

*Trophies of War and Empire: The Archival Heritage of Ukraine, World War II, and the International Politics of Restitution.* By Patricia Kennedy Grimsted. Foreword by Charles Kecskeméti. Harvard Papers in Ukrainian Studies. Cambridge, Massachusetts: President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2001. \$19.95. 749 pp. Index, illustrations, appendices, and bibliography. Soft cover.

*U.S. Restitution of Nazi-Looted Cultural Treasures to the USSR, 1945–1959: Facsimile Documents from the National Archives of the United States.* Compiled with an introduction by Patricia Kennedy Grimsted. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2001. CD-ROM. Windows system requirements: Pentium-class processor; Microsoft Windows 95 OSR 2.0, Windows 98 SE, Windows ME, Windows NT 4.0 with Service Pack 5 or 6 (6 recommended) or Windows 2000; 16 MB RAM (32 recommended); 15MB available hard disk space. Macintosh system requirements: PowerPC processor; Mac OS 8.6, 9.0.4, 9.1, or OS X; 64 MB RAM; 24 MB hard disk space. Requires Adobe Acrobat Reader 5.0 (provided). Available free of charge from the National Archives and Records Administration, Research Support Staff, Room 406, 700 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20408-0001. Fax: 202-401-7170. Toll-free phone: 866-325-7208.

It would not be much of an overstatement to say that in *Trophies of War and Empire*, Patricia Kennedy Grimsted has single-handedly—in a book as sweeping as the great steppe of Ukraine itself—brought together international politics, legal dilemmas, cultural restitution, European history, and complex issues of archival provenance and pertinence in an intriguing, surprisingly readable, and very valuable examination of the archival heritage of Ukraine.

Grimsted skillfully takes the reader through a labyrinth of complicated issues surrounding archival restitution, using Ukraine as an extremely detailed case study. Some of the factors that affect the restitution of Ukrainian archives include the suppression of a distinct Ukrainian identity under Soviet rule; the plunder of manuscripts and archives during World War II (to which nearly half of the book is dedicated); and the diaspora of the Ukrainian documentary heritage through the movement of refugees and émigrés throughout Europe and elsewhere. As if these and other historical issues didn't make the matter difficult enough, Grimsted also looks at recent efforts toward restitution taken by organizations such as the United Nations, UNESCO, and the International Council on Archives, as well as through international treaties, that often call for action, but seldom truly achieve satisfactory resolution.

Grimsted advocates the establishment of international norms to guide the restitution of records for Ukraine and other nations that face similar issues from wartime displacements or the creation of newly independent nation-states. Critical first steps proposed by Grimsted include an examination of categories of materials that may have different legal considerations. To make this possible, she proposes the careful documentation of “institutional and territorial provenance, circumstances of alienation and migration, the present location and archival arrangement of the materials, and legal factors affecting ownership” for any records under consideration for restitution claims (p. 16). This includes the development of descriptive inventories and registers of holdings for Ukrainica removed to Moscow or abroad.

Although an imposing work at over 700 pages, Grimsted has provided thorough documentation of an archival issue of extreme international importance. Her detailed documentation of the fate of Ukrainian records during World War II stands as one of the most exhaustive studies to date of the impact of the war on archival matters, both past and present. Her thoroughness of research, her examination of competing claims, and her advocacy for international resolution through legal agreements and precedents put her at the forefront of this issue. Her clear, precise writing makes a large work very approachable and educational.

Individuals who wish to learn more, or who want to explore the subject but are intimidated by the size of Grimsted's book, may find the CD-ROM *U.S. Restitution of Nazi-Looted Cultural Treasures to the USSR, 1945–1959* worthwhile. Available free of charge from the National Archives, the disk contains facsimile documents of U.S. restitution transfers to the USSR. They include correspondence, inventories, and memos. Photographs of the Munich Central Collecting Point, the Offenbach Archival Depot, and related illustrations are also included. An introduction by Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, based in part on chapter 6 in *Trophies of War and Empire*, entitled "Western Allied Restitution in the Postwar Context," provides a context for the materials contained on the disk. This introduction gives a good overview of the process of U.S. restitution to the USSR in the immediate postwar years; a list of these transfers is provided in the appendix.

Although the resources contained on this disk are worthwhile and useful, the organization and operation of the interface, through Adobe Acrobat Reader 5.0, is sometimes problematic. For instance, the list of illustrations described in the Acrobat "bookmarks" navigation tool is too narrow in its description. The back cover of the CD tells me there are photographs of the Offenbach Archival Depot, for example, but unless I look at the title page for the chapter of illustrations, the image descriptions provided in the "bookmark" section are too specific, and do not state where or when they were taken. My interest was in seeing photographs taken at Offenbach; an image title such as "Books from Schloss Banz, Bavaria" does not tell me where it was taken nor does it give me enough context to know if it is of interest. In fact, this particular image is not of books per se, but rather of cartons of books being hauled in an open-top U.S. Army semi-truck. Although an inconvenience, such descriptive issues would be minor if, when returning to the list of illustrations, it remained expanded. Instead, it collapses to the folder level and a reader again has to expand the folder to see the listing of illustrations provided. This interface problem is the same with the facsimile documents on the disk.

Nevertheless, despite these problems, this disk makes available an interesting sample of documents and images relating to U.S. archival restitution to the Soviet Union, and Grimsted's introduction points out the larger archival issues at stake.

Both of these works are important because they explore largely uncharted territory. *Trophies of War and Empire* is by far the most extensive examination of the subject of archival restitution in print. It serves as a benchmark for other works related to similar issues for other nations or concerning other periods. Grimsted is to be commended for her unceasing study of these issues and her strong and compelling advocacy for international standards.

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*Lying About Hitler: History, Holocaust, and the David Irving Trial.* By Richard J. Evans. New York: Basic Books, 2001. \$16.00. 318 pp. Index. Soft cover.

Richard J. Evans, a professor and specialist on modern German history at Cambridge University, found himself in London's High Court in January of 2000, attempting to defend the virtues of truth, justice, and historical standards. *Lying About Hitler* relates the peculiar series of events that placed Evans in the witness stand and forced him to address complex issues that his colleagues largely consider in the more rarified atmosphere of university lecture halls and campus coffee shops. His story reflects important changes in the nature of the historian's craft and offers archivists an intriguing insight into current scholarly debates concerning professional values and ethics. Historical objectivity remained central to the case although, as Evans readily acknowledges, this notion itself remains a slippery and elusive concept.

Indeed, few historians believe that pure objectivity constitutes a realizable possibility. Most contemporary academics live comfortably in a world of multiple perspectives, ambiguous data, and conflicting interpretations. Widespread skepticism greets any author who claims to discover absolute and timeless truth. Many postmodernists would argue that truth telling serves more as a comforting fiction than a lofty professional goal. Scholars, according to this view, need to acknowledge and openly embrace the inherently relativistic and political nature of their activities. Yet, some recent events have reintroduced questions concerning objectivity, truth, and standards into historians' deliberations. An unsettling series of accusations alleging plagiarism by several senior and very visible historians received widespread media attention throughout 2002 and 2003. Criticisms concerning the misuse of source material in a prize-winning book recently caused the Organization of American Historians to convene a special investigative review panel. Another best-selling historian received a reprimand from his college for inventing stories concerning his military career in an effort to build a rapport with undergraduates. Considered together, these controversies created a troubling sense that many historians had sacrificed accuracy, integrity, and honesty in the interest of advocating particular political perspectives and advancing personal careers. As Evans discovered in the real-world atmosphere of a London courtroom, however, truth matters.

The case in question arose from a dispute normally confined to the book review sections of academic journals. Deborah Lipstadt, a prominent United States historian at Emory University, had published a book entitled *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* in 1993. She extensively studied the culture and literature of Holocaust deniers, linking their activities with right-wing, anti-Semitic extremists and demolishing their academic pretensions. Lipstadt accused the deniers of falsifying evidence, manipulating data, ignoring solid scholarship, and creating pseudohistorical works in order to promote an overtly racist political agenda. David Irving, an independent historian who had authored dozens of books concerning the Second World War, received some critical treatment in her monograph. Lipstadt accused Irving of misrepresenting evidence, harboring neofascist sympathies, consciously seeking to exonerate Adolph Hitler, and trafficking with Holocaust deniers. Irving denied all of these accusations, demanded that Penguin Books remove Lipstadt's book from circulation, and eventually filed a defamation lawsuit against the author in the

British courts. Lipstadt's barristers engaged Richard Evans as an expert witness, charging him with the task of examining Irving's works in order to prove that their client's assertions had merit. Evans meticulously combed through Irving's books, examined the documentary record in order to evaluate the plaintiff's use of archival sources, and constructed a convincing case that the independent historian had misrepresented evidence. The judge ruled in favor of Lipstadt and *Denying the Holocaust* remained in print. Evans's eloquent account of his investigative efforts and his experience as an expert witness reads like a fast-paced detective novel, making historical methodology highly accessible to the nonspecialist. A few implications, however, should especially interest archivists.

First, Irving had trumpeted his own use of primary source materials and argued that his critics relied primarily on secondary works in order to construct their interpretations. Even many reviewers who disagreed with Irving's viewpoint praised his meticulous research and use of archival sources. Evans's investigation painted a very different picture. Irving frequently ignored provenance, rarely contextualized individual items, routinely manipulated evidence, failed to verify documentary authenticity, and ignored information that cast doubt upon his ideological preconceptions. In one notable instance, for example, Irving relied on "a carbon copy of a typed-up transcript of another typed-up transcript of a handwritten transcript of an extract from an unknown document, unauthenticated by any distinguishing marks such as a signature or an official stamp of any designation" (p. 154) as a key piece of evidence. His intentional and unwitting missteps demonstrate the need for historians to build solid methodological training concerning archival principles and practices into their graduate programs.

Second, the dispute illustrates the problems inherent in evaluating historical works. Irving's books appeared legitimate, contained standard scholarly citations, relied heavily on archival sources, and sounded authoritative both to general readers and some academic peers. Only when Evans followed the footnote trail and examined the original documentation did distortions become apparent. Few reviewers or readers possess the motivation or leisure to visit the archives and consult the primary sources. Modern historical scholarship typically relies upon highly disparate documentation contained in widely scattered repositories. Academics usually privilege such factors as interpretive breadth, creativity, and engagement with the secondary literature in judging new work. *Lying About Hitler* underscores the fact that accuracy and authenticity sometimes should be examined rather than assumed.

Finally, the Irving case suggests that historians need to define their core values more carefully and communicate their operating standards more effectively to a broader audience. Outside the halls of academia, objectivity remains an important principle. For many, it justifies the very existence of the historical profession. Historians need not naively embrace nineteenth-century positivist assumptions or delude themselves into thinking that they can write definitive history by consulting all available sources. They should think hard, however, before fully forfeiting claims to objectivity and wholeheartedly embracing trendy postmodernist notions. As Judge Charles Gray, who presided over the Irving trial, observed: "Whilst I accept that an historian is entitled to speculate, he must spell out clearly to the reader when he is speculating rather than reciting established facts. An objective historian is obliged to be even-handed in his

approach to historical evidence: he cannot pick and choose without adequate reason” (pp. 226–227). His useful prescription bears repeating in every historical methods seminar.

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