Belgium" had been burnt, the Germans were repeatedly referred to as "Huns", and it was reported to be "the most terrible thing ever done by Germans" (Kramer 2007, p14) since the Thirty Years' War. The contemporary international description of the event culminated in a headline of the *Daily Mail* of the 31. 8. 1914 that carries for Germans a terrible and uncanny historical premonition: "Holocaust of Louvain – Terrible Tales of Massacre – Dutch Abhorrence". After the attacks on the library of Leuven and the cathedral of Rheims the general term used for Germans in the allied press was 'barbarians'. Germans were no longer perceived as Europeans but were labeled as barbarians in a long tradition of vandalism starting with the burning of the Library of Alexandria.⁵

Leuven has become a European 'lieu de mémoire', but it has not become a German memory.⁶ In German national memory the name "Versailles" remained for a long time the placeholder for the First World War. (Schulze 2002) Given the way in which it was instrumentalized in Nazi politics and mobilized for starting the Second World War, this heroic national narrative was no longer acceptable in Germany after 1945 and had to be forgotten. When the year of commemoration began in 2014, Germans were eager to search for a forgotten or neglected phase of their national history, recovering local monuments and family memories from domestic documents scattered in attics and cellars as well as visiting exhibitions and reading new historical publications. While German readers avidly read Christopher Clark's account of the prehistory of this war, which relieved them of the sole burden of blame for having started the First World War, no similar interest was generated in events after the beginning of the war such as the German burning of the library of Leuven in August 1914 or German complicity with the young Turkish government during the genocide of the Armenians in April 1915. A European commemorative event was held in Liège on August 4th 2014, but public references to Leuven and its library remain scarce in Germany.

After a hundred years, Germany's search for its lost past would be well rounded off if this event would also find a place in German memory. The burning of the Leuven library is an exemplary case of an entangled German-Belgian history calling for a dialogic memory. Two countries engage in a dialogic memory if they face a shared history of mutual or unilateral violence by taking responsibility for their own guilt and acknowledging the trauma of the victim. In a dialogic memory, the offender is not confined to his own perspective and suffering but joins the perspective of the victim by expressing regret, taking responsibility, and showing empathy for the other's suffering. A German memory

of the event transcending the national perspective by getting to know and sharing empathically the Belgian memory could be an important step towards creating a shared European memory of the Great War.

What do we lose when we lose a library?

Let me come back again to the central question: What do we lose when we lose a library? In order to answer it, we have to consider the power of books. For this purpose, let me introduce two literary descriptions of the book as a cultural object from the early modern era, one by William Shakespeare, the other by John Milton. In the *Tempest*, Shakespeare introduces the figure of Prospero as a Renaissance magus who lost his dukedom because he spent too much time in libraries. While meditating and trying to acquire the wisdom of the world, he forgot his real life duties. He lost his power and had to flee, but he took books with him that helped him to gain new power over the island which became his place of refuge, ruling and manipulating its inhabitants. Caliban, his subject, has a clear sense of the power of his books:

Remember
First to possess his books, for without them
He's but a sot, as I am, nor hath not
One spirit to command. They all do hate him
As rootedly as I. Burn but his books.

Caliban is an oppressed victim of colonization; he does not possess any books himself, nor has he ever read any. But he strongly feels and fears their power from the outside. For Caliban, the book has *magic power*. To burn Prospero's books is tantamount to destroying the power and domination of his master.

My second description of the inherent power of books comes from John Milton's impassioned plea against censorship from which I have already quoted. For Milton, books were not pre-modern instruments of magic in Caliban's sense, nor were they mere material objects. Milton described the secular book as a sacred object because he conceived of it as the container of the spirit of a human being. Here is the quote again in its larger context:

"For Books are not absolutely dead things, but doe contain a potencie of life in them to be as active as that soule was whose progeny they are; nay they do preserve as in a violll the purest efficacie and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. (...) who kills a Man kills a reasonable creature, Gods Image; but hee who destroyes a good Booke, kills reason it selfe, kills the Image of God, as it were in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the Earth; but a good Booke is the pretious life-blood of a master spirit, imbalm'd and treasur'd up on purpose to a life beyond life. (...) We should be wary therefore what persecution we raise against the living labours of publick men, how we spill that season'd life of man preserv'd and stor'd up in Books; since we see a kinde of homicide may be thus committed, sometimes a martyrdome, and if it extend to the whole impression, a kinde of massacre, whereof the execution ends not in the slaying of an elementall life, but strikes at that ethereall and fift essence, the breath of reason it selfe, slaies an immortality rather than a life". (Milton 1963)

This high praise and sanctification of the book as a cultural object comes from a Puritan background. It is leveled against the Catholic and counter-reformation policy of preventing printing, burning books and forbidding their circulation as dangerous media of heresy and insurgence. Censorship, Milton argued, is the tool of the enemy, meaning the Pope and the Roman Inquisition that must by no means be implemented by a Puritan government, which would thereby immediately lose all its credibility. To drive home his point, he produced this elevated panegyric of the book, which deserves a central place in Western cultural memory. According to Milton, the value of the book is tied directly to the value of the individual (in the sense of Leo Löwenthal) who carries not only the breath of his and her creator but who carries also a part of God's spirit. In this religious language Milton extolled the value of the book in general as a shrine for human reason and thought, thereby blending his Puritan belief with the spirit of Renaissance Humanism and modern enlightenment. If for Milton to destroy one book is even worse than homicide, destroying a whole library amounts to a sacrilege.

Knowledge, memory, and imagination

There are striking testimonies of people who witnessed the burning of libraries and expressed this trauma in memorable words. The most moving account of the burning library of Leuven is the testimony of the Rector of the American College, Monsigneur de Becker, which was transmitted by the US ambassador Brand Whitlock. After describing acts of murder and destruction, he gave an account of the burnt library:

“Here in the Halles of the University was the Library; its hundreds of thousands of volumes, its rare and ancient manuscripts, its unique collection of incunabula—all that had been burnt deliberately, to the last scrap. Monsigneur had reached this point in his recital; he had begun to pronounce the word *bibliothèque*—he had said ‘*la biblio...*’ and he stopped suddenly and bit his quivering lip. ‘*La bib ...*’ he went on—and then, spreading his arms on the table before him, he bowed his head upon them and wept aloud.” (Kramer 2007)

This requiem in less than three words is the most memorable account of the traumatic destruction. While the books and manuscripts are irrecoverably burnt and lost, the burning has become part of a world-memory. Today, libricide has been turned into a multi-directional memory in the sense of Michael Rothberg, a narrative that connects different accounts of cultural loss, thus once more transforming an exclusive we into an inclusive we. By collecting and connecting the memories of the burnt libraries of Leuven, Sarajevo and Timbuktu, they are mutually confirmed as a common loss and symbolically empowered.

Looking back at the devastating destruction during the Second World War, D.C. Watt, a historian and collector of books himself, has spelled out what it is that we lose if we lose a library:

“What Europe lost through the war was a great part of its history and an immense treasury of delight and joy for all generations to come. To destroy the relics of the past is even in small things, a kind of amputation, *a self-mutilation* not so much of limbs as of the *memory and the imagination*.” (Kramer 2007)

Watt was able to assess the destructive violence against cultural heritage from the inclusive view of the European point of view, referring to it as an act of self-mutilation. “All learning depends on memory” is a statement by Quintilian, the master of ancient rhetoric. In the early modern era, this statement had to be transformed into: “all science depends on libraries”. In the course of the systematization and professionalization of knowledge, libraries became the pride and heart of the universities as a specialized tool for the new sciences. Libraries consist of shelves and shelves of books. From this point of view they may appear rather redundant and monotonous. In early modern libraries, however, ancient authors and pioneers of science were also presented in rows of plaster busts, turning the library into temples of knowledge and spaces of conversation. Libraries are also theatres of learning and stages of cultural memory.

As libraries have gone digital, they have lost their material space and monopoly of information. The dispersed and portable digital libraries that we carry with us in our lap-tops, tablets and smartphones, have lost their tangible shape and are reduced to abstract micro-bits of information. Anthropologist Merlin Donald has referred to this accumulated knowledge of mankind as ‘exograms’ stored in an ‘external memory’. According to Donald, this ‘external symbolic storage’ (ESS) is “a storage and retrieval system that allows humans to accumulate experience and knowledge”. (Donald 1991) In the digital era, cultural memory has become a universally accessible and collectively shared data base that “links the individual mind to the accumulated wealth of human thought.”

As we have said, however, traditional libraries were something else.. In our age of a total functionalization and restructuring of information it is important to recover a glimpse of the utopian spirit that used to be attached to libraries since the time of Roman antiquity. Libraries offered access to a world of its own—a magic circle—into which one can enter to start a conversation with the best spirits of all ages. In a famous letter Machiavelli described the retreat into his library as a feast of the intellect.

“In festive clothes I enter the ancient courts of the great masters, where I am received in friendship and nourished with the food that is all mine and for which I was born. I feel no restraint to ask them and they answer me in their humanity. For four hours I feel no tedium, forget all sorrows, fear no poverty, and death does not scare me, as long as I am with them.”

In a less elitist and more democratic way, Hanna Arendt reinterpreted the topos of the library as entrance into a conversation of spirits, emphasizing the qualities of communication and imagination. She defined Karl Jaspers’ concept of ‘humanitas’ as a “spiritual realm, which will last as long as there are humans on earth.” (Arendt 1958, p6) In her description, ‘humanitas’ becomes a vision of public space, modeled on the library and the republic of letters:

“is not beyond this world, nor is it an utopia, it is neither of yesterday nor of tomorrow, but of this world. It was created by reason and is ruled by freedom. It can neither be fixed nor organized, it reaches into all countries

of the world and into all of their pasts; and although it is of this world, it is invisible. It is the domain of *humanitas*, which can be accessed by anybody coming from his or her own world.” (Arendt 1958, p6)

Half a century later, Arendt’s description of the public space of the library can perhaps be stretched to fit the (utopian) vision of the Internet as a globally extended network of communication: “Those who enter it, recognize each other. They are like sparks, gaining in light or disappearing in darkness, changing in continuous movement. The sparks see each other, and each one gleams brighter to the extent that he sees others.” (Arendt 1958, p6) In their electronic shape the shelves and books no longer fall prey to fire and brutal violence but this does not mean that digital libraries are safe; they have changed their forms of vulnerability.

Conclusion

Let me sum up this essay with a few conclusions.

1 *The invention of a new We*

A general value of cultural heritage and a deeper sense of its loss arises only with the construction of an inclusive we of humanity, defined as a league of civilized nations. There is no guaranteed stability of this institution, however, as the road towards re-barbarization is always open, be it through fascist or fundamentalist violence.

2 *The dialectic between damage and preservation*

Universalist movements of preservation were born out of the experience of destruction, be it the destruction of war, of the enemy, of time, or of modernization. The fragility of culture is an old experience, but its need for common care and joint measures of protection is a modern achievement. Destruction triggered the reaction of protection, but the emphasis on protection and valorization also triggers new acts of vandalism as the videos published by the terror of IS have shown. What is listed and ascribed outstanding universal value can attract the wrong kind of attention and become the target of further destruction.

3 *The past has to be preserved in order to exist*

The past has been described as “a foreign country”⁷, but the important insight is that it does not exist by itself, but has to be brought into the present and kept there. It only exists to the extent that we collect, preserve, cherish and represent its material remains. It is obviously performed and constructed, but in order to do so, its traces have to be carefully preserved.

4 *The future has become a cause of common concern*

The future is no longer a screen on which to constantly project the desire of further change, innovations and brave new worlds, but also a horizon of expectation in which we hope to preserve, maintain and pass on to succeeding generations what we already possess and cherish. The future of these things depends on the measures for their preservation and perpetuation that we take today.

Notes

- ¹ This slogan had been coined for the Great World Exhibition of 1851 and was taken up and repeated for the preservation of national cultural heritage, (see Swenson, 195-7.)
- ² At the time of the Great War, barbarism was not only a term to vilify the enemy, but it was also revalued as a regenerative source of energy. This is the reason why some German voices retorted with stubborn haughtiness: 'That may be barbarism, but then it is a piece of healthy barbarism for which we will never want to be ashamed.' Alan Kramer, pp. 26-7. Marinetti and Mussolini are two other examples who denounced civility and praised the regenerative vigor of barbarism.
- ³ The activists of the heritage monument followed the humanitarian model of restricting warfare by protecting injured soldiers and civilians, aspiring towards a 'Red Cross of Monuments' (Swenson 209, 213).
- ⁴ AP 23.
- ⁵ While there are plenty of testimonies to what was called at the time a 'crime against humanity', we have virtually no reports from the perpetrators who later tried to justify and contain the event in an administrative report. Alan Kramer emphasizes that we are dealing here not with barbaric violence but with the shape of modern violence in the context of radicalized industrial warfare (Alan Kramer, *Dynamic of Destruction. Culture and Mass Killing in the First World War*, Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 20).
- ⁶ The City Council in Konstanz has just decided not to rename a street named after General Otto von Emmich who was the commander of German troops invading Belgium in August 1914. The street had been named after him in 1934; there is no connection between the general and the city of Konstanz. The naming of streets after military leaders of the First World War were popular in the Third Reich and still after the Second World War.
- ⁷ It is the first sentence of L.P. Hartley's novel *The Go Between* (1953).

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"A library life, most pleasant and sweet": on the essence of libraries

Per Cullhed

It is the establishment's own spirit that shall enliven the spirit of an enquiring mind; encourage it through a tempting availability, and provide a library life most pleasant and sweet.

J.P. Tollstorp

These are the concluding words, translated from Swedish, in the chapter on the library collection of Linköping cathedral in J. P. Tollstorp's description of Linköping from 1834 (Tollstorp 1834). Tollstorp was a topographical author, printer, and manufacturer who, for a short period, settled in Linköping and wrote its history. The quote describes his wishes for a new library to house the oldest collection of what now forms the city library of Linköping, a Church and University City 200 km south of Stockholm, in Sweden. At the time of writing, the collection was tucked away in a cathedral tower in such a disorderly manner that he compares it to an Egyptian labyrinth.

The new library Tollstorp dreamed about was realized in installments between 1870 until 1928 when the new combined Diocesan and City Library finally opened its doors in a rebuilt chapter house. This library existed between 1928 and 1973 until a new and modern city library was completed on a nearby piece of land, only to be destroyed by fire in 1996. This means that there are three distinct stages in the Linköping library history: the church-tower, the refurbished chapter house, and the purpose-built modern library. These three phases, from a temporary storage to a fully-equipped modern library, form a development cycle shared by many other libraries.

Let us return to Tollstorp and his ideas of a better library. At the time of the quotation, the library consisted of 26000 volumes and the disorder, the obscure place it was kept in, and the irregular opening hours made the collection virtually inaccessible. To remedy this, he gave six distinct recommendations, which, if followed, would raise the library status to one of the best in the country and an excellent place for research. His principles for achieving this were the following:

- The library should have librarians, ever present and so knowledgeable about the collections that they could earn the merit of being called living catalogues.
- The library should be open all day, all year around.
- The library should be equipped with reading places, in heated rooms
- The books should be arranged according to subject.
- The users should have free access to the books.
- The books should be kept in a good order.

It took almost a hundred years for all Tollstorp's wishes to be fulfilled when, in 1928, a library rotunda behind the chapter house was finished and the first proper city library opened. In 1973, it had become hopelessly small and obsolete and a third library was built. This library included many new functions and it soon became a place where one

could meet friends, drink coffee, watch 16 mm films on Thursday evenings, borrow books and listen to records. It was a truly buzzing public space.

On the September 20, 1996 the library was burned down due to arson. The municipal information office had been housed in the library and it had been threatened several times since they handled the controversial immigration issues in the wake of the refugee wave of the 1990s, with refugees at that time coming from the former Yugoslavia, which is a sort of parallel to what is happening in Europe today. Extreme right wing offenders were suspected but no arrests were ever made. The very fire developed quickly, and fire fighters could do no more than try to see that the fire did not spread to historic houses in the vicinity. They concentrated on this and avoided further water damage to the old collections that were kept in the basement.

The different stages of the fire were later investigated, demonstrating that the initial fire was lit a little later than eleven o'clock p.m. It was a Friday evening and the library was open due to a public event called *Humanistdagarna* [The Humanist Days] celebrated each year. At the time when the fire started in another part of the building, in a chair in an office room, the meeting room hosted around four hundred people. Library staff attempted to put out the fire, but in vain. When the fire fighters arrived after five to six minutes, the house was already burning violently and approximately twenty minutes after the initial fire, there was a fire-gas explosion that set the whole building ablaze, ultimately destroying most parts of the building. In the ensuing investigations, it was stated that the cause of the rapid spread of the fire was the acoustic plates glued to the ceiling with thermo-setting glue. The fire started in a small office room, spread to an inside hallway with acoustic plates in the ceiling and when these had become hot enough, the bond from the glue failed and they fell down in a regular pattern, spreading the fire at a high speed. Fortunately, the lecture hall was close to the library entrance and all the visitors could be evacuated.

On Wednesday September 25 a team from Uppsala University Library arrived on the scene, giving advice on how to handle the damaged material. One of the first and more severe losses was the library card catalogue, leaving the more than 200 000 books in the basement inaccessible. Furthermore, the basement ceiling nearly collapsed, but ultimately it withstood the fire, and again, one could say that this proves that the compartmentalization of buildings still remains one of the most effective means of protecting collections. Being kept in strong vaults in the basement, the special collections did not suffer any heavy damage. Only the exhibited parts of the heritage collection were either destroyed or heavily damaged. Some books, but regarding the circumstances still relatively few, were water-damaged. They were subsequently packed within sheets of plastic between the volumes and sent off to freezers for later drying. The remaining books were soot damaged and the soot removal took the good part of a year and was performed by cleaning the books with latex sponges. The damaged leather bindings were treated at the Uppsala University Library, while other items were treated at the Linköping Regional Museum.

Later, a new library building was erected on the same spot as the old building, connecting the still undamaged parts of the old library to the new building. The Swedish king inaugurated the new library in March 2000 and this event echoes the famous quote of the Grand Duke Charles Augustus of Weimar on the event of the fire at the Weimar Hoftheater in 1825. He is said to have quoted from Goethe's play Pandora "Let that burn down. With greater beauty will it rise again." (Eckermann and Soret 1850). The

Linköping city library was indeed splendid and brand new this sunny day fifteen years ago, and it also contained some new collections.

Fire entails rapid change, but libraries are constantly changing and in the current fast shift of the role of libraries, the symbolic and topical aspects of libraries are becoming increasingly important. Destruction and change can be seen as a catalyst for analyzing the essence of libraries, both throughout history and in current library practices. Here follows a list of what the people of Linköping lost when they lost their library in the fire of 1996:

- They lost the central access point for information and until other arrangements could be made, this library core function could not be fulfilled. One has to remember that that this was still in the very early days of the Internet.
- The citizens felt they lost their enjoyment of their share of the public services.
- The library lost its modern collection of books. In the beginning, this could only in part be compensated by branch libraries.
- Audio-visual material was totally lost, but since it was at a time when other music services started to emerge this may not have been such a disastrous loss.
- Some antiquities were badly damaged or destroyed and in addition to their monetary value the materiality and history they represented was lost.
- The order of the remaining collection was completely lost due to the loss of the card catalogue: all of these books had to be re-catalogued.
- The central public space of the library was lost for three and a half years.
- The staff's own research on collections was completely lost in some cases.

After the fire, a public billboard was put up where citizens could express their feelings, in a time before Facebook. Above all, they felt a **loss** and this was mixed with feelings of anger, nowhere to go, and nowhere to find the information they needed. (Klasson 2000). Despite the difficult situation after the fire, the library nevertheless was able to build on the following noteworthy positive factors that facilitated a renewal of the library:

- The special collections were largely undamaged.
- 200 000 books remained intact.
- Knowledge of the library remained as the staff was still there.
- The will to continue operations was strong.
- The library was insured and the insurance covered all the costs.
- There was an overwhelming public support after the fire: people donated books and money and offered to help in many other ways, as did the library community in general.
- Suddenly library values became obvious and it was clear from the outset that the library, apart from its information contents, also meant a lot as a symbol for democracy and shared resources.
- The fire revitalized practices and services, the most notable renewal perhaps being the shift to an online-catalogue.

The technological changes that the libraries world-wide are now facing are the same sort of dramatic changes that a library fire causes. New techniques will always challenge mankind but the information revolution made possible by the Internet is obviously the most fundamental change since Gutenberg. In fact, the three generations of libraries mentioned earlier, now have a fourth generation coming up and this *fourth* library is the virtual library settling down and inhabiting our computers and devices. If we try to identify persistent library values, exemplified by what happened in Linköping, that is, by dramatic change, we need to take the following into account.

Firstly, there is an enormous competition for our attention. Young people today spend much more time on other things than on traditional reading, and unintentionally books just tend to lag behind as concentrating on long texts is much more of an effort than searching and networking. Paradoxically, more and more books are produced, even traditional paper books, also due to the ease with which we can write books—but who will have time to read them? Concentrated reading need not be old-fashioned. On the contrary, it is a skill that needs to be promoted, not in opposition to new media, but as a unique way of accessing information that does something to our minds. Libraries can offer help and space for this, and encouragement to learn or re-learn about its advantages.

Obstacles in finding information have always been a problem. Already Tollstorp complained about the inaccessible books in the cathedral tower and nowadays instant access is something we speedily are growing accustomed to, so immediate access is probably the sweetest fruit of knowledge today, whereas hard to get books will be seen as a hard nut to crack. Therefore, opening times and circulation times at libraries are becoming increasingly important for the access of traditional books.

Libraries traditionally have produced data about data (metadata), but today, instant access requires not only metadata, but also more instant data. Producing data puts a pressure on libraries to not only lend ready-made books, but also to produce their own books by means of digitization and other types of text treatments such as transcription and, of course, always, the use of OCR in the digitization of texts. It could be argued that libraries have been remarkably slow in realising the potential of their collections on the Internet, perhaps because they feel it will change their *raison d'être*, and due to a general lack of resources to pursue this expensive task. In the past decade, predominantly commercial companies, often in public private partnerships, have led the race in converting information content. However, libraries can catch up. If Google has an advantage when it comes to printed books, libraries can catch up with images and manuscripts, and more types of digital formats such as ePub, Kindle Mobi-format and PDF.

In this age, libraries need to emphasize their role as a public space that is accessible to everyone, which is one of the lessons learnt from fires; libraries represent an open public space for meeting both information and people. This is a highly valuable and cherished aspect, and thus increasingly important. The books and the information may move out on the Internet, but we still need physical spaces for creative meetings, and for concentrated reading. Such spaces should be prominent, as symbols of our will to take part in the public offerings and indeed, when libraries of today have a chance to renew their buildings, many choose to produce city landmarks of outstanding design. Here is a list of these core library assets, often forgotten in everyday operations, but so terribly obvious when they disappear by fire:

- The collections – this is a fundamental asset, regardless of whether it is analogue or digital.
- Democracy – citizens in Linköping felt they were deprived of parts of their democratic rights after the fire.
- Participation – if you do not have a public space, participation is made difficult.
- Creative meetings – the importance of real meetings cannot be over-estimated, especially in times of intense concentration on communication via screens.
- Quality – libraries represent something genuine, you can trust them, and if you lose them, this presence of quality decreases.

- Sustainability – libraries stand for longevity and trust, manifested in their efforts to preserve and promote information.
- Reading – the neutral spaces for reading and concentration suffer when you lose a library.
- Common space – the sense of belonging is manifested in a place where you, as well as others, belong. Libraries represent your rights to feel a sense of belonging in society.
- Landmarks – iconic places make an impression that we value and wish to partake in
- Integration – libraries can integrate information and information techniques with their operations.
- Digitization – libraries need to become the fourth library and actively promote the digitization of collections.
- Publishing – libraries should increasingly publish their digital assets and they often form the hub for academic publishing in general
- Images – in the digital world, images and materiality of objects have become more and more important and libraries have unprecedented opportunities to promote the use of images.

The three generations of libraries in Linköping are the following: The cathedral tower, the rotunda at the chapter house and the new library. In the presentation I held in Leuven in September 2015, these were all displayed on a device, in this case an iPad. Let this be a symbol for the fourth library, the one that provides information outside of the library buildings but in no way makes them obsolete.

By way of conclusion I would like to return to Tollstorp's library advice from 1834, and comment on how the modern library lives up to his wishes.

The library should have librarians, ever present and so knowledgeable about the collections that they could earn the merit of being called living catalogues.

The staff's skills are probably more important than ever, and the field they are working in is more demanding than ever. Not only should they know as much as possible about their collections, but they must also be able to advise users on all the technical aspects of accessing information from a multitude of sources and devices.

The library should be open all day, all year around.

Access to the public spaces represented by libraries is acknowledged world-wide, often with 24/7 services.

The library should be equipped with reading places, in heated rooms.

As already stated, reading and space for reading is instrumental for library operations. Analogous to Tollstorp's wishes for heated space, that is the much longed for prerequisite to reading in times when heating was both cumbersome and sometimes dangerous. WiFi and an abundance of electrical sockets may instead be today's equivalent commodities.

The books should be arranged according to subject.

Finding aids in the virtual world may arrange and re-arrange books in the most timely manner and the chances of finding information are hereby unprecedented. However,

when it comes to browsing, books arranged according to subject still greatly enhance visitors' possibilities to feed an 'enquiring mind'.

The users should have free access to the books.

Today's obstacles to free access have more to do with commercial and security issues than was normal in Tollstorp's days. Commercially based locking-in mechanisms often prevent access to information that from a technical point-of-view sees no barriers. However, obstacles to free access are less and less accepted and will diminish even more with an increased library financed digitization process.

The books should be kept in a good order.

Today, this wish of Tollstorp may be interpreted as the never-ending need of curating both analogue and physical collections. Curating involves maintaining all types of infrastructural means necessary for long term-preservation and sustainability. Times and practices have changed greatly since 1834 and Tollstorp would probably not believe his eyes if he saw the libraries of today, but regardless if we are talking about the second, third or fourth type of library his advice probably still applies, albeit here a bit tweaked and adapted to modern libraries. He promised a laurel to those who would make his dream library come true and it should probably go to the staff who rebuilt the Linköping library, but also to everyone in the library world today who promotes these ideals that live on even in an electronic world that Tollstorp knew nothing about.

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An instrument of democracy: libraries in a changing world

Robert Nouwen

Introduction

On August 25, 1914, the German army deliberately burned the University of Leuven's library along with 300,000 medieval books and manuscripts. In 1933, when the National Socialists had just taken power in Germany, they began a mission to eliminate everything that did not fit within their ideology, including books by dissenters. In May 1933 more than 20,000 books were burned in Berlin. On January 28, 2013, Islamist rebels set the library of Timbuktu with thousands of ancient manuscripts on fire. Many books of this library were about Islam. One of the characteristics of totalitarian ideologies and regimes is the destruction of problematic information and limiting free speech through control of written culture.

What do we lose when we lose a library? A future without libraries: is this possible? In most democratic countries, libraries were founded to support public education and civic participation.¹ Meanwhile the Flemish government recently decided that municipalities no longer have the obligation to make public libraries available. Local authorities may decide themselves how they will use their financial funding by the Flemish government. Many fear that it will be tempting for many municipalities to close the local library in a difficult budget situation. It is remarkable how much our Western European society emphasizes utilitarian value. Something only contributes to our society when its use is directly detectable. In addition, utility today is often limited to the economic welfare of the people. In tough economic times, people like Mr. Average justify economies in culture. This means that the entire cultural sector, including libraries, is currently under strong pressure. In our changing world, most people are convinced that we have access to all information thanks to the World Wide Web. But they often forget that this information is particularly superficial and at the same time easy to manipulate. Within this context, the meaning of a library, and above all a national heritage library like the Royal Library of Belgium as a repository for intellectual and cultural heritage, remains of exceptional importance.

Libraries as guardians of cultural heritage

The core business of libraries lies essentially in preserving a cultural production, especially the written and printed culture and heritage, and in making it available. Scientific research, as well as providing access for a broader public, is an important way to share this. In libraries with an important collection, such as the Royal Library, this cultural production can be explicitly placed in a historical perspective. The library has a history that goes back to the age of the Dukes of Burgundy and preserves several collections of

exceptional historical importance, not only the precious manuscripts and rare books we consider as heritage, but every book and every newspaper that enters the library, for we are the national repository library of Belgium.

The Royal Library of Belgium preserves a rich collection of Belgian newspapers, originally not meant to be kept. Their importance lies in the richness of information: political, ideological, economic, social, cultural, and so on. Newspapers not only provide information, but also offer a contemporaneous interpretation and comment upon events. And therefore they also outline the history (or absence) of freedom of speech. Thus our archive of newspapers helps critical citizens to inform themselves about contemporary history, just like literature, philosophical or historical books, and so on.

The reason why cultural and historical heritage, why books, periodicals and newspapers are so important, lies in the fact that they extend beyond our need for food, for health, for shelter and safety. They are bearers of knowledge and cultural identity and also appeal to a whole set of values such as cultural diversity and pluralism of cultures, the freedom to think and to seek inspiration, the freedom of expression and the press. Each one of these values is inherent in a democracy. Heritage is the tangible and visible history of a nation and, together with the written word, largely forms the identity of a nation. When a population loses significant cultural heritage, then it loses its identity, its very soul.

Libraries as information facilitators

This leads to the conclusion that from the moment that the materiality of history disappears, the factuality of history itself also ends. The World Wide Web hardly provides an alternative to free information gathering and the preservation of cultural heritage. The Internet only replaces the visible and tangible reality with a virtual possibility. The World Wide Web is for most of us also more of a maze than a source of help because of the abundance of information and disinformation fed by half-truths and lies.

This said, libraries, both the large and the small, are information facilitators with a mark of quality that has two important parallel tasks. The first is to make our written and printed cultural production and heritage available in a physical way for reasons of scientific research, information gathering and pleasure. However, it is not enough to open doors for everyone! In the context of today, the second task is to digitize and present these collections on the World Wide Web in a qualitative manner. Only in this way do they offer the people the possibility to have free access to their history, to knowledge and ideas, to socially important information and thereby give the opportunity to participate as critical citizens in all aspects of society.

Libraries as meeting places

If we agree that libraries are information facilitators, we can go one step further. Libraries, the small and the large, often organize evening debates, lectures and readings of authors in cooperation with cultural associations. But nothing can replace the physical presence of knowledge and literature as a framework for such events, no TV program in the past,

no Internet forum now. A dynamic library now is the Stoa of fifth-century Athenian democracy, a meeting place for citizens who come together to discuss, the perfect place for intellectual debate, for the sharing of knowledge, for the strengthening of democratic thought and critical citizenship.

Libraries evolve gradually from knowledge centers to real public spaces where expertise and community come together. The visitors, the readers, and the community are central. This community may be defined very broadly: researchers and young people who come to study, culture consumers and active citizens. National and university libraries are, especially by young people, increasingly used as study and meeting places and less and less as purely scientific libraries. For this reason it is important that significant scientific libraries as well as local libraries not only facilitate information and research, but also foster debate and encounter and enforce a high level of commitment. Initiatives like the British Library exposition “Magna Carta. Law, Liberty, Legacy,”² one of the most famous documents (1215) in the world which was significant for the development of human rights, and the range of Magna Carta-related teaching resources for use in primary and secondary school classrooms, show clearly that ancient heritage is still of major importance for the development of citizenship, by bringing people together.

Libraries as safe spaces for dialogue and discussion

By doing so, libraries offer a safe space for dialogue and discussion about real issues in our society. Libraries are the venues for a deliberative democracy. Not only can they offer many opportunities for students to develop the skills that are essential for participation in a scientific community, but also for participation in a flourishing democracy.³ We are living in an era in which citizens strive for greater participation in civic life. In the *International Civic and Citizenship Education Study*, one can read that young people in Flanders are reluctant about multicultural society, that they believe less than average in democracy and democratic values and that they hardly see the sense of political or social debate.⁴ Libraries have to activate the civic potential of young people by stimulating their will to assume a more active role in civil discourse.

Since the early days of democracy, citizens have debated their role in a participatory democracy. In the words of Barber (1984), in a strong democracy “citizens regard discourse, debate, and deliberation as essential conditions for reaching common ground and arbitrating differences among people in a large, multicultural society”.⁵ Democracy requires an engaged and well informed citizenry. Despite almost universal access to schools, libraries and information, it might be argued that the citizens of Europe are not better informed than in earlier days. Easy access to information through new technologies has not changed this. This is the paradox that T. Judt points out, namely between the abundance of information that is available to us and the indifference that we demonstrate with respect to that information and our past. This has truly disturbing implications for our democracy.⁶

Conclusion: Libraries and democracy

What will we lose when we lose our libraries? We lose an instrument of democracy! The English bishop Richard de Burry (1287-1345) defends his boundless love of books in *Philobiblon*, written in 1344. In this essay, he also describes books as custodians of truth. During The Second World War, when the future of democracy was uncertain, Franklin D. Roosevelt described libraries as “the great symbols of the freedom of the mind”. Freedom of the mind implies freedom of information.⁷ Thus, there is no doubt that libraries still play an important role in advancing democracy. Since the second half of the nineteenth century, scholars at various times have stressed the link between the public library and democracy. Libraries have been presented as a necessity for any country that wished to be an effective democracy, but also as a gateway to the right of every citizen to cultural and intellectual development. Every citizen needs a broad range of literacy skills. Without these, it is not possible to search for, receive and create information. Science, cultural development and education are inseparably linked to democracy and freedom. And just because of their educative function, libraries are mostly understood as being instrumentally valuable to democracy.

Also in the future, libraries will play an important role in our democracy despite the possibilities offered by the World Wide Web. Although the Internet offers an impressive gateway to information, there is no equity of access. Too many people lack the knowledge, training, income and equipment to make use of it. And there is too much information pollution that influences valuable information in a negative way. Thus, libraries have to renew their historical mission.⁸ Libraries need to re-examine their core beliefs and strengthen their capacity to push boundaries and engage citizens to participate more actively in public life. This means not only that libraries have to inform citizens, but also that they have to push them to participate fully in our community. The fundamental democratic values of openness, respect, participation, the pursuit of truth are paramount. The key mission of every library should be in the will to be a gateway to knowledge for every citizen so that he or she can exercise his or her democratic rights and play an active role in society.

Notes

- ¹ Comp. Ronald B. McCabe (2001), *Civic Librarianship: Renewing the Social Mission of the Public Library*, Scarecrow Press, p. 68.
- ² <http://www.bl.uk/magna-carta>.
- ³ Nancy Kranich (2010), “Academic Libraries As Hubs For Deliberative Democracy”, *Journal of Public Deliberation*: Vol. 6: Iss. 1, Article 4: <http://www.publicdeliberation.net/jpd/vol6/iss1/art4>.
- ⁴ Saskia De Groof, Eva Franck, Mark Elchardus & Dimokritos Kavadias (2009), *Burgerschap bij 14-jarigen. Vlaanderen in internationaal perspectief. Vlaams eindrapport van ICCS “International Civic and citizenship Education study” voor het Vlaams Ministerie van Onderwijs en Vorming*, pp. 215-216 (http://www.iea.nl/national_reports.html#c2900.)
- ⁵ B. Barber (1984), *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age*, University of California Press, Berkeley, p 37.

- ⁶ T. Judt (2008), *De vergeten twintigste eeuw. Nieuwe wereldgeschiedenis*, s.l., pp. 15-16 (= T. Judt, 2008, Reappraisals. Reflections on the Forgotten Twentieth Century).
- ⁷ Freedom of Information (FOI) can be defined as the right to access information held by public bodies. It is an integral part of the fundamental right of freedom of expression, as recognized by Resolution 59 of the UN General Assembly adopted in 1946, as well as by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which states that the fundamental right of freedom of expression encompasses the freedom to “to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/freedom-of-expression/freedom-of-information/>
- ⁸ Comp. Ronald B. McCabe (2001), pp. 67. Code of Ethics of the American Library Association 3th paragraph: *In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.* <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/proethics/codeofethics/codeethics>.

Supporting libraries in societies under pressure: the British Council experience from 1934 to 2015

Stephan Roman

A dawning realisation of the need to protect and promote the free exchange of knowledge and ideas

The First World War opened with the burning of the University Library in Leuven in 1914, the destruction of the Sarajevo National Library heralded the start of the Bosnian Civil War in 1992, and the wanton looting of the Jaffna Public library in 1981 marked a grim beginning to the 25 year long civil war in Sri Lanka. The free exchange of knowledge and ideas matters. This is why libraries sit at the heart of national and community life and why they are always amongst the first victims of war, violence and state sponsored repression.

The British Council was established in 1934 to promote the values of the United Kingdom as an open and democratic society, through the free exchange of ideas, information and learning between the UK and other countries. English language, arts, education, and science were its principal programme areas and remain so to this day. This was only a year after Hitler had got to power and the success of the Nazi propaganda machine in projecting a compelling narrative about the new regime was already becoming evident. Although this propaganda approach was seen as being successful it was viewed with great suspicion by the UK government and public. There was no enthusiasm to imitate this approach in countering the cultural messaging of the Nazis. In fact the British looked back on their propaganda effort during the First World War with extreme distaste. In 1929 a senior Foreign Office diplomat wrote to protest against the use of any form of propaganda in promoting the UK's international interests which he described as a 'sinister activity'.¹ In a debate in 1938 in the House of Commons Harold Nicholson stated "During the war we lied damnably. I think that some of our lies have done us tremendous harm and I should not like to see such propaganda again".²

It was against such a background of mistrust about the dangers of overt propaganda that discussions took place about how the United Kingdom should organise its cultural relations activities in order to counter fascist propaganda. It was decided that what was needed was an organisation that would "conduct British cultural propaganda with other countries on the basis of reciprocity, sending out British speakers abroad and bringing foreign speakers to the UK to lecture here and meet people of similar interests in this country. It will also establish English libraries for the free exchange of learning and ideas".³

This was the first mention of libraries as an important arm of cultural relations and it sent a powerful message that the United Kingdom would conduct international cultural relations in a very different way to the fascist powers of Germany and Italy. British cultural relations would be about the sharing of ideas, reciprocal exchange, and the need to listen and learn from others. In this libraries were seen as key to the success of the UK's new cultural relations strategy. Thus in 1934 the *British Council for Relations with Other Countries* was established. In 1936 this rather lengthy name was abbreviated to the *British Council*.⁴

The first British Council offices were established in countries under growing pressure from Nazi and fascist ideas and influences—in Romania, Poland, Austria, Egypt, Argentina, and Portugal. Libraries and reading rooms were central to the British Council mission from its founding years. Libraries were seen as safe spaces where anyone could come to obtain unrestricted access to books and journals which were not censored and where the open exchange of information and ideas was to be encouraged.

Opposing fascism: the Second World War and its aftermath (1939-1950)

During the Second World War the British Council saw its mission as being to maintain free access to ideas in countries where there was a struggle for influence taking place between the Allies and the Axis powers. This was particularly the case in countries like Romania, Portugal, Spain, Argentina, and Egypt. The following particularly graphic account of Nazi Germany's methods in Portugal was given by an anonymous writer in the Annual Report of 1940-41⁵:

“International conferences held in Portugal were attended by disproportionately large German delegations; aeroplanes stuffed with learned Germans descended at the last moment to swamp the delegations of other countries and bands of German tourists devoted themselves assiduously to sightseeing in the slight leisure left by more assiduous propaganda.”

The British Council's response to the challenge of the war was to increase its library and arts programmes, as well as supporting the teaching of English, scholarship and exchange programmes. British Council libraries now offered access to a wide range of books and periodicals and demonstrated the value and importance of free thinking and the right to uncensored knowledge. This approach had a significant impact in the countries in which the British Council was then operating.

Olivia Manning in her novel *The Balkan Trilogy* captures the drama and danger of these days with its descriptions of the British Council library in Bucharest in 1940 operating under growing threat of an Iron Guard putsch. In one very dramatic episode the library is ransacked, the books and periodicals scattered across the road, the windows of the building are smashed. One of her characters reflects that in the short term you can destroy books and libraries but you can never destroy the ideals of free expression that they represent.

Libraries were linked to the concept of open debate and discussion. This was about creating safe spaces for people to meet and share their thinking and ideas. This is a powerful concept which has a strong resonance today in countries where free expression is under threat. The very popular British film actor, Leslie Howard, now best remembered for his role as Ashley Wilkes in the 1939 film *Gone with the Wind* was a great supporter of the British Council's work during this period and it was while returning from a British Council library lecture tour that he was killed when his plane was shot down by the Luftwaffe over the Bay of Biscay in June 1943.

In 1945 following the collapse of the Nazi regime, the British Council was at the forefront of opening up libraries across East and Central Europe in order to counter the growing Soviet threat in many of these countries to liberal ideas.

Maintaining free access to knowledge and ideas during the Cold War (1950-1990)

In the first phase of the Cold War, the British Council struggled to maintain cultural centres and libraries in the countries falling under Soviet control. The British Council—and its libraries—were seen as a direct threat to the Soviet regimes in many of these countries. In Czechoslovakia for example a British Council staff member, Dr Arna Rides, defected and accused the British Council of conducting a policy that was hostile to the new Czech Communist government and “following the train of those who want to plunge humanity into the horrors of a new war”⁶. By 1950 the British Council had been closed in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria. It survived only in Poland and Yugoslavia. In these two countries the British Council Libraries remained amongst the few places where people could go and get unrestricted access to Western literature, knowledge and books. In Germany, the British Council launched a major libraries and information initiative to counter Soviet propaganda. This was called *Die Brucken* (Bridges). Libraries and cultural centres were set up in major cities across West Germany and these provided access to the latest British books and magazines. This was a hugely popular offer and at its peak in the mid 1950’s several hundred thousand Germans were library members.

As the struggle between the West and the Soviet political systems intensified, the British Council expanded its role to work in countries across Africa, Asia and the Middle East in order to counter the growing influence of Soviet Russia. This was the period when British Council libraries reached their peak of influence with over 200 libraries in existence. Large lending and reference libraries were set up in countries like India, Pakistan, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Iran, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Kenya, and Sudan. Many of these libraries were extensive and offered a wide selection of books and periodicals in English literature, arts, sciences, medicine and business. In 1982 the British Council Library in Mumbai for example issued over 360,000 books to its members.⁷ Worldwide over a million people were now members of British Council Libraries.

However, it was the work that was done in many parts of Asia and Africa to develop national and local library systems, particularly academic, specialist and public libraries, which has left a lasting impression. Educational aid through technical assistance and training programmes, and scholarships, now became a major part of the British Council’s work in the developing world. Libraries were very much part of this effort. The aim was to ensure that access to knowledge and ideas was made as widely available as possible to people in all these countries. Local publishing was also encouraged and schemes set up to train and develop both local publishers and librarians. In the late 1950’s for example, the redoubtable Evelyn Evans, on secondment from the British Council to the Ghana Library Board, helped to develop the public library system in Ghana. Her book *A Tropical Library Service: The Story of Ghana’s Libraries* was published in 1964 and became an unexpected best seller in the UK and in Africa.⁸

In the 1970's and 1980's there was considerable technical support from the UK's Overseas Development Administration (ODA) for the training of librarians and publishers and the provision of books and journals. The *Library Development Scheme* and the *Books Presentation Scheme* were two major ODA funded programmes that were managed by the British Council during this period. These programmes supported important library and publishing development projects in countries such as Indonesia, Egypt, Syria, India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Ghana and Sri Lanka. Between 1970 and 1990 over 10,000 libraries in over 40 countries benefited directly from these programmes. In delivering this work the British Council was strongly supported by its Library Advisory Committee, drawn from leading library and information science professionals in the UK. It also worked in close partnership with leading professional bodies such as the *Library Association*, which itself had an active international programme during these years, and a range of the UK's public and academic libraries, including the *British Library*.

The development of libraries and local publishing industries was central to the British Council's cultural relations mission during these years. Strengthening access to knowledge, and ideas was seen as critical to the development of countries in Africa and Asia. This conviction was strongly rooted in the British experience of the value of public libraries and their role in raising standards of education and creating a sense of social inclusion. The main challenge that many countries faced—particularly those in poorer economic environments—was how to sustain these libraries once the UK's funding for them dried up.

From the post-communist space to cyber space: reinventing libraries in the 1990's

The collapse of the Soviet system in the period 1989-1991 opened up new opportunities for the British Council to re-establish libraries once again across Central and Eastern Europe as well as investing in a major programme of English Language teaching. Libraries were opened in Prague, Bucharest, Sofia, Sarajevo, Zagreb, Skopje, Kiev, Moscow, Bratislava, and Budapest. These were additional to the existing British Council libraries in Warsaw and Belgrade that had never been closed during the era of the Cold War. From 1989 a major effort was also launched by the UK Government's *Know How Fund* to support the development of democracy and democratic institutions in all the countries of the former Soviet Bloc. The British Council was involved in helping to deliver this programme.⁹ Though much of the programme focused on strengthening government and civil society institutions, there was funding and support for the development of public and academic libraries as well as for local publishing. A key feature of this approach was the launch of a series of *Book and Library Sector Studies* by the UK based consultancy *International Book Development (IBD)*. This provided a system wide view of where support for books and libraries was most needed in a particular country. The British Council was an active partner of both the Know How Fund and IBD during this period and collaborated on many of these studies.

In 1996, with the arrival of the internet, the British Council was faced with the challenge of how to adapt its global network of over two hundred libraries to the opportunities of the new digital age. It became increasingly clear that information would

now be available through the internet and this required a fundamental rethink of where in the world libraries were still needed, and what type of print and digital collections should be available in them.

One thing was clear though. At this point in time large parts of the developing world were still well behind in terms of telecommunications connectivity and there was the risk of a major digital divide opening up between those countries where telecoms access was available and those where it was very difficult. In 1997 in order to respond to this challenge the British Council was instrumental in helping establishing the *Global Knowledge Partnership* (GKP) with the World Bank and other partners to help bridge the digital divide and increase access to the new knowledge revolution in the developing world.¹⁰ The *Global Knowledge Partnership* focused on areas such as national ICT policy frameworks, the creation of local digital content, and issues around access. In particular there was a lot of consideration given to how to support public and academic libraries in the digital age and ensure that librarians were given appropriate training to cope with the demands of a new information era. The British Council played an active role in helping to organise both the first major Global Knowledge Conference in Toronto in 1997 and the second one in Kuala Lumpur in 2000, which was attended by over 1500 IT professionals, policy makers, publishers and librarians from around the world.

Coming full circle: libraries as spaces for safe dialogue and knowledge exchange in societies under pressure

Between 2001 and 2010 there was a widespread closure of British Council libraries around the world as the impact of new digital technologies gathered momentum. Libraries survived in South Asia and in a few countries in Africa and the Balkans but closed almost everywhere else. This was the end of an era as libraries had been a key part of the way the British Council carried out its cultural relations work in so many countries for 70 years. With the closure of libraries also went the concept of an open and accessible cultural and knowledge space which anyone could enter and use. The consequences and impact of this loss were poorly understood at the time. There was a brief attempt to reinvent the concept of libraries during this period through the creation of a network of *Knowledge and Learning Centres* (KLCs). These were physical spaces located in British Council offices where students could access a range of on line and print information resources and also connect with learning communities in the UK and around the world through the latest teleconferencing facilities. The KLC programme ran for about 5 years and was eventually wound up as the speed of new digital technologies rendered fixed site digital access spaces obsolete. The era of the mobile phone and laptop had arrived.

Since 2010 there has been a reinvention of public libraries in many parts of the world. The new public library buildings in Birmingham, Liverpool and in London for example as well as in cities like Rotterdam and Berlin are exciting spaces where people come together for a whole range of learning, social and cultural activities. Alongside this, the struggle to support the free and open expression of ideas is never over and since 2011 there is a growing realisation that in some parts of the world there is still a real need to support physical libraries as safe spaces where people can access information that is not censored or controlled and where they can freely exchange ideas with each other.

Countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh are at the sharp end of this new struggle for freedom of expression and it is here and in the neighbouring countries of South Asia that the British Council has launched a *Library Revolution Programme* which will fuse the best aspects of physical and digital library spaces and collections to create safe and secure information access for as many people as possible in societies where the free exchange of ideas is currently under pressure.

British Council libraries in Pakistan were closed in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. However, the plan now is to re-open them again in Lahore and Karachi. The news of these plans generated great excitement across Pakistan and was the number one news item in the Pakistani media for several days after it was announced. The plan is to use the British Council Libraries in these two cities and a further six partner libraries as a focal point for outreach and support.

We should not underestimate the risks though—ideas and libraries are dangerous and will attract threats and challenges. Whilst the black flags of ISIS still fly, whilst Boko Haram challenges knowledge, British Council libraries in countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are keeping open a space for the free exchange of ideas. A place and a space where people can come together—physically and virtually—without fear to debate, discuss and learn. Libraries, like facts, are stubborn and dangerous to those who fear open free communities. In Sri Lanka the British Council has recently opened a new library in the northern city of Jaffna, which was at the heart of the Sri Lankan civil war for over 25 years, a bitter and divisive conflict which impoverished this once great educational and cultural city. The library is open to all communities in Jaffna and is a place for learning, study, and academic reflection. It is also a safe space for intellectual exploration and the sharing of ideas. The new British Council library in Jaffna works closely with local schools and universities and also has excellent collaboration with the Jaffna Public library, now restored after its destruction in 1981, and once again a cultural beacon for the population of Northern Sri Lanka.

In conclusion

The contribution of libraries—both in their physical and digital forms—to sustaining the freedom of the human spirit can never be underestimated. This has been a guiding driver for the British Council in its work over the last 80 years and will remain so in the years ahead. Knowledge, ideas, and information have no boundaries and access to them is a universal right and benefit which needs to be respected, protected and promoted. It is this that we will lose if we lose libraries.

Notes

¹ 10 May 1929, Public Record office, FO 395/437.

² Commons Hansard, 5th Series, Vol.331, 16 February 1938.

³ Memorandum by R.A Leeper, 18 June 1934, Public Record Office.

⁴ Donaldson, Frances (1984). *The British Council – the first fifty years*. London, Jonathan Cape.

⁵ British Council Annual Report 1940-41, pp. 19-20.

- ⁶ “The British Council amongst the Warmongers”, *Szabad Nepo*, 11 February 1950
- ⁷ Donaldson, Frances (1984). *The British Council – the first fifty years*. London, Jonathan Cape, pp. 358.
- ⁸ Evans, Evelyn J.A. (1964). *Tropical library Service: The story of Ghana's Libraries*. Andre Deutsch.
- ⁹ Klaus Boehnke (ed.) (1990). *Israel and Europe: A complex relationship*. Springer.
- ¹⁰ Global Knowledge Partnership, see <http://www.globalknowledge.org>

What do we lose
when we lose a library?

**Preservation and digitization
of heritage collections**

The Endangered Archives Programme: a global approach to saving vulnerable material

Jody Butterworth



EAP266: History of Bolama, the first capital of Portuguese Guinea (1879-1941), as reflected in the Guinean National Historical Archives

This image, taken in 2010, is of the storage for the Ministry of Justice court documents in Bissau, after the civil war in Guinea-Bissau, from 1998-1999 and shows one of the most alarming situations that the Endangered Archives Programme has witnessed. The photograph was sent to the Endangered Archives Office as part of a project¹ looking into the history of Bolama, the first capital of Portuguese Guinea. Part of the project involved the transfer of these documents to the National Historical Archives (INEP) where they were reorganised.

However, I should start by explaining a little bit about the Endangered Archives Programme (EAP). It was set up in 2004, and is funded by Arcadia (previously the Lisbet Rausing Charitable Fund) and administered by the British Library. The original funding timetable for the Arcadia grant was £10 million over 10 years. We have now celebrated our 10th anniversary and at the current rate of expenditure the original grant is likely to last approximately 15 years. To date, we have 274 projects in 80 countries².

The Endangered Archives Programme has three main aims: the first, to contribute to the preservation of mankind's documentary heritage, particularly in parts of the world where archives are at increased risk and resources may be limited. This has meant the grants are awarded primarily in Africa, Asia, Latin America and parts of Europe. The second aim is to raise awareness of threatened material and to encourage other initiatives, and finally, the third is to help improve archival standards in areas such as cataloguing, collection management and preventive conservation.

The goal of the programme is to aid academic research by identifying and preserving collections that are at risk of neglect, physical deterioration, destruction, inappropriate or uninformed storage conditions and poor handling. The Endangered Archives Programme has a broad interpretation of the word 'archive'; it can include printed sources such as books, newspapers, periodicals and ephemera; manuscripts, visual material such as photographs, prints and drawings; video, film and sound recordings. There have even been projects documenting rock inscriptions in Libya and temple murals in Tamil Nadu.

The risks to archives are diverse and may include natural disasters. The Endangered Archives Programme has felt this perhaps more over the past 12 months than previously. Projects have been put on hold due to the Ebola outbreak. Cyclone Pam in March demonstrated the threat some EAP locations are constantly under. Two of our earliest projects are situated in Tuvalu³, (low-lying islands in the South Pacific). In the initial application, they focused on the constant risk of material being saturated and damaged by tidal surges, or, at the very worst being washed away altogether. There has also been the devastating news about Nepal where EAP has eight projects both completed and current. What was reassuring was the speed with which people were able to contact us to let us know that they were safe, but for example the Madan Puraskar Pustakalaya Library, the largest repository of Nepali language material (home to more than 35,000 books, 50,000 rare photographs, 15,000 ephemera and over 10,000 manuscripts) had its premises deemed hazardous and has to find alternative secure storage. A further Nepalese project to safely store and digitise rare glass plate photographs had just been awarded prior to the earthquake, but has had to be put on hold⁴. On a more positive note, the ninth project in Nepal was just been awarded and will start in October 2015 to digitise medieval manuscripts in individual and Vihara collections from various Newar settlements in the Kathmandu Valley⁵.

It is an extremely humbling experience to go home after a day in the office, to listen to the news and realise the conditions under which some of the grant-holders work. This was clear last year during the project to digitise the archive of the poet Taras Shevchenko⁶ during the height of the unrest in Kiev. I have to also mention another country that has made the headlines, this time due to the wanton destruction of heritage, and that is Mali.

EAP has five projects in Mali—three of which have been based at the UNESCO World Heritage site of Djenné⁷, 220 miles south of its twin town of Timbuktu, both major centres of Islamic learning. In 2006, a library was built with the support of the European Community Fund and the Embassy of the United States. It belongs to the whole population of Djenné but the manuscripts deposited remain the property of private families. The initial pilot project in 2009 discovered nearly 3,000 manuscripts in 13 collections. The second project increased the amount held at the library from just over 2,000 manuscripts held by 33 families to 4,000 from 70 families. The current project hopes to increase this number further by not only looking at private collections within Djenné but by researching the neighbouring villages as well. The other two

Malian projects include one, based in Bamako, digitising the collections created by the earliest professional Malian photographers⁸ and a successful survey of historical colonial collections of the archives of Bandiagara, Dogon Country⁹.

Although this conference focusses on the deliberate destruction of the past, EAP is also concerned about the subtle man-made threat caused by homogenisation and where there is a decline in the value of traditional cultures. These cultures are sometimes at odds with what is considered progressive and this may increase the threat to documentary evidence of a pre-modernised society. To help address this, EAP funds awards that focus on a 'pre-modern' or 'pre-industrial' period of history, though this is very difficult to qualify. However, it is more likely that archives are at risk due to lack of funds, general neglect or lack of knowledge of how to ideally store material. The majority of projects fall into this category.



EAP454: Locating and surveying early religious and related records in Mizoram, India

The scope of the Endangered Archives Programme is potentially overwhelming and realistically it can only make the smallest of contributions. Therefore, when it was being set up, there was a conscious decision that it should be reactive with its awarding of grants. In this way, the programme can be confident that the local archival partner wishes to be involved. There has also been a decision that although national organisations may be considered, it is more likely for smaller, independent and private institutions or collections to be awarded funds, as it is felt that they are possibly less known, will have fewer resources and will benefit more.

The decision as to which applications are funded falls on the EAP Panel, a group of experts from around the world who meet annually at the British Library in April to discuss each application. The criteria for evaluating applications consist of eight points:

- Urgency
- Vulnerability
- Significance
- Feasibility
- Age of material
- Expertise and experience of the applicant
- Provision for professional development of local staff
- Access to the digital copies.

The decision process is extremely supportive. Instead of a simple award or decline, the panel either offers the award; gives a conditional award (when the applicant must provide slightly more information); suggests a deferred award (where the proposal is worthy of support but an improved application is needed and therefore would need to be resubmitted in the future); then there is a rejection if it does not fall within EAP's remit.

There are two types of grant available. The first is for a Pilot Project, which usually runs for six months and is in the region of £10,000. Its focus is to carry out a survey of an archival collection and includes the digitisation of a small proportion of material. People are encouraged to apply for a pilot project before they turn to a Major Grant, which is in the region of £50,000 and can last for roughly two years. This will fund researchers to locate significant collections, transfer them to a suitable local archival home where appropriate, create digital copies and deliver them to the local archival institution which is considered to have the master digital copy. A second set is deposited with the British Library. The Endangered Archives Programme encourages training for local staff in cataloguing, preventive conservation and in digitisation. The original material will not be removed from the country of origin, unless temporarily for conservation purposes, and if this does happen, permission from the highest governmental authority must be obtained. This has only happened once in EAP's 10 year history.

The rationale of EAP is not only to preserve and identify vulnerable material, but also to make it available to international scholarship. This is achieved by making the digital copies accessible via the British Library and local institutions. The British Library provides online access through the EAP website and currently we have five million images online. Each month we have in the region of 60,000 page visits to our collections, with browsers coming from over 140 countries, with between a third to forty per cent of visitors coming from the UK, the USA and India. Other countries that make up a large proportion of visitors include: Pakistan, Russia, Indonesia, Canada and Mongolia. The Endangered Archives Office team is directed by the Head of Digital Scholarship at the British Library and is made up of three permanent members of staff; the Grants Administrator, Curator and Cataloguer. The rest of my paper will focus on just one recent pilot project to show what can be achieved in a relatively short amount of time, with a very modest amount of money.

EAP596¹⁰ was awarded in 2012 and was carried out on the Caribbean island of Anguilla during May-June 2013. The principal grant-holder was Jan Liebaers from the Anguilla Archaeological and Historical Society with two co-applicants; Andrew Pearson, research associate at Bristol University and Ben Jeffs, an expert focusing on heritage protection in developing countries. The project was based at Anguilla's Court House and was realized

in conjunction with the Public Library. The objective was to identify records pre-dating Anguilla's independence, to produce a preliminary listing for further cataloguing and preservation, and if possible, to combine the records into a single collection. Training of local staff would include trial digitisation of the most significant material.

Because of Anguilla's colonial history its records are housed mainly at the National Archives at Kew, London or the National Archives of St Kitts and Nevis. This had bred a general indifference to the island's documentary heritage, added to which, neither national nor local cultural institutions had taken official responsibility for the island's archives and the government did not have any retention or disposal policy for its material. Prior to the 2012 EAP grant, archival work carried out had been on a volunteer basis by the Anguilla Archaeological and Historical Society and whenever they heard about the possible destruction of records, they tried to intervene. A further problem was that many of the records that had existed were subsequently destroyed by natural disasters, most recently the hurricanes of 1995 and 1999.

At the start of the project, historical records were known to exist and a survey was carried out to assess where they were and what condition they were in. It was truly an island-wide search for material: repositories included the Court House 'Archive Room', the Court Registrar, Judicial Office, Government ministries and departments, Radio Anguilla, the Public Library, Anguilla National Trust, various church records and the private collection of the Anguilla Heritage Museum. There was a fortnight allocated for training local staff (mainly from the Public Library) on digitisation, data management and document listing. The project had publicity on the island, which included both radio and newspaper coverage. But perhaps most ingeniously it was the 'Digitisation Day' that caused the most awareness of the project. Members of the public were invited to bring their family documents to the Public Library and staff offered to digitise their old photographs and archives. Material included photographs of historic buildings, family and social scenes from Anguilla's past as well as an album showing the hurricane damage of 1999. A lot of photographs and newspaper cuttings brought along were about Trevor 'Ras Bucket' Davis, the island's first international sprinter. His own collection of photographs, athletic meeting passes and other memorabilia generated a large amount of interest.

During this period, the Anguilla Archaeological and Historical Society held several gatherings. At its Annual General Meeting, a lecture was given where the public were invited to hear about the project. The society had two consultations at the end of the project, one with the Governor of Anguilla, the other with the island's Executive Council to present its findings, raise issues and discuss options for future curation of material. The most impressive achievement to happen during this time was actually surplus to the objectives of the pilot project. Found in black bin bags housed in the Court House were some issues of *The Beacon*, a publication set up during Anguilla's revolution of 1967. It became an eight page weekly newspaper with the final issue printed in October 1971. There were many that were missing but it captivated local interest, lost issues were found and a complete run was compiled by various sources offering their copies to be digitised. On May 28th, to coincide with Anguilla Day, the publication went online and within the first month of it going live, several hundred visitors accessed the website.

It was absolutely evident from these activities carried out during the three month project that it raised public awareness of the necessity to preserve historical documents and encouraged both government officials and locals to value their documentary heritage.

I hope that by giving this in-depth example of one of our pilot projects and by explaining the aims of the Endangered Archives Programme I have shown what can be achieved through collaboration and training, which is at the core of EAP. Hopefully this will result in substantial improvements in the preservation of documentary heritage in areas of the world where resources are limited. I am also keen to take the opportunity to remind anybody who may consider applying for a grant in the future that the call for preliminary applications goes out each September with a closing date for submission at the beginning of November. So do have a look at our website¹¹.

Acknowledgement

The information regarding EAP596 has come from the Final Report co-written by Jan Liebaers, Andrew Pearson, and Ben Jeffs. The Endangered Archives Programme would like to thank Jan Liebaers for agreeing to have this information made available for this publication.

Notes

- ¹ EAP266: History of Bolama, the first capital of Portuguese Guinea (1879-1941), as reflected in the Guinean National Historical Archives.
- ² All figures were correct at the time of the conference 'What do we lose when we lose a library' held 9-11 September 2015.
- ³ EAP005 and EAP110 Tuvalu National Archives Pilot and Major projects.
- ⁴ EAP838: Digitisation of the photographic collection from DirghaMan and GaneshMan Chitrakar Art Foundation started in November 2015.
- ⁵ EAP790: The Melvin Seiden Award: Digital documentation of endangered medieval manuscripts in individual and Vihāra collections from various Newār settlements in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal.
- ⁶ EAP657: Saving the original lifetime archive of the well-known Ukrainian poet, artist and thinker, T.H. Shevchenko.
- ⁷ As of April 2016 there are now four projects in Djenné: EAP657: Saving the original lifetime archive of the well-known Ukrainian poet, artist and thinker, T.H. Shevchenko manuscripts in Djenné, Mali, with a view to a major project of preservation, digitisation and cataloguing; EAP488: Major project to digitise and preserve the manuscripts of Djenné, Mali; EAP690: Project to digitise and preserve the manuscripts of Djenné and surrounding villages and EAP879: Continued digitisation and preservation of the Arabic manuscripts of Djenné and surrounding villages.
- ⁸ EAP449: Social history and cultural heritage of Mali: preserving the archives of professional photographers.
- ⁹ EAP764: Preserving the memory of the colonial past in Dogon country. A survey of historical collections of the endangered archives of Bandiagara.
- ¹⁰ EAP596: Safeguarding Anguilla's heritage: a survey of the endangered records of Anguilla.
- ¹¹ <http://eap.bl.uk>

On the way to a nationwide strategy for the preservation of our written cultural heritage: the “Koordinierungsstelle für die Erhaltung des schriftlichen Kulturguts” (KEK)

Ursula Hartwieg

Introduction

“What do we lose when we lose a library?” – “How do we lose a library?” – “Is the loss of a library always evident at the first glance?” – “What should be done in order to prevent losing a library?” These were some of the fundamental issues facing the participants of the conference in Leuven. Apart from war—past and ongoing—there are other catastrophes which very much draw the attention to the loss of libraries or the loss of written cultural heritage in general. This can easily be illustrated by some incidents which took place in Germany in recent years. In 2002, the river Mulde bursts its banks and flooded the town of Grimma in Saxony and the local museum and its library suffered severe damage. On September 2, 2004, a devastating fire raged in the Duchess Anna Amalia Library in Weimar. Apparently a defective electrical cord caused the outbreak of the fire. It destroyed the upper floors of the historic building, which belongs to the UNESCO World Heritage, and over 50,000 volumes of this outstanding collection. Another 62,000 volumes were severely damaged.



Fire in the Duchess Anna Amalia library. © Maik Schuck, HAAB Weimar

And finally the whole building of the Historical Archive of the City of Cologne, one of the largest local authority archives in Europe, collapsed on March 3, 2009. It collapsed because of an underground landslide into the subway tunnel which was constructed for a new subway line and which might be the cause for this catastrophe: Two young residents of neighboring buildings were killed and over 90 percent of the holdings were buried by the collapse.

In all these cases the loss of books or archival documents attracts huge public attention and as if it were needed, these catastrophes have made us aware of the vulnerability of our written cultural heritage. This ultimately results in a beneficial effect for in a way these catastrophes bring about their own remedies, in that in such spectacular cases press and politicians usually quickly react with news coverage and rescue funds. But there are even larger, ever-present threats, which lead to massive damage. They have two causes: on the one hand internal damage can be caused by the immanent properties of the materials themselves. Acid corrosion for example results among other things from replacing rags with wood pulp in the industrial processes for producing paper since the middle of the nineteenth century so the problem lies within the material itself. On the other hand damage can be caused by external factors, such as inappropriate storage or lack of professional knowledge. Both internal and external damage pose an existential threat: instead of a sudden incident like a fire, they are creeping and continuous catastrophes and moreover they do not usually arrest the attention of the public. Therefore a nationwide strategy is badly needed to deal with this scenario. It should not be tolerated any longer that books and archival material are being lost every day to the national memory as a result of these creeping catastrophes, largely unnoticed by the public. This is one of the reasons why in Germany 2011 finally we saw the founding of the KEK, the abbreviation for the *Koordinierungsstelle für die Erhaltung des schriftlichen Kulturguts* ("Coordination Office for the Preservation of the Written Cultural Heritage").

Past initiatives

In the last few decades several parties or stakeholders responsible for the preservation of written culture have tried to develop adequate strategies to confront the challenge. The first coordinated approaches were put into practice at the level of individual federal states since the 1980's: Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, North Rhine-Westfalia, Lower Saxony and Saxony, to name just a few. The programmes implemented vary in scope and size: some of them support both libraries and archives, some of them are limited to either archives or libraries in public ownership or focus on a special damage pattern like acid corrosion. By the 1990's politicians at federal level had become aware of the massive extent of acid corrosion and the huge costs of the technology of mass deacidification. In response the Conference of Ministers of Culture and Education ("*Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK)*") issued two nationwide recommendations—one for libraries in 1993 and another for archives in 1995: In both areas every institution should use additional funding in order to be able to preserve 1 percent of its holdings.¹ In 2009 however the Conference of Ministers of Culture and Education had to conclude that these recommendations were implemented neither sufficiently nor extensively.

Finally to the national level: in 2003 the German parliament appointed the Committee of Enquiry “*Kultur in Deutschland*” (“Culture in Germany”) in order to take stock of the diverse cultural landscape in Germany and to recommend legislative action in the field of cultural policies to the German federal government. In its final and comprehensive report in 2007 the Committee advised the federal government and the federal states “to jointly develop a national concept for the preservation of endangered written cultural assets. The Committee furthermore advised the federal government to issue a support programme for the physical rescue, digital recording and digital safeguarding of endangered written cultural assets of national and European relevance as well as to advocate the extension of such support within the European Union.”²² These recommendations clearly indicate that dealing with the preservation of German written culture can be successful only on a nationwide level, with strong commitment on the part of the German federal government—always taking into account the cultural sovereignty of the federal states. There followed, however, no immediate implementation of these recommendations. By 2007 no nationwide coordinated strategy for the preservation of German written culture had been developed let alone implemented—despite the massive threats which demand it. Although dedicated projects at federal and state levels already existed their effectiveness remained project-oriented and regionally limited. As a consequence, the existing, often selective efforts were not sufficient to protect all the threatened documents from destruction throughout Germany in a sustainable and effective manner.

But in 2009 the situation began to change: A lobby group called the *Allianz Schriftliches Kulturgut Erhalten*—that is the Alliance for the Preservation of Written Cultural Assets—sprang into action. The Alliance was established in 2001 as an association of twelve archives and libraries with comprehensive historic holdings. Its main goal is “to safeguard the originals of the rich cultural and scientific tradition in Germany against the threats to their existence and to firmly establish the preservation of this tradition as a national task in the public awareness.”²³ In spring 2009 the Alliance published a memorandum addressed to the German federal and state governments in order to organise the nationwide preservation of originals more efficiently and to promote their conservation in a sustainable manner. The Memorandum is called “Preserving the Future” and it contains seven practical recommendations, which take up those of the Committee of Enquiry “Culture in Germany”, to form a national strategy, to implement a funding programme and to put a figure on the costs: “The federal government should strengthen the preservation of the cultural assets of national relevance in their original form by funds amounting to 10 million Euro per year. This sum roughly equates to the expenditure hitherto already available to libraries and archives for this purpose from their responsible bodies.”²⁴ And they even go further by anticipating the KEK: “The federal and state governments should establish a central coordination office at an existing institution to provide for an approach based on the division of labour in the field of preserving the originals and to organise the distribution of funds.”²⁵

The Alliance did very well in presenting the Memorandum to the Federal President of Germany on April 28, 2009, thereby gaining maximum political publicity.



Official presentation of the Memorandum to the Federal President of Germany, Horst Köhler, on April 28, 2009. © Jörg F. Müller

And they received unexpected support: on March 3, 2009, a couple of weeks before the Historical Archive of the City of Cologne had collapsed. There was much pressure for political action. The Minister of State for Culture took up the issue and both the recommendation to develop a national strategy for the preservation of written culture and to establish a central coordination office found their way into the coalition agreement at national level between CDU, CSU und FDP in October 2009. Thanks to the combination of historical occurrences and the fresh impact of the catastrophe of the Historical Archive of the City of Cologne some ideas of the Alliance very quickly turned into political issues.

The KEK

All in all it took two years of negotiations between the federal government and the state governments before they agreed to establish the KEK. This agreement was absolutely necessary because of the German concept of the autonomy of the federal states in cultural affairs. Although the federal government took up the initiative, it was unable to act on its own but instead had to negotiate both the concept of and the funding for the KEK with the sixteen state governments. Federal and state governments jointly agreed to support the KEK for a pilot period of five years with an annual budget of 600,000 Euro, 500,000 Euros of which come from the Federal budget of the Minister of State for Culture. A further 100,000 Euros are provided by the federal states via their Cultural Foundation, the *Kulturstiftung der Länder (KSL)*.

In August 2011 the KEK started its work with two and a half positions: a half-time position as research assistant, a full-time position as executive officer and a full-time position as head of the KEK.⁶ It is established under the auspices of the *Stiftung*

Preußischer Kulturbesitz (Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation – SPK) and situated at the *Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin* (Berlin State Library). Its work is supervised by a five-person advisory board: two members represent libraries, the other three have special functions in the field of archives.⁷ The authorities commissioned the KEK with one main task: to develop a national conservation strategy for written cultural heritage in Germany. Added to this are various other tasks which all aim at counteracting the risks to written cultural heritage, for example awareness raising among the public and creating professional networks. In all matters concerning the permanent national preservation of collections, the KEK is a central cross-federal state institution in Germany, operating in a coordinating and advisory function.

Right from the beginning the KEK was able to annually fund model projects for preservation throughout Germany. These projects are not only highly visible for specialists, the public, press and politicians, they also generate useful insights for developing the nationwide strategy. A proposal for funding of a project has to fulfil four criteria: it has to be exemplary, innovative and promotionally effective and must of course correspond with the annual thematic focus. There is strong competition, but obviously, given the limited financial means of the KEK, nationwide support for every archive and library cannot be provided and only a small choice of model projects can be funded. An outline of the previous funding activities of the KEK shows that 2.4 million Euros have been used to support model projects. In other words, over six years the KEK has passed on two thirds of the 3.6 million Euros it received to other archives and libraries nationwide:

- 2010: “The start” (funding amount: ca. 523,000 Euro)
- 2011: “Flames, Floods and Disintegration” (funding amount: ca. 513,000 Euro)
- 2012: “Joining Forces” (funding amount: ca. 402,000 Euro)
- 2013: “Provisioning in Large Format” (funding amount: ca. 300,000 Euro)
- 2014: “Fading Scripture – Fading Colour” (funding amount: ca. 280,000 Euro)
- 2015: “Forgotten Treasures” (funding amount: ca. 413,000 Euro)

A look at all 370 applications and their distribution among the federal states indicates that the prior existence of preservation programmes in federal states such as Baden-Württemberg, North Rhine-Westphalia or Saxony produces specialist knowledge which in its turn produces more applications. Federal states without any preservation programmes generate fewer applications no matter to which degree the local holdings are already endangered. In order to analyse the model projects with regard to their content they are classified into six groups: archive material, library material, emergency prevention, infrastructure, expertise and public relations. The statistics for the distribution according to these six categories show that the majority of the projects focus on the holdings of libraries and archives themselves. This, however, is no surprise, as in the first years the funding tried to support especially small institutions, which often lack professional know-how and infrastructure. Since its foundation the KEK has supported 194 model projects in archives, libraries and sometimes museums throughout Germany. All of them are concerned with the preservation of written cultural heritage, whether by preserving the objects themselves, by emergency prevention, by developing innovative practices in archives and libraries or by generating an awareness of the huge challenges of preservation. The KEK has collected and made useable the knowledge generated by funding these projects as part of its main task.

The nationwide strategy for the preservation of written culture

The development of a nationwide strategy, however, obviously cannot be nourished merely by the knowledge gained through the funding of model projects. It needs more data, and it needs more data than the small KEK-team can produce. Therefore the relevant ministries were asked to appoint experts in matters of preservation, conservation and restoration, one librarian and one archivist in each state and at government level. Thus the KEK has created a nationwide network of experts by means of which comprehensive data concerning institutions in public ownership could be collected. This set of data was built on two questionnaires: the first contained seven questions and concentrated on the existing infrastructure for preservation, conservation and restoration. The second contained six questions on library and archive material and the extent of its damage. The KEK organised two nationwide expert meetings in Berlin in summer 2013 and spring 2014 in order both to develop the questions and discuss the results. In consultation with the advisory board of the KEK these results were analysed to produce definitive data for the nationwide strategy.

Thus the whole portfolio of the KEK—funding model projects, awareness raising, creating and maintaining networks, mediating between experts and politicians as well as collecting data—contributes to its main objective: the development of the nationwide strategy for the preservation of our written cultural heritage. Of course this huge task is assisted by specialists' know-how and political guidance from various partners. First of all there are the political supporters at state and federal level who established the KEK and commissioned it to develop the strategy. Then there are the KEK itself, its advisory board, the Alliance and the boards of the three nationwide committees in the archive and library sector with expert knowledge in collection preservation issues (*Bundeskonzferenz der Kommunalarchive beim Deutschen Städtetag (BKK)*, *Deutscher Bibliotheksverband (dbv)*, *Konferenz der Leiterinnen und Leiter der Archivverwaltungen des Bundes und der Länder (KLA)*). Finally the nationwide expert network initiated by the KEK makes up the largest group numerically. All these parts have to fit together like interlocking cogwheels which symbolize the way the KEK works.

In autumn 2015 the nationwide strategy was published under the title *Die Erhaltung des schriftlichen Kulturguts in Archiven und Bibliotheken in Deutschland. Bundesweite Handlungsempfehlungen für die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien und die Kultusministerkonferenz*.⁸ For the first time it offers a nationwide, cross-sectoral and comprehensive set of data concerning archive and library holdings, existing damage and future risk. In order to preserve a minimum of 1 percent of the already damaged and endangered holdings per year a sum of 63.2 million Euro annually was needed.⁹ At present, however, only some 14 million Euro have been procured for this purpose at federal, state and municipal level so there is a huge need for political, professional and budgetary negotiations in the near future.

As for the KEK itself negotiations have already been successful. The current coalition agreement on national level between CDU/CSU and SPD ("Shaping Germany's Future") contains the following paragraph:

Preserving the written cultural inheritance is a nationwide duty. The corresponding coordination center at the Berlin State Library will be continued beyond 2015 on the basis of an already planned evaluation and in consultation with the federal states, if necessary by means of a Federal Government/federal states funding program.¹⁰

Following its positive evaluation the KEK will be funded by federal and state governments up to the end of 2020 and as the coalition agreement recognizes preserving the written cultural heritage as a nationwide duty the way has been opened for negotiations at all levels. This is a huge task that can only be undertaken when all involved parties join forces and fulfil their respective tasks. A successful implementation of the cross-sectoral strategy which the KEK has presented would not only lead to the establishment of preservation as a long-term task but would also ensure future access to Germany's written cultural heritage.

Notes

- ¹ "Empfehlungen der Kultusministerkonferenz zur Erhaltung der vom Papierzerfall bedrohten Bibliotheksbestände" (1993) and "Empfehlung der Kultusministerkonferenz zur Erhaltung der vom Papierzerfall bedrohten Archivbestände" (Beschluß der Kultusministerkonferenz vom 17.2.1995).
- ² *Kultur in Deutschland. Schlussbericht der Enquete-Kommission Kultur in Deutschland*, hrsg. vom Deutschen Bundestag, Drucksache 16/7000 vom 11.12.2007, p. 132: available at <http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/16/070/1607000.pdf> (accessed 1 May 2016).
- ³ Allianz zur Erhaltung des schriftlichen Kulturgutes – Alliance for the Preservation of Written Cultural Assets, *Preserving the Future. A Memorandum*. Berlin: Heenemann 2009, p. 3.
- ⁴ Ibid., p. 14.
- ⁵ Ibid., p. 15.
- ⁶ Cf. Koordinierungsstelle für die Erhaltung des schriftlichen Kulturguts (KEK), *Tätigkeitsbericht 2014*. Berlin: Gallery Print, 2014, pp. 34-35: available at http://kek-spk.de/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf_Downloads/KEK_Taetigkeitsbericht.pdf (accessed 1 May 2016).
- ⁷ Cf. Koordinierungsstelle für die Erhaltung des schriftlichen Kulturguts (KEK), *Tätigkeitsbericht 2014*, p. 35.
- ⁸ Download available at http://kek-spk.de/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf_Downloads/KEK_Bundesweite_Handlungsempfehlungen.pdf (accessed 1 May 2016).
- ⁹ Koordinierungsstelle für die Erhaltung des schriftlichen Kulturguts in Deutschland, *Die Erhaltung des schriftlichen Kulturguts in Archiven und Bibliotheken in Deutschland*. Berlin: Druckerei Rüss, 2015, p. 12.
- ¹⁰ "Deutschlands Zukunft gestalten – Koalitionsvertrag zwischen CDU, CSU und SPD, 18. Legislaturperiode," p. 92: available at <https://www.cdu.de/sites/default/files/media/dokumente/koalitionsvertrag.pdf> (accessed 1 May 2016).

The Sinai Library: a resource of continuing significance

Hieromonk Justin of Sinai

Sinai is a harsh desert of precipitous granite mountains and narrow, rock strewn valleys. The scriptures call it “the waste, howling wilderness” (Deuteronomy 32:10). In this severe and barren land, it is difficult to sustain life. And yet, it was here that hermits and anchorites came in the latter third and early fourth centuries, searching for places of solitude where they might pass their lives in prayer and fasting. But Sinai is more than a harsh desert. For it was here that God revealed himself in a special way to the prophet Moses, first at the bush that burned with fire without being consumed, and then at the peak of Sinai, where he received the Tablets of the Law. It was here that God said to Moses, “the place whereon thou standest is holy ground” (Exodus 3:5).

In the fourth century, this desert also became the goal of pilgrims, who made their way to Jerusalem, and if they had the time, the means, and the stamina, would continue on to Sinai. When Egeria and her fellow pilgrims visited the area around the year 383, they witnessed a flourishing monastic life, and were even then following an established pilgrim route. In the middle of the sixth century, the emperor Justinian ordered the construction of a basilica and high surrounding walls at the traditional site of the Burning Bush. The walls and the church have stood ever since. The roof beams of the basilica, the trusses, and even the purlins are intact from that time. The eighth beam from the back bears the inscription:

+ Ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας τοῦ εὐσεβ[εστάτου] ἡμῶν βασιλέως Ἰουστινιανοῦ +
+ For the salvation of our most pious Emperor Justinian +

The inscription was carved when he was still living. It would predate the year 565.

Sinai’s collection of icons is famous throughout the world. The most important were executed in the encaustic technique, and are dated to the sixth century. More than sixty icons date from before the tenth century, a period from which almost no other examples of panel painting have survived. The Sinai library is also renowned. The oldest manuscripts date from the fourth century. An eighth-century manuscript of the Psalms and Odes bears the scribe’s signature and the note, “The Psalter has been written in the place of God, Mount Sinai.” To be at Sinai is to step back into a world that has survived largely intact from Late Antiquity.

In 1975, Archimandrite Sophronios was working in the tower of Saint George, which projects from the north wall of the monastery. An interior floor of the tower had collapsed many years before, owing to the great age of the timbers, and the poor quality of the construction materials available. He was clearing away the room when, on May 25, 1975, at 2:15 in the afternoon, he noticed a piece of parchment in the debris. He understood the significance of the discovery, and began to keep a detailed record of each day’s events, as hundreds of manuscript leaves and fragments came to light. It took three weeks to clear

the area, using the utmost caution so as not to damage any of the manuscripts. What had he found?

In centuries past, precious manuscripts were kept in the tower of Saint George, since it was one of the most secure parts of the monastery. Dilapidated manuscripts, loose quires, single leaves, and fragments had been set aside in one corner of the room. In 1734, Archbishop Nikiphoros Marthales created new quarters for the library. We know now that when the manuscripts were transferred, the damaged fragments were left behind. It was this deposit that came to light in 1975, collectively known as the New Finds. The manuscripts were in a range of languages: Greek, Christian Palestinian Aramaic, Syriac, Arabic, Georgian, Slavonic, and Latin. Each of these texts is important in its own right. If we step back and consider them in perspective, we will see that they provide insights into the history of Sinai at a time when there is little information from traditional historical accounts.

Greek manuscripts

The most important discovery was twelve folios, two half folios, and twenty-three fragments from the Codex Sinaiticus. The texts are from the first seven books of the Old Testament, and from the Shepherd of Hermas, that is, from the beginning and end of the manuscript. Although this manuscript would have reached Sinai at a later time, it is a reminder that, from the fourth century, Sinai was an extension of the Holy Land, the far reaches of the Holy Land. As such, Sinai was also a part of the Greek speaking world.

New Finds Majuscule 5 and 56, dating from the eighth or ninth century, is a *Tropologion*, giving hymns and odes for feast days. These are the oldest surviving copies of the canons composed in iambic verse attributed to Saint John of Damascus.¹ New Finds Majuscule 4 is a *Tropologion*, giving various canons for feast days that occur between July 3 and August 29. For August 9, there is a canon in honour of Aaron the Priest, a local feast day that has not been retained, even at Sinai. New Finds Majuscule 26, also dated to the ninth or tenth century, is a school text of the *Iliad*, giving lines of the poem, alternating with notes on vocabulary and grammar.

We know that Greek letters flourished in Palestine in the seventh and eighth centuries, with the contributions made by John of Damascus, Andrew the Jerusalemite (who became bishop of Crete), Cosmas of Maiuma, Stephen the Sabaite, George the Syncellus, Michael the Syncellus, and Theodore and Theophanes the Grapti.² This is reflected in the Sinai library, which contains numerous Greek manuscripts dating from that time. All of these manuscripts speak of continuity at Sinai after the seventh century, as Greek remained the language of converse, study, and prayer.

Christian Palestinian Aramaic manuscripts

Among the New Finds were a number of manuscripts written in Christian Palestinian Aramaic. A manuscript that dates from the seventh or eighth century contains the Sayings of the Desert Fathers, number 59 in the collection. One of the most beautiful is a Lectionary dating from the thirteenth century, manuscript number 41.

Christian Palestinian Aramaic is a type of Western Aramaic, and thus is close to the dialect that would have been spoken by Jesus and his disciples, and the first Aramaic speaking Christians.

Syriac manuscripts

Syriac New Finds 24 is a copy of the Psalter, with a beautiful illumination of King David. The title reads, "David, Prophet and King." The writings of Dionysius the Areopagite consist of four treatises and ten letters. Although these works pass under the name of the Athenian who was converted by the Apostle Paul, as mentioned in Acts 17:34, the works are not referred to before the close of the fifth century. They were translated into Syriac by Sergius of Resh'aina, who died in 536. The oldest surviving manuscript of the works of Dionysius the Areopagite is Sinai Syriac 52, a manuscript of the sixth century, that is, the very century in which these works were first translated into Syriac. Among the New Finds were additional fragments from this same manuscript. Classical Syriac was the language spoken in upper Mesopotamia. In the Late Antique world, Syriac-speaking villages stretched from the Mediterranean to the foothills of the Zagros, and from Antioch to Ctesiphon, the Persian capital. Many important works of Greek philosophy, literature, and medicine were translated into Syriac. In addition, many works of Christian poetry and exegesis were composed in Syriac.

Arabic manuscripts

Sinai Arabic New Finds 8 and 28 are from a manuscript of the Gospels. This has been dated to the latter half of the eighth century, or the beginning of the ninth, based on its orthography.³ By the middle of the ninth century, we have dated manuscripts. New Finds 14 and 16, also a manuscript of the Gospels, bears the date 859. Syria, Palestine, and Egypt came under Arab rule in the early seventh century. By the eighth century, Christians were expressing themselves in Arabic, and finding their place in Arabic culture. It was then that many works were translated from Syriac into Arabic, or, more rarely, directly from the Greek. In this way, the torch of learning was passed from the world of classical antiquity to the emerging Arabic speaking world.

Georgian manuscripts

Sinai Georgian New Finds 10 is a Jerusalem Lectionary dated to the ninth century. It is one of several Sinai manuscripts that have been invaluable in reconstructing the typicon of Jerusalem as it was in the tenth century. There is evidence for Georgian monks at Sinai as early as the sixth century, but this reached a zenith in the ninth and tenth centuries. Georgian scribes copied out manuscripts of the scriptures, lectionaries, and other liturgical books, as well as lives of the saints, homilies, and ascetical writings. Some of these were important translations made at Sinai. These manuscripts are an important witness to monks from Georgia living at Sinai, translating texts, and creating manuscript copies.

Slavonic manuscripts

Sinai Slavic New Finds 1 is an *Euchologion* written in the eleventh century. The writing is skilfully executed, with colors added in red, green, yellow, azure, and black. It is written in Glagolitic, the script developed by Saints Cyril and Methodius in the ninth century, to facilitate the introduction of Christianity to the Slavic speaking world. The manuscripts at Sinai in Glagolitic and Slavonic are some of the earliest surviving Slavic liturgical texts. They are also evidence that pilgrims came to Sinai from the Slavic lands soon after their conversion.

Latin manuscripts

Sinai Latin New Finds 1 consists of several quires that belong to a Latin manuscript in the Old Collection, containing the psalms, a calendar of selected saints, a list of the apostles and the places where they preached, a list of the liberal arts, and the Passion of Saints Peter and Paul. When E A Lowe studied the Psalter in the Old Collection, he listed a number of aspects of the orthography, punctuation, and contractions that are otherwise unknown in Latin manuscripts. But they would be natural to one versed in Greek and Syriac scribal practices.⁴ The evidence points to a scriptorium where Latin was still alive, though at some remove from the Latin speaking West, and in an area where the scribes were bilingual or even trilingual, accustomed to writing in Greek and Syriac or Arabic. It is likely that the manuscript was written in Jerusalem, or one of the areas of the Holy Land. We should not rule out the possibility that it was written at Sinai. This manuscript becomes an important witness to a Latin presence in the Holy Land before the First Crusade.⁵

Palimpsests

From the seventh century, with the arrival of Arab rule, Sinai became even more isolated. If the monks wanted to write a new manuscript, they were often constrained by necessity to take some existing manuscript, whose text was now considered less important, or perhaps a manuscript that was falling apart from age, and already missing sections. The writing

could be erased, and the valuable parchment used a second time. The original writing remains faintly visible beneath the second text. This is what is known as a palimpsest. As a result of such reuse of older parchment, Sinai has over one hundred and sixty manuscripts with palimpsest text. When scholars come across a palimpsest, very often it is the original text that is of the greater interest. If the original writing was large, and if the second text was written at right angles to the first, it may be possible to make out the underlying text. But more often, this is not the case, and the original writing remains elusive, and it would seem, beyond recovery. And yet, from the few words that are legible in the margins of these manuscripts, scholars have long known the importance of such texts. Recent advances in digital photography techniques have made it possible to recover these faded texts. They are photographed using separate narrow bandwidths of light in what is known as multi-spectral imaging. Specialists then process and combine these images, searching for an approach that will best clarify the underlying writing. Good results are not guaranteed. But in many instances, the text that was all but invisible before, now becomes legible.

In 2014, we photographed Sinai Greek New Finds Majuscule 2 with multi-spectral imaging techniques. All of the leaves were taken from three different earlier manuscripts. Approximately two-thirds of the leaves are from a volume that was of the same size and format. As a result, the upper writing is almost directly over the lower, making it much more difficult to decipher. But the original text is clear on several leaves, and on folio 72 verso, we read about a letter that the Emperor Arcadius sent in reply to Pope Innocent concerning “the thrice-blessed John.” This would be Saint John Chrysostom, and a reference to the turbulent events surrounding his banishment from the capital. Four single leaves are from a seventh-century work called the *Pandects of Holy Scripture*, by Antiochus of Palestine, who became the abbot of the Lavra of Saint Sabbas, outside Jerusalem. The *Pandects of Holy Scripture* is a compendium of the teachings of the scriptures and the fathers of the Church, arranged in 130 chapters. Antiochus was a witness to the destruction of Jerusalem by Chosroes in 614, and his compendium includes an account of the forty-four monks of the Lavra who were killed at that time. The remainder of the manuscript, consisting of sixteen bifolia and four single leaves, was taken from what would have been a large and beautifully written manuscript. The underlying text contains passages from Ezekiel, Jeremiah, the Epistle of Jeremiah, the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and Baruch. There is also one leaf from the book of Ecclesiasticus. (see illustration on page 138)

Sinai Georgian New Finds 13 is a manuscript with various ascetical and hagiographical texts, written by a scribe named Mikael in the tenth or eleventh century. The manuscript is a palimpsest. Professor Zaza Aleksidze, Director of the Centre of Manuscripts, in Tbilisi, Georgia, was able to identify the underlying text as Caucasian Albanian, an ancient language once spoken in the Caucasus to the east of Georgia. This language had only survived in a few inscriptions carved on stone, and in one Armenian manuscript that listed the letters of the alphabet.

Sinai Arabic New Finds 8 and 28 is a manuscript of the Gospels in Arabic, dated to the second half of the eighth century, or the beginning of the ninth. The leaves of this manuscript are very often sewn together from two, three, or four small patches, and most of these are leaves where the original text was erased. (see illustration on page 139)



Sinai Greek New Finds MG2 58v

A decorative initial is faintly visible on one leaf, and Latin is visible in the margin below. Multi-spectral imaging allows us to see the text more clearly. It is written in what has been identified as an Insular script, a style of writing developed in Ireland, that spread to England, where it flourished between AD 600 and 850. This was the age of Aidan and Cuthbert and Bede, the time of an unusual flowering of monasticism in England. The manuscript points to contact between that world and Sinai.

20
 حيا له يا نكلم الاصم وابصر وسمع فبهنوا
 فسمعوا الاخبار فقالوا ان هذا السحر يخرج السبا
 طير الابن الزبول تنزف السبا طير فلما نظر الى
 هم وبنصر قال لهم ان كل مملحة تقتر وعار نفسها
 فابها خرب وكل مدبه او بيت يفتروا نفسه
 لسر يقوم وارطان السبا طير يخرج سبا طير فانه
 يفتروا على نفسه فكيف يدوم مملحة واركان
 انابيل زبول اخرج السبا طير فابها خرب فاد اخرج
 حونهم معاد لك هم يدوبوا الحمد انه وار
 صا اخرج السبا طير بروح الله ادر قد اجتربت
 سكره اكراب الله اوصيف بعد ارحا ادر قد
 الرسا لقوى وسلب انبته الا ان يبد اول قبر
 بطة وحبس سلب نعمة ارا الذي لسر فقوم
 فانه علم ومن لا جمع مع فهو يبد د معاد لك
 اقول لست اركل خطية وجداف بعقر للناس
 فاما الحداف علو روح القدس ولا بعقر لهم
 طير يقول كلمة علم ير البشر بعقره فاما الذي
 يقول علو روح القدس فليس بعقره لا فهدا
 العالم ولا الاب او نصبعوا السحرة صم
 خه وثمر تها صالحة او يصنعوا السحرة
 رديه وثمر تها رديه ارم ثمره السحرة
 تعرف يا اولاد الافاعي كيف تفرد ورا
 سحله ورا خيرات وانتم انتقرا ارم قسط
 القلب يتكلم اليوم ارا الاسرار الصالح من
 كنز قلبه الصالح يخرج الصالحات والا
 سار السوم من كنز قلبه السوم يخرج

Responsibility today

All of the manuscripts we have seen were recovered from the tower of Saint George. They could easily have perished with the collapse of the room in which they had been stored. They have proved to be of the greatest interest to scholars, because of the texts that were recovered, and because of the information they provide on the history of the monastery from the seventh to the tenth centuries, a period for which there are few historical sources. We lament the loss of the library of the University of Leuven even more in our own time, for we have seen how even one leaf from a manuscript can be so important for scholarship and history.

The deliberate destruction of libraries by members of the Islamic State has again made this a topic of the greatest urgency. While Saint Catherine's Monastery has remained a place of peace, we would be remiss in our responsibilities if we did not feel great concern over these developments. What steps are we taking in our responsibility for the Sinai library? We are in the process of renovating the library building. This is being funded by the Saint Catherine Foundation. We expect the renovation to be completed in 2017. The new building will provide better storage conditions and greater security for the library.

The monastery has recently approved a project for the digital photography and online access of the Syriac and Arabic manuscripts. Scholars are coming increasingly to appreciate the significance of these manuscripts. Writing about the Arabic manuscripts of Saint Catherine's Monastery, Peter Brown has said,

For here we can listen to a Christianity of the Middle East that resolutely combined engagement with the Islamic present and loyalty to its own past.

They show that Christianity found its own voice in the Arabic language, so as to contribute to the exuberant new Arabic culture.⁶

We cannot fully appreciate the complex history of the Middle East without an understanding of the critical first centuries of Arab rule. At a time when many Christians are leaving their ancestral homelands, these texts would remind them of their own rich heritage, a heritage that we must make every effort to preserve, and to make accessible. Their voice also deserves to be remembered and heard in the contemporary Middle East.

Notes

¹ Demetrios Skrekas, "Hymnographia Iambica: In Quest of Author and Audience," *Proceedings of the Twenty-first International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, vol. 3 (London: Ashgate, 2006), p. 151.

² Cyril Mango, "Greek Culture in Palestine after the Arab Conquest," in: G. Cavallo, G. de Gregorio, and M. Maniacci, eds, *Scritture, Libri e Testi Nelle Aree Provinciali di Bisanzio*, vol. 1 (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi Sull'Alto Medioevo, 1991), pp. 149-150.

³ Hikmat Kachouh, "Sinai Arabic New Finds Parchment 8 and 28: Its Contribution to Textual Criticism of the Gospel of Luke," *Novum Testamentum*, 50 (2008), p. 30.

⁴ E A Lowe, "An Unknown Latin Psalter on Mount Sinai," *Scriptorium*, vol. ix (1955), pp. 177-199.

⁵ E A Lowe, "Two Other Unknown Latin Liturgical Fragments on Mount Sinai," *Scriptorium*, vol. xix (1965), pp. 3-29.

⁶ Peter Brown, "The Great Transition," *The New York Review of Books*, May 10, 2012.

Books and meanings in worlds of change

David McKitterick

In 1914 the destruction of Leuven university library, and with it much of the northern European renaissance, was taken by the Allies as clear evidence of the end of German civilisation: that Germany was peopled by barbarians. In the treatment of the town's population and buildings, and in the burning of the library, the Allies were given propaganda on a huge scale, as we can see from the surviving ephemera and official reports that were published over the following few weeks and months. It was a further, and powerful, reason to fight German aggression. Human misery and death was given an extra dimension, defined in historical and cultural terms. (Kramer 2007, Tollebeek and van Assche 2014)

The difference between Leuven in 1914 and today is not just one of scale, not just one of political simplification in 1914 compared with the contradictions, factions and other complications of modern politics. It is that there is nothing like the national and international political and military clarity in considering Islamic State that there was against Germany. Only very recently we have seen the destruction of libraries at Mosul, including the Sunni Muslim library, the library of the 265-year-old Latin Church and Monastery of the Dominican Fathers and the Mosul Museum Library. Among the 112,709 books and manuscripts thought lost are a collection of Iraqi newspapers dating from the early twentieth century, as well as maps, books and collections from the Ottoman period; some were registered on a UNESCO rarities list.

In parts of the world, large-scale destruction of one kind or another has become everyday: in the Middle East; in parts of Africa; in civil unrest in Sri Lanka; by the Taliban in Afghanistan; in the destruction of archaeological evidence on a scale that we shall never know in China's rush to modernisation; in the natural world (the Amazon rain forests; ivory in Africa). That is quite apart from the ordinary risks of fire, earthquakes and other disasters that can occur anywhere, whether Weimar, Japan, California or Kathmandu. It has to be acknowledged that libraries are but a part of this destruction. But we also acknowledge that they are different. How, and why?

I want to start not in 1914, but in the thirteenth century. The stained glass windows in Chartres cathedral depict religious belief and secular daily experience: the stories of the Bible, of the saints, of history and of myth. It is difficult to count them, from the great rose windows in the north and south transepts, to the windows of the nave and at the east end, one of them depicting some of the stories and myths associated with Charlemagne. Nor is that all. The sculptures, from tiny heads to more than life-size figures of saints, prophets and scenes from the Old Testament, depicting daily skills as well as saintly emblems and ancient philosophers, add further to this extraordinary survival: this witness to ways of thinking and of remembering. This collection of sculpture and of stained glass, that largely survived the French Revolution, has been aptly described as a library: a library of images (for there are relatively few textual clues in the windows, and these are difficult to see with the unaided eye), but a library none the less.¹

In 1793 the cathedral was in considerable danger. The metal that used to mark the centre of the great maze in the centre of the nave was torn out to be melted down. Some of the windows were destroyed. But the vast majority of this assemblage was not attacked. Where revolutionary vandalism destroyed so much in other French cathedrals, Chartres escaped. It owes its survival not least to a man named Antoine-François Serjent, or Serjent-Marceau, born in Chartres and trained as an artist and print-maker. An ardent revolutionary, he became a member of the committee for public instruction, and was one of the founders of the Musée Français, fore-runner of the Louvre. (Dowd 1953) It was he who memorably said of Chartres cathedral “que jamais la hache et le marteau ne l’entament. Il sera toujours pour Chartres une richesse, car il offrira aux amateurs des arts, aux étrangers, un objet d’étonnement et d’admiration”.

There are of course several questions here, and some are now very difficult to unravel, such as the degree to which there was clearly some local feeling that was at odds with the wider revolutionary enthusiasm to destroy not just the church, but also its representatives. Churches and cathedrals were turned into temples of the cult of the supreme being, ‘le culte de l’être suprême’. This is what happened to Chartres cathedral on 19 May 1794. Yet, when the revolution had run its course, and the cathedral was restored to Christian uses, an inscription was carved into the stone above one of the doors, in a place that incidentally itself involved some destruction of medieval work. The temple of reason was returned to its original purpose. The word ‘templum’, a word characteristic of the revolution and redolent of non-Christian practices and beliefs, whether in the Graeco-Roman traditions or in the Jewish tradition, was used even in this restoration. Maybe there was some thought of the destruction of the second temple at Jerusalem by Roman armies in AD 70, and the contrast with the more fortunate Chartres.

The further point to note about Serjent’s words is his allusion to ‘étrangers’. Foreign opinion was a point of much anxiety amongst those who argued against mass destruction. Such destruction was not only an impoverishment that lessened the status of France as a cultured nation. It also provided ammunition that her enemies—not least Britain—were ready to use as evidence against her and what the Revolution involved.

Chartres did not escape entirely. An example of revolutionary vandalism (a word coined by the abbé Grégoire), it lost its lead roof—an act probably as much of simple opportunist theft as of revolutionary fervour. Grégoire’s own pleas for preservation rather than destruction were part of a vision of France. The values that he used of Amiens cathedral were very similar to those used by Serjent of Chartres:

“Un des plus beaux monumens gothiques qui soient en Europe: la magnificence, la hardiesse et la légèreté de sa construction en sont une des plus hardies conceptions de l’esprit humain.” (Grégoire, 1794, Vidler 2000, p. 143)

Grégoire’s concern at the destruction of monuments, buildings, libraries and other relics of a royal past has been well documented, not least in his own writings, and especially in a series of pamphlets that he published in autumn 1794. In page after page of the three *Rapports sur le vandalisme* he systematically noted not only the damage to public buildings in town after town across France, but also the destruction of the collections in the museum at Arles, the destruction of paintings, of stained glass and of books, and the theft of the lead from Chartres cathedral. All this was despite legislation. It was, he argued, partly the result of ignorance. So he also argued for the need to educate people in understanding the importance of statues—that they were more than lumps of stone—

and of books. (Grégoire, 1794) I introduce Chartres not as an example of destruction, but of preservation, because it may help us understand a little more of what we mean when we talk of vandalism, of loss. It is easy to think of libraries that have been destroyed or dismembered, from ancient Alexandria to the twenty-first century.

We can see in the arguments after 1789 most of the features that present themselves in more recent vandalism and desire to efface the past: a concern at lost beauty, a concern at the loss of inspiration, a concern for lost history of several different kinds, a concern for loss of memory, a concern that such highly focused destruction was in fact the destruction of something representing much greater values, a concern for international reputation and example. The more fervent French revolutionaries thought that they were destroying a hated royal- and church-dominated civilisation. It was even suggested by François Harriot, a man of limited education and who was later to be guillotined in more than usually wretched circumstances, that the Bibliothèque Nationale (formerly Royale) should be burned—not so much to destroy the trappings and evidence of royalty, as to destroy learning and history itself.

The vandals, a Germanic tribe that sacked Rome in the fifth century, do not have a good reputation. One trouble is that our sources are all Roman—hardly a guarantee of impartiality. In the eighteenth century Edward Gibbon was fierce about them. It is little wonder that in the 1790s Grégoire chose this particular barbarian tribe as the basis for his neologism that has passed into several languages.

But I want to develop matters a little further, more specifically of libraries. We are thinking at this conference of the ways in which libraries represent memory—national and human, material and conceptual. They represent values that are agreed by societies that invest in them in particular ways. The processes of selection and organization that they depict are representations of ways of thinking whether in different periods, for different groups of people, or for different geographical regions. Their destruction involves an obliteration of one kind of recording and remembering the past. Insofar as libraries also represent intellectual, political and social status and values, they stand for society itself, whether at international, national or local level.

This is familiar ground. I plan now to look not backward, to the destruction of so many libraries in the past, where Leuven is pre-eminent in our memories here, but to look at the present. It is always foolish to try and look forward in too predictive a way, but on this occasion we need to try to do that as well. Most of the papers in this conference deal with dramatic and disastrous loss: in Europe, the Middle East, in Africa. We are dealing with loss of historical evidence, the loss of scholarship, the loss of memory, sometimes the destruction of national, ethnic, religious or other social identity, on a huge scale. In this paper I want to look at one aspect of such losses, and how losses on even a small scale affect what another generation is unable to inherit. But while we may think of it as small-scale, in fact the international potential is even greater.

As buildings containing intellectual wealth, libraries exist in two spheres: physical and mental. This is reflected in the way that they are presented to the world, whether in the neoclassical architectural style of the Library of Congress in Washington or the New York Public Library, or in the aggressive modernism of the new Birmingham public library, or in the prominent places selected for libraries in cities and universities alike. Whether in Paris, Berlin or Leuven, we expect libraries to make statements in their locations and in their architecture. The same applies to private libraries, in where they sit in the plans of houses large enough to possess a library room, or even in the way that we present books in

our own homes. In the palaces of seventeenth-century Rome they were places for meeting and consultation, a quasi-public space separate from private quarters. (Volapié, 2014) In the nineteenth century they were often domesticated: a place to retire to, not infrequently dominated by men. (Franklin 1981, pp.45-8) Physical presentation is an important part of large libraries and smaller collections of books alike. It represents a place in a scale of values.

The first thing to remember is that libraries have always been in flux, and that they are in flux today. There are relatively few libraries that can be described as stable, in the sense that nothing is lost and nothing is added. Those that do survive in this way are historic collections. One of the most celebrated examples of a successful attempt to maintain at least numerical stability in the course of its formation is that of the seventeenth-century London diarist Samuel Pepys, who decided that the optimum size for his private library was three thousand volumes. (Loveman 2015) He adhered to this rigidly, discarding books when he needed to add. But even for him it was only a numerical stability. Intellectually he followed his changing interests, so that what survives is not a portrait of evolution, the changing landscape of a lifetime of reflection, but a snapshot of where he had reached by the time of his death. His library as it was finally established is now in Magdalene College, Cambridge. The new-fangled glazed bookcases that he had made by a joiner in the naval dockyards were more than a whim. They preserved the books from the dirt of seventeenth-century London, but they also represented a boundary. His books were a part of everyday life, but in a carefully defined way. They were different.

Let us stay with this theme of the physical, and move from the library building and the presentation of books on shelves and in cases, to the volumes themselves. Whatever the library, their external appearance and the materials and manner of their binding tell us an immense amount, whether it is the rough goatskin bindings of Arabic manuscripts for everyday use in northern Africa, or the degree of decoration that has been applied by the most expensive Parisian craftsmen since the sixteenth century. Time spent on binding a book, and the price of the materials, give instant evidence of value and circumstance, whether we are looking at new books or at old books that have been repaired and rebound perhaps several times. Pepys and Sir Isaac Newton were near contemporaries: it is Pepys's name that appears in large letters on the title-page of Newton's *Principia* (1687), as Secretary of the Royal Society. But if we look at the shelves of the books belonging to these two men we see very different effects. It is not one of age: Pepys owned more sixteenth-century books than did Newton. Pepys spent a great deal of time, energy and money on having his books bound by the most fashionable bookbinders in London. Apart from the decorative backs, and the spine titles (a taste in furnishing that, though having its roots in the sixteenth century, became fashionable in England only after 1660), many of his books were bound in Turkey leather, colored goatskin that is often referred to as morocco. Newton's books are much more workaday, bound in calf and mostly very plainly. He is not known to have spent much on binding his books, and they represent a much more ordinary view of what was available from the trade in his lifetime. Here, certainly, are not books for show.

The catalogues of the libraries of both men have been published, and they give us detailed views of their interests. (Smith 1978, Harrison 1978) But these catalogues can tell us only a strictly limited amount concerning how these books looked in their rooms. By chance, we can also see the libraries today, most of that of Pepys in Magdalene College and about half of Newton's in Trinity College, Cambridge. For hundreds of other

seventeenth-century libraries we have no more than lists of titles and editions, whether in privately made catalogues or, more usually, in the very limited information provided by book auctioneers when libraries were put up for sale after their owners' decease. These are lost libraries just as the libraries destroyed by war or fire are lost. In their dispersal and disappearance a sense of value is lost—much more than just monetary value.

Private libraries offer repeated examples of how books move around: how they are sold, how they are valued in different ways, in different circumstances, by different people and different times, and how they are lost—whether a few books are lost or destroyed, or an entire collection is lost. Sometimes—more often than we can possibly know—the books themselves are not lost: it is their provenance that is lost, and they can no longer be associated with a particular owner. The eagerness by so many people to have their books rebound has caused untold loss of historical evidence. The dramatic losses of private libraries in France at the end of the eighteenth century are an extreme example of destruction, theft, relocation, and sale, and are far from untypical.

Today we look back to major periods of loss or major disturbance: to the destruction of monastic libraries in the English reformation; in the seventeenth century to the events of the Thirty Years War; to the dispersal of Jesuit libraries following the suppression of the order in the mid-1770s; to the secularization of Bavarian monasteries; to the era of the French Revolution; to the confiscations from occupied countries under Napoleon (and the subsequent incomplete programme of restitution after 1815); to the destruction of French libraries in 1870; to the First World War, with the initial shock of Leuven; to the confiscations of Jewish property in Nazi Europe; to the bombings and seizures of the Second World War with all their still unanswered questions.

And so to our own times. But now we face a much more complicated challenge in our libraries even in times of peace: not simply of dispersal, loss and destruction, but of change of use and consequent loss. There are several reasons for this, and they are only partly related. Most obviously, we are in the midst of what has been called the third revolution of the book, the transition from paper to computer screen. (Mercier 2002) (In this scheme, the first two revolutions were the transitions from roll to codex, and from manuscript to print.) Besides this, for libraries almost everywhere, lie the costs of premises and of staff. For generations it has been assumed that library growth was good in itself; that a growing library meant a richer one, one that was better than its competitors, one that was more useful, or at least of more potential use. This has been a widely accepted part of the development of university libraries and public libraries as well as of national libraries.

In a world where libraries are key elements in establishing hierarchies among universities, a position further up the rankings can be bought: the more books, the better the university must be. In fact, and as a moment's thought will reveal, different kinds of libraries have very different purposes. The archival expectations for national collections are not the same as the expectations for public libraries.² Although we tend to lump university libraries together, as if they are one and the same kind, in fact they are very different, in their histories, in their constituencies of readers, and in their purposes as agreed within the various universities. A university with a very large research component needs a different kind of library from one where this is smaller and less demanding, and where the emphasis is on undergraduate teaching. All this should raise serious questions about what it is that we mean by a library. It is, clearly, more than a collection of books. It implies some organisation. It implies access.

What of the content? We are becoming increasingly accustomed to libraries without a book in sight. The Harper library at the University of Chicago was built in 1912, its main floor a cavernous reading room, shelved with books. A few years ago, less than a century after the building had been completed, all the books were moved out, and it became the Cathey Learning Center, a 24-hour place in which you could read, lounge, chat, drink coffee and learn either by yourself or in collaboration with others. But it was a BYOB place: Bring Your Own Book. Elsewhere on the campus is a vast new building where, again, books are invisible. They are all stored in ultra-compact shelves, from which they can be speedily delivered to readers. There is no question of open access, the kind of opportunities to browse the shelves that became such an integral, essential and highly successful part of the larger more traditional research libraries such as the Widener Library at Harvard, or Cambridge University Library.

At Leiden, books have progressively been removed from open access, and their places have been taken by computer terminals. (The Bodleian Library, by contrast, has recently moved in the opposite direction, and actually increased the numbers of books on open access.) Any changes in the accessibility of books, whether reduction or increase, has an immediate impact on the pace and the methods of study and research. It therefore comes with a negative or positive cost. We cannot say that the University of Chicago has lost its library. It has kept its books, on campus. But we can say that its library is no longer what it was once. It is invisible, stored in industrial standard bays where books can no longer be seen as they were intended, as individuals amongst their fellows: in visible contexts. Each book becomes a separate object, and thereby one of the purposes of a library, a rapprochement of ideas as expressed in printed codices, is obscured. But Chicago has, on the other hand, recognised an important point: that the physical evidence presented by a book is of continuing importance. To scan it, and discard the original, is no answer to the needs either of scholarship or of history.

That raises the question of why we should scan books, and to what purpose. What are the limitations and advantages? Libraries across the world are pouring money into digitisation programmes. The topic raises almost more questions among visitors to libraries than any other. To what good? There are several ways of answering this question.

First, preservation. Like microfilms before them, the creation of a scanned image (or rather, sequence of images) of a book creates a surrogate. Time and again the existence of such surrogates has provided some relief when originals have been destroyed. The existence of a digitised copy is better than none at all. We see that in buildings as well as books, as in the programme by the University of Oxford to prepare three-dimensional photographs of buildings at Palmyra and elsewhere under threat by Islamic State.³ Just how long digitised images can themselves be preserved is, not surprisingly, a question that produces rather uncertain answers.

Second, it is invaluable not just as an insurance against loss. It is also an invaluable way of sharing knowledge across the world. But it is a limited surrogate. A digitised copy can never replicate an original, and there is no sign that it will do so in the foreseeable future. It will not tell you about how and why a book was made in a particular way, for a particular purpose and a particular audience. We return to the importance of the physical properties of books: the materials on which they are written or printed; the quality of these materials, be it parchment (of various kinds of animals), rag paper, wood-pulp paper, esparto paper, clay-loaded paper, hand-made, machine-made, etc. All vary in colour, just as they vary in weight. With current technology, no digitisation can record this. Then we

may move to the binding: is it cheaply done? If done by machine, then how? What are the boards made of? Pulp board? Laminated board? Strawboard (extremely cheap, and inherently short-lived thanks to high acid content)? Again there are cost implications here, with evidence of how a book was sent to what kind of market. Almost as an aside, digitisation programmes do not usually concern themselves with watermarks, guides to the quality and source of the paper that is being scanned. The economics of manufacture and market cannot be determined from scans. There is the obvious question of size and bulk. Everything is presented in the same way on screens, which are themselves of standard sizes. Yes, it is possible to enlarge images so as to gain a sense of the size of type or script of a large folio that is too large for a whole page to be represented full-size on screen. But that will not give you a proper sense of the book. A small book suffers as much by enlargement as do large ones by reduction. On screen, they appear the same. Then there is colour. What is trustworthy? It is easy to manipulate it on screen. This can be an advantage for some kinds of work, but it is a grave disadvantage if one is seeking some kind of long-term verisimilitude. Then there are codicological questions, questions concerning the structure of the book. For modern ones that may not matter very much. For older ones it can be of central importance to understanding not just the manufacture and publication of a book, but even its writing and composition. Differing structures may reflect a need to produce a large number of copies very quickly, for example to meet sudden changes in law respecting religious practice; or they may reflect a history of slow-selling, where leaves or whole gatherings were substituted to try and present apparently new books to market. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was not uncommon for books or pamphlets that had been printed and sold individually to be re-marketed, bound up as more or less collected works.

Some of this sounds rather negative: what digitisation can NOT do. That is to misinterpret the challenge. Without question, digitisation is making research possible on a scale that was hitherto undreamed of. Just as the invention of cheap photography in the nineteenth century, and the development of cheap photolithographic reproductions of manuscripts, breathed new life into palaeography, so modern digitisation brings together libraries in ways that we could never have thought possible.

Three obvious organisational challenges dominate much of the current rush to digitisation; and they have so far received less attention than they deserve. First is the tendency to concentrate on just some aspects of books, notoriously in art-historical concentration on illuminations in manuscripts at the expense of text: the British Library is a major culprit here.⁴ Second is the increasingly urgent need for orderly programmes of digitisation, rather than the somewhat haphazard ones that have so far been followed: a course that currently tends to emphasise what is already well known, rather than encourage exploration amongst less well-known books. That may, or may not, be a worthy part of the development of knowledge. Third is the need, partly met, but still hugely challenging, to provide adequate guides to what exists: union databases of manuscripts, library by library, text by text⁵; of printed books, edition by edition and author by author. So far we have too little of this, though examples were set in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (and even earlier) with the beginnings of union catalogues.

We need also to think of our libraries in the context of modern publishing. In particular, the steady increase in e-publishing is affecting not only the future of publishers and of booksellers (to say nothing of customers' reading habits), but also attitudes to libraries as we have known them: collections of books printed on paper. As e-publishing

expands, so libraries come to be redefined: not as warehouses where artifacts can be seen, handled and examined, but as centres that make possible access to computer-based data. That in turn raises questions about whether we even need libraries and librarians, since much of what we use most frequently is provided by large commercial companies such as Google; and scans of older material, whether on Gallica, EEBO or other platforms do not need to be housed in buildings that have been adapted from traditional library use: buildings with high specifications for strength and environmental conditions, and at addresses that, being convenient for people, tend to be city-centre rather than in the cheaper places on the outskirts of towns such as industrial estates. The question almost begins to pose itself. Do we actually need libraries?

Let us turn this rather alarming question round. Why do we need libraries of the kind that have proved so liable to destruction? Books—written and printed—are vehicles by which we understand our past, and hence our present. That is one of the reasons why so much energy is put into their manufacture, and their control by censorship or by destruction. Book burning has a peculiar kind of horror, for it epitomises, in a dramatic way, the destruction of what is deemed to be unacceptable, whether in Nazi Germany or in sixteenth-century Reformation England, whether religious books, political books or books considered to be immoral, to be burned by the common hangman. Further, it is commonly associated with murder, often on a massive scale.

Let us turn to the books themselves. We have always to remember that books are more than the texts that they contain. In the words of John Milton, “Books are not absolutely dead things, but ... do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them.” Each volume also contains its own history; the reasons for its making and the reasons why it was made in the way that it was. Just as much as any text it contains, it tells us about its origins and about those who created it. The materials used in manufacture can tell us a great deal about their publication: expensive or cheap paper, large or small formats, typography and layout that is generous, even ostentatious, or cramped with tiny margins and tiny type. The materials and quality of their bindings offer not just further information about the values and purposes surrounding initial publication, but also the values and priorities set on these same books generation by generation, as each decides how much to spend, what the books should look like on the shelves, etc. We can consider how price structures fit into all this. Is the publisher or bookseller trying to sell as cheaply as possible? Is there some subsidy? How do the production values of this or that particular edition fit in with others from the same publisher? How much money was available to produce a particular book? These are the ordinary topics of interest to any bibliographer studying the history of books. They tell us about mankind’s history.

Beyond this, and with considerable implications for the future of our libraries as well as a reflection of what has been lost, during the last few years we have become ever more interested in copy-specific details. The history of bookbinding and decoration is an old concern. Other aspects are more recent. We have become interested in the history of individual readers, exemplified (for example) in readers’ manuscript marginalia. (Orgel 2015) We want to know about the provenance of individual copies: who owned them, when, and where? Books used and annotated by well-known figures are of immensely greater interest than plain copies of these same editions. In early printed books we pay attention to the towns or institutions where manuscript decoration has been added. For example, thanks to identifying English styles of decoration in the books concerned, we now know that at least two copies of the Gutenberg Bible found their way to England in the fifteenth century; one, complete, is

at Lambeth Palace Library; the other survives only as a single leaf, in the British Library. Bindings and their styles can help us understand how books are dispersed. The exhibition at Brussels in 2006 of bindings of books from the Plantin-Moretus Press in Antwerp showed how they had travelled across Europe whether in the hands of early booksellers or into the libraries of bibliophiles. (Liesen and Sorgeloos, 2006)

As another example, this time of a library that we can still inspect, we may return to the library of Sir Isaac Newton, which I have already mentioned. After he died in 1727, most of his books were acquired by a neighbour who needed some furnishings for his house. Lists were made of Newton's books in 1727 and c.1766. Over half of his known books are now in Trinity College. Others are scattered round the world. Others have been lost completely. Occasionally another one turns up in the book trade. If we did not have these volumes, we would have the list of the eighteenth century, which some people might argue is sufficient. But the fact that we also have Newton's own copies of these books means that we can follow much more of the ways in which he read his books, and what he thought was important. We can see which books have been most worn by use. He annotated only a very few of his books, but there is other evidence that we can study. It was his habit to dog-ear pages containing passages that caught his attention. Not only that. He turned the corners of the leaves down so that the corners reached exactly the right spot on the page. Although he did not annotate his books, these dog-ears tell us how he read.

Books are, in other words, artifacts. This is a message that has been drilled into hundreds of students of the history of the book. It is a message that still escapes many people. We are dealing not with lists, but (at least in the case of printed books from the same edition) with a multiplicity of apparently identical, but actually often different, objects—each of which may have something to tell us.

One of the wonders of printing, recognised in the fifteenth century and exploited ever since, is that it can produce large numbers of copies that are—more or less—identical. That is the foundation of assumptions not only in reading, in scholarship, in sharing knowledge, in religious practice, in political and social organisation, but also in the management of many libraries, as books are de-accessioned, destroyed and dispersed, on the assumption that they can be easily consulted in another copy, whether online or in another library. But there is another reality. As we become ever more aware of differences among copies—differences in text that are the result of the manufacturing process where copies could be altered even while sheets were being printed off, differences in provenance, differences in presentation—so this attitude becomes more and more questionable.⁶ So we face dangers not only of war, of fire, of natural disasters, but also the dangers of librarians and of financial restraints that challenge the very survival of our historical inheritance.

All this relates to books and other documents as physical presences. Inevitably that has taken us to destruction as well as to what we might look for in preservation. But I want to end on a very different note. It is not simply that the contents of libraries that are changing. It is their very purpose. The idea of a library as a place for the care of books (to use the phrase employed for his pioneering history of libraries by the Cambridge scholar J.W.Clark) (Clark 1901), where they can be looked after, preserved and made available to such people who need them, is increasingly unrepresentative of libraries in general. We see an increasing number of libraries whose duties are not to care for books, but to make information and books available through digital means. Much of this is driven by costs: the costs of keeping, caring for and making available traditional, physical books. If

we are to believe the stream of position papers, strategy documents, reports and guidance summaries that seem never to cease, little-used books are an anathema to most librarians.

The idea of the virtual library extends even into the commercial world: the ProQuest resource ebrary provides access to over 700,000 scholarly books, as well as tens of thousands of journals. Does that mean that we are witnessing the destruction of libraries not in any negative sense, (whether in the present-day or in two world wars in twentieth-century Europe) but in a belief in progress: that virtual libraries are actually better than physical collections of books? That, by making texts—in the widest sense—far more widely available, albeit in strictly limited forms, our new generation of libraries is arguably more successful than ones that existed to maintain paper, ink and cloth?

In other words, what do we expect of libraries in the twenty-first century?

Notes

- ¹ I am grateful to Malcolm Miller, the cathedral's historian, at this point.
- ² I am not concerned here with the serious decline in the staffing and funding of public libraries, and the consequent loss to people who rely on them.
- ³ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/islamic-state/11829761/Archaeologists-plan-to-use-3D-imagery-to-preserve-antiquities-under-threat-from-Islamic-State.html>.
- ⁴ <https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/welcome.htm>.
- ⁵ For one enterprising union project, the work of Albrecht Diem of Syracuse University, see <http://www.earlymedievalmonasticism.org/listoflinks.html#Digital>. For the virtual union catalogue of Swiss manuscripts, see <http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en>.
- ⁶ For one recent example of variations among copies ostensibly of the same book, see Fogelmark, 2016. Fogelmark considered 227 copies, and discovered that as many as ten sheets had been set twice, leading to many more variations among copies. For variations in the Shakespeare First Folio (1623) see the pioneering work of Hinman, 1963.

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Lessons from World War II and the Holocaust: What can be done to save cultural heritage and memory during times of war?

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For those of us whose professional life is focused on conserving heritage, it is painful to acknowledge that not only is our passion not shared by all, but that there are some in this world who can and will vigorously eradicate what we work to preserve.

Whalen, 2001

Introduction

One needs to be proactive in the face of disaster. Librarians, archivists, and curators need to plan and be ready for any type of disaster. According to International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, three armed conflicts occur each year around the world (IFRCRCS World Disaster Report 2002). Yet, despite the often precarious and unstable situation of libraries and archives during times of conflict, remnants, and in some cases, entire corpora and archives manage to survive. The Holocaust of World War II is the quintessential example in this regard. During this time, local citizens, the United States Army, and Allied Forces worked together to protect the cultural heritage collections in Europe. Many of these actions were taken to help protect and save important cultural sites, including libraries and archives.

Are there lessons and practices to be learned from the manner in which cultural heritage material survived during World War II? Are there standardized responses that can help to guide and establish best practices for those caring for cultural collections in war-torn regions and, in turn, mitigate the impact of war and disaster on libraries and archives? This paper addresses our preliminary research in this area, drawing lessons from policies, disaster management planning, and large-scale collaborations between cultural heritage institutions, Allied Forces, and citizens during World War II and the Holocaust that helped preserve and save cultural heritage. Libraries and archives need to be prepared and must recognize the changing nature of warfare, conflict and human-made disaster. However, the evidence of the mobilization for preparedness before World War II seems to do little for us now in an era of cyber-attacks, terrorist actions by individuals or small groups, biological attacks, climate change and transnational crime (Erwin et al. 2012). Not only will this approach to disaster planning need to be multi-disciplinary in nature, but international cooperation will continue to be necessary in order for this to be a successful endeavor.

This paper discusses examples gleaned from the holdings of the *Yiddisher Visenshaftlecher Institute* (YIVO) and the current efforts of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) and its International Archival Program (IAP) that uncovers, preserves, saves,

and unites materials dispersed during the Holocaust (van der Houven and van Albada accessed 1 November 2015). In the light of these examples and lessons learned, we propose new ways forward that build on this history and the work of the IAP and YIVO as institutions develop disaster management plans to save the cultural resources that form the foundation of memory, history, and the transmission of knowledge.

A Brief History of Destruction, Displacement, and Recovery

During World War II, the Nazis destroyed and confiscated non-Germanic material, establishing organizations to collect and loot materials, such as the *Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg* (ERR). The ERR was directed by Alfred Rosenberg, who was also appointed by Adolf Hitler in 1934 to be in charge of the *Judenfrage*—the “Jewish Question” (Rose 2008). In order to support the ERR, Hitler ordered Rosenberg to search and loot libraries and archives in the occupied Eastern territories and place the materials around Germany (Borin 1993). The ERR confiscated books to support research on the *Judenfrage* from 375 archives, 402 museums, 531 institutes, and 957 libraries (Pugliese 1995). As a result of the Allied bombings of Frankfurt, most of the ERR’s holdings were moved to the small village of Hungen in Germany. However, when the Americans took control of Hungen in 1945, they were able to locate the stores of looted books and arts and save many collections.

One notable collection that suffered during the systematic looting and destruction as part of the ethnic cleansing that occurred during World War II was the *Yiddisher Visenshafitlecher Institute* in Vilna, Poland (now Lithuania) (YIVO accessed 1 November 2015). Established in 1925 in Vilna, YIVO collected books and manuscripts and housed famous works of art and sculptures. The institute had 85,000 volumes and thousands of archival documents related to Jewish history in Eastern Europe (Borin 1993). In 1941 after the Nazis occupied Vilna, they sent looted materials from YIVO to various depots, such as to the *Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage* (Institute for the Study of the Jewish Question) in Germany. Throughout the war, the Germans sent different officers to collect information about museums, arts, libraries and synagogues, looking for Jewish collections and scholars who could evaluate and translate the materials (Borin 1993). At the beginning of 1942, Dr. Johannes Pohl, a German official who was a Judaic scholar and chief of the Hebraic collection in one of the libraries in Germany, was sent to create lists of books and arts in Vilna (Borin 1993). When Dr. Pohl arrived in Vilna in 1942, he ordered the confiscation of all of YIVO’s books, and in July 1942, the secret police arrested three Jewish scholars, whom they sent to the Strashun Library in Poland to compile lists of incunabula and rare books based on their language knowledge of Hebrew and Yiddish. Later, the Nazis requested that the Jewish Council in Vilna send twenty workers to select, catalog, and ship the books. Five out of the twenty workers were experts in Judaica; given the need for people who could read Hebrew and Yiddish, this number later increased to forty.

Not all confiscated materials were shipped to Germany; some materials were smuggled from YIVO and buried in the ghetto during the war as a hiding technique (Fishman 2001). Eventually, the German Army seized the entire Jewish collection in Vilna. Some of

the materials were sent to Frankfurt and others were destroyed (Borin 1993). Fortunately, not all the materials were sent to Frankfurt or destroyed as planned. According to a report by Dr. Philo, 50,000 volumes remained in Vilna waiting to be shipped out (Borin 1993). The total number of smuggled materials, along with the ghetto's library collection, amounted to 93,463 volumes, an increase from 45,000 volumes at the beginning of WWII (Borin 1993).

The U.S. Army helped YIVO recover part of its materials after it relocated to New York City after the war (Fishman 2001). YIVO planned to re-collect Jewish materials from Europe with the help of the U.S. Army, donations from private collectors, and donated personal papers, and materials from over 300 synagogues. As a result, YIVO once again has a comprehensive collection of Eastern European Jewish material (YIVO accessed 1 November 2015). YIVO's establishment in the United States and its efforts to salvage and find materials that it lost during the war stands as one of the most important efforts to recover cultural material, history, and memories confiscated or destroyed during the Holocaust.

Excavating the Archival Diaspora

As exemplified by YIVO, the recovery of archives and other cultural heritage material after the Holocaust can be likened to the history of a large-scale, long-term archaeological excavation. The unearthing and location of these materials has been made complicated by the lack of information about where materials were moved to, hidden, or kept during World War II. Many of these mysteries also stem from the lack of information about archival holdings prior to World War II (Mayorek 1993). While some collections were kept together in their entirety, others were split up and moved to several different locations. Thus, the unearthing of the provenance, history, and fate of Jewish archives after the Holocaust and World War II has remained a task fraught with many questions and unknowns resembling, in many respects, a "giant jigsaw puzzle" of related pieces that have been slowly reunited over time (personal communication A. Steck 7 December 2015).

Much of the information about the history of saved or recovered collections can be derived from documentation that the Nazis themselves created as they destroyed and/or confiscated material. Photographs from the Offenbach Archival Depot, for instance, speak to the displacement of massive quantities of archival and library material (Yad Vashem Photo Archives 1943). Other information about provenance can be gleaned from identifying marks left on objects, such as the Dutch *Ex Libris* bookplates found in books at the Offenbach Archival Depot (Hoogewoud 2001). Despite the systematic, organized plunder and destruction of Jewish documentary heritage, vast amounts of documentation have survived and continue to be unearthed. Jeffrey Mifflin argues that "[m]uch of the more interesting Holocaust documentation has survived by accident or good fortune" (Mifflin 1998); yet other materials escaped destruction and confiscation because strategies were employed to save them.

The International Archival Program (IAP) of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) has been a pivotal force in locating and preserving Holocaust-era archives that were evacuated, dispersed or hidden. Working with national archives,

ministries of defense, and intelligence agencies in Europe to locate materials that survived, the IAP uncovers material that had long been hidden in, stored, or moved to secure locations as part of its “long-term effort to preserve evidence of the Holocaust (personal communication R. Ioanid 16 October 2015).” While the assistance of government and intelligence entities has facilitated the location of archives, other material is often found by chance. Lack of documentation on how and where archival materials were moved to or hidden has not only made the recovery of such material more difficult, but has also obscured the methods and tactics that were employed to save documentary heritage in the wake of large-scale human and cultural atrocities.

The IAP comprises a staff of eight people—five stationed at the USHMM in Washington, D.C., and three abroad—who are active in 58 countries, working on hundreds of projects to locate archives from the Holocaust period (personal communication A. Steck 7 December 2015). Once materials are located, the IAP microfilms or digitizes them in order to create preservation/access copies to be deposited with the USHMM, creating between four and six million surrogates of records per year (personal communication A. Steck 7 December 2015). The goal is to unite collections that had been separated as well as to aggregate the entirety of the evidence of the Holocaust in one, central repository, the USHMM (personal communication A. Steck 7 December 2015). The archives of the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien* (IKG), or Jewish Community Vienna (Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, accessed 7 December 2015), is one such *fonds* that had been separated into several parts and moved to different locations that became united through the course of the IAP’s work (USHMM accessed 7 December 2015). Consisting of 500,000 documents including reports, correspondence, deportation lists, books, maps, and photographs stored in approximately 800 boxes, a large part of this archives was discovered in one of the IKG’s buildings in Vienna in 2000 (Backman accessed 7 December 2015). This part of the archives was united through microfilming with its other half, which was transferred to the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People (CAHJP) in the 1950s (CAHJP accessed 7 December 2015).

The condition of the materials the IAP finds varies considerably, often requiring a triage approach to microfilming (personal communication A. Steck 7 December 2015). The IAP works with local conservation staff to mend and prepare items before they can be microfilmed or digitized. The variable conditions result from a lack of resources, benign neglect, and sometimes even deliberate destruction (personal communication A. Steck 7 December 2015). Given the circumstances under which materials are moved, hidden, or evacuated, preservation conditions typically remain less than ideal or suitable. The challenges of ensuring adequate and sufficient preservation environments while simultaneously saving them can even be found in recent examples (Bamako accessed 16 December 2015).

Through the course of locating this material, the IAP has discovered a variety of ways that material survived: many times, archives were either moved to more secure locations, or hidden. Synagogues were one place where materials were hidden. Books and archival material were sealed in the walls of the main Synagogue on the Daniel Meyerplain in Amsterdam, for instance, and later discovered by ERR (Yad Vashem Photo Archives, ca. 1942-1943). The IAP has also encountered archival material at the Dohány Street Synagogue in Budapest (personal communication R. Ioanid 16 October 2015). As vulnerable targets of plunder and destruction, libraries also devised methods to hide materials. At the University of Leipzig, for example, a Torah Scroll was hidden between

the beams of the roof of library to protect it from being destroyed during *Kristallnacht* (Yad Vashem accessed 8 November 2015). Hiding material within the structures of buildings—whether in walls or roofs—was thus one strategy employed to protect and preserve heritage from being plundered. Other materials—such as the IKG material noted above—are found in abandoned buildings, apartments, and houses, as for example, 6,300 registration cards which were found in the crack of a wall in a home in Budapest (rt.com accessed 11 November 2015). Materials confiscated by the ERR have been uncovered in other places, such as caves and mines, which served as “repositories” for the Nazi caches (Rothfeld 2005). Such examples underscore the importance of employing strategies—whether ad hoc or not—to hide cultural heritage material during times of conflict, and but also of the possibilities of recovery as illustrated by the IAP’s continued dedication and stewardship.

Disaster Management Planning for the Future

No doubt, the destruction and looting of books and archival materials during World War II and the Holocaust and recent wars in Iraq, underscore the importance of proactive measures; likewise, the destruction of libraries and archives in wartime reiterates the importance of preservation and conservation. “Library Preservation and Conservation” can be defined as the “systematic application of principles that prolong the life of all collections materials—analogue and digital” (Smithsonian Institution Archives accessed 8 September 2015).² “Emergency and Disaster Planning” is a core element within the practice of Preservation and Conservation. The need for research and practical implementations in this area is great, and for this reason we must examine historical evidence in addition to modern approaches to disaster planning (Smithsonian Institution Archives accessed 8 September 2015). The above examples provide context on how and why some collections survived, and this history should compel libraries and archives to ask the following questions: What disaster plans does our institution currently have? What can be learned from those that are in place? Does our institution address man-made disaster in current plans, and if so, how? How can this information be used to develop flexible, scalable and practical plans that can be of use across economic boundaries and utilize modern technology as a tool?

Media and public outcry about the destruction of cultural heritage institutions during World War I was massive (Derez 2013). One well-documented disaster was the deliberate destruction and burning, on August 25, 1914 of the library of the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium at the hands of the German Army (van der Houven and van Albada accessed 5 September, 2015). In response to events such as Leuven, and as the impending threat of a World War II grew, there was organized and legitimate action from governments such as the United States and Great Britain to protect cultural heritage institutions. A number of handbooks and guidebooks, written specifically for the cultural heritage sector provide in-depth recommendations and guidance in the face of wartime disasters (e.g., see Burr 1952). Such sources serve as evidence of a concerted and directed effort towards the saving of both portable and immovable cultural resources in World War II. However, as Kathy Peiss describes, similar efforts were largely absent during the Iraq wars: “The difference is striking across 60 years—in the message, tone and

assumptions of wartime leaders and in the policies and procedures they oversaw” (Peiss 2007). This has certainly been the case with even more recent examples from the Middle East, such as ISIS destruction and burning of libraries and the looting of the Donetsk and Kharkiv libraries in Eastern Ukraine by Pro-Russian demonstrators (Kusch 2014, accessed 9 September 2015).

In order to begin the process of disaster planning in times of war, it is essential that libraries and archives do the best they can to know their collections: know what exists and where it exists and what conditions or factors are involved in its preservation. Institutions need to be honest with themselves and have the knowledge of what they realistically can and cannot do in regards to disaster planning. In terms of examining historical reactions, three different sub-divisions can be analyzed to properly examine historical wartime disasters in libraries and archives, as laid out by Rene Teijgeler (2006):

- Pre-conflict: actions taken before the outset of war.
- Peri-conflict: actions taken in the midst of or during the conflict itself.
- Post-conflict: after the war has ended, a time mainly involved with disaster response, recovery and reclamation.

The examples noted in this paper illustrate all three types of disaster responses. In an ideal world, pre-conflict responses that employ disaster management planning would be the norm, though history has shown that peri-conflict and post-conflict responses remain more prevalent. Based on the above examples, we propose the development of an institutional “score” which would rate an institution’s potential to deal with a disaster as part of a pre-conflict approach. This could be generated by way of a survey or assessment tool that would take numerous basic factors into account which are grounded in the practice of cultural heritage preservation. For example, questions about an institution’s geography, collections, facilities and building materials, amount of digital content and location of storage servers in addition to the existence and depth of current disaster management plans may all factor in to the score. This score would then be part of a larger scale overview which would help institutions analyze their level of risk and therefore begin to help repositories take steps to manage that risk. While only in the preliminary research phase, we believe this approach yields some promise in assisting institutions to become more risk averse and identify areas in need of development.

Conclusion

Political and social upheaval has frequently led to the deliberate and accidental destruction of libraries and archives. Recent wars and conflicts in Timbuktu, Egypt, Libya, Iraq and other countries around the world demonstrate that libraries and archives, as part of the region’s cultural heritage and memory, remain vulnerable. In recent years, libraries and archives have been burned, destroyed or looted as a direct result of these conflicts. Given such horrific conditions, those responsible for the management of these collections have little to no opportunity to plan for or remedy these tragedies. Most institutions struggle with basic operations and have few resources, if any, even for collection preservation, much less disaster preparedness or training.

While the goal for the future should be to avoid peri-conflict measures by advanced “pre-conflict” planning, modern tools do not exist to assist in this endeavor regardless

of economic or geographic region. Not only do recommendations need to factor in the modern nature of human conflict, they also need to use technology as a tool in disaster mitigation. From cell phone cameras and mobile applications, to GIS and geospatial data, to advanced cyber security measures, the plethora of instruments at our fingertips need to be utilized. This was true in World War II when the U.S. Committee on Conservation of Cultural Resources recommended institutions take photos of their collections in situ (1942), and it should be true today more than ever.

Notes

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- ² In the most general terms, there are seven guiding principles that make up the core elements of the practice of preservation in archives, libraries and museums.

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A virtual Renaissance for the manuscripts of Chartres damaged during World War II

Claudia Rabel

Chartres is famous worldwide for its Gothic cathedral, which has miraculously survived intact from the Middle Ages until the twenty-first century. Sadly the same cannot be said for its ancient libraries. Until 1944, the collection of medieval manuscripts in the municipal library at Chartres was one of the richest in France. It was also one of the most prestigious, because it was directly related to the history of its schools, especially the celebrated cathedral school, so vigorous in the first half of the twelfth century. The catalogue published in 1890 listed 518 medieval manuscripts (Omont *et alii* 1890). The great majority came from the cathedral chapter and the Benedictine abbey of Saint-Père-en-Vallée, the two centres of intellectual life in Chartres since the Carolingian period, one dominating the city from a high plateau, the other situated in the lower city.

One year before the end of the Second World War, on the 26th of May 1944, American aircraft accidentally dropped bombs on Chartres. In the ensuing conflagration, the municipal library, installed in the town hall, was destroyed. The flames devoured nearly two thirds of the medieval manuscripts. The rest escaped in different states of preservation, from carbonized relics to bundles of leaves that were almost untouched. Immediately attempts were made to save whatever remained. In Paris, in the restoration atelier at the Bibliothèque Nationale, leaves were detached from volumes now transformed into compact blocks. Starting in 1948 at Chartres, identified fragments were regrouped by shelf-mark. Luckily, scholars in Chartres had long been devoted to their manuscript heritage, and the rescue teams had at their disposal a very detailed catalogue published in 1890 by Henri Omont and collaborators, as well as the work and photographs of the canon Yves Delaporte, who in 1929 published the catalogue of the illuminated manuscripts in the library.

What did we lose when we lost the library of Chartres?

The reputation of the School of Chartres, the emblematic crown jewel of the twelfth-century intellectual renaissance, was established by Abbé Clerval in his thesis, published in 1895. In 1965 Richard Southern called into question the very existence of that “School”, igniting a lively debate. Today it is accepted as certain that the “Chartrain masters” taught in the shadow of their cathedral, as witnessed by the Liberal Arts and their classical masters on the Royal Portal (Jeauneau 2009). Clerval, himself a canon of the cathedral, made remarkable use of the manuscripts in the library. Their material loss created an enormous void, depriving us of the possibility of continuing his work on the originals, in the light of today’s knowledge and questions.

The fire and its consequences have rendered the manuscripts that escaped extremely fragile. Some break easily, others were illegibly blackened by the fire or, conversely,

washed out by water, contracted, pleated, vitrified by the heat, sometimes reduced to crumbs. These martyred manuscripts must be handled with extreme care. Consequently, since 1944 they may be consulted only in exceptional circumstances. By and large, the collection was consigned to oblivion, and the idea that it was destroyed, or at least inaccessible, became a commonplace among scholars.

What can we retrieve?

Since 2005, an ambitious project at the Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes (CNRS, Paris) has intended to provide 'A virtual Renaissance for the damaged manuscripts of Chartres'. It is directed by Dominique Poirel and, since 2009, by myself, with a lot of help from Patricia Stirnemann (the only one of us who is truly a specialist of Chartrain manuscripts and their illumination!). The project is being carried out by the Institute in close collaboration with several partners, notably the Médiathèque l'Apostrophe de Chartres (also known as the Municipal Library) where the manuscripts are kept. It has received public funding from several sources.

In order to catch up with research that was brutally interrupted in 1944, we have embarked on several parallel pathways. A primary task has been to determine more precisely what exists and what has been lost. In the complicated situation of the manuscript collection in the library of Chartres it is impossible to count the number of manuscripts. New survivors appear, others whom we thought had made it, cannot be found, and still others are sometimes found mixed up under a single shelf-mark in the same box. Important discoveries had been made in the "surprise packets"—a cupboard full of nearly 400 envelopes of manuscript fragments classified as "unidentified". Among them we have already recognized 38 medieval manuscripts on parchment thought to have been destroyed, which can be added to the 164 previously identified.

Reproduction, legibility and image enhancement: « relaxation » and multispectral imaging

One of the essential objectives of IRHT since its foundation in 1937 has been the preservation and systematic reproduction of medieval manuscripts. As of today, we have digitized 143 of the damaged manuscripts of Chartres. At the outset, we hoped that the legibility of the deformed fragments would be improved by relaxing and stretching the parchment. But in the end, this has been useful for only 22 manuscripts. The others needed no treatment, or the fragments were too small, or the damage to the parchment prohibited treatment. From 2009 to 2012 two restorers undertook this work in the technical centre of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France at Bussy-Saint-Georges. They 'relaxed' the folios in a humidifier or between sheets of sympatex, cleaned their surface, kept them stretched as they dried, digitized the folios, and placed them in specially conditioned boxes, made to measure.

As can be seen for manuscripts 83 and 137, the “relaxation” has quite efficiently removed the wrinkles in the parchment and rendered both the text and illumination legible (<http://www.manuscrits-de-chartres.fr/en/restauration-et-reproduction>). The wooden bindings of a few manuscripts survived, for example that of ms. 17, whose folios have also survived well. The boards of ms. 149 are still decorated with the “tunic of the Virgin”, the cathedral’s most important relic, which was used as the heraldic bearings of the chapter. The manuscripts can be consulted in the Institute’s virtual manuscript library, the Bibliothèque virtuelle des manuscrits médiévaux (<http://bvmm.irht.cnrs.fr/>). Multi- or hyper-spectral photography is another promising aid. For the manuscripts of Chartres this technique can solve the problem of overlapping lines of script, recto and verso, on transparent parchment. The procedure is very time-consuming and justifiable cases must be pinpointed, based on the importance of a specific passage of text and the historic or literary value of the book.

Putting the manuscripts in order

Once photographed, scholars begin to put the fragments into their correct order. Luckily, the foliation still exists on some of the better preserved fragments. But much more often the sorting relies on the identification of the texts, and this is arduous, time-consuming work. Three examples of manuscripts from the cathedral library illustrate the difficulties. Occasionally a microfilm made before the war provides help, as with the *Opuscula medica* in manuscript 62, a tenth-century book thought to have come from the abbey of Fleury. Otherwise, sequencing the folios requires that a passage of text be taken from each page, identified in a printed edition, and given a relative position in the manuscript. For a two volume bible containing more than 900 pages, ms. 139, the task was not difficult, but very laborious. The bible was probably copied in Chartres, but painted by the Almagest Master, one of the most gifted of the Parisian illuminators at the beginning of the thirteenth century. It was known before only from a few black and white photographs. Dominique Poirel was our detective for manuscript 205, a thirteenth-century book containing a remarkable collection of theological texts from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, some of them very rare.

The web site

The web site devoted to Chartres, “A la recherche des manuscrits de Chartres” (“Rediscovering the manuscripts from Chartres”, <http://www.manuscrits-de-chartres.fr/>), presents all the documentation we have found for each manuscript from the medieval libraries at Chartres. A listing gives access to a short entry concerning the manuscript. From there one can access the volume’s bibliography, occasionally a detailed description, the digitized facsimile of the book in its present state, and pre-war photographs. Textual editions are also noted. The site intends to open up wider avenues of research, becoming a tool for the study of the influence exercised by the masters, authors and books from Chartres on intellectual and artistic history in the Middle Ages. To this end, the site

includes a “who’s who” of the main Chartrain authors. Little by little the manuscripts of their works will be listed, dated and localized, which will help scholars to evaluate their place in time and space. The site also intends to create an inventory of manuscripts made in Chartres, but housed elsewhere today, such as the bible in two volumes commissioned by Abbot Suger for Saint-Denis (Paris, BNF, lat. 55 and 116) and the bibles made for the count Thibaut de Champagne and saint Bernard of Clairvaux (Troyes, BM, mss 2391 and 458).

What have we learned during the last ten years?

Today, we have a much more precise understanding of the documentation. Our improved knowledge is also a source of frustration, because among the preserved volumes there are many legal and liturgical manuscripts which are difficult or even impossible to put back in order. The fire seems to have spared them in greater number than the rare texts that interest so many scholars. One exception is the work that symbolizes the school of Chartres in the twelfth century, the two volumes of the *Heptateuchon* made for Thierry de Chartres, manuscripts 497-498. We have the pre-war microfilms of the volumes, and there are fragments remaining. In this unpublished *Bibliotheca* of the liberal arts, Thierry collected works, mostly by classical and Arabic authors, for an encyclopedic teaching programme. One of the sources must have been manuscript 214, a collection of texts on astronomy and mathematics that perished, but we discovered the reproduction of an extraordinary drawing of a *nocturlabe* (a nocturnal clock that uses the stars to determine time) and Jean-Patrice Boudet was able to write a very detailed “ghost description” of the manuscript.

Thanks to another old photograph, we also have an idea of the frontispiece of the *Apothecarius moralis*, manuscript 1036 written in 1373. In this manuscript, the monks of Saint-Père provided an inventory of their 224 books, and gathered together an entire *Bibliotheca* of scattered Latin and French texts found in their library. Alas, for the moment only a few fragments of the book have been found.

Where can we go from here?

More than seventy years after the fire, it is high time, and now possible, to examine the manuscripts and the ancient catalogues of the medieval libraries of Chartres with renewed vision and today’s questions concerning the networks of people, knowledge and books. It is also time to say honestly that the manuscript collection at Chartres is rich, but not in witnesses to the cathedral school of the twelfth century, famous for the teaching of its masters on grammar, natural science, the Bible and theology, the philosophy of Plato. On the contrary, already in the late sixteenth-century catalogue of the library of the cathedral, which contains 209 volumes (Paris, BNF, ms. Dupuy 673, ff. 133-138), one searches in vain for the works of Gilbert de la Porrée, Guillaume de Conches, John of Salisbury.

The chapter library was very much alive, and constantly used by the canons in the Middle Ages, as we learn from a register begun at the end of the thirteenth century, which mentions their book loans—books that were borrowed but not always returned (mss 1007-1008). In 1303, for example, Landolfo Colonna returned the “very old” volume containing Livy’s fourth decade which was previously unknown (his deluxe copy, made in Rome, is now in Paris, BNF, lat. 5690). But Landolfo did not return the volume of Lactantius, which is housed today in Oxford (Bodl. Lib., Canonici Patr. lat. 131). During the following centuries, the wandering humanists and bibliophiles continued to fill their shopping carts with the manuscripts of Chartres. The eleventh-century obituary-martyrology is famous for its miniature of Bishop Fulbert preaching to the faithful in the cathedral, which he had built after the fire in 1020. The manuscript left the city already before the French Revolution and ended up in the library at Saint-Etienne, which gave it back to Chartres after the war (ms. nouv. acq. 4). After the Revolution, many of the oldest manuscripts, such as two copies of medical works (lat. 9332 and lat. 10233), were removed from the chapter library and carried off to the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Manuscripts from the abbey of Saint-Père have also been identified there, including the works of Bishop Fulbert (lat. 14167, 11th c.) and Yves de Chartres (lat. 2892, 12th c.).

The library of Chartres is nonetheless exceptional, even as it existed at the end of the nineteenth century. It is rich in Carolingian manuscripts, which attest to the existence of schools already at that time and the study of ancient authors. At Saint-Père they read Flavius Josephus (ms. 29) and studied Virgil, as we can see from a commentary on the *Bucolics*, written partially in tironian notes (ms. 13). The library is rich in liturgical manuscripts that inform us about the offices celebrated in the cathedral and other churches in the city. Although these books have often perished or exist only in a fragmentary state, some can be studied using pre-war reproductions. It is rich in cartularies, obituaries and other diplomatic documents, which are key sources for economic and political history, local and regional history. These manuscripts have been partially published, but when the editions are compared to the originals, new information always comes to light. In 2015-2016, history students at the University of Versailles-Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, under the direction of Pierre Chastang and Isabelle Bretthauer, have studied one of these historical documents of the cathedral, the book of rentals for the bishopric (*Livre blanc*, ms. 1138).

We hope to have raised scholarly interest for the manuscripts of Chartres, whether they have survived or not. The fire in 1944 caused irreparable losses, but important new discoveries continue to surface. Perhaps the most spectacular has been made by Patricia Stirnemann. She examined the list of 35 books bequeathed to the cathedral in 1180 by its bishop John of Salisbury, one of the greatest twelfth-century humanists. She has identified several of the books on the list with manuscripts described in the 1890 catalogue, all destroyed. With the exception of one, which was no longer in the library at the time. And it is the most important of all, namely John’s personal copy of his greatest work, the *Polycraticus*, a treatise on political and moral philosophy written for Thomas Becket. It is a manuscript of English origin, now housed in the municipal library at Soissons, ms. 24. But that is another story, which has been told by Patricia Stirnemann herself on the 1st of October 2015 in Metz, at a colloquium devoted to John of Salisbury. “test”

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War, division and digital reunification, or what do the Omont collection and the lecture notes kept at the Leuven University Library have in common?

An Smets

Introduction: the history of the University Library¹

The University of Leuven was established in 1425, but it took more than 200 years before it would have an official library. When founded in 1636, the library was housed in the University Hall (the headquarters of the University). The first librarian was the Hebraist Valerius Andreas (1636-1655), who published the first catalogue of the collection in 1639. In 1736 the library possessed over 8000 volumes. In 1755, Cornelius Francis Nelis was appointed acting librarian. He managed to increase the revenues of the library tenfold and to obtain the establishment of a legal deposit. Jan Frans Van de Velde, librarian, appointed in 1772, led an active purchasing policy and, over ten years, doubled the number of volumes from 20.000 to 40.000.

Upon the dissolution of the University by the French Republic in 1797, the library had about 50.000 volumes. Many were confiscated and distributed to French institutions. The rest of the books were claimed by the city of Leuven. Only in 1806 was the former university library reopened, but as a city library. In 1817 the library resumed its former function within the framework of the newly established *Rijksuniversiteit*—or state university—of Leuven.

When the State University was disbanded in 1835, the library was again owned by the city, which passed it immediately on to the newly established Catholic University. From that point forward, the library could again gradually grow. Under Jean Baptiste Malou (1839-1848), the number of books was estimated at 60.000 and the number of manuscripts at 300. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century growing importance was attached to the library and in 1900, the number of books increased to some 150.000 volumes. And thanks to the initiative of the new rector Mgr. Paulin Ladeuze, the library was thoroughly modernized in 1913.

But this modernization had a short life. On the night of August 25 1914, the University Hall, including the renewed library, was burnt down as German troops torched a large part of the city. The University's bull of foundation, nearly 1.000 manuscripts, 800 incunabula and all the other books, about 300.000 volumes, went up in flames. The catalogue was also lost, while a very partial list of the manuscripts survived. Already during the war, the committees of allied and neutral countries assembled money and books for the restoration of Leuven's library. A new library building was built between 1921 and 1928 at the current Mgr. Ladeuzeplein. The money was raised mainly through private initiatives of US citizens and educational institutions, spearheaded by the later president Herbert Hoover. At the dedication of the new building in 1928 about 750.000 volumes were available. They were brought together partly by donations from home and abroad, and partly purchased with funds from the German reparations².

Upon the arrival of the *Wehrmacht* on 16-17 May 1940 about 900.000 volumes along with a large part of the new building were burnt down again. However, this time some manuscripts, especially books of hours, and 10.000 to 15.000 books were rescued. There was a catalogue of a series of manuscripts (357) and bits and pieces of information about other manuscripts. Incunabula that were collected between the two World Wars had been included in the catalogue by Polain (1932-1978), but only one of them survived the fire. Only in 1951 was the library able to resume full operations. Mgr. Étienne van Cauwenbergh, who was appointed librarian in 1919, left at his retirement in 1961 more than one million volumes.

Following the split of the University the years 1970-1979 were marked by the division of library collections between the KU Leuven, the Flemish University, and the Université catholique de Louvain, the French wing which moved to Louvain-la-Neuve. Books with an even call number went to the UCL, those with an odd number stayed at Leuven. Serials, series and multipart works had a single call number and so stayed together. The donations were allocated in their entirety to one of the two divided libraries, whereby the donor (if alive) had a say³.

Special collections at the University Library

Special collections are kept in different departments of the University Library, where we focus on the Tabularium, conserving manuscripts, old books and graphics in the main library building. A lot of attention goes to the 'academic collection', containing the following components:

Collectio academica antiqua (Caa) and Collectio academica hollandica (Cah)

These are sub collections of books and other printed materials (e.g. theses) published by Leuven academics and works related to, respectively, the Old University (1427-1797) and the State University (1817-1835). Later titles published on the Old University and the State University are added to these sub collections. In January 2015, the Caa-subcollection contained 6558 pre-1800 documents, among them 3255 theses, and the Cah-collection 229 titles.

Lecture notes

Lecture notes are handwritten student notes, written down during the classes at the University. More information on this sub collection will be found further on in this contribution.

Modern academic collection (Ca)

The Central Library is also the depository for all publications related to the University of Leuven and all publications that come from this University or its academic staff. Examples include: publications on the history of Leuven University, series or journals published by a department, publications of researchers and professors (both published during their academic careers, as before and after this career), etc. This sub collection contains works from the modern University, i.e. from 1835 onwards.

Besides sub-collections which are grouped around a specific theme, the University Library also possesses provenance collections. The most important are:

1. *Susan Minns*

Susan Minns (1839-1938) from Boston probably had the largest collection on death and death dance. In 1922 she put her collection into auction. When she was contacted by the American architect of the new University Library, she donated \$ 12,500 to the University of Louvain to purchase pieces at the auction, and also paid the shipping costs.

2. *Archibald Corble*

The heirs of the British fencer and bibliophile Archibald Harrison Corble (1883-1944) donated in 1948 his large collection of books on fencing and duelling to the university. This collection contains more than 2000 items, dating from the fifteenth to the twentieth century.

3. *Henri Omont: cf. infra*

4. *Henry de Vocht*

Henry de Vocht (1878-1962) was professor of German philology in Leuven and an important scholar who graduated on the impact of Erasmus on the English theatre. He later turned into an authority of the sixteenth-century humanism and the history of Leuven University. In all these areas Henry de Vocht was also an avid collector. His library of 2.600 volumes came after his death to the University Library.

5. *Frans Cranevelt*

The humanist Cranevelt (1485-1564) owes his fame mainly to his extensive correspondence with contemporaries such as Erasmus, Thomas More and Juan Luis Vives. Today, 385 letters from the period 1520-1528, mostly addressed to Cranevelt, are kept in the University Library. The letters, which are a rich source of information about the political and intellectual life in the sixteenth century, were published by de Vocht (ed. 1928) and Ijsewijn et al. (1992-1995). All letters are fully digitized and available via the library catalogue Limo (<http://limo.libis.be>).

Detailed description 1: Lecture notes from the Old University (1425-1797)

In the twentieth century, the librarians of the University Library began to shed light on the history of the University itself. This was not the case in the previous centuries (Mirguet 2003: 72), so one should not be surprised to notice that no lecture notes were mentioned in the first library catalogue, of 1639, which contains descriptions of some 60 manuscripts (Puteanus, 1639: 124-127)⁴, nor in later catalogues⁵. There are estimates that the library possessed some 950 manuscripts at the eve of the First World War (Coppens et al. 2005: 108)⁶, among them a least (or—rather—only) eight lecture notes (Moreau

1918: nrs 109-116 p. 97-98)⁷. Almost 30 years later, at the beginning of the Second World War, the manuscript collection counted again 827 items⁸, of which 68 were (probably) lecture notes from Leuven⁹. None of these 68 manuscripts survived the fire of the Second World War. Étienne Van Cauwenbergh, librarian between 1919 and 1961, paid particular attention to rebuilding the lecture notes collection, and a few years after his retirement, a catalogue was published with the first 99 items ([D'Haenens] 1965)¹⁰. It is this sub collection of some 100 manuscripts that was divided in the 1970's between the universities of Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve. Both universities acquired new copies afterwards, by donation and by purchase.

At the end of 2002, the collection of lecture notes of the Université catholique de Louvain totalled 152 items for the period 1425-1797, of which seven printed courses (Mirguet 2003: 73-74). They are all described in the catalogue published by F. Mirguet in 2003. It took ten more years before an inventory of the lecture notes kept at the KU Leuven was published, as part of the edited volume *Ex cathedra* (Vanpaemel et al. 2012: 293-325). This inventory lists 175 manuscripts for the Old University.

This sub-collection is important because the lecture notes give a very good picture of the curricula at the Old University, mainly at the Faculty of Arts, as those manuscripts constitute by far the largest group. As such, the lecture notes are important for the history of education, but their value is much broader, giving also details on the worldview and historical urban geography. These elements can often be deduced from the various iconographic resources contained in the manuscripts. Besides the engraved images (title pages, moralistic prints,...), which were widely disseminated and sometimes reprinted several times over, there are also original drawings made by the students themselves, both educational and entertaining. This is especially true for the lecture notes of the seventeenth century. Those students were master calligraphers, describing their courses with decorative initials, chronograms, coats of arms and ornate colophons. They apparently liked to take breaks from their studies with 'airy' drawings of landscapes, cityscapes, drunkenness, jesters and dwarves, portraits. From the eighteenth century onwards, this gradually changed. Calligraphic and illustrative aspects became less important, and the scientific engravings were included, which are less original to the note-takers themselves, but very interesting from a research point of view. They illustrate how teaching was linked more and more to scientific discoveries and inventions.

Detailed description 2: the collection of Henri Omont

For many years, Henri Omont (1857-1940) was curator of the manuscript department of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris. After his death his private collection was purchased by the KU Leuven. It contained 23 manuscripts and manuscript fragments (including three charters), 1492 incunabula and rare books up to 1800 and numerous reference books and manuscript catalogues, including many rare specimens¹¹. For his work as a palaeographer and manuscript specialist, he collected documents that could help with the description of manuscripts, including hundreds of offprints from his colleagues. To underline the importance of this collection for the newly established University Library, let us cite C. Coppens et al. (2005: 351):

“For the collection of manuscript catalogues, for example, this was an incomparable basis. Not only did Omont own virtually all the great reference works, from the eighteenth-century folio volumes from Paris, Florence and Vienna to the nineteenth-century publications from London, Berlin or Leipzig, beside the countless ‘ordinary’ catalogues. He also possessed extremely rare editions such as seventeenth and eighteenth-century catalogues of private and institutional libraries, or private editions such as wedding gifts, *nuptialia*, between colleagues. He had also assembled an extensive collection of old auction catalogues of the great collectors. (...)”.

As this collection was purchased rather than gifted, half of the collection, including all the archives, went to the Université catholique de Louvain. For the manuscripts, this meant that seven items stayed at Leuven¹², twelve others went to Louvain-la-Neuve¹³, while for four others, one part was kept in Leuven and the other half in Louvain-la-Neuve¹⁴. The reason for this ‘horror scenario’ probably lies in the value of the fragments, as the first three of them date from the first half of the seventh century and even earlier.

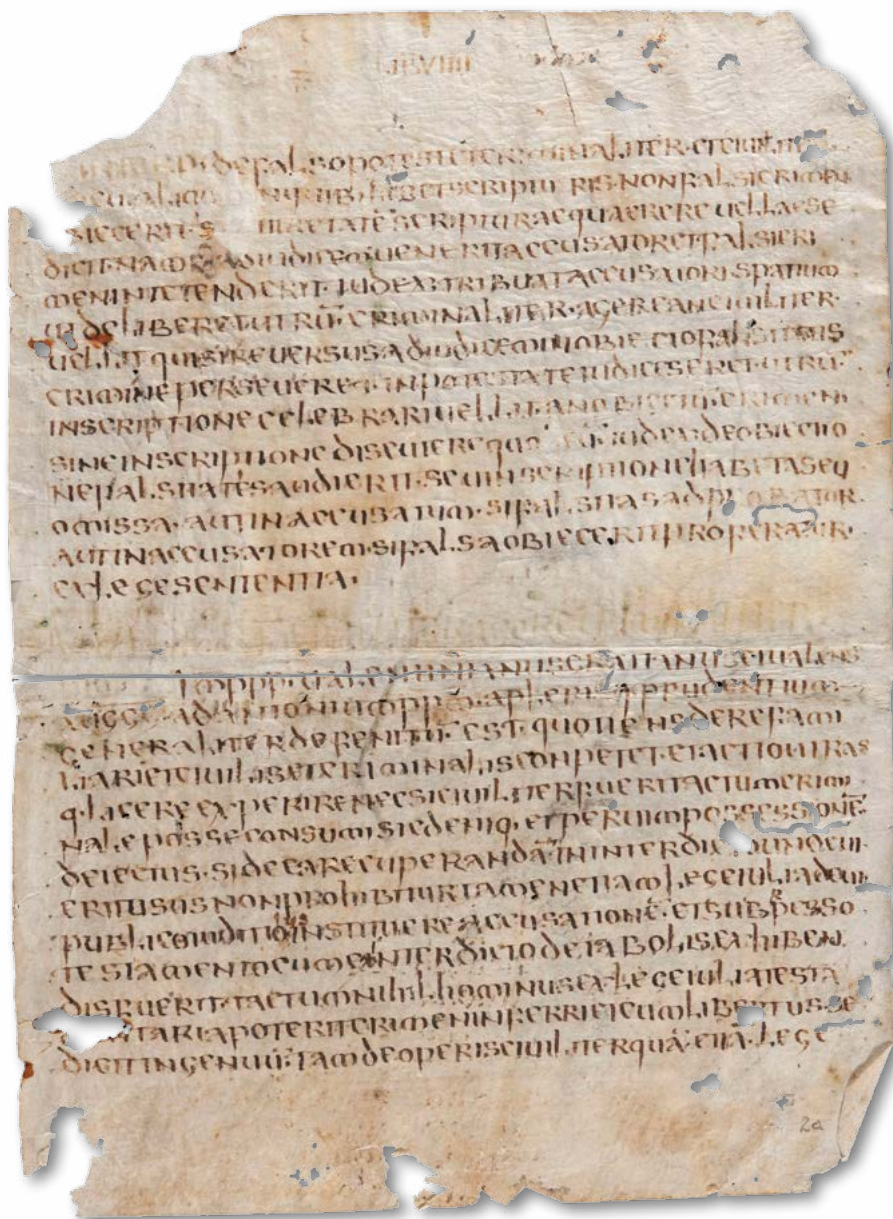
Reunification after the division ... thanks to the digital library

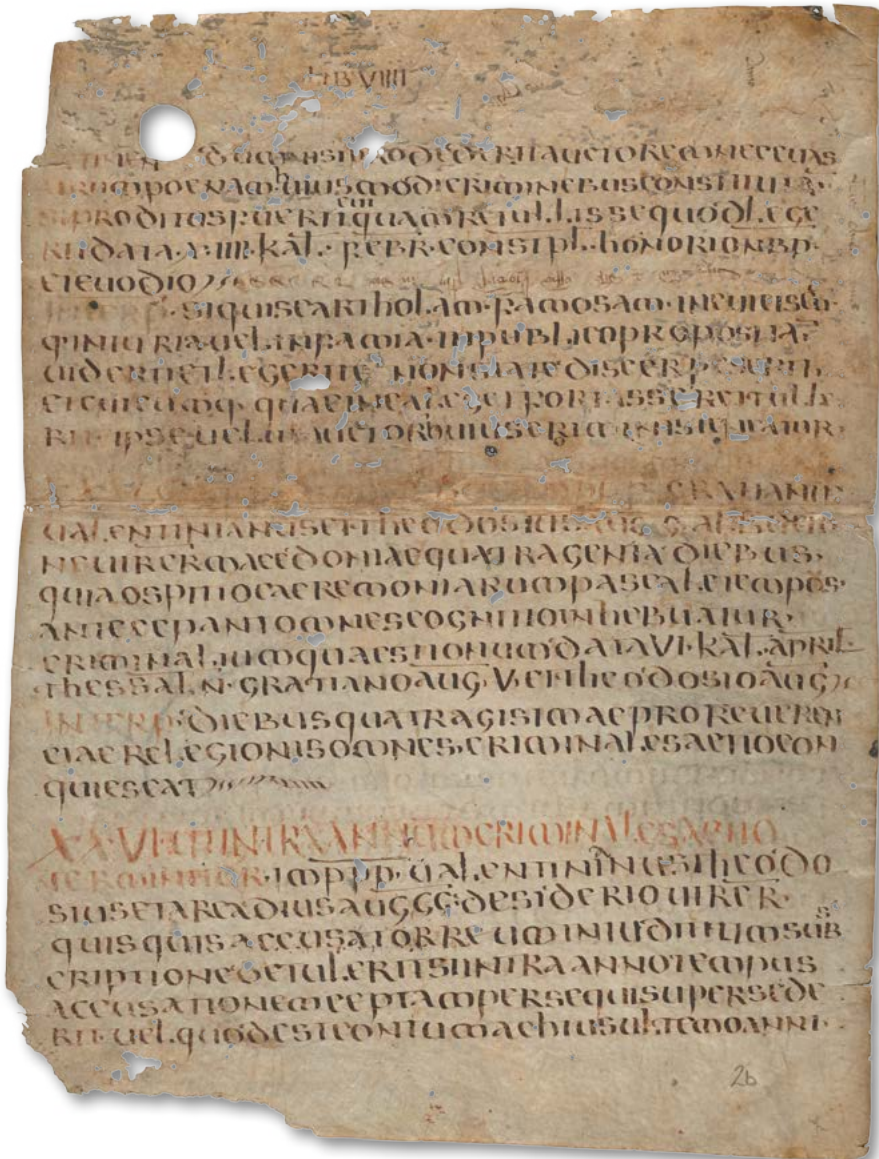
Now, almost 50 years after the division, there are good relationships between the ‘sister universities’ KU Leuven and UCL, and we have collaborated on several projects together. With respect to the heritage collections, each university owns its own collection, and there will be no exchanging of their respective parts. But, what is not possible in the physical world can be done virtually. Even then, as there are different ownerships, one should be aware of the juridical implications of such a collaboration, so this aspect can take some time, but once contracts are signed, there are no further (legal) obstacles.

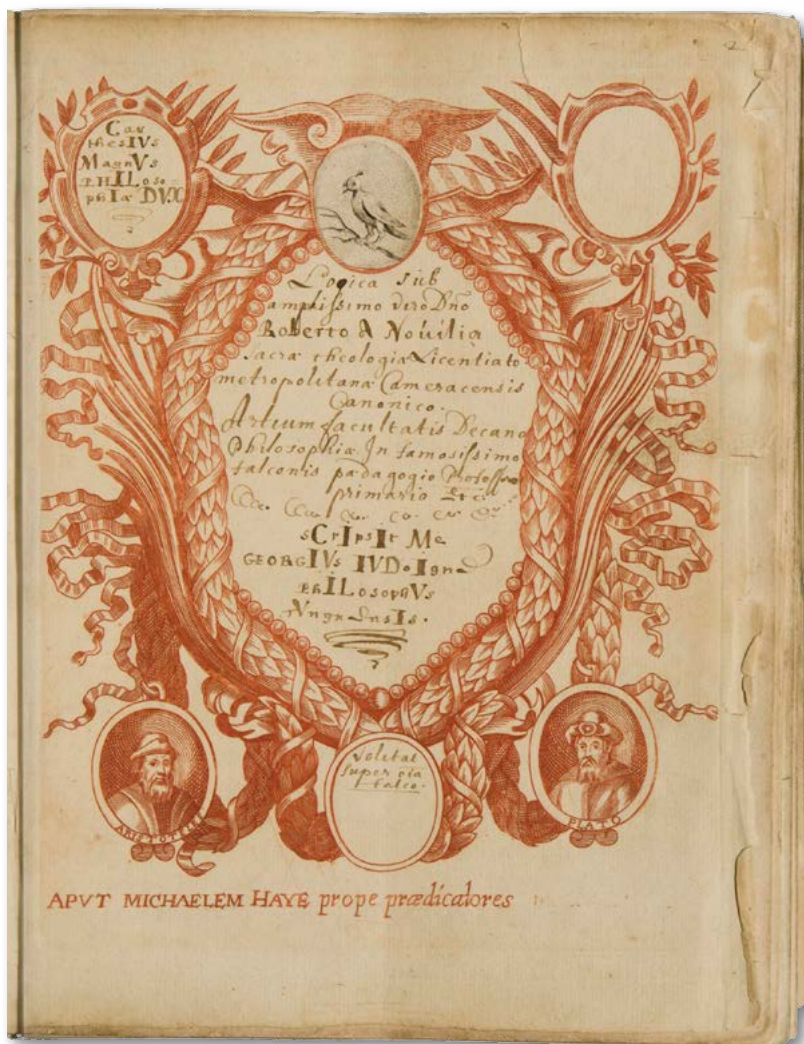
The first project has been the digitization of the four divided Omont fragments. The pictures of the fragments conserved at the UCL will be added to the catalogue of the University Library, which already contains descriptions and images of the fragments kept at Leuven¹⁵, and the staff of the archives of the UCL can also make available ‘the whole fragments’ through their own services.

Another project, called *Magister dixit*, started at the beginning of 2015. For this project, all lecture notes from the Old University, which are kept in Leuven and in Louvain-la-Neuve, have been completely digitized. The total number is of 303, 174 for the KU Leuven and 129 for the UCL, the amount of digital images is roughly 127.000. This project was made possible by generous funds from the Foundation Inbev-Baillet Latour and additional financial support from the Leuven University Fund. Moreover, this project is not merely about digitization, but also contains a section on metadata—as there are no online metadata available for the manuscripts of the UCL—and a scientific platform. This platform, realized by Libis, the information service of the University Library, not only presents all the images, but also contains supplementary features for researchers to work on these images. In March 2016, one year after the launch of the project, the platform was presented to the (academic) public. At the same time, a new collaboration

was announced, as the Louvain lecture notes kept at the Royal Library of Brussels will also be digitized and added to this platform. So keep an eye on <http://heron-net.be/lectio/magister-dixit-project>, because the digital collection is still growing.







KU Leuven, University Library, Tabularium, ms250 titlepage

Conclusion

Institutions that have lasted over several centuries have happy and tumultuous stories to tell. It is no different for the Leuven University Library: two fires almost destroyed the entire collection, and the division of the university in the 1970s also led to the division of the library collections. But fortunately, as shown here, the digital possibilities of the twenty-first century offer answers to some problematic situations created in the twentieth century. This is only a start. Why not dream of adding (alternatives for) lost documents

and other divided collections to our library resources? We can reconstitute collections in the virtual realm and create scientific platforms to attract other institutions to add their own materials. This will lead to international communities working on the same themes. Of course, this is not possible without enough money for staff, equipment, storage etc., but let's end this contribution with the dream that all this can one day be made possible.

Notes

- ¹ I would like to thank my colleague Katrien Smeyers, who gave me the permission to base my text on the history of the university library on an earlier text she recently wrote. More information can be found in Coppens – Derez – Roegiers 2005. I also would like to thank Melissa Lo, Assistant Curator at The Hunting Library, for having read and correcting my English text.
- ² About the fire of the library and the reconstruction after the first World War, see also Schivelbusch (1988).
- ³ On the division of the university, see also Jonckheere and Todts (1979). However, the section dedicated to the library is very limited (pp. 347-352).
- ⁴ The text is also reproduced in Sanderus (1641-1644: t. II, pp. 37-40). See also C. Coppens et al. (2005: pp. 42-43).
- ⁵ See e.g. M. le baron de Reiffenberg (1844) and Namur (1841: pp. 211-219). See Coppens (1990) for an overview of former catalogues of the collection, especially pp. 52-55.
- ⁶ An incomplete list of 154 manuscripts (without lecture notes) is published by de Moreau (1918: pp. 50-80). This book mentions the lecture notes with the archival documents, cf. *infra*.
- ⁷ See also Mirguet (2003: p. 72).
- ⁸ G1-357 and D317-786. The G-manuscripts were given by Germany to the University Library, in accordance of the treatise of Versailles, the D-manuscripts came from different donations. See the unpublished inventories (*Inventaires*) in the reference list.
- ⁹ The following manuscripts of the D-list are (probably) Louvain lecture notes: D324, D465, D499-502, D514-516, D682, D696-698, D704, D717-719, D726-729, D731-773 and D780. Among the G-manuscripts, only G181-182 and G332 were lecture notes from Leuven.
- ¹⁰ D'Haenens (1965: pp. 3-4) mentions that the collection counts some 100 manuscripts at that time, and that he gives a description of the first 100 documents, but the catalogue ends with C99.
- ¹¹ To be more concrete: 1779 documents from the nineteenth century, 644 from the twentieth century and 610 books without datation.
- ¹² Omont 1, 11, 14, 15, 16, 20 and 21, now MSS 1094, 1099, 1100, 1106, 1101, 1102 and 1103.
- ¹³ Omont 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 22 and 23 (call numbers still used).
- ¹⁴ Omont 2, 8, 9 and 10, of which the Leuven parts now have the call numbers MSS 1095, 1096, 1097 and 1098. For more information on MS 1095, see McCormick (1976), for MS 1096 McCormick (1979 and 1980) and for MS 1097 see Massaux (1961). For the url's, see *infra*.
- ¹⁵ MS 1095:
http://limo.libis.be/KULeuven:ALL_CONTENT:32LIBIS_ALMA_DS71161061900001471
 MS 1096:
http://limo.libis.be/KULeuven:ALL_CONTENT:32LIBIS_ALMA_DS71161060700001471
 MS 1097:
http://limo.libis.be/KULeuven:ALL_CONTENT:32LIBIS_ALMA_DS71161079070001471
 MS 1098: http://limo.libis.be/KULeuven:ALL_CONTENT:32LIBIS_ALMA_DS71161077380001471

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What do we lose
when we lose a library?

**Digital libraries and
imaging research**

Digital libraries, digital law? A tale of copyright challenges and chances

V.E. Breemen¹

What do we lose when we lose a library? Asking that question implies at least two other issues: what are ‘libraries’? And what does ‘losing’ mean? I recognize that there are many different types of libraries, but for purposes of this paper, I regard ‘libraries’ as established structures in society (both physical and virtual), which are closely linked to their functions (including organizing, disseminating and preserving collections) and act on the basis of normative values (reliability, accessibility, diversity, etc.). In the networked public information environment they are changing functionally (most functions currently have a digital component, while, due to new actors developing similar functions, libraries may no longer be the sole authorities they used to be) and legally (it is questionable if and how the law facilitates digital library activities). As to ‘losing’ therefore, I adopt a legal perspective—what barriers does the law pose to the way libraries function, especially in the digital domain?

When looking at libraries through a legal lens, we could assess whether the law assigns libraries a ‘public task’, and if so, what that task entails. We could talk about user privacy and intellectual freedom. We could discuss the implications of the right to be forgotten for the library’s access and preservation functions (see recently also IFLA 2016). Or we could analyze how copyright law deals with libraries, to name but a few angles. In this paper, I take the first and last options together from a Dutch and European perspective: if libraries have a public task to provide low threshold access to (online) information, shouldn’t copyright law, as a system of exclusive rights and exceptions which shares goals in the organization and dissemination of information (Henry 1975; Grosheide 1986), somehow facilitate that task? This assumption informs the structure of the paper as follows.

First, I observe that the Dutch legislator has lately established something close to a digital public task for libraries in the updated Library Act (2014). Yet, though the envisaged functions clearly imply the involvement of copyrighted content, copyright law as such was kept out of the library policy reform (Zijlstra 2011: 3, 10). Second, I concretize the potential copyright challenges by briefly addressing the current exceptions to copyright’s exclusive rights for the benefit of libraries. The exceptions’ scope turns out to be either limited or unclear in respect of digital library activities. But there are also signs that copyright law recognizes the library’s task and the digital component in particular. Third therefore, I examine two examples of opportunities for accommodating digital library activities that already appear in a legislative initiative and a copyright case respectively: 1) the European Commission’s Orphan Works Directive (2012), which expressly allows for the digitization and online dissemination of works whose right holder is unknown, if those activities serve the library’s ‘public interest mission’; and 2) the European Court of Justice’s decision in the *Technische Universität Darmstadt*-case (2014), which depicts digitization as an ancillary right for libraries to effectuate the onsite consultation exception and their ‘core mission’ of disseminating knowledge. The fourth section concludes.

If libraries have a digital public task ...

This paper started with the assumption that (public) libraries have a public task, but is that actually the case? From a user perspective, information is not scarce anymore and new actors may perform similar functions. Yet, as we will see, library functioning is based on fundamental values, such as reliability and accessibility; they remain a go-to source for free (or in any case, low threshold) copyrighted works, which amounts to a public task—a notion I will now illustrate.

A 'public task' can follow from various sources, mainly factual conduct, policy documents, library statutes, or the law (Kabel et al. 2001: 14-15). In the Netherlands, the library's public task used to be based on soft law and has at last made its way into the law: the Library Act 2014. The modernized Dutch library rules have two focus points: 1) to create a national digital library and coordinate the cooperation within a network of libraries; and 2) to provide a proper legal basis for library functions and underlying values (see amongst others Zijlstra 2011).

As a result, the Library Act articulates library functions, gives them a statutory foundation for the first time, and, most notably, extends them to the digital domain. The law follows from the Dutch library system's reorganization process (initiated in the late 1990s), which aimed to reflect on the library's functions in the developing information society (Huysmans and Hillebrink 2008: 9). In line with that objective, the law now lists five functions, which previously had been determined only by library policy (see for example the Statuut voor de Openbare Bibliotheek 1990, a self-regulation instrument of Dutch library professionals). The functions are 'reading and literature', 'development and education', 'knowledge and information', 'art and culture' and 'meeting and debate'. Or in short: 'reading, learning and informing'. Together, they facilitate user education and access to information. As we will see, access is one of the most relevant functions in the light of copyright. Another function with copyright implications is preservation. The Dutch Royal Library, which was already charged with the (digital) preservation and stewardship of national cultural heritage, is now responsible for the national digital collection. That collection is intended to contain both copyrighted and out of copyright materials (Breemen 2014: 141).

To operationalize their functions, libraries are expected to accommodate lending and consultation, to build collections, to provide assistance, to offer study- and meeting places, and to join forces with educational institutions (Richtlijn voor basisbibliotheken 2005: 6-7). The functions have freedom of expression connotations as they are related to the library's role of gateway to information and culture, fostering user-participation in a democratic society (see also IFLA/Unesco Public Library Manifesto 1994). In sum, the Library Act focuses on the library's social functions, irrespective of their manifestation, so both physical and digital (see the explanatory memorandum accompanying the Library Act: 12).

According to another central feature of the Library Act, the library's public task is supposed to serve the general public on the basis of values: independence, reliability, accessibility, diversity and authenticity. Values are perceived as the criterion that delineates libraries and their functions from other information providers, but their interpretation in the digital domain is different from in the analog world (Huysmans 2006: 23-24; Zijlstra 2011: 4). Scarcity is no longer an issue—on the contrary—and in the information

abundance, quality and assistance gain importance (Huysmans 2009; Weinberger 2011: 191; Cohen et al. 2014: 76). The values are also among the justifications for the library exceptions in copyright law, especially access to a diverse information offer and safeguarding the preservation of cultural heritage by a reliable institution (Dutch House of Representatives 2004: 41-42, 49).

So far, we can conclude that the Dutch legislator still (or: especially now) sees a role for libraries in the information society, which is even extended into a digital public task. Given this acknowledgement, we should assess in more detail how the legislator treats libraries in copyright law. Even though copyright law contains specific exceptions for the benefit of 'publicly accessible' libraries, these seem to focus strongly on physical libraries and are accordingly far off from the digital reality. Therefore, I now turn to the copyright consequences for digital library functions.

... which suggests both copyright similarities and challenges ...

If we take the library's functions as described in the previous section for the analysis below, let's qualify them concisely as 'access' and 'preservation'. Before assessing the library exceptions in copyright law, I should explain that library activities in the sphere of digital access and preservation easily encroach on the right holder's exclusive rights, whereas the analog 'reading room' function has traditionally been 'free' under copyright. The exclusive rights, which give right holders control over the use of their works or a remuneration claim, encompass reproduction, distribution, public performance, broadcasting, and otherwise communicating to the public—also in digital domain. In most cases therefore, as digital use entails acts of reproduction, libraries need prior permission to develop digital activities. But the exclusive rights are not absolute. The copyright system has inherent limitations (limited duration, ideas are not protected etc.), and statutory exceptions carve out certain public interest uses from the exclusive rights, including library exceptions (Guibault 2002: 15-16). Their specific rationale is connected to the free flow of information and the dissemination of knowledge. In this paper, I focus on those statutory exceptions.

The exceptions for the benefit of libraries have developed as a result of the technological advances to which both copyright law and libraries have been (and are) constantly responding, such as evolving reproduction equipment enabling quick, cheap and good quality copies. Moreover, rising lending numbers led to authors' calls for remuneration for the increased use of their works, apart from payment for the initial sale. These developments asked for a balance of interests, triggering what we could call the 'library privilege' in the European copyright *acquis*, that is, exceptions to the exclusive author's rights to accommodate libraries and their functions. Two directives are at the core: the Rental and Lending Rights Directive (1992) and the Copyright Directive (2001). The former facilitates library lending, the latter enables other access related functions (primarily consultation and preservation). Without attempting to be exhaustive, I will hereafter briefly indicate in which respects their scope is limited and unclear with regard to library functions' digital aspects (see also Breemen 2014).

First, the lending regime. Lending in the legal sense of the word means ‘making available for use, for a limited period of time and not for direct or indirect economic or commercial advantage, when it is made through establishments which are accessible to the public’. So, the exchange of works between libraries, or between users themselves, does not constitute ‘lending’. The Rental and Lending Rights Directive posits lending as an exclusive author’s right, but allows member states to turn this into a remuneration right. The Dutch legislator has used this opportunity, so libraries don’t need permission for their lending activities if they pay an equitable remuneration.

Conventionally, lending was taken to involve physical works only, which could be new media as long as they were tangible (see the sources mentioned in Van der Noll et al. 2012: 26). Obviously, the question is whether the existing regime extends to ‘e-lending’, which denotes online loan via libraries. This is inevitably a matter of interpretation. Legislative history also shows that the European Commission already recognized the future possibilities of electronic transmission of works to users at various occasions, but ultimately chose to exclude such transmission from the scope of the directive because of the different national approaches that existed at the time (European Commission 1991: 34-35; European Commission 1995: 56-59; Van der Noll et al. 2012: 35-36; Breemen and Breemen 2013). The e-lending issue is however becoming more and more topical with the technological possibilities in place and increasing user expectations in this regard. But even if legally facilitating some form of e-lending were deemed desirable under conditions, changing the current interpretation would initially require action at the European level. One step in the direction of more clarity is the test-case on e-lending that is currently pending before the European Court of Justice (*VOB v. Stichting Leenrecht*). Paraphrased, central questions concern the legal status and particularities of making available selected categories of works via a ‘one copy, one user’ e-lending model. Even though the Dutch Library Act implies that libraries will make e-content available to their users, the question is nevertheless what the legal possibilities are. Certainly, the present uncertainty does not mean that making available e-books via libraries is impossible; yet that practice currently requires contractual agreements with right holders.

Next, the second set of exceptions featuring in this paper follows from the Copyright Directive. The Dutch legislator decided to implement the two optional library exceptions for preservation and onsite access. The preservation exception (Article 16n Dutch Copyright Act, based on Article 5(2)(c) Copyright Directive) is drafted in a technology-neutral way, thus covers digital preservation and with that, part of the library’s task. But it is unclear how many reproductions may be made and when (a work must be ‘threatened by decay’ - when is that sufficiently established, and is preventive copying covered?), leading to legal uncertainty. The provision does not extend to the making available or other publication of the preserved works, nor is there much room for digitization projects as such.

The onsite access exception (Article 15h Dutch Copyright Act, implementing Article 5(3)(n) Copyright Directive) reveals a strong traditional institutional view from the legislator on libraries: exempted from copyright is the making available of works from the library’s collection by means of a ‘closed network’, via ‘dedicated terminals’ in the ‘institutions’ buildings’. Despite the Library Act’s assumption that libraries will offer information and culture in the digital domain in a structured way, the formulation of this copyright provision seems oriented towards physical libraries - only to some extent recognizing the new dimension of digital libraries (see also Breemen 2014). Again, at

distance access proves to be among the main copyright difficulties as online access is explicitly excluded from the exception. The onsite access exception was central to the *Darmstadt*-case, where the European court offered a broader interpretation of its scope and effectiveness as will be discussed below.

The picture painted up to now suggests that the 'library privilege' in copyright law doesn't actually reflect the changing realities of the digital domain. Yet as we will see, both legislation and case law offer examples of copyright recognizing the library's task.

...then shouldn't copyright law offer chances to facilitate this task ...

Recalling my description of 'libraries' at the beginning of this paper, the mentioned characteristics express that library institutions are characterized by their functions and values and acknowledge the virtual dimension. If we compare this with the European and Dutch legislators' views in copyright law, it is obvious that they employ much more restricted library descriptions for purposes of the copyright exceptions. Apparently, they consider libraries principally as physical places. Surely, a certain structure or degree of organization is necessary to prevent the exceptions from becoming 'floodgate' provisions. But now, copyright law's perception of libraries doesn't really meet the digital realities. Therefore, following those copyright challenges and in line with the argument that '[t]he roles libraries play are shaped by copyright law' (Henderson 1998), this paper will next explore two recent 'chances' for digital library activities under the existing copyright framework. Both examples focus on the permissibility of digitization of copyrighted works and subsequent access in relation to the library's public task. The section ends with a short perspective on other relevant and ongoing initiatives in the context of copyright and libraries.

The Orphan Works Directive: preservation and access as 'public interest mission'

A field where the European Commission has already taken action involves so-called orphan works. The uncertain legal status of works whose right holders are unknown impaired the online unlocking of cultural heritage, which spurred calls for the creation of a legal framework to solve this issue (see Recital 3 of the Orphan Works Directive), since, as we have seen, the Copyright Directive doesn't cover online delivery.

Now, the Orphan Works Directive facilitates the digitization and dissemination of orphan works insofar as these activities contribute to the library's (and other cultural heritage institutions') 'public interest mission'. Presumably, this refers to a public task (as the Dutch implementation does explicitly). As a result, libraries may digitally reproduce *and* make available works whose right holders cannot be found after a diligent search, especially online. That statutory permission furthers their disseminative, cultural, educational and preservation purposes as well as the cross-border availability of such works. This is of course a positive development, but the condition of a 'diligent search' has evoked severe criticism: seeing the number of works involved in digitization projects, how can this criterion be feasible in practice? Substantial efforts and expenses will be required for which libraries may not have the resources. In addition, the directive has been criticized for only addressing a 'specific and limited part' of the orphan works problem,

which is not confined to the cultural heritage sector or digitization projects (Van Gompel 2011: 207-208).

The ECJ's Darmstadt-judgment: dissemination of knowledge as 'core mission'

Next, the library's 'core mission' was again a central consideration in the *Darmstadt*-case. The European Court of Justice interpreted the onsite access exception of Article 5(3)(n) Copyright Directive. In doing so, the court displayed a flexible attitude towards copyright in the digital domain, as will be explained next.

The facts of the case are the following. The Technical University of Darmstadt had digitized a book from its collection and placed this version at its users' disposal via electronic reading points in the library, instead of concluding a license with the publisher. Users could also save and print the book. The publisher objected to this practice taking place under the exception for onsite consultation. When the case ended up before the European Court, questions concerned whether the current copyright exceptions allow libraries to digitize works, and whether they may enable users to print or save the works.

The court answered the first question affirmatively and the second one negatively. The decision largely relied on an 'ancillary rights'-reasoning which created space for libraries to utilize their digital collections. In short, according to the court, libraries may make works available via terminals under the exception of Article 5(3)(n), which aims to foster the dissemination of knowledge, hence the library's 'core mission' (which presumably denotes a public task, especially given the phrase's Dutch translation: 'fundamentele taak'). While the provision only covers the exclusive making available right and not reproduction, the exception's effectiveness in practice (and the realization of the public task) requires an ancillary right for libraries to digitize the works in question. Consequently, the court made a leap to Article 5(2)(c), arguing that digitization constituted a 'specific act of reproduction' which was necessary to effectuate the onsite access exception. The publisher's licensing offer didn't lead to a different conclusion. The court's line of reasoning does however not apply to the digitization of entire collections generally (which would not constitute a 'specific case'), nor to the printing or downloading via terminals (as the making of new copies would not be 'necessary' for onsite consultation purposes), though the latter could be covered by another exception, for example for private copying, provided that the conditions are met. Inevitably, there is still the exclusion of online access.

Outlook

Apart from these two examples, other initiatives are 'pending', including the e-lending case mentioned earlier and the European legislator's efforts to modernize the European copyright framework. In that context, while taking right holder interests into account, the European Parliament supports strengthening and updating copyright exceptions to cover the digital component of libraries, which are seen as 'institutions of public interest' with access related functions, also online. Therefore, the Parliament urges the consideration of 'minimum standards' to accommodate the library's 'public interest duty of disseminating knowledge' (see the non-binding resolution: European Parliament 2015). Subsequently, the European Commission has also expressed cautious intentions to address some aspects of the exceptions with relevance for access to knowledge, education and research, such as their effectiveness in the digital domain (European Commission 2015). It remains to be seen if, and what, action will ultimately be taken with regard to the library exceptions.

...somehow?

To recapitulate, this paper has illustrated the assumption that libraries have a public task to provide low threshold access to (online) information to everyone with the recent Dutch Library Act. Another part of the assumption asserted that libraries and copyright law share goals of organizing and disseminating information, requiring copyright to, somehow, facilitate the library's task to reflect this common ground. At the same time, digital library activities easily constitute reserved acts under copyright. Logically, the public task does not give libraries a permit to deny copyright; the potentially increased impact on right holder interests must be taken into account. In turn however, copyright law should cater for the present digital realities, and as we have seen, the prevailing library privilege is limited and unclear.

Indeed, in addition to observing that now of all times the Dutch legislator has given the library's functions an explicit basis in law, showing the significance of a digital public task, this paper assessed how the legislator treats library functioning *in copyright law*. Is an exception for the benefit of libraries still justified in the networked public information environment? In this regard, the public task proved to play a role after all. First, the library's task and the underlying functions and values form the justification of the library exceptions in copyright law. Yet the current exceptions cover the digital component of the library's functions only to a small degree. As exceptions require their own specifics in the digital domain, their analog counterparts cannot simply be translated to the online environment, as is especially visible with regard to the library's access related functions. But a balance of interests should be central to copyright exceptions.

Second therefore, the *Darmstadt*-case and the Orphan Works Directive offered examples where the library's public task (or something similar) informed a facilitative stance of copyright law toward digitization and, be it solely in the specific orphan works context, online access. Online access clearly remains one of the thorniest issues surrounding the library exceptions in copyright law. The orphan works example has shown that it is possible to design copyright exceptions such as to ensure at distance access, but, as indicated, this concerns only particular works.

Beyond that, in line with the European Parliament's view on modernizing copyright law, a proposal could be made for library exceptions to act as a sort of minimum safeguard for library functioning. With this, I mean that exceptions should enable libraries to perform their public task in any case to some extent in the digital domain, by allowing, as a lower limit and under balanced conditions, some forms of online access, while considering right holder interests. If libraries wanted to go beyond such exceptions, agreements with right holders would be needed. Irrespective of their concrete design, future library exceptions should at any rate avoid that the physical library's prevalence once more evokes a 'traditional institutional' approach. That is, copyright law should support the digital library's public interest functions too, and we should not risk losing them to legal barriers.

Note

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Spectral imaging: capturing and retrieving information you didn't know your library collections contained

Fenella G. France

Introduction

Spectral imaging at the Library of Congress has greatly influenced interactions between preservation scientists, conservation professionals and curatorial staff. The unique visualization of hidden content in collections through spectral imaging techniques allows direct interaction with the collection information, being presented in a non-threatening manner. Spectral imaging also allows integration of data from other non-invasive analytical techniques to map discoveries directly back to the location of the analysis, overlaying this on a representation of the original document or manuscript. Spectral imaging allows researchers to characterize pigments and inks on the object, retrieve lost text, and illuminate creation methods. Since spectral imaging captures information in both the visible and non-visible regions of the spectrum, in addition to tracking changes due to damage, this non-visible information can also be used as a unique signature for each individual library collection item, a type of document or manuscript unique identifier which is becoming increasingly important for preventing loss due to theft or other disasters; an additional non-visible security component. Spectral imaging technologies also provide the ability to capture information from burnt and water damaged collection materials in instances where at first glance it appears all content knowledge has been lost from the damaged item.

Advances in technology and digital access have improved utilization and interpretation of scientific analyses for cultural heritage and humanities studies. Integrating scientific and curatorial knowledge (such as the move from STEM—science, technology, engineering and mathematics—to STEAM—science, technology, engineering arts and mathematics) is a critical multidisciplinary approach. The concept of open and linked data is essential for analysis and integration of large and disparate data sets, of particular interest as we consider connecting separated library collections through digital data. One example of added value from captured data providing access to fragile historic documents, is the linking of the 1507 Waldseemüller World Map and 1513 Ptolemy Geographia to the same printing location in Europe.

“**Scriptospatial**” refers to a visualization interface and approach for linking related data; a global information system approach for documents, creating an interactive interface for scholars and scientists to engage with object data. Viewing digital cultural materials in multiple dimensions applies an archaeological approach, uncovering and interconnecting information strata of unique documents. Utilizing an object-oriented approach in conjunction with the data layer allows mapping of spatial and temporal data with increasing complexity for direct sharing and visualization of data. This scriptospatial concept enhances the ability to support cross-disciplinary research collaborations. These relationships support valuable and innovative creative approaches to preserving library

collections, linking analog and digital collection information and data integration, while strengthening effective collaborations for prevention of loss from our world's rich library collections (France and Toth 2014).

Preservation of original historic materials is critical to preserving the "hidden" information contained within. Digital imaging capabilities allow researchers to retrieve hidden and lost text, characterize pigments and inks on the document, and illuminate production and creation methods. Blending science and humanities enhances our capacity to understand provenance, author intent, and enrich understanding of materials. The range of data captured allows greater access to the information available from fragile historic documents.

The creation of a new digital cultural object (DCO), incorporating the processed and non-visible images with the original document, allows inferences to be drawn to generate new knowledge. Utilizing an object-oriented approach in conjunction with the data layer allows mapping of spatial and temporal data with increasing complexity. Examining and explaining the properties of original source materials with imaging tools, while linking this with curatorial knowledge, permit scholars to relate these scientific analyses to the social context of how they were created and used. These relationships support valuable and innovative creative approaches to data integration, while strengthening effective humanities and scientific collaborations. There has been a shift over the past few decades from cultural heritage organizations as repositories of objects to repositories of knowledge (Reilly 2003) so there is a real need to understand the potential impact of these new imaging capabilities on libraries, archives and museums, including the value added for researchers.

Spectral image capture

Preservation and digital humanities studies of libraries, archives and special collections are quickly moving beyond simple red-green-blue (RGB) image capture, and now include a range of technical collection capabilities, including multispectral and hyperspectral imaging. Utilizing non-invasive integrated digital imaging systems such as spectral imaging, provides the preservation specialist, scientist, conservator, curator and researcher, with a tool that can reveal useful, hidden, unknown and preservation information about an artifact. Looking at an object does not reveal everything contained within the original material. The unaided eye often cannot detect features such as writing and inks that are erased, hidden by overwriting or varnish, or faded because of environmental factors, or identify important provenance components such as colorants.

These features on photographs, manuscripts, maps, and other heritage objects are important for scholars, authentication, "fingerprinting" and the care of collections. Looking at documents at various magnification levels and with a range of illumination modes (raking or side-lighting, transmitted light, reflected light, and the integration of fluorescence and different wavelengths) can capture these elusive features. The application of hyperspectral imaging to the preservation analysis and study of cultural heritage artifacts is a powerful, non-invasive technique to characterize colorants and pigments, track changes over time, assess the effectiveness of treatments, and monitor objects on long-term exhibition. The process can extract and reveal hidden and redacted text and

original author intent, and allow for changes or modifications with different inks to be easily revealed and documented, with even non-visible fingerprints being rendered. Imaging with light emitting diodes (LED) illumination in 16 spectral bands throughout the visible and non-visible spectrum, together with raking and transmitted light provides safe conservation lighting that is integrated with the camera to minimize light on the object (France and Toth 2011).

Spectral image processing

For processing most captured spectral image datasets two main types of image processing and analysis are utilized—principal component analysis, and the creation of unique spectral curves. Principal component analysis (PCA) is a technique used to emphasize variation and distinguish differences or similarities in a set of data. This technique is related to multivariate image analysis (MIA) where 2- or 3-dimensional data have spatial, intensity, spectral and possibly temporal components and all dimensions can be used to assess image data, and easily visualize patterns within the spectral response. This pattern recognition allows separation between materials that may appear to be the same to the unaided eye in the visible region and is used to make data easy to explore and visualize.

In spectral curve analysis the images are fully registered and aligned with no filtering between the camera and the document, since the presence of a filter can cause a slight pixel shift that impacts alignment. This process enables a specific pixel location on the image to be selected, and due to the distinctive spectral (chemical) response of different material, a spectral curve that is unique to that material (ink, paper pigment etc.) can be generated. Spectral curve analysis allows for precise separation between inks of very similar chemical formulations, and augments the PCA separation, mapping and identification of different document components. When PCA images are created materials with different chemical or spectral responses are assigned pseudo colors, to enhance separations and make visualization easier. These allow the researcher to easily distinguish between, for example, two black inks that previously looked identical. The pseudo color rendition may assign red to one ink, blue to the other characterizing and mapping differences across the entire surface of the original image.

There are several off-the-shelf image processing software programs available ranging from open source free software at moderate cost, to powerful multi-functional packages. One of the most widely used software applications is Image-J, a free downloadable software originally developed by the National Institute of Health (NIH) in the United States. This is used widely for PCA processing and to generate pseudo color images. For generating spectral curves, ENVI-ITT has been utilized, since this allows the creation of a spectral reference library where curves of reference materials can be compiled. These spectral curves are used for comparison when characterizing and identifying materials. When tracking change due to environment or treatment, a unique set of curves can be grouped together for analysis and comparison.

Spectral imaging capabilities

The integrated layers of data create a cube of images that can be processed to reveal and expose a range of information. This digital version of the original has layers of data not visible when viewing the original and is being referred to as the “digital cultural object” (DCO)—an object that cannot replace the original, but adds non-visible information contextually in both temporal and spatial layers. Historic documents do not readily lend themselves to context analysis, since documentation about the creation of the document may not be readily available. The additional contextual information is not apparent in conventional digitization techniques for these objects, so the integration of the spectral data assists in mining the layers of data stored within the objects. In this way the DCO allows a shift from the use of interpretive virtual heritage applications, which focus on the artistic rather than the investigative and inferential, toward the development of interdisciplinary scientific data as part of cultural heritage scholarly studies. Coordinating the relationship between the original object and the scientific data contained in the DCO provides linked access to scholarly information; since identification of materials enables access to provenance, geographical and temporal information to extend knowledge about the historic document (France 2011).

At the Library of Congress, there has been a concerted effort to both uncover such hidden and redacted information using the data to assess and analyze the impact of prior treatments before stabilizing an object, to ensure that any stabilization treatments do not remove scholarly contextual data. In addition, the non-visible data produces a unique spectral “finger-print” of the document, useful for provenance and as a unique identifier in times of natural or man-made disaster or in conflict when collection items are removed from their original location.

Historically, technical studies have been used for purposes of characterization, and while this information is still critical, the additional data that can be captured with spectral imaging technologies greatly advances information that can be made available. To ensure high quality data capture and processing, the Library of Congress has focused on developing and adhering to an integrated set of standard work processes in consultation with curatorial experts thus assuring cross-disciplinary analysis. For research projects a team is formed of curatorial, conservation and preservation scientific staff to coordinate the overall approach based on these integrated technical findings. This process ensures that an informed decision is made in relation to the data and analyses in relation to how preservation actions may impact contextual information, guaranteeing that this content remains with the object (Emery et. al. 2009).

Thomas Jefferson's handwritten draft of the Declaration of Independence

One of the challenges of working with cultural heritage materials is the lack of historical documentation. Thomas Jefferson's handwritten draft of the Declaration of Independence illustrates how new technologies can continue to add knowledge to documents that have been examined at length by generations of researchers. Jefferson wrote this first draft with amendments from Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams. (Hays 1898). The document contains

the term “United States,” the first time this term had been used in an official document. Spectral imaging of the handwritten draft revealed a number of changes, with the specific spectral response of inks revealing overwritten changes. Any changes or amendments were specifically annotated and attributed to each person involved in the drafting of the document. However, there was one region of the document where an obvious “smudge” of the under-text gave credence to the presence of a previous word. Image processing of the region proved challenging, as the inks were spectrally very similar in composition. It was finally revealed that Thomas Jefferson had originally written “fellow-subjects” and changed this to “fellow-citizens” (see Fig. 11). This correction had been suspected for some time, as a researcher from Princeton University noted that Jefferson was copying the term from the First Draft of the Virginia Constitution, rapidly erasing it while the ink was still wet on the “Rough draught” and carefully replacing it. (Boyd 1950). This immediate and deliberate overwrite was the only location on the entire document where a hasty change is apparent, along with a deliberate attempt to completely expunge the original writing. Everywhere else in the draft document, changes were both neatly crossed out and clear insertions are made. If the change or insertion was not made by Jefferson he carefully noted this in the margin.

The Waldseemüller 1507 World Map

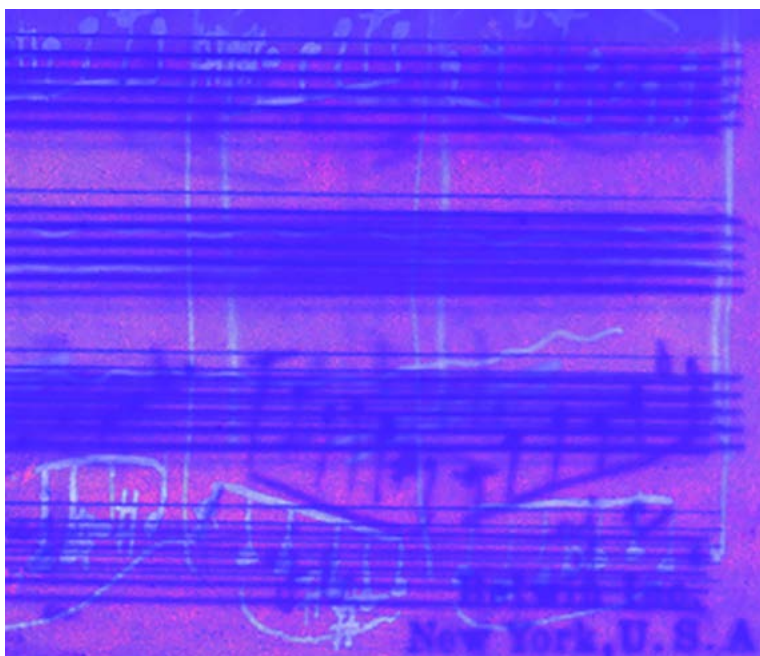
The application of spectral imaging technology can further be seen in the example of the Waldseemüller 1507 World Map with captured data providing a number of insights for cartographic and geographic researchers. Johannes Schöner (1477-1547), a German astronomer and cartographer and pupil of Waldseemüller, drew red lines over the map from the Middle East north to the Black Sea, an area that must have been of interest. Over time, these inscribed red gridlines on Sheets 6 and 7 had faded significantly and become virtually imperceptible. These gridlines represented important added features in the cartographic history of this map, so it was important for curatorial collaborators to find a way to retrieve this lost information. With spectral imaging, these lines could be distinguished through their unique spectral response. The reconstruction allowed researchers to assess overlapping of the lines—including which lines were laid down first, where lines began and ended. This broadened the interpretation and understanding of Schöner’s thought processes from the early 1500s.

The 1507 World Map was discovered in 1901 by Joseph Fisher, a Jesuit historian conducting research in the library collection of Wolfegg Castle, Württemberg, Germany. He was convinced that the World Map sheets were printers’ proof sheets, so the ability to gain greater understanding about how the woodcut was produced was of great interest to scholars, cartographers and historians. Specialized image processing was able to create a virtual 3-dimensional rendering of the map, giving a visual perspective of the original woodcut from which the sheets were printed. The original woodcut no longer exists, hence the processed images provide the only possibility for an analysis of possible techniques used in the early 1500s (France and Toth, 2013). These layers of data comprise the DCO, adding a rich resource of non-visible information to support expanded contextual knowledge of the document.

Researchers have been fascinated with understanding the sources used for the creation of the Waldseemüller map. While the upper America's are not rendered correctly, the representation of South America in the lower region is incredibly accurate, given the lack of knowledge of sea voyages and journeys at that time. This is an excellent example of how science and humanities come together to share data and make inroads into expanding the understanding of our historic documents.

Bela Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra

Utilization of spectral imaging with transmitted illumination and image processing enabled capture of heavily obscured information on an original music score. The Concerto for Orchestra was written by Béla Bartók in 1943, one of his best-known, most popular and most accessible works. The score, inscribed "15 August – 8 October 1943" premiered on December 1, 1944, in Boston, played by the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. Bartók said that he called the piece a concerto rather than a symphony due to the way each section of instruments was treated in a soloistic and virtuosic manner. The work was written in response to a commission from the Koussevitzky Foundation, following Bartók's flight to the United States from his native Hungary because of World War II. Bartók revised the piece in February 1945, with the most change in the last movement where he extended the movement with a longer ending. Bartók added additional sections on a number of pages where he changed the score, and in some places the layers of additions leave up to four layers, all with staff lines on both sides of the papers, further obscuring the original music score. These layers could not be removed due to the document having been laminated at a period in its history.



Assessing and monitoring change with spectral imaging

Over the past seven years the Preservation Research and Testing Division (PRTD) has been assessing the impact of proposed treatments. One example involved stabilization of a sixteenth century hand-colored map with verdigris degradation. Spectral imaging was used to assess methods of reducing the transfer (offset) of verdigris to adjacent pages and tracking changes between various stages of the stabilization treatment. The generation of spectral curves for the exact same location of the document at various periods indicated that the treatment was successfully removing the discoloration and the shape of the spectral curve was moving back towards that of the pure undamaged paper.

Increasing the understanding of degradation and the interaction between substrate and media, and environmental parameters has also been critical in the examination of fugitive media on twentieth century materials. Progressive repeat imaging has occurred to track long-term change in the Herblock Collection of political cartoon drawings stored in different environments. The periodic assessment was used to track and better understand degradation mechanisms, and the detection of those inks most at risk to color change (and fading).

As spectral curves are specific to the chemical composition of the ink or object substrate, and are modified due to treatments and environment, a spectral reference library has been developed for non-invasive identification and characterization of aged and deteriorated materials and degradation mechanisms. Another area of interest for conservation is tracking changes of objects containing light sensitive materials placed on long-term exhibit. Spectral imaging of an eighteenth century map indicated the potential for fading due to a slight change apparent after only six weeks of exhibit. This information was not apparent in the visible region to the unaided eye. Imaging through glass also assists in assessment of change during long term exhibition. In addition to detecting and assessing treatments, spectral imaging illumination is important for revealing information obscured due to previous treatments, such as lamination.

Development of a sustainable integrated heritage science dataset model

One challenge faced in the preservation of cultural heritage is access to physical scientific reference samples of the same materials as collection items, which would allow test assessments and the tracking of change due to natural and accelerated aging. The Center for Library Analytical Scientific Samples–Digital (CLASS-D) is an initiative to create an open access “database” for the integration of scientific, preservation and scholarly content data from international libraries, archives, museums and other heritage institutions. The Library of Congress has been developing this platform based on open exchange of standardized scientific data, non-proprietary file standards for image and text data and the utilization of open technologies. Underlying this data has been the establishment of standards and protocols for rigor in scientific practice and data collection, while also ensuring a flexible data model to enable the addition of data from new technologies as they become available (France et. al 2010). The scriptospatial interface allows direct interaction and integration of scientific and humanities data and has become a popular

component when considering how to store, access and present various data components from diverse research sources. While this approach is still going through beta testing, the response has been overwhelmingly positive, with the potential for international collaboration at distance, greatly improved.

Summary

In the current environment of global uncertainty with climate change, political instability and conflict, it has become even more imperative for heritage institutions to have the capacity for capturing collection content information for longevity and provenance. These risks highlight the importance of preserving original source materials so that new technologies can be applied to recover lost and hidden information, capture non-visible unique identifiers and provide condition assessment data for monitoring and long-term preservation. Multiple illumination techniques and image processing allow optical retrieval of this information. Customized illumination to recover information in original heritage materials is critical to better understanding the intent of the author, whether in text, diagrams or music, and can further aid preservation by tracking changes of materials on exhibit in order to ensure their longevity for future generations.

The introduction of the term the “*digital cultural object*” further recognizes the materiality of the original source materials by visualizing and linking new non-visible content information with the original object. Revealing and uncovering this data—document archaeology—enables information to be transformed into knowledge. Utilizing these new technologies to enhance access to the content of collections, ensures non-invasive preservation of our rich and diverse world heritage materials for perpetuity and assist the worldwide move to avoid loss of knowledge, history, culture and a sense of self, what we lose when we lose a library.

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The repercussions of a historic library fire: the benefits of a multidisciplinary approach to treating fire-damaged parchment from the Cotton Collection

Paul Garside, Mariluz Beltran de Guevara & Christina Duffy

Introduction

Close collaboration between conservators, conservation scientists and imaging scientists, in conjunction with curators, provides many benefits when dealing with damaged manuscripts. This approach not only improves the understanding and care of such items, but also allows an unprecedented recovery of information, as illustrated by work on fire-damaged items from the Cotton Collection. The British Library currently contains roughly 150 million items, and the core of the historical collections—the ‘foundation collections’—is based around a series of eighteenth-century donations and acquisitions. These include the books and manuscripts originally belonging to Robert Cotton, Hans Sloane, Robert Harley and George III.

The Cotton Collection was assembled by Sir Robert Bruce Cotton (1571-1631), (Prescott 1997) and has been described as ‘the most important collection of manuscripts ever assembled in Britain by a private individual’. It contains some of the greatest treasures of English literature and history, including the Lindisfarne Gospels, two contemporary examples of Magna Carta (from 1215) and the unique manuscript of ‘Beowulf’. However, in 1731 a fire at Ashburnham House, Westminster, destroyed or damaged a quarter of the manuscripts, including Beowulf and one copy of Magna Carta. Damage included charring and heat distortion, discolouration, water damage, inappropriate drying using open fires, excision of burnt and glutinous material, and incorrect reassembly leading to loss of codicological history, and the problems were exacerbated by unskilled emergency conservation. Further damage occurred in the nineteenth century from attempts to flatten distorted parchment and the use of chemical washes to separate fused leaves and recover lost text, and from another smaller fire in 1865 in the bindery at Anthony Panizzi’s house. By the late twentieth century, much of the damaged material was still found as leaves, fragments and burnt lumps of vellum, many of which were inlaid and eventually sewn into inert transparent sleeves to facilitate their use.

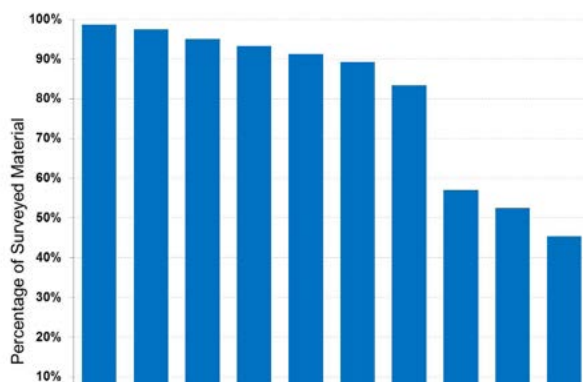
The importance of this collection means that it is vital to allow the best possible access to scholars, to raise its profile and appreciation with the general public, and to ensure its survival for future generations. This requires close collaboration between the curators and the various members of the conservation team: conservators, conservation scientists and imaging scientists. By doing so, it not only safeguards the physical wellbeing of the items, but it may also be possible to recover information that was thought to be lost, or that was previously unknown, either in a physical or a virtual form. This was achieved by a variety of approaches:

- A thorough collection survey and the development of novel survey and assessment methods.

- Developing a greater understanding of parchment fire damage through the preparation of surrogates.
- Investigation of improved conservation methods for fire-damaged parchment.
- Instrumental analysis, including the development of new techniques to assess condition.
- Analytical imaging to recover lost and obscured text.

Survey

An extensive and detailed survey was carried out by conservation staff on a representative selection of burnt and fire-damaged parchment items from the collection, chosen by the curator; in total 243 items were assessed. (de Guevara & Garside 2013) The aim of this work was to provide a greater level of understanding of the physical nature of these items, and to inform any future decisions about conservation work. The survey covered a number of specific areas, including the identity of the item, a thorough description of the binding and its condition, an assessment of the nature and condition of the parchment substrate, any suggested treatments, and an overall priority rating. The conditions of the binding and the substrate were rated using the condition grades suggested in the 'Improved Damage Assessment for Parchment' (IDAP) project, based on a qualitative scale of 1 (good) to 4 (very poor). (Larsen 2002, 2002a, 2005) In addition, the following features were noted: the colour of the original and damaged parchment by percentage in the volume; the presence of old repairs, discoloration, mould, flexibility, water, heat and fire damage, transparent areas, deformations, gelatinisation, calcite deposits and damage to the text (and illuminations if present); and the condition of the inlaid and repair papers, including discoloration, cockling, tears, brittleness. This provided an invaluable body of information about the fire-damaged components of the collection, and, for example, revealed the range of extent of different types of damage exhibited by the representative set; with reference to the graph below, it can be seen that there are common patterns of damage throughout the burnt material, some of which are almost ubiquitous. Information of this kind helps to inform planning for particular conservation treatments and broader strategies to be developed for the material as a whole.



Patterns of damage revealed by the survey of material from the burnt Cotton collection

Surrogates and fire damage

To better understand the condition of these fragments, a surrogate parchment book was prepared and then burnt under controlled conditions on wooden shelving. (de Guevara & Garside 2013) Not only did this provide a greater knowledge of the ways in which parchment responds to this kind of damage, but also created a set of samples which could be used to investigate potential conservation treatments for these materials. This made it possible to explore various options for bridging repairs, using a variety of different materials and adhesives, which were then assessed for the quality of the repair (possessing appropriate, but not excessive strength) and compatibility with the original material. (de Guevara & Garside 2013) The results of these experiments are summarised in the table below. On the basis of this work it was then possible to specify the best methods of creating bridging repairs for the fragments in a manner that minimised risk, whilst also making them more accessible than had previously been the case, thereby enhancing the usability of the collection.

Support	Adhesive	Support Suitability	Adhesive Suitability	Overall
Parchment	Gelatine	✘	✓	✘
	Isinglass	✘	–	✘
	Methylcellulose	✓	✘	✘
	Wheat Starch	✘	–	✘
	Klucel G	✘	–	✘
Repair Paper	Gelatine	✓	✓	✓
	Isinglass	✓	–	–
	Methylcellulose	✓	✘	✘
	Wheat Starch	✓	–	–
	Klucel G	✓	–	–
Goldbeater's Skin	Gelatine	✓	✓	✓
	Isinglass	✘	–	–
	Methylcellulose	✘	✘	✘
	Wheat Starch	✓	–	–
	Klucel G	✓	–	–

Assessment of potential bridging repair methods for the burnt Cotton fragments, rated as unacceptable (✘), adequate (–) or good (✓)

Instrumental Analysis

Analysis using modern instrumental techniques potentially allows the chemical, physical and microstructural properties of artefacts to be examined in great detail. However, to be used with collection items, any such method should ideally fulfil certain criteria: it should be non-sampling and non-invasive, generate reproducible data that can be readily interpreted, be relatively easy to operate (if it will be used by non-specialists), and, if

possible, be suitable for *in situ* usage. Rapidity of data collection and ease of handling are also desirable. Near infrared (NIR) spectroscopy, used in combination with a fibre-optic probe, is one technique that meets these requirements. A library of parchment spectra has been created with data recorded from both collection items and surrogates. The use of surrogates (including the previously mentioned parchment book subjected to a controlled fire, as well as documents and manuscripts purchased from a variety of sources and in a wide range of conditions, from pristine to heavily degraded) has proved particularly valuable; their non-collection status means that it is also possible to carry out various invasive and destructive analyses, such as measurements of tensile properties and shrinkage temperatures. These properties, as well as other parameters such as graded condition assessments, can then be linked to the relevant spectra by computational techniques such as chemometrics (multivariate analysis) which subsequently allows similar properties to be predicted for future samples (including collection items) through the non-invasive NIR spectroscopy. This potentially provides a valuable tool for rapid condition assessment and 'triage' of large collections to identify those items in greatest need of immediate attention, a process which is important in the current climate of limited budgets and staff resources; it can also enable damage to be 'mapped' over a particular manuscript, allowing any areas of particular deterioration or concern to be highlighted. This work is currently ongoing, but has already proved its worth when dealing with important collection items.

Analytical Imaging

Analytical imaging techniques, such as multispectral imaging and digital microscopy, allow objects to be examined in great detail, and in ways which could not be achieved with the naked eye or with conventional photography. The use of these techniques can uncover subtle signs of damage and change, as well as revealing features that have been lost, such as text which has been damaged or obscured (either deliberately or accidentally), features hidden by overlying layers (including underdrawings or text on the underside of paste-downs) and also potentially highlighting alterations or modifications that have been carried out in the past.

Unlike conventional digital photography, in which images are created from a combination of three colour channels (red, green and blue), multispectral imaging employs a much greater number of channels, each recorded at a specific wavelength, to yield a set of in-register monochrome images of an object, which can then be enhanced by computational techniques to reveal subtle, obscure or otherwise hidden details that would be invisible to the eye and would not be apparent using normal photography. As well as covering the visible region, the technique may also be extended into the infrared and ultraviolet, and employ filters to reveal fluorescence effects, all of which increase the potential information in the resultant data set.

Alongside multispectral imaging, high resolution digital microscopy can also provide valuable insights into the nature of objects, allowing important but small-scale features to be examined, such as micro-fracturing and loss of pigments and inks, the presence of the earliest indications of degradation (such as the onset of gelatinisation around individual hair follicles, defibrillation or losses).

In the case of fire-damaged documents from the Cotton collection, these kinds of analytical techniques were extremely useful in allowing thorough examination and to recover regions of damaged text—in particular, they allowed the legibility of the burnt copy of Magna Carta (*Cotton Charter XIII.31a*) to be enhanced. It can be seen that in the computationally recovered false colour images, much of the text that was previously unreadable can now be deciphered.

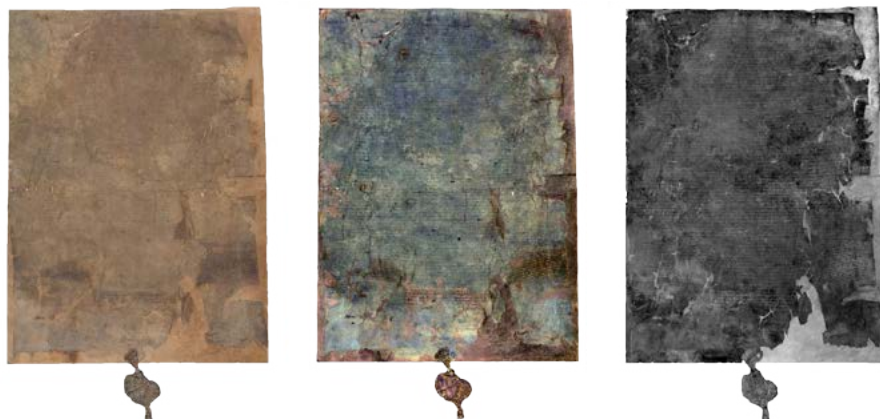


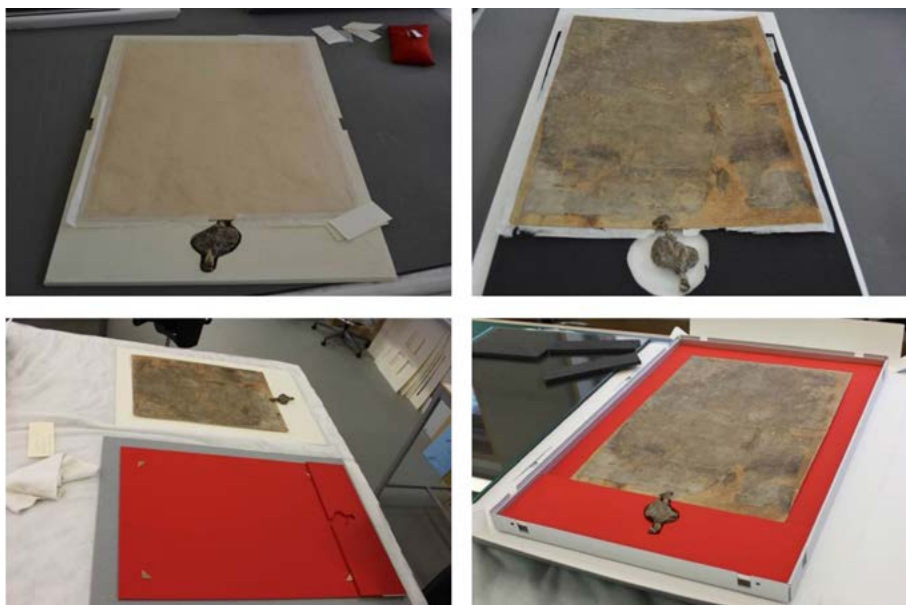
Image enhancement of *Cotton Charter XIII.31a*

Conclusion

The Cotton Collection is of great historic and cultural importance, but the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century fires and their direct consequences have reduced access to significant parts of the collection, and have limited the extent to which the damaged manuscripts can be interpreted. The multidisciplinary approach adopted by the conservation team, employing the skills of conservators, conservation scientists and imaging scientists as appropriate to the particular item and its requirements, has set the groundwork to enable effective conservation and thus improve accessibility. It has also served to enhance the knowledge of the wider collection, and the causes and effects of damage.

It has been possible to reveal previously lost or hidden information—both explicit, in the form of text, and implicit, in the nature of the construction and composition or the item—through a combination of conservation assessments, analytical imaging and instrumental analysis. Individually, each of these pieces of work has improved the understanding and conservation of the collection, and taken together they provide a model for collaborative work between different specialisms, and demonstrate the synergistic benefits of such an approach. It can be seen that analytical work by the conservation scientist supports the more direct work by the conservator and in turn, conservation assessments and knowledge contribute to the development of the science. Analytical imaging techniques allow objects to be studied in microscopic detail and reveal

otherwise hidden information, which informs conservation and further analysis. All three strands, working in collaboration, enhance the study of the items and help to ensure their long-term survival, whilst also enabling new techniques and strategies to be developed. In addition, collaboration has allowed the individuals involved to become more familiar and confident with one another's working methods and approaches, helping to ensure that for future projects, all of the necessary aspects are included and fully integrated into the workflow from the inception, increasing efficiency and allowing the greatest possible benefit to be derived from the work. This kind of method has demonstrated its value in other similar work, such as the preparations for the recent Magna Carta exhibition, for which the 'burnt' Magna Carta, as well as two other copies of the charter and various related manuscripts, were reframed for display.



Reframing of *Cotton Charter XIII.31a*

The work on the burnt items from the Cotton collection has provided a double benefit. The first and most obvious advantage is to the collection itself, by facilitating access to the items and making available information which had been lost or was otherwise unknown. The second derives from the collaboration between different specialists leading to new understandings of the nature of such collections and of the philosophies and techniques that can be used to deal with them. These outcomes were less likely to have been developed in such a robust way with shorter term projects or ones which deal with smaller, less significant or less varied collections of materials. It is the very range of challenges presented by the burnt Cotton collection that has allowed, encouraged and perhaps even compelled the production of such beneficial results.

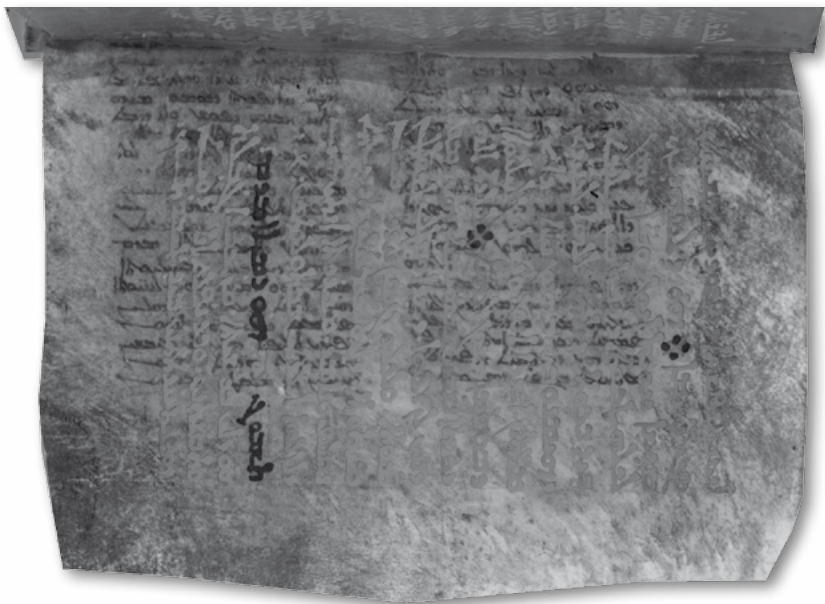
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How do we preserve and share our digital library information?

Michael B. Toth

Early manuscripts were preserved on parchment for over 1,000 years by protecting them in libraries and collections. This was preceded by papyrus, and followed by paper. Now libraries and other institutions face new challenges in preserving and sharing information as they use advanced digitization resources to make increasing amounts of their collections available online for global access. These range from St. Catherine’s Monastery in the Sinai¹ and the Vatican Library² to the US Library of Congress³, Walters Art Museum⁴, and private and university manuscript and book collections around the globe. Wherever they are and whatever culture they represent, each library is grappling with the challenges of preserving digital information for free use by continued research across cultures. Many libraries are using advanced camera systems to capture high-resolution images of manuscripts and printed works. Some institutions are conducting spectral imaging to reveal new information⁵—including the earliest works of Archimedes⁶, Galen (see Figure below)⁷, David Livingstone⁸, Waldseemüller⁹ and others. Some institutions such as KU Leuven, University of Manchester, and Duke and Harvard Universities are working to integrate spectral and 3-dimensional imaging into their digitization processes and infrastructure. The ultimate goal of digitization by these institutions and projects is to provide global access to the data for current and future access and study.



Processed image of the Syriac Galen Palimpsest revealing the under text by combining captured images (CC 4.0 BY Owner of the SGP)

Digital preservation

With the advent of the Internet as a resource for digital sharing and collaboration in the mid-1990's, libraries and other cultural heritage institutions had to change their paradigm for preservation and access. Instead of locking tangible objects within robust structures to protect them from theft and catastrophic destruction, libraries now face the challenge of also keeping ephemeral bits of data available for global access by machines and people well into the future.

The Archimedes Palimpsest Program began a process in 1999 to not only refine and adapt spectral imaging to meet cultural heritage needs, but most importantly also to provide digital data as a standardized digital product for free global sharing. At that time institutional information technology (IT) systems were not robust enough to handle what were then considered large amounts of data, so the Archimedes Palimpsest data were hosted on commercial servers with robust backups.¹⁰ This program pioneered not just the development of an advanced spectral imaging system, but also all the other components of a successful full-lifecycle digital preservation and access program: work processes, standardization and information management capabilities. During this first decade of the twentieth century many libraries and cultural heritage institutions also developed digital access management and preservation systems that provide not just quality images, but also the ability to access and manage large amounts of standardized data and metadata to meet current cultural heritage goals. With these large amounts of data came challenges for preserving data to meet long-term goals for global access and sharing amidst changes in technology, data formats and storage media.

For the Archimedes and Galen Syriac Medical Palimpsests, manuscripts in libraries from Timbuktu to KU Leuven and St. Catherine's Monastery, and other paper, parchment and papyrus objects, institutions have developed standardized image products to advance scholarly research and preservation. To accomplish this, libraries have developed integrated systems for digitization, access and digital preservation. Systems are more complex than just the hardware and software technology: an effective system must bring together people with a diverse set of skills, efficient work processes, and the appropriate technology. This requires people trained in digitization, conservation, access and preservation applying metadata, data, and standards to support the integration of digital imaging and storage technologies. They must also remain abreast of ever-changing technologies not only in academic institutions and libraries, but also commercially. Large-scale digitization efforts and advanced imaging—including spectral imaging—at these and other institutions have demonstrated that commercial off-the-shelf imaging and processing equipment, techniques and work processes can be effectively integrated into library infrastructures to support research into and preservation of digital representations of manuscripts and printed works.

Digital preservation enablers

The combination of effective management, cataloging, conservation, digitization and IT resources enables interdisciplinary studies of the resulting data. Providing continued data access for people and machines requires data and metadata that meet broadly accepted

and mature international interoperability, format and integrity standards for ease of access and long-term storage. Only with standardized data and metadata can complex sets of digital images be integrated and preserved online for a broad set of global users.¹¹ This can include integration with data collected from other imaging systems and institutions for dynamic online collaboration, as with the Syriac Galen Palimpsest¹². Standardized data and metadata enable not just access to quality images, but also the ability to manage and exploit the large amounts of standardized data and metadata about the images and the objects they represent. In the case of the Syriac Galen Palimpsest, this standardization allowed the integration of images from four different institutions and a private collection into a single online data set.¹³

Another key digital enabler for digital preservation is the ability to freely share data under licensed access. Free data access under global licenses like Creative Commons¹⁴ allows multiple institutions and even individuals to copy and store the original data without the need for cumbersome requests for permission and potentially fees. Global replication and storage of data helps prevent loss of the data due to failure or destruction of a single server or storage facility. Availability of free licensed data also avoids complications in meeting varied requirements for access control and segregation of data on servers, especially commercial servers.

The ultimate goal of digital preservation is to preserve the digital data representing the physical objects without regard to any specific file format (e.g. TIFF, PDF, JPEG) and/or operating system (e.g. Windows, UNIX, Mac).¹⁵ Developing data and metadata in compliance with broadly accepted global standards offers a structured common format for both information providers and end users to store and access the digital object and information about the object. Free access on multiple systems promotes regular data upgrades and conversions to meet any new format revisions and the latest standards.

Data management and integration

Large collections of quality digital images that serve as surrogates for their collection objects must be effectively managed and preserved by libraries, requiring development and operation of an integrated data management system and infrastructure for data storage, archiving, access and preservation. Libraries need to incorporate the available digital information about collection objects in a digital data set following a standard structure and format. As noted when the Archimedes Palimpsest data was released online in 2008, the data set should:

1. Serve as the authoritative digital data set in a standardized format that meets the needs of current and future users.
2. Provide derived information (i.e. content, cataloging, accession and accountability information) about the original object.
3. Offer a sustainable standard product to which current or future contributors can add additional standardized information (e.g. catalog data, conservation information, scholarly analyses).¹⁶

Libraries as digital preservation pioneers

Building on a long and proud heritage of preserving and providing access to written and recorded cultural heritage objects, libraries have developed mature capabilities for cataloging objects in their collections and digitizing them. New technologies and growing amounts of data and metadata now require flexible skills and techniques for dealing with the ever-changing requirements for digital access, sharing and preservation. It is no longer sufficient to focus just on production of the highest quality images. Digitization now requires a full lifecycle approach to data: from cataloging to digitization and metadata generation, image processing, data integration and hosting, and finally sharing and access. Each of these tasks requires management of people, processes and technologies that are focused on different products and outcomes. As part of a library's digital assets, these images must meet international data, metadata and integrity standards for an integrated library data set that will provide long-term preservation and access.

Standardized metadata

Key to managing these data is the incorporation of standardized metadata into the digital object with persistent identifiers. Strict metadata standards for all data types will define both the cultural content and technical information to help ensure digital objects can be stored, accessed and integrated. Standardization of metadata means diligent use of cataloging and metadata standards, standardized vocabularies, an accepted metadata schema (and crosswalks with other standards as needed), and text marked up to support the conversion and aggregation of metadata into standard formats. This requires use of mature consensus standards and metadata elements by all partners.

Fortunately libraries built on mature and robust cataloguing standards as they led the cultural heritage community in developing standards for metadata encoding and sharing, starting with development of the *MAchine-Readable Cataloging* (MARC) standard 50 years ago.¹⁷ Many standards now build on the flexibility offered by *eXtensible Markup Language* (XML).¹⁸ These include *Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standards* (METS), *Metadata Object Description Schema* (MODS), *Resource Description and Access* (RDA), the *Europeana Data Model* (EDM) and the *Dublin Core Metadata Element Set* (*International Standards Organization Standard Number 15836 – ISO 15836*). The adoption of these metadata schema allows at a minimum the ability to:

- Uniquely identify and host the digital object (i.e. the image file) or resource;
- Describe the digital objects in objective terms to accepted standards and protocols;
- Detail the file type, format and processes used to create the digital object;
- Relate the digital object to the physical object; and
- Identify the standards and protocols used to create the record.¹⁹

The standards, vocabularies and schema documentation must themselves be preserved as part of the data set for continued access, effective discovery and retrieval. By maintaining these library metadata standards to ensure their applicability to new technologies and capabilities, libraries will have a basis for updating their data. Changes in technologies and standards require continued collaboration and consensus. This includes continued

development of schema for harmonization of standards with other institutions and commercial IT providers.

Current access vs preservation

One challenge libraries face is the need to provide access to data for current users, while at the same time structuring data for long-term preservation. Attempting to meet the needs of current users for research and education may require data sets with a format and structure that lends itself to ease of use in a current Graphical User Interface (GUI) needed for web access or current access tools. At the same time, developing data sets in a simple flat file format and structure necessary for technology independent preservation may not offer the rich structure preferred for use with software and viewer tools being developed today.

Various application programming interfaces (API) can ingest and manipulate data of various types, as long as they are structured in standard formats and identified with standardized metadata. Data collected in standard formats need to be integrated and displayed with descriptive data for research, but institutions have to be careful not to structure data and metadata to just meet the immediate needs of API and software developers, without continuing to focus on preservation. Fortunately standard frameworks are being developed that capitalize on standardized data structures for an enhanced user experience with open-source presentation API. One example is the *International Image Interoperability Framework* (IIIF) for image viewing, which is used by *OpenSeadragon* and *Mirador* viewers. Development of IIIF for images and potentially other frameworks for data sharing support increased data compatibility with access to image content and technical descriptions of images.²⁰

Future challenges

Libraries face tremendous budgetary, technology and organizational challenges as they continue to address their responsibilities for controlling access to the physical object while accepting new responsibilities for broad digital access and data preservation. As technologies change, libraries and their parent institutions find themselves unable to keep up with commercial vendors that offer more robust infrastructures and backup. Some libraries have turned to outside vendors and contractors to offer the needed flexibility and expertise to remain abreast with changes in technology. Others have adopted in-house agile development processes from software frameworks, but this requires mature program management skills to meet technical requirements within budget and on schedule. Ultimately public-private partnerships between libraries and commercial vendors offer potential to bring the best from each culture to bear on digital preservation.

Another cultural and budgetary challenge for libraries is free access to data, which can run counter to legacy access controls required for physical objects. Digital access requires balancing the perceived loss of patrimony and control of the information with the need for digital preservation and sharing. While some institutions feel that they may

lose a funding source without paid licensed use of data, this must be balanced with higher IT costs required to develop and maintain access controls and their own geographically dispersed backups and upgrades.

Balancing these challenges are the centuries of expertise libraries bring to developing bibliographic records, and a proud history of manuscript and document preservation. Combining these skills with the rapidly growing technologies and work processes of commercial IT service providers offers tremendous potential for the preservation of rich digital cultural heritage. This will require continued collaboration across all partners to ensure access to and preservation of information for future generations amidst an ever changing technology environment.

Library digital data geographically dispersed on Internet servers can be regularly accessed by users. Over time, this regular access on operational online servers will help identify data in old formats or corrupted data in time for reformatting or replacement from backups. Most importantly, dispersed data can be used to rebuild library digital data should it suffer a loss—even including loss of the physical object represented by the digital data. Library infrastructures can be rebuilt, but the information within them can be all too easily lost, whether from a simple undetected ‘bit flip’ from cosmic rays, an individual erroneously mis-shelving a collection object or deleting a drive, or even a major catastrophe striking a library or its geographic area. In these circumstances libraries can turn to other institutions or commercial providers to retrieve their digital holdings and continue their mission of making information available for the preservation and study of our cultural heritage well into the future.

Notes

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- ² Vatican Library Digitization Project (2016)
- ³ France and Toth (2011)
- ⁴ Emery, Toth and Noel (2009)
- ⁵ Christens-Barry (2009)
- ⁶ Emery, Lee and Toth (2011)
- ⁷ The Galen Syriac Palimpsest (2010)
- ⁸ Wisnicki and Toth (2012)
- ⁹ France, Emery and Toth (2009)
- ¹⁰ Emery, Toth and Noel (2009) 342
- ¹¹ Emery, France and Toth (2009)
- ¹² New York Times (2015)
- ¹³ Following discovery of the ‘missing leaves’ by Grigory Kessel, St. Catherine’s Monastery of the Sinai, the Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, the Bibliothèque nationale de France, and Harvard University Houghton Library provided not only access to their collections for spectral imaging, but were also generous in granting Creative Commons licenses to share the digital data for free access with that of the anonymous owner of the codex on www.digitalgalen.net.
- ¹⁴ Creative Commons About The Licenses (2016)
- ¹⁵ Emery, Toth & Noel (2009) 339
- ¹⁶ Archimedes Palimpsest ReadMe (2008)
- ¹⁷ Library of Congress (2006)
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²⁰ IIF (2015)

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Imaging endangered manuscripts: materials of Timbuktu manuscripts in focus

Lieve Watteeuw

*Salt comes from the north, gold from the south and silver from the country of
the white men, but the word of God and the treasures of wisdom are only to be
found in Timbuktu.*

Fifteenth-century Sudanese proverb¹

In preparation for the conference “What do we lose when we lose a library?” in September 2015, a small number of Malinese manuscripts were brought to the University of Leuven by the librarian of the Mama Haidara Memorial Library in Timbuktu, Dr. Abdel Kader Haidara.² The sixteen manuscripts were digitized by the Imaging Lab of the University Library and during the months of research and conservation, images of watermarks and book bindings were captured. Nondestructive laboratory analyses with micro-xrf and multispectral images revealing the inks and pigments were used to decorate a colorful eleventh-century Koran fragment. The laboratory and imaging techniques shed light on the fascinating world of manuscript production in Timbuktu, an important intellectual center in Africa from the late Middle Ages. This essay will focus on some case studies, documented when the manuscripts were studied at the University of Leuven.

Timbuktu in the middle ages: the Paris for African scholarship

The West African city of Timbuktu flourished during the prosperous Shonghay empire (15th-16th centuries) as a very important trading center on the trans-Saharan caravan route.³ It was a wealthy commercial center connecting Saharan, tropical and Mediterranean Africa. El Hasan am Muhammed el-Wazzan-ez-Zayyati, better known as Leo Africanus, diplomat and one of the earliest sixteenth-century travelers to Africa, described the flourishing city in March 1526 in his *Cosmographia*: “The city was inhabited by doctors, judges, priests and scholars, all appointed by the King. There are manuscripts and written books from the Barbary coast (modern Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia) to be bought here, and they are sold for more money than any other merchandise”.⁴ Through Leo Africanus the fame of Timbuktu as a rich and erudite intellectual center reached Europe. The first Western European mention of ‘Tombutu’ is on the map of Africa in the Atlas of Abraham Ortelius, published in Antwerp in 1570.⁵

During this “golden age” under the Shonghay dynasty, there was an exceptionally high degree of literacy and scholarship, both extremely important requisites for the interpretation of Islamic laws and regulations. Books and libraries were key symbols of the

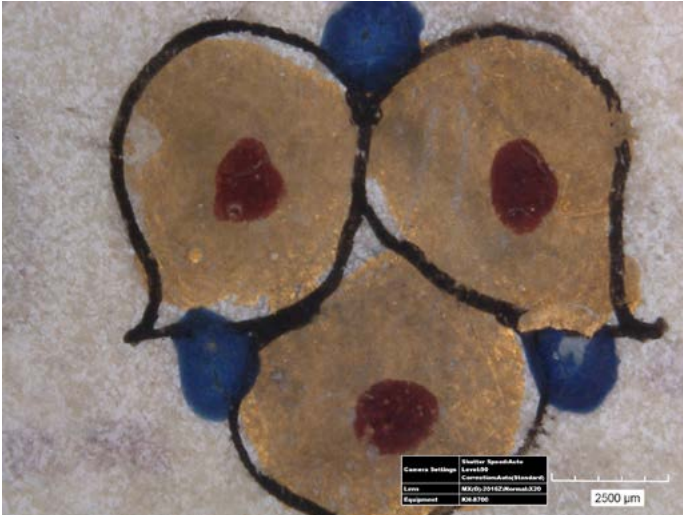
wealth and power of the city, which flourished thanks to the trade in salt, gold and slaves. Despite tribal conflicts, the elite of Timbuktu fostered book production and collection, and controlled the scriptoria and libraries. The Sankoré university was established as early as 1300. The books collected and copied in Timbuktu covered a wide range of topics and genres: key texts of Islam, Korans, collections of Hadiths, Sufi texts and devotional texts; works of the Maliki school of Islamic law; and texts representative of the 'Islamic sciences', including grammar, mathematics and astronomy. By the fifteenth century, Timbuktu scholars were producing original works including contracts, commentaries, historical chronicles, poetry, and glosses as well as compiling new versions of, and commentaries, on established texts. From the comments and marginalia that were added over time, it is evident that the manuscripts were used intensively and their value was exceptionally high: in the historical chronicles of Timbuktu, for example, the purchases of books receive more mentions than the construction or renovation of mosques. On any list of the most important commercial transactions, paper and books appear.

Colors in an eleventh-century Koran fragment

An eleventh-century fragment of the Koran, written on translucent parchment, measuring ca. 16.6 x 19.5 cm (in an irregular shape) was written and decorated elaborately



Koran, parchment, fragment, 16.6 x 19.5 cm, 11th century (Photo Imaging Lab, KU Leuven)



Koran, 11th century, detail of the calligraphy in gold leaf, lapis lazuli, organic red and carbon black (photo with Hirox video microscope, KIK-IRPA, Brussels)

The folio was severely damaged by rodents and was examined in the laboratories in a non-destructive way to explore its material characteristics. The text of the second surah, the Cow, verse 56-57—written in brownish iron gall ink—reads: “Then We revived you after your death that perhaps you would be grateful. And We shaded you with clouds and sent down to you manna and quails ...”. Under the Hirox 3D video binocular, the dark hair follicles in the parchment are clearly visible and the Xrf measurements (spot measurements with the Art-Tax, Bruker) revealed that the bright blue color was most probably made of lapis-lazuli (no sign of iron in the Xrf measurements). The pigment **lapis lazuli** was expensive in the West; it was also a pigment for the precious decorations in manuscripts in the Islamic Middle East. Efficient techniques were required, by specialist manufacturers, to produce adequate quantities of top quality pigment for use in manuscript decoration. Gold foil was applied, and on top bright organic red and yellow paint, made of orpiment were used by the calligrapher. The black lines profiling the design, were added in carbon ink. Small green reading marks as green dots were added, now severely corroded as they contain a copper containing pigment.⁶

Western Paper in Timbuktu manuscripts

Already in the late fourteenth century North African scriptoria were using papers imported from Southern Europe. Although paper was made in North Africa and Egypt, quality paper imported from Southern Europe via Venice and Granada was vital for Timbuktu manuscript production.⁷ Water power made European paper mills faster and their products cheaper. Paper was packaged by the ream and shipped in bales.⁸ The watermarks of the three crescent moons, named by the Italian papermakers “tre lune”,

were used from the fifteenth century(?) on paper intended for the Ottoman market. Venice was the main port for shipping paper from the mills of upper Italian areas like Piedmont, Livorno or Lombardy. The ‘three crescents’ motif is one of the most commonly encountered watermarks in Islamic manuscripts in north and western Africa and it exists in multiple forms and shapes.⁹ From the early eighteenth century French papermakers imitated this Italian product. Their paper was called “trois croissants façon de Venise” or simply “trois croissants”.¹⁰ The strict rules for the export of papers to the Levant were laid down in an *Arret de Louis XV* of 14th February 1739.¹¹ The port was Marseille, and merchants were purchasing paper from the mills in the valley of the Huveaune, or from deeper in the Provençal hinterland from cities such as Pertuis and Entraigues-sur-Sorgues, where paper especially for the Levant was produced and then exported to Cairo and Alexandria.²²² Long-distance traders, Sudanese merchants and pilgrims brought the bales through Tripoli and the Libyan oases to the Sub-Saharan cities. For Timbuktu the trade roads through the Moroccan desert were also significant and from the late eighteenth century the harbors on the Atlantic coast received ships with European paper.¹³ As the three moon paper carries no monograms, it is almost impossible to date or to determine whether it is of Italian or French provenance.¹⁴



Paper watermark with three crescent moons. *Kashf al-Hijab fi 'Ilm al-Hisab*, ca. 1700, 14.5 x 20 cm (photo Imaging Lab, University Library, KU Leuven)

Other types of watermarks found in Timbuktu manuscripts are “Trois ronds, une croix” and “Couronne avec étoile et lune”.¹⁵

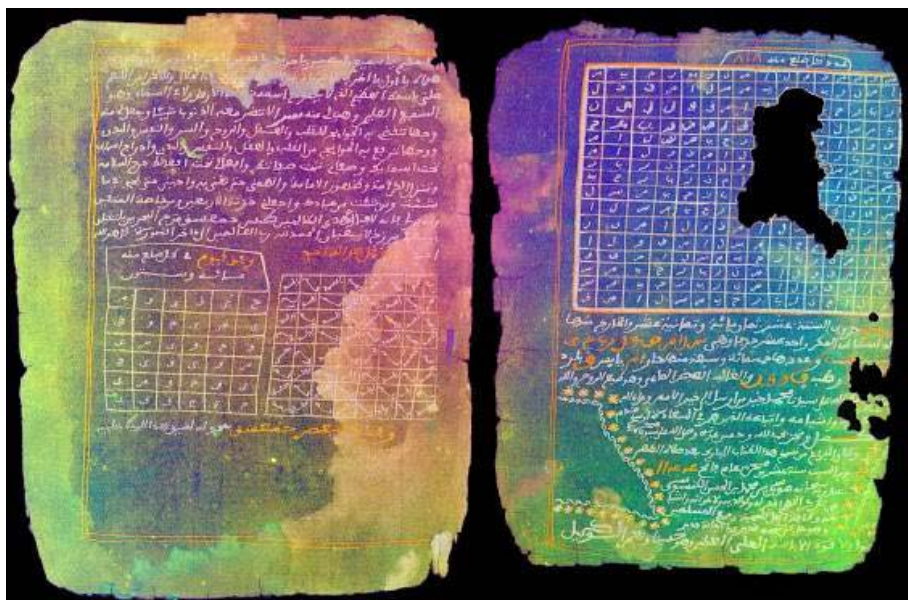
Timbuktu book bindings

A feature of Sub-Saharan manuscripts is that they are unbound, with the loose leaves protected by a flexible leather wrapper, covering the fore edge with a flap.



Severely damaged manuscript in leather bookbinding, 37 x 21,5 cm, 18th century ?, during conservation (photo Lieve Watteeuw, KU Leuven)

The inside is lined with paper or leather. The leaves in their wrapper are kept together with a thin linen ribbon around the cover and the most valuable ones have leather satchels or bookcases, decorated with blind tooled geometrical patterns.¹⁶ The folios are not numbered and the scribes used headers and footers to establish the order of the text. Through time many of the books have become incomplete and their folios disordered. Over the past two centuries, a large number of manuscripts has been lost (mostly burnt) or damaged by being hidden in the mud houses in which the family libraries were established. They were often literally buried to protect them from colonizers (Timbuktu became part of the colony of French Sudan in 1880¹⁷) or to protect them from tribal conflicts, lawlessness and political instability.¹⁸ Due to the climate and high humidity during the rainy season from July to October and the harsh conditions in which the manuscripts were stored for decades, they are now extremely damaged. The hot and dry conditions have also caused the leather book bindings, usually in goat or gazelle leather, to become stiff and rigid. Insects and rodents have attacked the leather and paper; the paper is extremely dry and the inks damaged by rain and the flooding of the river Niger. Multispectral imaging made the decay of the paper fibers clearly visible.¹⁹ Moreover, the imaging technique revealed some lines of the faded texts written in iron gall ink, especially at the edges of the folio's where the water impregnation is prominent.



Multispectral imaging of paper folio's, revealing watermarks, degradation of the paper fibers and of the text written in iron-gall ink (photo Mike B. Toth, William A. Christens-Barry, Washington).

The political instability, the successes of the rebel army of Tuaregs and of the Islamic Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) and the destruction of some historic mausoleums in the region of Timbuktu in June 2012 seriously threatened the unique family libraries. Drastic action became necessary, as described by Abdel Kader Haidara in his essay earlier in this publication, whereby in a secret operation the hundred thousand endangered manuscripts of Timbuktu were taken to Bamako, the capital of Mali. The manuscripts—sometimes one folio, sometimes bulky volumes—were unobtrusively concealed in small trunks and suitcases and carried to safety in buses, on donkey carts or via the Niger River.

Future Research possibilities for the Timbuktu manuscripts?

The NGO SAVAMA-DCI (Sauvegarde des Manuscrits et la Defense de la Culture Islamique) cherishes the unique intellectual potential of this Malian heritage of books. With the support of various foreign universities and institutions the manuscripts are being catalogued, described, digitized and preserved—no longer in Timbuktu, but in Bamako. The Catholic University of Leuven, always mindful of the fatal library fire in 1914 which reduced its entire collection of medieval manuscripts to ashes, has accepted with great pleasure to contribute to this work. The sixteen manuscripts of the Mamma Haidara Memorial Library, brought to Leuven, were researched, digitized in high resolution and one of them—torn and distorted by heat and insects and with damaged folios—was

carefully conserved. Moreover, the challenge of applying innovating techniques for non-destructive imaging and analysis proved highly valuable during this study, and showed how cross disciplinary research methods and new imaging tools can contribute to the knowledge and material pedigree of this fascinating but extremely vulnerable African book heritage. For this research target, international collaboration is essential.

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- ¹¹ Code de Louis XV, ou nouveau recueil des principaux règlements & ordonnances de sa Majesté, 14 février 1739, Paris, pp. 80-87. Online: <https://books.google.be/books?id=Xu6dIZmxe48C&pg=PA81&lpg=PA81&dq=Trois+croissants+fa%C3%A7on+de+Venise&source=bl&ots=uw5KV1ABap&sig=GEXzy9Wb7QOASNMKqoa8BkaoEx4&hl=nl&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewir-4yjlFHLAhUJwxQKHxNDD0Q6AEIHjAA#v=onepage&q=Trois%20croissants%20fa%C3%A7on%20de%20Venise&f=false>
- ¹² Coussot, G.J. (2016), "Papetiers, filigranes et imprimeries du Comtat Venaissin au XVIII^e siècle", available online: <http://papetiers-comtatvenaissin.eu/papetiersfiligranesComtat/papetierfiligranesintroductionnew.html>.
- ¹³ Kane, O.O. (2016), *Beyond Timbuktu: An Intellectual History of Muslim West Africa*, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- ¹⁴ Walz, T. (2011), p. 84.
- ¹⁵ Gaudriault, R. (1995), p. 116.
- ¹⁶ Kane, O.O. (2016), p. 54.
- ¹⁷ Dubois, F. (1897), *Tombouctou la Mystérieuse*, Paris.
- ¹⁸ "Lost Libraries of Timbuktu", in: "Africa Before Transatlantic Enslavement", available online: http://www.understandingslavery.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=378&Itemid=233
- ¹⁹ Multispectral images were taken during during the Imaging Workshop at KU Leuven in spring 2015, by Mike B. Toth, William A. Christens-Barry, and Alberto Campagnolo. On MS Imaging, see: Toth, M.B., "How do we preserve and share our digital library information" (essay in this publication); France F.G., "Spectral imaging: capturing and retrieving information you didn't know your library collections contained" (essay in this publication); Easton, R.J., Christens-Barry W., Boydston K., Toth, M.B. *et al.* (2010), "Standardized system for multispectral imaging of palimpsests", *Proc. SPIE 7531*, Computer Vision and Image Analysis of Art, 75310D. Photometric Stereo (RTI) imaging with the KU Leuven RICH microdome were actured by Bruno Vandermeulen and Lieve Watteeuw. For the RICH project, KU Leuven: Lieve Watteeuw, Bruno Vandermeulen *et al.*, "Imaging the Topography of Illuminations and Bookbindings with the Minidome (RICH). A 2D+ imaging tool for Art-technical and Conservation Monitoring", Preprints ICOM-CC, 17th Triennial Conference, Melbourne, Australia, September 15-19, 2014; <https://portablelightdome.wordpress.com/category/rich-illuminare/>.