

# On Networks in Ostforschung and the Distribution of Looted Media. Provenance Research in the Library of the Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies

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**Abstract:** Between May 2022 and April 2024, the library of the Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (IOS) in Regensburg was searched for media which were looted under National Socialist rule. The library comprises the holdings of two predecessors. The Südost-Institut existed already under National Socialism, whereas the Osteuropa-Institut was a product of the Cold War. The leading personnel in both institutes was active in ‘Ostforschung’ before as well as after 1945. Therefore, this paper on the one hand embeds the results of provenance research in an analysis of personal contacts among ‘Ostforscher’, on the other hand it explains the interdependence between the results and Nazi foreign and occupation policies.

**Keywords:** Osteuropa-Institut (Munich); Südost-Institut; ‘Ostforschung’; Hans Koch; Wilfried Krallert; Fritz Valjavec

## Introduction

Scholars active in National Socialist ‘Ostforschung’ who after the Second World War were ready to accept that their scientific objectives and support for the regime had been fundamentally wrong were few and far between. The great majority of them felt that the transition to post-war society and measures intended to bring about ‘denazification’ undeservedly robbed them of something important and valuable – their research. They wanted to maneuver their ideological bubble as little changed as possible across the caesura of 1945. One of the strategies they employed to reach that goal was to stick together. ‘Ostforscher’ continued to support each other on different levels, to cooperate with the same faces that had been around already before 1945 and, for the time being, to adhere to the same problematic ideas about Eastern Europe and her inhabitants.

The library of the Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (short IOS) in Regens-

burg illuminates one of the consequences of the situation described above: the channeling of looted media through networks. The degree to which personal contacts forged under National Socialism facilitated the influx of looted media in the IOS’s predecessor institutes was the most astonishing result of a project which was funded by Deutsches Zentrum Kulturgutverluste (German Lost Art Foundation) between May 2022 and April 2024. In this paper, I will elaborate this point in detail, but I will begin by outlining the library’s history, and move on with describing the project’s design, and also some smaller, but no less important results. The project was designed to identify Nazi loot in the IOS’s library, but it is clear that a specialized library with a focus on Eastern Europe most likely also has media in its holdings which had been seized during one of the phases of ‘expropriation’ and ‘nationalization’ in this region (including the former GDR) since the October Revolution. To research these media’s provenances would require another full-time project, not least because it is

often more complicated to find out where a book imported from Eastern Europe was really coming from than to identify Nazi loot. IOS is aware of this problem, but there are not yet any concrete plans to tackle it.

## The Library's History and Holdings

The IOS is a young institution, but it was not founded from scratch. It came into being in 2012 by merging the Osteuropa-Institut (short OEI) and the Südost-Institut (short SOI) that were both originally located in Munich and moved to a common address in Regensburg in 2007.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the IOS from the first day has housed a fine specialized library consisting of two parts with a history reaching back almost a century.

Founded in 1930, the Südost-Institut was the first institution of its kind in the German-speaking world. Its official name changed several times, but the colloquial Südost-Institut has been used since the beginning. Throughout its history, it remained small and was always tight on money. Originally, the institute was dedicated to research on 'Deutschtum' (Germandom) in the Southeast – 'Southeast' refers in this case to Bavaria, Austria, and the regions bordering them. Under Fritz Valjavec (1909-1960, managing director since 1936),<sup>2</sup> the focus was broadened to include all of Southeast Europe and all 'peoples' living there, without, however, losing 'Germandom' out of sight. It was Valjavec, member of the NSDAP since 1933, as well, who established ever more close contacts with the regime and lent the institute's services

to party and Sicherheitsdienst (Security Service, the SS's secret service, short SD). In 1943, the Südost-Institut was incorporated into Reichssicherheitshauptamt (Reich Security Main Office, short RSHA).<sup>3</sup>

An institution belonging to the RSHA was likely to be disbanded by the Allies after the war. SOI escaped this fate because an air raid on Munich in early 1944 had inflicted grave damage and more or less paralyzed all activities. Two thirds of the library (about 2.000 volumes) burned.<sup>4</sup> The basic decision to reactivate the institute was made in the autumn of 1945,<sup>5</sup> but it took more than five years to put it into practice. When the institute finally resumed work in 1951, Valjavec was reinstated as managing director.<sup>6</sup> The Südost-Institut collected media on all Southeast European countries, additionally on Czechoslovakia and the Habsburg monarchy.

The Osteuropa-Institut, founded in 1952, was a product of the Cold War dedicated to 'Sovietology' and, more broadly, to research on the Eastern Bloc. It collected media on the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, East Central Europe and, to a lesser degree, on Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. Originally, Theodor Oberländer (1905-1998), then Bavarian Secretary of State for Refugees and Expellees, was meant to become director, but he declined in favor of his political career. Instead, he used his weight to push through Hans Koch (1894-1959).<sup>7</sup> Koch, a Protestant theologian and historian, had held chairs in Königsberg (today Kaliningrad), Breslau (today Wrocław), and Vienna. He became acquainted with Oberländer in the 1930s.<sup>8</sup> Both men's activities during the war will be explored in more detail below.

Although outwardly the Osteuropa-Institut's beginnings were modest (during the first year, it occupied a shack in a backyard on Ludwigstraße),<sup>9</sup> it was far better funded than the Südost-Institut.

1 It is worth noting that plans for such a merger existed already in the 1950s and continued to crop up now and then in the following decades. See Wolfgang Höpken: Wissenschaft – Politik – Biografie. Die deutsche Südosteuropaforschung und ihre Akteure am Beispiel von Franz Ronneberger, Berlin et al. 2020, 352.

2 On Valjavec see for example Gerhard Grimm: Georg Stadtmüller und Fritz Valjavec. Zwischen Anpassung und Selbstbehauptung, in: Mathias Beer / Gerhard Seewann (eds.): Südostforschung im Schatten des Dritten Reiches. Institutionen – Inhalte – Personen, Munich 2004, 237-255; Ingo Haar: Friedrich Valjavec. Ein Historikerleben zwischen den Wiener Schiedssprüchen und der Dokumentation der Vertreibung, in: Lucia Scherzberg (ed.): Theologie und Vergangenheitsbewältigung. Eine kritische Bestandsaufnahme zum interdisziplinären Vergleich, Paderborn et al. 2005, 103-119; Robert Pech: Anpassung als Lebensprinzip. Fritz Valjavec und die Südost-Forschung zwischen Nationalsozialismus und früher Bundesrepublik, in: Südosteuropa-Mitteilungen 56 (2016), No. 3, 55-72; Norbert Spannenberger: Südost-Forschung im Dienst der SS – Zur Biographie von Fritz Valjavec 1909-1945, in: Südosteuropa-Mitteilungen 54 (2014), No. 4, 61-73.

3 Höpken 2020 (see FN 1), chapter 1.2.2.

4 Höpken 2020 (see FN 1), 278-279, 345.

5 Höpken 2020 (see FN 1), 345.

6 In 1955, he finally became director of the institute.

7 Gert Robel: Osteuropa-Institut München, in: Erwin Oberländer (ed.): Geschichte Osteuropas. Zur Entwicklung einer historischen Disziplin in Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz 1945-1990, Stuttgart 1992, 281-294, here: 283.

8 Philipp-Christian Wachs: Der Fall Theodor Oberländer (1905-1998). Ein Lehrstück deutscher Geschichte, Frankfurt / New York 2000, 45.

9 Wolfgang Kasack: Alexander Adamczyk (1903-1967), in: Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas 15 (1967), 481-485, here: 482.

In only ten months between the opening (February 1st, 1952) and the end of the year, the library acquired 1.694 bibliographic units – in other words, approximately as many as SOI in its first six years (1931-1937).<sup>10</sup> Presently, there are roughly 350.000 media in the IOS's library, about 20.000 of which were printed before 1945. Its holdings include books, journals, newspapers, maps, and atlases.

## The Start of the Project

So many media on and from Eastern Europe assembled in one library could have served as 'Red Flag' in their own right. The chances that such a library flashes completely green on the Traffic Lights of Provenances<sup>11</sup> are as good as nil, yet for decades nothing happened. No one gave strange library stamps (or holes instead of a stamp) a second thought. The decisive hint that action was required was delivered by Wolfgang Höpken in his recent major study on German research on Southeast Europe. There he quoted a passage from a letter that Valjavec wrote in February 1942 to Helmut Carstanjen (1905-1991), director of the Institut für Südostdeutsche Forschungen (Institute for Southeast German Research) in Graz:<sup>12</sup>

*"Finally, a question or request: I assume that on the occasion of the annexation of Lower Styria, some holdings of Slovene books were secured. Probably there is scholarly literature among them which could be useful to our institute? I would be very happy if it were possible to do something about it. First and foremost, we would be interested in a couple of handbooks, among others, the Slovene Biographical Dictionary. It goes without saying that we are prepared to give whatever is desired in return."*<sup>13</sup>

Valjavec certainly knew to whom to turn. Carstanjen's institute was heavily involved in planning and supporting the German invasion of Yugoslavia, and Carstanjen himself was the person to decide which Slovene cultural goods (primarily books) should be destroyed and which preserved.<sup>14</sup> He was willing to comply with Valjavec's wishes,<sup>15</sup> but I could not find any hint that the SOI really did receive a shipment of books from Graz.

Valjavec's letter to Carstanjen was the incentive to comb the literature for similar episodes. As soon as I actively started looking for these, several cropped up. They feature – again – Valjavec for SOI, and Koch for OEI. In the second half of 1941, Valjavec accompanied Einsatzgruppe D in Bukovina as interpreter. In Czernowitz (in Romanian Cernăuți, in Ukrainian Chernivtsi), he deposited two or three crates of books of unknown origin in the German consulate. They were shipped to Bucharest in the spring of 1943, and from there most probably to Prague.<sup>16</sup> In the Südost-Institut's accession book

10 IOS Regensburg, [Library of the OEI München], Akzession 1952 – 1953 – 1954; IOS Regensburg, Inventar des Instituts zur Erforschung des Deutschen Volkstums im Süden und Südosten in München; IOS Regensburg, [Library of the SOI], Inventarbuch II, angefangen Juni 1936.

11 The Traffic Lights of Provenances is a tool widely used in the German-speaking world to visualize results of provenance research. It always consists of four colors (green, yellow, orange, red), but their meanings vary slightly, depending on the researcher or institution using them. For my definition, see below.

12 Höpken 2020 (see FN 1), 267.

13 Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv München [hereinafter BayHStA] Abteilung 5.2.4. Schul- und Bildungswesen, Hochschule und Forschung, Erwachsenenbildung, Südost-Institut 55, Instituts-Korrespondenz von Fritz Valjavec 1942, A-D, Fritz Valjavec to Helmut Carstanjen, 19.02.1942: "Zum Schluß noch eine Anfrage, bzw. Bitte: Ich nehme an, daß anlässlich der Angliederung der Untersteiermark manches an slowenischen Bücherbeständen sichergestellt wurde. Befinden sich nicht darunter u. U. wissenschaftliche Werke, die auch für unser Institut von Nutzen sein könnten? Ich würde mich sehr freuen, wenn sich da u. U. etwas machen ließe. Vor allem an einer Reihe von Handbüchern u. a. dem slowenischen biographischen Lexikon wären wir sehr interessiert. Im übrigen ist es selbstverständlich, daß wir in jeder Weise zu Gegenleistungen bereit wären."

14 Christian Promitzer: Täterwissenschaft: das Südostdeutsche Institut in Graz, in: Mathias Beer / Gerhard Seewann (eds.): Südostforschung im Schatten des Dritten Reiches. Institutionen – Inhalte – Personen, München 2004, 93-113, here: 104-105.

15 BayHStA, SOI 55, Helmut Carstanjen to Fritz Valjavec, [Graz], 25.03.1942.

16 BayHStA, Südost-Institut 64, Instituts-Korrespondenz von Fritz Valjavec 1943, P-R, Hans Petri to Fritz Valjavec [spring of 1943].

there are no entries that could be linked to this episode. Either the crates never made it to Munich, or they contained innocuous Romanian literature for Valjavec's private library.

Hans Koch simultaneously fulfilled several roles in the second half of 1941. He worked for Abwehr (military intelligence), served as a captain in the Wehrmacht, and as Alfred Rosenberg's liaison officer in Army Group South on the Eastern Front. Furthermore, he was responsible for preventing uncontrolled looting in the Monastery of the Caves (in Ukrainian Pechers'ka lavra) in Kyiv. The premises of the monastery were housing several museums and libraries at that time.<sup>17</sup> This was most probably a Wehrmacht assignment, but Rosenberg also had a Bibliotheksschutz (protection of libraries) unit at his disposal. Koch's connection with Rosenberg made me formulate a hypothesis that proved to be correct, namely, that his private library contains looted books. Most of them, however, came in his possession in the first half of 1942 when he was – at least officially – just an ordinary Wehrmacht officer waiting for his next deployment.

Then there was Wilfried Krallert (1912-1969), a common acquaintance of Valjavec's and Koch's. In 1940, he became head of Publikationsstelle Wien (Publication Office Vienna) which received, and partly kept, partly distributed looted media from Eastern Europe. As member of the infamous Sonderkommando Künsberg, Krallert was personally responsible for the looting of numerous libraries and archives in Yugoslavia, Poland, and the Soviet Union. After Sonderkommando Künsberg was disbanded in 1943, he began to work in RSHA where he continued to supervise the looting of cultural goods.<sup>18</sup> Krallert contacted Valjavec for the first time in 1936 when he began to work for Südostdeutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (Southeast German Research Association).<sup>19</sup> He most probably made Koch's

acquaintance in Kyiv in the autumn of 1941.<sup>20</sup> Their first documented encounter, however, took place only in 1944.<sup>21</sup> In May 1945, Krallert was arrested and interned in Wolfsberg camp (Carinthia). After his release in 1948, he pursued a motley array of occupations to make a living. For example, he sold parts of the Publikationsstelle's library and map collection that were still (or again) in his possession.<sup>22</sup> Both SOI and OEI figure among his clients, and Krallert also accepted commissions from Valjavec and Koch.

Initially, we considered to apply for funding to check only those parts of the IOS's library holdings that could be traced back to Valjavec, Koch, and Krallert. But it was clear that there was a high probability for missing something, and at some point the library would have to be autopsied completely anyway. Now we know that it was the right decision to settle on the biggest possible research design. There is no doubt that these three men are Red Flag Names. Nonetheless, the majority of suspicious or looted media that surfaced during the autopsy is not linked (directly) to them and thus would have remained undetected for the time being.

## Workflow

We are lucky that the IOS's predecessors' accession books came down to us as complete series. Still, they do not suffice for identifying looted media. Until 1960, entries in SOI's accession books are minimalistic. Two crucial types of information are lacking: the year of acquisition and the immediate provenance. Only in exceptional cases, such as the acquisition of large private libraries, a note on provenance was made – and this was an innovation of the 1950s. Up to the 1980s, donors' names were given only sporadically. It is possible that SOI received media from a Red Flag source during the war. They could also have burned in 1944, or still be in the library but bear no provenance marks.

17 Katharina Kucher et al.: *Kriegsbeute in Tübingen. Eine Urkunde Peters des Großen, Seilschaften der Osteuropaforscher und die Restitution*, in: *Osteuropa* 66 (2016), No. 11/12, 149-167, here: 159.

18 For more information on Krallert's participation in the looting of cultural goods see Michael Fahlbusch: *Wilfried Krallert (1912-1969). Ein Geograf und Historiker im Dienst der SS*, in: Karel Hruza (ed.): *Österreichische Historiker 1900-1945. Lebensläufe und Karrieren in Österreich, Deutschland und der Tschechoslowakei in wissenschaftsgeschichtlichen Porträts*, Vol. 1, Vienna / Cologne / Weimar 2008, 793-836, here: 819-825.

19 BayHStA, Südost-Institut 35, Instituts-Korrespondenz von Fritz Valjavec 1936, I-P, Wilfried Krallert to Fritz Valjavec, 27.03.1936.

20 On this point, see Kucher et al. 2016 (see FN 17), 158-160. The authors claim that Koch and Krallert were acquainted with each other since their "common days in Vienna", but to my knowledge, their ways did not cross in the Austrian capital.

21 Roman P. Smolorz: *Das Südosteuropa-Institut Regensburg 1949-1958. Regensburger Neugründung oder Dresdner Tradition?*, in: Katrin Boeckh / Roman P. Smolorz (eds.): *Osteuropa in Regensburg. Institutionen der Osteuropa-Forschung in Regensburg aus ihrer historischen Perspektive*, Regensburg 2008, 69-83, here: 78.

22 The lion's share of its holdings was shipped to London in 1946.



The OEI was founded after the Second World War, which means that the accession books do not betray a link with the looting of cultural goods even if such a link existed. Several well-known Nazis are listed as donors and sellers, for example, historian Hans Uebersberger (1877-1962), jurist and publicist Franz Ronneberger (1913-1999), or archivist Johannes Papritz (1898-1997), but political orientation as such does not prove anything. The weight of evidence in this project was primarily provided by the autopsy.

Some media could be ticked off as innocuous even without an autopsy: private libraries of individuals who died before 1933, author's copies donated by the author, books acquired via international book exchange, and Nazi propaganda publications. Also excluded were reproductions (microfilms, photocopies) because we do not know where the originals are right now. In total, I autopsied 11.950 bibliographic units. The number is smaller than the 20.000 given above because of the exclusions, the difference between bibliographic units and single volumes, and the fact that not all media were placed correctly in the stacks.

The remaining titles were assembled in four so-called raw lists (one per institute, plus one containing SOI's journal volumes).<sup>23</sup> Media included there were searched in the online catalogue to find out if they are still in the library and what the current signature is, and then, after eliminating typos and misspellings and completing the bibliographic data, transferred to four corresponding so-called stacks lists. The stacks lists are organized according to the current signatures because they serve(d) as basis for the autopsy. There, all autopsied media are marked with the Old Church Slavonic special letter 'Monocular O' (written like this: ⓪) imitating an eye, which fits this purpose perfectly. The cells provide space for short notes and are colored according to the Traffic Lights of Provenances. I use the four-piece Traffic Lights of Provenances with green meaning innocuous, yellow suspicious, orange highly suspicious, and red looted. The vast majority of media remains white (not defined). As they lack marks of provenance, they neither appear suspicious, nor can one be sure that they are innocuous.

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23 Since 1982, SOI had a separate accession book for journal volumes.

There was no one-fits-all method to formulate a suspicion regarding the provenance of a medium or mark it red. Looted media were identified in most cases via a combination of library markings, information on an institution's or person's fate during the Second World War, and the seller's or donator's biography. Another important hint was a "typically Jewish" surname such as Goldstein, Zweig, or Salomon. It is admittedly problematic to label names this way, but finding persecuted persons among the media's previous owners leaves no other possibility than to also let oneself be guided by stereotypes. Potential victims of the Shoah were searched in databases such as Yad Vashem's.

To make orientation in the mix-up of data easier for myself, I distilled a so-called working list from the stacks lists which contains only media marked yellow, orange, or red. It showed me at first glance on which media I had to conduct detailed research and write case-dossiers. With the writing of dossiers progressing, the working list became superfluous. In the dossiers, also a few green and white titles are included that initially appeared suspicious and therefore required research to ascertain what to do with them. The dossiers vary greatly in length and do not follow strict formal rules but simply assemble all available information on a medium. During the second year of funding, information on provenance was added to the online catalogue. I did this not only for suspicious and looted media, but in total for estate libraries, and for any provenance marks which could be linked to a concrete person.

The autopsy of books and journal volumes went smoothly and was more or less completed after six months. The map collection proved to be more difficult to work with. It seems that the shipment to Regensburg wrought havoc on it and that in the meantime no one took the effort to remedy the chaos reigning there. At the outset, it was impossible to find exactly the map one needed, because the shelves' and boxes' labels were hardly ever matching the boxes' content. Thus, the first task was to make an inventory. This process dragged on for most of the funding period; the first small forays into autopsy could only be made at the beginning of the second year.

Krallert's shady presence in both predecessor institutes indicated that the map collection might

be a hotspot of looted media, but this did not prove to be the case. Only one map – not connected to him – bearing an illegible first name and the surname Goldstein appears suspicious. There are two explanations for this result. First, a considerable share of SOI’s pre-1945 map collection consists of German military maps from the Second World War and of ‘Volkstumskarten’ published by either Publikationsstelle Wien or Publikationsstelle Berlin-Dahlem. Both types of maps are innocuous, despite the fact that they are in some cases translated reproductions of looted foreign maps. Moreover, of all types of media in IOS’s library maps are the least likely to bear provenance marks. Their history may be problematic, but they do not have anything about them to provoke suspicion.

### Results, Part I: General Trends and Observations

This section provides graphs and tables to illustrate different results of the autopsy. At the outset, it is necessary to mention an event which colors all of them in one way or another: the acquisition of Michael Schwartz’s estate library by SOI in 1983. Schwartz, a German born in Slovakia, was a doctoral student of Valjavec’s at Auslandswissenschaftliche Fakultät (Faculty for Studying Foreign Countries) in Berlin. After 1945, he developed an interest in the history of Hungarian Jews and began to buy literature on the topic. 92 bibliographic units in his library were published before 1945, written in Hungarian (or in Hungarian and other languages) by Jews on Jewish topics and/or, judging by the owner’s name, belonged to someone who was (at least according to anti-Semitic laws) Jewish. 84 of them were still in IOS’s library during the autopsy, but only 17 bear provenance marks. It is impossible to maintain that these books would be innocuous,<sup>24</sup> but it is equally impossible to trace each single history of ownership. As it is more likely that the books were looted at some point than

24 On the Shoah in Hungary see, for example, Tim Cole: Holocaust City. The Making of a Jewish Ghetto, New York / London 2003; Christian Gerlach / Götz Aly: Das letzte Kapitel. Realpolitik, Ideologie und der Mord an den ungarischen Juden 1944/1945, Stuttgart / Munich 2002; Zoltán Vági / László Csósz / Gábor Kádár (eds.): The Holocaust in Hungary. Evolution of a Genocide, Lanham 2013; Ronald W. Zweig: The Gold Train. The Destruction of the Jews and the Second World War’s Most Terrible Robbery, London 2003.

that this was not the case, we decided to offer them to a Jewish institution in Hungary for restitution. They became property of the library of the Jewish Theological Seminary – University of Jewish Studies in Budapest in May 2024.

Consequently, all of them are marked red, irrespectively of what we know (or rather, do not know) about the single volumes’ histories. This makes visualizing the project’s results a tricky affair, because all other numbers are one order of magnitude lower than this bulk of 78 bibliographic units. To juxtapose one with the other runs the danger of making the smaller numbers incomprehensible and meaningless. Therefore, I decided to count all Judaica from Schwartz as one entity in the graphs which would be distorted the most. They are marked with an asterisk (\*).

Apart from the question how to visualize results in a sensible way, I am convinced that one learns most about the dynamics that provided IOS’s predecessors with looted media by paying attention to what the picture looks like without Schwartz’s library. The murky origins of the Judaica in his estate library are as valid a result as all others, but their acquisition was just *one* event. And one event cannot be representative of what was going on either at SOI or even at both predecessor institutions. My aim was not to let Schwartz’s library overshadow other results.

Color	OEI	SOI	IOS	Total
Yellow	18	14	2	34
Orange	14	10	2	26
Red	37	92	3	132
Total	69	116	7	192

Suspicious and looted media amount to less than 1% of all pre-1945 media in IOS’s library. This observation is not made to trivialize the numbers. But it tells us that OEI and SOI belong to a different category of recipient than libraries that possess(ed) several hundreds or even several thousands of looted media. As for OEI, the reason is clear. Being founded after the war, it received ‘only’ a very small part of the Nazi-loot most of which went into private possession or circulated on the market. While it is often astonishing, even shocking how many looted media were still circulating after 1945, they no longer were assembled to shipments of

dozens or hundreds of volumes. This is also true for Schwartz's library which comprises by far the largest share of suspicious media of all private libraries in the IOS's holdings. The Südost-Institut acquired them in one package, whereas Schwartz most likely bought them over the course of many years, from various sellers and intermingled with innocuous volumes.

Apart from Schwartz's library, the number of suspicious and looted media from SOI is not only small, but also considerably lower than from OEI. Obviously, although the institute supported the National Socialist regime, and although Valjavec succeeded in making it the leading institution among comparable ones,<sup>25</sup> it was a tiny fish in National Socialist academia. There are no hints at regular or big allocations or at allocations from a government or party institution. Therefore, active steps were required to grab a piece of the cake. Valjavec made efforts to this end, but they in all likelihood bore no fruit.

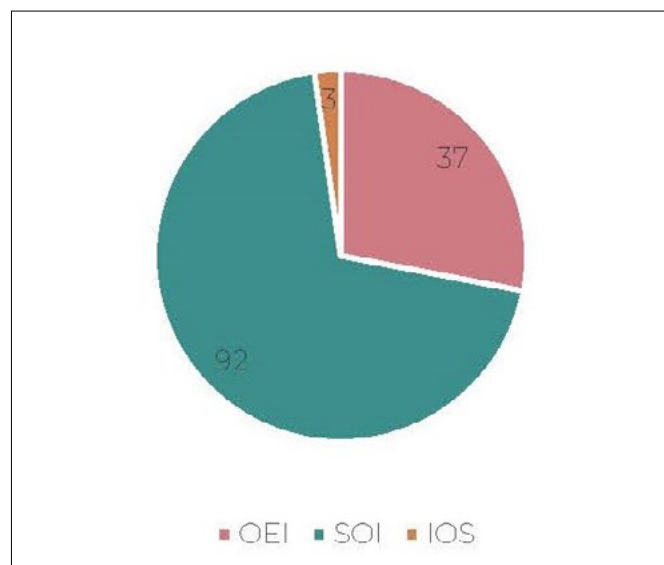


Figure 1a: Looted Media

Schwartz included, 92 out of 132 looted media (69,6 %) are from SOI, whereas without him 37 out of 48 looted media (77,1 %) are from OEI, 8 from SOI, and 3 from IOS. In the other two categories, OEI dominates by a small margin. Furthermore, SOI acquired almost all looted media at once, whereas OEI acquired looted media at more instances and in lower numbers per acquisition. From this I conclude that OEI was in general more likely to acquire suspicious and looted media than SOI. Why was this the case?

<sup>25</sup> This is Wolfgang Höpken's assessment. See Höpken 2020 (see FN 1), 239.

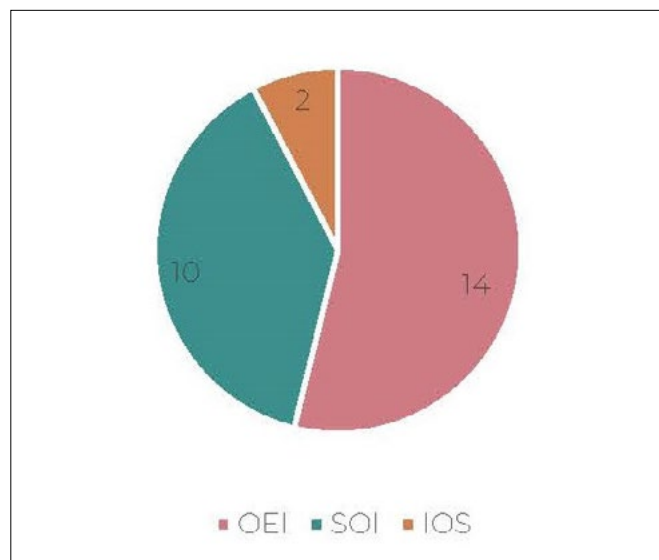


Figure 1b: Media Marked Orange

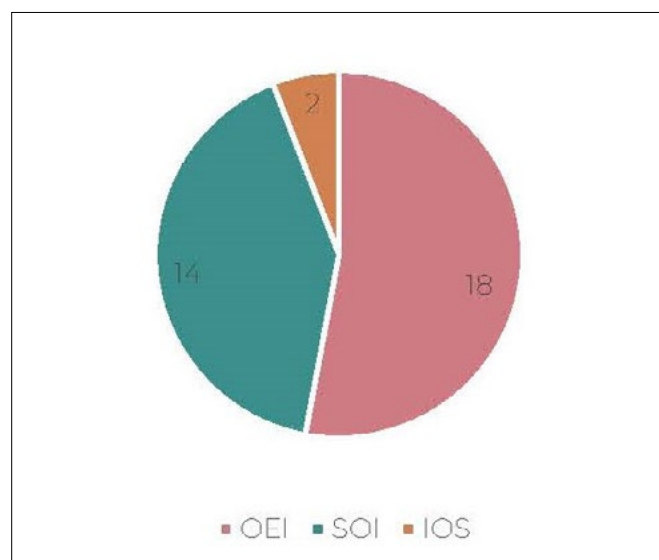


Figure 1c: Media Marked Yellow

Partly, this distribution can be attributed to the library's size. As already mentioned, OEI was always better funded than SOI – the more media a library is able to acquire, the higher chances are that some of these were looted. But more important is the relationship between Nazi Germany and the countries IOS's predecessor institutes were interested in. Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania were allied with Nazi Germany. The Independent State of Croatia (short NDH)<sup>26</sup> and Slovakia are usually characterized as German satellites. Albania and parts of Slovenia were occupied by Germany's erstwhile ally Italy, and thus for most of the war off limits as well. Public and scientific libraries in the 'Reich Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia'

<sup>26</sup> NDH's territory included what today is Bosnia.

suffered comparatively little from German interventions.<sup>27</sup> All named countries belong to SOI's scope of interest. Greece fell victim to massive looting, but neither Valjavec nor his successors ever made Greek literature a priority.

German allies, including temporary ones, and satellites were not subjected to large-scale plunder in the way Yugoslavia, Poland, and the Soviet Union were. But Jews living there were persecuted. Research on the Shoah in Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, and NDH<sup>28</sup> equivocally presents a two-sided picture: without German influence, persecution bent on extermination would not have taken place, but anti-Semitic legislation was stepped up and implemented without immediate German interference or pressure. 'Aryanization', for example, was a National Socialist invention, yet its implementation on the ground was a domestic affair. The decision to deport Jews was a domestic affair as well. Both processes enabled the looting of property, including books. Therefore, not every person responsible for looting was a German citizen or 'Volksdeutscher' (ethnic German), and in these cases it is neither completely wrong nor fully correct to talk about cultural goods looted by the Nazis. The Judaica in Schwartz's library, for example, were most likely looted or confiscated by Hungarians.

Eastern Europe in the narrow sense, OEI's core region of interest, fell victim to National Socialist looting without exception. Furthermore, the specter of 'Judeo-Bolshevism' multiplied targets. If one considers Jews enemies, and equates Jews with Bolsheviks, as, for example, Alfred Rosenberg did, then in the Soviet Union where (officially) private property did not exist, all public institutions became potential targets. Thus, more looted media were available that OEI, rather than SOI, was interested in.

27 Antje Rapmund: *Die deutsche Bibliothekspolitik in der Tschechoslowakei und in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges*, phil. Diss., Berlin 1993, 80-81.

28 Larisa Dubova / Georgii Cherniavskii: *Opyt bedy i vyzhyvaniia. Sud'ba evreev Bolgarii v gody Vtoroi mirovoi voyny*, Sofia 2007; Ivo Goldstein / Slavko Goldstein: *The Holocaust in Croatia*, Pittsburgh 2016; Mariana Hausleitner: *Die Rumänisierung der Bukowina. Die Durchsetzung des nationalstaatlichen Anspruchs Großrumäniens 1918-1944*, Munich 2001; Eduard Nižňanský: *Expropriation and Deportation of Jews in Slovakia*, in: Beate Kosmala / Feliks Tych (eds.): *Facing the Nazi Genocide. Non-Jews and Jews in Europe*, Berlin 2004, 205-230; Krisztian Ungváry: *Robbing the Dead. The Hungarian Contribution to the Holocaust*, in: Kosmala / Tych 2004 (see FN 28), 231-261.

The tiny share of suspicious and looted media acquired by IOS is explained by the factor time. When OEI was founded and SOI resumed work in the early 1950s, the pre-1945 period still formed the recent past. Therefore, it was quite natural to acquire publications dating from this period in larger quantities. Since the 1960s, the number of acquired media from the pre-1945 period has been constantly shrinking because they no longer fall in the category of recent publications. Today, almost none are bought any more, but they continue to be included in donations.

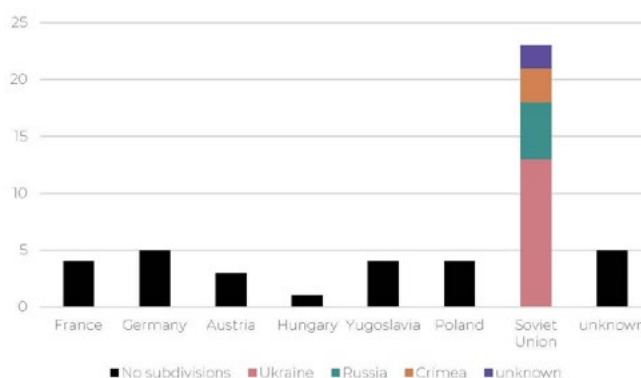


Figure 2: Countries of Origin (Looted Media)\*

The distribution by countries of origin neatly fits the picture presented above. Because of Schwartz, most looted media are from Hungary. Second comes the Soviet Union with Ukraine in front position.<sup>29</sup> The two books from the Soviet Union that cannot be localized more precisely were most likely looted on the present (internationally acknowledged) territory of the Russian Federation.

If one asks the question who was robbed of his or her possessions not with countries in mind but with persons and institutions, yet another difference between OEI and SOI materializes. In the following graph, media marked orange or yellow are included. Owners, including presumptive ones, are grouped into four categories: public institutions, Jews (private as well as institutional property), others (trade unions, the Catholic Church, private

29 Looted books from the Crimea are counted separately for two reasons. First, the peninsula became part of the Ukrainian Socialist Federal Republic only in 1954. From 1921 to 1954, it was, with varying administrative status, a part of the Russian Socialist Federal Republic. Second, with the current situation in mind, placing the Crimea with Russia would be an acknowledgment of her violation of international law in 2014, whereas placing it with Ukraine would be oblivious of the facts on the ground.



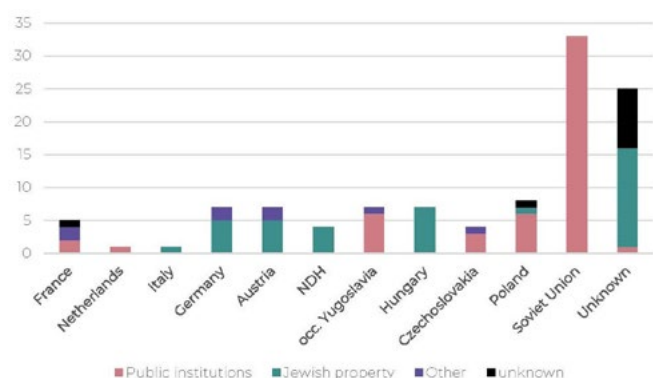


Figure 3: (Presumed) Owners of Looted and Suspicious Media

associations etc.), and unknown. Due to the last category, numbers become somewhat fuzzy, but it is not the small details that are important.

It becomes clear that in one country, either public institutions (columns predominantly red) or Jews (columns predominantly green) constitute the main group of victims. Green columns represent Nazi Germany's core regions (Germany,<sup>30</sup> Austria), a loyal satellite (NDH), and long-time allies (Hungary, Italy). In all other countries the plunder of public institutions dominates. It is possible to link this result back to the uneven distribution of looted media between OEI and SOI (without Schwartz). OEI's core scope of interest was formed almost exclusively by Poland and the Soviet Union; the Nazi regime despised and hated these two states most of all states they were at war with. These states were themselves – via their public institutions – principal targets of lootings and destruction.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, German allies and satellites were concentrated in SOI's core field of interest. Therefore, looted media in SOI's library 'had' to come from other sources, the most important of which were in IOS's case Central Europe's Jews.

The distribution by language shows a somewhat different picture. Because of Schwartz's library, Hungarian comes first. Given that the looting of cultural goods in Eastern Europe figures so prominently, both in the project's design and in the

<sup>30</sup> In theory, 'Germany' means here the borders of 1937. In practice, all books I was able to localize come from cities within the present borders.

<sup>31</sup> The columns do not reflect the intensity of the Shoah. Little green in one column does not mean that there were only few victims or that persecution was 'mild' in this country. This distortion might be a consequence of the fact that IOS's library does not collect Judaica as such but acquires only works with a thematical link to Eastern Europe. Schwartz's estate library is the exception to this rule.

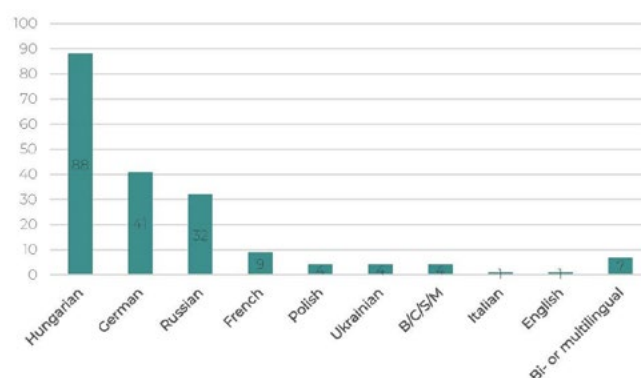


Figure 4: Languages

results, at first glance, it is surprising that German comes second. But German by that time was an important language in academia, the mother tongue of large minorities in Eastern Europe, and had been the dominant language in the Habsburg Monarchy and Imperial Germany. Russian, coming third, was also an imperial lingua franca.

The distribution by year of publication in combination with the books' topics illustrates some patterns of National Socialist cultural looting. I name the most important ones here, without any intention to convey the impression that all media marked red would correspond to one of them. Half of the looted media had been published in only fourteen years between 1930 and 1944, and thus formed recent publications when they were looted. In Nazi ideology, the Soviet Union featured as 'Lebensraum' (living space) for Germans. For a potential post-war future after a German victory, land and people were earmarked for colonial exploitation. In IOS's library there are looted books on *Petrografia Ukrainy* (*Petrography of Ukraine*), *Pochvy Urala* (*Types of Soil in the Ural Mountains*), *Zapovedniki SSSR* (*Nature Reserves of the USSR*) or *Materialy po izucheniiu vodnogo rezhima i vlogooborota pochv Mologo-Sheksninskoi niziny* (*Materials for Studying the Water Regime and Circulation of Humidity in the Soil of the Lowland between Mologa and Sheksna*). All of these belonged to Erwin Buchholz (see below) who worked in Alfred Rosenberg's Ministry which would have enjoyed pride of place in exploiting the Soviet Union.

Many Germans harbored anti-Bolshevik and anti-Soviet sentiments, even when they otherwise were no ardent Nazis. Fairly widespread among the educated was also the notion that for an enduring triumph over Communism, it would be

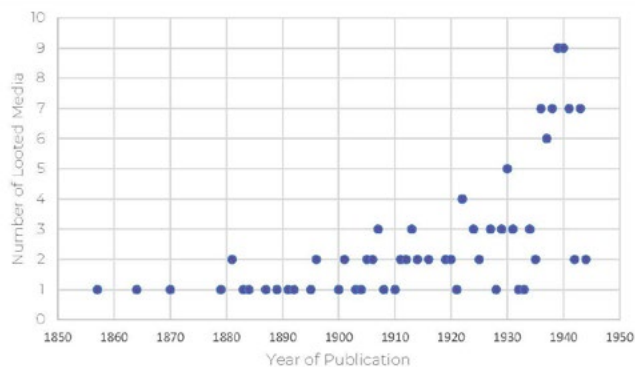


Figure 5: Chronological Distribution of Looted Media

required to be familiar with what was going on in the political enemy's mind. In IOS's holdings I found looted books with titles such as *Prozessbericht über die Strafsache des antisowjetischen "Blocks der Rechten und Trotzisten"* (*Report on the Trial Concerning the Case against the anti-Soviet 'Bloc of Rightists and Trotskyites'*) or *Listovki Moskovskoi organizatsii bolshevikov 1914-1920 gg.* (*Leaflets by the Bolsheviks' Moscow Organization from the Years 1914-1920*). These belonged to Hans Koch and Ehrenfried Schütte (for more information on him, see below). Bibliophile rarities were of no use either for colonial exploitation or 'Gegnerforschung' (adversary research); this explains the predominance of 20th-century publications. Looted books from the 19th century illustrate two other facets of the Nazi-looting of cultural goods.

Sonderkommando Künsberg was after a slightly different type of booty than Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg. The Sonderkommando was tasked with collecting data on the occupied countries that could be useful for military operations and future peace negotiations. Its members were looking first and foremost for maps, statistical data, and archival materials.<sup>32</sup> Judging from IOS's holdings, when Künsberg's men were seizing books, they preferred publications on realities which do not change much over time, such as topography and geography, or publications which made it possible to study developments over a longer period, such as ethnography and demography. It did not matter that much if a publication was not recent. Among the booty from the Institute for Military Geography in Belgrade was a copy of *Detailbeschreibung von Albanien* (*Detailed Description of Albania*) (published

32 Ulrike Hartung: *Raubzüge in der Sowjetunion. Das Sonderkommando Künsberg 1941-1943*, Bremen 1997, 13.

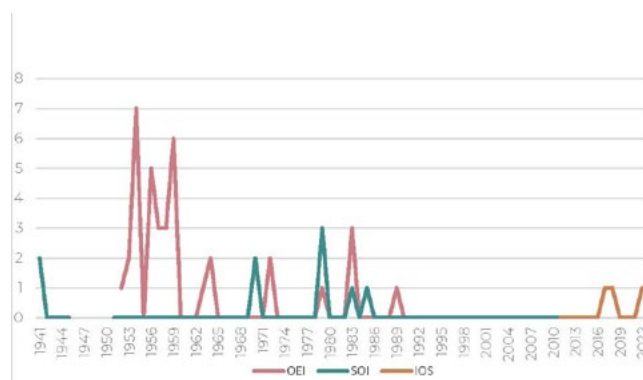


Figure 6: Accession of Looted Media\*

in 1900), and from Odesa a copy of *Topograficheskoe-etnograficheskii ocherk Makedonii* (*Topographical and Ethnographical Survey of Macedonia*), published in 1889.<sup>33</sup>

The previous four paragraphs convey the impression that Nazi-looting was an orderly affair with a clearly formulated agenda. To a certain degree, it was just that. But looting is most often also a wanton and messy affair. In IOS's holdings, this slippery slope of looting becomes visible as soon as an individual book's content is clearly at odds with one of the agendas described. Why should a biography of general Grigorii Potemkin (1739-1791) have been useful to Sonderkommando Künsberg, or a two-volume publication on ancient Russian coins to Rosenberg?

Looted media were accessioned throughout IOS's predecessors' post-war existence. The OEI acquired the first looted volumes already in 1952, whereas the most recent addition (by donation) took place in 2018. The most recent accession dates from 2022 but this concerns volumes belonging to SOI that had been lying around for decades before my colleagues took care of them. OEI's graph peaks several times in the 1950s. In the first decade of its existence, the institute acquired far more media from private persons than later. Among them were several men who either directly participated in the looting of cultural goods or, via their professional positions, were able to profit from it already during the war (see below). In the 1950s, OEI also acquired the estate libraries of Irene Grüning (d. 1955) and Hans Koch (d. 1959) that both comprised looted books (see below).

33 This book was restituted in June 2023.

After 1960, there are fewer peaks and increasingly large gaps between them. From this data one could draw the conclusion that the circulation of looted media was finally winding down (but not stopping completely) in the 1990s, i. e. about 50 years after the Second World War ended. The few small peaks after the year 2000 do not contradict this observation as these media were either part of private libraries when IOS acquired them or leftovers from remote acquisitions. They may have been absent from the market for decades.

As SOI and IOS did not acquire looted media in that many instances, there is not much to say about chronological distribution. The only noteworthy observation regarding SOI is that, compared to OEI, a reversed picture emerges. Looted media crop up during the Second World War and then again rather late, in the 1970s and 1980s – bearing in mind, of course, that our knowledge of the history of acquisition before 1960 is patchy. One explanation for this would be that after the Second World War, SOI did not go through a construction phase in the same way as OEI. Most media burned in 1944, nonetheless there still was a library, and thus no necessity to buy whatever was available.

The other explanation is a generational one. In the 1970s and 1980s, men who were young during the Second World War and had participated in or profited from the looting of cultural goods were entering old age. They may have felt that it was time to dispense with things they no longer needed – in itself a neutral process that occurs at one point in most peoples' lives and does not necessarily mean that they had a guilty consciousness about the books.<sup>34</sup>

How crucial personal contacts were for the acquisition of looted media is amply demonstrated by the fact that 122 out of 132 looted media in OEI and SOI (92,4 %) were acquired from private persons. I analyze these networks in the following section. For IOS, the rate is 100% but this is not significant because previous owners reached adulthood only after 1945.

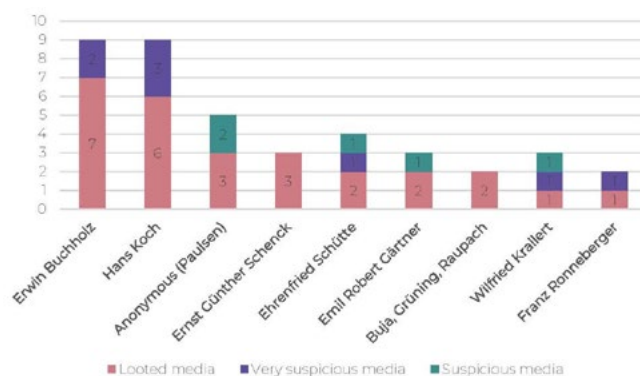


Figure 7: Private Sellers/Donors of Looted Media\*

Apart from Schwartz, most looted media (seven red titles, one orange) were in possession of Erwin Buchholz, who worked in Rosenberg's Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete (Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories) and simultaneously for Wirtschaftsstab Ost (Economic Staff East) from 1941 to 1944.<sup>35</sup> As he specialized in forestry, it is likely that he used the books for his work (one of them bears the stamp of the Ministry) and took them with him when the Ministry started to disintegrate in 1944. Second comes Hans Koch (six red titles, three orange ones). It is likely that he personally participated in the looting of libraries at least in some instances, but it is not possible to prove that. Be it as it may, he certainly knew about the origins of the books in question. Buchholz and Koch can be attributed to Rosenberg's empire of looted objects, but one should not forget that, simultaneously, they had affiliations with other institutions responsible for the looting of cultural goods, namely, Wirtschaftsstab Ost and the Wehrmacht.

The next ranks are taken by men associated with Sonderkommando Künsberg. At the third rank we find an anonymous person who donated several books to SOI in late 1979. The looted ones among them are from libraries in Belgrade (Institute for Military Geography), Vršac (library in the Serb Metropolitan's Palace), and Odesa (State Library, today National Scientific Library). Other suspicious books (marked yellow) included in this donation are also from Yugoslavia. The geographical combination indicates that the donor was a member of Sonderkommando Künsberg. To my best educated guess, Viktor Paulsen (1913-1987)

<sup>34</sup> At the moment, a similar generational effect kicks in. By now, it is these men's children who are elderly and sort through their possessions. As a result, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich is offered donations that obviously include looted media on a regular basis (oral information by Dr. Gudrun Wirtz, May 16th, 2023).

<sup>35</sup> <https://ns-reichsministerien.de/2019/10/02/erwin-buchholz/>, <30.05.2023>.

is the donor. Paulsen closely collaborated with Wilfried Krallert. They were both responsible for looting the Institute for Military Geography, where Paulsen undertook most of the work on the ground.<sup>36</sup> Afterwards, he supervised the transport of looted geographical books to Vienna. At the end of October 1941, Krallert and Paulsen went to Odesa to 'secure' Black Sea German archives. A report on their trip mentions the State Library as object of interest,<sup>37</sup> although it was no noteworthy repository of German materials. I was not able to find documents on the looting of the library in Vršac. However, Krallert was undoubtedly responsible for it, and he partly passed the books on, partly kept them for Publikationsstelle Wien.<sup>38</sup>

The fourth rank is taken by Ernst Günther Schenck (1904-1998), a physician who specialized in nutrition. During the war, he served as Ernährungsinspekteur (Supervisor of Nutrition) of the Waffen-SS, the SS's armed branch. In the summer of 1941, Sonderkommando Künsberg was incorporated into the Waffen-SS, and in the first half of 1942, its members in the Soviet Union were deployed with SS-Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler, an elite division of the Waffen-SS.<sup>39</sup> Two books which Schenck donated to OEI bear the stamp of institutions in Taganrog. Thus, it is likely that he received them as a present in the Sonderkommando's base in this city. The third book is not from Taganrog, but he could have received it there.

Then there are five persons who donated or sold to IOS's predecessors two red titles each: Hans Joachim Buja (1915-?), Emil Robert Gärtner (1915-?), Irene Grüning (1900-1955), Hans Raupach (1903-1997), and Ehrenfried Schütte (1910-2007). It is important to note that Grüning is an exception in this group, because she bought the books in question after the war without knowing anything about

their origins.<sup>40</sup> Last come Franz Ronneberger and Wilfried Krallert who donated one looted book each to OEI. But in both cases, it is reasonable to assume that they actually distributed more looted books, and that we only lack the definitive evidence to prove that.

## Results, Part II: On Networks and the Distribution of Looted Cultural Goods

Given here are only personal contacts which served as channels for the distribution of looted media. But their function was not limited to that; they indicate professional and institutional ties within 'Ostforschung' before and after 1945 in general. It would be possible to write a whole history of 'Ostforschung' in the 1950s about the same connections and about the same people without mentioning a single looted book. Vice versa, connections could be added to this network that did not enable the distribution of looted media but were nonetheless vital in the academic village of 'Ostforschung'.

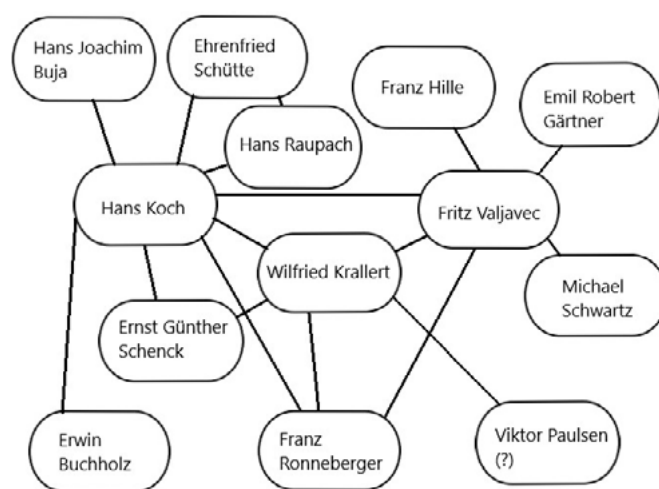


Figure 8: Networks for Distributing Looted Media

Within OEI's network, there are three important nodes. Wilfried Krallert should be mentioned first, because he is the only person of interest for the project who had entrepreneurial and professional ties with both OEI and SOI, sold looted media to both, and presumably attracted further donors and sellers to both. For instance, the donor from 1979 most probably was Viktor Paulsen. Had not Krallert's wife Gertrud (née Sattler, 1913-2007), his

36 Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes [hereinafter PA AA], R 27531, Wilfried Krallert: Bericht über meine und Dr. Paulsens Tätigkeit im Rahmen des Einsatzkommandos des Auswärtigen Amtes, 3. Mai 1941; Wilfried Krallert: Bericht über die Sicherung des Militärgeographischen Institutes in Belgrad, Wien, 3. Mai 1941.

37 PA AA, R 27558, Meldung über den Einsatz des Einsatzkommandos „Potsdam“ im Raume der Heeresgruppe Süd. S. d s. I., 5.

38 Murray G. Hall / Christina Köstner: ...allerlei für die Nationalbibliothek zu ergattern... Eine österreichische Institution in der NS-Zeit, Vienna / Cologne / Weimar 2006, 360; National Archives Kew, FCO 12/424 [from Vršac for example Nr. Rus-525].

39 Hartung 1997 (see FN 32), 60.

40 Grüning noted the date of purchase in each book she bought after 1945.



former colleague at Publikationsstelle Wien, headed SOI's library, he may not have decided to donate the books to a Bavarian institution, because he was an Austrian living in Vienna. The acquaintance with Mrs. Krallert would also have had the advantage that she was privy to the books' provenance and would have kept silent without much ado. Even Mrs. Krallert working in the library was a consequence of personal contacts established under National Socialism, i. e. her husband's acquaintance with Valjavec. One can hardly overestimate what a great favor it was to install her in the library as permanent positions were rare at SOI.<sup>41</sup>

As for OEI, Krallert seems to have attracted two other donors of suspicious and looted books. One of them is Franz Ronneberger. The first thing to know about him is that he was a specialist for Southeast Europe and a friend of Valjavec's. He donated books to SOI, but in 1954 he also made a donation to OEI which could have been facilitated by his acquaintance with either Krallert or Koch. During the Second World War, Ronneberger operated his own Korrespondenzstelle (Office for Correspondence) in Vienna, which collected and processed information on and from Southeast Europe. Originally, it belonged to the Foreign Ministry and the Abwehr, but in 1942, it was incorporated into RSHA. In 1944, it was merged with Krallert's Publikationsstelle, another SD (and thus RSHA) outlet.<sup>42</sup> Later that year, the Publikationsstelle, including Ronneberger, was evacuated to the former Benedictine Abbey of St. Lambrecht (Styria). There, Ronneberger could have made Koch's acquaintance. Koch was made director of SD's so-called Wannsee-Institut in February 1945,<sup>43</sup> thus Krallert became his superior. In February and March 1945, Koch travelled several times to St. Lambrecht to talk to Krallert.<sup>44</sup> In May 1945, Ronneberger and Krallert were arrested there and then served time together in Wolfsberg internment camp.<sup>45</sup> Ronneberger received the

book in question either from Wilfried Krallert or another high-ranking employee of Publikationsstelle Wien, such as Gertrud Krallert.

The second is Schenck who, as already mentioned, was Supervisor of Nutrition of the Waffen-SS. But it is also possible that Schenck was acquainted with Koch. He was one of the very last German POWs to be released from the Soviet Union after West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's visit to Moscow in 1955. The press coverage of this journey was extensive, and Koch was an interpreter in Adenauer's delegation. It is possible that Schenck became aware of Koch and OEI after his return to Germany and made contact.

Koch himself is the second important node in this network. Grüning worked at the editorial office of *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas (JGO)* in Breslau when Koch was the journal's editor. Later, he wrote her obituary for the journal.<sup>46</sup> It is interesting that Pastor Oskar Wagner, an old acquaintance of Koch's, carried out the transfer of Grüning's private library to OEI in 1956. The accession book identifies him as seller and gives *Nachlaß (estate) Dr. Grüning* in brackets.

His secret service activities brought Koch into contact with Hans Raupach, another Abwehr officer.<sup>47</sup> Raupach's donations to OEI, however, did not result from any acquaintance of his, but from the fact that he was the institute's director between 1963 and 1975. In 1939, Koch operated the so-called 'Kochstelle' in Cracow, an Abwehr outlet dedicated to supporting Ukrainian nationalists.<sup>48</sup> Hans Joachim Buja worked in Cracow, too; he was head of the General Government's Family Office (Sippenstelle).<sup>49</sup> In 1941, Koch, like Schütte and Buchholz, worked for Alfred Rosenberg. In 1943, he was deployed with Sonderkommando Bergmann, a division of Abwehr, because of his language

41 Höpken 2020 (see FN 1), 374.

42 Höpken 2020 (see FN 1), 576, 581, 590.

43 This secret institute was dedicated to research on the Soviet Union.

44 Martin-Opitz-Bibliothek Herne, ADGA A 10.505 Fasc. 2, [Hans Koch]: 16 Notizbücher und Notizkalender aus den Jahren 1941, 1943-1945, 1947-1955, 1957-1959, pocket calendar 1945.

45 Carsten Klingemann: Franz Ronneberger: Sozialwissenschaft – Publizistik – Nachrichtendienst. Zum Verhältnis von „Intelligence“ und Wissenschaft, in: Carsten Klingemann: Soziologie und Politik. Sozialwissenschaftliches Expertenwissen im Dritten Reich und in der frühen westdeutschen Nachkriegszeit, Wiesbaden 2009, 227-255, here: 251.

46 Hans Koch: Irene Grüning (1900-1955), in: *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 3 (1955), 466-467.

47 National Archives Kew, KV 2/3015, Gotthard GAMBKE / Hans RAUPACH / Sergius PETERS, Part III Leutnant Dr. Hans Raupach, 21.

48 Kai Struve: Deutsche Herrschaft, ukrainischer Nationalismus, antijüdische Gewalt. Der Sommer 1941 in der Westukraine, Berlin 2015, 97-98. 'Kochstelle' is a pun. The intended meaning is something like Koch's Department or Koch's Office, but it is also possible to understand it literally as the place where one cooks, i. e., where the Secret Service concocts its operations.

49 <https://archiwum.instytutpileckiego.pl/dlibra/publication/1034/edition/1002/content>, <21.12.2022>.

skills.<sup>50</sup> Schütte volunteered for Sonderkommando Bergmann in 1942 and remained in this unit until the end of the war.<sup>51</sup>

In Koch's private library, there are offprints with dedications by Schütte and Buchholz.<sup>52</sup> While the dedications are neither markedly cordial in tone nor revealing in content, they show that there was more to Koch's acquaintance with both men than just him being the director of an institute they from time to time donated or sold books to. A 1919-map of Ukraine from Schütte's private map collection points to the same conclusion. Schütte received it as a present in 1941, and obviously showed it to Koch, because he wrote on the jacket that, according to Koch, it shows "Skoropadsky's borders of 1917 [sic!]" (Skoropadsky-Grenzen von 1917).<sup>53</sup> Discussing a map with someone is indicative of a relationship that is not necessarily close but goes beyond business transactions.

The third node is Theodor Oberländer. He did not sell or donate looted media to IOS's predecessors, and may not have been in possession of such an object at all. But his leading role in getting the OEI founded may have earned him a reputation as the institute's *éminence grise*. This in turn could have made OEI a rallying point for people acquainted with Oberländer, sharing his political points of view, or both. Oberländer knew Koch, and he was Schütte's superior at Sonderkommando Bergmann. Both Oberländer and Schütte were acquainted with Raupach.<sup>54</sup>

As for SOI, the point made here that personal contacts were crucial for the influx of media is illustrated best by a group of innocuous acquisitions. Initially, Valjavec was employed at the

institute for starting and to keep running a journal. To secure a steady stream of new material for *Südostdeutsche Forschungen* (since 1939, *Südost-Forschungen*), he forged contacts with scholars across Southeast Europe and the German-speaking world. Several of his correspondents appear among previous owners of media in IOS's library, for example, orientalist Franz Babinger (1891-1967), archivist Josef Kallbrunner (1881-1951), historians Johann/Jan Lipták (1889-1958) and Mita Kostić (1886-1980), director of Brukenthal Museum in Hermannstadt/Sibiu Rudolf Spek (1893-1953), and many others.

When it comes to the channeling of looted media, in SOI everything happened on a much smaller scale than in OEI, thus Valjavec is the only node. His connection with the Krallert couple was already described. Equally important seems to be his acquaintance Franz Hille who worked for Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg in Zagreb from 1941 until his conscription to the Wehrmacht in early 1943. In November 1941, Hille sent Valjavec two books which he had used for writing so-called *Ausarbeitungen* (short papers for internal use on topics that were interesting to Rosenberg). Usually, 'Ausarbeitungen' were based on looted media – their meta-purpose was to prove that the looting *did* provide salient information on the regime's 'enemies'.<sup>55</sup> It is likely that Hille was also somehow involved in directing books from Rabbi Heinrich Urbach's (1879-1960) library to Munich, but there is no documentary evidence supporting this hypothesis. In 1941 or 1942, SOI received a shipment of books, most probably from Zagreb, which among others contained two looted books from Urbach's library in Sarajevo. A third book could have belonged to Urbach as well, but it burned in 1944.

Emil Robert Gärtner (\* 1915) sold to SOI two looted books from Strasburg and a third suspicious one from France in 1970. He was a former doctoral student of Valjavec's at Auslandswissenschaftliche Fakultät, and served in the Wehrmacht from 1939 to 1941. As described above, in 1983, SOI bought the estate library of Michael Schwartz, another former doctoral student of Valjavec's.

50 Andreas Kappeler: Hans Koch (1894-1959), in: Arnold Suppan / Marija Wakounig / Georg Kastner (eds.): *Osteuropäische Geschichte in Wien. 100 Jahre Lehre und Forschung an der Universität, Innsbruck / Vienna / Bozen 2007*, 227-254, here: 247.

51 <https://ns-reichsministerien.de/2019/12/04/ehrenfried-schuette/>, <22.05.2023>.

52 Erwin Buchholz: *Aus der Geschichte der russischen Forst- und Holzwirtschaft*, Hamburg 1957 [signature W 01/Sep. 939]; Ehrenfried Schütte: *Die sowjetische Beurteilung der Rechtsprechung des Westens über die sowjetischen Nationalisierungsmaßnahmen*, Heidelberg 1958 [W 01/Sep. 807].

53 Pavlo Skoropads'kyj (1873-1945) became Hetman (leader) of Ukraine by the grace of Germany in April 1918. His regime collapsed already at the end of the same year. The map is not yet catalogued and thus bears no signature.

54 Schütte wrote Raupach's obituary in *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*. See Ehrenfried Schütte: Hans Raupach (10. April 1903 – 12. Januar 1997), in: *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 45 (1997), No. 2, 358-359.

55 Nazarii Gutsul: *Der Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg und seine Tätigkeit in der Ukraine (1941-1944)*, phil. Diss., Gießen 2013, 139, <http://geb.uni-giessen.de/geb/volltexte/2014/11002/>, <14.12.2022>. Such a proof was not necessary to soothe moral qualms but to justify the huge sums which the party spent on the Einsatzstab.

## Concluding Remarks: From the Specific to the General

Writing about the history of IOS's library is akin to trying to make a structure appear coherent which ultimately defies generalizations or grand narratives. What today functions as one library are from a historical point of view three libraries – or even more, if one thinks of the private libraries IOS's predecessors acquired and IOS is still acquiring. This makes for a highly idiosyncratic collection which is as much the result of librarians' planning as of events that no one could have foreseen or influenced, such as donations or the merger of OEI and SOI. IOS's library is therefore a fascinating workplace and object of study, but for these same reasons, the applicability of my results to other projects in provenance research may be limited. To make up for that, as a conclusion I would like to point out some general characteristics of Nazi-looting and the distribution of looted media which are reflected in the project's results.

Valjavec's efforts to get a hold on looted books for SOI are a good example for how normal it was to act like that under National Socialism. Besides the letter to Carstanjen quoted above, in early 1940, he pointed out to Franz Alfred Six (1909-1975), his superior at *Auslandswissenschaftliche Fakultät*, that in Prague, books would be 'available' in the near future.<sup>56</sup> Obviously, Valjavec was routinely watching out for 'opportunities' and did not hesitate to come forward when he believed to have spotted one.

The case of *Slovenski biografski leksikon* (*Slovene Biographical Dictionary*) confirms that he cared little about *how* a book was acquired, if only it *was* acquired. In 1936, Valjavec tried to get a copy via book exchange, in 1942, he asked Carstanjen for a looted copy, and in 1944 he made enquiries as to how and where the SOI could buy a copy.<sup>57</sup> Each time he put his request in similar words as if there were no difference between the modes of acquisition except for the amount of money the institute would have to spend.

56 BayHStA, Südost-Institut 50, Instituts-Korrespondenz von Fritz Valjavec 1940, S-Z, Fritz Valjavec to Franz Alfred Six, 29.2.1940. Library holdings from Prague were not distributed as freely as Valjavec imagined (or wished).

57 BayHStA, Südost-Institut 34, Instituts-Korrespondenz von Fritz Valjavec 1936, A-H, Fritz Valjavec to Franjo Baš, 14.3.1936, II; BayHStA, Südost-Institut 67, Instituts-Korrespondenz von Fritz Valjavec 1944, Joža Glonar to Fritz Valjavec, [Ljubljana], 05.05.1944, [2-3].

The history of OEI in general, and of the looted books in its library holdings in particular, is about the question how strong continuities with the pre-1945 period were in research on Eastern Europe during the first fifteen or so post-war years. This is of course too big a topic to deal with here in any length or depth, so I will limit myself to making just one point: the same factors which shaped research objectives also facilitated the circulation of looted media. In 'Ostforschung', there was little turnover from before 1945 to after. Almost all representatives managed to obtain comparable positions or found ways to participate in academic life from the sidelines. And of course, these scholars brought their pasts with them. Sometimes, the past materialized as personal contacts, sometimes as mindsets, sometimes as tangible objects such as looted books, sometimes as all of this simultaneously. The result was an academic environment which was not only able to resist profound change for some time, but also allowed looted media to circulate without raising eyebrows. The construction phase, when OEI seemingly took everything only to have something that deserved the name library, further highlighted the basic dynamics.

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### Reference

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