

Returned from Russia: Nazi Archival Plunder in Western Europe and Recent Restitution Issues - with Afterword 2013 (Second Edition)

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During World War II, German agencies plundered the European archival heritage - from military intelligence and national security records, to files from Masonic lodges and Jewish communities, and personal papers of countless luminaries. At the war's end, the Red Army and Soviet trophy scouts found many major Nazi hideouts. Archives from all over Europe were seized a second time and rushed to Moscow where they remained sequestered for almost half a century. Since the 1991 revelations, extensive negotiations led to the return of archives to France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, along with papers seized from Vienna to the Rothschild Family, among others. In the first half of this book, now in its second edition, American historian and archival specialist Patricia Kennedy Grimsted reveals the dramatic fate of those records in Nazi and Soviet hands and the post-1991 battle within Russia over their restitution. The second half of the volume brings together reports from each country, written by key specialists who negotiated the return of those twice-plundered archives from Russia. Detailed listings provide present locations for the returned holdings. In the 2013 Afterword, Patricia Kennedy Grimsted relates more recent developments: initial returns to Austria in 2009, the search for Masonic files in Moscow, continuing hope for return of Greek and other Jewish records, offset by the lack of progress in returns from Russia to Poland and Germany, and the quandary of NS-period records divided between Moscow and Germany. Grimsted vividly describes the controversial pending claim in US court for books and archives in Moscow by the Chabad Community in Brooklyn. In conclusion, she recalls with hope the Russian commitments "to facilitate the return of 'displaced' cultural valuables still held in Russia."



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