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# The Music Collection of the Former Prussian State Library at the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków, Poland: Past, Present, and Future Developments

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## ABSTRACT

Before World War II the Prussian State Library, with its three million volumes, was one of the most important German libraries. It was operational until mid-1943, but the ever-increasing number of air raids over Berlin led to a large-scale evacuation of its collections to the east in late 1943 and early 1944. Among the most prized collections removed for safekeeping were hundreds of autograph scores and music manuscripts by Mozart, Beethoven, and Bach. As the result of postwar border changes some of these collections ended up in the Jagiellonian University Library in Kraków, where they remain. Since the unification of Germany consecutive German governments have been trying to negotiate the return of the Prussian music collection from Kraków to Berlin. However, negotiations have been extremely difficult as the broader question of German compensations for losses inflicted on Polish libraries by the Nazis is being raised. This article discusses the Prussian music collection in the context of cultural heritage and war reparations.

## INTRODUCTION

The story of the music collection of the Prussian state library in the aftermath of World War II exemplifies an ongoing debate about cultural loss, war reparations and restitution, and trophy collections. At the very center of this debate lies the question of Poland's right to the former Prussian State Library collection and Germany's accountability for cultural losses inflicted on Poland during World War II.

According to the November 2004 final report of a commission set up by Warsaw mayor Lech Kaczyński to estimate losses inflicted on Poland's capital

by Nazi Germany, Germany should pay Poland 45.3 billion dollars for the destruction of historic, private, and state buildings as well as elements of the city's infrastructure such as roads, bridges, sewer lines, and so on (Kraj, 2004). Regardless of how accurate these estimates and claims are and how likely they are to be successfully realized, the question of war reparations is very much alive almost sixty years after the end of World War II.

Since the unification of Germany, consecutive German governments have been trying to negotiate the return of the Prussian music collection from Kraków to Berlin. However, negotiations have been difficult as the broader question of German compensations for losses inflicted on Polish libraries surfaces every time the issue of possible return of the music collection is raised. This article discusses the history of the music collection of the Prussian State Library in the final years of World War II and its postwar years in Poland, including the latest developments after the fall of communism.

### THE WAR YEARS, 1939–45

Before World War II the Prussian State Library and the Bavarian State Library were the most prominent universal libraries in Nazi Germany (Olson, 1996, p. 62). The Prussian State Library had about three million volumes, including numerous rare books and manuscripts. One of the most important parts of its collection were musical manuscripts of great composers such as Johann Sebastian Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Amadeus Mozart. The library held 80 percent of Bach's manuscripts, more than 50 percent of Beethoven's manuscripts, and more than one-third of all Mozart's manuscripts. Although one of the first air raids by the British Royal Air Force to hit the Prussian State Library occurred as early as August 1940, the library remained operational until mid-1943 (Olson, 1996, p. 63). However, the evacuation of materials began in 1941 and continued until March 1945 (Jammers, 1997a, p. 113; Olson, 1996, p. 63). Among materials evacuated from Berlin were over 70,000 medieval and Eastern manuscripts, over 300,000 maps, and over 500,000 modern autographs (Jammers, 1997a, p. 113). These materials were taken to 30 safe storage depots scattered all over Germany. At first, book transports were carefully documented, but toward the end of the war materials were shipped, often unpacked, to "increasingly indeterminate locations" (Olson, 1996, p. 65). Of the ultimate 30 storage depots, 4 ended up in the American occupation zone, 1 in the French occupation zone, and 13 in the Soviet occupation zone. Five depots located in Pomerania and 6 in Silesia were first occupied by the Soviet Red Army and eventually fell under Polish jurisdiction, and 1 depot in northern Bohemia became Czechoslovak territory after the war (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, 1995, pp. 7–8). The whole prewar collection, including the music collection, was now scattered all over Central and Eastern Europe.

### THE POSTWAR YEARS, 1945–2000

Many collections evacuated from Berlin were hidden in mines, monasteries, and castles. Music manuscripts from the Prussian State Library, for example, were first hidden in the castle of Fürstenstein (Książ) and later transferred to the Benedictine abbey with its two churches located in Grüssau (Krzeszów) in Silesia. As a storage depot for rare materials the abbey served its purpose very well. It was not bombed by the Allied powers during the war nor was it destroyed by the Red Army advancing from the east. In addition to 505 boxes of materials from the Prussian State Library, there were an additional 500 boxes that contained the most valuable books from the Breslau (Wrocław) University and the Breslau (Wrocław) Public Libraries. The boxes were hidden in the attics of the two churches (Kalicki, 1994).

At the Potsdam Conference, held after Germany's surrender in 1945, the Allied powers placed Upper and Lower Silesia, Danzig, and parts of Brandenburg, Pomerania, and East Prussia under Polish administration. The decision to shift the Polish prewar boundary to the west was to compensate for Poland's territorial losses in the east. Stalin demanded that a large amount of Polish prewar territory in the east be annexed to the Soviet Union. Subsequently, millions of Poles were expelled from what was now the USSR and resettled in the areas obtained from Germany. A German-Polish border was now set along a line formed by the Odra (Oder) and Nysa (Neisse) rivers. Millions of ethnic Germans were forced to relocate to Germany, joining hundreds of thousands who had already fled the advancing Soviet Red Army. Grüssau became Krzeszów and all its inhabitants and property now belonged to Poland.

By mid-1946 only three Benedictines remained in Krzeszów (Grüssau). They were allowed to stay only after they had renounced their German citizenship and "reclaimed" Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Italy as their native countries (Kalicki, 1994). Sometime in 1946 Polish authorities discovered the existence of the hidden boxes and immediately decided to move them out of the abbey. The remaining monks were warned not to mention anything about the boxes to the Soviet soldiers stationed nearby. The Russians had already been shipping entire factories, construction materials, furniture, as well as art objects and precious archival and book collections (for example, the Berlin Sing-Akademie collection with over 5,100 predominantly manuscript music scores) from Germany and Silesia to the Soviet Union (Grimsted, 2001, pp. 249, 270). Since Warsaw was in ruins, many government agencies were temporarily operating out of Kraków, and that is where over 1,000 of the boxes were taken. In Kraków the collection from the Prussian State Library was kept in at least four different locations, including the Nowodworski-Collegium, before it was finally deposited in the Jagiellonian University Library (Biblioteka Jagiellonska) in December 1948 (Jammers, 1997a, 131).

### THE MUSIC COLLECTION

The music collection from the Prussian State Library included, among other things, over 100 Mozart autographs, including a whole manuscript of *Die Zauberflöte*, (*The Magic Flute*), the last two acts of *Le Nozze di Figaro* (*The Marriage of Figaro*), and one act of *Così fan tutte*, and 11 symphonies (including the *Jupiter* Symphony); 22 Beethoven autographs (including the Symphony No. 9 in D minor op. 125 without the choral finale), 25 autographs from the Bach collection, 112 autographs from the Cherubini collection, and almost all of Mendelssohn including his concertos for violin and the oratorio *Elijah* (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, 1995, p. 20; Kalicki, 1994).<sup>1</sup> In addition to autographs, the collection included 145 musical manuscripts from the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries, 133 librettos from the seventeenth century, and over 2,500 early music prints published between 1501 and 1700 (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, 1995, p. 20). The latter collection included early German hymnbooks, anthologies, works by anonymous composers, and numerous works by German and Italian composers (including 26 works by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina) (Patalas, 1999, pp. 258–61). This important music collection was almost immediately designated as officially secret by the authorities, and its existence would not be revealed for several decades (Zamorski, 1997a; Pirożyński, 1992).

### THE POLITICS OF SECRECY

The legal situation of the goods located in Poland's newly acquired northern and western territories was resolved by two government decrees of March 2, 1945, and March 8, 1946. The decrees specified that "all property of the former German Reich and Free City of Danzig, German and Danzig's natural and legal persons, as well as persons who fled to the enemy" had been taken over by the Polish State treasury (Nahlik, 1958, p. 296; Kowalski, 1998, pp. 67–68; Kowalski, 1997).<sup>2</sup> Cultural objects were not singled out in these decrees, but they definitely fell under the definition of "all property of the former German Reich" (Rzeczypospolita Polska, 1945a; Rzeczypospolita Polska, 1946).<sup>3</sup>

The nationalization of German cultural items did not make them more accessible to the public than before. On the contrary, some collections, like the music collection from the Prussian State Library, were kept in secret and few knew of their existence. There may have been several reasons why the Polish authorities decided to keep silent about the music collection. First, there was the concern that news about the collection being kept in Kraków might undermine negotiations with the Soviet Union and later with East Germany about the return of Polish cultural items appropriated by the Nazis. Contrary to official slogans about friendship between socialist countries, there was quiet disapproval and unease, even amongst some government officials, about how the Soviet Union was handling the issue of cultural reparations. Under the Polish-Soviet agreement on compensa-

tion for war losses inflicted by Nazi Germany, signed on August 16, 1945, the Soviet Union agreed that “15 percent of all reparations from the Soviet zone of occupation in Germany” would be delivered to Poland (Kowalski, 1994, p. 81). All Polish reparations (as a percentage of those received by the Soviet Union) could only be drawn from the Soviet-occupied zone in the east of Germany. Thus, German territory in the west, over twice the size of the Soviet-occupied zone, was excluded, along with the area that constituted American, British, and French occupation zones in the south, northwest, and southwest of Germany respectively.

The Bureau of War Restitution and Reparations in Warsaw compiled a list of objects from the Dresden Gallery, which shortly after the war had been taken to the Soviet Union as war booty, and demanded their delivery to Poland as compensation for cultural war losses. The list was ignored by the Soviet authorities who decided in 1953 to drop any further reparations claims against East Germany and two years later returned the whole Dresden Gallery to East Germany. The Polish government had to follow the same policy and issued on August 23, 1953, a declaration that “considering the fact that Germany has already fulfilled to a large degree its obligations in the area of reparations . . . the government of the People’s Republic of Poland has decided to renounce the pursuit of [German] reparations for Poland” (*Oświadczenie rządu*, 1953). Any future negotiations about the “exchange” (a term more politically neutral than “return”) of cultural items had to be conducted directly between Polish and East German governments. In 1954 Poland handed over 117 paintings by various German artists to East Germany, but the East Germans balked at returning the original architectural drawings of Warsaw’s buildings and instead presented Poland with an electron microscope (Kowalski, 1998, p. 68). Secret negotiations about the return of the music collection from the Prussian State Library to the German Democratic Republic were mostly unsuccessful and resulted in unusual political gestures by Polish authorities (see below).

Another reason for keeping silent about the music collection may be attributed to a general sense of historical justice. The Prussian State Library collection was considered by many, including librarians, to be small compensation for the extensive losses inflicted by the Nazis on Poland’s museums, libraries, archives, and private art collections and for the Nazis’ destruction of numerous historic buildings. There was also a widespread feeling of resignation that the return of Polish cultural objects from the eastern territories taken over by the Soviet Union would be of limited success, if not entirely impossible to carry out. Many probably thought that, in an uncertain international political climate and in a country with limited political sovereignty, the best way to make sure that the collection would stay in Poland was to keep silent about its existence and location. The collection thus remained off limits to Polish and international scholars, who could not study its precious manuscripts. It took decades to change this situation.

### UNSUCCESSFUL RETURNS: SECRET NEGOTIATIONS AND POLITICAL GESTURES

Despite the official policy of secrecy and denial, on several occasions Polish authorities contemplated the return of the Prussian State Library collection to East Germany. For example, in 1949 the Department of Libraries of the Ministry of Higher Education considered the exchange of archival materials, including the Prussian State Library collection, between Poland and Germany as a prelude to a peace conference. The conference did not happen and the exchange idea was abandoned (Kalicki, 2002, p. 380). In 1957 the Ministry of Higher Education was again making preparations to return, this time, "the whole collection of the former Prussian State Library" to East Germany. However, it remains unclear why at the last moment the whole operation was called off and the collection was never returned (Kalicki, 2002, pp. 380–81). In 1963 the Ministry of Higher Education ordered the director of the Jagiellonian Library to divide the collection of the Prussian State Library into those parts that should be kept in Kraków and those that should be sent to other Polish libraries. Eventually the ministry decided to send the part of the collection intended for the University of Łódź Library to East Germany, but again, for unknown reasons, this plan was abandoned (Kalicki, 2002, p. 384). Finally, in 1965 the Ministry of Higher Education informed the rector of the Jagiellonian University that an agreement had been made with East German authorities to return "part of the collection of the former Prussian State Library" to East Germany and since "the collection was the property of the Polish State" it would be sent as a gift commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Polish People's Republic and the 15th anniversary of the German Democratic Republic (Kalicki, 2002, p. 385). Altogether 92,000 volumes of materials from the collection of the former Prussian State Library were returned to East Germany. A large part of the returned collection included newspapers and periodicals coming not only from Kraków but also from Warsaw, Łódź, and Lublin, where parts of the collection had been kept after the war (Kalicki, 2002, p. 386). It was the first time since the end of World War II that Polish authorities surrendered any part of the Prussian State Library collection to East Germany. However, these materials did not include a single item from the music collection. This stayed in Kraków.

East German librarians discovered the whereabouts of the Prussian State Library music collection in the late 1960s. In 1966 Zofia Lissa, a University of Warsaw musicology professor, received a list of missing Grüssau manuscripts from Dr. Karl-Heinz Köhler of the Music Department of the German State Library in East Berlin (Lewis, 1981, p. 156). The following year Professor Lissa assured Professor Horst Kunze, the director of the German State Library in East Berlin, that "finally I have a full confidence that everything is there [in Kraków], and in good condition, well preserved" (Kalicki, 2002, p. 388). In 1970 Professor Kunze asked Otto Winzer, the

East German Foreign Minister, to propose to the Polish government that the Beethoven and Mozart manuscripts be returned to East Germany to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Beethoven's birth. The minister, however, refused to investigate this matter. Next, Kunze tried to get the attention of the East German prime minister, but this too failed. However, 1970 was not the right time to negotiate the return of cultural objects. Poland and the Soviet Union were negotiating a treaty with West Germany that would finally recognize formally the German-Polish border along the Odra (Oder) and Nysa (Neisse) rivers. East German claims to its musical heritage had to be put on hold in the face of West German reconciliatory *Ostpolitik* and the priorities of Soviet foreign policy.

In addition to attempts to exert political pressure by East Germany, some Polish musicologists began to question the official policy of secrecy about the music collection. In the mid-1970s Jan Stęszewski, a music professor and chairman of the Polish Composers' Association, consulted several prominent Polish musicologists who supported his idea that the Minister of Culture, Józef Tejchma, should be persuaded that the Prussian State Library music collection should no longer be kept secret. For Stęszewski it was "a matter of honor" that something be done about it (Kalicki, 2002, pp. 394–95). In 1976 he met with Tejchma and presented the position of the Polish Composers' Association that, "from the political, moral, scholarly, and artistic points of view, the existence of the collection of such significance must not be kept in secret" and "inaccessible to the rest of the world" (Kalicki, 2002, p. 397). The minister agreed to take the issue to his superiors as he was not in a position to make any decision about the collection.

Stęszewski, in his conversation with Tejchma, also mentioned some publications in the Western press openly accusing Polish authorities of hiding the Prussian State Library music from the rest of the world. Some Polish musicologists, through contacts with their Western colleagues, continued to try to stay informed as much as they could about what was being published about the music collection. In the late 1960s and early 1970s several articles had appeared dealing with the lost collections in journals and newspapers such as the *Book Collector*, *Notes*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, and *Kölnische Rundschau*.<sup>4</sup> Western musicologists were also aware of the activities of the American Carleton Smith, the British biologist Peter Whitehead, and the British journalist Nigel Lewis, all of whom were trying to resolve the mystery of missing collections from the former Prussian State Library. Lewis even devoted a book to this topic entitled *Paperchase: Mozart, Beethoven, Bach . . . The Search for their lost Music* (Lewis, 1981), though it was not published until 1981.

It is hard to say what kind of influence such publications had on the Polish political establishment, but it was not significant. Given their political and cultural isolation, even ignorance, most of Poland's governing elite was probably unaware of such articles published in the West. In 1976 the first secretary of the East German Communist Party, Erich Honecker,

asked his counterpart in Poland, Edward Gierek, to find and return the collections from the former Prussian State Library to East Berlin. At the beginning of 1977 Honecker was invited on a hunting trip to Poland during which Gierek informed him that “a team of our scholars has begun an intensive search and just uncovered the tracks of these precious [collections]” (Kalicki, 2002, p. 400). On April 26, 1977, the Polish government announced in a press release issued by the Polish Press Agency (PAP) that “a systematic and scrupulous search has recently been rewarded with successful results” that had led to “a precious discovery” of collections belonging to the former Prussian State Library. It was the first public announcement of the existence of such collections in Poland, though it did not say anything about the music collection in particular (Lewis, 1981, p. 227). The decision to reveal what was by then a thirty-two-year state secret about the Prussian State Library collections may have been influenced by three factors: Polish–East German strained relations and possible Soviet pressure to ease the tension, quiet but persistent dissent of some Polish musicologists at continuing to keep the music collections officially secret, and finally, to a lesser degree, publications in the Western press about possible whereabouts of the music collection.

Though the April 26, 1977, press release had not mentioned the music collection, the following day information about it and the Jagiellonian Library appeared in the German edition of the Warsaw newspaper *życie Warszawy*. It looked like the government was still not ready to reveal where the music collection was located. Finally, in May 1977, as an important part of ceremonies arising from the signing of a treaty of friendship and cooperation between Poland and East Germany, seven original scores from the Prussian State Library music collection were returned to East Germany. These included Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony and Third Piano Concerto; Mozart’s *Die Zauberflöte*, the Mass in C-minor, and the *Jupiter* Symphony; and Bach’s Concerto for Two Harpsichords and sonata No. 3 in A-flat for Flute and Harpsichord (Lewis, 1981, pp. 228–29). These manuscripts were described as “gifts of friendship” from socialist Poland to socialist East Germany and were presented to the Germans by the first secretary of the Polish United Workers Party, Edward Gierek, during his visit to East Berlin on May 29, 1977. The selection of the Ninth Symphony and *The Magic Flute* indicated either genuine commitment of the Polish authorities to return works of “the most intense significance nationally and the widest internationally” or belated reparations forced on Poland by East Germany (Lewis, 1981, p. 228). Regardless of the true reason behind the return of these seven scores, it was a one-time gesture that would not be repeated, though communist propagandists of both countries portrayed the gesture of the Polish authorities as a symbol of everlasting friendship between two nations. The return of the seven scores to East Germany confirmed indirectly for the first time the existence of the Prussian State Library music

collection in Poland (the press release in April 1977 as mentioned above spoke only of “precious collections”). Gierek’s visit to East Berlin in 1977 and Nigel Lewis’s publication of *Paperchase* in 1981 broke the secret of the Prussian State Library music collection once and for all.

### IMPASSE OF THE 1980S: THE POSTCOMMUNIST YEARS

The imposition of martial law in Poland in December 1981 caused an impasse in Polish–East German relations. Polish authorities bent on dismantling the “Solidarity” movement did not want to be concerned with issues of cultural restitution. Nevertheless, the East German government kept pressure on Poland, demanding the return of the remaining Prussian State Library collections to East Berlin. In 1985 the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs rejected East German claims to the collections as groundless (Kalicki, 2002, p. 427). In 1987 Poland’s leader, General Wojciech Jaruzelski, asked two Polish scholars of international law to prepare a legal report on the question of ownership of the collections. According to Professor Marian Wojciechowski and Professor Krzysztof Skubiszewski’s analysis, issued on April 8, 1987, “the collections of the former Prussian State Library became the property of the Polish State through its legal authority over the Regained Territories. This legal authority was given to Poland by the four Allied powers . . . and included the right to appropriate and confiscate German property” (Kalicki, 2002, pp. 427–28).<sup>5</sup> With the end of communism in Eastern Europe, neither Poland nor East Germany changed their negotiating positions, though there were some who continued to hope that the fall of communism would bring an acceptable solution to both sides.

The fall of communism and the unification of Germany did indeed change the character of negotiations. Poland was no longer negotiating with one of two German states that were often in competition with each other. Moreover, the Polish government no longer had to be concerned that its foreign policy follow the dictates of the Soviet Union as it had for the previous fifty years. Paradoxically, this may have made future negotiations more challenging as Poland and East Germany (now the Federal Republic of Germany) were conducting their foreign policy as sovereign states for the first time since the end of World War II.

It seemed that the new era carried promises of reconciliation and better understanding between Poland and Germany. On June 17, 1991, for example, both countries signed a treaty on good neighborly relations and friendly cooperation. This included article 28.3 stipulating that “the contracting parties shall, in the spirit of understanding and reconciliation, strive to resolve problems of cultural property and archives, starting with individual cases” (*Traktat między*, 1992; Czubek & Kosiewski, 2004, p. 129). This provision became the basis for bilateral negotiations that began in February 1992 and resulted in returning one considerable archeological collection back to Poland. This collection included some Bronze Age

gold jewelry and over 1,700 silver and gold coins that had been taken by the Nazis from archeological museums in Warsaw and Poznań at the end of the war. The Germans now demanded the return of all the collections of the former Prussian State Library. The Polish authorities in their turn made any return of the collections contingent upon the restoration of all cultural objects removed from Poland by Nazi Germany (Kalicki, 2002, pp. 433–34). The talks were suspended as both sides became more and more frustrated at the lack of progress.

In March 1997, to commemorate the 170th anniversary of the death of Beethoven, the Jagiellonian Library held an exhibition of his autographs (Zwiercan, 1997). For the first time since the end of World War II, his Symphony No. 8 in F major, op. 93 was displayed in one piece, part 3 from the Jagiellonian Library and parts 1, 2, and 4 borrowed from the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin-Preußischer Kulturbesitz. During the opening ceremony Antonius Jammers, the director of the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, thanked his Polish colleagues for preserving the collections of the former Prussian State Library and made clear his understanding that they had not been plundered by Poland but rather the Polish authorities had “saved these important cultural and historical documents from the Soviet grip, and [possibly] from insecure transfer to Moscow or some other location” (Jammers, 1997b). He also said that out of 45,000 pages comprising the prewar collection of Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart autographs, about 20 percent were located in the Jagiellonian Library, including 3 percent of all of Bach’s pages, 43 percent of all of Mozart’s pages, and 12 percent of all of Beethoven’s pages. Referring to Beethoven’s Eighth Symphony, he called it “a small example of an unnatural division of the Prussian treasure between Berlin and Kraków” (Jammers, 1997b). Finally, he offered financial help with the expansion of the Jagiellonian Library and expressed the hope that by 2002 the collection of Beethoven autographs would be returned to Berlin, promising the Jagiellonian Library a complete set of microfilms of all of this material (Jammers, 1997b). Speaking on the same occasion, Laurdis Hoelscher, Consul General of Germany in Kraków, emphasized the importance of the former Prussian State Library collections for Germany’s cultural identity and heritage. He stated that various parts of the music collection, though “separated by the war, complement each other and should be taken back in one piece to the place of their origin—Berlin” (Hoelscher, 1997). These remarks were not received favorably by the Poles. In an interview with a local newspaper in Kraków, for example, Krzysztof Zamorski, director of the Jagiellonian Library, rejected Germany’s offer of financial help, stating that “we are not trading the *Berlinka* (Berlin Library) [collection] off” and reiterated that “the *Berlinka* (Berlin Library) collection found itself in Poland as the result of the war, which had not been started by Poland” (Zamorski, 1997b). It seemed obvious that Polish-German negotiations had reached another impasse.

In December 2000 Polish prime minister Jerzy Buzek made a spectacular gesture by returning the 1522 German edition of the Bible that had been translated by Martin Luther and that had been owned by the Prussian State Library to German chancellor Gerard Schröder (Czubek & Kowiewski, 2004, p. 130). Buzek's action reminded many of Gierek's decision to return a few items from the music collection of the Prussian State Library to East Germany in the late 1970s. Like Gierek's gesture, it did not break the impasse surrounding the negotiations to return the whole of the Prussian State Library collections to Germany.

## CONCLUSIONS

Sixty years after the end of World War II and almost sixteen years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Poland and Germany are still negotiating the return of cultural objects. The German government would like to see the return of all collections of the former Prussian State Library to Berlin. The Polish government has raised the broader question of German compensations for cultural losses inflicted on Poland as well as the return of any remaining art objects plundered by the Nazis that may still be in Germany. According to Klaus-Dieter Lehmann, president of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, there are no cultural objects taken from Poland to Germany that would be equal in value to the collections from the Prussian State Library (Lehmann, 2003). This may be true of some 100 objects identified in public collections (for example, museums or libraries) as having been taken from Poland during World War II. However, some art experts believe that there are still many Polish art objects, some of them extremely valuable, that ended up in private collections in Germany or had been taken out of Germany, thus making their successful recovery almost impossible (Lehman, 2003; Cieślińska, 2003). The Polish government demands the return of objects of equal value to the Prussian State Library collections, and the German government insists that most objects appropriated by the Nazis have already been returned and is either unwilling or in no position to deal with private collectors who may have obtained plundered Polish art objects (Nicholas, 1994, pp. 78, 80). Thus, the situation is a stalemate.

In addition to government talks, there have been informal contacts between Polish and German scholars aimed at breaking the impasse of the official negotiations. In 2000 a group of Polish and German intellectuals calling themselves the Copernicus Group (*Grupa Kopernika* or *Kopernikus Gruppe*) published in the German daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* a list of proposals, one of the most important of which was that Poland have representatives assigned to the board of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation (Czubek & Kowiewski, 2004, p. 131). The argument was that with Polish board members, Poland would in effect become co-owner of the music collection from the former Prussian State Library. The Copernicus Group also called on the German government to disclose all the informa-

tion it had about plundered art objects and to return them to Poland. They also demanded that Poland return the collections from the former Prussian State Library, with the exception of the music collection, to Berlin. The music collection, they suggested, should stay in the Jagiellonian Library as a permanent deposit of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation. The Copernicus Group's proposals aroused some interest in both the Polish and German media but had no impact on further negotiations partly because the demand to change the nature of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation was unrealistic. It was, however, an interesting and open-minded initiative aimed at breaking an almost decade-long deadlock that shows every sign of continuing.<sup>6</sup>

## NOTES

1. The term *autograph* is defined as "a manuscript of a musical work written in its composer's hand, as opposed to music in the hand of a copyist or printed music" (Randel, 2003, p. 66). The entirety of Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* has been spared, even though today Acts I and II are divided geographically from Acts III and IV, the first two being in Berlin and the last two in Kraków. See Alan Tyson (1987).
2. For the history of Polish-German reparations, including some declassified archival documents, see Góralski (2004).
3. See also *Rzeczypospolitej Polska* (1945b).
4. For a list of journal and newspaper articles dealing with the lost collections of the Prussian State Library see "Auswahlbibliographie" in Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (1995, pp. 47–50).
5. The term *Ziemię Odzyskane* (Regained Territories) refers to Upper and Lower Silesia, Danzig (Gdańsk), and parts of Brandenburg, Pomerania (Pomorze), and East Prussia given to Poland at the Potsdam Conference, held after Germany's surrender in 1945.
6. For a discussion of the Copernicus Group, see Traba (2004).

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