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STANISŁAW LISOWSKI AND THE RESTITUTION OF INCUNABULA OF MONASTIC PROVENANCE UNDER THE TREATY OF RIGA (1921)*

Abstract: The Treaty of Riga is considered one of the most important documents of the first half of the twentieth century for Eastern Europe. Few studies, however, address the question of the restitution of library and archive collections. The restitution of Polish cultural heritage was included in the Riga peace negotiations as one of the most important issues to be settled. The reconstruction of the restitution processes is important for the history of the collections of Polish libraries and archives as well as their contemporary holdings. Official documentation on the process of restitution burned down in 1944 during the Warsaw Rising. Therefore, unpublished archival material is an important source for reconstructing restitution processes. The papers of those who participated in the works of the Mixed Special Commission are an example of this type of material. The article draws on the papers of Stanisław Lisowski and his notes on the restitution of incunabula of monastic provenance (above all the libraries of Sieciechów and Czerwińsk).

Keywords: Treaty of Riga, Stanisław Lisowski, restitution of literary heritage, old prints, incunabula, provenance research, Benedictines (Sieciechów), Canons Regular (Czerwińsk).

The fate of Poland's cultural heritage is inextricably linked to the history of the Republic of Poland, especially the military operations conducted and the changes in the country's borders. During the numerous wars waged since the seventeenth century against Russia, Sweden and Turkey, the subsequent partitions and the First and Second World Wars, cultural property was plundered (but also destroyed) on a massive scale. Although more than a century has passed since the signing of the Treaty of Riga, matters related to the restitution of Polish cultural heritage still evoke the interest of researchers, and the use of so far unpublished materials and a long historical

* This article is the result of research project no. 2021/05/X/HS2/01137 funded by the National Science Centre.

perspective allow for a more comprehensive analysis of the process of restoring lost cultural property.

The Peace Treaty between Poland, Russia and Ukraine, signed in Riga on 18 March 1921, was one of the most critical documents for Poland and Eastern Europe.¹ It brought an end to the Polish-Bolshevik war, regulated diplomatic relations between the two countries, established the central section of Russia's western border, and forced Marshal Józef Piłsudski to abandon his plans for an Eastern European federation, which affected the character of the reborn Poland, and sanctioned the borders and political systems of Belarus and Ukraine. Moreover, it codified citizenship issues, respect for national minorities, and equal rights to exercise national, religious and cultural practices. Its Article XI stipulated that Russia and Ukraine had to return cultural property exported to their territories and seized from Poland after 1 January 1772; Articles XII and XIV guaranteed the recovery of state property, mainly industrial and railway equipment, and the payment of thirty million roubles in gold² for the active participation of the land of the Republic of Poland in the economic life of the former Russian Empire (Article XIII). In addition, Russia and Ukraine were to re-evacuate, upon the demands of the Polish state authorities, based on the declarations of the owners, the property of local government bodies, town boards, institutions, individuals and legal entities evacuated or forcibly deported from 1 August 1914 to 1 October 1915 (Article XV).³

¹ Compare content: *Rozejm i traktat ryski: Rokowania pokojowe w Rydze. Ratyfikacja traktatu i wykonywanie jego postanowień. Rokowania polsko-radzieckich komisji mieszanych, m.in. w kwestiach reewakuacji i rewindykacji dóbr kulturalnych (teksty preliminarium i traktatu pokojowego, druki, noty, memoriały, raporty, korespondencja)* [Armistice and Treaty of Riga: Peace negotiations in Riga. Ratification of the treaty and implementation of its provisions. Negotiations of Polish-Soviet mixed commissions, including: in matters of re-evacuation and recovery of cultural property (texts of the preliminary estimates and the peace treaty — forms, notes, memoranda, reports, correspondence)], AAN [Archives of Modern Records], Warsaw, 2/503/0/4.2/854.

² The amount in the Treaty was understated. A very indicative valuation by Edward Chwalewik, based on Martinus Nijhoff's antiquarian catalogues (catalogues 487 and 488), showed that the market value of printed material of Polish provenance from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries was 11 million florins, that is more than 100 million roubles. See ZSRR. *Stosunki polityczne z Polską — rewindykacja mienia, repatriacja, wymiana poselstw i konsulatów. Referaty, protokoły, umowy, korespondencja* [USSR. Political relations with Poland — the restitution of property, repatriation, exchange of posts and consulates], AAN, Warsaw, 2/322/0/4.4/6743a, pp. 48–61.

³ See also: *Zapomniany pokój: Traktat ryski interpretacje i kontrowersje 90 lat później*, ed. Sławomir Dębski, Warsaw, 2013; Jerzy Borzęcki, *The Soviet-Polish Peace of 1921 and the Creation of Interwar Europe*, New Haven, CT, 2008; *Traktat ryski 1921 roku po 75 latach: Studia*, ed. Mieczysław Wojciechowski, Toruń, 1998; Jerzy Kumaniecki, *Pokój polsko-radziecki 1921:*

The implementation of the provisions of the Treaty of Riga was to begin immediately after the exchange of the ratification documents, that is on 30 April 1921. No action was taken at that time, and this state of affairs persisted for several months, as each party accused the other of violating the terms of the Treaty. The implementation of articles on the restitution of cultural property, including cultural heritage, although essential and discussed in detail during the drafting of the peace preliminaries, commenced with a considerable delay. For the implementation of Article XI, as stipulated in the Treaty itself, a Special Mixed Commission consisting of three representatives of each Party and relevant experts was to be set up on an equal basis within six weeks of ratification. Meanwhile, for Article XV, the Mixed Re-evacuation Commission was to be set up on the same terms, consisting of five representatives and indispensable experts. The seat of both commissions was Moscow.

Representatives of the Polish scholarly community, many years before the beginning of the diplomatic endeavours and negotiations related to the determination of the content of the Treaty of Riga and later with regard to the implementation of its provisions, had been making multiple efforts to locate, identify and describe the seized cultural and scientific property of Poland. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century researchers conducted queries in Russian libraries, archives and museum collections to identify, record and process items of Polish provenance. The results of their efforts were used by members of the Mixed Re-evacuation and Special Committee, its plenipotentiaries and experts in their struggle with representatives of the Russian-Ukrainian side to regain the lost literary heritage.⁴

Geneza, rokowania, traktat, komisje mieszane, Warsaw, 1985; Dariusz Matelski, *Losy polskich dóbr kultury w Rosji i ZSRR: Próby restytucji: archiwa — księgozbiory — dzieła sztuki — pomniki*, Poznań, 2003; idem, *Problemy restytucji polskich dóbr kultury od czasów nowożytnych do współczesnych: Archiwa — księgozbiory — dzieła sztuki — pomniki*, Poznań, 2003; idem, *Grabież i restytucja polskich dóbr kultury od czasów nowożytnych do współczesnych*, 2 vols, Cracow, 2006; Dorota Pietrzekiewicz, *Spory o zbiory: Piotr Bańkowski — rewindykacja i ochrona dziedzictwa piśmienniczego*, Pułtusk and Warsaw, 2019; eadem, 'The Peace of Riga and the Recovery of Polish Literary Heritage', *Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis. Studia ad Bibliothecarum Scientiam Pertinentia*, 19, 2021, pp. 183–200.

⁴ See also: Dorota Pietrzekiewicz, 'W służbie książce, czyli zmagania polskiego środowiska naukowego o odzyskanie utraconych zbiorów bibliotecznych na mocy traktatu ryskiego', in *Na co dzień i od święta: Książka w życiu Polaków w XIX–XXI w.*, ed. Agnieszka Chamera-Nowak and Dariusz Jarosz, Warsaw, 2015, pp. 415–32; Hanna Łaskarzewska, 'Stania o zwroty polskich zbiorów bibliotecznych z Kijowa i Petersburga w świetle niepublikowanych dokumentów dotyczących realizacji ustaleń traktatu ryskiego — ze spuścizny Stanisława Lisowskiego', *Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej*, 25, 2003, pp. 39–66; eadem, *Tam gdzie przeszła burza...: Losy polskiego dziedzictwa kulturowego w latach 1914–1920*, Warsaw, 2019;

For over a decade, almost ninety individuals, including many distinguished librarians, archivists, historians, museologists and art historians, participated in the work of the Polish delegation in the Mixed Special and Re-evacuation Commission, at home and abroad. The restitution efforts were challenging and conflict-free. From the first to the last day, the Russian-Ukrainian delegation sought by various means either to block, even when the case was open-and-shut, even the most precise and most indisputable Polish demands or to implement a minimal portion of them. Examples of such behaviour are described in the *Documents concerning the actions of the Polish delegations in the Mixed Re-evacuation and Special Commissions in Moscow*.⁵ They can also be found in official archives of the Polish Delegation⁶ and papers⁷ of individuals involved in these tasks.

Interesting materials on restitution works, complementing the information provided in the literature on the subject, can be found in the papers of Stanisław Lisowski, who made a significant contribution to the recovery and scientific compilation of incunabula and old prints — an essential element of Polish cultural heritage. Such papers are classified as a non-institutional source (in my opinion, very valuable for reconstructing the history of Polish book collections), often characterized by fragmentation and scattering. The usefulness of such sources depends

Katarzyna Tomkowiak, 'Udział Zygmunta Mocarskiego w pracach rewindykacyjnych polskich zbiorów bibliotecznych z Rosji (1922–1923)', *Folia Toruniensia*, 18, 2018, pp. 57–87; Mateusz Hübner, 'Traktat ryski a kwestia rewindykacji polskich dóbr kultury i nauki z Rosji sowieckiej', in *Zwycięski pokój czy rozejm na pokolenie? Traktat ryski z perspektywy 100 lat*, ed. Zbigniew Girzyński and Jarosław Kłaczek, Warsaw, 2022, pp. 295–325; Józef Szczepański, 'Restytucja polskich archiwaliów po traktacie ryskim', in *Zwycięski pokój czy rozejm na pokolenie?*, pp. 327–52.

⁵ Nine notebooks were published in print between 1921 and 1924. These publications contain material summarizing the first three years of the Commission's works. Further volumes were not published because the government withheld funds allocated for this purpose. See also: dossier 891, Materiały dotyczące drukowania Dokumentów Delegacji w Komisjach Reewakuacyjnej i Specjalnej w Moskwie [Materials on printing Delegation Documents in the Re-evacuation and Special Commissions in Moscow], AGAD [The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw], Warsaw, no. 1/394/0/-/42, pp. 1–136.

⁶ The official documentation of the Mixed Special and Re-evacuation Commissions (from 1921 to 1934) was destroyed along with the holdings of the Treasury Archives in 1944. Some fragments of it (for example reports, minutes, official correspondence, notes, papers, and so on) have survived in the papers of individuals or institutions involved in the recovery and preservation of the literary heritage. Today they are scattered in various libraries, archives, museums.

⁷ Zygmunt Kolankowski, 'Granice spuścizny archiwalnej', *Archeion*, 57, 1972, pp. 53–73; Alicja Kulecka, 'Spuścizny w archiwach, bibliotekach i muzeach w Polsce', *Archeion*, 100, 1999, pp. 70–96.

on the competence of their producers (in this case, in library matters), their personality and their attitude to the facts they present. Particularly valuable material is research documentation — in the case of Lisowski — his expert reports and papers on the study of the provenance of old prints, including incunabula, seized from Polish territories by Russia.

The primary source for the reconstruction of Lisowski's professional curriculum vitae and biographical details are his papers stored in the collection of the Manuscripts Section of the University Library of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (hereinafter: SR B UMK). These materials contain unpublished documents related to his work in the Mixed Special Commission for the restitution of incunabula and old prints of the Polish provenance from the USSR. The value of these documents cannot be overstated as they relate to that period of restitution works from which no documentation has been published to date. They complement the restitution documentation fragmentarily preserved in state archives and libraries, providing a fuller picture of the struggle to recover Polish literary heritage. Kazimierz Przybyszewski characterized these sources in his article 'Spuścizny rękopiśmienne w Bibliotece Uniwersyteckiej w Toruniu [Manuscript Legacies in the University Library of Toruń] (Gumowski, Lisowski and Kwiatkowski)'.⁸ A certain group of materials of this resource has been described by Hanna Łaskarzewska in her article 'Starania o zwroty polskich zbiorów bibliotecznych z Kijowa i Petersburga w świetle niepublikowanych dokumentów dotyczących realizacji ustaleń traktatu ryskiego'⁹ (Efforts to Return the Polish Library Collections from Kyiv and St Petersburg in the Light of Unpublished Documents Concerning the Implementation of the Treaty of Riga). The author pointed out that unpublished documents in this collection are very valuable for establishing the chronology and scope of the restitution works. In 2003, she announced that she and the Historical Book Collection Documentation Laboratory team of the National Library would publish these materials.¹⁰ She failed to realize these plans, and to this day, the materials still remain in manuscript/machine print form.

Lisowski's biography appeared in *Słownik pracowników książki polskiej*¹¹ (The Dictionary of Polish Book Workers). In 2004, Przybyszewski made his

⁸ Kazimierz Przybyszewski, 'Spuścizny rękopiśmienne w Bibliotece Uniwersyteckiej w Toruniu (Gumowski, Lisowski i Kwiatkowski)', in *Studia o działalności i zbiorach Biblioteki Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika*, 6 vols, ed. Bohdan Ryszewski, Toruń, 1980–91, vol. 2, 1982, pp. 139–69.

⁹ Łaskarzewska, 'Starania o zwroty polskich zbiorów bibliotecznych z Kijowa i Petersburga'.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 19, note 3.

¹¹ Leonard Jarzębowski, 'Lisowski Stanisław', in *Słownik pracowników książki polskiej*, ed. Irena Treichel, Warsaw and Łódź, 1972, p. 521.

biography available in the collective work *Kustosze zbiorów specjalnych*¹² (The Custodians of Special Collections). His bibliophilic passion is highlighted in the work of Ewa Andrysiak *Towarzystwo Bibliofilów Polskich w Wilnie 1929–1939*¹³ (The Polish Bibliophile Society in Vilnius 1929–1939). The obituary was published in *Przegląd Biblioteczny*¹⁴ (The Library Review).

In the Archive of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, in the papers of Piotr Bańkowski — who cooperated with Lisowski in St Petersburg — one can find information about the collection of incunabula (including *incunabula catenata*),¹⁵ which complements the expert reports prepared by Lisowski. In addition, there are various papers by Lisowski¹⁶ in the collection of this archive in the documents of Witold Suchodolski. The Archives of New Records contain a personal file of Lisowski,¹⁷ in the collection of the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment, where there are documents attesting to his participation in the collection works and his high competence as an expert in the field of bibliography, who compiled a catalogue of incunabula (4,500 works) from libraries confiscated in the Polish land. In the State Archives in Lublin, where he worked, there is also scanty documentation reconstructing his professional path. There are letters connected to his restitution works in the Jagiellonian Library, in the Manuscripts Section, among Ludwik Birkenmajer's papers.¹⁸ In the Central Archives of Historical Records, in the materials of, for example Stefan Rygel or Marian Morelowski, one can also come across scarce information about his involvement in the restitution of the Polish literary heritage.

Lisowski's predilection for registering, compiling and securing book collections of Polish provenance is most evident during the period of his involvement in the restitution activities carried out by the Special Mixed

¹² Kazimierz Przybyszewski, 'Stanisław Lisowski — bibliotekarz, archiwista, kustosz Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej w Toruniu', in *Kustosze zbiorów specjalnych*, Warsaw, 2004, pp. 32–36.

¹³ Ewa Andrysiak, *Towarzystwo Bibliofilów Polskich w Wilnie 1929–1939*, Kalisz, 2007, pp. 22, 23, 31, 36, 42, 43, 49–52, 59, 85, 100, 102, 120, 125, 126, 129, 138, 139, 141.

¹⁴ *Przegląd Biblioteczny*, 1964, 4, p. 272.

¹⁵ Materiały Piotra Bańkowskiego [Papers of Piotr Bańkowski], Archiwum Polskiej Akademii Nauk w Warszawie [Archive of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw] (hereafter A PAN), Warsaw, III-217, no. 145.

¹⁶ Materiały Witolda Suchodolskiego [Papers of Witold Suchodolski], A PAN, III-404, no. 3.

¹⁷ Akta osobowe — Stanisław Lisowski [Personnel file — Stanisław Lisowski], AAN, Warsaw, 2/14/0/6/4015.

¹⁸ Sekcja Rękopisów Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej [Manuscript Section of the Jagiellonian Library] (hereafter SR BJ), Korespondencja Aleksandra Birkenmajera, vol. 38, Cracow, Przyb. 589/75; Listy Aleksandra Birkenmajera, vol. 95, SR BJ, Cracow, Przyb. 646/75.

Commission, for which he worked for nearly five years and also during the period when he was the head of the old prints and rare books department of the University and Public Library of Stefan Batory University in Vilnius (1928–45), and later deputy director of the Mikołaj Kopernik City Library in Toruń. There, he served as curator and head of the Library's Old Prints Department from October 1945 until his retirement (1958). This inclination stemmed from his education, professional path, and personal interests.

Lisowski was a Vilnius native. He graduated from an elite secondary school with a humanities and mathematics profile. After obtaining his secondary school certificate in 1900, he enrolled in the Faculty of Law at the University of St Petersburg, from which he graduated in 1911. In the academic year 1912–13, he successfully passed the examinations and obtained the first-degree diploma.¹⁹ As an auditing student, he attended the Faculty of Philology, where he studied philosophy, psychology, the introduction to comparative grammar of Indo-European languages, and Bulgarian and Czech philology. He attended the classes of Jan Baudouin de Courtenay and Aleksei Aleksandrovich Shakhmatov. At the same time, he studied library science and bibliography under the supervision of Stanisław Ptaszycki. During his studies, he was interested in the history of the book and the history and contents of various book collections. Starting in 1910, he actively participated in the student bibliographical club, where he delivered several papers on subjects relating to the history of books and libraries, particularly emphasizing the history of Polish books and Polish libraries. From August 1911 until the end of 1915, he worked as assistant chief librarian of the Library of the Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg, in the Polish book department. As part of his duties, he compiled a bibliography of the Polish bibliography and a systematic catalogue of scientific articles in Polish and Bulgarian journals in the library's collection. In addition, he was commissioned to provide bibliographical advice to members of the Polish scholarly community at the University of St Petersburg.²⁰

He worked at the Russian Bibliological Association,²¹ which was accredited to the Academy, and over time, he even became a member of its board.

¹⁹ Przybyszewski states that Lisowski obtained his diploma in 1914. However, Lisowski, in his handwritten CV, indicates that he graduated in 1912. See also: Przybyszewski, 'Stanisław Lisowski', p. 32; *Materiały biograficzne S. Lisowskiego* [Biographical documents S. Lisowski], SR B UMK, Toruń, rkps 1332/IV, fols 1–4.

²⁰ SR B UMK, rkps 1332/IV, fol. 4v.

²¹ Krzysztof Migoń, 'Zmienne role i losy towarzystw bibliologicznych', *Z badań nad Polskimi Księgozbiórami Historycznymi*, 13, 1993, pp. 311–19 (p. 315).

He delivered several papers on library science and bibliography in this forum. In 1913, he was sent to Moscow to attend library courses to improve his competences. On his return to the Neva — to his former position in the library — he prepared a report for the Russian Bibliological Association on the Moscow library science courses for publication.²² During this time, he cooperated with the Literature Department of the Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg in compiling a review of works on Slavic studies.²³

In 1915, the Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg published his bibliographical work *Pol'skaia literatura, istoriia i drevnosti v 1912–1913 gg.: Bibliografiia*.²⁴ A year later, he edited and published *Polski Kalendarz Piotrogrodzki na rok przestępny 1916: Rocznik ilustrowany informacyjno-historyczno-literacki (praca zbiorowa tych, których los rzucił nad Newę)* (The Polish Petrograd Calendar for the Leap Year 1916: An Illustrated Informational-Historical-Literary Yearbook (a Collective Work of those whose Fate Threw them over the Neva)), released by Waclaw Zgoda.

Between 1917 and 1922, his primary sources of income were private tutoring and a job at a Polish school. He did not serve in the army.²⁵ In 1918, he found employment as an expert and custodian of the Society for the Care of Historic Monuments.²⁶

In 1922, he married Jadwiga Wolańska, daughter of Stanisław Adolf Wolański (doctor) and Antonina Helena (*née* Sylwestrowicz) Wolańska.²⁷ In later years, she collaborated with her husband in the State Archives in Lublin (1923–25) and for the recovery of the Polish literary heritage. Between 1925 and 1928, she headed the restitution team's manuscript and print inventory department and was involved in archival and library works. After the Second World War, their professional paths also crossed in libraries in Toruń.²⁸

Lisowski made a declaration for choosing Polish citizenship (in accordance with Article VI of the Treaty of Riga). In November 1922, the

²² See also: Przybyszewski, 'Stanisław Lisowski', p. 32; SR B UMK, rkps 1332/IV, fols 1, 2, 3, 4.

²³ SR B UMK, rkps 1332/IV, fol. 4v.

²⁴ Władysław Tadeusz Wisłocki, *Bibliografia bibliofilstwa i bibliografii polskiej*, 4 vols, Lviv and Cracow, 1919–24, vol. 2: *Za lata 1918–1919 (oraz uzupełnienia do części I)*, Lviv, 1920, p. 11.

²⁵ SR B UMK, rkps 1332/IV, fol. 26.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, fol. 2.

²⁷ Jadwiga Wolańska was born on 5 April 1897 in Vilnius. In St Petersburg, she completed the two-year Polish Higher Courses of the Society of Devotees of Polish History and Literature. She was a student at the Bestuzev Higher Female Courses for a year. See: *Materiały biograficzne J. Lisowskiej* [Biographical documents J. Lisowski], SR B UMK, Toruń, rkps 1335/III.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, fols 1, 2.

Lisowskis moved to Poland and settled in Lublin, where Stanisław started working in the local State Archive — together with Ptaszycki. Formally speaking, he worked there until the end of 1927. During this time, he was on several occasions appointed as to the Special Mixed Commission in St Petersburg. The first time was in 1923.²⁹ As part of his duties, he compiled, among other items, a list of incunabula from Polish monasteries and wrote a series of exhaustive papers on the cultural significance of Polish monasteries, ‘aldynes’³⁰ and ‘elseviers’³¹ of the Polish provenance in St Petersburg collections or the collecting passion of Józef Andrzej Załuski. His activities were characterized by high professionalism, a comprehensive knowledge of Polish history and an excellent understanding of old Polish book collections. In recognition of his competence, in March 1924, he was appointed deputy plenipotentiary of the Polish Delegation for Library Affairs in St Petersburg.³² He described the results of his activities in an article published under the pseudonym ‘Spectator’, entitled *Notatka o proveniencji inkunabułów znajdujących się w Rosyjskiej Publicznej Bibliotece w Piotrogradzie*³³ (Note on the Provenance of Incunabula Held in the Russian Public Library in Petrograd).

From 1 January 1928, he was appointed head of the old prints and rare books department of the University and Public Library of the Stefan Batory University in Vilnius. He worked there until the Polish university authorities handed the library to the Lithuanians (15 December 1939). On 15 January 1940, he was appointed to the post of bibliographer, where he continued to hold the post until 15 April 1945, the time of his departure to Poland. During his stay in Vilnius, he organized and systematized the department of old prints and compiled a catalogue of incunabula. At the same time, he assumed the duties of deputy director. Some of his more important publications from this period include. *Uniwersytecka Biblioteka Publiczna w Wilnie za czasów rosyjskich*³⁴ (The University Public Library in Vilnius in Russian times), *Uniwersytecka Biblioteka Publiczna w Wilnie w latach 1919–1929*³⁵ (The University Public Library in Vilnius in 1919–1929), *Starodruki Uniwersyteckiej*

²⁹ Wspomnienia o bibliotekarzach [Memories of librarians], SR B UMK, Toruń, rkps 1327/IV, fol. 16.

³⁰ Books from the Renaissance printing house of Aldus Manutius in Venice.

³¹ Books printed by the Dutch printers Elseviers in a small format (12°).

³² Ibid.

³³ Spectator [Stanisław Lisowski], ‘Notatka o proveniencji inkunabułów znajdujących się w Rosyjskiej Publicznej Bibliotece w Piotrogradzie’, *Przewodnik Bibliograficzny*, 1926, 6, pp. 267–68.

³⁴ Stanisław Lisowski, *Uniwersytecka Biblioteka Publiczna w Wilnie za czasów rosyjskich*, Vilnius, 1932.

³⁵ Idem, *Uniwersytecka Biblioteka Publiczna w Wilnie w latach 1919–1929*, Vilnius, 1931.

*Biblioteki Publicznej w Wilnie*³⁶ (Old Prints of the University Public Library in Vilnius) and the article 'O los ksiąg Zygmuntowych'³⁷ (On the Fate of the Sigismund Volumes). Originally, texts on the fate of the library of Vilnius University were published in *Księga pamiątkowa ku uczczeniu 350. rocznicy założenia Uniwersytetu Wileńskiego* (Souvenir Volume to Commemorate the 350th Anniversary of the Founding of the Vilnius University) and in the journal *Ateneum Wileńskie*.

As repatriates in April 1945, the Lisowskis returned to Poland and settled in Toruń. From 1 June to 31 August 1945, Lisowski was deputy director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Municipal Library in Toruń. From October 1945 until his retirement, he performed custodian duties and was head of the Division of Old Prints of the University Library in Toruń.

The restitution of the Polish literary heritage in St Petersburg was carried out primarily at three institutions: The Public Library,³⁸ the Library of the Roman Catholic Clerical Academy³⁹ and the Library of the Military Medical Academy.⁴⁰ The collection operations from the former Imperial Library in St Petersburg were further clarified by an agreement concluded on 30 October 1922. This agreement and the resolution signed the following day opened a discourse primarily on the 'universal' nature of the St Petersburg library and case against dividing its collection, as well as manuscripts and prints in dispute and those that were not subject to restitution at all and for which Poland was to receive an equivalent. Regarding prints, the Polish Commission applied the principle of sparing the Public Library due to the nature of its collection of worldwide importance and on the assumption that prints were of far less significance than manuscripts and a certain representation of them

³⁶ Idem, *Starodruki Uniwersyteckiej Biblioteki Publicznej w Wilnie*, Vilnius, 1932.

³⁷ Idem, 'O los ksiąg Zygmuntowych', *Wilno: Kwartalnik poświęcony sprawom miasta Wilna*, 1, 1939, 2, pp. 145–52.

³⁸ The library was established as the Imperial Library (1795–1810), later renamed the Imperial Public Library (1810–1917), then the Russian Public Library (1917–25), later the Leningrad State Public Library (1925–32) and the M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library (1932–92). Since 1992, it has been operating under the name of the Russian National Library in St Petersburg.

³⁹ A Catholic university connected with the history of the Polish community in St Petersburg. After the Vilnius University was closed down in 1832 as part of the repressions following the November Uprising, the Roman Catholic Theological Academy was established based on its Faculty of Moral Sciences and the Main Seminary by an order of Tsar Nicholas I. In 1842, the university was moved to St Petersburg by imperial decree.

⁴⁰ From 1799 it operated as the Medical and Surgical Academy, from 1808–81 as the Imperial Medical and Surgical Academy, and in 1881 it was renamed the Imperial Military Medical Academy. In 1935 it was named after Sergei Mironovich Kirov.

was in various collections in the country. Despite this position, Soviet experts — as they had announced while still in Riga while drafting the content of the articles of the Treaty — did not want to allow the implementation of Article XI. It should be in mind that after the commencement of the works of the Mixed Commissions, the Soviets launched a campaign to stir up public opinion in Russia and abroad against restitution, issuing loud proclamations from the university councils of St Petersburg and Minsk. In the following years, they continued this propaganda; articles were published in the official press stating outright that Russia would not implement the Treaty of Riga. This attitude of the scholarly community did not go unnoticed during the restitution works. The Soviet party altogether avoided cooperation in the search for books of Polish provenance while at the same time blocking access for the Polish experts to official sources (inventories, reports), which could guide them to the seized items. Polish experts, therefore, conducted extensive provenance research. Great merit in this field went to Lisowski, who examined incunabula and old prints by autopsy.

By the provisions of the Treaty of Riga and the Resolution, incunabula and prints published after 1500 were subject to restitution if they belonged to persons or institutions of outstanding importance to Polish history (with a special restriction for Zalusiana, of which only those with handwritten annotations of a scientific and bibliographical nature made by Józef Andrzej Załuski were subject to restitution).⁴¹ Such an interpretation offered enormous opportunities for the Soviets to question whether a particular person, institution or monastery could be considered the most prominent or only eminent. In addition, incunabula and old prints listed by Karol Estreicher in *Bibliografia Polska* (The Polish Bibliography), which feature in the collections of the Jagiellonian Library, the University Library in Warsaw and the Ossolineum in Lviv, were subject to restitution.

The work, which had been going on for years to establish and register the oldest prints' Polish origin, was only completed in the second half of 1930. Stefan Rygiel started these activities with Fr Bronisław Ussas; they were continued by Kazimierz Piekarski, then Lisowski with Witold Suchodolski, and completed by Bańkowski, who later took part in the negotiations on the equivalence of the items left at the Neva River.⁴² Between 1922 and 1935, there were nearly 250 meetings of print experts.

⁴¹ Halina Juszcakowska, 'Z badań nad załuscianami w Bibliotece Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego', *Z badań nad Polskimi Księgozbiorami Historycznymi*, 2, 1976, pp. 35–76.

⁴² See also: A PAN, III-217, no. 144, fols 127–33; *ibid.*, no. 146, fol. 5. On Bańkowski's involvement in the restitution of incunabula see: Dorota Pietrkiewicz, 'Catenaty Rosyjskiej

Lisowski, from 1923, researched primarily incunabula and old prints. His professionalism and commitment led to his appointment as the second plenipotentiary for library matters of the Polish delegation in St Petersburg in 1924. He carried out in-depth source and provenance research. Its results provide information on items mostly lost irretrievably during the Second World War. Out of all the incunabula held by the National Library before the Second World War (some 2,250 primarily revindicates), only five survived.⁴³ Out of the recovered chain incunabula included in the National Library's holdings, not even one remains. The results of Lisowski's expertise, considering provenance, are important testimony regarding these books today.

Incunabula in the Russian Public Library in St Petersburg were (and still are) stored in the so-called Faust's Chamber (Gothic Hall). It is now part of the structure of the Rare Books Branch of the Russian National Library in St Petersburg. This chamber was created and furnished in the medieval style (the works were completed at the end of 1857) according to a design by Ivan Ivanovich Gornostaev, cooperating closely with Vasili Ivanovich Sobol'shchikov, who had worked in the library since 1834.⁴⁴ The hall is the most peculiar and characteristic part of the library. It was created on the model of a European monastery cell from the fifteenth century, in the centre of which there is a statue of Johannes Gutenberg by the well-known Danish sculptor — Bertel Thorvaldsen. Above the column

Biblioteki Publicznej w Petersburgu w świetle ekspertyzy Piotra Bańkowskiego', in *Historia, memoria, scriptum: Księga jubileuszowa z okazji osiemdziesięciolecia urodzin Profesora Edwarda Potkowskiego*, ed. Jacek Krochmal, Warsaw, 2015, pp. 166–75.

⁴³ Michał Spandowski, 'Polskie zbiory inkunabułów zniszczone, rozproszone i przemieszczone w czasie i w wyniku II wojny światowej', *Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej*, 54, 2013, pp. 5–36 (p. 9).

⁴⁴ Sobol'shchikov's responsibilities in the library included the development of the graphic collections and the organization of the Rossica department, which collected literature relating to Russia. In 1859, he travelled to the larger European libraries to observe various solutions concerning both exhibitions held in the libraries and architectural solutions applied to the library buildings. He is the author of memoirs of an old librarian from his time working in the Imperial Public Library. In them, he also raised the issue of Polish books. He wrote that in the year he was accepted to work in the library, seized books from Poland were taken out of packs and placed in cabinets. They were taken from several libraries: the University of Warsaw library, the Society of Friends of Science, the Puławy Library of Prince Czartoryski, the library of Jan Dąbrowski and Prince Sapieha. The last three libraries were incomplete, they could be described as fragments of libraries. He added that by the time the Russian army occupied the localities where these libraries were located, the Poles had managed to remove what was more valuable from them. Each library stood separately in St Petersburg. Vasili Ivanovich Sobol'shchikov, 'Vospominaniia starogo bibliotekaria', *Istoricheskii vestnik: Istoriko-literaturnyi zhurnal*, 38, 1889, pp. 70–92, 296–315 (p. 80).

capitals are inscriptions proclaiming that pioneers of the art of printing stand there and that the name Gutenberg, the inventor of printing, will live forever. It is an interesting neo-Gothic composition with colourfully painted cross-shaped vaulted ceilings and soaring windows with colourful stained-glass windows. According to the description dating back to 1872, it was furnished with huge ornate cabinets, a heavy table and armchairs, desktops, a reading bench, a cuckoo clock and a globe with an astrolabe.

Disputes and fierce arguments over the incunabula of Polish provenance continued throughout the functioning of the Mixed Commissions. Clause CC I A of the 1922 resolution referred to them and complicated the restitution process. In their efforts to publish as few incunabula as possible, the Soviet party used the following rationale: they considered the most outstanding institutions and individuals to be those to whom general historical compendia or information publications devote so much attention that they clearly stand out against the general background of the story of Polish culture and history. Furthermore, the Soviet party demanded that only monasteries that contained images to which miraculous properties were attributed should be considered the most significant for Polish culture. With such an interpretation, it is impossible to maintain objectivity. For years, the Polish team had to resist the arguments of their adversaries and demonstrate that a particular institution or person had indeed played a significant role in the Polish culture. Incunabula with Polish provenance notations and those documenting the development of printing in Poland were also qualified for return. We should emphasize here that Polish glosses on copies were relatively rare, and the number of incunabula printed in Poland, which would constitute a monument to printing, was relatively modest. The hosts voluntarily recognized — as meeting the requirements of the resolution — only the Benedictine Monastery of the Holy Cross and the Crown Archives. They also reported the Cistercian monastery of Jędrzejów, which was a tactical move, as before 1925, incunabula from this monastery had not been discovered in the St Petersburg holdings.⁴⁵

After more than two years of restitution works, some 300 of the oldest prints returned to Warsaw. Considering that the total number of incunabula of absolutely confirmed Polish provenance amounted to 4,183 (disregarding more than 800 of uncertain provenance), this was

⁴⁵ Archiwum Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej w Warszawie [Archive of the University Library in Warsaw] (hereafter A BUW), Materiały II Rzeczypospolita 1915–1939 [Materials of the Second Polish Republic 1915–1939], Warsaw, VIII/39, fols 43–53; A PAN, III-217, no. 145; Referaty i opracowania na potrzeby prac rewindykacyjnych [Reports and studies for the purposes of debt recovery], SR B UMK, Toruń, rkps 1323/IV, fols 1–3.

only 7 per cent of the most valuable prints seized. Discussions among experts and plenipotentiaries, in which Lisowski participated, ruled out reaching an agreement on this matter. They forced the Polish party to make far-reaching compromises.⁴⁶

At the beginning of the activities of the Mixed Commissions, the Soviets offered to return 1,200 incunabula that were not part of the Russian Public Library's core collection and 794 from other libraries. This was a total of 1,994 items, so Lisowski proceeded on the assumption that 1,500 incunabula should be requested. This figure represented approximately one-third of the incunabula removed from Poland. It should be regarded as a reasonable way out of restrictions set out in the above-mentioned clause of the 1922 resolution. Moreover, it could be justified by historical and cultural arguments. Lisowski emphasized that incunabula, apart from their financial value, in cases where their original owners in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries can be established, are precious documents of Polish intellectual culture and scholarly life, constituting sources for the history of libraries and education. It was precisely this relationship that the hosts exhibited as a *sine qua non* for the collection activities. It was, therefore, in this direction that he conducted his research and expertise. He knew the most significant number of plundered volumes belonged to the Załuski Library (1,054),⁴⁷ the University of Warsaw and suppressed monasteries. The latter group included some very significant church and academic cultural centres. In his opinion, these were principally the collections formerly belonging to:

Canons Regular (Czerwińsk)	191 incunabula
Collegiate Church (Opatów)	169 incunabula
Cistercians (Ląd)	114 incunabula
Cistercians (Koprzywnica)	61 incunabula
Benedictines (Sieciechów)	67 incunabula
Canons Regular (Mostów)	67 incunabula
Canons Regular (Witów)	60 incunabula
Cistercians (Sulejów)	47 incunabula
Collegiate Church (Wiślica)	44 incunabula
Cistercians (Wąchock)	36 incunabula
Cathedral and Fara Church (Płock)	26 incunabula
Dominicans (Sandomierz)	18 incunabula
Order of the Holy Sepulchre (Miechów)	18 incunabula

⁴⁶ SR B UMK, rkps 1323/IV, fols 1-3.

⁴⁷ *Spektator*, 'Notatka o proveniencji inkunabułów', p. 267.

Canons Regular and Jagiellonian	84 incunabula
University (Cracow)	154 incunabula
other priests	1,156 incunabula ⁴⁸
In total	

He argued that since the Polish team had already received 310 incunabula from Łysa Góra, with glosses bibliographically compiled by Załuski and Stanisław Karnkowski, the total number of incunabula recovered would be 1,466. He added that it was appropriate for this group to file claims because of their financial value and the fact that there were the oldest and most valuable editions among the incunabula of Polish provenance among post-convent books. He stipulated that it was not possible, under such conditions, to force through a compromise under which Poland would obtain a specific lump sum and a way of unilaterally selecting books to choose the oldest and rarest copies. The Soviet party did not have to return all the seized incunabula; it was to pay an equivalent for a specific part of them.⁴⁹

The issue of the equivalent of, among other items, incunabula taken over was only partially resolved by the end of 1936. Not even the Equivalent Committee, which was specially established for this purpose to prepare the material for two agreements and cooperate in their execution, brought the desired resolution. These documents concerned the Polonica left in the Russian Public Library. The first covered the equivalence for prints from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, the second for manuscripts and incunabula.⁵⁰

During his research, Lisowski established that out of the total number of incunabula in the Russian Public Library analysed (5,704 volumes), 4,183 were exported from Polish lands. The Russian provenance was confirmed only among 1,521 items. In 1927, he presented the exact provenance of the recovered incunabula:

Łysa Góra	227
Bishop Piotr Tomicki	31 ⁵¹
Crown Archives	20

⁴⁸ SR B UMK, rkps 1323/IV, fols 1–3; see also: *Catalogue of Incunabula in the National Library of Poland*, 2 vols, ed. Maria Brynda, Michał Spandowski and Sławomir Szyller, Warsaw, 2020–23, vol. 1, pp. 7–11.

⁴⁹ SR B UMK, rkps 1323/IV, fols 1–3.

⁵⁰ A PAN, III-217, no. 146.

⁵¹ An interesting collection of occasional speeches by popular preachers consisting of thirty-one incunabula. See: *Materiały II Rzeczypospolita 1915–1939*, A BUW, VIII/39, fol. 48.

Stanisław Karnkowski	14
Załoski Library	11
Polish binding	4
Polish printing	3
Czartoryski Family Collection	3
Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz	2
Sigismund Augustus	1
In total	316

He also compiled a set of incunabula, unquestionably of Polish origin, mainly from church and monastery collections:

Załoski Library	1,054
Łysa Góra	263
Czerwińsk	191
Opatów	169
Ląd	114
Cracow	84
Koprzywnica	61
Sieciechów	67
Mstów	67
Witów	60
Pułtusk	61
Sulejów	47
Wiślica	44
Wąchock	36
Warsaw	36
Płock	26
Hebdów	26
Gidle	30
Piotrków	24
Sandomierz	18
Czerna	17
Miechów	18
Wieluń	15
Obra	13
Błędów	9
Przyrów	8
Pińczów	8
Płock	9
Łask	8

Lublin	7
Sieradz	12
other Polish monasteries and churches	75
priests and other clergy	154
In total	2,831

Mariia Dmitrievna Moricheva reported that between 1922 and 1935, the Russian Public Library in St Petersburg held 190 plenipotentiary meetings, 280 meetings of experts on manuscripts and 235 meetings of experts on printed books, including incunabula.⁵² Lisowski's notes preserved in Toruń focus on the latter group of items. They illustrate how difficult negotiations were conducted by Polish plenipotentiaries and experts over single copies of the Polish provenance, which, according to the treaty and subsequent resolutions, were to return to Poland. Their adversaries used many tricks and intrigues to protect the library's holdings on the Neva and not to deplete them. They fiercely defended each volume from being returned to its rightful owners. Still, they were not afraid of the impoverishment that the mass sale of its books (not necessarily duplicates) was doing to the library's stock. Among the books sold off were also those taken from the territory of the First Polish Republic, which, under the Treaty of Riga, were subject to restitution claims. They were found in antique shops by members of the Polish delegation, including Bańkowski and Helena Hleb-Koszańska.⁵³ Polish books were dispersed all over Russia and beyond its borders, finding their way to various institutions, private book collections or antiquarian bookshops, where — as Bańkowski reported — 'even today [that is during the restitution action] any lover of the Polish book can easily come across them.'⁵⁴

In 1925, fighting for incunabula from old Polish monasteries, Lisowski prepared, among other publications, three papers on the significance of the Benedictine monastery of Sieciechów⁵⁵ for Polish culture and the

⁵² Mariia Dmitrievna Moricheva, *Biblioteka Zaluskich i Rossiiskaia natsional'naia biblioteka*, St Petersburg, 2001, pp. 54–55. The study is largely devoted to the implementation of the Treaty of Riga. The author questions the legitimacy of using the term 'plunder', concerning confiscations of literary heritage by Russia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. She also defends the attitude of Soviet experts and plenipotentiaries who, in the interwar period, guarded the St Petersburg collections (of worldwide importance) against their depletion by releasing items of Polish provenance.

⁵³ Łaskarzewska, 'Starania o zwroty polskich zbiorów bibliotecznych z Kijowa i Petersburga', pp. 60–62.

⁵⁴ Pietrzekiewicz, *Spory o zbiory*, pp. 192–95.

⁵⁵ Franciszek Tadeusz Borowski, 'Dekret kasacyjny z roku 1819 i jego wykonanie w stosunku do zakonów diecezji sandomierskiej', *Studia Sandomierskie*, 18, 2011, 1,

rank of the local library, which had been operating since the fifteenth century. He referred to earlier findings by Adam Kirkor,⁵⁶ Joachim Lelewel,⁵⁷ Karol Szajnocha⁵⁸ and Józef Gacki.⁵⁹ He refuted arguments by Dmitrii Dmitrievich Shamraj, an employee of the Russian Public Library, about the later origins of the Sieciechów book collection and the damage caused to the book collection by a fire in the seventeenth century.⁶⁰ Lisowski demonstrated that the monastery's prominence in the cultural and scientific life of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was already high in the sixteenth century and maintained such a position until its disestablishment. Jan Kochanowski was associated with this centre during the Renaissance,

pp. 7–162 (pp. 99–112); Robert Stępień, 'Pokasacyjne losy i obecny stan zachowania archiwaliów klasztoru Benedyktynów z Sieciechowa', *Res Historica*, 45, 2018, pp. 131–53; Robert Stępień, 'Losy księgozbioru klasztornego benedyktynów sieciechowskich po kasacie opactwa w 1819 roku', *Wschodni Rocznik Humanistyczny*, 15, 2018, 3, pp. 73–86; Robert Stępień, 'Losy benedyktynów sieciechowskich po kasacie opactwa w 1819 roku', *Archiwa, Biblioteki i Muzea Kościelne*, 110, 2018, pp. 357–79.

⁵⁶ A. Kirkor considered the book collection at Sieciechów (from the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries) to be as significant as those at Opatów and Miechów. See: SR B UMK, rkps 1323/IV, fol. 4, 45.

⁵⁷ J. Lelewel pointed to the increased importance of the library in the fifteenth century, adding: 'If the Sieciechów library had about 6,000, the Miechów and Łysa Góra libraries could count up to 9,000 volumes'. Joachim Lelewel, *Bibliograficznych ksiąg dwoje, w których rozebrane i pomnożone zostały dwa dzieła Jerzego Samuela Bandtke: 'Historia drukarni krakowskich' tudzież 'Historia biblioteki Uniw. Jagiell. w Krakowie', a przydany katalog inkunabułów polskich*, 2 vols, Vilnius 1823–26, vol. 2, 1826, p. 89, quote 111. See also: SR B UMK, rkps 1323/IV, fols 4, 44, 45, 49, 54, 81.

⁵⁸ His findings were referred to in 1924 by Kazimierz Sochaniewicz in his papers. He worked for the Mixed Commissions for a short time, having been appointed in March 1924, and already in July of that year, he was arrested on charges of acting to the detriment of the USSR. He was released after a month with an order to leave for Poland. Kazimierz Sochaniewicz, *Sprawa rewindykacji archiwów i mienia kulturalnego Polski od Rosji*, Warsaw, 1921.

⁵⁹ He referred to the monograph *Benedyktyński klasztor w Sieciechowie według pism i podań miejscowych*. 'The library within the present monastery walls was located on the first floor, in the eastern pavilion, behind the great altar. It was five cubits high, divided into two halls, and held a total of 40 running cubits [...]. We know from various monastic memoirs that Abbot Próchnicki stocked the local library with important works; that during the tenure of Franciszek Pražmovský many books were damaged by damp or other causes, or were completely destroyed; that Bułharewicz multiplied the number of books in spiritual and scientific subjects. Also, during his tenure, in 1757, a catalogue was compiled [...] from which [...] Lelewel arrived at the conclusion that the Sieciechów library at that time numbered up to 6,000 volumes.' Józef Gacki, *Benedyktyński klasztor w Sieciechowie według pism i podań miejscowych*, Radom, 1872, pp. 264–65; see also: SR B UMK, rkps 1323/IV, fols 5, 42, 82, 97.

⁶⁰ In the available sources, Polish experts have found no confirmation that the book collection suffered and was consumed by fire in 1682. It is worth recalling that there were several fires.

and another well-known poet and composer, Sebastian Klonowicz, headed the local monastery school, from where Chancellor Jan Zamoyski invited him to run the Zamość Academy.⁶¹ These arguments were put forward by Sochaniewicz⁶² and Suchodolski. Still, they did not convince the Soviet party of the necessity of including incunabula from this book collection⁶³ in the restitution, despite the apparent conclusion of the Polish party that this was by the resolution of 30 October 1922. With the negotiations having stalled, they were referred to a higher authority, the chairs of the two delegations in Moscow, for resolution.

The list of incunabula returned to Poland compiled by Lisowski includes only two items from Sieciechów. One was Teofilo Ferrari's florilegium *Propositiones ex omnibus Aristotelis libris excerptae*,⁶⁴ annotated by Benedictus Soncinas. It contained the provenience note: 'Illustr. et Rev. Domino Andreae Prochnicio⁶⁵ Polono D. G. Episcopo Camenecenis ac pro tunc serenissim et [...] Regis Poloniae in Neapoli legato. Fr. Felix Fabricius de Cardo ord. min. consilarius s. theologiae baccalaureus professus amoris

⁶¹ SR B UMK, rkps 1323/IV, fols 46, 50.

⁶² On 3 July 1924, he delivered a paper, 'On the return of incunabula from the Benedictine monastery in Sieciechów', which was included in the official documentation, as an annex to Protocol No. 54.

⁶³ It is not possible to give the approximate size of the stock of the Sieciechów library at the time of the suppression due to the lack of its surviving catalogues/inventories. The literature on the subject points to two inventories from the eighteenth century: from 1757, used by J. Lelewel, and from 1799, prepared by the French Benedictine friar Gerard Lefebvre de Lassus, which was destroyed during the Second World War. Jerzy Kaliszuk reports that one of the last people to study its contents was Maria Hornowska, who was preparing a work on medieval Polish libraries before the war. See also: Gacki, *Benedyktyński klasztor w Sieciechowie*, p. 265; Lelewel, *Bibliograficznych ksiąg dwoje*, p. 111; Jerzy Kaliszuk, *Codices deperditi: Średniowieczne rękopisy łacińskie Biblioteki Narodowej utracone w czasie II wojny światowej*, 3 vols, Wrocław, 2016, vol. 1: *Dzieje i charakterystyka kolekcji*, p. 286; Stępień, 'Losy księgozbioru klasztorowego benedyktynów sieciechowskich', p. 76.

⁶⁴ Teofilo Ferrari, *Propositiones ex omnibus Aristotelis libris excerptae*, Venice: Johannes and Gregorius de Gregoriis, de Forlivio, for Alexander Calcedonius, 3 Aug. 1493; cf.: *Inkunabuly w bibliotekach polskich / Incunabula quae in bibliothecis Poloniae asservantur*, ed. Alodia Kawecka-Gryczowa, 2 vols, Wrocław, 1970–93, vol. 1, ed. Maria Bohonos et Eliza Szandorowska, 1970 (hereafter IBP) — IBP 2172; vol. 2: *Uzupełnienia, indeksy / Addenda, indices*, ed. Maria Bohonos, Michał Spandowski et Eliza Szandorowska, 1993 (hereafter IBP†); *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke*, ed. Kommission für den Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke and Deutsche Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin — Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Leipzig, Stuttgart and Berlin, 1925–, (hereafter GW) — GW 9826. See: SR B UMK, rkps 1323/IV.

⁶⁵ Jan Andrzej Próchnicki h. Korczak, Bishop of Kamienica, Archbishop of Lviv, Abbot of Sieciechów. He was a bibliophile, donated his books to the Benedictine library in Sieciechów. Mieczysław Gębarowicz, *Jan Andrzej Próchnicki (1553–1633): Mecenas i bibliofil — szkic z dziejów kultury w epoce kontrreformacji*, Cracow, 1981.

et [...] gratia DDD A. 1607.’⁶⁶ The second *Formularium instrumentorum ad usum Curiae Romanae* was, unfortunately, without an indication of the date of publication,⁶⁷ but with the provenance notes listed by Lisowski. Describing individual features of the copy, he pointed out: 1) ‘At the beginning several manuscript pages, Latin. On the last one, 1631, there is a note of 13 Latin lines and the Chronicle of the passage of the Tartars 1506. At the end — Fr. Joseph de An. scripsit’; 2) on the first printed page, a note with reference to *Annales typographici...* by Georg Wolfgang Panzer — ‘Panzer. V.’; 3) after the register on a blank page ‘Conventus Monasterii Sieciechoviensis’.⁶⁸

In a list of uncollected incunabula, Lisowski listed for Sieciechów: *Speculum exemplorum omnibus christicolis salubriter inspiciendum ut exemplis discant disciplinam*,⁶⁹ sermons by Leonardus de Utino⁷⁰ and sermons for Lent by the Basel theologian Johannes Gritsch (pseud. Conrad Gritsch) *Quadragesimale*.⁷¹ *Sermones de sanctis...* of the Italian Dominican theologian Leonardus de Utino, a lecturer in theology at Bologna, were kept at the Neva despite Lisowski’s recognition of their Polish provenance. A Polish expert identified the entry on the first page: ‘Ex numero librorum Dris Joannis Huberti; [...] Tarnoviensis et Raciboriensis’; ‘Sum Joannis Sadłowski⁷² artium magistri, philosophiae doctoris cons. ordin. Bochnensis’; ‘M. Lucae[...]ivski. Theol. Dris’ and a note referring to the work of W. G. Panzer (to volume one).⁷³ On

⁶⁶ SR B UMK, rkps 1323/IV.

⁶⁷ Nearly twenty editions were published in the fifteenth century: GW 10197–10216; IBP 2207–2219; IBP† 947–956.

⁶⁸ SR B UMK, rkps 1323/IV.

⁶⁹ *Speculum exemplorum omnibus christicolis salubriter inspiciendum ut exemplis discant disciplinam*, Strassburg: [Printer of the 1483 Jordanus de Quedlinburg (Georg Husner)], 1 Mar. 1490. See also IBP 5068; IBP† 2101. In the copy, next to the Latin glosses, the reference to W. G. Panzer (vol. 1, 43, 192), there was ‘Ex libris Monasterii Sieciechoviensis’ and a note on the eighth page at the bottom reading: ‘Fri Conv. Mnru pro Lando D[...]; clipei dicit plus 1621 quando regularis fr[...] preicat[...] monaster[...]. Ibid.

⁷⁰ IBP 3415. The notes give the title *Sermones aurei de sanctis fratris. Leonardi de Utino*.

⁷¹ Lisowski pointed to an edition of 1473, unlisted in incunabula lists (see also: IBP 2545–2564; IBP† 1074–1083). It was probably the Nuremberg edition (Nuremberg: Johann Sensenschmidt and Andreas Frisner, not after 1474; see also: IBP 2545). In the analysed copy, he found a sentence in Polish written on the last sheet: ‘Xięgi co widzieć jako zowa’. On the spine was a large sticker with the letter ‘K’, and on the first page of the print, at the bottom there was a note: ‘Conventus Monastr. Sieciechoviensis’ — see: SR B UMK, rkps 1323/IV; Pietro Delcorno, ‘Hidden in a European Bestseller: The Quadragesimale of Gritsch / Grüttsch and the Reception of Dante’s *Commedia* in Sermons’, *Medieval Sermon Studies*, 65, 2021, 1, pp. 34–61.

⁷² Most probably Jan (Hieronim) Sadłowski, priest, lecturer at the Cracow Academy.

⁷³ Georg Wolfgang Panzer, *Annales typographici ab artis inventae origine...*, 11 vols, Nuremberg, 1793–1803, vol. 1, 1793, p. 546, no. 137.

the second page was the maxim in Polish, 'Don't let high thoughts soar, dwell on what can be', while on the third page, there was a sentence, 'Patrum benedictinorum Congr. Poloniae mon. Sieciechoviensis.'⁷⁴

There was a similar struggle for incunabula belonging to the Lateran Canons Regular, above all from Mstów and Czerwińsk, who had been active in Polish lands since the twelfth century. Alongside the Benedictines and Cistercians, this order played an important cultural role in Poland, as did collecting books. At a joint meeting of experts on 5 October 1925, Lisowski delivered a paper on the importance of the Czerwińsk monastery and its library while pointing out the similar importance of Mstów.⁷⁵ He concluded his speech by comparing Czerwińsk to the two most essential centres: Częstochowa and Łysa Góra.⁷⁶

The abbey of Czerwińsk was the wealthiest monastery in Mazovia, surpassing the older Benedictine monastery of St Adalbert in Płock in this respect.⁷⁷ This was due, among other aspects, to good relations with the Mazovian princes. The abbey maintained contacts with foreign centres (for example the mother monastery in Liège) and had its own library, as the Rule of St Augustine prescribes. It also had its own scriptorium, as evidenced by the surviving documents now stored in the Bibliothèque Nationale.⁷⁸ The origins of the Czerwińsk library are unknown. It was probably based on codices brought from Liège.⁷⁹ Over time, the book collection grew, and in 1603, a catalogue was compiled, which is attested to in the surviving copies, in the form of a sticker with a note indicating that a particular volume was entered in the catalogue ('1603 Inscriptus bibliothecae Cervenensis'). In the middle of the eighteenth century, Abbot Matthew Kraszewski enriched the library with 'useful works'.⁸⁰ The library holdings at the time of the cassation were estimated to be around 3,000 volumes. In his report, Samuel Bogumił Linde noted that he took 39 bundles of books

⁷⁴ SR B UMK, rkps 1323/IV.

⁷⁵ Ibid., fols 7–10.

⁷⁶ Ibid., fol. 10.

⁷⁷ Andrzej Radziwiński, 'Związki klasztoru czerwińskiego i kanoników regularnych z instytucjami kościelnymi Płocka w średniowieczu', *RH*, 62, 1996, pp. 113–25.

⁷⁸ Kaliszuk, *Codices deperditi*, pp. 358–59.

⁷⁹ Most likely this is how the valuable and widely known (due to the binding), re-vindicated *Ewangeliarz Anastazji* (former St Petersburg signature: Lat.Q.v.I.65; today in the National Library: BN 3307 II). See also: Marian Morelowski, 'Płaskorzeźby ewangeliarza tzw. Anastazji a sztuka leodyjsko-mozańska XII wieku', *Prace i Materiały Sprawozdawcze Sekcji Historii Sztuki Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk w Wilnie*, 2, 1935, pp. 265–96; Beata Janowska, 'Ewangeliarz Anastazji', in *Dzieje klasztoru w Czerwińsku*, ed. Edward Olbromski, Lublin, 1997, pp. 49–53.

⁸⁰ Wincenty Hipolit Gawarecki, *Opis topograficzno-historyczny ziemi wyszogrodzkiej na teraz w obwodzie i województwie płockim położonym*, Warsaw, 1823, p. 35, note 23.

from there to save them. A list from around 1820 mentions 1,615 printed books and 27 manuscripts (in a total of 1,642 volumes) that were taken away after the liquidation of the monastery.⁸¹

Lisowski identified the Polish provenance in 191 incunabula from Czerwińsk. The remarks he made (in October 1925) about the legitimacy of returning them to Poland remained without any reaction from the hosts until the following March. The Soviets also remained deaf to further substantive arguments presented at subsequent expert meetings and in memoranda (for example 26 June and 11 December 1926).⁸² The Polish restitution team regained a small number of incunabula from the former Czerwińsk collection of the Canons Regular. These were:

- 1) *Sermones Pomerii de tempore*⁸³ – the first edition of the sermons of the Franciscan friar Pelbartus de Themeswar⁸⁴ of 27 July 1498⁸⁵ with numerous glosses: on the inside of the first cover in fifteenth-century writing, words in Latin and Polish (for example descriptions of the angelic hierarchy of Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones), on the second page at the top ‘1603 Inscriptus biblioth. ad convent. Cervenensis’, the entire inside of the second cover was inscribed with Latin sentences and one Polish sentence. At the end of the book, on a blank page in Latin, the life of St Jadwiga is written in sixteenth-century writing;
- 2) *Sermones Pomerii quadragesimales* – edition of 10 November 1499 with the note ‘1603 Ex proprio redactus in communitatem’ and a column of Polish words written on the inside of the second cover;⁸⁶
- 3) by the same author *Stellarium coronae beatae Mariae Virginis* printed by Heinrich Gran on 2 May 1498.⁸⁷ At the end of the book, there was a note from the sixteenth-century stating that it belonged to Jakub Ostrowski of the Nałęcz coat of arms, Doctor of Theology (before 1604), canon of Włocławek, vicar of Niepołomice, canon of Cracow, procurator of the chapter 1612–33, polemical writer and preacher. On the second sheet

⁸¹ Kaliszuk, *Codices deperditi*, pp. 359–61.

⁸² SR B UMK, rkps 1323/IV, fols 73–86, 87–123.

⁸³ See also: IBP 4220.

⁸⁴ In 1458, he studied at the University of Cracow. In 1463, he was licensed in Theology. Possibly in 1471, he left Cracow as a doctor. In 1483, he was mentioned in the Franciscan Community Annales of St John Monastery in Buda, the Hungarian capital city. After 1483, his writings began to be published in print.

⁸⁵ Lisowski, in his notes, incorrectly indicated the year of publication, giving 1458. In Hagenau, Heinrich Gran began his work around 1489.

⁸⁶ See also: IBP 4218.

⁸⁷ See also: IBP 4225.

- at the top, there was an annotation that the volume was written out for the 1603 catalogue;
- 4) *Missale Constantiense* — Unfortunately, there is no indication as to whether this was the edition of 1485 (Basel), 1499 (Rouen) or 1500 (Strasbourg).⁸⁸ The book had numerous provenance notes from the sixteenth century clearly indicating that it belonged to the monastery of the Canons Regular of Czerwińsk;
 - 5) *Opera* — Nuremberg edition of the works of St Anselm of Canterbury printed at Kacper Hochfeder on 27 March 1491 in Nuremberg. The copy featured the date of purchase (1515), the price of the book and an indication of its affiliation to the collection of the Canons Regular;
 - 6) *Sermones Discipuli de tempore et de sanctis cum promptuario exemplorum et miraculis Beatae Mariae Virginis...* by Johann Herolt, Dominican preacher and homiletician, 1486, printed by Nikolaus Kesler in Basel.⁸⁹ The book on the first printed page had information on its belonging to the Czerwińsk library and a catalogue register dated 1603. In addition, it had two provenance notes: 'Liber Joanni Swierzkowski dono datus/presbiteri Joanni Cervenensis monasterii anno quo eram suscaptus 1602 Mens./sept. donatus suceptus mensis Februarii' and 'Postea a me p. Stanislao Vyszogrodinense acceptus est apud Joannem Swierzkovicium in debito 55 grosii quas mihi debebat';
 - 7) *Nova Decretalium compilatio Gregorii IX, Venetiis*, impensa atque diligentia Thome de Blavia, de Alesandria of 1486,⁹⁰ with the annotation 'AD 1517 hic liber decretalium per fratrem Mathiam Zawieyski ad Dominum Joannem Radomyski pro una vulpina pellicea et [...] per Dominum Ambrosium est comparatus ad honorem Dei.' The parchment fly-leaf included news of the circumstances of Abbot's death and funeral ceremony;
 - 8) *Sermones Dan de sanctis* by the Augustinian and influential fourteenth-century preacher Jordanus de Quedlinburg, printed in Strasbourg in 1484 by Johann (Reinhard) Grüninger.⁹¹ The book formerly belonged

⁸⁸ Not in IBP.

⁸⁹ See also: IBP 2753.

⁹⁰ Ludwig Hain, *Repertorium bibliographicum, in quo libri omnes ab arte typographica inventa usque ad annum MD. typis expressi ordine alphabetico vel simpliciter enumerantur vel adcuratius recensentur*, 4 pars in 2 vols, Stuttgart and Paris, 1826–38 (hereafter H.) — H. 8021; not in the Incunabula Short Title Catalogue (ISTC, <<https://data.cerl.org/istc/>>) and IBP.

⁹¹ See also: IBP 3277.

- to the organist, as evidenced by the provenance note ‘Ipse liber per Paulum organistam Domus Cervenensis comparatus AD ut infra’;
- 9) a synthesis of canon law, compiled by the Camaldolese monk Gracjan *Decretum: cum apparatu Bartholomaei Brixiensis...* of 1486, with no indication of where it was published. In that year, *Decretum...* was printed in Venice by Thomas de Blavis and in Basel by Michael Wenssler.⁹² Lisowski noted that on the first sheet (at the very top) there was an annotation ‘1603 Inscriptus bibliothecae Cervenensis’, on the first vacant sheet ‘Iste liber comparatus est pro alma domo Cervenensis nostro totum corpus juris cum aliis libris potioribus pro tunc abbati [...] placitus’ drawn up in a sixteenth-century ductus;⁹³
- 10) two parts of *Summa theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, without giving details of the edition but with clear signs of belonging to the abbey library.⁹⁴

Lisowski’s unpublished notes also contain valuable information on incunabula from the libraries of Cistercian monks (for example from Łąd, Koprzywnica, Sulejów, Wąchock), Dominicans (from Sandomierz), Canons Regular (apart from Czerwińsk, from Mstów and Witów), the Order of the Holy Sepulchre (from Miechów), parish and collegiate churches (for example Opatów and Wiślica) and priests and dignitaries of the Catholic Church (for example Archbishop of Gniezno and the Primate of Poland Stanisław Karnkowski or Bishop of Kyiv Józef Andrzej Załuski). In the last period of restitution work in St Petersburg, they were used, among others, by Bańkowski, who used them to prepare and elaborate claims for the restitution of *incunabula catenata*.⁹⁵

(Proofreading Jan Czarniecki)

Summary

The Treaty of Riga is regarded one of the most important documents of the inter-war period not only for Poland but also for Eastern Europe. This issue is explored by researchers, it is reflected in the literature on the subject, however, few studies address issues related to the restitution of library or archive collections. The restitution of Polish literary heritage was included in the Riga peace negotiations as one of the most important issues for settling. The reconstruction of the restitution

⁹² See also: IBP 2454, 2455.

⁹³ SR B UMK, rkps 1323/IV.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Pietrzekiewicz, ‘Catenaty Rosyjskiej Biblioteki Publicznej w Petersburgu’.

processes is important for the history of the collections of Polish libraries and archives as well as their contemporary holdings. Official documentation on the process of restitution burned down in 1944. Therefore, unpublished archival material is an important source for reconstructing restitution processes. The papers of those who participated in the works of the Mixed Special Commission are an example of this type of material. The article draws on the papers of Stanisław Lisowski and his notes on the restitution of incunabula of monastic provenance (above all the libraries of Sieciechów and Czerwińsk). Lisowski was twice appointed as an expert and plenipotentiary for the works of the Mixed Commission for Re-evacuation and the Special Commission. He was involved in the study of, among other aspects, incunabula and old prints. In the course of his restitution activities, he prepared papers and expert reports, conducted provenance research, featured in part in the article.

(Proofreading Jan Czarniecki)

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