

THE MASONIC COLLECTION OF THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
IN POZNAN



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The activity of Freemasonry was appropriately matched and accompanied by a significant development of Masonic writings. The growing number of publications was recorded by and reflected in basic bibliographies of Freemasonry¹. This literature constituted the core of the collections in libraries of Masonic lodges. According to the estimates given by the German Museum of Freemasonry in Bayreuth, round about the year 1930, all Masonic collection in Germany put together amounted to 200,000 library units². The steady development of these libraries was abruptly changed and put to an end by Hitler's coming to power. Lodges were either closed or forced to close, and their property was confiscated. Libraries of some of lodges, like that, for example, at Altenburg, were burned down by triumphant SAmen.³ The bulk of the collections was taken over by the Gestapo, and the books were handed over to the Professional Library of the SS Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler, housed in the buildings confiscated from the Masonic lodges in Berlin (at 12 Emserstrasse – the building

The first version of the present article was published in 1992 in the periodical *Ars Regia* 1992 No. 1 (including an English translation; a German translation was published in *Quatuor Coronati Jahrbuch*, No. 30). However, the results of further studies on the collections plundered during the war and the need for updating information on the collections prompted a necessity of writing a new and revised version of the article. The new version was published in the annual publication of the University Library in Poznań *Biblioteka*, 2006, No. 10.

¹ August Wolfstieg, *Bibliographie der Freimaurerischen Literatur*. – Bd. 1-3. – Burg, 1911-1913 ; Bernhard Beyer, *Bibliographie der Freimaurerischen Literatur. - Erster Ergänzungsband*. – Leipzig 1926 ; Hans Quint, *Selbständige Freimaurerliteratur aus den Jahren 1901 – 1926 // Bibliographische Mitteilungen aus dem Verein deutscher Freimaurer*. - 1927 – 1928 Nr. 3 – 4.

² Information received from Mr. Herbert Schneider, Director of the German Masonic Museum in the years 1980 – 1996.

³ Information received from Mr. Hans-Georg Lesser van Waveren, Director of the German Masonic Museum in the years 1996 – 2002, obtained from the members of the lodge from 1933.

that previously belonged to the Grand Lodge of Hamburg, and, temporarily, in Eisenacherstrasse – in the building of the United Grand Lodge of Germany.⁴ The seized books were partly processed, many of them were stamped with the cachet of the Reichsführer' library. Some bear a stamp with the provenance of a book. The collection of the Reichsführer SS Professional Library was also supplemented by purchases and acquisitions in German bookshops, those of neutral countries, and even through the agency of middlemen from the allies countries.⁵ After the formation of the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (Reich Main Security Office or Reich Security Main Office – RSHA), the library was eventually incorporated into its Office of Written Records, Office VII (Reichssicherheitshauptamt Amt VII) as a protective depository for the seized materials.

The annexation of Austria into Greater Germany (the so called 'Anschluss') and seizure of the collections of lodges in Austria paved the way for a new stage in Nazi's plundering of Masonic collections. In the course of time, the collection of books confiscated from German lodges was supplemented, between the years 1939 – 1942, with books plundered in the countries successively subjugated to Nazi Germany. The year 1940 was particularly "prosperous" at that. The rapid conquest of many countries came as a total surprise to Freemason lodges in Scandinavia and Western Europe. The plundering of Masonic collections was engineered and organized by a specially appointed *Einsatzstab* accountable to Alfred Rosenberg and the competing power groupings of the RSHA⁶. The Nazis looted, for example, the collection of the Grand East of the Netherlands at The Hague, which included the library of Georg Kloss, a nineteenth century bibliographer and a historian of Freemasonry, purchased posthumously by Prince of Orange and donated to the Grand East⁷. The library of the

⁴ Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, *Twice plundered or „Twice saved“? : Identifying Russia's "Trophy" Archives and the Loot of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt // Holocaust and Genocide Studies*. - Vol. 15 (2001) Nr 2, p. 199.

⁵ Archives of the Library, call number 537, k. 18.

⁶ Ludwik Hass, *Zasady w godzinie próby : wolnomularstwo w Europie środkowo – wschodniej 1929-1941*. - . Warszawa : PWN, 1987, p. 251.

⁷ A. Van de Sande, *Vrijmetselarij in de Lage Landen*. – Zutphen, 1995, p. 146.

Grand Lodge of Norway shared the same fate⁸. Similar situation occurred in Belgium. In France, after the initial defeats in 1940, the registers of members of the Grand East and the Grand Lodge were relocated to the province. Soon, when the total defeat was evident, the materials were subsequently destroyed⁹. The Gestapo temporarily took over the buildings of French obediences. The Einsatzstab men plundered a significant part of the archives. After a few weeks, buildings and the remaining part of library materials were handed to collaborators who, protected by the SS, collected material later used in anti-Masonic propaganda. There were two centres of this kind in Paris: one, led by Bernard Fay, was at Bibliothèque Nationale and exploited materials stolen from the collections of the Grand Orient de France, the other, called Centre d'Action et de Documentation and directed by Henri Coston, and had at its disposal the collections stolen from the Grande Loge de France.¹⁰

Until 1943, the seized masonic books were located in Berlin. However, the increasing air raids conducted by the allied air forces on the city forced the management of the Professional Library of the SS Reichsführer to evacuate them from the bombed region. The book collections and the Masonic archival material was taken to Silesia and to northern Bohemia near Boemisch Leipa (Czech: Ceska Lipa). Part of the books and the Masonic archival material brought to Silesia were first located in Książ (German: Fuerstenstein), and then, following other duties additionally assigned to the castle at Książ, the Masonic collections were transferred to Wilkanów (German: Wölfelsdorf) in the Kłodzko Valley. All the collection of the library, amounting to 100,000 – 150,000 volumes and processed and catalogued, was transferred directly to Sława Śląska (German: Schlawa, between 1939-1945 Schlesiersee), a small town on the border of Lower Silesia and Lubusz Land (Ziemia Lubuska), not far away from the pre-war German-Polish border. The collection was placed in a rented palace that belonged to the Haugwitz family. The collections in

⁸ *Den Norske frimurerordens stambus : hundre år i bybildet ; 1894 – 1994*. – Oslo : Faktum, 1994, p. 82.

⁹ Ludwik Hass, *Świat wolnomularski – konkrety*. – T.1, Trudne czasy 1932-1945. – Łowicz : Mazowiecka Wyższa Szkoła Humanistyczno-Pedagogiczna, 2004, p.236.

¹⁰ Dominique Rossignol, *Vichy et les Francs-maçons*. – Paris 1981.

Wilkanowo and those in the northern Bohemia were only stacked for preservation, whereas those in Sława still underwent further study by documentalists of the Amt VII of the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) as far as January 1945¹¹. In autumn 1944, a further batch of at least a part of archival material and card indices of Coston's Centre d'Action et Documentation was received¹². In January the following year, during the retreat in face of the advancing Red Army, part of the collections from Sława was relocated back to Berlin, to the vault in Emserstrasse. Another part, including valuable Dutch collections, bypassing Berlin, was sent to Thuringen and Hessen.¹³

After the ceasefire, the fate of the confiscated and plundered Masonic collections depended on who was involved in getting hold of them. The collections of the Grand East of the Netherlands were discovered by American troops in a shed in the village of Hirzenhain in 1946. An American officer who was a Freemason himself commanded the troops and thus eventually they were promptly sent back to The Hague¹⁴. Various dispersed collections of Masonic material were intercepted by American or British soldiers and privately shipped to the US and Great Britain. The collections from Berlin, northern part of Bohemia and from Wilkanów were taken over by the Red Army and, as the "spoils of war", shipped to Moscow¹⁵. The archives were given to the exclusive use of the NKWD, the books filled

¹¹ Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, op. cit. p. 202 – 205.

¹² The base for the hypothesis is the fact that numerous French materials were found at Sława. However, as a rule, the Nazis would hand them over to French collaborators. The collections that were in possession of Fay remained at the National Library in Paris. Coston fled with the retreating German troops, cf. Dominique Rossignol, *Vichy et les Francs-maçons*. – Paris 1981.

¹³ Patricia Kennedy Grimsted op. cit. p. 204 – 205.

¹⁴ A. Van de Sande, *Vrijmetselarij in de Lage Landen*. – Zutphen, 1995, p. 146; according to the account given by Evert Kwaadgras, director and custodian of the Masonic Cultural Centre at the Hague.

¹⁵ It is highly probable that the Russians did not manage to ship all of the items from the collection housed at 12 Emserstrasse to Moscow. Emserstrasse is situated in the western part of Berlin and the material that had not been taken away until July 1945, was subsequently taken over by the Americans. This may be proved by the fact that the Free University in Berlin still possesses some books and materials from library of the Grand Lodge of the Three Globes in Berlin, which still bear shelf marks of the Reichsführer library written in pencil.

the lists of prohibited books preserved in the main libraries of Moscow¹⁶. The eighteenth and nineteenth century German archival material that was of significant historical value but was at the same time useless for the NKWD, was later handed back to the GDR (East Germany). The material was housed at the central Archives of the GDR in Merseburg and then went through the process of library preparation. However, no scholars outside the GDR were allowed to participate. After the reunification of Germany, these archival materials were shifted to Berlin–Dahlem and incorporated into the Secret Archive of the State Prussian Cultural Heritage¹⁷. Most of the archival material and book collections plundered by the Nazis in occupied countries and then taken over by Russian troops was not reunited with their former owners for decades. Part of French documents and materials, formerly housed in Czechoslovakia and at Wilkanów, was handed back to their owners as late as 2000.¹⁸ However, the books have remained in Moscow libraries¹⁹.

Sława was spared from military events. In January 1945, having relocated some of the collection, the SS-men burned some of the archival material kept at Sława. The front-line units of the Red Army marched into the town at the turn of January and February. Trophy hunting units of the Red Army for some reason did not make it to Sława. But in the town there were forced labourers – Poles, who mostly came from the neighbouring counties of Greater Poland. Some of them, after the front line units advanced further westwards, decided to settle down in Sława and stay there for good. Hence, as early as the summer of 1945, though military activity was still going on just several kilometres away, Polish administration officials appeared in the town. The Poles who stayed at Sława during the war let Director of the University Library in Poznań, Prof. Aleksander Birkenmajer, know about the remaining collections. Prof. Birkenmajer

¹⁶ Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, op. cit. p. 206 – 208.

¹⁷ Renate Endler, Elisabeth Schwarze, *Die Freimaurerbestände im Geheimen Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz*, - Bd. 1. – Frankfurt am Main [et al.], 1994, p. 47.

¹⁸ *EM-Akten des KGB zurückgekehrt // Blaue Blätter*. - 2001, Nr 301, p.7.

¹⁹ Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, op. cit. p. 204 – 205; Ingo Kolasa, *Sag mir wo die Bücher sind // Zeitschrift für Bibliothekswesen und Bibliographie*. - 1995 Jg. 42 H. 4, p.359.

was the government's plenipotentiary for matters concerning safeguarding of abandoned and survived collections²⁰.

In 1945, Polish librarians throughout the country carried out a particular operation to scout out abandoned book collections for their further preservation. This applied to both Polish book collections displaced from their original libraries and Polish book collections seized by the Germans from various institutions and private collections whose owners were forcefully displaced from Western Poland to the newly established General Gouvernement. Eventually, the operation also applied to book collections that belonged to German institutions and had been abandoned in the territories that, after 1945, were incorporated to Poland.

In its operation, the University Library covered with its activity Greater Poland, Lubusz Land and Western Pomerania. Safeguarded collections from within the areas were shipped to Poznań, sorted out and tentatively catalogued to be then handed over back to their rightful Polish owners. The collections whose owners could not be traced, or those that were seized by the authorities supplemented the ransacked library resources²¹.

Prof. Birkenmajer, the then director of the University Library, sent Ludwik Gocł, a staff member of the library, to Sława Śląska. Ludwik Gocel arrived at Sława on April 16, 1945 and immediately made straight for the palace. The books in question were placed in three grand rooms, five big rooms of the eighteenth century palace and its grand hall, partly stocked in piles, partly on the shelves. It took two days for L. Gocel to go through the books with their first cursory evaluation. According to his estimates there were about 100,000 to 150,000 volumes. L. Gocel found Masonic material to be the most valuable part of the books housed at Sława. However, he erroneously assumed that the bulk of the material gathered in the palace was of some interest to Freemasonry as he also included to the lot books on

²⁰ Archive of the Library, call number 537, k.15.

²¹ Stanisław Kubiak, *Biblioteka Uniwersytetu im Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu 1919 – 1966*. – Poznań 1967, p. 107 – 111. ; Małgorzata Głowacka-Helak *Rewindykacja księgozbioru Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej w Poznaniu oraz zabezpieczenie zbiorów porzuconych i opuszczonych w latach 1945 – 1946 na terenie Wielkopolski i Ziemi Odzyskanych // Roczn. Bibliot. - R. 35(1991) z. 1/2, p. 272 – 290, includes further references.*

Jesuits, Jews or witches that were also in the sphere of interest of H. Himmler and the VII Amt of the RSHA. On the basis of the provenance marks placed on books and periodicals he was then in position to isolate properly those books that had come from Masonic lodges and those that had come from special purchases of the Reichsführer SS Professional Library. Gocel noted that about 25% of books and publications had been stamped with the seals of the Professional Library.²²

Immediately on his return to Poznań on April 21, 1945, Ludwik Gocel submitted a relevant written report. The response from the authorities of the University and the management of the library was swift. Three days later Rector of the University told L. Gocel to safeguard the Sława collections and start delivering them in batches to Poznań. A provisional approval of the decision was given, and, on July 11, written consent from the Ministry of Education to accommodate the collections was issued. Until the first transport was ready to leave, the Sława collection was entrusted to the officials of the Culture Section of the district authorities of the Głogów county residing at Sława. The shipments commenced from April 28. By the end of July 16 batches of shipment by lorries were effected. Some of the books, in crates and cardboard boxes, were shipped by train. The shipments were escorted by staff members of the University Library²³. By May 1946, the bulk of the collection was shipped to Poznań. The rest of the collection from Sława and the neighbouring Lubogoszcz was successively shipped as late as 1947 – 1948²⁴. The operation was hampered by lack of sufficient resources for covering the costs of the shipment. It should be mentioned that Sława was just one of many locations from where books were to be shipped to Poznań²⁵.

²² Archives of Poznań University Library, call number 537, k. 17 -19 ; A. Jazdon, *Zbiory zabezpieczone w Sławie w zbiorach Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej w Poznaniu* // *Nasza Sława* . - Nr 1 (4) 1997, p.5-6. reprint in a special edition in Polish and German: *Die in Sława abgesicherten Sammlungen in den Bücherbeständen der Universitätsbibliothek* // *Nasza Sława*. - R. 5 Nr 2 (17) 2000, p. 8, 13.

²³ Archive of PUL, call number 537, k. 50 -53.

²⁴ Annual Report of Poznań University Library, the year 1948, p. 72.

²⁵ Małgorzata Głowacka-Helak *Rewindykacja...*, p.285-286.

In the summer months of 1945, some of the inhabitants of the town of Sława, took books or sections of card indices from the palace as keepsakes. It was only many years later that some of the cards that may be assigned as the ones from the Coston card index and other card indices of the Amt VII RSHA found their way to the University Library²⁶.

The French books and archival material was successfully restituted to France in the years 1947 – 1948. In July 1947, the Ministry of Education let the director of the University Library know about a planned visit of Paul Chevallier, the cultural attaché of the embassy of the French Republic in Warsaw, to the library²⁷. Paul Chevalier arrived at the Library on August 5th. After the initial talk with Dr. Jan Baumgart, the deputy librarian, he went to Sława accompanied by Maria Michałowska, a staff member of the Library. They returned together with three crates that might have included French books and archival material²⁸. The contents of the crates were checked and a record of items was made. However, it was revealed that they included only part of the French material mixed with other material, including German books and documents. Further searches in the storehouses housing the safeguarded collection at *Coll. Medicum* were of no avail²⁹. Despite only partly successive Paul Chevallier's fact-finding mission, in November the Library hosted Jean Prinnet of the National Library in Paris³⁰. Accompanied by three or four staff members of the Library, J. Prinnet went through the collections of the recovered and safeguarded material available in Poznań at the time. The found relevant printed material was then put into crates and shipped, through the agency of the French consulate, to France³¹. In 1948, another guest from Paris, Antoinette Poisson, visited the library, but there is no account if she found any additional materials. As a result

²⁶ Annual Report of the Masonic Section for the year 1998, p.4 ; Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, op. cit. p. 220 ; A. Pacyga, *Zarys dziejów Sławy do 1945 roku. Cz. 4. Kultura (4)* // Nasza Sława. - Nr 3 (10) 1998, p. 4.

²⁷ Archive of PUL, call number 547, k. 101.

²⁸ Archive of PUL, call number 540, k. 169.

²⁹ The Archives of the Library, call number: 547, k. 111-112.

³⁰ The Archives of the Library, call number: 547, k. 192-193.

³¹ Annual Report of Poznań University Library for the Year 1947, p. 82-83.

of all these efforts, the French found, and then shipped to France, almost all relevant material and books once stored at the *Centre d'Action et de Documentation* (Action and Documentation Centre). The ones that left were only those that had got mixed with other books.

The material shipped to Poznań from Sława was handled in the following way: part of the publications related to economic and political matters was handed over to the libraries, institutes and the chairs of the University. The remaining part of the group was included to the secured collection of the University Library and its particular items were then gradually incorporated into the Library's resources or, alternatively, exchanged with other Polish research libraries. The same mode of procedure was applied to publications related to the Jesuits and witchcraft trials³².

Thus, the archival material that was available at Poznań University Library at the time formed only a part of the original larger collection from Sława. The most valuable sets were sent back to Berlin, other sets were destroyed. The 21 crates of archival material of various provenance found in Sława, partly mixed with printed material, were handed over by the Ministry of Education, to the Ministry of Public Security of Poland³³. A request placed by the Ministry of Education for library materials in the archives to be left at libraries was rejected³⁴. The relevant papers related to the request are currently held at the Institute of National Remembrance. What has been left was not of much value though there remained a few interesting sets of documents in the lot.

The printed Masonic material seized at Sława included various parts of the collections from different lodge libraries. Not a single collection was preserved in its entirety, not even extensive runs of periodicals of the same provenance. Instead, there were many duplicate copies of the same titles, especially those of popular interest. The fact that the Library was in possession of such a large collection of

³² Małgorzata Głowacka-Helak, *Działalność Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej w Poznaniu nad zagospodarowaniem księgozbiorów porzuconych i opuszczonych. Lata 1947 – 1950* // Biblioteka. - Nr. 7.2003

³³ The Archives of the Library, call number: 540, k. 65.

³⁴ The Archives of the Library, call number: 540, k.117.

Masonic books put it in a special position and made it possible to create a valuable collection of its own.

Having transported books to Poznań, staff members of the Library started to catalogue the Masonic books tentatively. The so-called accession catalogue that was intended to put some order in the collections before they were to be handed over for full and extensive cataloguing process at the Library has been preserved until our times.

In 1958 a historian, Dr Stanisław Kubiak, became the Director of the Library. He addressed the professors of history at the University, Prof. Witold Jakóbczyk and Prof. Janusz Pajewski, with the question of how to treat the Masonic books, present in the current collections of the Library. Following their advice, he made the decision to proceed with the Masonic documents as a separate collection with its own inventory and catalogue³⁵.

The collection of *Masonica* of the University Library in Poznań has been in existence since the 1st of January 1959.

Masonic documents including some rare and particularly valuable collections, are, as they have always been, in many research libraries, both in Poland and in other European countries, forming a base for Masonic libraries. However, the separation of a Masonic content is unique to the University Library in Poznań. This formula has been proven particularly valuable for users of the collection.

During the period 1959-1981, 29 thousand volumes were examined. Work on these very specific Masonic documents caused much difficulty for those who had only sporadic contact with them. Therefore, in October 1981 an Independent Division of the Masonic Collections was created. Its employees were originally to deal only with the description of the collection. Gradually, as they gained more experience, they extended their duties, taking over the administration of the still unprocessed collection, and serving the users (with scientific information and providing access to the books).

The oldest part of the collection is made out of Seventeenth-century documents of the Rosicrucians. The Eighteenth-century documents number over four thousand. Since a large number of the pamphlets have been bound together, the collection has approxi-

³⁵ Information obtained from Prof. Stanisław Kubiak and Prof. Janusz Pajewski.

mately 3 thousand volumes: The largest part of the collection dates from the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries (until 1933-1935). There are around 52 thousand of the so-called "new" documents, including about 12,000 books and pamphlets, and 40 thousand annual sets of periodicals. A small, but still-being-supplemented number of post-war documents (approximately 500 volumes at the moment) cover contemporary literature on Freemasonry. Thanks to international exchange, basic scientific German and English periodicals are coming in, currently amounting to 1,700 volumes and 455 annuals of 44 titles of periodicals. The collection is still far from reaching a point of being a complete reference reading collection of modern Masonic literature, yet it is a fairly representative sample of it. Each year a report on the new acquisitions is published.

By language, about 3/4 of the documents in the collection are in German. Additionally, there are many documents in French and English. Documents in other languages are represented to a small extent. The weakest point of the collection as it was in 1945 was the almost total lack of documents of the Polish Freemasonry. This shortcoming is envisaged to be compensated by way of purchases from antiquarian bookshops or at auctions. Following the planned purchase policy of Polish books and documents, it has been possible to gather most of the titles of Polish literature on Freemasonry of the second half of the Nineteenth century and the first half of the Twentieth century. Regrettably, Polish books and documents documenting the Freemasonry from the years 1780 – 1822 are still too few in the collection.

Catalogued books and documents available for the reader are supplemented with two representative collections from the lodge libraries: The Grand Lodge of Five United Lodges of Hamburg and the Lodge called "Three Globes", with the seat in Breslau (both amounting to about 5,000 volumes)³⁶.

The catalogued books and documents include a complete collection of German encyclopaedias on Freemasonry and some written

³⁶ Printed catalogues of the libraries in question: Karl Wahlstedt, *Katalog der Bibliothek der unter der Grossen Loge von Hamburg vereinigten fünf hamburgischen Logen*. – Hamburg, 1901; Alfred Ockler, *Verzeichnis der Büchersammlung der ger.: u.: vollk.: St. Johannis-Loge Friedrich zum goldenen Zepter in Breslau*. – Breslau, 1897.

in English and French. More extensive general study papers number a few hundred items. A wide spectrum of issues is also presented in manuals, handbooks and brochures (presenting the propaedeutics of Freemasonry), as well as numerous apologetically and polemic brochures.

The collection is rich in all basic bibliographies of Masonic literature. Supplementing them and at the same time showing the richness of the collections of the Masonic libraries are many printed catalogues of lodge libraries. Booksellers' catalogues registering documents play a similar role by Masonic publishing houses and bookshops.

Periodical publications make up 70% of the collections. Among them are 118 German magazine titles and a similar number of titles in other languages. One can find almost all the magazine titles that count here, and the presently existing gaps in those sets will be filled in during the next few years. Beside typical magazines, among the periodicals there are 32 titles of German almanacs and calendars and similar French and English publications. The next group of periodicals are the reports of the St. Johns Lodges and the Grand Lodges, and of Masonic cultural and charity associations. Reports in German number 115 titles. A numerous collection of lists of the members of German lodges is of great source value. There are almost complete for the years 1871-1919. There are some gaps in the lists from the time of the Weimar Republic and from the period between the March Revolution 1848/49 until the unification of Germany. The most valuable pieces in this collection are the least complete lists of lodge members from the Eighteenth century until the end of the first half of the Nineteenth century. The local history of Freemasonry is reflected in bilingual publications of the registers of lodge members of Poznań published both in German and Polish. Bilingual lists of members continued to be published until 1872.

The registers and lists available in the collection are entirely filled arranged according to place and lodges though they will probably not undergo formal cataloguing but will be simply put in alphabetical order and thus made available. Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-century speeches and collections of speeches delivered in lodges are represented in especially large numbers. They reflect the interests of the Freemasons and are the evidence of the educational work, which

was going on in those workshops. Works by the most outstanding Masonic authors are also gathered here. Panegyric speeches delivered on the occasions of different jubilees and mourning lodges prevail among biographical publications. They are of some value, as they contribute basic biographical data, not only about the outstanding personages from the Masonic world, but also about those less known or completely unknown Masons especially in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth century. This information can be used in research on the social composition of the Freemasonry. Beside panegyric documents there are also scientific biographies of many Freemasons here.

An interesting group of documents are literary works. Texts of Masonic songs and song collections prevail among them. Some of those collections are supplemented by music. Apart from that, poems and other poetic works, recited or read in lodges on the occasions of different fests and celebrations, are present in this group of documents. This group of texts is of the smallest value, but because of their large quantity it is a literary phenomenon, worthy of note. Prose is represented by nineteenth century philosophical stories and novels. There are also anti-Masonic examples. A fine example of the above is a book written by Andrew Michael Ramsay entitled "Les voyages de Cyrus". The collection lacks the French original, but German editions of the book in French, its German and Polish translations are available. There are also a few dramas with Masonic subject matter, including "Ernst und Falk," G.E. Lessing's views on Freemasonry presented in the dialogue-form.

The next group are documents presenting the philosophical, ethical and social issues of the Freemasonry. Some of them present the philosophy of the Freemasonry and also its opinion on individual currents in the philosophical thought. These include the controversial works of the prominent Polish philosopher F.B. Trentowski and just as controversial books written by the German Freemason J.G. Findl. A large group of documents presents the relationship of the Freemasonry to Christianity and its different creeds. It covers both polemics against the Catholic Church and attempts to find a common philosophical basis and ways of practical collaboration with it, such as those undertaken by Albert Lantoiné. There are also works devoted to ethics, composed of many editions of texts of the Old Charges and comments on them, and also publications devoted to individual as-

pects of that issue. The social thought of the Freemasonry can be followed in the works presenting the relation of the Order to such problems as socialism, anti-Semitism, women's issues, and to the growing threat of fascism and right-wing nationalism during the last years before World War II. In this group of documents there are also publications devoted to knowledge of the occult.

Many documents are devoted to the history of Freemasonry, presenting the „prehistory” of the movement, i.e. the history of numerous mystery societies and mystery celebrations, from ancient times to the present day. Others describe the history of the mediaeval Order of the Knights Templar, to whose legend Freemasonry strongly referred, and finally, other ones, on the history of mediaeval builders' confraternities.

Many documents present the history of the Freemasonry from its beginning until the present day, both on the scientific and popular level. A much smaller number of authors deal with the history of the Freemasonry during different periods. The largest number of them present that history, as shown in different countries, regions and cities. Publications devoted to the history of the Grand Lodges consist of both scientific papers, as well as those with the character of a reliable chronicler's work, and also contributors' notes and worthless panegyrics.

There are a few hundred Masonic constitutions and statutes in the collection. The treasure among them is the first edition of the Anderson's Constitution from 1723, still applicable in its core for all Freemasons until this day. A number of its reprints and later editions and adaptations have also been preserved and finally a complete set of the statutes of the German Grand Lodges (all editions) and many from other lodges. In addition, a large part of the collection is composed of statutes of individual lodges. One can also find a series of statutes of Masonic charity and cultural foundations and associations.

A small division of documents gathers publications devoted to the external work of the Freemasonry i.e. charitable, cultural and publicity activities.

Many interesting documents concern Masonic rituals and symbols. They include study papers on the problems concerning the rite, analysing the development of its multi-level structure, and also describing the Masonic symbolism as well as individual symbols. Apart

from study papers, there are many ritual source texts here, such as numerous catechisms, most often for the symbolic degrees, and books of rites of entire systems, as well as many initiation rites and other Masonic ceremonies. One can also find extracts for individual members of lodges' managements. Some of the most interesting in this group are Eighteenth-century anti-Masonic texts, being the first publications including descriptions of Masonic rituals. The most technically accomplished are those of Bernigeroth. The most interesting in this group are anti-Masonic texts that include descriptions of Masonic rites.

An interesting part of the collection is the documents of some different associations similar in their character and rites to the Freemasonry. The most valuable group considered by many scientists beyond "price", are seventeenth century documents by the Rosicrucians. There are approximately 75 titles of different publications from 1616-1628 here, among them fundamental works of this movement (including almost all the publications of the German Rosicrucians). There are also Rosicrucians' documents from the Eighteenth century, and also valuable documents of the Eighteenth-century Illuminates. This group of collections includes documents of associations referring to the Knights Templar, a Jewish organisation called B'nai B'rith, the Druids, Schlarafia, Rotarians and other organizations.

The last division of the collection is the anti-Masonic literature from the Eighteenth to Twentieth century.

Since 1969, the Masonic collection of the University Library in Poznań has been housed in the eighteenth-century palace at Ciążeń-on-Warta (Słupca county)³⁷. Old books and documents dating back to the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries are held, for security

³⁷ *Ciążeń : Pałac Biskupi* In: Katalog zabytków sztuki w Polsce - T.5, z. 22, Powiat słupecki. – Warszawa: Inst. Sztuki PAN, 1960. - p.1-4. : il. ; Janina Myślińska, *Pałac biskupi w Ciążeniu* // Biuletyn Historii Sztuki, R. 19(1957), p. 404-405 : il. ; Andrzej Bendziński, *Pałac w Ciążeniu i jego funkcje biblioteczne* // Biblioteka Nr 3 (12) 1999, p. 33-37. ; folder Andrzej Bendziński, Andrzej Karpowicz, *Pałac w Ciążeniu*. – [Warszawa: Sztuka Królewska w Polsce, 1992]. – 20 p. : il. ; 20 cm. ; translation into German: *Palais in Ciążeń* // Ars Regia R.3(1994) Nr ¾, p. 183-187 and an updated edition: Andrzej Bendziński, Andrzej Karpowicz, *Palais in Ciążeń* / übers. Roman Dziergwa // Ars Regia r. 6(1997) Nr 1/2 p. 296 – 300.

reason, in a separated room in the stacks of the Library in Poznań. First editions of Polish books and material related to Poland as well as contemporary Masonic literature are available in the study room of the Masonic Section at the Library.

Most of the first floor rooms perform representative functions. This is where the reading room of the Masonic collection is situated. The library features about 4,000 volumes of the most important titles of books and periodicals with best-preserved bindings. The arrangement of the reading room clearly refers to the typical temple décor and the layout of a Masonic lodge: blue curtains and tablecloth, candlesticks, two columns and the so-called Masonic carpet. On the walls hang reproductions of characteristic Masonic engravings. Visitors have free access to books. The items from the collection are made available only for personal inspection in the reading room of the palace or, failing that, upon an earlier request in the reading room of the Special Collection Department at the Library in Poznań.



Detail of the reading room in the Masonica collection of *Ciążeń*
(Photo: A. Önnersfors, April 2008)

The fact that the Masonic collection has been placed at Ciążeń has made it necessary to double the catalogue of the Masonica. One set of the catalogues is at the University Library in Poznań, at the Independent Division of the Masonica Collection, while the other one is at Ciążeń. A microfilm version of the catalogue (as of May 1989) has been published and distributed by Olms-Verlag from Hildesheim. Since 2002, the records of the items from the Masonic collection are gradually incorporated into the online catalogue of the Library. The online catalogue includes the entire list of bibliographical records of old and rare books from the seventeenth and the eighteenth century and those of contemporary literature. Work is well advanced on the introduction of records of documents and books from the first half of the nineteenth century.

The collection has been made available for researchers from Poland and abroad since the half of the 1980s. The collection has contributed to the general study on Freemasonry oftentimes followed by valuable research publications. The authors of the latter publications often stress in forewords and preface the extraordinary source material available at Ciążeń as well as the brilliant conditions of work there³⁸.

³⁸ To quote just a few: Karlheinz Gerlach, *Berliner Freimaurerreden 1743-1804*. - Frankfurt am Main [et.all.], 1996, p.10 ... Schliesslich sei allen Dank gesagt, die diese Edition unterstützen, namentlich den Archivaren und Bibliothekaren, Herrn Kustos Andrzej Bendzinski (Universitätsbibliothek Poznań/Ciążeń), ... Herrn Mag. Andrzej Karpowicz (Universitätsbibliothek Poznań)... ; Florian Maurice, *Freimaurerei um 1800 : Ignaz Aurelius Fessler und die Reform der Grossloge Royal York in Berlin*. – Tübingen : M. Niemeyer, 1997, p. VI ... Herrn Andrzej Karpowicz danke ich für einen sehr fruchtreichen und idyllischen Aufenthalt in Ciążeń... ; Hanna Domańska, *Gdański Zakon Synów Przymierza*. – Gdynia : Uraeus, 2002, p. 22 ... Materiał znajdujący się w ... Poznaniu ... pomogli mi zebrać: ...Andrzej Karpowicz, kustosz zbiorów masońskich Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej w Poznaniu...



Andrzej Karpowicz among the shelves of the masonic collection held at Ciążeń, April 2008 (Photo: A. Önnersfors)

The Masonic Collection Section of Poznań University Library closely cooperates with the library of the German Freemasonic Museum in Bayreuth and the library of the Grand Lodge of Austria in Vienna and actively participates in the works of the European Association of Masonic Libraries, Museums and Archives. One of the congresses annually held in different countries was held in Poznań and Ciążeń in 1996³⁹. The congress was accompanied by the exhibition of the eighteenth and nineteenth century Masonic books⁴⁰.

Transl. by Tomasz Olszewski

³⁹ Andrzej Karpowicz *Sesja Europejskiego Stowarzyszenia Muzeów Wolnomularskich (Poznań – Ciążeń, 23 – 26 maja 1996 roku)* // *Ars Regia* 1997 R. 6 nr1/2. – p. [249] – 255.

⁴⁰ Published catalogue of the exhibition: Andrzej Karpowicz *Książka wolnomularska XVIII i XIX wieku.* – Poznań 1996.

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