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Trophies of War and Empire: The Archival Heritage of Ukraine, World War II, and the International Politics of Restitution. By Patricia Kennedy Grimsted. Harvard Papers in Ukrainian Studies. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2001. ISBN: 0-916458-76-8.

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Trophies of War and Empire: The Archival Heritage of Ukraine, World War II, and the International Politics of Restitution.

By Patricia Kennedy Grimsted. Harvard Papers in Ukrainian Studies. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2001. xvii, 749 pp. Appendices. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Tables. Available from the Society of American Archivists, \$19.00 members, \$25.00 nonmembers, soft cover. ISBN: 0-916458-76-8.

Reviews that begin by describing a work with superlatives such as “a tour-de-force” or “a stunning intellectual achievement” might well inspire skepticism in the critical reader. Yet it is difficult to characterize Patricia Kennedy Grimsted’s *Trophies of War and Empire: The Archival Heritage of Ukraine, World War II, and the International Politics of Restitution* in more prosaic terms. As a senior research associate at Harvard University’s Ukrainian Research Institute and a coordinator of ArcheoBiblioBase, a directory of library and archival institutions and sources in Ukraine and the Russian Federation, Grimsted is uniquely positioned to analyze the current archival situation in the Russian Federation and its fourteen successor states. She brings over thirty-five years as an authority on Soviet and post-Soviet archives to this meticulously researched and documented work, which Charles Kecskeméti, Secretary-General, emeritus, of the International Council on Archives, credits with “open[ing] a new chapter in the history of archival literature” (p. xii).

Trophies of War consists of two distinct but vitally interconnected sections. The first examines the literature of archives and international law to consider issues related to the devolution of archives in successor states. Ukraine serves as the focus for this discussion, but the descriptive typology that Grimsted develops for identifying and defining the Ukrainian archival heritage abroad is a model that could be adapted for use by other successor states (Grimsted notes that she has adapted this typology from her previous efforts to identify the Russian archival legacy abroad). The second part of *Trophies of War* traces the displacement of archives and other historically significant materials, including books and works of art, during World War II and the subsequent efforts of European nations to regain important portions of their archival legacies. Utilizing historical analyses and archival sources in countries including Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Poland, the former Soviet Union, Ukraine, and the United States, Grimsted paints a fascinating picture of the extent of archival displacement resulting from World War II. The ongoing alienation of many of these archival and cultural resources from their countries of origin continues to have significant intellectual, social, and political impact on diplomatic relations among European countries.

While these two portions of *Trophies of War*—devolution of archives from predecessor states to successor states and the restitution or return of archives following war—are discrete issues, Grimsted demonstrates that “they have become intertwined in the public mind and in politics” (p. 489); in practical terms they remain separate only on a theoretical level.

Much recommends *Trophies of War* to the archival community. It provides an absorbing account of archives in Ukraine—a history complicated by frequent shifts in boundaries and political control across the centuries. Grimsted also chronicles the development of the modern archival profession in Ukraine, tracing the difficulties of the country’s current archival situation to the politicization of archives and the purges of archivists under Stalin in the 1930s. She summarizes the effects on archives of the Stalin era as follows: “The tragic consequences of the liquidation of a generation of professionally trained historians and archivists were inadequate reference work in the archives and, perhaps more importantly, that no one was left to train younger specialists. The suppression of professional archival standards thus had a multiplying effect on subsequent generations of Soviet and present-day archivists” (p. 9). Grimsted emphasizes the underdeveloped system of archival description in Ukraine, noting that not a single finding aid for Ukrainian archival sources was published in the decade following independence and citing this weakness as a major obstacle to the country’s attempts to reconstitute its archival heritage.

Certainly Ukraine’s complex history presents daunting challenges to any efforts to reclaim its archival legacy. These endeavors must incorporate the examination of records not only in the Russian Federation, but also “in the bordering states and former imperial capitals of Poland, Austria, Hungary, the now separate Czech and Slovak republics, Romania, and Turkey—that is, in all the successor States to the major powers that earlier governed the lands that now constitute Ukraine” (p. 12). According to the archival principle of provenance, Ukraine has legitimate pretensions for the return of records created within its territories and now held in other countries; however, in many cases these records of Ukrainian provenance have become so entwined with fonds in other countries that they have become records of joint heritage. In such cases—and in cases where records are of pertinence to Ukraine (that is, related to, but not created in, Ukraine)—Grimsted advocates an economically impractical solution—that the repository housing the archives in question should make available good quality microform copies of the originals at an affordable price.

Much of Ukraine’s success in reconstituting its archival heritage, of course, relies on the cooperation of the Russian Federation, which views itself as the rightful successor state to the Soviet Union and as such has nationalized the entire archival holdings of the U.S.S.R. into a single Archival Fond of the Russian Federation. Early hopes—engendered by a 1992 agreement among the Russian Federation and the other members of the Commonwealth of

Independent States in 1992—for the smooth and timely transfer of records to the appropriate successor states did not materialize; only one private transfer to Ukraine had taken place by the time this book went to press. This lack of progress is due in part to the Russian Federation's preoccupation with issues related to international pressure for the restitution of cultural materials—many of which had long been thought lost—looted by the Soviet Union during the Second World War. While the other Allies pursued policies for the restitution of displaced cultural materials in the years following the war, Stalin adopted a policy of seizing them as a form of reparations. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the scale of this looting was exposed for the first time. Unfortunately for the cause of cultural restitution, these revelations took place during a period of increasing nationalization in Russian politics, which culminated in the 1998 passage of a “spoils of war” law. This legislation nationalized all seized cultural materials as the property of the Russian Federation, making negotiations for restitution extremely difficult, as each individual case would require a special act of parliament. The result of this legislation has been the Russian Federation's “renewed ‘Cold War’ on the cultural front with the European Community” (p. 422).

As interesting as Grimsted's case study of Ukrainian archival heritage and her analysis of World War II restitution issues are, the chief contribution of *Trophies of War* lies in her call for the development of international standards and principles to govern the devolution of archives to successor states and their return or restitution following periods of war and occupation. Grimsted surveys discussions about the return of dispersed archives that have taken place under the auspices of the International Council on Archives, the United Nations, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization in recent decades and the resolutions that have emerged from these meetings. (Helpfully, the texts of several key documents are provided as appendices, and URLs for others are provided in footnotes.) While there is international agreement that each nation has an inalienable right to its archival heritage, existing resolutions are inadequate for the purposes of assisting in the recovery of displaced archival resources. Thus, Grimsted argues,

What is needed on the international front today is not more resolutions or another agreement that provides for more bilateral discussions and bilateral agreements. Realistic guidelines and mechanisms should involve more precise attempts to define in principle, and with concrete examples, the nature and types of archival materials that might be legitimately subject to claim in terms of their provenance, and additional data regarding the circumstances of migration (and/or alienation from the homeland) that might substantiate these claims. (p. 81)

The international politics of restitution is an extremely complicated and evermore high-profile business. It is imperative for the archival community to

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take an active and continuing role in this arena, unless it wishes to abdicate responsibility for alienated archives to lawyers, diplomats, and the court of public opinion. Grimsted's call to action is especially timely in light of recent history (conflicts and reorganization of the Balkan States, the new regime in Afghanistan, and so forth) and current events, such as the ongoing military action in Iraq.

Trophies of War is indeed a landmark achievement, remarkable for its depth and breadth. In addition to its appeal for archivists, it will be a must-read for those involved in cultural restitution issues, an invaluable resource for scholars on Eastern Europe, and pure enjoyment for historians and history buffs everywhere. It is impossible to do justice to this thoroughly researched work of scholarship in a brief overview. Readers will find that the true pleasure and value of this volume is in the details—in the precedents cited as the author outlines the archival heritage of Ukraine and in the recounting of specific cases of World War II plunder and restitution. More generally, *Trophies of War and Empire* draws attention to the significance of archives by placing them, as Charles Kecskeméti notes, “in the very heart of 20th-century politics, wars, cold wars, and power games” (pp. xii–xiii). And for that, the archival profession can be profoundly grateful.

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