

Books Across Borders and Between Libraries:  
UNESCO and the Politics of Postwar Cultural Reconstruction, 1945-1951

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York  
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## Abstract

### Books Across Borders and Between Libraries: UNESCO and the Politics of Postwar Cultural Reconstruction, 1945-1951

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This dissertation is a history of the emotional, political and technical power of libraries and books in the immediate post-World War II moment, examined through the lens of the reconstruction and rehabilitation activities undertaken by the Libraries Section of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. For UNESCO's founders, since libraries, books and information had been targets of abuse and misuse under fascism, their renewal had to be an area of primary concern in the postwar. In that endeavor UNESCO faced, on the one hand, urgent demand for both replacement and new, up-to-date sources of information and publications, and on the other hand, issues of censorship, ownership and rights over confiscated, stolen and other displaced materials. National and international priorities regarding book distribution and the renewal and expansion of libraries intersected with early Cold War intergovernmental conflicts within the transnational forum of UNESCO; its leadership, staff and collaborators sought to achieve a balance between the organization's universalist mission and the aims of its individual member states. Within that rubric this research examines three themes. First, practical programs to provide libraries with the means to acquire books they wanted and needed; second, proposed programs in which UNESCO would play a mediating role in the delicate, political and often emotional debates over the fate of confiscated and displaced libraries and books; and third, UNESCO's contribution to formulating notions of cultural rights as human rights within the context of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. By honing in on

the key actors, immediate aims and long-term goals of the Libraries Section, this study provides nuanced insight into the complexities and specificities of UNESCO's areas of interest, action and inaction during the early postwar, post-Holocaust, Cold War years. Examination of the unprecedented and increasingly global level of transnational, intergovernmental and inter-organizational networking initiated and facilitated by UNESCO for the library world illuminates how international relations and national politics both helped and hindered UNESCO's efforts, and identifies the short- and long-term impact on library and book culture, focusing in particular on the examples of France, Poland, and surviving Jewish Europe.

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## Introduction: Wartime Planning, Postwar Response

A report submitted to the November 1946 Conference for the Establishment of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) asserted that “The human and material losses and the war-born complexities of reconstruction are like great weights shackling the feet of the young Unesco, crippling its progress towards the goals of a better world. Until the weights are in some major way reduced, Unesco cannot run its best race.”<sup>1</sup> While few non-specialists today are familiar with the origins of UNESCO or with the central role that post-World War II reconstruction played in those origins, this quote illustrates how, at the time, reconstruction and rehabilitation were widely recognized as primary defining tasks of the nascent organization.<sup>2</sup> One year after its founding Conference, UNESCO’s first General Director, British scientist Julian Huxley, continued to assert that “Unesco’s programme for reconstruction and rehabilitation was ... a *precondition* of all other Unesco activities.”<sup>3</sup> Indeed, it was integral, and from 1945 to 1950, Reconstruction was one of the three main UNESCO program areas.<sup>4</sup>

The roots of UNESCO’s reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts were formulated over the course of the war years; once in place, the program was limited to its particular areas of expertise: education, science and culture, and was purposefully and intricately interconnected to broader, long-term development and improvement goals. This organizational strategy ensured

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Technical Sub-Committee to the Preparatory Commission transmitted to the General Conference, Paris, 15 November 1946, 1. UNESCO Archives (hereafter UA), General Conference First Session Paris 1946, Documents.

<sup>2</sup> In fact, UNESCO was briefly to be called the United Nations Organization for Educational and Cultural Reconstruction, a name that was quickly dismissed as it risked conflicting with UNRRA and, moreover, did not reflect the long-term, global mission of the organization that was ultimately formed. For more about UNESCO and reconstruction see Chloé Maurel, “L’action de l’Unesco dans la domaine de la reconstruction,” *Histoire@Politique. Politique, culture, société* 19 (Jan-Apr 2013) : 1-15.

<sup>3</sup> Emphasis added. UNESCO Press Release, Second General Conference, Mexico, “Huxley Reports UNESCO’s 1947 Activities,” 6 November 1947. University of Southampton, MS262, Papers of Aaron Zakharovich Steinberg (1891-1975), 1910-93 (hereafter Southampton, Steinberg Papers) 6/1/32.

<sup>4</sup> The other two main programs were International Understanding and Fundamental Education. Organisation of the Secretariat, 1947. <http://www.unesco.org/archives/new2010/doc/Orga%20charts/1947.pdf>. Last viewed 10 November 2012.

that UNESCO would not be confused for a reconstruction or relief agency, which it emphatically was not. Rather, as described in the quotes in this introduction's first paragraph, the perception at the time, both within and outside of UNESCO, was that if it did not successfully and visibly contribute to the reconstruction and rehabilitation of science, education and culture in the war-damaged countries, then the organization's overarching mission, to disseminate information and understanding in the pursuit of toleration and world peace, could not succeed. With responsibility for feeding people's bodies assigned elsewhere – primarily with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) being responsible for immediate physical, medical and urgent material needs – the best, indeed the only way that UNESCO could, under its mandate, contribute to reconstruction and rehabilitation, can be boiled down to one overarching goal: to feed people's minds.

While feeding people's minds was a goal shared by those who were concerned with reinstating freedom and toleration to a war-ravaged world, different groups involved with UNESCO's work sometimes converged and sometimes diverged over the ways in which that goal should be pursued. The resultant contestation, which often surprised "Unescans" persuaded of UNESCO's honest attempt to formulate a neutral, impartial, fair- and right-minded agenda and, as a result, of the obvious role the organization could and should play as international arbiter, functioning above and beyond national borders or ideological conflicts, is at the center of much of this work.<sup>5</sup> The charged atmosphere and transitional moment in which UNESCO was functioning was defined by lingering wartime hostility between countries and people, coupled

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<sup>5</sup> "Unescans are unescing again. That is to say, in humorous jargon of its own delegates, that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is holding its fourth general conference in Paris." The term "Unescan," though found only in this single citation, is nonetheless employed occasionally throughout this work as it illustrates the true believer mentality that characterized so many who were involved with UNESCO during its first, most idealistic and optimistic years. Carlyle Morgan, "Putting UNESCO Back in the UN: Toward Tomorrow," *Christian Science Monitor*, 23 September 1949.

with escalating pressures and new waves of mistrust, propaganda and censorship on both sides of the solidifying Iron Curtain. UNESCO's task was to initiate and facilitate communication and cooperation across these divisions as well as between traditionally often segregated national, local, academic, public, private, governmental and non-governmental organizations, including libraries and including Jewish groups, on an ever-widening international scale.

This dissertation focuses on a brief moment, from about 1945 to 1951, when reconstruction priorities regarding libraries and early Cold War intergovernmental conflicts collided within the international forum of UNESCO. It will trace and analyze areas of convergence surrounding practical UNESCO programs that successfully provided libraries with the assistance they wanted and needed, and areas of divergence surrounding proposed programs that sought to forge a leading role for UNESCO in the delicate and often emotional debates over the postwar fate of confiscated books and library collections. UNESCO's view regarding the latter, which proved to be quite controversial, was that some portion of books recovered after the war, whether they were Jewish texts stolen by the Nazis and left without owners or fascist publications confiscated postwar by the allies, were vital educational tools, especially within the Europe where two horrific world wars had originated. Study of Nazi publications was perceived as necessary to understanding how to help prevent any future militaristic takeovers; the study of Jewish material to help prevent any future resurgence of violent antisemitism.

The results of this investigation demonstrate that even those seemingly as dedicated to the notion of universalism as Unescans were, such as Jewish groups or sympathetic intellectuals or Americans involved in drafting the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, found themselves at odds with UNESCO over some of their shared interests. This contestation seems not only to have initially been unexpected at UNESCO, but also proved in some cases to be a

serious impediment to its actions and activities. After all, UNESCO was not an operating agency, but rather a stimulating and coordinating agency, “a leader, not an enforcer.”<sup>6</sup> When it came to postwar reconstruction, UNESCO’s primary task was informational: “Unesco’s main duty was to *demonstrate* that there were vast cultural needs in the post-war world.”<sup>7</sup> Here again UNESCO was contrasted with UNRRA: “Though UNESCO is not a relief organization and by direct gifts can give only token help in reconstruction, it has a considerable role to play in coordinating and guiding the work of the various voluntary organizations throughout the world. Specific knowledge of needs has permitted UNESCO to advise outside organizations and to administer funds raised by them.”<sup>8</sup> This structure made UNESCO exemplary of what Joseph Nye later termed soft power and defined as obtaining results not through force, payment or coercion, but rather, indirectly, by attracting, co-opting and collaborating.<sup>9</sup> Within the early Cold War context, UNESCO’s use of soft power quickly opened the organization up to praise for its perceived successes in cultural diplomacy, understood as providing welcomed access to desired but otherwise unattainable or unavailable cultural content, as much as to condemnation for its

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<sup>6</sup> Toni Samek and Gustavo Navarro, “Mining & Onlining Memory: The Foundation, Organization, Preservation, Access, and Control of Unfettered Cultural Records for All.” [http://biblioteca.clacso.edu.ar/ar/libros/raec/ethicomp5/docs/pdf\\_papers/58Samek.%20Toni.pdf](http://biblioteca.clacso.edu.ar/ar/libros/raec/ethicomp5/docs/pdf_papers/58Samek.%20Toni.pdf). Last accessed 6 November 2012.

<sup>7</sup> UNESCO Executive Board, Committee for Cultural Reconstruction, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session, 1 October 1947, Minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting, p.11. UNESCO Archives, 361.9 A 20 Reconstruction Needs General PII. [NOTE about the UNESCO Archives. Most of the documents cited here are held in what is referred to as the General or Central Registry. The full title of the collection (accession number AG 8/2.2 REG) is UNESCO, Bureau of General Services, Registry & Mail Division, Index of Inactive Correspondence Files, Series 1946/1956. The finding aid is available at [http://www.unesco.org/general/eng/infoserv/archives/f\\_aids/ag08fa00002e.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/general/eng/infoserv/archives/f_aids/ag08fa00002e.pdf). Last viewed 20 April 2013. Within the General Registry material is filed by a combination of numbers, letters and symbols, as in the 361.9 A 20 in this footnote, followed by a title, and is sometimes further subdivided into Parts. Unless otherwise indicated all UNESCO Archives citations are from this Registry. UNESCO Archives citations that include Volume numbers are referring to bound volumes that document in detail UNESCO meetings and conferences, beginning with the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education in 1942.]

<sup>8</sup> Lars Lind, “UNESCO’s Work in Mass Communications,” *The Library Quarterly* 20:4 (Oct., 1950): 259-271, 268-269.

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Nye, “Public Diplomacy and Soft Power,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616, Public Diplomacy in a Changing World (Mar., 2008): 94-109; Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004). Interestingly, in these pivotal writings Nye focuses on the soft power of individual countries and writes very little about international organizations. The only mention of UNESCO in *Soft Power* appears once, in passing, in reference to its Cultural Heritage Sites (93).

perceived participation in cultural imperialism, understood as the imposition of cultural material hostilely received as propaganda.<sup>10</sup>

During the lead-up to and throughout the war years it was evident that culture, including libraries and books, were key targets of *and* essential tools in fascism's rise and spread.<sup>11</sup> In response, many believed that an equally powerful cultural force in the postwar would be critical to reversing the cultural abuses being waged by the Nazis. As J.P. Singh put it in his recent history of UNESCO, "all delegates accepted early on that cultural issues would play a role in the organization's future. This was as much due to the denunciation of ideas of racial and cultural purity that existed in Nazi Germany as in the need felt for creating a new culture of peace."<sup>12</sup> These two overarching and interrelated goals - overcoming the influence of fascist ideas and forging a peaceful world - were the driving force behind UNESCO's library reconstruction and rehabilitation activities. In order to achieve these goals it was necessary to take extremely seriously the postwar need for reliable documentation of the most current and up-to-date information. Such publications were valuable, necessary commodities that were in as short supply as any other in the immediate postwar. Ways in which to identify, obtain and circulate these resources to all who needed and wanted them was a central and immediate concern of the

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<sup>10</sup> See for example Maud S. Mandel, "Philanthropy or Cultural Imperialism? The Impact of American Jewish Aid in Post-Holocaust France" *Jewish Social Studies* 9:1 (Autumn, 2002): 53-94; Richard Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture Since World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 1997); Jerry Israel, Review of Gary E. Kraske, *Missionaries of the Book: The American Library Profession and the Origins of United States Cultural Diplomacy* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985) *Pacific Historical Review* 56:4 (Nov. 1987): 583; and Frank Ninkovich, *The Diplomacy of Ideas: U.S. Foreign Policy and Cultural Relations, 1938-1950* (Cambridge University Press, 1981).

<sup>11</sup> Saul Friedlander writes, "As peripheral as it may seem in hindsight, the cultural domain was the first from which Jews (and 'leftists') were massively expelled." This and other recent research challenges the notion that these early actions were peripheral. Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, Vol. I The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1997), 12. See also all references listed under "cultural de-Judaization" in the index. Also see Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004), especially Part 6 "Hitler's Cultural Revolution," 391-461, describing how a central element of Hitler's Nazism was to purge all foreign cultural influences and replace them with that which was considered purely German.

<sup>12</sup> J.P. Singh, *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: Creating Norms in a Complex World* (London: Routledge, 2010), 11. [page number from unpublished manuscript].

UNESCO Libraries Section. Thus, libraries, as primary means for circulating, disseminating, storing and preserving information and culture, were central players in positive and negative, wartime and postwar, efforts to influence knowledge, understanding and people.

In a recent article about postwar historiographical issues, Mark Mazower pointed out that “talk about reconstruction begged the question of which past people wanted, or thought they wanted, to reconstruct.”<sup>13</sup> This dissertation argues for a reframing of such traditional notions of reconstruction, often conceived of, then and now, rather literally as a return to the past, to reconstruct what had been, to whatever extent such an undertaking was even possible in 1945. The research to be discussed here demands that reconstruction be considered instead as having used elements from the past in order to (re)construct a vision for a new, different kind of future. As previously mentioned, however, different groups were choosing from different histories and formulating different visions for different futures. UNESCO hoped to convince all those involved with its work of its vision for a universalist future in which tension, conflict and war would disappear, while sharing, exchange and collaboration across borders would become the norm, and peace would reign.

Within that vision, the UNESCO Libraries Section provided a forum through which dedicated, determined, and forward-looking groups and individuals could articulate and pursue their hopes to improve the world and relations between its inhabitants through expanding free and open access to modern, public libraries. From the time of its formation, UNESCO’s Libraries Section was adamant in its articulations that it did not have any intention of helping libraries to simply recreate what had been. On the contrary, it insisted that its main interest was libraries with a new vision for the future, for change and modernization and expansion. “It is of the greatest importance that the work of rehabilitation should not be allowed to become simply

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<sup>13</sup> Mark Mazower, “Reconstruction: The Historiographical Issues,” *Past and Present* 210 Supplement 6 (2011), 26.

the restoration of each national library system and each individual library to its pre-war state. A library should not automatically have a claim to international benevolence because it has been destroyed. The test must be its place in the present and future library system [emphasis in original].”<sup>14</sup> That present and future system, as envisioned by UNESCO and its supporters, required “selling” the public library idea worldwide and, if successful, would be characterized by the greatest possible expansion of library services, access, exchange and cooperation. The latter elements were a necessity, as there were not enough monetary or material resources to allow each library to purchase all that it needed, and an ideology, stemming from the belief that networks of exchange and cooperation would help to create a more peaceful world.

UNESCO had a clear vision. The challenge was to communicate that vision in such a way that sufficient support and resources would rally around it. Speaking at the 2011 International Society for Cultural History Conference, Tom Allbeson said, “UNESCO’s early campaigns are animated by a photographic discourse in which there is a dynamic relation between *the visualisation of the past* and *a vision of the future* [emphasis in original].”<sup>15</sup> The same was true of the Libraries Section’s campaigns, which often coupled photographs with dire statistics of destroyed libraries in order to motivate donations and other assistance for their reconstruction in line with its global, future- and peace-oriented vision. Publications such as UNESCO’s 1949 informational booklet *Libraries in Need*, intended primarily to be a fundraising tool that sought both material and financial donations in support of UNESCO’s endeavor to address the war’s devastating impact on libraries, illustrated what had been lost and articulated a

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<sup>14</sup> UNESCO Preparatory Commission, Committee on Libraries, Museums, Publications and Special Projects, Memorandum on Problems and Policies, Section I Preamble. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, London-Paris 1945-1946, Vol. V Programme Committees.

<sup>15</sup> Tom Allbeson, “At the Crossroads of Cultural Memory and Utopian Thinking: Photography, Architecture and the Establishment of UNESCO,” International Society for Cultural History Annual Conference, Oslo, 3-6 August 2011. See also his dissertation, Allbeson, “Ruins, Reconstruction and Representation: Photography and the City in Postwar Western Europe (1945-58),” PhD Dissertation, Durham University, 2012.

vision of what was going to be built in the future. “War cut off the mental food supplies of millions,” then-Director General Jaime Torres Bodet wrote in the Foreword. He continued, “War gutted, or sacked, or demolished thousands of libraries [...] and we always had too few,”<sup>16</sup> emphasizing how central reconstruction and rehabilitation were to Unesco’s founding mission, and at the same time, how integral and inseparable they also were to Unesco’s longer term aims of development, improvement and expansion.

In fact, a 1946 Libraries Section report employed a highly visual metaphor in order to explain what it was attempting to do in terms of balancing immediate reconstruction needs with long-term development goals:

The fact that most of our plans and projects have both a long-term or short-term aspect is quite justified. We have tried to look ahead as far as possible, to paint a picture, if I may use such a metaphor, where the background is drawn most carefully, with plenty of clear and realistic detail; but where the actual subject of the picture is in the foreground and takes up the whole scene, so as clearly to express the true meaning it is intended to convey. The picture which we are about to show you is one of libraries devastated by the war, of services ruined and disorganised by the Nazis, of a shortage of books and lack of qualified staff for libraries all over the world. Beyond the countries ruined by war, there are others which are awakening to the need for libraries and competent services, but who often lack qualified personnel and information.<sup>17</sup>

What this vision reveals is ultimately what is most important to most libraries and librarians: free and open access, both in terms of the belief that libraries should have access to whatever material they seek to collect and that library users should have access to whatever material they seek, regardless of form, media or content. To that end, the Libraries Section argued that even “Libraries with constitutional bars to lending should be compelled to provide efficient services

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<sup>16</sup> Jaime Torres Bodet, Foreword, 29 February 1949, *Libraries in Need* (Paris: UNESCO, 1949).

<sup>17</sup> Edward J. Carter, Provisional verbatim report of first meeting, 28 November 1946, p.12. UNESCO General Conference. UNESCO/C/Prog.Com./S.C.Lib&Mus/VR1, Paris, 6 December 1946. UNESCO Archives, General Conference 1. Session Paris 1946, Programme Commission I, Vol. 5 Documents.

of[sic] reproduction and to allow reproduction (subject to copyright restrictions).”<sup>18</sup>

Reproduction, via microfilm, for example, would ensure that material that either could not be afforded by other libraries or that was no longer available in any other way could still be distributed among interested libraries the world over.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, bibliographies, the Libraries Section argued, “should never be regarded as passive indications of books, etc. [...] that exist, but as instruments to enable books to be used.”<sup>20</sup> This insistence on and the successful implementation of transnational networks focused on improving access and availability, on sharing, exchange and cooperation, highlight the key arguments of this dissertation.

The role of international structures and transnational systems in postwar reconstruction, beyond UNRRA, is a relatively new area of study.<sup>21</sup> Understandably, postwar reconstruction is often studied in individual national contexts.<sup>22</sup> War-impacted countries were determined to

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<sup>18</sup> UNESCO Preparatory Commission, Committee on Libraries, Museums, Publications and Special Projects, Memorandum on Problems and Policies, Section I Preamble, Preparatory Commission, London-Paris 1945-1946, Vol. V Programme Committees.

<sup>19</sup> “Millions of books and magazines have been destroyed in the war and can never be reprinted in the ordinary way but by using film we can make them universally available again. This will be of vast service to universities and schools.” Transcript of BBC interview with Carter, 6 April 1945. Royal Institute of British Architects, British Architectural Libraries, Drawings and Archives Collections, Victorian and Albert Museum, Edward Carter Papers (hereafter RIBA, Carter Papers), Box 1, CaE/1, Folder 2. Due to space limitations the details of the Libraries Section’s microfilm projects are only briefly mentioned in this work. UNESCO Archives, 651.523 : 02 Microfilm – Libraries Part I up to 31/VII/48.

<sup>20</sup> UNESCO Preparatory Commission, Committee on Libraries, Museums, Publications and Special Projects, Memorandum on Problems and Policies, Section III Circulation of Publications and Bibliographical Services, Preparatory Commission, London-Paris 1945-1946, Vol. V Programme Committees.

<sup>21</sup> See for example Léonard Laborie, *L’Europe mise en réseaux: La France et la coopération internationale dans les postes et les télécommunications (années 1850-années 1950)* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2010); Waqar Zaidi, “‘A Blessing in Disguise’: Reconstructing International Relations Through Atomic Energy, 1945–1948,” *Past and Present* 210 Supplement 6 (2011) : 309-331; John Krige, *American Hegemony and the Postwar Reconstruction of Science in Europe* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008). A related, growing field is the study of circulation and networks, the topic of a number of current and upcoming conferences such as Networks in Times of Transition, October 2010; From the League of Nations to the United Nations: New Approaches to International Institutions, March 2013; Geographies of the Book, Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing, July 2013; In Motion: The Circulation of People, Commodities and Ideas, Western Society for French History, October 2013.

<sup>22</sup> One reason for the specificity of traditional postwar histories correlates to the specificity of each country’s postwar situation, a point made by Mark Mazower his previously mentioned article on postwar reconstruction: “there were considerable differences between countries like Denmark, the Low Countries, Norway and the USSR, where reconstruction essentially involved pre-war regimes reconstructing themselves; countries like France and Greece where the democratic transformation took place amid the memories of earlier democratic collapse; and

create strong new national identities to distance themselves from the pain of loss and occupation as well as from any questionable wartime behavior. This was often accomplished by emphasizing national victories, newfound superiority over wartime aggressors, and by insisting on the clear distinctions between themselves and the growing American influence in the world. Of course these countries could not accomplish reconstruction, financially or materially, without external assistance that came primarily from the United States. Though often overlooked, more profound ways in which reconstruction was a transnational and universalist endeavor in which transcending borders and boundaries, real and imagined, between countries and people, including via networks of sharing and exchange and through what French Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain termed an “international spirit,” are clearly visible in the origins and early activities of UNESCO.<sup>23</sup>

To that end, this work was inspired in part by what eminent historian of the book Robert Darnton concluded in his pioneering article on the specialization:

By its very nature, therefore, the history of books must be international in scale and interdisciplinary in method. But it need not lack conceptual coherence, because books belong to circuits of communication that operate in consistent patterns, however complex they may be. By unearthing those circuits, historians can show that books do not merely recount history; they make it.<sup>24</sup>

Any study of UNESCO must likewise be international and interdisciplinary. As historian Chloé Maurel points out, UNESCO is not just international, but transnational.<sup>25</sup> This study of the Libraries Section in particular unearths circuits that played a significant role in repairing and expanding transnational networks of communication, cooperation and exchange. One aim of this

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countries under occupation—Italy, Germany, Austria, and Hungary-whose transition to democracy was being managed for them.” Mazower, “Reconstruction: The Historiographical Issues,” 28.

<sup>23</sup> Jacques Maritain to Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, 28 January 1948, p.14. Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes, Direction des Archives (hereafter MAE), Cote S50 3-5 UNESCO.

<sup>24</sup> Robert Darnton, “What is the History of Books?” *Daedalus* 111:3 Representations and Realities (Summer 1982), 81.

<sup>25</sup> Chloé Maurel, “L’Unesco: une plate-forme pour les circulations transnationales de savoirs et d’idées (1945-1980),” *Histoire@Politique. Politique, culture, société* 15 (septembre-décembre 2011), 1.

project is to provide conceptual coherence to questions that have not previously been asked. We know much about how books and libraries were destroyed, confiscated, censored, dislocated, during the war, about the devastation of Europe's literary and book cultures, but little about how Europe's libraries were revived after the war. How did they replenish emptied shelves? How were library buildings physically rebuilt? What was done about lost texts that were in fact irreplaceable? How were the years of missed acquisitions made up for? Who was responsible for deciding which texts damaged libraries needed? And, from the other end, what was done with Nazi and other fascist publications that might have been put on library shelves during the war years? Libraries and books were very specific targets for confiscation, censorship and destruction, addressing those attacks a targeted goal of most postwar European governments and international agencies concerned with education, literacy, re-education, cultural rights, freedom, etc.

Due to the scope of the wartime and postwar significance of libraries, these questions and the many related issues that they raise impacted UNESCO as a whole:

Quite apart from the report of the Libraries Section, the agenda of the [Preparatory] Commission was quite full of library business, for almost without exception the other Sections – whether on Education, the Social or the Natural Sciences, on Fine Arts or Philosophy – had emphasized the need for indexing, abstracting and other bibliographic and library services. The need of intellectual workers the world around is for complete and up-to-date information regarding the literature of their fields.<sup>26</sup>

Long before these needs became known, however, the significance of libraries in and on the war was on the radars of those at the highest levels. President Roosevelt, for example, in a message to the 1941 annual conference of the American Library Association (ALA), described the gravity of the threats libraries were facing:

Libraries are directly and immediately involved in the conflict which divides our world, and for two reasons: first, because they are essential to the functioning of a democratic

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<sup>26</sup> “Mr. Clapp’s Report of his trip to Europe,” *Library of Congress Information Bulletin*, 6-12 August 1946, p.11-13.

society; second, because the contemporary conflict touches the integrity of scholarship, the freedom of the mind, and even the survival of culture, and libraries are the great tools of scholarship, the great repositories of culture, and the great symbols of the freedom of the mind.<sup>27</sup>

In 1941, the knowledge that libraries were “directly and immediately involved” in the war stemmed from two main factors, both of which predated the official outbreak of the war.

The first resulted from the experience of World War I, during which libraries were purposefully or collaterally impacted or destroyed, as were most avenues of communication and exchange between libraries.<sup>28</sup> The second resulted from the events of 10 May 1933, when Hitler’s supporters flagrantly confiscated and burned books deemed to be *undeutsch* (un-German), whether in authorship, content, or both.<sup>29</sup> As a result of that auto-da-fé, images and detailed reports of which were widely circulated and discussed the world over, library concerned individuals and organizations began to prepare, from the outset, for the almost-certainty that the war would leave in its wake a desperate, urgent and unprecedented situation of library devastation, displacement and need, one that threatened to far exceed what had been seen in the aftermath of the first world war. The resultant anxiety about the fate of information, publications and knowledge, coupled with the conviction that the allies would be the ultimate victors, inspired a broad spectrum of preparatory activities regarding postwar library reconstruction and rehabilitation that emerged early and evolved throughout the war years. Some of these will be discussed shortly.

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<sup>27</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt to Luther H. Evans, 13 June 1941. Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library, Hyde Park, New York. Quoted in part in “President Roosevelt on Libraries,” *The Library Association Record* 43:10 (October 1941), 177.

<sup>28</sup> Library historian Michael Harris has traced the development of modern European libraries to WWI precisely due to its unprecedented impact on libraries, ranging from problems of staffing and financing to destruction or capture of library resources. Michael H. Harris, *History of Libraries in the Western World*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1999), 207.

<sup>29</sup> Saul Friedländer refers to the May 10 book burnings as “rituals of exorcism.” Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, 57.

## I. “Librarian Warriors”<sup>30</sup>

These wartime planning efforts were centered in the United States and Great Britain. As the Secretary of the [British] Library Association put it during the summer of 1945, “Librarians have always maintained that the knowledge stored in books knows no bounds of geography or politics, and the devastation which took place throughout Europe immediately aroused in the Anglo-Saxon world on both sides of the Atlantic a determination to help in reconstruction, both as a matter of ordinary human sympathy and as a vital principle inherent in true librarianship.”<sup>31</sup> The notion that librarianship “knows no bounds” was often expressed at the time, that it is inherently a neutral, impartial and democratic profession and that therefore librarians, library officials and their supporters were ideally positioned – mentally, intellectually and (non)ideologically – to help heal the wounds of war that had created such devastating divisions, hatred and mistrust among people and nations.<sup>32</sup>

The remark made by a member of the International Federation of Library Associations, that, “To librarians national boundaries are handicaps to be overcome,” helps explain why librarianship fit so neatly into UNESCO’s early efforts to break down, or at least overcome, not only national boundaries but also any narrow or uninformed thinking that raised other types of barriers that impeded cooperation and collaboration, and that, in the worst cases, led to war and

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<sup>30</sup> This phrase was used to describe the library activities of Archibald MacLeish and Carl Milam in Frederick Stielow, “Librarian Warriors and Rapprochement: Carl Milam, Archibald MacLeish, and World War II,” *Libraries & Culture* 25:4 (Fall, 1990): 513-533.

<sup>31</sup> P.S.J. Welsford, “International and Overseas Contacts with special reference to the Book Recovery Campaign and the Services’ Libraries,” *The Library Association Record* 47:7 (July 1945), 133.

<sup>32</sup> Some from within the library world were already challenging this stereotype at the time: librarian Carl Milam of the American Library Association and American delegate to UNESCO, for example. According to one author, Milam’s “long career had been marked by efforts to vanquish the image – and reality – of librarians as timid, apolitical guardians of print culture.” Patti Clayton Becker, *Books and Libraries in American Society during World War II: Weapons in the War of Ideas* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 200.

its unthinkable horrors.<sup>33</sup> This determination on the part of librarians is one reason the appellation “librarian warriors” was borrowed here - precisely because of the tension inherent in the juxtaposition of the two terms. The former brings to mind quietness, stillness, the internal life of the mind, while the latter brings to mind physicality, fighting, struggle, even violence. In fact, what Frederick Stielow, with whom the terminology appears to have originated, was bringing to light was how hard librarians have historically been willing to fight, not with violence, but with stubborn determination, to achieve their goals of expanding access to knowledge and information.

As Director General Huxley put it during the Preparatory Conference, “Thus to promote peace and security Unesco must all the time seek to prevent the separateness of nations from increasing – as was the case with the Fascist and Nazi states and as will always be a danger with any totalitarian or semi-totalitarian regimes – and we must do our utmost to lower the barriers that now exist.”<sup>34</sup> Even more succinctly, the *UNESCO Courier* stated in 1949 that the “Final target of Unesco is destruction of all restrictions on the free circulation of indispensable media of culture.”<sup>35</sup> As such, the concern driving UNESCO’s Libraries Section, “what kind of a library program will make the maximum contribution towards building a lasting peace?” exemplified the concerns that preoccupied the organization as a whole regarding how to foster peace through education, science and culture.<sup>36</sup> Luther Evans, Librarian of Congress from 1945 to 1953 and Director-General of UNESCO from 1953 to 1958, once remarked that from its earliest days

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<sup>33</sup> D.J. Urquhard, “IFLA – A Provocative View” in Willem R.H. Koops and Joachim Wieder, eds., *IFLA’s First Fifty Years* (Munich: Verlag Dokumentation, Publishers, 1977), 133.

<sup>34</sup> Report of Dr. Julian Huxley, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission to the General Conference, Paris, November 1946. UNESCO/C/15, Paris, 18 November 1946. UNESCO Archives, General Conference 1. Session Paris 1946, Vol.4 Documents.

<sup>35</sup> “Has UNESCO Anything to Declare?” *UNESCO Courier* 11:10 (1 November 1949), 8.  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0007/000741/074130eo.pdf#74149>

<sup>36</sup> Ralph R. Shaw, Department of Agriculture Library, 21 August 1946. American Jewish Archives, James Marshall Papers (hereafter AJA, Marshall Papers), Box 31 Folder 11, UNESCO [U.S. Natl Commission First Conference] 1946-1947.

UNESCO had been doing “exactly what all of us as librarians have always been trying to do in our professional work.”<sup>37</sup> Overcoming and eventually creating a world in which political and ideological clashes would cease to lead to the devastation of war was the crux of UNESCO’s mission.

Within that mission, two themes defined the policies and initiatives of UNESCO’s Libraries Section. First, distribution of publications that had been unobtainable during wartime, as well as attempts to replace stolen, confiscated, destroyed and otherwise lost texts, achieved through purchase, sharing and exchange programs, was viewed as something to which postwar Europeans, regardless of political or ideological stance, or, equally importantly, wartime behavior, and including Jewish survivors, had a fundamental right. Second, by creating forums through which cultural leaders, librarians, and their supporters, regardless of belief or background, and extending to those on both sides of the deepening Cold War chasm, could cooperate to advance culture, knowledge and understanding, despite existing or intensifying divisions between their respective countries.<sup>38</sup> In both cases, these programs were defined primarily by cooperation and exchange, with the Libraries Section “concerned not with libraries in the traditional sense of collections of books, but with library services – with emphasis on the word service. We are laying down an intricate pattern of communications. No library, no institution, no technique can be justified, in the terms of our mandate, except as part of this

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<sup>37</sup> Luther H. Evans, “UNESCO Work and Method Illustrated by the Library Programs” in Leon Carnovsky, ed., *International Aspects of Librarianship: Papers Presented before the Eighteenth Annual Conference of the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago* (University of Chicago Press, 1954), 12.

<sup>38</sup> See also Hermina G.B. Anghelescu and Martine Poulain, eds., *Books, Libraries, Reading, and Publishing in the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Center for the Book, 2001).

pattern of communications.”<sup>39</sup> More broadly, the Libraries Section described its point of view in a 1947 report:

libraries are conceived essentially as local and specialist centres in a world-wide network of communications, in which no library is totally self-sufficient, or independent of other libraries, or of other branches of education, science, and culture. [...] No library, whether in a war-damaged country or elsewhere, can build up its book stocks or maintain improvements in service unless other libraries in the same field within the country and abroad and all the national and international bibliographical exchange and documentary reproduction services are competent within the terms of an international plan.<sup>40</sup>

The shared interest of librarians and of UNESCO in overcoming borders and boundaries also helps to explain how many of the former played leading and supportive roles in the formation, development and early evolution of the latter.

The active involvement of such well-known and respected national cultural figures was not without influence. They were trusted as representatives of a hopeful future and, even more importantly, according to historian Tony Judt in his pioneering work *Postwar*, of continuity with an idealized past.<sup>41</sup> In addition to representatives from various national and international library organizations, Edward J. Carter must be named first. Carter, Head Librarian of the Royal Institute of British Architects was Head Counsellor of UNESCO’s Libraries Section from its inception in 1945 until 1956. Although that position renders Carter central to this research, one of the men that he contracted, Jacob Zuckerman, emerges as the most significant individual in terms of his central role in developing the highly innovative, practical, impartial and successful

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<sup>39</sup> UNESCO Preparatory Commission, The Libraries Programme, Opening Remarks by the Counsellor, 31 May 1946. UNESCO/Prep.Com./L.M.&Sp.Proj.Com./4. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Vol. V Program Committees.

<sup>40</sup> UNESCO Libraries Progress Report for 1947, 26 September 1947, AJA, Marshall Papers, 30/2.

<sup>41</sup> Judt writes, “so much of the rehabilitation of post-war Europe was the work of men who reached maturity and entered politics many decades before. [...] In the first place such older men were rather unusual in surviving politically and ethically unscathed from thirty years of turmoil—their political credibility enhanced, as it were, by their scarcity value. Secondly, they all came from the remarkable generation of European social reformers who reached maturity during the years 1880-1910 [...] Their instincts and interests were very well suited to the post-war mood. [...] But thirdly, and perhaps most important, the old men who rebuilt Western Europe represented continuity. [...] What most people longed for in 1945 was social progress and renewal, to be sure, but combined with the reassurance of stable and familiar political forms.” Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005), 81-82.

library reconstruction and rehabilitation tools and programs that will be discussed throughout this work. Zuckerman, who was not a librarian by profession, nevertheless, as a result of his erudition, knowledge of languages and interpersonal skills, became, during the postwar, first a vital member of the Library of Congress Mission to Germany (to be discussed in chapters two and three), where he was known to his colleagues as Jack, a position which led directly to him being recommended to Carter for the Libraries Section. He worked in various capacities at UNESCO, where he was very affectionately known as Zuckie, from 1945 until his retirement in 1968.

Some of the other most prominent librarian figures active at UNESCO during its first years included, to name just a few who will appear elsewhere in this work, Archibald MacLeish and Luther Evans, former and future Librarians of Congress, respectively (MacLeish left the Library in 1944 to become the first Assistant Secretary of State for Cultural Affairs, a position that, in turn, led him to play a key role in the founding of UNESCO and in the writing of its Constitution<sup>42</sup> and Evans would later serve as Director General of UNESCO); Maria Danilewicz of London's Polish Library and Polish representative at CAME; Harry Lydenberg of New York Public Library, the American Library Association's International Relations Board, the Library of Congress Mission to Germany, and American delegate to UNESCO; Jaime Torres Bodet, former Head of the Libraries Department of Mexico's Ministry of Education and future Director General of UNESCO, and Julien Cain, Administrator General of the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BN), Head of la Direction des Bibliothèques de France, President of the French National Commission to UNESCO, member of UNESCO's Executive Board and a leading force in the Libraries Section.

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<sup>42</sup> For the full text of the Preamble to the Constitution, which is largely attributed to MacLeish, see Appendix I.

Here a brief side note about Cain is in order as this entire project was born out of a summer spent researching his life and work. Not long before attending UNESCO's First General Conference in 1946, Cain had been a Jewish political prisoner interned in the Buchenwald concentration camp. Prior to that, he had been removed from his position at the head of the BN in July 1940 by France's Vichy government. He was reportedly kept under surveillance until his February 1941 arrest by the Germans, who imprisoned Cain in Paris until deporting him to Buchenwald in January 1944. Upon his liberation by the Americans in April of 1945, Cain resolutely stated his immediate intentions to French reporter J.O. Moreau. "Tomorrow, I will be at the [Bibliothèque nationale]. I conceived there [Buchenwald] major plans for transformation, for modernis[ation]. I will make the library the most modern and the most practical in the entire world."<sup>43</sup> This ambitious goal was shared by many in the library world and at UNESCO who saw an opportunity in the postwar to reconstruct, not what had previously existed, but something new and improved, grounded in the past but looking beyond, farther and wider.

Yet another element of this future-oriented perspective was the fact that, as previously mentioned, for UNESCO, reconstruction was never a self-contained undertaking but rather was carefully planned in order to evolve smoothly into addressing its longer-term goals regarding expansion, development and improvement:

Rehabilitation of library and cultural services: There are two sides to this. The first concerns the actual reconstruction of collections; the second the continuing organisation of contacts so that insufficiency of one library need never be a serious hindrance to scholars. The two are connected because the reconstruction of collections can only be effected economically if some attention is paid to their future use and future organisation for use.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> J.-O. Moreau, *La France au Combat* (26 April 1945), 1. *La France au Combat* was the newspaper for the underground resistance movement of the same name, founded in October 1943 by André Boyer.

<sup>44</sup> Additional Notes on ASLIB's Tasks and Needs. RIBA, Carter Papers, Box 1, CaE/1, Folder 2.

As the 1946 program was being shaped, the vital interconnections between reconstruction and rehabilitation work and long-term programs and goals was emphasized: “it has become increasingly clear that many of the projects desirable for Unesco because of their long-term significance have an immediate relationship to the tasks of rehabilitation. The development of adequate library resources for the world, with which the library program of Unesco is inherently concerned, is intimately connected with the re-establishment of library centres in war devastated areas.”<sup>45</sup> In other words, reconstruction was vital to UNESCO’s long-term goal to build a better, more peaceful future. Therefore, prior to that long-term goal being achieved, success in reconstruction had to be achieved first.

## **II. Historiography**

Despite the flurry of library-related activity hinted at above, cultural reconstruction has until recently been largely overlooked in much scholarship on the postwar; at best, libraries, as well as UNESCO, are still mentioned in passing if at all in the new research that is emerging, which tends to focus on other cultural elements such as theater, radio and film. One of the most important of these new works, Philip Nord’s *France’s New Deal*, argues that “cultural reawakening” via cultural policy was just as central to France’s postwar reconstruction as were economic planning and social welfare.”<sup>46</sup> Yet he discusses neither libraries nor UNESCO. Inserting UNESCO into the history of postwar cultural reconstruction reveals, first, the ways in which cultural renewal was also, necessarily, an international and transnational undertaking, and second, that cultural renewal was an equally ambitious program for other war-damaged countries as well. Certainly in the realm of libraries, the postwar governments of countries as varied as

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<sup>45</sup> Report of the Technical Sub-Committee to the Preparatory Commission transmitted to the General Conference. UNESCO/C/11, Paris, 15 November 1946, p.4. UNESCO Archives, General Conference 1. Paris 1946, Vol.4 Documents.

<sup>46</sup> Philip Nord, *France’s New Deal from the Thirties to the Postwar Era* (Princeton University Press, 2010), 14.

France, Denmark and Poland were actively expanding public libraries and seeking to make the institutions important cultural and educational centers where knowledge, culture, national identity and pride would be newly accessible to an ever expanding public and would help begin to reverse some of the negative impacts and understandings of the war years. As such, this dissertation will contribute to the new but rapidly growing field of the history of international organizations, and of UNESCO in particular, and simultaneously will insert libraries into the also fairly new and expanding discussions about the significance of postwar cultural reconstruction.

The omission of UNESCO and of libraries in existing scholarship of the postwar period can be attributed to a number of factors. First, the origins and initial aims of UNESCO as coming out of WWII have been largely been forgotten and overshadowed in the decades since by its evolution into the development and preservation agency that most people are familiar with today. Second, even recent literature tends to cover longer time periods, meaning that reconstruction rarely receives the detailed examination that it warrants. Third, and perhaps most importantly, UNESCO was not a reconstruction agency like UNRRA but a coordinating body, meaning that much of the on-the-ground work was carried out by other organizations and was largely funded by governments, donors and private sources, and therefore was not necessarily recognized as having any connection to UNESCO. Fourth, in the United States, where public libraries are ubiquitous and while issues of censorship and access arise from time to time, we are overwhelmingly free to study or read any subject, item or title that we choose, those libraries and the freedoms that they represent are often taken for granted, including by the scholars who are often most reliant upon them.

The history of UNESCO is just beginning to be written. From within, the UNESCO History Project and Oral History Initiatives were first initiated in 2005 by then Director General

Koïchiro Matsuura on the occasion of the organization's sixtieth anniversary.<sup>47</sup> Growing in parallel with this internal upswing of interest are the number of new, external, comprehensive, scholarly histories of UNESCO; even more, particularly in France, are appearing in the form of recent or in-process dissertations such as this one.<sup>48</sup> General histories such as J.P. Singh's *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: Creating Norms in a Complex World* (2010), and more focused works such as Chloé Maurel's *Histoire de l'UNESCO: Les trente premières années. 1945-1974* (2010) and Gail Archibald's older *Les Etats-Unis et l'Unesco, 1944-1963 : les rêves peuvent-ils résister à la réalité des relations internationales ?* (1993), are paving the way for deeper, more nuanced understanding of the birth, structure, activities, policies, strengths and weaknesses of the early years and evolution of UNESCO.<sup>49</sup> One element that these emerging histories have in common is that they are very much organizational histories, examining UNESCO from the top and as a whole. Their results are informative and instructive, but are inherently unable to tell the full story of a vast, complex organization made up of many different smaller parts and of countless contributing individuals.

In her recent history of UNESCO, for example, the most comprehensive published to date, Chloé Maurel argues that the impulse to serve the "masses" was favored by the Americans but resisted by Europeans "more inclined to privilege an intellectual and elitist conception of UNESCO's mission."<sup>50</sup> It is with an eye to challenging, or at least complicating common conceptions such as this one regarding UNESCO's elitism that this work very purposefully takes

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<sup>47</sup> These projects have somewhat stagnated with the economic crisis and since the United States pulled its funding after Palestine was voted a UNESCO member nation in 2011.

<sup>48</sup> For example: Céline Giton, "La politique du livre de l'Unesco (1945-1974)," PhD dissertation, Le Centre d'histoire de Sciences Po, 2012 ; Perrin Selcer, "Patterns of Science: Developing Knowledge for a World Community at Unesco," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2011; Kristen N. Lochrie, "The theoretical construction of literacy at UNESCO, 1974-1987, PhD Dissertation, University of Virginia, 2011.

<sup>49</sup> See also, for example, the 2008 special issue, *New Histories of the United Nations* (Vol.19, No.3, September 2008), of the *Journal of World History* (published by UNESCO since 1953 when it was established with Lucien Febvre of the *Annales* as its editor).

<sup>50</sup> Chloé Maurel, *Histoire de l'UNESCO: Les trente premières années. 1945-1974* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 2010), 55.

a more microhistorical approach. By examining the interconnections between UNESCO's Libraries Division with the Reconstruction Program between about 1945 and 1951, this work will begin to expand the history of that organization from one that is almost exclusively big-picture and thus necessarily broad and general, to one that tells a more complex and nuanced story. Compared with UNESCO in general, which was relatively slow to come to life in terms of developing and implementing practical and successful projects, the Libraries Section, despite some notable missteps and failures, was recognized and admired from the outset as being active, grounded, productive, and as successfully bridging urgent postwar reconstruction and rehabilitation needs with those of the longer-term. The generalization that Europeans were elitist while Americans were inclusive may be true when looking at the positions taken and demands made by representatives of these governments at the highest levels of UNESCO. But such generalizations fail to take into account the day to day workings of the individual sections. These were staffed, certainly during the early years of interest here, by and large, by Europeans. The work of the Libraries Section that will be examined throughout this work, ranging from the International Clearing House of Publications to Book Coupons to its efforts to help ensure the fairest possible distribution of confiscated books, to its Summer School for Librarians and Manifesto for Libraries, whether taken individually or collectively, turn on its head any argument that UNESCO or the Europeans with influence on it, restricted it to be elitist, concerned only about the highest level of intellectual life and production.

Stephen A. Freeman of Middlebury College argued the same in 1948 when he wrote, "UNESCO is not a distant government agency, nor a lofty group of theorists who plan to let vague generalities on culture trickle down to the common level. It is definitely a people's organization." What made it a people's organization, according to Freeman, was the fact that

UNESCO relied upon people, all people, to make it successful. After all, as was previously mentioned and as Freeman reminded his readers, “The whole budget of UNESCO for 1947 was only six million dollars, eight million in 1948. It can do nothing by itself. Its function is to stimulate and coordinate the efforts of private organizations.” These should be motivated to participate, Freeman argued, in order “to feel that we are a part of a larger and more powerful movement, in fact that we are a unit in a world-wide organization for peace.”<sup>51</sup> In other words, if there was any advantage to UNESCO’s weak financial situation it was not only that people and private organizations could, and must participate in order for the organization to succeed and survive, but that this broad-based participation would help to ensure that an equally broad base of people stood to benefit.

Moreover, due to the deep imbalance between its paltry budget and its ambitious mission, UNESCO was utterly reliant on the active support, cooperation and collaboration of a vast, global network of governments, foundations and private, non-profit, non-governmental organizations:

The active co-operation of all countries is essential. UNESCO can help with advice and information, but real activity and positive interest from the countries themselves is necessary. For any country or national organisation to act only as passive recipient is far from satisfactory. UNESCO must therefore develop accurate and close contacts.<sup>52</sup>

When the various interested parties could not come together and agree on shared goals and means by which to reach them, UNESCO was often left paralyzed. As will be seen in chapters two and three, when such conflicts occurred UNESCO was unable to act independently due to its

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<sup>51</sup> Stephen A. Freeman, “Report on Unesco,” *The French Review* 21:6 (May, 1948), 443. For more about the reliance on these other bodies see Thomas G. Weiss, Tatiana Carayannis and Richard Jolly, “The ‘Third’ United Nations,” *Global Governance* 15 (2009): 123-142.

<sup>52</sup> Emphasis in original. UNESCO, National Surveys of Library Needs and Resources, UNESCO/Prep.Com./L.M.&Sp.Proj./10, Libraries Section, Rehab./Survey Needs and Sources/1, 1 August 1946, p.2. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission Vol.V Program Committees.

insufficient resources or due to its inability to obtain the support or authorization required to act in a particular place or on a particular issue.

This dissertation also seeks to complicate the argument that almost from its birth UNESCO was defined, because of its enormous size, small budget, and occidental imbalance, by an almost paralyzing discrepancy between its idealistic ideas and the disappointing reality of the concrete, productive work that it was able to accomplish. Much of the idealism present throughout UNESCO during its early years developed out of the war. As Judt described in *Postwar*, out of some of the worst devastation the world had ever seen “came the oddly optimistic mood upon which many observers remarked in the immediate aftermath of Liberation.”<sup>53</sup> When it came to UNESCO, the optimism stemmed in part from the belief that, by keeping in mind the lessons learned from the widely seen failures of the League of Nations and its cultural arm, the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, ideally positioned the nascent organization to make a concrete, positive impact, first in the realm of reconstruction, which would render it the postwar success that the League was never able to be.

The extent of this optimistic mood was repeatedly described by almost all who were part of, or who even just visited, UNESCO’s headquarters during its early years. According to one recollection, “the Organization was a kind of intellectual gold rush with people from all over the world leaving prestigious careers to come to Paris and work for an ideal. We worked in hotel bathrooms and files were kept in wardrobes; there was a certain something in the air which can only be called *élan* [perhaps best translated here as enthusiasm].”<sup>54</sup> The responses to this vibrant optimism and idealism were mixed, and some were critical. John Marshall of the Rockefeller

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<sup>53</sup> Judt, *Postwar*, 64.

<sup>54</sup> Joan Smith, “All In A Day’s Work,” *Lien/Link* (date unknown). Ms. Smith may have been inspired by the title *Élan, Impetus* in English, of the monthly publication of UNESCO’s Reconstruction Department in September 1949. The publication first appeared in February 1947 as the *Reconstruction Newsletter*.

Foundation reported from the second UNESCO General Conference that “All the fine words and speeches by the intellectuals seem to me to place them on a cloud that has lost its bearings so far as the earth is concerned.”<sup>55</sup> Criticism also came from within. Even the Libraries Section’s Jacob Zuckerman, who is the main actor in this dissertation and who was perhaps the most practically-minded idealist at UNESCO, later recalled, “Many of my colleagues were unfortunately more idealists than practical bureaucrats, so that a series of well-intentioned but certain to fail projects were undertaken.” Nevertheless, it had still been, in his words, “an exhilarating period in the life of the organization.”<sup>56</sup>

Thanks in part to the concrete achievements of Zuckerman and his colleagues, criticism often ceased when it came to the Libraries Section which, as will be demonstrated throughout this work, was often singled out for its productivity and efficiency. In a 1946 UNESCO meeting, for example, a Czechoslovakian representative stated, “While on the subject of Rehabilitation, I must say that better results have been obtained as regards museums and libraries than in any other field. For the experts have realised the necessity of a better distribution of books and scientific works throughout the world.”<sup>57</sup> Similarly, in 1947 then Librarian of Congress Luther Evans wrote that “The Libraries Section of the Secretariat gave the impression at the General Conference in Mexico of just the right combination of idealism and practical sense. Mr. Carter and his colleagues gave every evidence of understanding the large policies to be pursued by UNESCO, and they also seemed to have their feet on the ground as practical administrators of a

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<sup>55</sup> James Marshall to Judah Magnes, 2 January 1947. AJA, Marshall Papers, Box 21 Folder 9 Magnes, Judah L. 1909-1948.

<sup>56</sup> Jacob Zuckerman, *Memoirs* (untitled and undated), 63. Zuckerman Family, Private Collection (hereafter Zuckerman Family Papers). With grateful thanks to the Zuckerman family for allowing me full access to Jacob Zuckerman’s papers.

<sup>57</sup> Provisional verbatim report of first meeting, 28 November 1946, p.8. UNESCO/C/Prog.Com./S.C.Lib&Mus/VR1, Paris, 6 December 1946. UNESCO Archives, General Conference 1. Session Paris 1946, Programme Commission I, Vol. 5 Documents.

large program with a very limited budget.”<sup>58</sup> Here again is where the microhistorical view taken here can bring to light elements of the history of UNESCO that are inevitably obscured by general studies. To that end, a brief survey of the wartime origins of what became the UNESCO Libraries Section will provide a broader historical context important to understanding how vital and urgent assistance to libraries came to be seen by so many in the immediate postwar moment.

### **III. Planning and Assessment**

To look again to Mark Mazower’s work on reconstruction, he has argued that “the origins of the post war were to be found in the war years themselves,” and indeed, the wartime planning that enabled the UNESCO Libraries Section’s relatively rapid and effective postwar response began almost simultaneously with the onset of war.<sup>59</sup> Necessarily, countries not directly under attack were better positioned to collect duplicate and surplus materials and to host wartime planning meetings, efforts that were, therefore, centralized in the United States as well as in Great Britain, which hosted a significant number of exiled representatives of countries that were under direct attack; most important with regards to the future UNESCO were those who became involved with the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education (CAME), first called in London in 1942.

Realization that, at the very least, the war would impede libraries’ ability to acquire publications from abroad, and particularly from the United States, set in early. Already in November 1940 a plea from Holland was sent to “international librarian” Harry Miller Lydenberg.<sup>60</sup> The recipient was well chosen as in 1941 Lydenberg would retire as Director of New York Public Library and become Director of the International Relations Board of the

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<sup>58</sup> Luther H. Evans, “The Library Program of UNESCO,” *DC Libraries* 19:2 (January 1948), 21.

<sup>59</sup> Mazower, “Reconstruction: The Historiographical Issues,” 22.

<sup>60</sup> Phyllis Dain, “Harry M. Lydenberg and American Library Resources: A Study in Modern Library Leadership,” *The Library Quarterly* 47:4 (Oct., 1977), 464.

American Library Association (ALA), a sub-section of the organization that devoted significant attention and resources to postwar library reconstruction and rehabilitation.<sup>61</sup> The letter requested that ALA and American publishers of periodicals “print a slightly larger number of copies so as to dispose of a certain number of spare copies;”<sup>62</sup> spare copies that would then be distributed among European libraries after the anticipated allied victory.

Regardless of how distant that day might be, there was a general consensus that it was never too soon to begin preparing. Polish librarian Maria Danilewicz expressed this sentiment in 1941, writing while exiled in France prior to arriving in London where she would participate in the CAME meetings: “A happier to-morrow for the Libraries of Poland must dawn after the Allied victory. Loot and plunder must be restored, the collections must be re-organized and reconstructed. This is an important question for the future of the intellectual life of Poland and it does not seem premature to discuss and prepare the plans for post-war reconstruction.”<sup>63</sup>

Looking back to Roosevelt’s previously quoted 1941 letter to the ALA, it implicitly acknowledged that it was not at all premature to be thinking about their fate.

From the beginning of the war, national library organizations from all over the world, led by the ALA and the [British] Library Association, undertook their own efforts, individually and in cooperation, to prepare to assist with postwar library reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Academic, scholarly, religious, community and countless other bodies participated in or led their

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<sup>61</sup> Margaret Stieg Dalton, “The International Relations Office, 1956-1972,” *Library Trends* 55:3(Winter 2007): 609-622; Martin H. Sable, “Warfare and the Library: An International Bibliography,” *Library & Archival Security* 7:1(September 1985): 25-97; Peggy Sullivan, “The International Relations Program of the American Library Association” *Library Trends* (January 1972): 577-591; Flora B. Ludington, “The American Contribution to Foreign Library Establishment and Rehabilitation,” *The Library Quarterly* 24:2(Apr., 1954): 192-204.

<sup>62</sup> Unsigned letter from Holland to Harry M. Lydenberg, 16 November 1940. International Federation of Library Associations Archives, Fonds de Genève 1927-1965 (hereafter IFLA Archives), Box WA/5, Folder Bibliothèques détruites au cours de la guerre 1939- (American Book Center etc.).

<sup>63</sup> Maria Danilewicz, *The Libraries of Poland* (St. Andrews: W.C. Henderson & Son, Ltd., c1943), 63. Translated from the Polish *Losy Bibliotek Polskich* (London, 1942) by Helena Brochocka. Danilewicz wrote this in France where she had fled from Poland after the German invasion and shortly prior to her arrival in London where she would serve as Director of the Polish Library in London and then as Polish representative to CAME.

own efforts as well. One important effort to bring these efforts together occurred at the Polish Institute of Art and Sciences in America (PIASA), located in New York City. The Institute, deeply concerned for the fate of all the arts and sciences in Poland, agreed to hold a Conference on the Reconstruction of Libraries on 22 February 1944. Demonstrating how seriously the topic was taken, the Conference was attended by about fifty people, including a handful of U.S. State Department representatives, Librarian of Congress Luther Harris Evans and his predecessor Archibald MacLeish, scholars representing the war-impacted countries of Belgium, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, France, Poland and Netherlands East Indies, members of ALA and a broad range of library, educational and professional organizations. Also present was Lucy Schildkret, later historian Lucy S. Dawidowicz, who will appear again in chapter three. Schildkret attended on behalf of the Yiddish Scientific Institute (YIVO), a Jewish cultural and research body that was founded in Vilna in 1926 and that moved to New York in 1940.<sup>64</sup>

A Belgian attendee, aware of the activities of CAME already well underway by early 1944, nevertheless worried that its library-related “policy remains short of what we are entitled and what we want to do.”<sup>65</sup> His suggestion to the PIASA Conference, as reported in the *New York Times*, was to declare the need for an intellectual UNRRA and that “Private assistance, no matter how generous it may be, will not be sufficient for the task of restoring libraries. [...] the United Nations will have to include these restorations in their deliberations, both from an advisory and a financial point of view.”<sup>66</sup> Such a cultural or intellectual UNRRA, both titles that would later be used, repeatedly, in reference to UNESCO, “would afford a great contribution to

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<sup>64</sup> “Proceedings of the Conference on the Reconstruction of Libraries,” *Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America* II:3 (April 1944), 608-609.

<sup>65</sup> “Proceedings of the Conference on the Reconstruction of Libraries,” 611.

<sup>66</sup> “Belgian Suggests a Cultural UNRRA,” *New York Times*, 23 February 1944.

the moral well-being of the people concerned and to the peace itself.”<sup>67</sup> Indeed, disseminating knowledge and information to reconstruct people and nations in the interest of fostering a peaceful world became the driving motivation of UNESCO and its Libraries Section. The Section would also respond to a concern, expressed a few days after the Conference by another attendee who wrote to PIASA Director Oskar Halecki, lamenting, “It is a pity that there is not one united front in connection with the reconstruction of libraries.”<sup>68</sup> As demonstrated by attendance at the Conference as well as by the myriad of other efforts directed at preparing to address the same issues, concern about the fate of war-impacted libraries was so widespread that it was engendering an almost equally widespread range of response plans. Limited resources necessitated the avoidance of potentially wasteful duplicate, contesting, or simply confusing overlapping efforts and rendered a united front essential; upon its establishment, it was precisely such a united front that the nascent UNESCO would seek to provide. As a key element of UNESCO, a transnational coordinating and stimulating body, the aim of its Libraries Section was never to control, overtake or compete with other efforts. Rather, its goal, one that was initially formulated during the war within CAME meetings, was to centralize and organize them in order to create the most efficient and effective network of aid to war-damaged libraries.

As an article on CAME in Britain’s *Picture Post* put it in 1944, if the constitution was accepted for the proposed United Nations Organization for Educational and Cultural Reconstruction, then “internationalism will grow out of relief work.”<sup>69</sup> The constitution of the proposed organization, which would become UNESCO, was of course signed, and examining UNESCO’s subsequent early postwar library activities demonstrates how true this statement

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<sup>67</sup> “Proceedings of the Conference on the Reconstruction of Libraries,” 612.

<sup>68</sup> Librarian, Central Depository Library for the Netherlands East Indies to Oskar Halecki, 25 February 1944. Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America (hereafter PIASA Archives), 17.173 Conference on the Reconstruction of Libraries. 1942-1945.

<sup>69</sup> “Can the World Agree about Education?” *Picture Post*, 6 May 1944.

came to be. Indeed internationalism was very much imbedded in UNESCO from the outset, inspiring, defining and guiding the Libraries Section's programs, and more broadly, is precisely what those involved in reconstruction and rehabilitation at Unesco envisioned and aspired to, and which is what inextricably connected for advocates of Unesco's involvement in reconstruction, the organization's immediate, urgent postwar mission with its long-term, global goals. The library-related programs that will be examined in detail here constitute significant contributions to Unesco's effort for internationalism to grow at least in part out of its reconstruction and rehabilitation programs.

#### **IV. The Books and Periodicals Commission (BPC)**

The roots of the UNESCO Libraries Section's postwar reconstruction and rehabilitation program can be traced directly to CAME's first meeting, held in London on 16 November 1942, where a key item on the agenda was "The provision of books." In line with its focus on education, the agenda specified CAME's concern with "especially textbooks for schools."<sup>70</sup>

Within CAME's first month, however, that initial concern had been significantly expanded:

seven categories of books believed "amongst those which will be in the most urgent demand: (i) Books to replace destroyed books in National or University Libraries. (ii) Books on learned subjects published during the period of occupation of the country concerned, so that the libraries may be brought fully to date and that the gap caused by the war years may be bridged. (iii) Textbooks for Universities other than those included under headings (i) and (ii). (iv) Textbooks for use in schools. ... (v) General literature which will have been unobtainable in occupied countries during the war years, and for which there will obviously be an urgent demand. Books of this type would probably be needed in both the mother tongue of the country concerned and in foreign tongues."<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Draft report of CAME first meeting, 16 November 1942. The National Archives of the UK: Public Records Office (hereafter TNA PRO), ED 42/2 Conference of Allied Ministers of Education: Plenary Sessions: Reports, Agenda, Memoranda, Notes, Finance, Publicity.

<sup>71</sup> Two more points on the list less relevant to this research were "(vi) There will probably be outstanding books on the life and thought of the United Nations and on like subjects which the Allied Governments would consider should be made available. (vii) It is probable that a brief history of the war will be needed, written from the United Nations' angle." AME/B/1 Paper C, Supply of books in the post-war period to countries now occupied by the enemy, 31 December 1942. UNESCO Archives, CAME, BPC, Vol. IV Part I Documents.

This ambitious list, though still very preliminary given how early in the war it was drafted (1942), is revealing nonetheless. It illustrates the extent to which CAME was concerned from the outset about the anticipated scope of postwar book and library-related issues. Further revealing the significance of this issue was one of the first papers submitted to CAME, which concerned “Supply of books in the post-war period to countries now occupied by the enemy.”<sup>72</sup> This level of interest quickly led to the founding of CAME’s Books and Periodicals Commission (BPC).

The BPC was one of the two commissions formed during CAME’s second meeting, held 19 January 1943.<sup>73</sup> Among the primary concerns of the BPC, as defined during its initial months, was “inter-alia to study the rehabilitation of libraries in the Occupied countries.”<sup>74</sup> A few months later, study had already begun to turn to planned action with “the replenishment of libraries that have suffered loss by enemy action” being outlined as a specific goal.<sup>75</sup> English political scientist Sir Ernest Barker, at the time almost seventy years old, was appointed Chairman of the BPC, and delegates from CAME’s founding nations of Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, Norway, the Netherlands, Poland, Yugoslavia and Great Britain were represented on the Commission from its founding.

By December of 1943, a BPC sub-commission for books for war-damaged libraries, consisting of three British representatives and one each from Poland, Luxembourg and Czechoslovakia, had prepared a three-page report examining whether the BPC idea for “books

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<sup>72</sup> Complete Index to Commission (and History Committee) Papers. December 1942-December 1945. UNESCO Archives, CAME, BPC, Vols. IV and V Parts I and II Documents.

<sup>73</sup> The other was the Commission on Cultural Conventions. Ultimately there would be eight Commissions. Only the BPC had sub-commissions, one on History, the second for the Inter-Allied Book Centre.

<sup>74</sup> Jean Timmermans, Memorandum on the disposition taken in Great Britain towards the rehabilitation of Libraries, damaged or destroyed in the invaded countries, undated [circa June 1943]. American Library Association Archives 7/1/6 International Relations Office First (Old) Office (hereafter ALA IRO), Box 1, Series 7/1/6, Folder Allied Ministers of Education 1942-44.

<sup>75</sup> Richard Seymour to Ernest Barker, 14 October 1943. TNA PRO, ED 42/6 History Committee: Project for an Allied War Museum and Library. Inter-Allied Book Centre Committee.

obtained through [a] salvage drive would be of use to continental libraries.”<sup>76</sup> Publication collection efforts such as these, based primarily in the United States and Great Britain, were thus necessarily collecting and warehousing almost exclusively English language materials. Although it was difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain what might be available in other countries, the BPC, itself made up of representatives from various non-English language countries, was well aware that the postwar need would be for books and periodicals in a broad diversity of languages. Its research into what might be available resulted in one instance in the following memorandum to CAME:

The Soviet Government is reported to have established a fund of 4 million volumes for the purpose of re-stocking libraries in liberated districts of the USSR. It is suggested that the Conference [CAME] should be asked to consider whether to recommend an approach to the Soviet government for a contribution particularly of scientific and learned publications in Russian (since these are most likely to find qualified readers) for the destroyed and damaged libraries. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that collecting institutions on these lines should be found in other countries outside the English-speaking world.<sup>77</sup>

In addition, the BPC recommended that all CAME member nations, to the extent possible, collect enough copies of all their government documents and related publications being produced so that those could be exchanged after the war, and:

- (1) that contributions of books (and periodicals) in Spanish and Portuguese should be invited from certain of the Latin American countries or at least from those who are among the United Nations;
- (2) that the Swedish, Swiss and Egyptian governments should also be asked to help in respect of certain learned publications;
- (3) that enquiry should be made as to the availability of French books published in Cairo, Beirut and Algiers.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Report of the Sub-Commission for Books for War-Damaged Libraries, undated [circa fall 1943]. TNA PRO FO 371 Foreign Office: Political Departments: General Correspondence from 1906-1966.

<sup>77</sup> Richard Seymour, AME/B2, Memorandum by the Secretary on Books and Periodicals for National and University Libraries, 16 March 1943. UNESCO Archives, 02 A 20 Libraries – Special Needs Part I.

<sup>78</sup> AME/B/23, Interim Report of the Books and Periodicals Commission, July 1943, p.5. UNESCO Archives, 02 A 20 Libraries – Special Needs Part I.

These are only a few small examples of the intensive work the BPC undertook to plan and prepare for the postwar. Between the time of its founding in January 1943 and the time of the November 1945 Conference for the Establishment of UNESCO, the BPC met a notable fifty-four times and was lauded for its “very concrete work” (*un travail [...] très concret*), in contrast to other CAME commissions whose work remained predominately investigative (*un travail d’enquête*).<sup>79</sup> By the end of November 1945, the BPC had begun to turn its years of planning into action. It had delivered over 61,000 books, divided between CAME’s founding nations of Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Yugoslavia, as well as over 33,000 periodicals to France and Luxembourg, and had an additional 122,000 books and periodicals ready to be distributed.<sup>80</sup> While an acknowledged and welcome success, these numbers represented but a drop in the bucket of need. Maria Danilewicz asked, “Can all these books satisfy the intellectual hunger of Europe? No, *certainly not!* I believe that they will only stimulate the thirst of the European reading public and only make them want more and more.”<sup>81</sup> That thirst was not only stimulated by the relatively small delivery of books and periodicals initially trickling in, but came to be seen as almost unquenchable as details of the extent of losses and needs came increasingly to light.

In order to more completely satisfy that hunger, as soon as possible after the war’s end, a system of inter-library communication coupled with a central collection and distribution center would be required in order to facilitate, stimulate and increase the knowledge, sharing and exchange of the material that each country had and was willing and able to make available to

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<sup>79</sup> Fabien Daubresse, “Conférence des Ministres alliés de l’éducation pendant la Seconde guerre mondiale : la naissance de l’Unesco ou les relations intellectuelles mises au service de la paix,” PhD Dissertation, Université de Paris 1, 1992, 5.

<sup>80</sup> Draft minutes of the 54<sup>th</sup> meeting, 29 November 1945. UNESCO Archives, CAME, London 1942-1945, Vol. III BPC, History, Committees and Sub-Committees.

<sup>81</sup> Maria Danilewicz, “The Post-War Problems of Continental Libraries,” *Journal of Documentation* 1 (1945): 81-88, reprinted in 61:3 (2005): 337.

others. This is precisely the service that came to be provided by the UNESCO International Clearing House for Publications, to be examined in detail in chapter one.

In the interim, the lack of authoritative information regarding the status of Europe's libraries, as well as the circulation of misinformation, whether intentional or not, that variously over- and under-estimated the problem, presented a pervasive and enduring roadblock. Shortly before the liberation of Paris, Paul Vaucher, a French representative at CAME, expressed the concern that "The French newspapers have not often mentioned the Bibliothèque Nationale and some doubts as to its fate subsists."<sup>82</sup> In 1945, as reliable reports began to be filed, Maria Danilewicz described how "During the six years of war the whole of the civilized world followed with the greatest anxiety the news concerning the fate of continental libraries. It has happened twice in the lifetime of our generation that not only human beings were killed, destroyed, and dispersed but also their silent friends – books."<sup>83</sup> Although the BPC, like other concerned bodies, did its utmost to plan for postwar library reconstruction and rehabilitation during the war years, as one country after another was liberated, surveying and gathering data on library losses and needs remained the first priority of the BPC and then of its successor, UNESCO's Libraries Section.

## **V. Organization**

In order to make this project manageable given the global interests and reach of the Libraries Section, it was necessary to impose limits on the geographical scope of this work. After all, as an early Libraries Section document pointed out, "The areas which suffered most during the war were Western Russia, Eastern, Central and South-eastern Europe, China and the

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<sup>82</sup> AME/B/69, Supplement to the notes contributed by the Allied Representatives on the BPC in August 1943 on the principal libraries in their respective countries (AME/B/57) with further information about the damage which these libraries have sustained in so far as this is known (drafted may 1944). UNESCO Archives, CAME, BPC, Vol. IV Documents.

<sup>83</sup> Danilewicz, "The Post-War Problems of Continental Libraries," 334.

Philippines. Librarians and specialists of all kinds in these areas now work under conditions which most people from countries which have escaped the real hardships of war can hardly visualize.”<sup>84</sup> Despite the vastness of the problem, reconstruction was, especially initially, focused on Europe. This was a result of UNESCO’s origins in CAME which, as just outlined, was made up largely of representatives of exiled European governments, as well as of location. The fact that UNESCO was based in Paris simply made it easier for representatives of European countries to participate in its various meetings and conferences, and made it easier for UNESCO to assist the countries in which it had the greatest influence, thanks to over-representation from Europe, and to which it had the greatest physical proximity.<sup>85</sup>

When providing national examples, this work looks primarily to Poland and France. There are a number of reasons that these two countries were selected. To begin with, both countries had been present since the first CAME meeting in 1942 and therefore active throughout the founding and early development of UNESCO. Turning first to Poland, numbering thirteen, Poland’s delegation to the London Conference for the Establishment of UNESCO in November 1945 was the fifth largest, out of forty-four total.<sup>86</sup> Much of Poland, at the epicenter of Hitler’s hatred and murderous fascist policies, had been laid to ruin; postwar it fell under the occupation of the liberating Red Army. As a result, Poland represented, for UNESCO, a complex bifurcated situation in which the particularly extensive wartime devastation, coupled with the increasingly restrictive conditions and distrust stemming from its turn to communism and Sovietization, made reconstruction and rehabilitation to Poland among UNESCO’s most urgent priorities as well as

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<sup>84</sup> Untitled, unsigned, undated [circa 1946-1947]. UNESCO Archives 361.9 : 02 Reconstruction Libraries.

<sup>85</sup> While UNESCO’s reconstruction activities, including those of the Libraries Section, were also implemented in war-damaged areas of Asia and the Middle East, those locales are beyond the scope of this work and the expertise of this author and so are not discussed herein (although a global study of UNESCO’s role in reconstruction is in order).

<sup>86</sup> The larger four delegations came from the UK (originator of CAME), France (UNESCO’s hostess nation), the United States (key founder and funder of UNESCO, as well as a much larger and more populous nation) and China (also much larger and more populous).

one of its greatest challenges. Here it is important to note that while the Soviet Union refused membership in UNESCO until 1954, the 1945 to 1951 time frame of this work covers the years when Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland, each of which would pull out of UNESCO between 1950 and 1952, were members. This is key as initially UNESCO was only authorized by its Executive Council to assist its member states.<sup>87</sup> Disappointed and troubled by the Soviet Union's refusal to join UNESCO, the organization was grateful for the Soviet satellite states that it did count among its member nations, and Poland was one of the most important in terms of size and participation. To that end, Dr. Klara Jastroch, Advisor to the Polish delegation, informed the Polish Ministry of Education in 1946 that UNESCO proposed that Poland select a permanent representative to its Secretariat, the only condition being that the individual have excellent knowledge of English.<sup>88</sup> Having an influence in Poland was just as important to UNESCO as having a voice at UNESCO was to Poland.

This two-sided interest culminated on 25 November 1946, at the first meeting of UNESCO's Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Commission, when Sir John Maud, Vice-President of UNESCO's First General Conference, introduced Bernard Drzewieski: "the Conference has agreed to the proposal of the Nominations Committee that the Chairman of this Commission should be the delegate from Poland and it is my happy task [...] to suggest M. Drzewieski of Poland to take the Chair." This introduction was followed by the Commission confirming the election by acclamation. In accepting the nomination Drzewieski said, "I can

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<sup>87</sup> Apart from Soviet Russia, which refused relations, Germany and other former enemy nations were also excluded. This political restriction did not keep UNESCO from following the news of libraries and librarians in its non-member states. The Russian library journal *Bibliothekar*, for example, was carefully read and Russia's own library reconstruction efforts and its steps to advance libraries and reading were regularly and admiringly reported on in the *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* as well as in internal UNESCO discussions. CAME, BPC, Memorandum by the Secretary on Books and Periodicals for University and National Libraries, 16 March 1943, p.3. UNESCO Archives, 02 A 20 Libraries – Special Needs Part I up to 31 December 1956.

<sup>88</sup> Sprawozdanie Klary Jastroch z delegacji do UNESCO w Londynie (nr.G.M.-II-46), Warsaw, 25 April 1946. Archiwum Akt Nowych, Ministerstwo Oświaty w Warszawie [1944] 1945-1966, (hereafter AAN, Ministerstwo Oświaty [Central Archives of Modern Records, Ministry of Education in Warsaw]), File 807.

assure you at this moment I cease to represent my country, but represent from now on the Conference in our Commission.”<sup>89</sup> Nevertheless, Drzewieski was always introduced and viewed as being Polish. During the Commissions’ sixth and last meeting of the Conference, the French delegate made an important point when he said, “It is not without importance that this Commission has been presided over by the Polish delegate. Since it is a Commission for the reconstruction of the disasters of the war, it was only just that a country which suffered great martyrdom should be represented in the Presidential chair and that in the person of the Chairman we should give a thought to his country.”<sup>90</sup> In response, Drzewieski concluded the meeting by stating, “you Frenchmen and we Poles, with all our friends here representing international democracy, have made our small contribution to the development of a happier life for the children of all countries.”<sup>91</sup> His reference to children stems from his history as an education specialist. Prior to directing the Reconstruction Program at UNESCO, Drzewieski had been Vice-Chairman of the Polish Teachers’ Union, Secretary of the Polish Branch of the New Education Fellowship, Headmaster of a Secondary School in Warsaw, member of the staff of the Polish Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in Britain during the war, representative of the Polish Social Information Bureau, Educational Advisor to the Polish Ministry of Information, and Foreign Relations Secretary to the Polish Teachers’ Association in Great Britain.<sup>92</sup> In a speech given in London in 1942 Drzewieski had also expressed his belief that only international cooperation would make rehabilitation after the war possible, “Neither these emergency measures nor the laying of the foundations of a permanent peace can be taken by single nations.

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<sup>89</sup> Commission on Reconstruction and Rehabilitation, Provisional Verbatim Record of the First Meeting, 25 November 1946, p.1. UNESCO Archives, General Conference 1. Session Paris 1946, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Commission, Volume 8 Documents.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, 31.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 32.

<sup>92</sup> Bernard Stefan Drzewieski. Polish Ministry of Information, British Division, Educational Section, Lectures and Conferences on Poland, 7.

They must be dealt with on a European scale, if not on a world scale.”<sup>93</sup> This background rendered him highly sympathetic to the needs and activities of the Libraries Section, which he viewed as integral to both education and reconstruction more broadly.

With the arrival of Drzewieski to the Secretariat, his presence and his nationality ensured that to a certain degree Poland’s needs and interests were regularly brought front and center, particularly in discussions regarding reconstruction and rehabilitation. UNESCO had the close adhesion of a Pole who appeared to embody their hopes for the sort of energy, capability and cooperation that they envisioned would create, nurture, facilitate, within UNESCO, bonds between opposing viewpoints and ideologies. In fact, Drzewieski revealed his determination for action, his belief in what UNESCO represented, as well as his devotion to his home country during the Preparatory Commission meetings a year earlier. During the second plenary meeting, a debate arose regarding whether the representatives present felt they could vote on an administrative matter without first consulting their home governments, Drzewieski, seeking to avoid delaying action for bureaucratic niceties, declared, “I was born a rebel: I started my career as a rebel when I was a boy of 14. But I try to have respect for law, but not when the law justifies my worst fears.” In this case his worst fear was any delay of assistance to the devastated countries, including his own, Poland.<sup>94</sup> Moreover, as the head of the Reconstruction Program, Drzewieski became an international representative of UNESCO, traveling the world to draw attention to its activities and needs. This included a speaking tour of the United States as well as

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<sup>93</sup> *Calling All Europe: A Symposium of Speeches on the Future Order of Europe*, published on behalf of the Socialist Vanguard Group, London, 5-6 April 1942, p.16.

<sup>94</sup> Provisional record of the Second Plenary Meeting, London, 19 November 1945. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, London-Paris, 1945-1946, Vol. II Records of Plenary Meetings.

multiple broadcasts in French, English and Polish on *Radiodiffusion française* during the late 1940s.<sup>95</sup>

Interviews with Unescans were broadcast regularly on *Radiodiffusion française* during the early reconstruction years. France, which, like Poland, was counted among the states UNESCO considered war-devastated in the aftermath of World War II (as of May 1949 these were Austria, China, France, Greece, Hungary, Iran, Italy, the Netherlands, Philippines, Poland and Czechoslovakia).<sup>96</sup> Unlike Poland and most others on that list, however, France was able to financially and materially contribute fairly significantly to UNESCO's reconstruction efforts even while being an important recipient of the same.<sup>97</sup> So while Poland's early involvement at UNESCO was primarily motivated by its interest in and urgent need for reconstruction, France's primary motivating factor was quite different. In early 1948, Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain wrote to France's Minister of Foreign Affairs, stating, "It is in the measure that France will make herself the champion of an authentic and generous international spirit that she will be able [...] to exercise a strong influence that will be useful to her in the long term, our country being more or less the only one whose own interests coincide with the development of such a

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<sup>95</sup> Archived broadcasts, most from the show, *Tribune de Paris*, include, "L'ONU: La reconstruction pacifique et l'Unesco," with Henri Laugier of the UN and Roger Seydoux speaking from Hunter College, NY via *La Voix du Canada*, 9 June 1946; "UNESCO," with Eve Curie, Jean Painleve, Vladimir Porche[?] and Léon Blum, 5 August 1946; "L'Unesco est à Paris," with Julian Huxley, Sir Alfred Zimmern, Jean Thomas and Roger Seydoux, 25 September 1946; "Les bons d'entre-aide de l'Unesco," 5 November 1951. *Inathèque de France*.

<sup>96</sup> It is notable that Austria and Italy appear on this list, while Germany, which inarguably had suffered extensive war damage, does not. Austria and Italy were never as contentious at UNESCO as Germany, which was strictly an enemy nation (though, as will be discussed in chapter two, from the outset, UNESCO, extremely concerned about re-education and reconstruction, wanted to work there too). But it was too contentious to include Germany immediately, partly because victim countries like Poland protested so strenuously at any mention of Germany receiving UNESCO aid when their own needs had yet to be met. Austria and Italy, on the other hand, seem to have been accepted as victim rather than perpetrator nations, the latter joining UNESCO 27 January 1948 and the former 13 August 1948; (West) Germany joined 11 July 1951. Furthermore, 1947 UNESCO missions to war-devastated countries included Austria on their itinerary. Resolutions adopted by Unesco Meeting of Experts from Devastated Countries, 12-13 May 1949. UNESCO Archives, 361.9 A 06 (44) "49.05" Int. Conf. of Representatives of War Devastated Countries – Paris May 1949.

<sup>97</sup> At the same time, the US, UK, China, France and the USSR "were exempt and given special treatment" because of the contributions they were able to make to the work of reconstruction. This resulted in a "clear distinction" being drawn between these five countries and all the others. Daubresse, "Conférence des Ministres alliés de l'éducation pendant la Seconde guerre mondiale," 25.

spirit.”<sup>98</sup> Maritain was reporting as President of the French Delegation to the second UNESCO General Conference.<sup>99</sup> His statement exemplifies the mix of idealism and opportunism France had regarding the “international spirit” that the newly-established UNESCO represented, and points to the tension inherent between the organization’s universalist mission and the aims of its individual nation-state members.

France, which had lost much it had sought to the Anglo-American camp during the founding of UNESCO, had won one, not insignificant victory, to host the organization in Paris. France saw its host status as an opportunity to reassert itself as world leader and example in intellectual and cultural life and cooperation.<sup>100</sup> In another *Radiodiffusion française* broadcast, Léon Blum said to the French people, “What must interest us particularly, us Frenchmen, in UNESCO, is its seat [Paris] and its actual objective [*son siège et son objet propre*].”<sup>101</sup> To quote again from *Postwar*, Judt described Paris precisely as the French hoped it would be seen by the rest of the world after the war; hosting UNESCO was believed to be important to achieving that:

In the end, then, there could be only one place for a properly *European* intellectual life in the years after World War II: only one city, one national capital whose obsessions and divisions could both reflect and define the cultural condition of the continent as a whole. [...] France was once again the natural European home of the disinherited intellectual, a clearing house for modern European thought and politics. Post-war Parisian intellectual life was thus doubly cosmopolitan : men and women from all over Europe partook of it—and it was the only European stage on which local opinions and disputes were magnified and transmitted to a wide, international audience [emphasis in original].”<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Maritain to Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, 28 January 1948, p.14. MAE, S50 3-5 UNESCO.

<sup>99</sup> Maritain was standing in for Conference President Léon Blum, who was not well enough to make the trip to Mexico City, venue of UNESCO’s Second General Conference.

<sup>100</sup> UNESCO Month [brochure], November 1946. Zuckerman Family Papers. For more about the American-British-French debates over UNESCO’s founding see, for example, Maurel, *Histoire de l’UNESCO*; Iris Julia Bührle, “La France et l’UNESCO de 1945 à 1958” *Revue d’histoire diplomatique* 122:2 (2008): 117-29; William Preston, Edward Herman and Herbert Schiller, *Hope & Folly: The United States and UNESCO 1945-1985* (University of Minnesota Press, 1989); William R. Pendergast, “UNESCO and French Cultural Relations 1945-1970” *International Organization* 30:3 (Summer 1976): 454-83.

<sup>101</sup> “UNESCO,” *Tribune de Paris*, with Eve Curie, Jean Painlevé, Vladimir Porche[?] and Léon Blum, 5 August 1946. Inathèque de France.

<sup>102</sup> Judt, *Postwar*, 209-210.

Here, writing of men and women from all over Europe and an international audience, Judt could easily have also been referring to the impact of UNESCO being in Paris. Also emblematic of French commitment to and leadership in UNESCO were the comparatively “high order” delegates, from Léon Blum to Lucien Febvre, that characterized French representation from the beginning.<sup>103</sup>

One area of common interest in postwar Poland and France is visible in the decrees passed in both countries, very rapidly after their respective liberations, regarding the expansion of public libraries and librarianship, and in the importance that both placed in quickly reconstructing their libraries. As will be briefly discussed in chapter four, these decrees and activities were part of a broader, pan-European push to institutionalize and nationalize culture as part of an effort to increase access to education and knowledge, including via libraries. Here it is simply useful to note that UNESCO’s Libraries Section was acting within a broader context in which reconstructing, improving and expanding libraries was viewed as essential not only by specialized organizations and interested individuals, but also by governments seeking to reconstruct their countries and their people, including through the expansion of knowledge, literacy, understanding, and the reconstitution of a national-cultural identity.

Chapter one will examine the UNESCO International Clearing House for Publications and its associated *Bulletin for Libraries*, as well as the UNESCO Book Coupon Scheme. Together, these represent the highly innovative and successful core of UNESCO’s postwar library reconstruction and rehabilitation program. Their achievements help to complicate the common argument, most recently made by Maurel, that UNESCO was characterized from its formation by a cleavage between conception and practice (*décalage entre conception et*

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<sup>103</sup> Walter H.C. Laves and Charles A. Thomson, *UNESCO: Purpose, Progress, Prospects* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1957), 327; Léon Blum, *La France et l’U.N.E.S.C.O.* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1946).

*pratique*).<sup>104</sup> In fact, the success and sensitivity of these projects exemplify the fact that, as Carter wrote, “Unesco’s policy in book distribution has been defined as ‘the task of meeting exactly stated needs in as exact a way as possible.’”<sup>105</sup> The Libraries Section’s endeavor to identify and respond to “exactly stated needs” rather than to decide and distribute what UNESCO or its supporters and donors believed was needed is an extremely significant distinction when situated within the early postwar Cold War context in which culture, and information and publications specifically, were viewed as potential vehicles of propaganda and misinformation and therefore wanted to be controlled by those on both sides of the escalating conflict.

Chapters two and three examine related issues of control, but regarding the complex and often contested issue of what to do about the vast amount of library collections that had been pillaged, confiscated, stolen and displaced throughout the war years. These chapters investigate UNESCO’s interest in being involved in the issue of confiscated books and the resistance it unexpectedly met as that issue was seen as highly proprietary by those who considered themselves to be the rightful owners or heirs or deciders of the fate of the books in question. The subsequent contestation over UNESCO’s attempted involvement also identify the area of confiscated books as one in which the Libraries Section ultimately failed. Much to its own surprise, it was unable to convince the world’s powers or postwar authorities of what seemed to be obvious, that it, as an impartial, transnational organization dedicated to free and open access, could undertake the fairest possible management and distribution of the books. Given the nature of the contestation and the political pressures involved in deciding which books went where, when, and why, fairness was ultimately not the most compelling argument.

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<sup>104</sup> Maurel, *Histoire de l’UNESCO*, 44.

<sup>105</sup> Edward Carter, “UNESCO’s Library Programs and Work,” *The Library Quarterly* 18:4 (Oct., 1948), 237.

The scope of this issue requires it to be covered in two chapters. Chapter two focuses on UNESCO's interest in participating in deciding the fate and ultimate distribution of non-Jewish books confiscated by the Nazis as well as of the often-forgotten category of fascist and other undesirable publications confiscated by the allies during and after liberation. This chapter will also examine UNESCO's role in bringing enemy nation Germany, specifically German publications and German libraries, into the organization's networks of international exchange discussed in chapter one. In any study of postwar reconstruction, it is impossible to neglect the question of surviving Jews and Jewish communities in Europe. Chapter three continues with the theme of confiscated books by examining the short-lived plan to build a World Jewish Library in Europe, under the auspices of UNESCO, as a home for a portion of the confiscated Jewish books that could not be restituted, either because their original owners or any surviving relations had not survived or could not be identified. The World Jewish Library plan, almost entirely forgotten since, challenges the long-held view that Jewish life and culture fled or was shipped, virtually without question or contest, out of post-Holocaust Europe, at the earliest possible opportunity. Rather, this chapter will demonstrate that one of the new visions for postwar Europe included a new future for a postwar Jewish Europe, one that was not ant-Zionist, but that provided an alternative future vision to Zionism.

Chapter four turns to the notion of libraries, and public libraries in particular, as a cultural right, and to UNESCO's role in developing and articulating this and other cultural rights within the rubric of the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. UNESCO's 1948 Summer School for Librarians and its 1949 Manifesto for Libraries, both of which were rooted in the Libraries Section's reconstruction work but also looked far beyond it, provided innovative and influential ways for UNESCO to smoothly transition from reconstruction into participating

in the promotion and expansion of public libraries, of free and open access to information and publications as a cultural and human right, worldwide.

The work of the Libraries Section, even during the short period of time examined here, extended far beyond the geographical borders or the projects that are discussed in this work. Its reach was global and its interests ranged from leading the effort to create a European Union Catalogue to encouraging countries to publish national bibliographies, to addressing issues of copyright, authors' rights, archives and documentation, translation, among others.<sup>106</sup> The war's impact on libraries, however, was complex and vast enough to make it a focus of this work. Looking to that impact, the Libraries Section identified the main forces it was faced with addressing and reversing as "destruction, looting, neglect."<sup>107</sup> This work revolves around the three overarching categories of war impact on libraries: actual losses<sup>108</sup> due to confiscation, censorship, theft, and/or war damage; losses due to the long isolation between countries throughout the duration of the war; and general, continuing, long-term needs to improve and expand existing library service and culture.

Chapter one, to which we turn now, will demonstrate that the UNESCO Libraries Section's primary response to all the losses, to the destruction, looting and neglect, revolved around transnational cooperation and exchange. It was impossible for libraries to purchase enough books and periodicals to replace all that had been lost or had gone uncollected, not only because of the obvious financial resources such an enterprise would require, but also because of simple supply and demand; unique or rare items were generally out of print and either far too

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<sup>106</sup> For broader examinations see, for example, Giton, "La politique du livre de l'Unesco (1945-1974)"; Emma Rothschild, "The Archives of Universal History," *Journal of World History* 19:3, New Histories of the United Nations (Sep., 2008): 375-40.

<sup>107</sup> *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* II:4 (April 1948), 120.

<sup>108</sup> "Actual losses" were broken down into 1) irrevocable losses 2) random gaps 3) masses of books. Danilewicz, "The Post-War Problems of Continental Libraries," 335.

expensive for libraries to purchase or simply no longer available at all. Due to limited print runs, the same was true for even many recent periodicals and specialized publications. While donation and distribution programs were vital, the number of texts that could be collected remained profoundly insufficient in the face of the enormous demand and need. Therefore, UNESCO's primary solutions to restocking Europe's libraries, was to develop ways for libraries to share and exchange copies, especially through expanded interlibrary loan programs, and to make books more affordable and accessible. While such programs existed prior to the war and still do today - we as scholars often take such programs for granted - they had to be carefully (re)constructed and expanded in the aftermath of war.

## Chapter 1: “Books between Libraries”: Sharing, Exchange and Purchasing

In May of 1945 a two-part article entitled, “Library Situation in Europe,” was published in two consecutive issues of the American trade periodical *Library Journal*. One of the article’s most insightful passages hints at the reasons that libraries became such critical elements of postwar reconstruction and rehabilitation at UNESCO and well beyond:

What has befallen European libraries has not been simply the evil doings of wanton and avaricious men, though it has been that in part. It has been in part also a reflection of a centrally directed program of cultural conquest. The wartime experience of European libraries, in other words, has not been limited to observable damage—physical destruction, losses through removal of treasures, etc. This conquest has meant a perversion of the function libraries normally perform in a free society.<sup>109</sup>

This brief assessment highlights two interrelated points key to understanding the significance of libraries to postwar reconstruction and rehabilitation and to the role of UNESCO in that undertaking. First, it articulates the mounting realization of what the true scope and complexity of the task would be. Second, this realization explains, in turn, why the task was considered so vital and urgent, not only by specialized bodies such as UNESCO, but also by postwar governments of Europe that were as concerned about reconstructing their people and national identities as with reconstructing their nation’s physical, economic and industrial structures and infrastructure. In other words, one key motivation behind the postwar focus on libraries discussed throughout this work was to reverse fascism’s cultural, intellectual and social conquest at all levels of society, an undertaking that necessitated the development of highly specialized programs disseminating alternate forms and sources of information and seeking to foster productive communication, cooperation and productive interaction, including between disparate or even hostile groups. Such programs, including those of the UNESCO Libraries Section, had

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<sup>109</sup> Grayson Kefauver and Carl M. White, “Library Situation in Europe,” *Library Journal* 70 (1 May 1945), 387.

immediate reconstruction and rehabilitation goals, but were intricately tied to its longer-term goal to increase understanding and toleration in order to foster a peaceful world.

Such programs were developed throughout the war years as concern about the fate of libraries and their contents steadily escalated. Pierce Butler, Professor of Bibliographical History at the University of Chicago, warned early in 1944 that “in the present war the number of working libraries...that have been and will be destroyed is enormous. And, even worse than this, the great warehouses of publishers containing their total available surpluses have been annihilated on a scale hitherto unprecedented.”<sup>110</sup> The precise details of that scale, however, took a significant amount of time, resources and effort to uncover; an undertaking that could only occur post-liberation and within the broader postwar context in which losses of all types were being discovered and documented, and responses formulated and prioritized. The massive theft and destruction of libraries and books, what historian Jonathan Rose has called “the most devastating literary holocaust of all time,” constituted only one element of the unprecedented carnage.<sup>111</sup>

Well before the extent of the carnage came to light, while it was still fully underway in fact, an early memorandum submitted to UNESCO’s precursor organization, the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education, meeting in London between December 1942 and November 1945, stated, “This war has shown the necessity for large-scale and long-term planning. It has taught us that the most difficult problem can be solved by cooperative effort. This new attitude naturally

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<sup>110</sup> Pierce Butler, “War in Library History” in Butler, ed., *Books and Libraries in Wartime* (University of Chicago Press, 1945), 18.

<sup>111</sup> “The story of the six million is also the story of the One Hundred Million. That is the toll of books destroyed by the Nazis throughout Europe in just twelve years [...] the mass slaughter of Jews was accompanied by the most devastating literary holocaust of all time.” Jonathan Rose, ed., *The Holocaust and the Book: Destruction and Preservation* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 1.

extends to the library world.”<sup>112</sup> The interconnections between these three key elements – planning, cooperation and libraries – that came to define the reconstruction and rehabilitation program of the UNESCO Libraries Section were identified during the war years and honed in its immediate aftermath based on precisely and urgently expressed needs and desires for information and publications.

Thus, for instance, in May of 1946 France’s Minister of Reconstruction and Urbanism, François Billoux, declared at a press conference in Paris that “The current economic situation in the world demands that exchanges be made between the devastated countries and the countries that were spared. It is above all necessary that our building industry modernizes and stays current with new construction techniques and modern production processes.”<sup>113</sup> Another postwar reconstruction official, Director of the Department of Building Policy for Poland’s Ministry of Reconstruction Juliusz Goryński, wrote in August 1946, “Especially now that we are faced with reconstruction of Warsaw and of our whole country, we most urgently feel the need for technical libraries.”<sup>114</sup> Vernon Clapp of the American Library of Congress, after a 1946 trip to Europe reported more broadly that “The need of intellectual workers the world around is for complete and up-to-date information regarding the literature of their fields.”<sup>115</sup> Statements such as these, identifying cooperation, exchange and libraries as necessary means to enable the global need to catch up with information and publications produced elsewhere throughout the war years,

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<sup>112</sup> AME/B/26, Memorandum by Mr. Theodore Besterman on a Proposed International Library Clearing-House. UNESCO Archives, CAME, BPC, London 1942-1945, Vol. IV Documents Part I.

<sup>113</sup> Conférence de presse tenue par M. François Billoux, ministre de la reconstruction et de l’urbanisme le 9 mai 1946. Note générale Secrétariat d’Etat à la Présidence du Conseil et à l’Information. Direction de la Documentation. Hors série n° 100.

<sup>114</sup> Juliusz Goryński, Director of the Department of Building Policy, Ministerstwo Odbudowy, to Wyndham White, Secretary General of the Emergency Economic Committee for Europe, 22 August 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 41, 37/2/326.

<sup>115</sup> “Mr. Clapp’s Report of his trip to Europe”, 11-13.

abounded during the immediate postwar moment. These urgent needs as well as UNESCO's response to them have been all but forgotten since.<sup>116</sup>

Postwar demand for information and publications was by no means limited, however, to that which was viewed as essential to reconstruction, but extended to virtually all fields of research and inquiry, as well as to the general public's demand for reading material, whether for leisure, distraction, self-education, instruction or personal fulfillment. UNESCO's early recognition of the scope and breadth of the postwar need for both replacement and new material for libraries, in all genres ranging from the most specialized to the most general, in all languages and for all ages and levels, is reflected in the formulation of the first priority reconstruction and rehabilitation programs developed by its Libraries Section. This chapter will examine the origins and early practices of three of the most important of these programs: the International Clearing House for Publications (ICHP) and the associated periodical, the *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries*, and the UNESCO Book Coupon Scheme. With the stated mission of the ICHP and *Bulletin* - "promoting and facilitating the exchange and distribution of publications throughout the world"<sup>117</sup> - these programs were developed specifically to expand, facilitate and centralize avenues of transnational, inter-organizational, inter-institutional and intergovernmental communication, cooperation, sharing and exchange. Specifically, "exchange without discrimination."<sup>118</sup> In particular, the ICHP and *Bulletin* made it possible for UNESCO to provide, via a centralized transnational network, a means for librarians to communicate with one another regarding postwar questions such as, "What has been published in enemy and occupied countries? What periodicals have ceased? What published material is still available? Which

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<sup>116</sup> Volker Berghahn, "Debating the Future of Industrial Society: American and European Social Scientists during the Cold War, 1945-1965," paper presented at Faculty House, Columbia University, 22 April 2010.

<sup>117</sup> *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* 1:1 (April 1947), 1.

<sup>118</sup> UNESCO, National Surveys of Library Needs and Resources, 1 August 1946, p.2. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission Vol.V Program Committees.

should be reprinted or reproduced?”<sup>119</sup> UNESCO had a fairly specific vision for what this network would look like:

A diagram of the Libraries Section’s work would be of a complex network of lines of communication, each line justified in the pattern by the existence at each end of it of receiver and producer bodies. UNESCO’s task most simply defined is to see that these lines of communication exist, that they are well served and that they are kept in good order [emphasis in original].<sup>120</sup>

The three projects examined in this chapter responded to issues identified and agreed upon during UNESCO’s First General Conference, specifically regarding breaking down “Barriers to the free circulation of publications” and increasing the “Movement of scientific journals and books.”<sup>121</sup>

Within that rubric, as Edward J. Carter, first head of the Libraries Section explained in a 1948 letter about the ICHP, “we have taken as our guiding slogan the obligation ‘to meet exactly stated needs in as exact a way as possible’ and exactitude can only be produced by having lists of available materials.”<sup>122</sup> This notion of exactitude represented a key nuance in the politically charged early postwar Cold War world when there was rampant anxiety about and desire to control propaganda and real and perceived misuse and abuse of information and publications on all sides. Certainly this tension manifested in and around UNESCO, increasingly seen, very quickly after its establishment, either as under too much of an Anglo-American and anti-communist influence, or as an anti-American and a pro-communist agent. Within such a highly

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<sup>119</sup> Unsigned [probably Theodore Besterman] to Julien Cain, 6 May 1946. UNESCO Archives 04 : 341.383 “39/45” Confiscated Books.

<sup>120</sup> UNESCO Preparatory Commission, Committee on Libraries, Museums and Special Projects, Memorandum on problems and policies in the development of world library and information services, 15 May 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission Vol. V Programme Committees.

<sup>121</sup> Note on a draft proposal for UNESCO Book Coupon Scheme, 24 September 1947. TNA PRO, ED 157/197 Ministry of Education: External Relations Branch and UNESCO Branch: Registered Files (UN Series). Libraries National Co-operating Body. Meetings: 1 November and 12 November 1946, 4 February, 5 June and 13 August 1947; Preparatory Programme.

<sup>122</sup> Edward Carter to Keyes Metcalf, 29 July 1948. UNESCO Archives, 02 A 855 International Exchange of Publications, Part I up to 31/XII/48.

charged context, the Libraries Section's dedication to meeting "exactly stated needs" in the realm of information and publications, to providing librarians free and open forums through which to communicate and to obtain desired materials across and despite physical, ideological and other boundaries, held not only great appeal, but also concrete meaning.

According to a 1947 Libraries Section document, "all Unesco's other library activities would be stultified unless the ultimate object of all such work is achieved: to get into the hands of any inquirer anywhere any book that he needs."<sup>123</sup> In order to further this goal, UNESCO had to look beyond libraries' need for sharing and exchange to also address libraries' need to purchase material. Examination of the UNESCO Book Coupon Scheme allows for further discussion of UNESCO's dedication to facilitating freedom of choice for libraries to *purchase* the new and used books and periodicals that they wanted from other countries. This universalist objective, repeatedly stated in similarly explicit ways by the Libraries Section throughout the early postwar years, helps explain why, in the immediate aftermath of the war, those concerned about the free and open exchange of information and publications looked to UNESCO for guidance and leadership. The 1947 document continued:

The need for books is far from being limited to works for the specialist, scholar or scientist. The public libraries which indeed also serve specialists as well as the mass of the people must be supplied with modern books of topical interest and recreational educational value. Most of the public libraries in Europe today [...] cannot in any way cater for the demand for good reading. The hunger for reading has been growing steadily and rapidly; the means to satisfy this healthy appetite hardly exist at present.<sup>124</sup>

In this document, entitled "Books between Libraries," the UNESCO Libraries Section identified sharing and exchange as that means and declared the subject to be "clearly one of the most

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<sup>123</sup> UNESCO, Outline of the Proposed Activities of the Bibliographical and Library Centre in Promoting the International Flow of Books between Libraries, 7 January 1947. UNESCO/Misc./85.1947.

<sup>124</sup> Untitled, unsigned, undated [circa 1946-1947]. UNESCO Archives 361.9 : 02 Reconstruction Libraries.

important of the rehabilitation and library activities of Unesco.”<sup>125</sup> How the Section, working in close collaboration with the UNESCO Reconstruction Program and with the cooperation of a wide array of library, national, non-profit, relief and other groups, rapidly developed successfully means of moving books between libraries in the interest of reconstruction, is the focus of this chapter. Specifically, like the previously quoted reconstruction officials, UNESCO situated libraries and the sharing and exchange of material between them as the ideal means by which to address the vast discrepancy between the overwhelming postwar demand for information and publications versus the utterly insufficient supply of resources available.

While reconstruction was UNESCO’s most immediate and urgent concern, all of its projects were developed with long-term advancement, improvement, expansion and peace in mind. As Carter explained, “reconstruction does not imply simply the distribution of gifts, important as those may be: it is much more important to assist in the creation and development of agencies and in the development of techniques which will be continuing and effective means of assuring the free flow and the proper use of materials on education, science and culture.”<sup>126</sup> The agencies and techniques developed by the Libraries Section, including those to be examined in this chapter and throughout this work, proved vitally important in the wake of the war. An unprecedented combination of intentional and unintentional wartime events, ranging from isolation and disruption to theft and outright destruction, had an utterly devastating impact on libraries. Consequences of factors such as these, whether they occurred alone or combination, made it difficult, if not impossible, for many libraries in war-impacted countries to effectively protect their existing collections and for virtually every war-impacted library to collect new

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<sup>125</sup> UNESCO, Outline of the Proposed Activities of the Bibliographical and Library Centre in Promoting the International Flow of Books between Libraries, 7 January 1947.

<sup>126</sup> Edward J. Carter, “A Reply to Dr. Sigerist’s ‘Open Letter to Unesco,’” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 22 (March-April 1948): 834.

material, particularly foreign publications, for the entire duration of the war. While the overwhelming scope of the damage will be briefly summarized here, it has been studied in detail elsewhere and is not the focus of this chapter.<sup>127</sup> Rather, this chapter will begin by briefly examining the earliest postwar surveying and assessment that fed directly into UNESCO's development of the ICHP, *Bulletin for Libraries* and Book Coupons. For, first and foremost, it was essential to investigate and circulate information regarding the extent of the damage, losses and needs.

### **I. Surveying and Assessing: The Immediate Postwar**

Let us return now to the 1945 article, "Library Situation in Europe," quoted at the beginning of this chapter. It was co-authored by education specialist Grayson Kefauver of the US Department of State and American delegate to CAME, and librarian Carl M. White, Dean of the School of Library Service at Columbia University. The authors concluded their article with the caveat that its content was necessarily limited by the fact that at the time of publication in May 1945, "the information is not yet complete and the destruction is not yet finished."<sup>128</sup> To that end, they pointed out that it was the ongoing responsibility of CAME's Books and Periodicals Commission (BPC, the precursor to UNESCO's Libraries Section), as it became possible, to gather, integrate, analyze and disseminate all that was known about library losses and needs in order to help guide the formulation and implementation of what would become a rapid and effective postwar response. Kefauver and White also made a key distinction between the visible

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<sup>127</sup> A random sampling over time includes, Rebecca Knuth, *Libricide: The Regime-Sponsored Destruction of Books and Libraries in the Twentieth Century* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2003); Rose, *The Holocaust and the Book*; Marek Sroka, "The University of Cracow Library under Nazi Occupation: 1939-1945," *Libraries & Culture* 34:1 (Winter, 1999): 1-16; Maria Kocojowa, *History of Polish Libraries* (Krakow: Universitas, 1993); Eileen Brown, "War Damage, 1939-1945, and Post-war Reconstruction in Libraries of the Federal German Republic and England: A Comparison," *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* 7:4 (1975): 288-308; Lester K. Born, "The Archives and Libraries of Postwar Germany," *The American Historical Review* 56:1 (Oct., 1950): 34-57; Pierce Butler, ed., *Books and Libraries in Wartime* (University of Chicago Press, 1945).

<sup>128</sup> Kefauver and White, "Library Situation in Europe," 475.

and invisible impact of fascism's war on libraries. The nuance is essential to understanding the degree to which the "observable damage," the physical damage that is most familiar, studied and remembered - ranging from the May 1933 book burnings to the well-known plunder of countless collections, great and small, private and public, to the second destruction of the great library at Louvain - represented only the tip, albeit often the most violent, traumatic and visually moving tip of the proverbial iceberg. Equally, and in many cases even more destructive, was the "perversion" of normal library functions due to non-observable damage.

Beyond the theft and destruction that have been the focus of most scholarship and that first come to mind when most think of the fate of libraries during the war, were a variety of other, largely forgotten, factors that also, often just as severely, negatively impacted libraries. Fascist censorship and confiscation policies crushed publishing, printing and bookselling industries. Other political and ideological conflicts further barred cross-border communication. Paper became an expensive and increasingly hard to come by resource. Printing technology was requisitioned for other purposes. Shipping lanes closed or became dangerous and impassable. Scholars were exiled, displaced and disconnected from their work and professional communities. Also, destruction was not always purposeful; libraries suffered unintended collateral damage from allied shelling. And, as the UNESCO Preparatory Commission stated in November 1946, "All libraries in the world have suffered from isolation during the six war years."<sup>129</sup> Whether alone or in combination, these factors rendered maintenance of existing collections, not to mention accession of new publications, almost impossible for virtually every library throughout Europe, and in many cases well beyond it, for the duration of the war. The unprecedented extent

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<sup>129</sup> Survey of Losses and Needs of Libraries in Some European Countries, 14 November 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Vol.V Program Committees.

of the resultant damage raised urgent questions regarding how libraries' emptied shelves could be restocked and acquisitions and circulation resumed.

The consequences of isolation were viewed by many as potentially the greatest immediate threat to reconstruction as well as the greatest long-term threat not only to libraries but to scholarship, education, the transmission of knowledge, and, most important to UNESCO, the pursuit of a more tolerant and peaceful world. A report on the state of Hungary's libraries sent to the Libraries Section said as much:

What Hungary has lost during the Second World War is less important, than the fact, that owing to its cultural politics the output of the cultural life in the democratic countries, as expressed in books and reviews, has mostly failed to reach the country. [...] English, American, and – in general – foreign books [are] needed in hundreds and thousands of copies for the Hungarian public and university libraries.<sup>130</sup>

Isolation as a result of blocked lines of communication and exchange impacted virtually every library worldwide, whether allied or enemy, such that even countries with no other direct connection to the war were often impeded from acquiring new publications from other countries. With little to no cross-border sharing or contact possible, countries fell terribly behind in their knowledge of the innovations, inventions, patents, theories and various other advancements that had been achieved and published about during the war in other countries. This knowledge gap threatened the ability of war-impacted countries to reconstruct in accordance with the most current technological, industrial, material and other developments, creating the urgent need for information and publications mentioned by the reconstruction officials quoted at the beginning of this chapter. As a result much attention was directed to reversing the consequences of isolation.

It was precisely due to the global scope of wartime isolation's impact on libraries that concerned bodies put great hope in the establishment of UNESCO. The Rockefeller Foundation,

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<sup>130</sup> Report on urgent needs of Hungarian libraries, 20 November 1946. UNESCO Archives 02 A 20 Libraries – Special Needs Part I.

for example, referring in its 1946 Annual Report to “the vast needs of Europe,” concluded that “Private funds are utterly inadequate in meeting the situation. One of the promising developments of 1946 was the successful launching of UNESCO, under the United Nations. With imagination and leadership, and supported by ample funds which only governments are in a position to provide, *this organization may play the leading role in reestablishing the intellectual contacts of the world.*”<sup>131</sup> While nothing even approaching “ample funds” were ever provided, the Libraries Section nevertheless significantly contributed to reestablishing contacts, and not only at the highest intellectual levels.

As the war came to an end, in order to create means of re-establishing those contacts, the Libraries Section’s first main undertaking was to continue the task for the BPC outlined by Kefauver and White, to survey and assess the extent of the damages, losses and needs. In order to act efficiently and effectively actors first had to attain a clear idea of what was needed, by whom, where, and how urgently, as well as of any response efforts already planned or underway. One recent history asserts that “During the war, CAME was a very useful body for examining postwar book needs, particularly since it brought together both the nations starved for books as well as those that might be able to supply them.”<sup>132</sup> Looking to continue and expand upon the successful example provided by CAME, in November 1946, American delegate to UNESCO’s Commission on Reconstruction and Rehabilitation asked:

How can Unesco help? First, we need desperately continuous and accurate information about the needs of the country. The needs of various countries today are not what they were six months ago. ... In the second place we need, and need desperately, continuous and accurate information about what the various nations are doing. This is a co-ordinating function that only such an organisation as Unesco can perform. In the third place I think

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<sup>131</sup> Emphasis added. The Rockefeller Foundation Annual Report 1946, 13. <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/81f6aa9b-5d37-4a64-a65c-6327e71077c6-1946.pdf>. Last viewed 2 April 2013.

<sup>132</sup> John B. Hench, *Books as Weapons: Propaganda, Publishing, and the Battle for Global Markets in the Era of World War II* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 75.

it will be necessary that Unesco be in a position to receive and disburse gifts either of money or of materials. .. based on the theory, that if Unesco is directly in touch with the needs of all the nations it will be in the best position either to advise or administer funds of that type.<sup>133</sup>

Such information was gathered through questionnaires, missions, and relationships with local and national voluntary organizations.

In November 1946, the UNESCO Preparatory Commission prepared its “Survey of Losses and Needs of Libraries in Some European Countries.” As made clear by its title, this early survey (others would follow) was by no means comprehensive, nor did it claim to be, examining only the library situation in Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, Norway, Poland, the United Kingdom and Yugoslavia.<sup>134</sup> To give just one example of an early report from Poland:

the library losses [...] amount to [...] nearly 20,000,000 volumes. To this figure must be added that Polish libraries naturally have not been able to acquire nearly enough of the works published outside of Poland from 1939 onwards, and that Polish book-production, although virile and rapidly developing according to carefully prepared plans, at this stage can only meet 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the demand. Every book of any value that can be given to Polish libraries will be of real constructive use.<sup>135</sup>

A few months later, additional questionnaires being sent to libraries were described in the first, April 1947, issue of the *Unesco Bulletin for Libraries*:

The Clearing-house [ICHP] has started to distribute two emergency questionnaires to collect exact information of needs and resources. Several thousand of these questionnaires have been sent out. The total distribution is planned to include 20.000 libraries, learned societies, technical institutes, etc. The first answers have already reached the Clearing-house and some of the information is included in this bulletin. We ask all librarians who have received the questionnaires to complete and return them as soon as possible.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Mr. Brumbach, Commission on Reconstruction and Rehabilitation, Provisional Verbatim Record of the Second Meeting, 25 November 1946, p.17. UNESCO/C/Rec.&Reh./Plen./V.R.2., Paris, 27 November 1946. UNESCO Archives, General Conference 1 Session Paris 1946, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Commission, Documents.

<sup>134</sup> UNESCO Preparatory Commission, “Survey of Losses and Needs of Libraries in Some European Countries,” 14 November 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission Vol.V Program Committees.

<sup>135</sup> Untitled, unsigned, undated [circa 1946-1947]. UNESCO Archives 361.9 : 02 Reconstruction Libraries.

<sup>136</sup> *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* 1:1 (April 1947), 3.

Based on the ongoing need for current information in constantly changing postwar circumstances, another, more comprehensive two-part survey was conducted in 1947, from which, according to the UNESCO Executive Board, “encouraging results have been obtained.” After two different questionnaires were sent to approximately fifty countries, between 15 February 1947 and 13 June 1947, UNESCO recorded the following statistics:

- Questionnaire No. 1:  
1,984 surveys of needs sent to 27 countries  
372 surveys returned to UNESCO with:  
180 expressed war losses  
257 expressed needs  
116 offers for free distribution materials  
143 offers for exchange of publications
- Questionnaire No. 2:  
2,859 surveys of available books and periodicals sent to libraries in 40 countries  
359 surveys returned to UNESCO with:  
119 offers of free distribution  
98 offers of exchange<sup>137</sup>

What do these numbers tell us? Some argued that “Figures only cannot convey the serious library situation in many areas of Europe and Asia.”<sup>138</sup> As true as that statement might be, figures were primarily what UNESCO had to convince potential donors of the vast, unprecedented scope of need for information and publications.

The information received through these surveys, with responses continuing to be received after these statistics were compiled, allowed the Libraries Section to develop the ICHP into the postwar epicenter of a global publications sharing and exchange network. And this work resulted in much more than figures. Many responses were voluminous, containing detailed essays, collection inventories and status reports, some with pages-long lists of needs, often specified down to the title, author, issue and volume number, a level of detail that no other method of

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<sup>137</sup> Report of the Director General on developments since the last session. Cons.Exec./3<sup>rd</sup> Sess./23, Paris, 7 July 1947. UNESCO Archives, Executive Board, 1947, Vol.I, 1-2 Sessions.

<sup>138</sup> Untitled, unsigned, undated [circa 1946-1947]. UNESCO Archives 361.9 : 02 Reconstruction Libraries.

information-gathering would have been able to achieve. Carter explained the value of the questionnaires to his colleague Bernard Drzewieski, head of UNESCO's Reconstruction Program, writing, "I do not pretend that the libraries reconstruction work is nearly as good as it should be, but almost every detail of our work which has gone well has been due to the intimate contacts we have established with individual libraries by means of our questionnaires."<sup>139</sup> Here Carter points out how, in addition to providing the greatest detail, questionnaires also helped UNESCO create vitally important personal relationships between librarians, local officials and other concerned individuals. Despite these clear benefits, there were drawbacks to the questionnaire method as well. UNESCO could never be certain that all institutions who should be were receiving the questionnaires. There was also the problem of the relatively limited percentage of questionnaires that were, first, filled in at all, second, in a comprehensive manner, and third, returned to UNESCO.

In an October 1947 meeting, the Greek delegate to the UNESCO Executive Board's Committee for Cultural Reconstruction raised another problem with questionnaires:

The devastated countries were tired of answering questionnaires and making out statistics of their losses and needs; these involved much work, but as yet there had been no practical results. He therefore did not agree with asking these countries for further statistics, but thought it better for Unesco itself to do the work through personal contact, through sending representatives to the spot. He thought that available funds would be much better expended on surveys than on publications. Collaboration with non-governmental organisations would enable them to secure information much more useful and of much greater immediate interest than the information they could derive from a mass of statistics.<sup>140</sup>

Surveys were indeed conducted, with UNESCO sending experts on field missions to assess losses and needs. But these missions were rarely focused solely on libraries and the experts could

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<sup>139</sup> Edward Carter to Bernard Drzewieski, 19 May 1949. LBA Memo 772. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons General PII.

<sup>140</sup> M. Photiades, UNESCO Committee for Cultural Reconstruction, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session minutes of first meeting, 1 October 1947, p.8. UNESCO/ComCultRec/3e Sess/SR 1, Paris, 10 October 1947. UNESCO Archives, Executive Board, 1947, Vol. IV Subsidiary Organs.

never visit every affected site or speak with every knowledgeable person, rendering their reports limited and containing much second-hand and anecdotal information. In addition, sending individuals on missions was expensive, logistically complicated and could be politically charged in areas of occupation. While missions were carried out on a far more limited basis than UNESCO hoped, in May and June of 1947 the Reconstruction Program sent experts on survey missions to Austria, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Italy, Poland, Yugoslavia. The purpose of the endeavor was described as “to supplement the lists of urgent needs already received by a first-hand picture of the situation – what has been done and what remains to be done – and by personal contacts with the Ministries of Education, other educational authorities, inspectors of schools and teachers.”<sup>141</sup> Because of the limitations inherent in both the questionnaire and mission methods, the close working relationships that UNESCO carefully sought to develop with a broad range of voluntary, non-profit and other organizations working in all countries impacted by the war were particularly vital to the organization. Their local knowledge, connections, on the ground field work and detailed reporting contributed significantly to UNESCO’s knowledge of losses and needs and therefore to its ability to address those.

As a result of these combined research methods, by the end of 1948, 1,016 libraries worldwide, a small fraction of those actually in need, had communicated their “priority requests” to UNESCO, raising a number of difficult questions that the organization sought to address as rapidly as possible.<sup>142</sup> How could these needs begin to be met? Where would the needed publications come from? How would they be delivered from donor to recipient? How to fund, manage, plan and be responsible for a global network of international exchange and cooperation?

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<sup>141</sup> Mary Trevelyan, Executive Board, Reconstruction Section, Preliminary notes on field survey work carried out in six European countries May-June 1947. Cons.Exec./3e Sess./35, Paris, 24 July 1947. UNESCO Archives, Executive Board, 1947, Vol.II 3. Session.

<sup>142</sup> *Libraries in Need*, 13.

The combination of the priority requests with such questions fed into a fundraising and informational tool, the 1949 UNESCO publication, *Libraries in Need*. Like others in the organization's postwar *In Need* series, the pamphlet-style book appealed primarily for monetary donations to go towards library reconstruction and rehabilitation activities. But *Libraries in Need* also appealed for donations, requesting "good books in good condition," and, more precisely, for specifically outlined categories of runs of periodicals (versus random single issues), recent technical and medical works, books for advanced study, publications of learned societies, standard works of reference and literature classics.<sup>143</sup> As books and periodicals began to reach UNESCO from a broad range of governmental, educational, public and private donors, the need for an efficient and effective method to store and distribute them became increasingly urgent.

Transnational exchange and interlibrary loan between libraries was hardly a new invention in 1945. The exchange of publications between libraries within Europe and beyond had been regulated since at least the Brussels Conventions of 1886.<sup>144</sup> International cooperation between libraries had also been a central concern of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations, a shared concern that historian Jean-Jacques Renoliet has identified as a key point of continuity between the UNESCO and that predecessor organization.<sup>145</sup> But the fact that pre-existing networks had been paralyzed if not destroyed by

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<sup>143</sup> *Libraries in Need*, 23.

<sup>144</sup> "The Brussels Convention has been partially applied by a number of states, but on the whole must be considered a dead letter. In the meantime a number of states, partly basing their action on the 1886 Convention have established bilateral agreements for the exchange of publications. The present time is an appropriate one for Unesco to initiate discussions in the light of the existing situation with a view either to the revision of the 1886 Convention or the formulation and promotion of a new and more acceptable policy." Revising the Convention was another task undertaken by UNESCO, but the organization's work in the creation of new conventions is beyond the scope of this work. Edward Carter, "Convention for Publications Exchange," 23 March 1948. UNESCO Archives, 02 A 855 International Exchange of Publications, Part I.

<sup>145</sup> Jean-Jacques Renoliet, *L'Unesco oubliée: La Société des Nations et la coopération intellectuelle (1919-1946)* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1999), 178, 312, 323.

the war created a unique opportunity for the system to be re-envisioned and expanded. The 1947 Libraries Section Progress Report stated:

every effort has been made to recreate or create interlibrary contacts. In this sense reconstruction has not been directly solely towards the war areas, but has been concerned with exchange services, technical competence, and apparatus throughout the world. No library, whether in a war-damaged country or elsewhere, can build up its book stocks or maintain improvements in service unless other libraries in the same field within the country and abroad and all the national and international bibliographical exchange and documentary reproduction services are competent within the terms of an international plan.”<sup>146</sup>

John Marshall, Associate Director of the Humanities at the Rockefeller Foundation, was extremely pleased to see evidence of this recognition in UNESCO’s plans for library reconstruction and rehabilitation:

It has been sometimes said that the best means of filling the gaps which the war left in the collections of the world’s major libraries is to bring the international book trade ‘back to normal.’ But ‘back to normal’ is a misleading phrase, except as it refers to the elimination of the barriers which impede the international circulation of printed materials through the channels of trade. What seems called for, rather, is an effort to establish new norms, which, by calling into play the best of past experience, and the best of present ingenuity in librarianship and technology, can assure ready access in all parts of the world to print and film which embodies advancement in every field. The international concern with this problem evident in Unesco’s programme is a promising sign.<sup>147</sup>

Even earlier, throughout the war years, concern regarding postwar international information and publications exchange preoccupied many involved with CAME and later with UNESCO.

Bernard Drzewieski, a Polish education specialist exiled in London who would become Head of UNESCO’s Reconstruction Program, said during a 1942 lecture, “the laying of the foundations

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<sup>146</sup> UNESCO Libraries Progress Report for 1947, 26 September 1947, AJA, Marshall Papers, 30/2.

<sup>147</sup> John Marshall, Report prepared for use in connection with the 1946 President’s Review. Rockefeller Archive Center (hereafter RAC), RG 3 Series 900 Box 24 Folder 191, 900 Program and Policy – Literature Aid 1945-1955.

of a permanent peace can [not] be taken by single nations. They must be dealt with on a European scale, if not on a world scale.”<sup>148</sup>

The more specific realization that demand would far outweigh supply so that transnational sharing and exchange would constitute the principal means by which libraries would be able to be reconstitute their collections was discussed early on. In March 1943, Edward Carter, at the time still Librarian of the Royal Institute of British Architects and already paying close attention to international library matters,<sup>149</sup> wrote to his contacts at the Rockefeller Foundation regarding the reconstitution of British libraries, “I am strongly of the opinion that this task is one that cannot be solved by isolated national action, any more than it can be solved by each library looking after its own interests. The reconstitution of library collections must be handled by an international committee working under the general provisions of the post-war settlement.”<sup>150</sup> The theme of cooperation was also insisted upon in a June 1943 letter to CAME from a Polish education specialist:

in the field of education, the first necessity will be to reconstruct the material needs [...] books, scientific apparatus and so on. Naturally, the treasures of cultural and scientific value which have been carried off by the invader must be returned – but irreparable losses, like the destruction by burning of thousands of books must be made good in other ways. [...] *In this connection the need for international co-operation is clearly indicated.* [...] The exhausted countries of Europe will be unable alone to find the material resources for such a reawakening. [...] once the day of victory arrives, all nations being on the side of truth and justice will join together for the reconstruction of their homes and their countries [emphasis added].<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Bernard Drzewieski, Representative, Polish Social Information Bureau, Vice-Chairman, Polish Teachers’ Union, in *Calling All Europe: A Symposium of Speeches on the Future Order of Europe*, published on behalf of the Socialist Vanguard Group, London, 5-6 April 1942, 16.

<sup>149</sup> “I am writing to ask whether you would be willing to take up the position of Counsellor in this organisation, in the section dealing with museums, libraries and special projects.” Julian Huxley to Edward Carter, 11 March 1946. RIBA, Carter Papers, Box 2, CaE/2, Folder 6.

<sup>150</sup> Edward J. Carter’s Reports to the Rockefeller Foundation, 29 March 1943, p.7-8. RIBA, Carter Papers, Box 1, CaE/1, Folder 2.

<sup>151</sup> Dr. Grabinska to CAME, June 1942. Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum, London, A.19.II/32, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Education, CAME 1942-1945.

Similarly, a French proposal to UNESCO's Preparatory Commission's Committee on Libraries, Museums, Publications and Special Projects, stated that "The Libraries Section of the UNESCO Secretariat should simultaneously study [...] Measures for giving speedy help to countries whose libraries have been destroyed or damaged, and for immediately restoring exchanges of publications."<sup>152</sup> Former Librarian of Congress Archibald MacLeish, in his capacity as American delegate to CAME, insisted on the dire need for there to be "'inter-availability' of the resources of the world's main libraries," what BPC Chairman Sir Ernest Barker referred to as "internationalization."<sup>153</sup> Reporting on a presentation given by MacLeish at a meeting of librarians in London, Barker wrote that "The library resources of the world should be pooled as one common fund of civilization, and that it should be made possible for all students to draw on this fund by a system of lending between libraries."<sup>154</sup> Barker emphasized that such a system of global exchange of publications was the only possible way "to give to depleted and devastated libraries a chance of enjoying access to the resources and the treasures of the intact libraries."<sup>155</sup> Agreement extended to the reality that the massive task of reorganizing a new and successful approach to the international exchange of publications was "more than a matter for librarians." Concerned librarians, their colleagues and supporters, turned to the Chairman of CAME to communicate their consensus on the need for such a system, which helped to solidify the matter as a high priority undertaking at UNESCO.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Proposals by the French Delegation, 2. UNESCO/Prep.Com.L.M.&Sp.Proj.Com/5, 4 June 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission London-Paris 1945-1946, Vol.V Program Committees.

<sup>153</sup> Ernest Barker to Richard Butler, 2 May 1944, reporting on a meeting of librarians and interested others held in London, 21 April 1944. TNA PRO ED 42/6.

<sup>154</sup> Barker to Butler, 2 May 1944. See also Archibald MacLeish, "A New Renaissance: Intellectual Needs of Liberated Peoples, Lending Libraries on a World Basis," *The Times*, 3 May 1944.

<sup>155</sup> Barker to Butler, 2 May 1944.

<sup>156</sup> Barker to Butler, 2 May 1944.

## II. International Clearing House for Publications

In 1944, CAME published a pamphlet about the Inter-Allied Book Centre (IABC) in London. The IABC served as the model, inspiration, and precursor to one of UNESCO's most significant contributions to facilitating the postwar sharing and exchange of books between libraries, its International Clearing House for Publications (ICHP).<sup>157</sup> The pamphlet's text explained the motivation driving both bodies: "A great task before us is the replenishment, on as large a scale as possible, in each of the allied countries, of national, university, public and other libraries, which are open freely to serious readers, and whose books have been destroyed. Unless this is done the development of the arts and sciences will suffer a serious check."<sup>158</sup> This supports the previously mentioned argument that information and publications were viewed as essential for immediate postwar reconstruction needs as well as for longer-term progress in war-damaged countries and beyond.

Speaking in London in January of 1947, Barker looked back over the brief lifespan of the IABC, to "the efforts made *in* this country—but not only *by* this country—for replenishing war-devastated and war-scarred libraries." Barker divided the Centre's efforts into two chronological chapters: New Books and Old Books. The former, Barker explained, "may also be called the chapter of Buying; for the new books were bought. It may also be called the chapter of the Books Commission," referring to CAME's BPC that he chaired. According to Barker, the BPC "spent a sum of over £50,000 of which three-fifths came from the contributions of Allied Governments—French, Czech, Belgian, Netherlands, Polish, Norwegian, and others—and the rest from H.M.

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<sup>157</sup> The IABC also served as model and inspiration of the American Book Center, established in Washington, D.C. in 1948. See Alice Dulany Ball, "Library Additions at Small Cost," *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* 37:4 (Winter 1951/52):723–25.

<sup>158</sup> "Restoration of Libraries," Conference of the Allied Ministers of Education, Inter-Allied Book Centre. Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum, London, A.19.II/32, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Education, CAME, 1942–1945.

Government. [...] With that sum [...] we not only bought 76,000 new books, aided by the booklists we prepared; we also bought nearly 150,000 scientific periodicals.” In contrast, the second chapter of Old Books, or the chapter of the IABC, as Barker explained, “may also be called the chapter of begging—begging, and also receiving; for the old books were begged, and given.”<sup>159</sup> Given how limited the New Books chapter inevitably could be given both the extremely tight financial constraints as well as the limited availability of books to purchase compared with the overwhelming need, ultimately the begging, giving and receiving that characterized the Old Book chapter had greater impact and longevity.

One of the first practical actions the BPC took, after spending, according to one frustrated onlooker, “an unconscionable time in discussions,” was to propose a book pool which, in addition to being fed through donations, would be fed through a book salvage drive, already underway at the time among libraries throughout Great Britain.<sup>160</sup> Books and periodicals that, until that point, were being automatically pulped or discarded, began to be carefully screened instead so that any in good condition and deemed potentially useful could be warehoused for eventual distribution to war-damaged libraries on the continent. Libraries, publishers, booksellers and other book-related bodies throughout the UK were instructed on the types of publications to be on the lookout for, primarily technical and reference works, and were strongly encouraged to save rather than pulp or discard whenever possible. These salvaged books were then added to the book pool which, in September 1944, was formally established into the IABC, a processing, storage and distribution facility located in London. That its stock was made up almost entirely of English-language British publications was an honest reflection of the British organizations, institutions and individuals that were responsible for donating its contents, but also reflected a

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<sup>159</sup> Sir Ernest Barker, “Restoration of Libraries,” [excerpt from speech given at the ceremony closing the IABC, 6 December 1946], *The Library Association Record* 49:1 (January 1947), 2.

<sup>160</sup> W.R. Richardson to Ernest Barker, 29 October 1943. TNA PRO, ED 42/6.

limitation of the IABC's ability to meet the needs of libraries throughout the entire European continent. The eventual ICHP sought to overcome this limitation in its drive "to meet exactly stated needs" and not to only distribute what was most easily and immediately available.<sup>161</sup>

Even before the ICHP was formally established, the Libraries Section expressed its strong position on the issue of freedom of choice that meeting those "exactly stated needs" represented. In September 1946 Carter wrote:

whether we like it or not, UNESCO must be very careful to avoid any definition which, while seeming to be broadly conceived and 'democratic', would in fact end by appearing undesirable to some people or groups; for instance, we cannot expect all countries in the world in this critical period to adopt into their public libraries all books without bias or distinction of religion, politics or social status. [...] I agree that our principal efforts in the question of exchanges and distribution must be directed towards the elimination of barriers, but while barriers exist we must devise means of leaping over them. The limited activities proposed for the [ICHP] in this respect can I think be regarded as temporary expedients. We do not want to buy books or to interfere with the normal channels of acquisition. Certainly we cannot be a dump for anything publishers choose to pass to us.<sup>162</sup>

Then, in a November 1946 document the Libraries Section further clarified its position: "The fundamental fact is evident, that despite the valuable distributions made by the two existing centres, the Inter-Allied Book Centre in London and the American Book Center in Washington, the work of rehabilitation of libraries has scarcely begun. Allocations from these centres have been generous and large, but the nature of the circumstances in which they have operated has not made it possible for distribution to be fully discriminate or exact. It will be a main objective of the ICHP to develop its policy so that *exactly expressed needs* may be exactly met [emphasis added]."<sup>163</sup> The "nature of the circumstances" refers primarily to the fact that these two centers

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<sup>161</sup> Carl M. White and P.S.J. Welsford, "The Inter-Allied Book Centre in London," *The Library Quarterly* 16:1 (Jan., 1946), 60.

<sup>162</sup> Edward J. Carter to P.S.J. Welsford, Secretary, The Library Association, 20 September 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 42, 37/13/345, Libraries, Collaboration with IFLA.

<sup>163</sup> Supplementary Report on International Clearing House for Publications, 5 November 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 41, 37/2/328, Libraries, ICHP.

were almost exclusively able to collect English-language publications. Although far from the only publications that war-isolated countries were seeking, these did, however, constitute a significant area of demand.

When BPC representatives, including librarian Maria Danilewicz of Poland and archivist Jan Opocensky of Czechoslovakia, examined in-person the inventory of the IABC in order to evaluate whether or not the publications collected via the book pool “could be of use to continental libraries,” they answered emphatically in the affirmative. Their sub-commission agreed “that a large percentage of these books would be very useful to libraries in the now occupied countries of Europe, and for the propagation of English literature and science through public libraries and English departmental libraries in the European universities and colleges.”<sup>164</sup> As the French Ambassador put it in January 1947, “the fact that the continent found itself deprived for six years of all communication with the Anglo-Saxon world provoked in Europe’s libraries a sort of asphyxia. Every day, my European colleagues can testify that, like me, we are rebuilding in our countries from the effect of the rupture of these contacts.”<sup>165</sup> Similar reports came from Poland. Again, Maria Danilewicz wrote, “The need for British books and periodicals is as great as ever in Poland and the reading public is waiting for the new publications on scientific and technical subjects,”<sup>166</sup> and from eminent librarian Dr. Jozef Grycz:

The destruction and looting of the Polish libraries by the Germans, and the impossibility of acquiring new publications caused large gaps in, above all, the British and American sections of Polish libraries. The filling of these gaps would be possible, at least in part, through: (a) purchase of books and periodicals through a special fund, (b) donations by various learned institutions in Great Britain and USA.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Report of the subcommission for books for war-damaged libraries, Fall 1943. TNA PRO, ED 42/6.

<sup>165</sup> The French Ambassador, “Restoration of Libraries” [excerpt from speech given at the ceremony closing the IABC, 6 December 1946], *The Library Association Record* 49:1 (January 1947), 4.

<sup>166</sup> Maria Danilewicz, Memorandum, 31 December 1945.

<sup>167</sup> Dr. Jozef Grycz, Warsaw, The problem of supplying Polish libraries with British and American publications, September 1945. AME/B/117, Conference of Allied Ministers of Education, London 1942-1945, Vol.IV Books and Periodicals Commission, Documents, Part I.

Despite such clearly stated needs, the fact that the country that had been best able to maintain its academic, industrial, and printing and publication systems for the duration of the war had been the United States also constituted a source of tension and resentment. While countries acknowledged their profound need for replacement and new materials in English and from the United States, they also wanted to ensure that that was not the only material that they would receive or that would be made available to them. During a UNESCO Preparatory Commission meeting, it was reported that an American delegation had become aware of the fear of recipient countries that “We should be simply swamped by American materials.”<sup>168</sup> While the greatest amount of available material, whether for exchange, copying or free distribution consistently came from the United States, the IHCP made it possible for any country, even the most devastated, such as Poland, to not only receive but to contribute to the exchange pool as well, revealing the extent to which UNESCO’s network helped to create a sense of equilibrium both in terms of need and availability.

Here a glimpse back to the first in-depth discussion of what became the ICHP is in order. It appears in an early CAME memorandum submitted by Polish-born British Voltaire scholar and bibliographer Theodore Besterman:

this whole plan is conceived as *transcending boundaries* [emphasis added]. ... Such a plan must be international to the fullest extent if it is to be really adequate; it will therefore apply at once to conqueror and conquered; to countries which have been severely damaged, to some which have been less injured and to some which have not been under fire at all. In other words, some countries will give a great deal more than they will receive.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Review with William Farr, Secretariat UNESCO Preparatory Commission, 24 July 1946. RAC, RG 12.2 Officers Diaries, John Marshall, 1 July-Dec 31, 1943 to June 3-Sept 27, 1946, MF Reel #4 [corresponds to Box 4, Folders 18-23 and Box 5, Folders 24-29].

<sup>169</sup> AME/B/26, Memorandum by Mr. Theodore Besterman on a Proposed International Library Clearing-House, CAME, London 1942-1945, Vol.IV Books and Periodicals Commission, Documents, Part I.

The idea was very warmly received by librarians worldwide. As Harry Lydenberg wrote, “There’s no doubt as to the usefulness of such a clearing house as you sketch. Many of us have talked or dreamed about it, but none of us seems to have got much farther.” Talk and dreams began to finally become a reality in August 1946 when UNESCO contracted Jacob Zuckerman to head up the envisioned clearing house.

Zuckerman, a German-born Jew educated in law and political science, had survived the war working for the British Embassy and the Interallied Control Commission in Lisbon and Madrid, monitoring and compiling reports on the German language press. When UNESCO contacted him in August of 1946, Zuckerman was working for the Berlin branch of the Library of Congress Mission to Germany, whose mandate was to assess the status of German publishing and libraries, to acquire wartime publications for American libraries, and to locate looted and other displaced library materials. Zuckerman’s prominent role in the latter will be discussed in detail in chapter three.<sup>170</sup> Zuckerman was lauded by his Library of Congress Mission colleagues for his “admirable command of continental languages,” at least six of them.<sup>171</sup> With involvement of several Library of Congress and its Mission officials in the founding of UNESCO, Zuckerman came to UNESCO thanks to a glowing recommendation to Carter from Vernon Clapp, Director of the Acquisitions Division of the Library of Congress.

In his first letter to Zuckerman, in August 1946, Carter described the capacity he envisioned Zuckerman would work in and the qualities and experience that Carter hoped made Zuckerman an ideal candidate for the position:

I understand from Mr. Clapp that your main interest and outstanding ability is in getting a move on with the actual execution of a tough job. I am sure we will have many like that in our programme. To a large extent our staff has to be one of trained and experienced

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<sup>170</sup> Dain, “Harry M. Lydenberg and American Library Resources,” 465.

<sup>171</sup> Harry M. Lydenberg to Edward Carter, 13 September 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 41, 37/2/373.

librarians and bibliographers, but in one section of our work, that relating to rehabilitation and the continuation of the work of the Inter-Allied Book Centre in London, and possibly at a later date of the work of the American Book Center, we shall need dynamic managerial ability. At the head we picture a permanent International Clearing House for Publications, growing out of the rehabilitation work.<sup>172</sup>

In early October 1946, Zuckerman was officially appointed “Counsellor in charge of the International Clearing House for Publications on the staff of the Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission.”<sup>173</sup> According to Carter, this put Zuckerman “in charge of the work that is immediately possible in connection with the development of the proposed International Clearing House for Publications. This part of the programme of the libraries section has been designated by the Preparatory Commission as a first priority task, in so far as it relates to relief and rehabilitation.”<sup>174</sup> First priority tasks were defined by UNESCO as “Projects and activities of first importance which the working party recommends with the strongest possible emphasis as matters for retention on the programme whatever the budgetary position may be, and for the fullest possible development.”<sup>175</sup>

Upon his arrival at UNESCO in early October 1946, Zuckerman immediately began to develop the ICHP and more broadly to collect information about the losses and needs of libraries, forwarding, as he received it, summaries of this information to the Head of UNESCO’s Reconstruction Program, Bernard Drzewieski.<sup>176</sup> This work built quite cleanly on what Zuckerman had done with the Library of Congress Mission, when he had traveled around Germany, collecting books, visiting libraries, uncovering stores of looted books, and beginning to cultivate relationships with experts in the library world and in reconstruction and rehabilitation

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<sup>172</sup> Edward J. Carter to Jacob Zuckerman, 1 August 1946. UNESCO Archives, Jacob Zuckerman Personnel File.

<sup>173</sup> Executive Secretary to Jacob Zuckerman, 7 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Jacob Zuckerman Personnel File.

<sup>174</sup> Edward J. Carter to Professor Thomas, 26 August 1946. UNESCO Archives, Jacob Zuckerman Personnel File.

<sup>175</sup> “News and Information,” *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* II:1 (January 1948), 2.

<sup>176</sup> UNESCO Archives, 361.9 02 Reconstruction - Libraries.

both in Europe and the United States. Looking back towards the end of his life, Zuckerman described those early years:

The working atmosphere at UNESCO was exceptional, because everything had to be invented from scratch and converted into reality. For my colleagues and me, this work was not just a job, a workplace, but a life's work, an ideal that we sought to fulfill. That was to heal the wounds that the war had struck: schools and universities destroyed, libraries and laboratories burned. Then there were the broken connections between educators and scientists in the international community, which after years of hatred and mutual distrust had to be reestablished again.<sup>177</sup>

The postwar problem of broken contacts and networks has already been established as a prevailing one, but here Zuckerman further complicates the issue, defining it as going beyond war-broken ties of communication to also take into account the very real impact of hostile feelings and interactions between people and countries. In order for UNESCO's newly envisioned and rapidly expanding worldwide system of information and publication sharing and exchange to succeed, it would have to be based on a trusted network of communication and cooperation. In the immediate aftermath of the war, the nascent UNESCO was looked upon as a trusted body - widely viewed as neutral and apolitical – making it an ideal host for a transnational collaborative network such as the ICHP.

The IABC was not only the model for the ICHP, but also its direct predecessor. The ICHP was to be “the international agency for the promotion of (1) exchanges of publications, (2) the direct transmission of publications from governments and institutions to libraries in all countries and (3) the maintenance of a stock of out of print works, reprints and periodicals.”<sup>178</sup> With the IABC scheduled to terminate its work at the end of 1946, concern about the loss of exchange possibilities and about the fate of the material still contained in the Centre led Carter to propose that UNESCO take over its work. In May 1946 he took Julien Cain to visit the IABC.

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<sup>177</sup> Zuckerman, Memoir, 56.

<sup>178</sup> Memorandum on the Inter Allied Book Centre in relation to the proposed World Clearing House for Publications, circa August 1946. TNA PRO, ED 42/6.

Cain, Director-General of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Director of France's Direction des Bibliothèques, Head of the French delegation to UNESCO, and identified as "probably the most important European librarian," had, moreover, "a close association with Unesco's affairs." Carter reported back to the IABC Director, librarian B.M. Headicar, "As I expected, M. Cain was enormously interested in everything he saw[sic] and easily agreed that every possible effort must be made to keep the Centre in being. My immediate proposal is that I raise the matter with the Library Committee of the Preparatory Commission [...] perhaps I shall succeed in getting Unesco to take some initiative in the matter."<sup>179</sup> Carter's proposal was approved. "Many delegates declared that this question was of the first importance and that the project should be given absolute priority."<sup>180</sup> In particular, the idea was to "give immediate attention to the ways its organisation, plus the experience and organisation of the American Book Center, can be merged into a fully international and permanent Publications Clearing House," i.e. the ICHP.<sup>181</sup> In September 1946 the Executive Board of the IABC met and agreed that UNESCO would become the "residuary legatee," fully assuming responsibility for "liquidating"<sup>182</sup> the remaining contents of the IABC.<sup>183</sup> During its January 1947 closing ceremony (really its temporary transfer to UNESCO), the Centre's impact was expressed in a grateful declaration made by the French Ambassador to Great Britain:

This magnificent book donation signifies that the defeat of political totalitarianism must have, as a first consequence, the total disappearance of intellectual totalitarianism. [...] In making possible not only the replacement of destroyed works, but also in putting on reserve, to be repaired later, the principal collections of periodicals printed from 1940 to

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<sup>179</sup> Edward J. Carter to B.N. Headicar, Confidential, 7 May 1946. UNESCO Archives 04(41-4) A 031 BNBC British Nat. Book Centre (formerly Inter Allied Book Centre) (hereafter BNBC-IABD) Part I.

<sup>180</sup> Memorandum on the relations between Unesco and the Inter-Allied Book Centre, 20 December 1946. UNESCO Archives, BNBC-IABD Part I.

<sup>181</sup> Edward J. Carter to B.N. Headicar, 12 July 1946. UNESCO Archives, BNBC-IABD Part I.

<sup>182</sup> Edward J. Carter to A.D. Nicholson, Director, IABC, 10 April 1947. UNESCO Archives, BNBC-IABD Part I.

<sup>183</sup> Edward J. Carter to Professor A. Photiades, Cultural Advisor to the Royal Greek Embassy, 24 September 1946. UNESCO Archives, BNBC-IABD Part I.

1945 [...] permitted the revival of libraries that, without these precautions, would have withered away.<sup>184</sup>

It was such successes that drove the continuation of CAME's work at UNESCO, and primarily through the ICHP.

Regarding the remaining contents of the IABC, approximately 20,000 books, 10,000 feet of periodicals, 50,000 reprints and pamphlets and the records of the IABC itself,<sup>185</sup> UNESCO formulated agreements with the recipient countries – Greece, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Poland - to pay for shipping from London.<sup>186</sup> During that time, “activities, in direct connection with Unesco’s programme of library rehabilitation, consisted in sorting, listing, and dispatching parts of periodicals. Seven hundred and ninety-eight learned, scientific, or technological periodicals in English were distributed, usually in several sets for each title, to 263 war-damaged libraries. Twelve thousand books were also allocated, as well as a large stock of official publications.”<sup>187</sup> Based on the IABC and the much-discussed idea of an international clearing house, the ICHP was established relatively quickly after Zuckerman’s arrival, in the spring of 1947.

The birth of the ICHP was described in the *UNESCO Book of Needs*, published in 1947:

As its main libraries reconstruction agency, Unesco has established an ‘International Clearing House for Publications’, an intelligence centre where an extensive filing system records the publications which particular libraries want and the duplicates they have for disposal by gift, sale or change. Already, more than 6,000 libraries are operating and many thousands of exchanges have been effected through ICHP; advice has also been given on the disposal of book gifts. The ICHP works in close co-operation with all existing national exchange centres and takes an active part in the effort to establish such centres where they are needed.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> The French Ambassador, “Restoration of Libraries,” 4.

<sup>185</sup> Although these were physically transferred not to Paris but to the National Central Library in London during the spring of 1947. Message from the Ministry of Works, 22 November 1946; Edward J. Carter to Lars Lind, 19 December 1946. UNESCO Archives, BNBC-IABD Part I.

<sup>186</sup> Edward J. Carter, IABC, Memorandum summarising meeting in London, 13 March 1947, dated 19 March 1947. UNESCO Archives, BNBC-IABD Part I.

<sup>187</sup> “British National Book Centre,” National Central Library Annual Report 1947-1948, 22.

<sup>188</sup> UNESCO, “Conclusion/Constructive Work,” *The Book of Needs* Vol. I (Paris: UNESCO, 1947).

National exchange centers were viewed by UNESCO as an ideal way to empower individual countries not only to request and receive precisely what they wanted, but also to distribute material among their libraries as they saw fit based on their intimate knowledge of their own country. The importance of national exchange centers to this endeavor was also based on the results of a UNESCO questionnaire that found libraries throughout Britain willing to donate much valuable and needed material, “scientific periodicals, technical journals, reference books, English classics, etc., all of which are particularly in demand,” but only willing or able to pay for transportation costs to a national collecting center in Britain, rather than to recipient countries.<sup>189</sup> Carter believed that the establishment of national book centers would create a positive and productive cycle of giving and receiving as their very existence would serve as “direct encouragement to many donors who otherwise would have been at a loss to dispose of unwanted books, except sale or to the dustman.”<sup>190</sup> The takeaway was that individuals and organizations were more likely to donate, whether financially or materially, within their own country.

To that end, as Carter explained, “Unesco itself should not establish a vast international stock-pile, but [...] our work should be very largely as a co-ordinator of national activities.”<sup>191</sup> Few such national centers existed in the early postwar years, however, and UNESCO looked to the few that did for guidance in building a successful model:

We know of the existence of exchange centres in a number of non-Member States, including : Finland, Japan, Latvia, Palestine, Portugal and USSR. We wish to send them a questionnaire which has already been prepared and received the necessary approvals ... Our argument in favour of communicating with these non-Member State Exchange Centres is quite simple ; all our Member States wish to obtain publications from these

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<sup>189</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Edward J. Carter and Bernard Drzewieski, 24 June 1947; Analysis of returned questionnaires from Great Britain up to 20 June 1947. UNESCO Archives, BNBC-IABD Part I.

<sup>190</sup> Edward J. Carter to Laurence Kipp, 5 February 1947. UNESCO Archives 361.9 02 Enc. Brit. Reconstruction Libraries – Distribution of Encyclopaedia Britannica.

<sup>191</sup> Carter also admired the already existing Danmarks Institut for International Udveksling af Videnskabelige Publikationer (Institut Danois des échanges internationaux de publications scientifiques et littéraires). Edward J. Carter to Hawkes, 13 June 1947. TNA PRO, ED 157/197.

countries ; therefore, information we can obtain about their exchange establishments is directly in aid to our own Members.<sup>192</sup>

Similarly, the ALA's Harry Lydenberg wrote to Carter, "I know of no country where national clearing houses are in operation, though I've heard that the Soviets have something like that. Hearsay entirely, with nothing better to rely on. It surely would be instructive to know the facts. Perhaps the rest of us might learn something from their experience."<sup>193</sup> Indeed many librarians considered Russia, along with the United States and Great Britain, as one of the "library-minded nations"<sup>194</sup> This willingness to look to and learn from not only non-member states, but those, such as Japan - considered an enemy nation - and the USSR - outwardly hostile to UNESCO since its founding and refusing to join the organization - demonstrated a real manifestation of UNESCO's often-stated determination to transcend physical and ideological boundaries and to look and act beyond borders, despite, or perhaps especially, in a time of heightening hostility.

The difficulty of acting in a neutral and impartial way in such an environment is revealed in the resolution about national exchange centers adopted by UNESCO's Second General Conference in November 1947:

To promote the organisation, maintenance and development of national book exchange and distribution centres, to provide liaison between them, and to assist their work by negotiating for the reduction or elimination of import duties and the reduction of transport costs for books. [...] and suggests that in these centres proper discretion should be exercised in the selection of books and periodicals, but no censorship.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Although it is not mentioned in any of these discussions, the Canadian Book Center was one of the few national book centers recommended by UNESCO to be established. Coincidentally, while on UNESCO Mission to Canada in 1947 to visit the Center, Zuckerman was able to witness the preliminary stages leading up to one of the most important moments of his life, the declaration of the state of Israel. He later recalled, "My first official UNESCO mission in 1947 led me to Halifax in Canada, for the opening of the local book center. During this journey, I was blessed to participate in the UN meeting at Lake Success in which the creation of a Jewish state was discussed." Zuckerman, *Memoir*, 64. Edward J. Carter to Exterior Relations, 24 March 1948. UNESCO Archives 02 A 855 International Exchange of Publications, Part I.

<sup>193</sup> Harry M. Lydenberg to Edward J. Carter, 22 August 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 41, 37/2/328, Libraries, ICHP.

<sup>194</sup> L.R. McColvin, Editor, "International Librarianship," *The Library Association Record* 46:4 (April 1944), 57.

<sup>195</sup> Resolution adopted by the Second General Conference of Unesco in Mexico. 2C/129-Page 5, 4 December 1947. UNESCO Archives 361.9 A 01 TICER : 02 A 20 Temp. Int. Council for Educ. Reconstr. Libraries Cttee.

The last element of this resolution contained the potential to be highly problematic. Definition and interpretation of “proper discretion” and how that is or is not differentiated from censorship are completely subjective concepts. Such vague language appears to have been UNESCO’s method of communicating to each participating country its freedom to decide, for itself, its libraries and its people, the texts it considered to be useful, necessary, and hopefully, that would also contribute to a more peaceful and tolerant world. Nevertheless, UNESCO walked a fine line between being perceived as providing or facilitating the free and open exchange of information and publications, and being perceived as contributing to the dissemination of propagandistic texts. This slippery slope explains the insistence of Carter and the Libraries Section on “exactitude” in fulfilling each library’s or country’s explicitly stated needs. Carter insisted, time and again, on this point, writing, “I remain convinced that we must avoid any undeliberate book-dumping, i.e., simply the massing of collections of books to be sent to the recipient countries without certain knowledge that the books which are sent are, in fact, books which they want, but the process of selected distribution is obviously one which takes time.”<sup>196</sup>

This philosophy was accentuated when an unexpected fund of \$10,000 allotted strictly for the purchase of books came to the Libraries Section and had to be spent in a matter of days. Carter protested, explaining:

books are not a commodity which can be purchased in bulk [...] The need is not a bulk need but individual and specialized. [...] by far the best way to purchase the books would be for particular institutions to be chosen to have placed to their credit adequate sums with carefully chosen and efficient booksellers, or other agencies in France, the United Kingdom, the United States, and possibly Switzerland. [...] To buy, not what Unesco, in a rapid few days’ survey, thinks these organisations want, but what they, as learned institutions know they want.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Edward J. Carter to Nicholson, 9 May 1947. UNESCO Archives, BNBC-IABD Part I.

<sup>197</sup> Edward J. Carter to Bernard Drzewieski, et. al., 22 October 1948. UNESCO Archives 361.9 : 02 Reconstruction Libraries.

Ultimately, “The \$10,000 available to the Libraries Division will be spent on books for libraries in the official reconstruction countries according to approved percentages.<sup>198</sup> Many libraries in these countries have communicated their exact priority needs. Efforts will be made to satisfy some of these detailed needs by purchasing the titles requested. Others have stated their needs in general terms. For these libraries some standard reference works of indisputable value will be bought. As many libraries as possible in each reconstruction country will receive gifts of a value ranging from \$100 to \$10.”<sup>199</sup> Because the Libraries Section mission was to provide exactly what libraries were asking for, “To start a book buying operation for about 300 libraries in countries varying in language, culture and interests, cannot be done in a hurry. [...] Thanks, however, to the Libraries division’s good documentation of library needs and its experience in these matters, we are satisfied that we can do a good job in a reasonably short period of time. The job is given first priority.”<sup>200</sup> Because the Section had done so much information gathering through its questionnaires, missions and relationships, and continued to gather information through its *Bulletin*, and despite Carter’s anxiety about the time constraint, the money was successfully spent on books. “The funds were used to buy works specifically requested by libraries and institutions in these countries and for reference works of special importance, like the Schlomann’s Technical Dictionaries, Macmillan’s Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, The

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<sup>198</sup> “It is recommended that the Executive Board approve the allocation and distribution of educational, scientific and cultural equipment purchased under the authorisation of Resolution 1.5 of the Final Resolutions: (2C/129(Rev.) 4 December 1947) and of non ear-marked voluntary contributions to the following countries in the proportion indicated, allowing a reserve of 10% for future allocation: China 21%, Poland 18%, Greece 10%, Czechoslovakia 9%, the Philippines 9%, Italy 8%, Hungary 8%, Austria 7%. It is further recommended that the Reconstruction Section in consultation with the Programme Sections concerned, and upon consideration of the information on Needs, should follow this percentage in the allocation of materials without further prior approval of the Committee for Cultural Reconstruction, subject, however, to the review of the Committee.” Resolution V. Executive Board, 6<sup>th</sup> Session, Report of the Chairman of the Committee for Cultural Reconstruction. 6 EX/17, Paris, 11 February 1948. UNESCO Archives, Executive Board 1948, Vol.V, 6. Session.

<sup>199</sup> Preliminary short report on book buying operation, 4 November 1948. UNESCO Archives 361.9 : 02 Reconstruction Libraries.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

Webster and Larousse dictionaries, etc.”<sup>201</sup> The final calculation totaled \$8,370 spent on books for six countries. The greatest amount, \$2,520, went to Czechoslovakia, followed in decreasing increments by China, Poland, Greece, Italy and concluding with the smallest allotment of \$630 going to Austria.<sup>202</sup> Indeed, perhaps the single most important aspect of the ICHP and its processes was that libraries had freedom of choice, ensuring that they would not be limited to restocking their shelves with whatever texts happened to be donated or otherwise made available to them.

Based on this approach, as of 31 December 1948, the ICHP had distributed 115,922 publications – books and periodicals “to the main war-devastated libraries,” a relatively small number, but one that does not take into account all the additional publications distributed by, through, or via some channel initiated, developed or facilitated by UNESCO. It does not take into account the 300 sets of the most recent edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* donated by its publisher to UNESCO for distribution to war-damaged libraries, the three full microfilm laboratories UNESCO set up in Austria, Hungary and Poland, the additional forty-seven microfilm readers coupled with \$1,800 in credit to be used toward the purchase of microfilms or microfiches sent to eleven war-damaged countries, \$8,370 worth of book and periodicals purchases out of an unexpected emergency fund, and about \$44,000 distributed in the form of UNESCO Book Coupons, to be discussed shortly.<sup>203</sup> The ICHP was also relied upon by various national governments, publishing houses, academic institutions and other significant donating

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<sup>201</sup> Lars Lind to Edward J. Carter, 1 March 1949. UNESCO Archives 361.9 : 02 Reconstruction Libraries.

<sup>202</sup> As these amounts do not reflect the suggested percentages outlined above **in footnote 198** it is not entirely clear how the final distribution was decided.

<sup>203</sup> UNESCO, Meeting of Experts from Devastated Countries, 12-13 May 1949, Unesco’s Part in Reconstruction, UNESCO/REC/Conf.14/2, Paris, 11 May 1949. UNESCO Archives, 361.9 A 06 (44) “49.05” Int. Conf. of Representatives of War Devastated Countries – Paris May 1949.

bodies, from Oxford University to the YMCA to the American Medical Library Association, to take responsibility for the allocation of their substantial book and periodical donations.

In order to make the ICHP and the distribution of all the gifts and donations to the libraries that wanted and needed them a success, there had to be a free, open, easy and efficient forum of communication in which libraries could both make their needs known and let other libraries know the material that they had available to offer, either in exchange or as an outright gift or donation. According to UNESCO's Reconstruction Program, "The need for a co-ordinating organisation, like Unesco's Clearing House, has also been proved over and over again. Books must be directed to the library where they are best used; centralized documentation on needs, resources and allocations made must be established and kept up-to-date."<sup>204</sup> The ICHP's periodical, *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries*, became that forum.

### III. UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries

With the *Bulletin of the ICHP* first appearing in November 1946 and the first issue of the *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries*<sup>205</sup> appearing in April 1947, the *Bulletin* was UNESCO's first periodical publication. The *Bulletin* was also the first truly international library publication. *Libri International Library Review*, a commercial trade publication, appeared a few years later, in 1950.<sup>206</sup> Even after *Libri* had appeared, a 1954 study on national and international exchanges conducted by librarian Edwin Williams singled out the *Bulletin*, "Most projects for the exchange of duplicates have been primarily domestic rather than international, though the *Unesco Bulletin for Libraries* lists wants and offers, and some national centers carry on a heavy international

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<sup>204</sup> Untitled, unsigned, undated [circa 1946-1947]. UNESCO Archives 361.9 : 02 Reconstruction Libraries.

<sup>205</sup> The *Bulletin* was renamed in 1979 to the *Unesco Journal of Information Science, Librarianship and Archives Administration*, which was published until 1983.

<sup>206</sup> *Libri* was born of an idea first suggested in 1930 to the American Library Association by Svend Dahl, the prominent Danish librarian. Svend Larsen, "Libri: The Early Years," *Libri* 50 (2000): 69-74. <http://www.librijournal.org/pdf/2000-2pp69-74.pdf>. Last viewed 12 August 2012.

commerce.”<sup>207</sup> As such, the *Bulletin*’s role in facilitating international exchange was viewed as significant beyond the immediate postwar moment of interest here.

The *Bulletin* was intended from the outset to function “as a working tool for librarians to disseminate in a quick and efficient way all information connected to Unesco which may assist in the distribution and exchange of books and periodicals.” Initially published in bilingual English and French editions, the brief posting format employed by the *Bulletin* also helped make it possible for librarians who were not necessarily fluent in either language to extract basic information regarding titles, publishers, editions, etc., details that could be “intelligible without translation,” as UNESCO put it, providing sufficient information for most libraries to decide whether or not they wanted any of the materials listed for their own library.<sup>208</sup> Importantly, the *Bulletin* was “provided to the war-ravaged libraries free of charge.”<sup>209</sup> Moreover, the *Bulletin* was to function “beyond political and commercial influence.”<sup>210</sup> These features were all integral to the Libraries Section’s dedication to ensuring the broadest possible access and availability to its programs. As Carter reported:

The Bulletin has been conceived always as an extended limb of the Secretariat bringing the practical contributions which the Clearing House staff can make to libraries in Member States throughout the world. It distributes the vast amount of information which is available to the Clearing House impartially throughout the world and in a form which is fully appreciated by librarians, so that direct action can be taken by them in response to the Bulletin notes without having to refer back to Unesco.<sup>211</sup>

It was believed that such neutrality could be maintained by contributors to and readers of the *Bulletin* being almost entirely librarians themselves, and by making it possible for “exactly

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<sup>207</sup> Edwin E. Williams, “Exchanges: National and International,” *Library Trends* 2:4 (April 1954): 564.

<sup>208</sup> *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* 1:1 (April 1947), 2.

<sup>209</sup> Zuckerman, *Memoir*, 63.

<sup>210</sup> Bulletin of the International Clearing House for Publications. Unesco/PrepCom/L&M/13/Appendix 2. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission Vol.V Program Committees.

<sup>211</sup> Edward J. Carter to Department of Cultural Activities, 19 February 1951. LBD Memo/4000. UNESCO Archives X07.353.321 UNESCO Publications – General Part 1(A).

expressed needs for books can be quickly and exactly met.”<sup>212</sup> It was a forum of inter-library communication intended to function within its own very particular sphere, making it possible for librarians to avoid having to communicate via national tools which increased the risk that they would run up against inter-national tensions and conflicts.

The first issue described the format and goals of the *Bulletin* and introduced the different sections. Regarding the monthly content of the entire *Bulletin*, readers were requested to contribute not only their postings regarding material wanted or available, but also any other news or information that would be of interest to the broader library world. In terms of the ICHP, the postings were arguably the most important aspect of the *Bulletin*:

In all clearing-house work Unesco hopes to be able to develop its service so that exactly expressed needs for books can be quickly and exactly met. The first step is to encourage libraries throughout the world, and particularly those in war-devastated countries, to send Unesco properly compiled lists of their needs. The more exactly needs are stated and the more complete the bibliographical information included the more efficiently will the Clearing-house be able to work.<sup>213</sup>

The first issue already included postings for materials offered and needed, based on responses to UNESCO questionnaires and on information forwarded from UNRRA, from Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, Greece, Poland, Yugoslavia, Denmark, France, Hungary, Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.<sup>214</sup> By the second issue those same countries posted again and were joined by Romania, Sweden, Germany, with new countries submitting postings for each subsequent issue.

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<sup>212</sup> Bulletin of the International Clearing House for Publications. Unesco/PrepCom/L&M/13/Appendix 2. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission Vol.V Program Committees.

<sup>213</sup> *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* 1:1 (April 1947), 10.

<sup>214</sup> According to a somewhat apologetic note in the *Bulletin*, the preponderance of information from UNRRA explained why so many of the publications listed in the first issue were in English, but, the note continued, “We hope to receive lists of demands for publications in all languages and from all countries, so that they may be advertised in this section of the Bulletin.” *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* 1:1 (April 1947), 11.

Eager “To ascertain of what practical use this Bulletin has been up til now and how to improve and increase its value to its users,” the fifth issue, in August 1947, included a postcard addressed to the *Bulletin* on which readers were requested to rate the publication.<sup>215</sup> Although none of the returned postcards were found over the course of this research, they clearly were returned for, as Carter wrote in early 1948, UNESCO had gathered “lots of evidence to show that very many needs are met as a result of these advertisements.”<sup>216</sup> In addition, in July 1947, UNESCO Director General Julian Huxley reported to the Executive Board:

There has been an extremely encouraging world-wide response to the Bulletin. Hundreds of appreciative letters have been received from libraries and institutions; specific requests have been met, exchange relations established, and offers made. The professional periodical press has given considerable space to the Bulletin and has in this way helped to make Unesco as a whole better known.<sup>217</sup>

After the ICHP had been successfully operating for almost a year, the February 1948 issue of the *Bulletin* outlined for the first time the allocation policy of the ICHP:

1. First priority is given to requests from war-damaged institutions in Member-states which have asked for specific available titles. If several requests for the same title have been received, priority is given to that institution which suffered the greatest losses. Second priority is given to requests from institutions which did not sustain war-damage but which are situated in war-damaged countries. Third priority is given to requests from institutions in other Member-states. Fourth priority is given to requests from institutions in non-Member-states.
2. Publications for which no specific requests have been received are allocated according to information obtained on needs in specific subject fields. As regards priorities, the same principles are applied as outlined in 1. above.
3. Whenever material is allocated on the basis of requests received subsequent to a notice published in Unesco Bulletin for Libraries, the interests of distant countries are safeguarded by allocating to these countries a specific proportion of the available publications.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* 1:5 (August 1947), 109.

<sup>216</sup> Edward J. Carter to Eugene B. Power, University Microfilms, 4 February 1948. UNESCO Archives 651.523 : 02 Microfilm – Libraries Part I.

<sup>217</sup> Report of the Director General on developments since the last session. Cons.Exec./3<sup>rd</sup> Sess./23, Paris, 7 July 1947. UNESCO Archives, Executive Board, 1947, Vol.I, 1-2 Sessions.

<sup>218</sup> *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* II:2 (February 1948), 41.

The most significant point visible in this policy is the extent to which war-damaged libraries, countries, and reconstruction and rehabilitation needs more generally continued to be so highly prioritized, evidence of their continued needs.

Much evidence of the publication's success also exists. Almost immediately after its launching Carter wrote that "As a medium through which libraries can establish their own direct contacts, the *Bulletin* has proved outstandingly successful, and one European librarian has reported to us that announcement in a single issue enabled him to establish more than fifty exchanges."<sup>219</sup> The Programme and Budget Commission, reporting at the 1949 General Conference on UNESCO publications, singled out the *Bulletin* as an example of one of UNESCO's most successful publications:

We shall refrain from giving full details, which would be tedious, and confine ourselves to quoting a single instance which will give an idea of the geographic area covered by one of our main publications and the relative volume of consignments to each country. The 'Bulletin for Libraries' was sent in April 1949 to 7,285 addresses in 89 countries. The following twelve countries receive more than 100 copies of this publication: USA 1,609; China consignments temporarily suspended since May 691; Switzerland 432; France 424; Belgium 406; Great Britain 346; Poland 232; Czechoslovakia 134; Hungary 115; Greece 106; Netherlands 103; Brazil 101.<sup>220</sup>

In fact, in 1949, the *Bulletin* had, at 7,500 copies, the greatest distribution of any UNESCO periodical except for the *Courier*, the general informational outlet of the Organization.<sup>221</sup> Two years later Carter reported:

The *Bulletin* has been published since April 1947, when it was the first Unesco periodical to appear; it is the only periodical the career of which has been uninterrupted for the last four years. At present, 8,000 copies are printed; these are distributed as follows: Free distribution 5,400 copies; Paid subscription 412 approx.; National Commissions, etc.

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<sup>219</sup> Carter, "UNESCO's Library Programs and Work," 237.

<sup>220</sup> General Conference, 4<sup>th</sup> Session, Programme and Budget Commission. 4C/PRG/6, Paris, 1 August 1949, 2. UNESCO Archives X07.353.321 UNESCO Publications – General Part 1(B).

<sup>221</sup> 4C/PRG/6 Annex II, 1 August 1949. UNESCO Archives X07.353.321 UNESCO Publications – General Part 1(B).

1,100. [...] The *Bulletin* is in fact an extremely efficient instrument. This is a justification for its free distribution rather than its sale.<sup>222</sup>

As was stated in the first issue of the *Bulletin*, its “success will be judged by the extent to which the information is actually used.”<sup>223</sup> Numbers tell of a statistical success. The sections of the *Bulletin* devoted to libraries’ postings: Publications Wanted, Exchange, Free Distribution, and Publications for sale, postings that steadily expanded with each new issue, tell of an even more concrete success, demonstrating that the *Bulletin* was actively being used as a forum of communication and cooperation between libraries the world over. Had the postings not been successful, the same countries would not have posted month after month, year after year. Moreover, in February 1948, then again in January 1949, the *Bulletin* requested that any libraries not archiving past issues of the publication return them to UNESCO, as “daily requests” arrived asking for back issues.<sup>224</sup> The expanding postings also offer evidence of how UNESCO successfully created a neutral forum in which libraries could exchange material beyond the limitations that might have otherwise been imposed had they tried to communicate and cooperate through any other means. In addition to the constantly expanding scope of countries and libraries participating in the ICHP was the fact that, as Zuckerman recalled, “Very soon, many libraries approached us, asking us to make available not only those books and magazines published in recent years, available, but also to help them get the books of today and tomorrow.”<sup>225</sup> By this he meant that libraries were also desperate for assistance with purchasing material.

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<sup>222</sup> Subscription, first instigated in 1951, was \$2.00 per month. Edward J. Carter to Department of Cultural Activities, 19 February 1951. LBD Memo/4000. UNESCO Archives X07.353.321 UNESCO Publications – General Part IV.

<sup>223</sup> *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* 1:1 (April 1947), 1.

<sup>224</sup> *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* II:2 (February 1948), 74.

<sup>225</sup> Zuckerman, *Memoirs*, 57.

#### IV. UNESCO Book Coupons

Introduced as “a new international currency created by UNESCO exclusively for the purchase of books and publications,” the Book Coupon Scheme differed from the sharing and exchange that was the focus of the first half of this chapter in that it responded to libraries’ equally pressing need to *purchase* the books, periodicals, and other textual materials that they required.<sup>226</sup> The coupons were intended to contribute “not only to the international circulation of ideas, but also, and more particularly, to the restoration of cultural institutions in the war-devastated countries.”<sup>227</sup> As Carter explained shortly prior to the launch of the initial trial period for the book coupons, “If the scheme works well, it will not only be more possible for books to be purchased by intellectual workers, but the procedure of purchase themselves should be simpler [emphasis in original].”<sup>228</sup> Much as with sharing and exchange, the factors impeding libraries’ abilities to freely purchase the materials they wanted during the immediate postwar years were varied and complex. The primary impediment, however, was financial. Even more specifically, “One of the obstacles to [...] recovery is the scarcity of hard currencies” and the related difficulty of libraries in soft currency countries to purchase material the required from hard currency countries.<sup>229</sup>

Insufficient resources coupled with the postwar currency crisis inevitably led to competition for the scarce funding that was available. Those combined factors and the resultant

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<sup>226</sup> “New Book Currency Now in Circulation,” *UNESCO Courier* I:11-12 (December 1948-January 1949), 6. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0007/000738/073886eo.pdf#73897>. Last viewed 15 October 2012.

<sup>227</sup> “New Book Currency Now in Circulation,” 6.

<sup>228</sup> UNESCO Book Coupon Scheme, remarks by Mr. Edward Carter, Head of the Libraries Division at the Distribution token coupons to participating members, 8 December 1948. 3C/D 26, Beirut, 8 December 1948. UNESCO Archives UNESCO General Conference Beirut 1948 Vol.24 Main Documents Speeches.

<sup>229</sup> “New Book Currency Now in Circulation,” 6.

demand for help they raised inspired UNESCO to create this new international currency.<sup>230</sup> This is how UNESCO described the situation in March 1949:

Although books and periodicals are the life-blood of a country's cultural life, they must take their place in the long queue of applicants for slices of the foreign currency available. In most countries this total is now very small indeed and scientists and scholars must compete with the general demand for food-stuffs and consumer goods, and with industry's need for machinery and raw materials.<sup>231</sup>

Unsurprisingly, such statements did not always endear people to UNESCO and led some to accuse it of being misguided, disconnected from reality, or at the very least of needing to reexamine its priorities. After all, could the need for books and periodicals really be compared with the need for food and other basic life necessities in the context of the recovering and reconstructing nations? UNESCO was in a difficult position, however, for the reconstruction and rehabilitation programs it did have, such as those examined throughout this work, could only have as their central concern the realms of education, science and culture. Its work could not overlap with that of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). As Director General Huxley explained at the 1946 General Conference, "relief and reconstruction had of course to be confined to education, science and culture, - spheres from which Unrra was debarred, as Unesco was debarred from dealing with material relief such as food or clothing."<sup>232</sup>

The two organizations were, however, in fairly constant contact, sharing information, experiences and findings that could potentially be useful to the other. BPC Chairman Ernest Barker, for example, "reported that he had been asked through a friend in UNRRA if the Commission could help in the provision of books for Assembly Centres for displaced persons in

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<sup>230</sup> They can legitimately be called a currency as examples of UNESCO Book Coupons were given to Chase National Bank "at their request, for inclusion in their Collection of Moneys of the World," Progress Report, 1 March – 30 April 1951, 8 May 1951, p.3. UNESCO Archives, 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons General Part III.

<sup>231</sup> "Book Coupon Scheme Proving a Success," *UNESCO Courier* II:2 (March 1949), 3.  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0007/000739/073938eo.pdf#73943>. Last viewed 15 October 2012.

<sup>232</sup> Report of Dr. Julian Huxley, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission to the General Conference, Paris, November 1946. UNESCO/C/15, Paris, 18 November 1946. UNESCO Archives General Conference 1. Session Paris 1946, Vol.4 Documents.

Europe.”<sup>233</sup> UNRRA, as the UN’s dedicated agency to providing vital physical life necessities to war-impacted countries specifically precluded UNESCO from addressing those same areas of concern, and vice-versa.

Exemplifying the Libraries Section’s broader goal to break down barriers impeding the free circulation and exchange of information and publications, the coupons were launched on a one year experimental basis on 6 December 1948, and received an almost immediate positive response from participants and observers alike. Conceived and developed by Zuckerman, book coupons quickly became a central solution for libraries and similar institutions to the currency restrictions and other barriers between countries that were otherwise virtually paralyzing cross-border purchasing and selling. As a 1949 article in the UNESCO Courier pointed out, it was primarily a currency, and not necessarily a wealth issue, explaining, “It’s not a question of price. For a university library in Poland it has been at least as hard to get a scientific paper priced fifty cents from the United States as the last edition of the expensive *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.”<sup>234</sup> Such restrictions had, of course, already existed and been problematic before the war, but they were greatly exacerbated by its circumstances and aftermath, which made it virtually impossible for libraries, universities and other institutions in soft currency countries to purchase books and periodicals that they desperately needed from hard currency countries.

As with the ICHP and all other Libraries Section projects, the Coupon Scheme was formulated with long-term development and expansion in mind, but, initially, “European countries with advanced educational systems have also received considerable aid through Unesco's book coupon scheme.”<sup>235</sup> This is made evident by the lengths to which UNESCO went

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<sup>233</sup> 34<sup>th</sup> BPC meeting draft minutes, 15 June 1944. CAME, London 1942-1945, Vol. III BPC, History, Committees and Sub-Committees.

<sup>234</sup> “Book Coupon Scheme Proving a Success,” 3.

<sup>235</sup> CHD, “Unesco in 1950-51,” *The World Today* 7:6 (Jun., 1951), 266.

to ensure Poland's participation in the Scheme. Prior to the Scheme being implemented, Director General Huxley wrote to the Polish Minister of Education introducing the concept and identifying Poland as one of the few countries recognized by UNESCO to take part in the trial period due to the extent of its wartime library damage and subsequent purchasing needs.<sup>236</sup> One month after the experimental period began, Carter wrote to the Polish Minister of Education in Warsaw, re-stating how pleased UNESCO would be for Poland to join in the Scheme, and to that end, that \$17,500 worth of coupons had initially been reserved for Polish usage. Apparently having not yet received a response from Poland confirming (or declining) its participation, Carter reminded the Minister that given the limited time period set aside to test the Scheme, Poland had to claim its coupons by 15 February 1949 in order to prevent them from, necessarily, being allocated to another country in need instead.<sup>237</sup> Shortly thereafter Carter explained the problem in another letter, writing that Poland (along with China) had "both indicated their wish" to participate, but that it had "been impossible to fix up some of the technical arrangements," which seem mainly to have consisted of receipt of the required paperwork, namely a "formal statement" indicating not only a country's commitment to participate but also indication of the currency with which they would pay UNESCO for the coupons.<sup>238</sup> Either the limitations imposed by those currency choices, or the fact that by 1949 Poland was increasingly frustrated with what it repeatedly perceived as UNESCO's Anglo-American-centrism and its disappointment with the extent to which UNESCO had contributed to Poland's reconstruction, or some combination of these and additional factors, dulled Poland's initial enthusiasm for the Scheme. Indeed, by 1

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<sup>236</sup> Julian Huxley to Minister of Education, Warsaw, 28 August 1947. AAN, Ministerstwo Oświaty, File 804, sygnatury 359-351.

<sup>237</sup> Edward J. Carter to Minister of Education, Warsaw, 12 January 1949. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General Part II.

<sup>238</sup> Edward J. Carter to G.R. Edwards, Central Medical Library Bureau, London, 7 February 1949; Jacob Zuckerman to John Jay McCloy, President, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 11 March 1949. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General Part II.

March 1949, Carter reported that he had received notification of Poland's decision not to participate in the trial phase; no explanation for this change of mind has been found.

This represented quite a shift from the book coupon launch on 8 December 1948, when Carter reported Poland and others joining in "at their own request."<sup>239</sup> UNESCO, never easily daunted, still listed Poland as a recipient for a portion of the "free" coupons distributed among select reconstruction countries. As a result, instead of being able to purchase \$17,500 worth of coupons, Poland was gifted \$6,804 worth.<sup>240</sup> Poland did accept and did spend those coupons. A report back to UNESCO regarding allocation of the "free" coupons provided a list showing their distribution among fifteen universities, libraries and other institutions.<sup>241</sup> Later, the Polish Ministry of Education compiled a list of twenty-five libraries that had been allocated small sums from a total of \$2,765, likely a portion of the \$6,804 gift, during 1950, ranging from a minimum of \$15 allocated to seven institutions, to a maximum of \$300 allocated to the Central Office for Professional Instruction.<sup>242</sup> UNESCO was nothing if not persistent, with correspondence seeking to entice Poland into the Scheme coming not only from the Libraries Section but also from the Director-General's office, which raised the possibility that Poland could use Polish currency instead of American, British or French to purchase coupons.<sup>243</sup> Certainly into 1950, the Minister of Education was not only actively circulating information within Poland about the coupons, but

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<sup>239</sup> UNESCO Book Coupon Scheme, remarks by Mr. Edward Carter, Head of the Libraries Division at the Distribution token coupons to participating members, 8 December 1948. 3C/D 26, Beirut, 8 December 1948. UNESCO Archives, UNESCO General Conference Beirut 1948. Vol.24 Main Documents. Speeches.

<sup>240</sup> Working paper for discussion at meeting on UNESCO Book Coupon Scheme, 1 March 1949. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General Part II.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Rozdzielnik bonow ksiazkowych Unesco na rok 1950, \$2750. AAN, Ministerstwo Oświaty, File 795, sygnatury 150.

<sup>243</sup> No response to this letter has been found. Walter H.C. Laves, Acting Director-General to Minister for Foreign Affairs, [11 August 1949]. UNESCO Archives, 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons General Part II.

was also requesting that Polish citizens suggest institutions or libraries that might be able to benefit from them.<sup>244</sup>

In the speech Carter gave during the official book coupon trial period launch ceremony on 8 December 1949, he said, “The distribution of token coupons today is intended not only as a ceremony formally launching this scheme, but as a symbolic record of the participation of Unesco Members States in an original venture which, while it is only possible because Unesco exists, can only be a success through the active and sympathetic cooperation of our members.”<sup>245</sup> The emphasis on communication and collaboration fits neatly within UNESCO’s overarching mission to promote peace and certainly within the Libraries Section’s other library projects previously discussed. By the time of the launch the coupons were highly anticipated as they had been discussed and planned since the First General Conference in the fall of 1946. Due to the severity of the postwar currency crisis, virtually all postwar talk of the coupon idea was met with optimism and praise.

In a December 1947 meeting with the Libraries Section’s Head Carter, Rockefeller Foundation officials in New York unanimously agreed that the Scheme “was impressive as one of the most objective and practical proposals that had come from Unesco.”<sup>246</sup> The Foundation leapt upon the idea as the ideal solution to the postwar problems, delays and failures of book circulation:

its acceptance and operation are regarded as so important and urgent that a determined effort will be made to work out some feasible plan. [...] It would seem that any really effective solution must come by international governmental action, presumably through

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<sup>244</sup> J. Hrynczyszyn to Chief Director, Library, 21 January 1950. AAN, Ministerstwo Oświaty, File 795, sygnatury 140.

<sup>245</sup> UNESCO Book Coupon Scheme, remarks by Mr. Edward Carter.

<sup>246</sup> Edward J. Carter, Unesco Schemes to Aid Publications Circulation, report of meeting with Rockefeller Foundation officers including G.R. Pomerat, Assistant Director for Natural Sciences, R.S. Morison, Assistant Director for Medical Sciences, R.F. Evans, Assistant Director for Social Sciences, Edward F. D’Arms and Charles B. Fahs, Assistant Directors for the Humanities, and Marshall, 13 December 1947, Harvard Club. UNESCO Archives 02 A 855 International Exchange of Publications Part I.

Unesco. Certainly, the problem is too large for effective remedy by anything but governmental and presumably international action. [...] It would be desirable that any RF action be related to and, indeed, have the effect of facilitating some lasting solution, such as the adoption and acceptance of the Unesco book coupon scheme.<sup>247</sup>

In a rare criticism of the Scheme that came from within the international library world no less, a top Norwegian library official active in IFLA spoke out against the coupons, reportedly stating, “Norwegian libraries and [...] even individuals have had little trouble in the last months in getting books from abroad through regular trade channels.” Confirming the narrow-mindedness and unpopularity of that view, a Norwegian member of UNESCO’s Executive Board and head of the Norwegian delegation to the 1947 General Conference, strongly disagreeing with his compatriot, said that he “did not seem to recognize the implications of recent announcements by the Bank of Norway to the effect that Norway’s foreign exchange balance is much less than had been supposed and that from this time on foreign exchange for all purposes would be much more difficult to secure.” For that reason, the UNESCO delegate believed, “it will be only a short time before Norway will need means to get books and periodicals from abroad,” a belief that led him to support the Book Coupon Scheme.<sup>248</sup>

Many war-damaged countries, and in particular the Chinese, Czechoslovakian, Greek and Polish governments expressed their support from these earliest discussions.<sup>249</sup> During the summer of 1947, British scientist Dr. Joseph Needham visited Czechoslovakia and Poland on behalf of UNESCO. Reporting back to UNESCO from multiple meetings at the University of Warsaw, Needham said, “Great interest was expressed in the Book Coupon Scheme, essential to

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<sup>247</sup> The International Supply of Printed Materials, marked Confidential. According to John Marshall this memorandum was circulated at an officers’ conference October 1947, though there are no other records of this conference [maybe referring to the ALA Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas meeting, 7 October 1947]. RAC, RG 3 Series 900 Box 24 Folder 191, 900 Program and Policy – Literature Aid 1945-1955.

<sup>248</sup> Alf Sommerfelt, Prof of Linguistics, University of Oslo, Norwegian delegate to UNESCO, 30 Oct 1947. RAC, RG 12.2 Officers Diaries, John Marshall, 1 October 1946 to 31 August 1948, MF Reel #5.

<sup>249</sup> UNESCO, National Co-operating Bodies in the United Kingdom, Notes on a draft proposal for Unesco Book Coupon Scheme, 24 September 1947. TNA PRO ED157/197.

break the stranglehold which the currency exchange regulations at present impose on the exchange of learned literature,” and that “intense interest was taken in the Book Coupon Scheme.”<sup>250</sup> In part this was because Czechoslovakia and Poland, like so many other countries in dire financial straits postwar, were seeking reassurance regarding their concern about being asked to contribute monetarily to UNESCO, a new organization, still unknown or unproven. According to Needham, “I found in government as well as academic circles a slight tendency to doubt whether Poland would get any concrete benefits of any kind in exchange for the national monetary contribution.” True to the coupons being framed as “an example of Unesco’s effort to deal with a real and practical problem in a realistic and practical way,”<sup>251</sup> the Book Coupon Scheme proved to offer the promise of precisely such a concrete benefit and Needham described its success in calming the concerns that were repeatedly expressed to him.

These exchanges also led Needham to conclude more broadly, “I think it is important that those members of the secretariat who come from the more advanced ‘donor’ countries scientifically and industrially, should often make the effort of thought required to see how it feels to be in the position of a devastated or relatively poor country, and to wonder ‘what advantage shall we get for our contribution to this organisation’?”<sup>252</sup> At the same time, such questions were especially difficult to answer given the small size of UNESCO’s budget. According to one report, from 1947 to 1949, about \$500,000 of UNESCO’s “administrative expenditure” went to reconstruction, with an estimated 73% of that amount being allocated for “direct aid” or emergency relief (while this number is relatively small, gift and donation amounts in some way

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<sup>250</sup> Dr. Joseph Needham, Notes on a short visit to Poland and Czechoslovakia, June 1947, Warsaw, p.2, 4. UNESCO Archives X 07.21 (438), Relations with Poland – Official, Part I.

<sup>251</sup> Carter, “A Reply to Dr. Sigerist’s ‘Open Letter to Unesco,’” 835.

<sup>252</sup> Dr. Joseph Needham, Notes on a short visit to Poland and Czechoslovakia, June 1947, Warsaw, p.5.

collected or distributed by or via UNESCO were in the millions of dollars).<sup>253</sup> For the same time period, the total amount from UNESCO's emergency reconstruction fund allocated specifically to libraries and books, including for "free" book coupons, was \$180,969.<sup>254</sup> To put these numbers into some perspective, out of UNESCO's approximately eight million dollar 1948 estimated budget, less than \$500,000 was allocated to Reconstruction and Rehabilitation and less than \$200,000 to the Libraries Section. In that year, however, only Natural Sciences received a greater allocation, at a bit over \$700,000, than did Reconstruction and Rehabilitation.<sup>255</sup> Ultimately, the distribution percentages are much more telling than the relatively small numbers.

The coupons' first year was declared a great success despite only \$100,000 of coupons distributed directly from UNESCO's hard currency reserve; the small allocation necessarily limiting the number of countries that could initially participate in the Scheme. During that first year, UNESCO distributed out of its 1948 funds for educational reconstruction an additional \$44,126 worth of "free" coupons to the war-devastated countries of Austria, China, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, the Philippines and Poland.<sup>256</sup> These participating countries were asked to choose one of three currency categories: hard, sterling, and soft, which would determine how the coupons, available in the fairly small denominations such as \$0.25, \$1.00, \$3.00 and \$10.00, would be pre-paid by each country's designated distributing agency, often the Ministry of Education or Culture or similar body, in their choice of either US dollars, pounds sterling or French francs. Looking beyond the first trial year UNESCO planned

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<sup>253</sup> "Introduction," *Report on the Effectiveness of the Reconstruction Program 1947 – 1948 – 1949* (Paris: UNESCO, 1950), 5.

<sup>254</sup> "Introduction," *Report on the Effectiveness of the Reconstruction Program 1947 – 1948 – 1949*, 36.

<sup>255</sup> "Appropriations by section, chapter and item," Budget Estimates for Financial Year 1948 and Information Annex (Paris: UNESCO, 1947).

<sup>256</sup> The UNESCO Book Coupon Scheme, LBA Memo 2251, 8 February 1949. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General, Part II.

for coupons to be purchased in the currency of all UNESCO member states.<sup>257</sup> Each country's designated distributing agency would then sell the coupons it had pre-paid for to libraries, schools, research institutions, etc., as well as to some individuals, in the participating country's own currency. The coupons were valid for one year after issue and any unused coupons could be returned to the distributing agency which would reimburse the purchaser and reallocate the coupons. After being purchased, the coupons functioned like checks, with purchasers mailing the required amount of coupons, along with a UNESCO Book Coupon Order form, to a participating bookseller in one of the designated bookselling countries. During the first trial year, purchasing countries could buy from booksellers in Czechoslovakia, France, India, the USA and the UK. The bookseller would fulfill the order and would send the coupons and order form it had received from the purchaser to the closest UNESCO office, which, to complete the process, would pay the bookseller for the amount of the coupons, in the bookseller's own currency.<sup>258</sup>

Upon first reading the process seems convoluted, but, based upon the overwhelmingly positive response, the coupons actually provided a reasonable and appreciated solution to the many bureaucratic obstacles and other barriers impeding, or at least disrupting, the postwar book trade between countries.<sup>259</sup> Most importantly, the coupons allowed purchases to occur that would have otherwise been virtually impossible for libraries that could not use the various soft currencies of their countries to pay for the majority of the books they required available only in hard currency countries, and primarily from the United States. In addition, much like with the ICHP and its *Bulletin*, book coupons, by providing libraries in need with a flexible and useful

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<sup>257</sup> Carter, "A Reply to Dr. Sigerist's 'Open Letter to Unesco,'" 835.

<sup>258</sup> UNESCO, National Co-operating Bodies in the United Kingdom, Notes on a draft proposal for Unesco Book Coupon Scheme, 24 September 1947. TNA PRO, ED 157/197.

<sup>259</sup> There may be some interesting parallels with the development currently underway of the bitcoin, described recently by *The Economist* as "a potentially attractive currency in which to settle international transactions, without messing around with bank charges or exchange rates." T.S., "How does Bitcoin work?" *The Economist*, 11 April 2013. <http://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2013/04/economist-explains-how-does-bitcoin-work>. Last viewed 13 April 2013.

currency, allowed them to freely select and purchase the material that they chose rather than to rely only on what was donated or otherwise made available to them. Through the Scheme the Libraries Section created another branch in its transnational network of communication and empowerment, ensuring that libraries have various means to access, to the greatest extent possible, what they wanted, down to the precise title, author, language, edition, etc.

As was stated in a Reconstruction Program report to the Executive Board, the book coupon as a “form of distribution is greatly welcomed, not least because it enables the recipient countries to exercise a free choice in the purchase of the most urgently needed books.” As discussed in detail earlier in this chapter, imbuing libraries with that freedom of choice was a defining feature of the Libraries Section’s reconstruction and rehabilitation projects. After his previously mentioned 1947 meeting with Rockefeller Foundation officials, Carter reported that “There was some discussion on the possible introduction of the scheme into the ‘Marshall Plan’, but it seemed clear that any scheme applied with limitations to politically ‘respectable’ countries would not serve Unesco’s non-political interests. The scheme as a whole might be wrecked if it was conditioned, if only in part, by political interests.”<sup>260</sup> While UNESCO was technically barred from working in enemy nations, or, in some cases, in non-member nations, it was determined to spread its reach and pushed increasingly hard against those barriers, as will be described in greater detail in the following chapter.

By putting desperately needed currency directly into the hands of purchasers, book coupons empowered a broad spectrum of readers and researchers with a broad variety of needs and interests to freely select and purchase whatever texts they chose from booksellers in any of the other participating countries. Most importantly, they did not only benefit large research institutions. Early in 1949, for example, a medical student at the Sorbonne in Paris scheduled a

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<sup>260</sup> Edward J. Carter, Unesco Schemes to Aid Publications Circulation.

meeting with Carter. He and his classmates, the student explained, were unable to obtain the texts they needed, especially those published in other countries. As a result, they had begun to build up their own small library, with each student contributing whatever money she or he could and with all meeting to agree on which books and periodicals would be purchased with their pooled resources. Since their small collection would not technically be considered a library, Carter wrote to France's national library body, the Direction des Bibliothèques, to recommend that it consider making an exception and providing the students with coupons in order to assist them to obtain the texts they required.<sup>261</sup> It seems that the argument was convincing because the head of the Direction, Julien Cain of the Bibliothèque Nationale, reporting on the success of the Scheme in France, emphasized especially that allocations in relatively small amounts, of two to three dollars for example, were useful in particular for professors and students, who, again, urgently needed access to foreign publications.<sup>262</sup> Less than three months into the Scheme, in fact, France reported that almost all of its coupons had either already been spent or at least allocated to purchasers. UNESCO was pleased, writing, "In organising distribution of book coupons, France has done the best job and has set up a well-organised office, with the result that almost all book coupons were disposed of a few weeks after they were placed on sale."<sup>263</sup>

Carter attempted to correct misapprehensions that the Scheme would only meet scholarly and intellectual needs during his 1947 meeting with the Rockefeller Foundation officers, explaining, "Unesco had not proposed the scheme as exclusively for the supply of 'higher studies' publications, and that we foresaw that the larger public libraries could benefit almost as

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<sup>261</sup> Edward J. Carter to M. Weissgerbert, 2 February 1949. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General, Part II.

<sup>262</sup> Julien Cain to Director General, 30 May 1949. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General, Part II.

<sup>263</sup> Working paper for discussion at meeting on UNESCO Book Coupon Scheme, 1 March 1949, 2. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General, Part II.

much as university, research and national libraries [emphasis in original].”<sup>264</sup> France’s 1950

report to the General Conference serves to illustrate what the actual scope of usage looked like:

The few figures that follow convey some idea of the operation of the Service during 1949; coupons to a value of \$25,588 have been allocated. Nearly three-quarters of the coupons used have been for purchases in the United States of America. The others were spent in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Switzerland and a smaller number in India and Israel. Lastly, in a few exception cases, they were spent in Hungary and Austria. The book coupons have been used by a great variety of bodies, the most important being the State Libraries, which, in 1949, purchased approximately \$12,000 worth of coupons; others are: scientific institutions (approximately \$1,300); Government Departments (\$400); industrial companies (over \$3,000); booksellers (\$5,800); medical practitioners and medical and pharmaceutical laboratories (\$1,200); private individuals (\$2,000), in very small orders. The most varied circles have benefited from the book coupon scheme: university professors, primary and secondary school teachers, students, aeronautical experts, engineers, artists, etc. The book coupon scheme, which has resulted in an increased volume of imports has enabled the French people to obtain further reference material and to extend cultural facilities; it is no mean instrument for international co-operation.<sup>265</sup>

Similarly, according to one history written by two former UNESCO officials, book coupons

supplemented what Unesco had been able to do through the *Bulletin for Libraries* in encouraging gifts and exchanges of publications. It made possible a more sustained, long-range build-up of the educational, scientific and cultural resources of the less-favored countries as well as those devastated by war. Individual students and research workers, as well as libraries and universities, could buy in their own currency the foreign literature they needed and could not otherwise have obtained. Their purchases ranged from astronomy to agriculture, from electronics to comparative religion, art, music, law and medicine.<sup>266</sup>

And, as pointed out by Julien Cain, the relatively small monetary amounts of spent coupons also indicate the attention to smaller institutions and individuals. This accessibility was further illustrated in a note about the Scheme published in the *Christian Science Monitor* in early 1951, stating that the coupons made “it possible for the man in the street to participate directly in the

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<sup>264</sup> Carter, *Unesco Schemes to Aid Publications Circulation*.

<sup>265</sup> France, Report submitted to the Fifth Session of the General Conference, 144. UNESCO Archives, General Conference, Fifth Session, 1950, Reports of Member States.

<sup>266</sup> Laves and Thomson, *UNESCO: Purpose, Progress, Prospects*, 78.

work of the United Nations.” Information about the Scheme was presented in a manner that would entice a broad spectrum of participation.<sup>267</sup>

Always looking to further advance its goal of knocking down or transcending barriers to the free and open exchange of information and publications, in the fall of 1949 UNESCO implemented yet another element of the Book Coupon Scheme. A new shipping label was adhered to packages containing materials purchased and shipped using the coupons that directed customs officials to “Please hurry it through customs.”<sup>268</sup> Looking to save border control officials “time and trouble,” the labels were coupled with UNESCO’s encouragement of all participating governments to do whatever they could internally to ease the entry of book coupon parcels into their countries. In addition, according to Zuckerman’s memoirs, “A number of transport companies were willing to perform free shipping. In other cases, we were able to use diplomatic pouches to the recipient countries, or we used UNESCO’s modest budget for the freight.”<sup>269</sup> These methods all contributed to making the book coupons the “immense success” UNESCO declared them to be only a few months into the initial trial period.<sup>270</sup>

In its six-month assessment, conducted halfway through the trial period, the Libraries Section summarized what it had learned thus far: that it took between two and five months to set up efficient coupon distribution in a newly participating country, that “a constant publicity campaign” was required to keep booksellers, local bookstores and the publishing industry, as well as purchasers, aware of the Scheme, and that due to careful implementation no abuses of the

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<sup>267</sup> “UNESCO Offers Gift Plan,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 6 February 1951.

<sup>268</sup> It is not clear if this is what the label actually read, which seems doubtful as the wording is awkward, or if it is just an interpretation of the effect the label was intended to have once it reached customs. “Has UNESCO Anything to Declare?” 8.

<sup>269</sup> Zuckerman, *Memoirs*, 56.

<sup>270</sup> “Has UNESCO Anything to Declare?” 8.

coupons had yet to be reported.<sup>271</sup> UNESCO stating the extent of the coupons' initial success was not a baseless assertion made by the organization in the interest of self-promotion, but far more importantly, was supported by and reflected in the commitment of the original test-run countries to continue to participate, and at a greater financial involvement after the initial trial period had ended. In November 1949, the *UNESCO Courier* reported that France, for example, which had initially been allocated \$20,000, believed it could use up to \$150,000, and that Czechoslovakia, which had been allocated \$50,000, wanted up to \$240,000. In addition, more countries were regularly in the process of joining in the Scheme, both as bookselling and as purchasing countries.<sup>272</sup>

Given the success of its first year of experimental operation and faced with the rapid expansion of the popular Scheme to an increasing number of countries worldwide, the greatest obstacle UNESCO's Book Coupon Scheme faced was financial. UNESCO had to find sufficient sources of "hard currency against which more coupons can be issued."<sup>273</sup> Many possible solutions were discussed. One was to continue to use UNESCO hard currency reserves, which Zuckerman estimated could consist of between one and two hundred thousand dollars for 1950.<sup>274</sup> In fact, the Director-General ended up allocating more than the Libraries Section's estimate had hoped for, \$250,000 from that reserve to be used from the end of September 1949, when the trial year ended, through 1950. While that allocation demonstrated recognition and acknowledgement of the significance of the Scheme by UNESCO as a whole, \$250,000 was still highly insufficient given the ever-growing demand.<sup>275</sup> As such, "additional hard currency

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<sup>271</sup> Six months' experience with the UNESCO Book Coupon Scheme, 23 May 1949. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General Part II.

<sup>272</sup> "Has UNESCO Anything to Declare?" 8.

<sup>273</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to John Jay McCloy, President, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 11 March 1949. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General Part II.

<sup>274</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to John Jay McCloy, 11 March 1949.

<sup>275</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Harry West, 24 March 1949. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General Part II.

sources must be found to make the scheme really attractive to the participating countries and to enable Unesco to extend the scheme in scope and to put it on a longer term basis.”<sup>276</sup> Some of those additional sources considered included creating a special Book Coupon Fund amounting to 10% of UNESCO’s total budget; selling book coupons to institutions in hard currency countries; hard currency donations from private organizations; hard currency gifts or donations from other international organizations (the Pan-American Union and Economic Commission for Europe were named as possible sources); and/or, financing by the World Bank or International Monetary Fund.<sup>277</sup> Ultimately, a combination of ever-evolving sources would provide the necessary funds. Early in 1949, Zuckerman traveled to the United States. There he met with various participating and interested bodies, from the American Booksellers Association to representatives from the Library of Congress and American Library Association, to discuss possibilities for getting more American institutions involved in the Scheme. UNESCO argued that if American institutions paid in hard currency US dollars for coupons, which they would in turn use to make foreign book and periodical purchases from soft currency countries, the hard currency reserve available to UNESCO and thus for additional coupons would be greatly augmented.

Any selling country stood to benefit from the use of coupons by purchasing countries, and not only financially. Julien Cain, for example, in 1952, mentioned “the happy effects of UNESCO coupons for the diffusion of French books abroad.”<sup>278</sup> Of course the entire program was in the interest of American publishers and booksellers as the coupons allowed foreign libraries to purchase American publications that they could never otherwise afford, not having

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<sup>276</sup> UNESCO Book Scheme—Cooperation of American Libraries, March 1949. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General Part II.

<sup>277</sup> Working paper for discussion at meeting on UNESCO Book Coupon Scheme, 1 March 1949; Jacob Zuckerman to Harry West, 24 March 1949. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General Part II.

<sup>278</sup> Les Bons de livres Unesco (2e causerie), Enregistrée à l’Unesco le 22 janvier 1952, 2. Bibliothèque nationale de France (hereafter BN), archives et manuscrits, Fonds Julien Cain NAF 28238.

access to the dollars to do so (interestingly, however, UNESCO's Book Coupon Scheme was only formally endorsed by the United States, via the ALA, in 1952).<sup>279</sup> At the same time, if foreign libraries did not want to purchase all or any American publications, although the records show that most did, the coupons could be used in various other countries as well, especially as the number of selling countries increased from the initial five previously mentioned. But, UNESCO consistently emphasized, the coupons benefited not only booksellers but also, and especially, libraries. American libraries, which generally speaking were not contending with the currency restrictions that their counterparts faced in war-damaged countries, could make a real difference: by using book coupons to purchase publications abroad they could directly contribute to the ability of foreign libraries to purchase publications. Money used to buy coupons went back to UNESCO which used it to produce and sell more coupons to help more libraries. If, on the other hand, American libraries purchased through normal commercial channels, the money spent could end up any number of different hands to be spent in any manner. In other words, UNESCO argued, the book coupons generated a unique, symbiotic relationship between libraries worldwide, ensuring that money spent by libraries in one country would directly benefit libraries in other countries. Given how expensive the international publications market was (and is), how restricted postwar budgets and currencies were and the fact that libraries virtually always struggle to obtain sufficient funding, the book coupons promised to help ease the limitations

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<sup>279</sup> "American Library Association endorses Unesco Book Coupon Programme," *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* VI:7 (July 1952), E85. The ALA resolution reads: "Whereas, Unesco, of which the United States is a Member State, is facilitating among its Member States the exchange of educational, scientific and cultural information through its Unesco Coupon programme, and 'Whereas, the acquisition of Am pubs by participants in the Unesco coupon programme is furthered in proportion to the increased use of these coupons by American libraries in the settlement of their foreign purchases, and 'Whereas, the libs of the United States are prompted both by ideals and precedent in promoting the exchange of ideas and info as expressed in books; therefore, be it Resolved: By the Council of the American Library Association, at the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of its Midwinter Meeting, 1 February, 1952, that American libraries be urged to give their support to the Unesco coupon programme by using the coupons to the fullest extent practicable in their purchases of publications from other countries participating in the programme; and that the Executive Secretary of the Association be instructed to give appropriate publication to the text of this resolution."

imposed by such difficulties, all the while further expanding the network of transnational library communication and cooperation UNESCO had begun to build through the ICHP and *Bulletin*.

Yet, determined to not be entirely reliant on the United States, Zuckerman pursued additional avenues of possible funding, particularly in the form of fairly extensive discussions with the IMF, which expressed “interest [...] and real desire of the Fund to be helpful to UNESCO in any way that is practicable within the limits of its authority.”<sup>280</sup> Those limits did, however, end up making it impossible for the IMF to directly contribute, but the discussions greatly increased knowledge of and exposure to the Scheme. Pursuit of other, non-American sources of funding demonstrates how the Libraries Section walked a fine line in its relationship with the United States regarding book coupons, as was the case in most other realms as well. Utterly reliant on the influx of US dollars in order to help fund and thus ensure the continuation of the Scheme (and of UNESCO in general), Zuckerman also had to employ his diplomatic skills regarding his hesitancy about other roles America might play in the Scheme. In one letter, responding to an apparent offer of publicity assistance from the Voice of America broadcasting service, Zuckerman wrote, “You certainly realize that governments of some member states are not too well disposed towards Voice of America, and we might be faced with awkward questions and might even harm the success of the scheme.” Such assistance could only be accepted Zuckerman explained, if it was “done in a very cautious way and after having checked with Unesco in Paris the text of any statement on the scheme broadcast through this channel.” In the same letter, Zuckerman insisted that any press release about the coupons come from UNESCO in Paris, certainly rather than from any American source, “thereby standing a better chance of being published in some of the countries concerned.” Zuckerman’s balancing of gratitude with practicality, demonstrates the delicate negotiation that UNESCO officials were constantly

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<sup>280</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Williams, 4 April 1949. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General Part II.

engaged in in order to maintain the support and encourage the participation of an ever-increasing number of member states, each one utterly unique and each with its own unique history and relationships with all the others.

Still, in order for the coupons to succeed, good publicity was key. To that end, notes and announcements about the Scheme can be found in virtually every scholarly, trade, and general periodical published the world over at the time.<sup>281</sup> Zuckerman recalled that “Appropriate advertisements were published in many newspapers.”<sup>282</sup> National Commissions for UNESCO, Ministers of Education or Culture and other similar bodies were also counted upon to help spread the word. UNESCO’s primary means of advertisement was via the information being circulated to the seven to eight thousand recipients of its *Bulletin for Libraries* as well as the twenty or so thousand recipients of the *UNESCO Courier*, as well as through other UNESCO publications.<sup>283</sup> In early 1950, to give one specific example, the Reconstruction Program’s *Impetus* offered a \$10.00 book coupon prize to the winner of its essay contest responding to the question: “In the realm of worldwide education, science and culture, what should be Unesco’s first priority reconstruction task for 1950-and why?”<sup>284</sup> This contest promised not only to further awareness of the coupons, but also provided a means for UNESCO to ascertain what concerned individuals believed were remaining priorities for reconstruction at a time when reconstruction was becoming less and less of a focus for many. Ultimately, according to a 1952 French report, the

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<sup>281</sup> A small sampling includes “The Reporter,” *The Journal of Higher Education* 20:2 (Feb., 1949), 104; “Notes for NOTES,” *Notes*, Second Series 6:2 (Mar., 1949), 298; “News and Notes,” *The Journal of Philosophy* 46:8 (Apr. 14, 1949), 254.

<sup>282</sup> Zuckerman, *Memoirs*, 56.

<sup>283</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Harry West, 24 March 1949; Gordon Williams, Assistant to the Managing Director, IMF, to Jacob Zuckerman, 9 May 1949. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General Part II; General Conference, 4<sup>th</sup> Session, Programme and Budget Commission. 4C/PRG/6, Paris, 1 August 1949, November 1946-30 June 1949. UNESCO Archives X07.353.321 UNESCO Publications General Part I (B).

<sup>284</sup> Adapted from UNESCO Features, No. 13 Paris, 15 January 1950. National Archives and Records Administration (hereafter NARA), RG 331, Allied Operational & Occupation Headquarters, World War II, Supreme Commander for the Allied Forces, Civil Information & Education Section, Public Opinion & Sociological Research Division, (Religious Cultural Resources Division), General Subject File 1945-52, Box 5963, Folder UNESCO Book Coupon.

coupons were their own best advertisement: “It should be noted that the Unesco coupons do far more than any article, lecture or film to spread knowledge of the Organization, its program and its aims.”<sup>285</sup>

On 15 February 1951, responsibility for the continuation of the Book Coupon Scheme was transferred from the Libraries Section within the Department of Cultural Activities, to the newly established Rehabilitation Service, the downsized continuation of UNESCO’s Reconstruction Program. This shift reflected the fact that, as a result of its huge success and in response to growing demand, the Scheme was being expanding from book coupons limited to the purchase of textual and published materials, to gift coupons with which purchasers could also buy films and scientific, laboratory and other educational and research equipment. More practically, on the same date as the Scheme was transferred, Zuckerman was appointed Assistant Head of the new Rehabilitation Service, and essentially took his book/gift coupon program with him into his new position,<sup>286</sup> where, during 1951, he had five employees from France, Belgium, the United States and United Kingdom working only on book coupons. By this time, less than two years in, the success of the Scheme was not in question. In March 1951, *Physics Today*, the journal of the American Institute of Physics, announced that the sale of UNESCO Book Coupons had reached \$1,000,000.<sup>287</sup> During the 1951 General Conference, the Director General reported:

In the last 12 months the number of countries taking part in the Unesco Coupon Scheme has gone up to 21. Nine new countries have joined the book coupon scheme (Western Germany, Belgium, Burma, Ceylon, Indonesia, Pakistan, Persia, Thailand and the Union of South Africa), bringing the number of member nations to 21. ... By February 1951 the total value of coupons issued by Unesco since the inauguration of the scheme amounted

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<sup>285</sup> Extract of the Reports of Member States presented to the General Conference at its Seventh Section, Paris, November-December 1952, France (page 74). UNESCO Archives, 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons General Part III.

<sup>286</sup> General Conference 1951 Report of the Director-General. 6C/3, [covers period April 1950-February 1951], 95; General Conference 1951 Supplementary Report of the Director-General. 6C/3 Add, 8 June 1951, [covers period April 1950-May 1951], 41. UNESCO Archives, General Conference 1951, Reports of Member States.

<sup>287</sup> “UNESCO’s Book Coupons,” *Physics Today* 4:3 (March 1951), 30.

to \$1,038,000, including \$574,500 issued since April 1950: \$342,000 for book coupons, \$72,500 for films and \$160,000 for scientific equipment.<sup>288</sup>

Coupled with the ICHP and its *Bulletin*, the book coupons represented the third point in the transnational network of international library cooperation and exchange so quickly and successfully implemented by the Libraries Section during the early postwar years, helping to expand and improve the groundwork for the global system of interlibrary loan, for example, that is still highly relied upon today and for the continued recognition that libraries, as institutions, represent freedom of information and choice, can and should function beyond borders, unimpeded to the greatest extent possible by the ideological, political, cultural and other differences dividing the countries the libraries were located in.

Indeed, as previously mentioned, the Scheme was so successful that in 1951 book coupons were expanded to gift coupons, an expansion that only increased the success of the coupon program and the interest of an ever-growing number of countries to participate. For France, “The satisfactory results yielded by this experiment have encouraged the French Government to join in the Unesco coupon scheme for films and scientific material.”<sup>289</sup>

Moreover, the program, evolved in form and function, still endures to the present day and is considered one of UNESCO’s most successful and longest running programs, which, due to varying exchange rates and currency variations, is furthermore one of the only internal projects to have actually generated some income for the agency.<sup>290</sup> According to Zuckerman’s memoir:

It also quickly turned out that, as we expected, the coupon program did not require budgeting any funds, but on the contrary, not only covered its personnel costs and other expenses but also created steadily rising surpluses. This was due partly to the commissions withheld at the time of coupon redemption, but mainly due to the accumulating amounts of coupons sold and paid for to us, but not yet presented for

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<sup>288</sup> General Conference 1951 Report of the Director-General, 77.

<sup>289</sup> France, Report submitted to the Fifth Session of the General Conference, 144.

<sup>290</sup> “UNESCO Coupons Can Buy Knowledge and Change Lives,” [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=44756&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=44756&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html). Last viewed 18 April 2013.

redemption. At the end of 1984 this capital, which naturally earns interest, amounted to 7 million dollars and the annual surplus exceeded 1 million dollars.<sup>291</sup>

In his personal history of UNESCO published in 1978, former Assistant Director General Hoggart wrote, “quite simple arrangements can be life-lines, such as the UNESCO book coupon scheme. [...] it is still greatly in demand and, if more funds were put into it, the demand would grow even further.”<sup>292</sup> Between 1949 and the mid-1960s, over 50 million dollars in coupons were used by over thirty-five countries.<sup>293</sup> It is significant and important to emphasize that this extremely popular and highly successful program began as a means to empower and enable war-damaged libraries to purchase needed materials for library reconstruction and rehabilitation, as outside of any political or economic barriers that could restrict, if not fully block, cross-border selling and purchasing.<sup>294</sup>

Again and again the Scheme was lauded for its functional practicality. Even those who had few kind words about UNESCO at the time, nevertheless, often singled out the Book Coupon Scheme as praiseworthy. A biting criticism of UNESCO under Huxley in an October 1948 *Saturday Evening Post*, for example, acknowledged that certain projects, “such as a book-coupon scheme enabling people in soft-currency countries to obtain books from hard-currency countries [...] sound a bit more like it.”<sup>295</sup> Indeed, the benefit of book coupons to UNESCO, that they were “economical and efficient,” is what made them so beneficial to libraries and to other book bodies and readers the world over.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> These figures have not been verified. Zuckerman, *Memoirs*, 58.

<sup>292</sup> Richard Hoggart, *An Idea and its Servants: Unesco from Within* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1978), 37.

<sup>293</sup> Maurel, *Histoire de l'UNESCO*, 238.

<sup>294</sup> Maurel does trace the program to “resolve the difficulties of the importation of books that multiple countries were suffering from, particularly in Europe, during this postwar period characterized by shortages.” Maurel, *Histoire de l'UNESCO*, 238.

<sup>295</sup> Ernest O. Hauser, “Doctor Huxley’s Wonderful Zoo,” *The Saturday Evening Post*, 2 October 1948, 73.

<sup>296</sup> Edward J. Carter to Bernard Drzewieski, 19 May 1949. LBA Memo 771. UNESCO Archives 332.55 : 02 Book Coupons-General Part II.

## V. Conclusions

The impact of the work described in this chapter was often personal and emotional, not only for the grateful recipients, but also for the staff and officials developing the programs and facilitating the exchanges. Barker, for example, speaking about his years at the head of the BPC, said:

I look back on three golden years of intellectual inter-allied co-operation. My colleagues were scholars and librarians from some eight or nine countries of Europe [...] But what a chapter it has been in my own life that for these four years in my old age I should have been permitted to join in this work among books—this work of inter-allied intellectual co-operation. I have been taught by my colleagues to be a good European; I have even begun to learn to be a good citizen of the world. Books cross all frontiers, and in the kingdom of books there are no barriers.<sup>297</sup>

Barker was not alone in feeling that the experience, in his case with running the program that evolved into the Libraries Section, was life-changing. Involved individuals were inspired by being able to make an impact. This chapter has provided three concrete examples of internally developed and implemented projects of the UNESCO Libraries Section that had a measurably positive impact on the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the postwar world, within libraries and well beyond, by providing flexible and successful means of ensuring that libraries in countries the world over had various ways in which to access the most current and up-to-date information and publications that they and their users wanted and needed. The remaining chapters will demonstrate how, when it came to UNESCO seeking a meaningful role for itself in externally developed and implemented projects that required cooperation and interaction with, not to mention the blessing of, the postwar world's main powers, and primarily with the United States, which, by no small coincidence, was also UNESCO's most important funder, the Libraries Section was ultimately, more often than not, thwarted.

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<sup>297</sup> Sir Ernest Barker, *Restoration of Libraries*, 3.

Through its ICHP, *Bulletin* and book coupons, the Libraries Section helped to successfully address an un-measurable but clearly significant portion of the urgent postwar demand for information and publications. Another pressing issue that UNESCO sought to become involved with during the immediate postwar years had to do with the management and distribution of library materials that had been looted, plundered, stolen, or otherwise confiscated or displaced by the Nazis throughout their sweep through Europe. As allied troops came across vast stores of textual material that they centralized in warehouses in their respective zones of occupation, questions about who owned or had the right to that material arose and sometimes became hotly debated. The following two chapters will demonstrate how UNESCO attempted to formulate a role for itself in the debates over confiscated books as an impartial, neutralizing mediator, and will describe the often unexpected resistance it met with in return.

## Chapter 2: “They must be in international hands”: The Contested Fate of Confiscated, Looted and Other Displaced Libraries and Books

In October of 1946, in a letter to the Allied Control Office for German and Austria, Edward J. Carter, Head Counsellor of UNESCO’s Libraries Section, wrote, “There is no doubt whatever that we [UNESCO] have partial responsibility, which must be translated into practical terms, for the allocation of the enormous stocks of books which are in the authority of the Allied Control Authorities.”<sup>298</sup> By “enormous stocks of books,” Carter was referring to the millions of texts, ranging from rare and unique cultural treasures to countless copies of books, textbooks and popular literature in any number of languages, that were recovered by allied forces during the liberation process as they pushed across Europe. The Nazis’ fascist regime had fully recognized the power of culture, waging it both as a propagandistic tool to advance their cause as well as making it a direct target of attack. As discussed in the previous chapter, libraries and books were a primary target and, as such, suffered enormous damage and destruction. Much was saved, however, partly as a result of the trophy collecting, propagandistic and “research” impulses of Hitler and his henchmen, some of whom were avid collectors, building their own dream libraries out of those from which they plundered, looted and stole.<sup>299</sup>

The postwar discovery of these vast book stores gave rise to an urgent allied effort to salvage all that had survived and to restitute it to original institutional or private owners or to any surviving relations. Tracking these owners down proved to be an enormously complex, time- and resource-heavy undertaking. Moreover, the postwar shifting of borders, affiliations and alliances meant that previous or current ownership was not always easily identified or unchallenged.

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<sup>298</sup> Edward J. Carter to A.C. Robinson, Control Office for German and Austria, London, 3 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 42, 37/11/340.

<sup>299</sup> See for example Andrea Baresel-Brand, ed., *Nazi-Looted Art – A Challenge for Museums, Libraries and Archives* (Koordinierungsstelle für Kulturgutverluste, Magdeburg, 2009); Robert M. Edsel with Bret Witter, *The Monuments Men: Allied Heroes, Nazi Thieves, and the Greatest Treasure Hunt in History* (New York: Center Street, 2009); Martin Dean, *Robbing the Jews: The Confiscation of Jewish Property in the Holocaust, 1933-1945* (Cambridge University Press, 2008); Rose, *The Holocaust and the Book*.

Finally, in some cases, original owners could neither be identified nor found, resulting in significant stores of unidentifiable or non-restitutable material whose fate had to be decided. Individually or in combination, these factors rendered the allocation and distribution of these materials a highly complex, delicate, and often politically, culturally, historically, or otherwise contested issue. It was precisely due to his recognition of the level of difficulty and sensitivity that led Carter to argue that UNESCO's leadership in the management of the issue would be "a brilliant opportunity to put [UNESCO] on the map."<sup>300</sup> It would help bring attention to UNESCO's cultural reconstruction agenda, its ability to act impartially, in a way that could transcend national borders and tensions, thus also bringing attention to its cooperative and universalist mission in pursuit of world peace. At stake was how UNESCO's power and authority to act on behalf of all nations and universal humanism would be interpreted and perceived.

Throughout this chapter, the books, manuscripts, periodicals, and other textual material typically found in library collections whose status and fate were uncertain during the early postwar years will be referred to, collectively, as confiscated books or material.<sup>301</sup> Within that broad category, this work will focus on three main sub-categories. First, were non-Jewish texts confiscated by the Nazis, either because they were considered to be un-German, or to be rightful German property, or simply to be added to some other collection elsewhere; these are the subject

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<sup>300</sup> "that twenty (20) copies of each title of Nazi literature confiscated under Control Council Order No.4, be assigned to UNESCO for purposes of study and research." Lucius D. Clay, Lieutenant General, US Army, OMGUS, to Wilson, 23 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 42, 37/11/340; Edward J. Carter, "International Clearing House for Publications, Some questions requiring attention," 1945, 1. UNESCO Archives 04 : 341.383 "39/45" Confiscated Books After World War II (hereafter Confiscated Books).

<sup>301</sup> According to the BPC, "the expression 'libraries' includes collections of any of the material coming under the description of 'books.'" Its definition of "books," however, was broader than that employed here, including "books, periodicals, pamphlets, leaflets, music, incunabula [material printed before the year 1501 in Europe], MSS. [manuscripts], archives and printed or written matter of all kinds." AME/B/13, Resolution on the Replenishment of Libraries from Enemy Sources. UNESCO Archives, Conference of Allied Ministers of Education, London 1942-1945, Vol. IV Books and Periodicals Commission, Documents, Part I.

of this chapter. The second category, often forgotten or overlooked in discussions of this topic, were Nazi and other fascist or militarist publications confiscated by the allies in the immediate aftermath of the war and characterized by the Allied Control Authority as “objectionable literature;”<sup>302</sup> these are also within the purview of this chapter. Third, were Jewish texts, which constituted their own special problem given the fate of Europe’s Jewish population and institutions during the war; these will be discussed in the following chapter. This breakdown of the breadth of texts that “confiscated material” could actually refer to reveals how complex and multilayered of an issue this was, often highly contested and fraught with emotional, political, cultural, historical and other delicate ownership and rights questions. It was to participate in the attempt to untangle these questions that UNESCO sought to become involved. It was also due to the presence of Jacob Zuckerman at UNESCO.

### **I. Jacob Zuckerman**

Although Zuckerman’s prominent, active and successful contributing role in the Libraries Section was already clearly demonstrated in the previous chapter, it is regarding confiscated books that his unique background, experience, skills and interests truly converged and significantly helped UNESCO to clarify its potential position in the delicate negotiations.

Zuckerman was contracted by UNESCO in August of 1946, while he was still serving as a leading official at the Berlin base of the Library of Congress Mission to Germany.<sup>303</sup>

Interestingly, according to Zuckerman’s memoirs, the Mission recommended him to UNESCO because the latter had a search underway for “someone who could lead them in rebuilding the

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<sup>302</sup> Allied Control Authority, Inter-Allied Control, Berlin, Order No.4, June 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 20, 6/4/46, Committee on Libraries, Publications, Museums and Special Projects Representation.

<sup>303</sup> The Cooperative Acquisitions Project for Wartime Publications functioned from August 1945 to 1 September 1948. For more about the Mission see Robert B. Downs, “Wartime Co-operative Acquisitions,” *The Library Quarterly* 19:3 (Jul., 1949), 157-165; Reuben Peiss, “European Wartime Acquisitions and the Library of Congress Mission,” *Library Journal* 12 (June 15, 1946). (reprinted at the request of Library of Congress Mission Frankfurt/Germany, APO 757). Peiss inscribed and signed one offprint “For Jack Zuckerman, who has contributed so much to the success of the mission.” Zuckerman Family Papers.

libraries destroyed or damaged during the war, and that the person concerned should not, however, have American, British or French nationality.”<sup>304</sup> A perfect fit, Zuckerman arrived in Paris to begin working at UNESCO two months later, in October. In the interim, while he wrapped up his work with the Mission, Zuckerman was in an exceptional position, able to advocate and negotiate on behalf of UNESCO from inside the Mission to the American and other allied and occupying authorities. He ensured not only that they knew about the existence, mission and goals of the new organization, but also that it shared their deep concern about the fate of confiscated cultural materials and, moreover, that as an impartial transnational organization it was ideally positioned and connected to achieve the fairest possible resolution. The possibility of resolving the confiscated book issue was an ideal way in which UNESCO believed it could be useful in organizing the postwar world in a manner that was focused on establishing and expanding global networks of communication, collaboration and cooperation in the interest of peace.

To begin with, Zuckerman had connections with all parties involved in the discussions regarding all categories of confiscated books: with the American government through Library of Congress colleagues, with UNESCO and all its member states as a high-level official, and with the World Jewish Congress and other Jewish and library organizations associated with UNESCO as will be discussed in the next chapter. He had first-hand knowledge of and physical access to confiscated books, gained first through the Library of Congress Mission and later through missions he embarked on as a UNESCO official. Prior to Zuckerman’s arrival at UNESCO, Carter referred directly to how valuable all this experience and connections were to UNESCO, writing to Zuckerman in August 1946:

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<sup>304</sup> Zuckerman, *Memoirs*, 53.

We have hardly got so far as to have discussions with the [Allied] Control Commissions, but sooner or later I should like to bring ourselves and the Control Commissions' representatives around a table to discuss, as a matter of practical policy, what we can do to assist actively or in an advisory capacity in the disposal of books found in enemy territory. On this last part, your experience is of very great importance.<sup>305</sup>

As Carter put it, Zuckerman had “very intimate knowledge of activities in the American zone and extensive knowledge also of the activities and personalities in the other zones.”<sup>306</sup> Knowing the personalities was of no small importance. Only careful, diplomatic negotiation with the various parties involved could result in UNESCO being granted any role in the postwar confiscated book management and distribution process. This undertaking was severely complicated by the constantly evolving landscape created and perpetuated by the multiple occupation zones and powers, further complicated by all the postwar governments in various states of stability and organization, each of which had its own claims, opinions and agendas regarding the confiscated books. Each of these powers were represented by their own corresponding officials, whose names, faces and interests changed regularly due to rapid turnover, nevertheless, each had to be contacted, charmed and persuaded, which is precisely why Zuckerman's knowledge of the personalities was recognized as such a vital quality by UNESCO. Zuckerman himself later recalled the importance of these personal connections. Referring to his leadership with the ICHP, *Bulletin for Libraries* and UNESCO Book Coupons, Zuckerman wrote:

The implementation of these above-mentioned projects took 2-3 years to complete and required an extensive correspondence with UNESCO National Commissions, finance ministries, banks, associations of publishers and booksellers, libraries, science institutes, etc. Often final arrangements could be made only through personal intervention. I

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<sup>305</sup> Edward J. Carter to Jacob Zuckerman, 29 August 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 43, 38/1/308, Libraries.

<sup>306</sup> Edward J. Carter to A.C. Robinson, London, 3 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

traveled around a lot and therefore was able to make many personal contacts, which were also very valuable for my later work.<sup>307</sup>

Indeed, Zuckerman's personal contacts proved to be of essential value to UNESCO on numerous occasions, and extended at least back to his Mission experience.

Particularly valuable was the fact that these contacts extended to inside the Soviet zone, from whom Zuckerman was able to obtain lists of periodicals being published there during the earliest postwar moment, information that was not necessarily otherwise widely available or easily obtainable.<sup>308</sup> In fact, even after his arrival at UNESCO, Zuckerman was advising the British Control Office for Germany and Austria on which Soviet authorities to speak with regarding publications in that zone, including how to contact them, what to say to them, and how to expect the discussion to progress, all the while urging the British to act quickly as his Soviet contact was expecting to hear from them regarding the book situation based on Zuckerman's alert. There was a reason why Zuckerman had this insight into the Soviet zone. He later recalled that "most of the scientific books and journals of interest" to the Mission were located:

in Jena, Leipzig, and other parts of the Russian-occupied Eastern Zone. [...] Most of these books had been moved to somewhere in East Prussia and other places to safeguard them from bomb damage, i.e. to places where they were no longer accessible, because they now belonged to Poland or Russia. It was therefore necessary to have formal negotiations with the Russian authorities to try to get this material for American libraries. To this end, I went, accompanied by an American Major (Grant), who was Russian by birth, almost daily from the end of January 1946 to the Russian Kommandatura in Karlshorst to negotiate the release of these books, for a fee of course. These negotiations lasted several months.<sup>309</sup>

This experience both exemplified Zuckerman's ease and proven ability to negotiate and move between borders, languages and personalities, and led to additional opportunities for him to do the same, especially after his arrival at UNESCO.

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<sup>307</sup> Zuckerman's remained at UNESCO until his retirement in 1968, which did not mark the end of his involvement in international cultural cooperation work. Zuckerman, *Memoirs*, 59.

<sup>308</sup> Jacob Zuckerman memorandum to Edward J. Carter, 4 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, *Confiscated Books*.

<sup>309</sup> Zuckerman, *Memoirs*, 48-49.

As the international scholarly community began to communicate once again, many looked to UNESCO as a source of information regarding which libraries and institutions had survived, in what state they were in postwar, and what were their current activities and interests. There was no other centralized body that had access to this genre of information, and it remained difficult and slow to extract information out of the enemy or previously occupied countries. In one report, Zuckerman reported having had inquiries regarding Archiv des Archeologischen Institut, Berlin and the Kunsthistorisches Institut, Marburg, leading Zuckerman to investigate “whether these collections were saved and where they are at present.”<sup>310</sup> These were questions that Zuckerman was particularly well-positioned to answer, or to know whom else to ask. His contacts, particularly as a result of his time with the Mission, went deeper and wider than those of many others, whether at UNESCO or elsewhere.

All this is to situate Zuckerman as a key insider and expert in the postwar confiscated book situation and as one of relatively few at the time who could move with relative ease whether between conversations or zones of occupation. His new position at UNESCO took full advantage of his unique talents, not only his knowledge of multiple languages but also his ability to negotiate, collaborate, cooperate and communicate, talents that transferred neatly into his role at UNESCO and his ability to positively impact the organization’s goals and mission in general and regarding the confiscated books in particular.<sup>311</sup>

## **II. Confiscated Books**

While UNESCO activity regarding cultural property matters is often traced to The Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, this close examination of UNESCO’s brief foray into the complex and highly contested postwar issue

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<sup>310</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Major Born, MFA&A, 26 November 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>311</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to A.C. Robinson, 14 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

of confiscated books and libraries reveals that, in fact, the roots of its interest in cultural property matters began even before its establishment.<sup>312</sup> The eighth document in the records of the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education's Books and Periodicals Commission (BPC), probably submitted and discussed in early 1943, was a memorandum by Czechoslovakian delegate and archivist Dr. Jan Opocensky. In it, he argued that the BPC had to be entrusted with:

(a) collecting with the aid of national delegates all reports concerning the carrying off of libraries, books, book collections by the civil and military authorities of enemy governments; collecting reports concerning the removal of libraries from one country to another; (b) collecting and verifying reports concerning the destruction of libraries, books etc; collection lists of banned books; (c) collecting reports and making a survey of the libraries existing on the territory of enemy states; (d) requesting the collaboration of the competent British and Allied institutions.<sup>313</sup>

After being discussed within the BPC, this memorandum was transformed into the twelfth document found in the records of the BPC, and had been edited into a shorter, more concise statement regarding the BPC's interest in "Replenishment of libraries from enemy sources and recovery of stolen books."<sup>314</sup> It included the recommendation that "the armistice terms should provide for the appointment of a Commission to secure the return of books and other objects taken from libraries by the enemy and reparation for the loss of books and other objects destroyed or damaged."<sup>315</sup> Some believed reparations would best and most fairly be achieved by taking the equivalent that they had lost from enemy libraries. Carter adamantly refused to consider any such eye-for-an-eye approach to the problem, which would only further exacerbate tensions and hostility between nations. He wrote:

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<sup>312</sup> The Convention was called by UNESCO and emerged out of issues brought about by World War II cultural losses. See Sigrid Van der Auwera, "UNESCO and the protection of cultural property during armed conflict," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 19:1 (January 2013): 1-19; Roger O'Keefe, *The Protection of Cultural Property in Armed Conflict* (Cambridge University Press, 2006). For the full text of the Convention see <http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/FULL/400>. Last viewed 15 March 2013.

<sup>313</sup> AME/B/8, Memorandum by Dr. Jan Opocensky, undated. CAME, London 1942-1945, Vol.IV BPC, Documents, Part I.

<sup>314</sup> CAME, BPC, Complete Index to Commission (and History Committee) Papers. December 1942-December 1945.

<sup>315</sup> CAME/B/12, Replenishment of Libraries from enemy sources and Recovery of stolen books. CAME, London 1942-1945, Vol. IV BPC, Documents, Part I.

A liberal policy which admits the need for reestablishment of relations will require also that the background of European scholarship, the existence of good scholar libraries, in allied and ex-enemy countries alike, is recreated. A harsh reparations policy of restocking British or French libraries by seizures from Germany and Italy will be disastrous. We must prepare now for a really intelligent, cooperative world cultural council – call it what one may – to see that his problem is handled sympathetically.<sup>316</sup>

The postwar reality turned out to be extremely complex and left uncertain the fate of libraries and books destroyed, stolen, confiscated, displaced, or otherwise physically impacted by the war. In many cases this uncertainty translated into disagreements and tension over how the damage should best be resolved and by whom. UNESCO's concern about the matter can be traced to this early wartime document; it spent the early postwar years fighting to be recognized as an impartial, international body that could be entrusted to seek resolution as fairly and efficiently as possible.

As an early Libraries Section document put it, "Unesco will be able to confine its activities to world-wide services as a coordinator and advisor, and as the promoter or executant of services of a universal and international character which cannot be fulfilled by any other body."<sup>317</sup> From the outset UNESCO was seen by some both within and outside of the organization as ideally structured and situated to deal, as impartially and cooperatively as possible, with the complexities of the management, protection, restoration and restitution of postwar confiscated books. Many of these recovered collections were centralized in warehouses in the American zone of occupation and managed by the US Army's Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives (MFA&A) Section. More broadly, recovered cultural property came under the authority of the Allied Control Authority (sometimes referred to as the Allied Control Council) or the Four Powers (the United States, United Kingdom, Soviet Union and France), and more

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<sup>316</sup> Edward J. Carter, Additional Notes on ASLIB's Tasks and Needs. RIBA, Carter Papers, Box 1, CaE/1, Folder 2.

<sup>317</sup> Libraries Progress Report for 1947, 26 Sept 1947. AJA, Marshall Papers, Box 30 Folder 2, UNESCO Mexico City Conference My-O 1947.

specifically, of the particular allied authority depending on the occupation zone in which the material was found.

Once the UNESCO Preparatory Commission was established in November 1945, it deemed “among the first problems which the Clearing House must consider is the manner in which several large existing stockpiles of books in Germany, Czechoslovakia and England can be distributed for the benefit of education, science and culture.”<sup>318</sup> There are two important points to be taken from this statement. First, that the Commission was integrating the confiscated books issue with the work of the ICHP. In part, this was because it did not initially distinguish between books carefully collected in order to be distributed to libraries that had suffered losses, and the stockpiles of confiscated, looted, and otherwise displaced books that had to be sorted, restituted whenever possible, before decisions being made regarding any that remained. Second, was that while the stockpiles in Germany are most often referred to and discussed, this quote serves as an important reminder that others existed, scattered around Europe. The stockpile in England was the Inter Allied Book Centre discussed in the previous chapter.

The stockpile in Czechoslovakia was one that was also of considerable concern to Zuckerman:

A great number of German books, library stocks of dissolved German libraries, books evacuated to Czechoslovakia by German libraries and book publishers, Nazi literature, were, at the end of the war, confiscated by the Czech authorities and according to the most recent information have not yet been listed or even sorted out. There are, of course, millions of books involved and it is obvious that the Czech authorities have more urgent problems involving expenditure and labour. On the other hand, a great number of libraries throughout the world would welcome an opportunity of obtaining some of these books, and the collections of German Nazi literature would also be most useful to numerous research libraries.<sup>319</sup>

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<sup>318</sup> Memorandum on the relations between Unesco and the Inter-Allied Book Centre, 20 December 1946, p.2. UNESCO Archives, BNBC-IABD Part I.

<sup>319</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Theodore Besterman, 28 March 1947. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

Given the tension between the fact that books were not and could not be a top priority in the overall postwar picture and the fact that the books were wanted and needed, Zuckerman wondered if the Czech authorities would be “willing to dispose of these books in the interest of science and culture?” and, “would they be prepared to accept the collaboration of Unesco in bringing about such a solution?” UNESCO recognized that the situation would require “an expenditure of hundreds of thousands of dollars,” which the organization of course did not have. But there was some good news as well, namely, that the Czech Minister of Education had sought and received the necessary approval from its Fund for National Reconstruction and that the Czech government made the gesture “to select say 10,000 of the best books for distribution by Unesco to appropriate libraries,” and indeed that many more books might be made available to UNESCO.<sup>320</sup> The urgency was not only based on the demand for the books, but also on concerns that the stockpiled books were in poor, unsuitable storage conditions, and that reportedly the main Czech libraries had been allowed to go in and select whichever books they wanted, without any documentation or regulation in process. It was because of this very level of disorganization and lack of information or leadership that UNESCO hoped to step in to fill the void. UNESCO, as neither a military nor a national authority, however, faced an uphill battle to be recognized as having a voice or a formal role in the management and distribution of this material.

By January 1946, Carter describes already having met and had discussions with MFA&A representative, Captain Ewan Phillips, regarding UNESCO’s “certain obvious and important interests in the cultural life and production both past and present of Germany.” UNESCO’s interests were, Carter emphasized, “directed to, as our finances are derived from, Unesco’s

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<sup>320</sup> Theodore Besterman memorandum to Zuckerman and Carter, 22 April 1947. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

member states.”<sup>321</sup> UNESCO’s actions regarding all aspects of confiscated books demonstrate the extent to which UNESCO’s interests, and therefore by extension those of its member states as well, did extend to contentious issues of international concern. The fact that, at their core, the confiscated books primarily regarded Germany, which as an (if not the) enemy nation, was considered outside the scope of UNESCO, adding further complexity to UNESCO seeking involvement in the issue. Nevertheless, at first, the possibility that these interests would lead to an approved role for the organization seemed quite hopeful, particularly when the Allied Reparations Commission reportedly agreed during a meeting in Paris in early 1946 that “the declared aims of UNESCO made it well suited to undertake the task of acting in a consultative capacity to the restitution authorities.”<sup>322</sup> Such optimistic statements, coupled with UNESCO’s deep concern and dedication to the topic, heightened its pursuit of a role for itself.

To that end, in August 1946, Carter declared himself to be “much concerned by the indefiniteness of all statements with regard to the legal authority of the people disposing of books, etc. found by the Control Commissions.”<sup>323</sup> A few days later Carter wrote to Zuckerman, at the time still working for the Library of Congress Mission to Germany, in Berlin, stating that “although this question of the distribution of books, and the rehabilitation problem generally, was included by the Preparatory Commission among our first-priority tasks, we are at present unable to do much more than negotiate with the existing authorities, in the hope that we may get a clearer idea than we possess at present of the actual work that UNESCO may be expected to

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<sup>321</sup> Edward J. Carter to MFA&A Section, Education Branch, 10 January 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>322</sup> Commission on the Protection and Restitution of Cultural Material, UNESCO/Prep.Com./Exec.Com./SR of Joint Meeting (CAME) Corrigendum 1, 12 March 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 8, D/6/0, Technical Sub-Committee in Educational Needs in War Devastated Areas Projects Governments.

<sup>323</sup> Edward J. Carter to F.R. Cowell, Foreign Office, London, 26 August 1946. UNESCO, Preparatory Commission, Box 43, 38/1/308.

do.”<sup>324</sup> Carter’s frustration regarded the prevailing ambiguity in thought, purpose and action regarding what to do with confiscated cultural materials, perhaps an inevitable reality given the political complexities and instability of postwar power negotiations and of UNESCO’s very unclear role therein.

The bottom line was that UNESCO neither could nor would take any action regarding the confiscated material, within or beyond Germany, without permission from the Allied Control Authority, permission that turned out to be much more difficult to obtain than originally expected. Discussion of this roadblock intensified during UNESCO’s First General Conference, which took place in Paris in November 1946. Grace Morley, UNESCO Counsellor for Museums pointed out to her colleagues, “there is a problem which may constitute an obstacle to our action. [...] I am speaking of the relations with the Allied Control authorities in Germany.” She continued, “We must at all costs be legally entitled to act in Germany, and this should be dealt with in negotiations with the occupying powers.”<sup>325</sup> In order to achieve that legal entitlement, Morley urged UNESCO to act. Specifically, she said:

it would seem desirable for this [Libraries and Museums] Sub-Commission to make a very definite recommendation on this subject, so that such legal difficulties as may arise in respect of Unesco’s intervention in Germany may be surmounted, that we may be quite free to act, and act effectively. The Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Commission is also dealing with this problem of penetrating into Germany [...] The Rehabilitation Commission can help us considerably to carry out our projects, and this is why I emphasize the necessity of a recommendation on the subject, so that, once the permission of the allied Control authorities has been obtained, we can act immediately.<sup>326</sup>

Zuckerman also urged UNESCO to “take immediate steps in order to obtain a decision from the American Military Authorities to the effect that the books should be turned over to Unesco for

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<sup>324</sup> Edward J. Carter to Jacob Zuckerman, 29 August 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 43, 38/1/308.

<sup>325</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> session Programme Committee, sub-committee on Libraries and Museums, Provisional verbatim record of the third meeting, 29 November 1946, p.10. UNESCO/C/Prog.Com./S.C./Lib&Mus/Y.R.3, Paris, 3 December 1946. UNESCO Archives, General Conference 1. Session Paris 1946, Programme Commission I, Vol.5 Documents.

<sup>326</sup> Ibid.

ultimate disposal.”<sup>327</sup> Although he clearly recognized the necessity, first and foremost, of convincing the Americans, Zuckerman also believed it was not and should not be entirely up to the Americans, writing, “I am of the opinion that it is not up to the American Authorities alone to take such a decision but that it is a four-power matter,” referring again to the United States, United Kingdom, Soviet Union and France. This, again, is where UNESCO’s proposed Committee would come in.<sup>328</sup>

This aim was reflected multiple times during the Conference, including in a detailed plan put forth by the Danish delegation, in some ways fulfilling Morley’s previously quoted suggestions, recommending UNESCO adopt the following:

The Conference begs the Allied Control Commission in Germany to recognise Unesco’s authority to operate in Germany within the limits defined by the Control Commission. The Conference also asks *each of the Occupying Powers to authorise the representatives of Unesco to travel in their respective zones, regardless of the previous decisions which may have been taken by the Allied Control Authorities.* [...] The Conference stresses the importance attached by Unesco to the distribution of non-identified books originally looted by the Nazis from Jewish or non-Jewish libraries both inside and outside of Germany and now confiscated by the Allied Control authorities. Moreover, the Danish delegation expresses the wish that, if and when the property in question is handed over to Unesco for distribution, the Director-General will appoint an advisory committee consisting of representatives of the organisations and institutions concerned.<sup>329</sup>

Initially, as *the* European-based international body coordinating and managing postwar cultural reconstruction, UNESCO was confident that responsibility to impartially administer distribution would come from the Allied Control Authority to its proposed Committee.

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<sup>327</sup> Jacob Zuckerman Memorandum to Edward J. Carter, 7 November 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 42, 37/11/340.

<sup>328</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Rafael Edelmann, 17 January 1947. Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Copenhagen, Raphael Edelmann Papers (hereafter DKB, Edelmann Papers). Note that according to the family, Rafael is the proper spelling of his name. However, Raphael appears on many documents and records. Since Edelmann himself often signed only with his first initial, in this work the decision was made to use the family’s spelling throughout.

<sup>329</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Session, Provisional Verbatim Record, 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, 28 November 1946. UNESCO/C/Prog.Com./S.C.Lib.&Mus./V.R.2. UNESCO Archives, General Conference 1. Session Paris 1946, Programme Commission I, Vol.5 Documents.

In an attempt to help the Allied Control Authority move away from ambiguity and to develop a concrete plan, the Libraries Section proposed to form a UNESCO Advisory Committee on Disposal of Book Stocks and to convene a Conference on Disposal of Book Stocks during the summer of 1947. Carter suggested that the Committee be called under the Chairmanship of an official from the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) and include MFA&A representative from each zone of occupation, including “with a place for a Russian representative if one could be persuaded to attend.” Also invited would be representatives, including a librarian, from each UNESCO member state and from European countries “directly concerned with the allocation of German books, i.e. Belgium, Holland, Luxemburg, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Greece, France, Denmark, Norway and UK.” In addition, Carter was careful to add, “others would, of course, be welcome if they chose to attend,” though he deemed this possibility “improbable, except that the United States has a very big stake in this work both as an occupying power and also because of her outstandingly large interest in libraries’ reconstruction.” In addition, Carter suggested representatives be present from Yugoslavia, as well as from Hungary, Austria, Italy and “ex-enemy states now coming within Unesco interest.”<sup>330</sup> This international expert body would negotiate with all four occupying governments to decide which confiscated, plundered, looted and otherwise displaced books would be distributed where and by whom.<sup>331</sup>

In further pursuit of this opportunity, in December 1946 Director General Julian Huxley sent letters in English, French and Russian copies in order to reach each of the Four Powers, to the Chief Secretary of the Allied Control Authority. In it, Huxley explained, “Since Unesco

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<sup>330</sup> Edward J. Carter memorandum to Julian Huxley, Walter Laves, André de Blonay, 28 March 1947. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>331</sup> Maurice Kaplan, United Jewish Educational and Cultural Organisation, to UNESCO Secretary-General, 21 January 1947. UNESCO Archives 02 (=924) World Jewish Library.

already possesses and will still further develop the means of estimating the educational, scientific and cultural needs of all its member states, we shall be able to render invaluable service in the distribution of these publications.” The means Huxley was referring to included the questionnaires, surveys and missions conducted by or via the Libraries Section and examined in the previous chapter. He added, “although our first duty is to meet the needs of member states, our interest as a relief and rehabilitation agency is not limited to member states only, and that we are also interested in all problems relating to the re-education of Germany.” Huxley concluded, “May I emphasise my hope that you will be prepared to recognise the urgency of this matter and will join with us in a preliminary conference as soon as possible?”<sup>332</sup> Here Huxley was referring to UNESCO’s proposed Conference on Disposal of Book Stocks, to be called in conjunction with the proposed Advisory Committee of the same name.

The initial meeting of the Libraries Section’s Advisory Committee on Disposal of Book Stocks was scheduled for 15-17 July 1947 in Paris; it was first postponed and then ultimately never rescheduled.<sup>333</sup> While the Committee was never convened and the associated Conference never occurred, UNESCO was able to engage in some productive correspondence, and to occasionally meet, with officials representing each of the four powers. This was the case when it came to discussions about “objectionable literature.”

### **III. Objectionable Literature**

One of the most urgent elements of the de-nazification and re-education process being undertaken by the Allied Control Authorities was to shut down all means of fascist information creation and dissemination and to replace those means with information creation and

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<sup>332</sup> Julian Huxley to Chief Secretary, Allied Control Authority, 20 December 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>333</sup> UNESCO Conference Section memorandums, 12 May 1947 and 19 May 1947. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

dissemination aimed at countering the fascist and militarist messages of the war years. That left the question of what to do with any “objectionable literature,” that had been published throughout the war years. Also referred to by the vaguer term, “tendentious,” such publications were defined as “Nazi, nationalistic, racist[sic], militarist, etc.”<sup>334</sup> The problematic content of this material constituted a separate issue, one with its own particularities.

On the one hand, there was a strong push to simply destroy any and all such publications. All those involved in the German book trade were instructed to separate any such material and turn it over to the military government to be pulped.<sup>335</sup> An Associated Press article from the time, entitled, “Book Purge Clearing Out Nazi Literature,” reported that “the greatest book purge in history, involving the destruction of millions of volumes, is being conducted in Germany as the four occupying powers execute an agreement to eliminate all literature of a Nazi or militarist character.”<sup>336</sup> The impulse to destroy this material as a protective measure is understandable. By pulping it the authorities could ensure that at no time in the future would it end up in the wrong hands or misused with malicious intent. Yet there was much resistance to this approach as well. Without a documentary record, the fascist period would be more likely to go unstudied and potentially unpunished. Without long-term access to this material the entire episode could more easily be dismissed as nothing more than that, an unfortunate episode. This, in turn, risked Hitler’s reign being forgotten, misunderstood, and in the worst case, repeated. As Zuckerman explained his work for the Mission, “I had to deal with the problem of denazification of the Berlin libraries. In circulars, the military government had asked the libraries to remove Nazi works from their collections on their own initiative. But by sampling, [they] found time and again that it had either not been done, or done to an insufficient extent.” Despite what fascism

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<sup>334</sup> Reuben Peiss, “My Mission to Frankfurt,” *Library of Congress Information Bulletin* (March 16-22, 1946), 1.

<sup>335</sup> Peiss, “My Mission to Frankfurt,” 1.

<sup>336</sup> Associated Press, “Book Purge Clearing Out Nazi Literature,” *Herald Tribune*, 19 March 1945.

had done to him, taking from him most of his family and friends and the entire world he had known prior to the war, Zuckerman was by no means comfortable with the destruction of the publications it had produced. “Since I am personally opposed to any kind of book burning,” Zuckerman wrote, “I was forced to accommodate all these books” in the warehousing facilities being used by the allies for all of these problematic materials.<sup>337</sup>

Going well beyond Zuckerman’s and others’ personal objection to book burning on principle, such action, at the very least, was viewed as dangerously taking the same action the Nazis had. There was the additional problem of delineating what did or did not fit into the “objectionable literature” category, although the almost certainly blurry boundaries appear to have been little discussed at the time.<sup>338</sup> To that end, it is striking to note the almost total absence of any mention of censorship; reference to censorship was virtually never employed with regard to the fate of the objectionable literature. As there was almost unanimous consensus that its distribution and accessibility had to be carefully monitored, all the negative connotations associated with the notion of censorship did not seem relevant or applicable to most involved. Rather, controlled distribution was the objective. The logic of “censorship as a logical responsibility in war” was employed by some American librarians during the war years and the logic and defensibility of such a position continued to make sense to many during its early aftermath.<sup>339</sup>

Objectionable literature was widely regarded as dangerous and highly inappropriate for general consumption. The collection, control and even the destruction of such material was part

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<sup>337</sup> Zuckerman, *Memoirs*, 51.

<sup>338</sup> For more about these blurry boundaries, the nuances and debates and the actual process of selecting and culling books, over which are beyond the scope of this work, see Kathleen J. Nawyn, “‘Striking at the Roots of German Militarism’: Efforts to Demilitarize German Society and Culture in American-Occupied Württemberg-Baden, 1945-1949,” PhD Dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2008, especially pages 383-410.

<sup>339</sup> Stielow, “Librarian Warriors and Rapprochement,” 518.

and parcel of the liberation process, critical to liberating minds and society, while making it possible for approved study and research of them to be undertaken. The occupying authorities' control also extended to material being published after the war. Any new publications had to be approved and licensed by the military government.<sup>340</sup>

Censorship is an identifying feature of fascist, dictatorial or totalitarian control of society. Librarians, like anyone responsible for collecting, are always selecting. Selection based on content, which may or may not be considered censorship, can be explained by a broad spectrum of influencing factors ranging from the scope, needs and gaps in a given collection, authorship, quality or merits, authoritativeness, and personal or institutional interests and mission, are always in play. Interestingly, distribution of objectionable literature for research purposes in the United States may not have been as controlled as intended. According to one source, smaller colleges and public libraries that were not significant research institutions complained about receiving large numbers of Nazi popular literature, for example, which might have in fact been turned down by the larger institutions that did not immediately recognize its research value.<sup>341</sup>

There was another push coming from a broad variety of libraries and other collecting institutions in many different countries that expressed a profound interest in collecting those materials for research, educational and historical documentation purposes. Being able to study fascism was seen as a way to help ensure, via knowledge and education about it, that such a regime could never again rise to power. To that end, the relevant Allied Control Authority Order No.4 made exceptions for a certain number of copies of any objectionable literature to be saved “in the interests of research and scholarship,” including by being “turned over to libraries of the four occupying powers,” and that such copies “may be used by German scholars and other

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<sup>340</sup> Peiss, “My Mission to Frankfurt,” 2.

<sup>341</sup> Downs, “Wartime Co-operative Acquisitions,” 162.

German persons who have received permission to do so from the Allies.”<sup>342</sup> The primary collection body was the Library of Congress Mission, which, in addition to traveling throughout the American zone to “first locate and then collect and ship those publications which have survived,” was given the opportunity to select from among the materials being separated out before they could be pulped.<sup>343</sup>

Questions about what would happen to “books which belonged to nazis or nazi institutions” was also an early concern of the Libraries Section.<sup>344</sup> On the one hand, entirely destroying such material would make it impossible to study the period which was considered vital to fully understanding it and therefore to helping prevent future fascist takeovers. On the other hand, allowing it to freely circulate or to stay in the hands of the German people and institutions in general seemed equally risky, an obvious impediment to re-education and other de-nazification efforts. One suggestion made by the Libraries Section to the Allied Control Authority was “not to distribute original prints but microfilm copies which could not be used by the public at large.”<sup>345</sup> The question of the objectionable material constituted such a delicate matter because of the concern about it falling into the wrong hands or being misused or misunderstood. The challenge was to ensure that it would be collected by research institutions, which would help limit, based on the fact of who generally uses research institutions, the breadth to which Nazi, fascist and other literature of concern might be accessed.

Working in the midst of this activity, Zuckerman was able to provide the Libraries Section with detailed explanations of the Library of Congress Mission’s approach to any objectionable

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<sup>342</sup> Quoted in Dr. Howard Wilson, Deputy Executive Secretary, to Air Chief Marshall Sir Sholto-Douglas, Commander-in-Chief, British Zone of Occupation, 11 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>343</sup> Peiss, “My Mission to Frankfurt,” 1.

<sup>344</sup> Edward J. Carter, Memorandum of points discussed with Mr. Warendorf and Mr. Bemberg on the legal questions relating to the disposal of publications found in enemy territory, 13 August 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>345</sup> Memorandum to be attached to letter of January 1947 to the Chief Secretary, Allied Control Authority. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

literature it encountered. When sufficient copies or stores were found, the Library of Congress Mission put aside 150 copies. Of those, distribution, in order of priority, was as follows: ten to fifteen copies were to be “reserved for the use of special libraries in Germany, which will be set up for scientists and historians to use, under supervision of the occupation government;” an unspecified number of copies were to be “used by military agencies;” the Library of Congress could “take as many as they think necessary,” at least between twenty-five and fifty copies; and finally, any remaining copies could be saved “for pooling with other powers.”<sup>346</sup> Attesting to its success, a 1949 article pointed out that it was a direct result of the work of the Mission “there is available in the United States an unsurpassed collection of European wartime publications”<sup>347</sup>

UNESCO, as usual, took a broader perspective, pointing out that it was “reasonable to assume” that, beyond Germans and beyond the occupying powers, “many research workers and scholars in other countries, particularly in those which had been the victims of Germany’s Fascist and Militarist ideologies, will also want to study these documents and no agency other than Unesco would be better equipped to carry out a careful and responsible distribution of the material.”<sup>348</sup> The Libraries Section already had the ideal means to carry out that distribution in place, in the form of its ICHP, which libraries in virtually every country victimized by (or for that matter that collaborated with) Germany, were already involved. In order to be able to do that though, UNESCO had to obtain copies in the first place.

Indeed at least one country, Denmark, expressed interest to UNESCO in also receiving copies of the objectionable literature, with which it hoped to build a research collection associated with the Royal Library in Copenhagen. The Danish Military Mission informed the

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<sup>346</sup> Memorandum of talk with Mr. Zuckerman, 20 August 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>347</sup> Downs, “Wartime Co-operative Acquisitions,” 165.

<sup>348</sup> Dr. Howard Wilson to Air Chief Marshall Sir Sholto-Douglas, Commander-in-Chief, British Zone of Occupation, 11 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

Allied Control Authority of the Library's request "that one copy of each piece of Nazi literature, including books, periodicals and newspapers be sent to the Royal Library before the remainder of such literature still located in Germany is destroyed."<sup>349</sup> According to the Danish, the Royal Library had already established "for the purposes of study only, a collection in order to make a study of Nazi ideology and Nazi methods." While the Library already had collected some material, it hoped the Allied Control Authority would provide "the opportunity to add to and complete its present collection."<sup>350</sup> While this request made the rounds of various military authorities via correspondence, as with other requests including that of UNESCO, any clear response to Denmark, much less a decision one way or the other, was not forthcoming.

UNESCO also wanted to collect such material for its own research purposes, with Zuckerman expressing interest in UNESCO receiving copies, at least on microfilm, of the Nazi archives, Himmler's diary, the records centralized at the Berlin Document Centre, Ministerial Collecting Centre, Director of Intelligence Building, Nuremberg Trial records, etc., as well as copies of documents being produced by the occupying authorities.<sup>351</sup> In addition, Zuckerman suggested to Carter that UNESCO seek to insert itself into the authorities' distribution list, specifically by sending requests directly to General Clay for the American zone and to the Enemy Wartime Publications (Requirements) Committee (EPCOM) for the British zone, to request that UNESCO also receive about twenty copies of each item of objectionable literature, to be distributed as it saw fit.<sup>352</sup> Carter appears to have approved the request as, in addition to

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<sup>349</sup> Major General K.D. Friss to M.C. de Tredern, Allied Control Authority, 11 June 1946. NARA, RG 260, Records of the United States Occupation Headquarters, World War II, Records of the U.S. Elements of Inter-Allied Organizations, Records of U.S. Element, Bipartite Control Office, Records maintained by the BICO Advisor; Recs re: The Activities of the DIAC [Directorate of Internal Affairs and Communications] & ACA [Allied Control Authority], 1946-48, Box 481, Folder Letter from UNESCO Concerning Allocation of Books Found on German Territory.

<sup>350</sup> Major General K.D. Friss to M.C. de Tredern, Allied Control Authority, 11 June 1946. NARA, RG 260.

<sup>351</sup> Jacob Zuckerman memorandum to Edward J. Carter, 4 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>352</sup> Edward J. Carter memorandum to Dr. Wilson, 26 September 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

negotiating with his Library of Congress colleagues, Zuckerman wrote to the British, French and Soviet authorities, requesting that UNESCO “become one of the recipients of objectionable literature.”<sup>353</sup> The plan was for UNESCO to “receive high priority for at least one complete set of all publications” for UNESCO’s own library. Any additional available copies, ideally the twenty it had requested when they were available, would be distributed by UNESCO via the ICHP to libraries that expressed interest.<sup>354</sup>

A positive response came from the British authorities, who responded, “We wish fully to co-operate with you in providing whatever material and information we are able. [...] it is suggested that UNESCO representatives should, as you propose, visit the British Zone to discuss, on the spot, with the officers concerned, the ways and means of obtaining the type of information you want,” referring to UNESCO’s desire to know not only about any library materials or book and periodical stores found in the British zone, but also to documents created by the British authorities.<sup>355</sup> The British were consistently more open to cooperating with UNESCO. Already in December 1945 EPCOM turned to UNESCO, requesting that it make its member nations aware of EPCOM’s plan to produce reproductions of German publications that were wanted but that did not exist in sufficient numbers to satisfy all requests. EPCOM identified UNESCO as “an appropriate channel for passing this information on to the Allied countries.”<sup>356</sup> Neither the Allied Control Authority nor the American authorities ever expressed such certainty regarding what might constitute UNESCO’s role.

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<sup>353</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to A.C. Robinson, 7 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>354</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Reuben Peiss, 9 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>355</sup> S.P. Whitby, for Chief, I.A. and C. Division, Berlin, to UNESCO Preparatory Commission, 10 February 1947. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>356</sup> Illegible, British Intelligence Objective Sub-Committee, London, to Sir Alfred Zimmern, Executive Secretary, UNESCO Preparatory Commission, 17 December 1945. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

This is clear in the American response to Zuckerman's request for UNESCO to be included on the publications distribution list, which came from Lieutenant General Lucius Clay, who wrote:

Your letter requesting that twenty (20) copies of each title of Nazi literature confiscated under Control Council Order No.4, be assigned to UNESCO for purposes of study and research has been received. The materials in question are now being catalogued. It is not yet certain how many copies of each title will be available, nor is it clear how great the demand will be from all parts of the world for these materials. It will be our policy, after the needs of Military Government and of the Library of Congress are met, to allocate the residual material to agencies such as yours in accordance with demonstrated needs. Your requirement will be given every consideration.<sup>357</sup>

No responses from the Soviet or French occupying authorities regarding this issue have been found and UNESCO admitted that it was operating "on limited knowledge of practice in the British and American zones of Germany only."<sup>358</sup> However, Zuckerman's advocacy on behalf of UNESCO and regarding German publications more broadly was rewarded when, in November 1946, he "was called to Berlin by cable signed General McNarney [...] in order to discuss with the Library of Congress Mission the possibilities of the acquisition of German publications for Unesco's Member States."<sup>359</sup> A few months later, however, in March 1947, UNESCO received a different message from the Allied Control Authority, which left little room for continued optimism. The letter classified books found in Germany into two categories: "a) books stolen by Germans in occupied territories; b) books belonging to private German individuals or to German scientific institutions (libraries, etc.). In the first case, the books have been returned or are in the process of being returned to their real owners. In the second place, it will not be possible to take the books out of Germany. Under these circumstances, the Allied Control Authority regrets that

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<sup>357</sup> Lucius D. Clay, Lieutenant General, US Army, OMGUS, to Howard Wilson, 23 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 42, 37/11/340, Libraries.

<sup>358</sup> Carter, Memorandum of points discussed with Mr. Warendorf and Mr. Bemberg, 13 August 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>359</sup> Julian Huxley to Adjutant General, OMGUS, Berlin, 8 November 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

it is unable to send the books to the Center International Exchange Publishers [ICHP] for their disposal.”<sup>360</sup>

One reason that UNESCO persisted in its struggle to obtain authorization to act in a clear and broad sense regarding the confiscated books, and one reason that it was constantly frustrated in these attempts, was because of the mixed messages it was constantly receiving from the various authorities. Interestingly, and in this case it is unknown who Carter’s contact was that gave him the information that Carter passed on to Director General Huxley in March 1947, “both British and American officers have expressed the hope that their functions and their own personal services might in due course be transferred to Unesco. They are beginning to find military control somewhat irksome.”<sup>361</sup> So, while some refused to ever even take seriously UNESCO’s potential role, others consistently looked to it as the ideal body to take over their work, which, by definition of the occupation, was temporary.

Correspondence regarding the objectionable literature in the UNESCO archives tapers off in the latter half of 1947. The last few letters are between Zuckerman and various contacts in Czechoslovakia. Zuckerman was trying to obtain a list of the German publications in their possession in order to determine how they could best be distributed, including through the ICHP. It seems that no such catalog was ever sent and that in fact, the Czechoslovakians were hoping that UNESCO would purchase the material in question, which was out of the question. It was there that the negotiations appear to have broken down and, ultimately, ended. If not with the objectionable literature, one of the areas in which UNESCO was able to make real headway was in the distribution of these “acceptable” German wartime and postwar publications.

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<sup>360</sup> N.D. Kostenko, Lieutenant Colonel, Chief Secretary, Allied Control Authority, to Dr. Howard Wilson, 19 March 1947. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>361</sup> Edward J. Carter memorandum to Huxley, Laves, de Blonay, UNESCO, 28 March 1947. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

#### IV. German Publications

In line with the ICHP's mission, discussed in the previous chapter, "to meet exactly stated needs in as exact a way as possible,"<sup>362</sup> Zuckerman recognized and pushed the idea at UNESCO that those needs inevitably would and should include interest in German wartime and early postwar publications. After all, the many libraries worldwide that had, prior to the war, received German publications, Zuckerman pointed out, might very well wish to reinstate those subscriptions as soon as possible.<sup>363</sup> His primary concern was for the needs of libraries outside of the United States, for, as he pointed out, American libraries would be well enough supplied, whether via acquisition or by sharing between libraries, by the number of copies being collected and purchased by the Library of Congress Mission.<sup>364</sup> In response to his queries on the matter, Zuckerman received a list, *Neuerscheinungen der Deutschen Wissenschaftlichen Literatur 1939-1945* Parts I and II, from EPCOM. He expressed his plan "to insert a few lines on these selected lists" in a forthcoming *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries*, depending on what EPCOM viewed as "the possibilities of non-German libraries obtaining" titles on the lists, perhaps via "exchange of these and possibly other German publications against literature published abroad."<sup>365</sup> To that end, despite its continued status as enemy nation and therefore not a UNESCO member nation, a query published in the first, April 1947, issue of the *Unesco Bulletin for Libraries*, announced that UNESCO had a list of German cultural and scientific publications available as of September 1946.

The note in the *Bulletin* explained, "Libraries interested in the acquisition of German publications can obtain copies of the lists upon application to the International clearing-house for

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<sup>362</sup> Edward J. Carter to Keyes Metcalf, 29 July 1948. UNESCO Archives 02 A 855 International Exchange of Publications Part I.

<sup>363</sup> Jacob Zuckerman memorandum to Edward J. Carter, 4 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>364</sup> Jacob Zuckerman memorandum to Edward J. Carter, 4 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>365</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Elaine Jones, EPCOM, 13 March 1947. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

publications and should mention the fields in which they are interested. Unesco hopes to be able to assist libraries in other than the occupying countries to obtain these publications. Payment will have to be made in dollar currency, which is the basic currency for all exports from Germany. The rate of exchange will probably be fixed at 25 to 30 cents to the mark which corresponds to the pre-war rate. The prices of these publications are not exceptional and correspond to the prices that would normally be expected for books of a similar kind elsewhere.”<sup>366</sup> It was Zuckerman, still working for the Mission at the time, who arranged for these copies of eight highly specialized German periodicals to be distributed to interested libraries through the ICHP.<sup>367</sup> Zuckerman understood that, while the prevailing impulse was to isolate Germany to the greatest extent possible, it would be a serious impediment, not only to German reconstruction, reeducation and reintegration, but also to research, scholarship and advancement the world over, to fully exclude wartime and postwar German publications from circulation. To that end, he also began, soon after his arrival to UNESCO, to encourage German participation in the ICHP, based, at least initially, not on German library needs but rather on the demand coming from libraries elsewhere to be able to access German publications.

UNESCO hoped to contribute to finding resolutions to these complex issues in ways that would be perceived as fair and impartial. Its plans to help facilitate a fair outcome were closely tied to the ICHP as that centralized exchange facility was seen as integral to also storing, organizing and distributing recovered confiscated materials, which often had more than one party laying claim to them. Indeed, UNESCO’s desire to help manage careful dissemination of German wartime and postwar publications, covering the full spectrum from outright fascist to completely non-political, was as much a motivation behind the ICHP as was its desire to meet

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<sup>366</sup> *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* 1:1 (April 1947), 24.

<sup>367</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Edward J. Carter, 10 September 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

the more general needs of libraries to share and exchange information and publications, whether to restock emptied shelves, to catch up with what they had been unable to acquire during the war years, or to access material that they could not otherwise afford to purchase or to even locate available copies.

As such, the primary way in which contested material did come to be integrated into the work of the ICHP was regarding the dissemination of reputable work published by German scholars throughout the war years and immediately after that scholars elsewhere were eager to access. As the Library of Congress Mission's Lydenberg wrote, the Mission was interested in obtaining copies of "significant books published in Germany since 1938, recognised unquestionably as works any scholar in any field would need to know about if he tried to keep in touch with developments in his field."<sup>368</sup> Demonstrating the significance, complexity and sensitivity of the issue, UNESCO also designated a single individual "to collect information concerning the German book market in the interest of the libraries of Unesco's Member States. As long as normal commercial relations with Germany cannot be established, it is expected to order all books for Unesco through Dr. [Hans] Broermann."<sup>369</sup> It became a point of pride for Zuckerman that, "Although the Federal Republic at the time was not a member state of UNESCO, the German libraries were not excluded from this book distribution."<sup>370</sup>

It turns out that the issue of publications in Germany could also be international. Concerned with stocks of their own publications that had been printed in Germany, the Presses of the University of Pennsylvania and Columbia University contacted the American Book Center in Washington, D.C., regarding distribution of those books, still in Germany. The Center's

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<sup>368</sup> Harry M. Lydenberg, Library of Congress Mission to Dr. Hanns W. Eppelsheimer, Stadtische Bibliothek, 25 April 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>369</sup> Jacob Zuckerman To Whom It May Concern, 11 November 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>370</sup> Zuckerman, *Memoirs*, 57.

Director responded that the UNESCO Libraries Section was much better positioned “to provide widescale and wise distribution” of the books in question.<sup>371</sup> Recommending that Carter be contacted directly, he wrote, “the use of machinery which UNESCO has organized in meeting such a problem as this might well help to encourage this new and very important international agency in its attempts to encourage real understanding between the peoples of its member nations.”<sup>372</sup> Here the Center was referring to the ICHP, and suggesting that through it, American publications in Germany could best be distributed. UNESCO’s interest in these matters, just as its cooperation with Germany more broadly, had to be eased into as long as Germany was considered above all an enemy nation, ineligible to be a member state or to receive aid or other support from UNESCO. However, the demand for information and publications discussed in the previous chapter extended to Germany and to German material as well, making the country and its libraries a concern for the Libraries Section as well.

Indeed by 1948 the Libraries Section was pushing against the restrictions imposed upon it regarding limiting its assistance and programs to member states. Zuckerman, corresponding with the Allied Control Authority officials as well as with German librarians, sought to extend exchange of publications to the latter as well. In late 1948, two letters were sent from Huxley to the Ministers of Education or equivalent in UNESCO member states, asking, first, if they were interested in receiving lists of publications available for exchange offered by Germany, and second, if so, for a list of institutions in their country interested in such exchanges, as well as lists of publications they were willing and able to offer to Germany in exchange.<sup>373</sup> As a result of the

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<sup>371</sup> Laurence J. Kipp, Executive Director ABC to MacEdward Leach, Secretary-Treasurer, Department of English, University of Pennsylvania, 20 January 1947. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>372</sup> Laurence Kipp to Mrs. L.E. Scanlan, Assistant Treasurer, Columbia University Press, 25 February 1947. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>373</sup> UNESCO, Circular Letters No. 134 (date unknown) and 150 (11 October 1948). UNESCO Archives 02 A 855 International Exchange of Publications Part II.

overwhelmingly affirmative response to these queries, in April 1949, Zuckerman traveled on UNESCO mission to Germany in order “to work out in cooperation with responsible German librarians the best ways and means of implementing the Resolution relating to Germany in Annex V of Records of the General Conference: ‘2. To facilitate the exchange, between Germany and other countries, of publications and of scientific, educational and cultural works and information calculated to further the aims of Unesco.’”<sup>374</sup> Again, most broadly those aims were informational, in the interest of allowing libraries and the people they serve to catch up with what had been going on elsewhere during the war. The success of Zuckerman’s push is visible in the *Bulletin for Libraries*, which included listings for publications available from Germany from its very first April 1947 issue onwards. In the July 1948 issue of the *Bulletin*, UNESCO announced that its work was “extending to Germany.”<sup>375</sup>

Regarding these German publications, UNESCO was intent on providing a forum through which they could circulate internationally based on their concern that “Much of the material is of great value to present-day working libraries, and the question of its availability is of importance. At present only the four occupying powers have had opportunities to acquire this material. UNESCO should study the means of making it available to all.”<sup>376</sup> As it turns out, even among the four power countries, information regarding the availability of these materials was not always readily available, particularly regarding material in occupation zones outside of their own. In a meeting Zuckerman had with Julien Cain, for example, he learned that the Bibliothèque Nationale was eager to learn, “a) Availability of material; b) Present capacity of German books production and possibilities for Germany to regain her former position [in

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<sup>374</sup> Jacob Zuckerman, Report on Mission to Germany, April 10-16, 1949, 19 April 1949. UNESCO Archives 02 A 855 International Exchange of Publications Part II.

<sup>375</sup> *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* II:7 (July 1948), 238.

<sup>376</sup> Edward J. Carter, Classes of books found in enemy territory at the disposal of the Allied Control Commission, 30 September 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books, p.4.

publishing]; c) The attitude of the various occupation powers regarding publishing.”<sup>377</sup> Here again UNESCO’s ability to interact and communicate with and between so many different parties set it apart. As Zuckerman wrote to Lieutenant Colonel Shelton of the University and School Section of Military Government in the British zone, UNESCO was aware “that some exchanges between German and British libraries have already been carried out and it might be possible to arrange for such exchanges on a world-wide scale” through UNESCO’s ICHP.<sup>378</sup> The primary impediment UNESCO saw to its being able to centralize and maintain stockpiles of books and “to organise world distribution” was financial, “On the scale of UNESCO budgeting no adequate sum could possibly have been allowed.”<sup>379</sup> Nevertheless, in Carter’s view, “There is no doubt whatever that we have partial responsibility, which must be translated into practical terms, for the allocation of the enormous stocks of books which are in the authority of the Allied Control Authorities.”<sup>380</sup> Regardless of its severe underbudgeting, as seen in the previous chapter, the Libraries Section did successfully figure out how, through cooperative and collaborative efforts to centralize and coordinate their efforts with those of others, it could have an impact without money. It was driven by the deeply held convictions of the Unescoans who worked for the organization.

To that end, the ninth issue of the ICHP’s *Bulletin for Libraries*, published in December 1947, announced that Austria, Hungary, Italy and Switzerland had been voted into UNESCO membership during the Second General Conference in Mexico City. As the *Bulletin* pointed out, UNESCO was “the first branch of the United Nations which has admitted ex-enemy states into

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<sup>377</sup> Jacob Zuckerman memorandum to Edward J. Carter, 25 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>378</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Lieutenant Colonel Shelton, University & School Section of Military Government, British Zone of Occupation, 7 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>379</sup> Carter, Classes of books found in enemy territory, 30 September 1946, p.5. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>380</sup> Edward J. Carter to A.C. Robinson, Control Office for Germany and Austria, London, 3 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

full membership.” Not surprisingly, this was a controversial decision at the time and creates interesting parallels to the recent, also highly controversial, vote at UNESCO admitting Palestine as a member state, prior to the same vote occurring at the UN itself. Not only that, but even prior to their acceptance as member nations, the ICHP had allowed, even encouraged, their participation in UNESCO’s clearing house activities. The report continued, “The new member states have, as readers of this Bulletin know, already been participants in Unesco’s libraries activities for some time, and we hope that this participation will continue and develop.”<sup>381</sup> The same was true of Germany and Japan, with exchanges with them being announced in July 1948.<sup>382</sup> As was discussed in the previous chapter with regards to the ICHP, such participation was not insignificant in the early postwar-Cold War context. It demonstrated that the determination of the Libraries Section to facilitate impartial communication and cooperation went beyond words and theories, and translated into action and achievement.

In the case of Germany, the work of the ICHP blurred into the issue of confiscated material and in particular that of what the Allied Control Authority termed “objectionable literature.” Anything created or published under Nazism, regardless of its closeness to or distance from politics or ideology, had to be carefully considered prior to being widely distributed to ensure it had no fascist or other militarist content that would render its careless circulation potentially dangerous. Lydenberg, carefully collecting German wartime publications for the Library of Congress Mission, explained what he referred to as his “personal feeling,” but which seems to fairly reflect the Library’s position in its collecting mission as well, that “studies by members of the Nazi party should not be excluded because of party membership, unless they are obviously a support or a furtherance of the Nazi doctrines now accepted by all sane-minded

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<sup>381</sup> *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* 1:9 (December 1947), 257.

<sup>382</sup> *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* II:7 (July 1948), 238-240.

men as harmful.”<sup>383</sup> In other words, an important distinction was made, defining the issue as one of content, intent and message, and not necessarily of authorship or affiliation.

Content and access versus affiliation or ownership became a matter of debate when it came to entire library collections that the Nazis had claimed and transferred to Germany during the war years. During the early postwar years, the involved governments debated ownership and affiliation rights, whereas, in the view of UNESCO, here too it was access to the content, the intellectual and educational value, that was of the utmost importance.

## **V. Ex-German Libraries in Italy**

Yet another of the highly complex and contentious issues within the rubric of confiscated books regarded the postwar ownership of and rights to library collections that had been looted, confiscated or stolen by the Nazis. Within this issue, the libraries in question usually fit into three broad categories, including libraries that had belonged to Jewish individuals, organizations or institutions, or libraries that had large Jewish content, to be examined in the following chapter. The remaining two categories consisted of libraries that had belonged to other countries but that had been established in Germany prior to the outbreak of war such as, for example, the Ibero-American Institute in Berlin, and German libraries that had been established in countries other than Germany prior to the outbreak of war but had then been re-claimed and transferred to Germany during the war by the Nazis.

The Ibero-American Institute, established in Berlin in 1932, was taken over in 1946 by the Americans who reportedly did not want the library to remain in Germany. After liberation, the allies lamented the fact that the Institute had been turned into “a centre for German propaganda activities in the Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries.” Postwar, the goal was

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<sup>383</sup> Harry M. Lydenberg, Library of Congress Mission to Dr. Hanns W. Eppelsheimer, Stadtische Bibliothek, 25 April 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

to return it to its purported true and original identity, repeatedly referred to using terms such as “unpolitical” and “scientific.”<sup>384</sup> One proposed way in which to help re-situate the Institute as an apolitical research institution was to transfer it under the auspices of UNESCO, a solution that Zuckerman reported the Americans to support.<sup>385</sup> The notion that UNESCO could achieve such a transformation, shifting the Institute from an instrument of propaganda back to a house of learning, introduces a specific perception of UNESCO’s role and capabilities that existed at the time. This same perception became particularly significant in the case of two German libraries, historically located in Italy, whose contested status postwar led their trustees to turn to UNESCO for support, assistance, and as a possible source of a solution to the contestation. The Biblioteca Hertziana and the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (German Archaeological Institute, referred to hereafter as the DAI), both in Rome, are the focus of this section.

The Hertziana and DAI were two of at least four German libraries specializing in art history and archaeology and located in Italy, referred to collectively throughout the literature of the time (along with others in similar situations) as, ex-German libraries in Italy. The Hertziana was established in Rome in 1913. The DAI traces its roots in Rome to 1829, when it was originally founded under the patronage of Prussian Crown Prince and later King Frederick William IV. During the war years, these libraries were two of many that “The Germans, in contravention of solemn international agreement, removed from Italy.”<sup>386</sup> After the war, like the contents of so many other libraries, the valuable collections of these two libraries were recovered by the allies, who placed them under the temporary stewardship of the International Union of the

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<sup>384</sup> Dr. Howard Wilson to Air Chief Marshall Sir Sholto-Douglas, Commander-in-Chief, British Zone of Occupation, 11 October 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>385</sup> Memorandum of talk with Mr. Zuckerman, 20 August 1946. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

<sup>386</sup> C.R. Morey, President, Union of Institutes of Archaeology, History and History of Art, American Academy in Rome, to United Nations Organization, 17 January 1947. UNESCO Archives, 02 (45) (=30) Ex-German Libraries in Italy (hereafter Ex-German Libraries).

Institutes of Archaeology, History and History of Art in Rome (referred to hereafter as the International Union).

The collections of the Hertziana and DAI, after having been located and identified by the allies, were physically returned to Italy in May 1946 based upon an agreement reached by the Tripartite Committee of France, the UK and the USA, which also appointed the International Union to serve as “perpetual trustee” of the libraries.<sup>387</sup> This responsibility, which the International Union soon expressed discomfort about taking on, certainly in a “perpetual” capacity, coupled with the belief it shared with UNESCO that the latter potentially “could fulfil a valuable service as the initiator of joint discussions between all interested parties,” led to a flurry of communication between the two organizations throughout the period, between 1946 and the early 1950s, when a solution amenable to all interested parties was being sought.<sup>388</sup>

Demonstrating the international importance of the libraries in question to scholarship and to the advancement of research and knowledge worldwide, UNESCO became involved with the debate over the fate and future of the libraries in January 1947, regardless of the fact that Italy did not become a member state until January of the following year and Germany not until 1951.

Although the Hertziana and the DAI were only two of many libraries whose fates were in flux after the war, they are of interest here because, when ownership of their unique collections in the aftermath of the war became highly contested between Germany and Italy, a concerned international community turned to UNESCO to help mediate, if not to fully defuse, the situation. It was the libraries’ temporary steward, the International Union, that “suggests that the several states interested, together with UNESCO be invited to concern themselves not only with the

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<sup>387</sup> Edward J. Carter, Memorandum of a discussion with Dr. Pierre Bourgeois, Dr. Rudi Salat, Dr. Heydenreich and Mr. Thompson, 30 May 1950. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part II.

<sup>388</sup> Edward J. Carter, Memorandum of a discussion with Dr. Pierre Bourgeois, Dr. Rudi Salat, Dr. Heydenreich and Mr. Thompson, 30 May 1950. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part II.

future administration of the libraries, but also with the possible direct control thereof by UNESCO itself.”<sup>389</sup> UNESCO, via its Libraries Section, responded very favorably to this suggestion. After all, the primary concern shared by the International Union and UNESCO was to ensure that, as soon as possible, the libraries would reopen and be accessible once again to scholars and interested researchers from the world over, preferably under international, rather than national, auspices. Carter wrote, “It is hoped that these libraries may be provided with a constitution which would bring them fully under international authority so that they may be saved in future from any partisan decision with regard to their use and safety.”<sup>390</sup> Moreover, Carter insisted, “Definitely, as far as Unesco is concerned, we would never consent to any of these libraries turning into exclusively nationalist control, not even, I dare say, control of any one of the constituent members of the International Union or to Italy. They must be in international hands.”<sup>391</sup> While the International Union was, by definition, an international body, its members had too great a stake in the libraries’ holdings, and were few and too closely involved in the contested ownership debate. The interested states, in addition to Germany, were represented within the International Union itself, which consisted of the American Academy in Rome, Belgian Academy in Rome, British School in Rome, Dutch Historical Institute in Rome, French School in Rome, Institute of Roman Studies, International Association for Classical Archaeology, Italian Institute for Archaeology and History of Art, Polish Academic Library in Rome, Pont. Institute for Christian Archaeology, Pont. Roman Academy for Archaeology, Rumanian Academy in Rome and the Swedish Institute in Rome.

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<sup>389</sup> C.R. Morey, President, Union of Institutes of Archaeology, History and History of Art, American Academy in Rome, to United Nations Organization, 17 January 1947. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part I.

<sup>390</sup> Edward J. Carter to C.R. Morey, 13 February 1947. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part I.

<sup>391</sup> Edward J. Carter to C.R. Morey, 13 February 1947. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part I.

In one document, a representative of the International Union outlined what he understood as “the four possible solutions to the problem of title to the Libraries.” In brief, these were: Italian ownership, German ownership, international ownership, and deferment of any decision to the German peace treaty, with an interim International Union administration. Out of those, the representative deemed the fourth to be “unacceptable, because it resolves nothing: it would leave the Union taking all the kicks, while Italians and Germans intregued[sic] for the body, and it would make any long-term policy or appointments impossible.” The third solution, on the other hand, that of international ownership, the representative judged to be “a sensible via media between the two extremes, between which the matter is now deadlocked. Both owner and direction would be happy in an arrangement which left all details of administration to the Union. This solution in my opinion stands a possibility of grateful acceptance in the USA, where opinion is primarily deadlocked.”<sup>392</sup> In this opinion, the International Union, whose members had direct interest in the fate of the libraries as well as specialized expertise regarding their content, was the ideal manager of them – a role for which UNESCO had insufficient knowledge, resources or authority. The International Union was not, however, viewed as the appropriate overarching controlling body. Only UNESCO could truly represent international ownership and serve as a mediating and impartial force between the competing interests. Be that as it may, achieving the necessary agreement to this solution proved far more difficult than either the International Union or UNESCO ever anticipated.

The role that UNESCO could potentially play in the management of the Hertziana and DAI was fully integrated into a draft statute prepared, apparently collaboratively between the International Union and UNESCO, quoted in full here in order to illustrate the extent of UNESCO’s envisioned involvement:

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<sup>392</sup> Aide-memoire for Professor Syme, undated. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part I.

The libraries [listed] shall be recognized as belonging to the United Nations, shall be intrusted[sic] to the International Union of the Institutes of Archaeology, History and History of Art in Rome, which Union administers them through its own organization, under control of UNESCO. The Union's administration of the libraries shall be of international character, conceived for the benefit of humanistic study and research, and conducted in the spirit which inspires UNESCO itself.

#2 UNESCO shall protect the international character of the libraries, keeping them free from any political interference, guaranteeing their non-removal from Rome and Florence, and their accessibility to competent scholars of any nation. UNESCO shall be empowered to inspect the administration of the libraries and to give advice or suggestions in this regard, acting through two representatives of its selection.

#3 The Union above-mentioned shall administer the libraries through its own staff or appointees and shall name the personnel of the libraries, which must reflect in its selection the international character of the administration, and local requirements as well. The nomination of the directors of the four libraries shall be submitted to UNESCO for approval.

#4 The financing of the libraries and their administration, shall be the joint responsibility of UNESCO and the Union; such financing to be provided by direct contribution from UNESCO, and by a special fund created by a common appeal by both organizations to the Nations and private institutions and individuals interested in the administration of the libraries. This special fund shall be administered by UNESCO, and the financial administration of the libraries by the Union shall be subject to inspection and revision by UNESCO.

#5 All questions which may arise outside the direct responsibilities of UNESCO and the Union mentioned above shall be discussed and decided by a Joint Committee composed of the two representatives of UNESCO mentioned above in article 2, and two representatives of the Union. A fifth member of the Joint Committee shall be the Counsellor for Libraries and Museums, of UNESCO, who shall act as Chairman. The Joint Committee shall meet on call of the Chairman or two of its members; its decisions shall be final and effective by majority vote of the Committee. The Joint Committee shall meet at least once a year.<sup>393</sup>

Here, as seen elsewhere in this work, UNESCO was consistently identified as a body that could protect cultural life from “political interference.” As also seen throughout this work, that optimistic perception, which prevailed both within and outside of UNESCO in the early years after its establishment, quickly proved to be more an idealistic hope than a realistic possibility. In general, this was because UNESCO could only act in the name and interests of its member nations, and more specifically, when it came to all of the confiscated books issues, UNESCO

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<sup>393</sup> Progetto di Statuto per la gestione delle biblioteche Ex-germaniche in Italia, undated. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part I.

could not act without being authorized to do so by the occupying powers, and in particular the American authorities. In other words, while UNESCO hoped to avoid any political interference or conflicts, in reality, it was fully ensconced in them.

When the politically charged discussions over the Hertziana and DAI became deadlocked, UNESCO became even more determined to provide an interim means to make it possible for the libraries to reorganize and reopen, which, again, was its first priority. To that end, the libraries became recipients of UNESCO grants-in-aid, two of relatively few organizations to receive direct financial assistance from the organization since it simply lacked the funds to provide any sort of widespread or consistent monetary support. In order for the grants to be approved by UNESCO as a whole, Carter guided the International Union through the application process. Reminding it that “every problem in Unesco’s programme is judged in relation to the main directive that Unesco’s duty is to assist international understanding and world peace,” Carter requested the International Union provide a ready answer to the inevitable question that Carter knew would be posed by the UNESCO Secretariat: “If we [UNESCO] make a contribution to the rehabilitation of these libraries what will that mean in terms of improvement to international understanding and how will it contribute to world peace?” Carter went on to suggest some points the International Union should highlight in preparing, “the most emphatic argument you can produce that at this time Unesco with its limited resources is justified in giving aid to the International Union for the rehabilitation of these libraries.”<sup>394</sup> Clearly, the Union successfully argued its case for between 1947 and 1948 UNESCO awarded \$8,000 worth of grant funding to the Union. According to the documentation:

As a result of the three grants it was possible to start restoration of these four libraries to their normal state. The work of reshelving the libraries and re-cataloging the publications was carried out during 1948, and all four libraries were opened to readers. Remarks

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<sup>394</sup> Edward J. Carter to C.R. Morey, 11 July 1947. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part I.

(evaluation): The progress made in re-establishing these libraries was entirely due to this grant which is completely justified. The Committee of the Union has applied the funds very well and creatively. These libraries are far more than passive book collections, they are centres for historical and art studies of world-wide importance and thus the Unesco grant contributed realistically to creative studies at the centre of Western culture.<sup>395</sup>

These awards further demonstrate that the significance of maintaining these libraries for international scholarly and research purposes was unquestionably recognized by UNESCO and taken on as a priority reconstruction and rehabilitation project. UNESCO ceased to provide funds when an endowment, based on “the disposal of certain ex-German assets in Italy,” assured the libraries a combined budget of approximately \$60,000 beginning in 1949.<sup>396</sup> The problems were not only financial of course, but primarily national and political.

German, Italian and American voices were the primary ones heard in discussions over the fate of the Hertziana and DAI, but they were not the only ones, as illustrated in an exchange between the Polish Ambassador in Rome and his fellow countryman and head of UNESCO’s Reconstruction Program, Bernard Drzewieski. The Ambassador wrote:

I approach you in your capacity as a member of the Preparatory Commission with the request that interest be taken in the International Union of former German Institutes in Rome. Unesco is the only body which can and should undertake jurisdiction and administration. There are, however, some persons who are trying to make difficulties, especially about Hertziana (the largest library of the history of art in the world) under the pretext of fearing complications. It is to Poland’s interest that these institutes be made an international property. They will become an important centre of study for young Polish research workers and students. If you as the Polish Delegate, will support the endeavors of the Union, we shall be in a position to ask for consideration for Poland.

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<sup>395</sup> Contract concluded with the International Union of the Institutes of Archaeology, History and History of Art in Rome, undated. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part I.

<sup>396</sup> Edward J. Carter to Director-General, 28 July 1949. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part II.

The consideration the Ambassador seeking regarded his recommendation of a specific Polish scholar to direct the Hertziana and to discuss the ways in which Polish students could be made welcome to conduct study and research stays at the Library.<sup>397</sup>

To a certain extent, the Polish Ambassador was bringing up details that could not be decided until the ownership and trusteeship issues had been resolved. Through 1947 and 1948 a number of different solutions were drafted, some apparently even passed, all primarily focused on resolving the debate between Germany and Italy on their national-based arguments for ownership of the libraries. In each case, the International Union responded by insisting on the position it had held from the beginning, “the international character and Union control of the libraries and their endowment might be safeguarded if Unesco became a third party to the agreement.” UNESCO also viewed such a resolution to be ideal. As Carter explained to the head of the Department of Cultural Activities, “The formal association of Unesco with the libraries as a trustee would be a most successful conclusion to our association with them during the past months and would assure the perpetual recognition of Unesco’s interest in this important field of international studies.”<sup>398</sup> Happily for UNESCO, the International Union was determined that an international solution must be found and that it made sense for that solution to involve UNESCO, in one way or another. Over time, as an international solution was not forthcoming, the Union began, necessarily, to somewhat temper its proposal, “As for the UNESCO trusteeship of the libraries, opinion here seems to be veering in favor of a representative of Unesco on the ‘Presidenza’ (Executive Board) of the Union, instead of acting as actual single trustee of the fund. This would be a simpler solution, and would make Unesco more intimately influential in

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<sup>397</sup> Polish Ambassador in Rome to Drzewieski, 29 October 1946, translated by Drzewieski and forwarded to Carter on 18 November 1946. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part I.

<sup>398</sup> Edward J. Carter memo to Jean Thomas, 23 March 1948. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries PI.

the direction of the libraries.”<sup>399</sup> The move from asking for UNESCO representation rather than full UNESCO trusteeship began to seem more achievable.

Beginning in 1948, Carter began to insist on the need to stop referring to the problem as that of the ex-German libraries in Italy. This title only highlighted the national conflict underway over the libraries rather than drawing attention to what really mattered, which was their contents and the international interests in accessing those collections. Carter had a preferred title, explaining in December 1948, “I am keen to get away from the title ‘ex-German libraries’; will it be premature for us to start using now the title ‘International Libraries of Archaeology, History and History of Art, Rome’?”<sup>400</sup> Carter was making the same point about half a year later, writing during the summer of 1949, “I think it is an appropriate time to get the title of the libraries changed to a form which will be totally acceptable permanently; we continue to call them German libraries; would it be better to call them International Libraries of Archaeology, History and History of Art?”<sup>401</sup> Carter was aware that the “ex” was perpetually antagonizing the Germans and their original ownership claim and that the “German” was doing the same for the Italians and their Italian property claim. The name, representative of the contested situation, was also antagonizing the international art historical and archaeological community whose primary concern was not who claimed or owned the material but simply that it be accessible. The failure of Carter’s renaming suggestion, the inability to get away from identifying the libraries only by the conflict over their ownership, is indicative of the power that the national debate had over that of UNESCO, a power that ultimately guided what would become final resolution of the debate.

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<sup>399</sup> C.R. Morey to Edward J. Carter, 9 November 1948. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries PI.

<sup>400</sup> Edward J. Carter to C.R. Morey, 14 December 1948. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries PI.

<sup>401</sup> Edward J. Carter to C.R. Morey, undated [summer 1949]. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries, PII.

Two resolutions were “passed” in the summer of 1949, neither of which in fact ended up being the final solution, which would only be reached in 1953. The first resolution, in June 1949, was described as:

The crisis of the German libraries settlement seems to have passed, in that all parties to it are now in apparent agreement, (owing to a recent assent from Washington), and ready to sign. Two documents will be signed: (1) an *Accordo* between the Union and the Italian Government, implementing the terms of the general agreement or Protocol, and required by the Protocol, and (2) the Protocol, to be signed by the representatives of France, Great Britain, Italy and the United States. We understand that payment of the endowment of 1.000.000.000 lire to the Union is due on signing of the Protocol, but against the possibility of delay in this, or delay in investment, the Committee on German Assets in Italy is prepared to pay the minimum expenses of the libraries during the 3 months of July, August and September, during which the libraries will be officially closed, though I think available to scholars by appointment. What might be important, at this juncture, is a visible participation of UNESCO in the settlement. If UNESCO could manage to regularize its contemplated representation in the Union, by means of a delegate, and produce him at the moment of signing of the Protocol and *Accordo*, the effect would be uncommonly good all around.<sup>402</sup>

The second, different resolution was explained just one month later as:

The libraries are to be financed by the investment of funds derived from the disposal of certain ex-German assets in Italy. This endowment will provide the libraries with an assured income of approximately \$60,000 a year. Unesco’s financial responsibility now ceases, but we have a continued interest in the welfare of these libraries, which the International Union have asked to be formalise by the appointment of a representative of Unesco of the presidium of the International Union. M. Thomas agrees that this can suitably be done. The proper person to be Unesco’s representative is, unquestionably, M. Thomas himself, although if representation is needed at any meeting, it might suitably be a specialist from the Humanities Division or from the Libraries Division, both of which are directly concerned with the Union’s work. [...] it would be appropriate and, from a Unesco point of view, highly desirable, for Dr. Morey to receive a brief letter from yourself regarding your pleasure at the successful termination of this work of rehabilitating the libraries, a work which could not have reached this satisfactory conclusion had it not been for Unesco’s support.<sup>403</sup>

After the interested government bodies appeared to have reached accord, even UNESCO expressed satisfaction with the resolution, as Carter wrote to the Director General, “It is a matter of very special satisfaction to Unesco to know that these libraries are in future to be maintained

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<sup>402</sup> C.R. Morey to Edward J. Carter, 29 June 1949. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries PII.

<sup>403</sup> Edward J. Carter to Director-General, 28 July 1949. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries, PII.

under unified and international control.”<sup>404</sup> Of course UNESCO had an interest in appeasing all the deciding authorities as it needed their continued support and participation in order for UNESCO to continue to function, whether in the field of libraries or any other.

The International Union, however, did not hesitate to express its frustration and to continue to insist quite avidly on the need for a more satisfactory international solution that included great involvement of UNESCO:

the Union will raise again its original contention, which it discarded only under protest, namely, that the libraries, to maintain their international character, should not belong to any one nation and that property title to them should be granted to the Union As an alternative to this we could suggest that property title be granted to UNESCO if UNESCO were willing to accept this property title in view of the fact that it would be commuted immediately into a perpetual lease to the Union. [...] Certainly a solution of turning them over either outright to the Union or to UNESCO would have the effect of taking them out of international politics into which they would be plunged by the signing of them as property to Italy. It would nullify to a very large extent the movement in Germany for a complete restitution to Germany and have the same effect in case recourse was had later on to the Hague Convention regarding restitution of cultural assets.<sup>405</sup>

Even though the Hertziana and the DAI had originally been established as German property located in Italy, a status it increasingly seemed they would soon be returned to again, the experience of the war had demonstrated the negative repercussions that national conflict could have on the safety and accessibility of cultural material. According to the International Union, only full international control could help avoid a repeat of what had occurred during the war.

In the midst of these ongoing debates, in September of 1949, the International Union was granted consultative status at UNESCO, formalizing what until then had been relations based on informal discussions and meetings conducted between representatives of the Union and the Libraries Section. It ensured continued cooperation between them and confirmed the Union’s

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<sup>404</sup> Edward J. Carter to Director-General, 28 July 1949. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries, PII.

<sup>405</sup> C.R. Morey to Edward J. Carter, 3 August 1949. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries, PII.

interest in and support of UNESCO, and vice versa.<sup>406</sup> The debate did continue, although progress itself was almost nonexistent. In response to Carter's fall 1949 inquiry to the British School in Rome regarding the status of the debate, he learned that "Negotiations are still at a very delicate stage, and while it is absolutely exasperating to sit and wait, that is certainly the most prudent course." The correspondence also addressed a more specific issue, that of Germany's determination to regain guardianship of the libraries. Regarding that point, Carter was told:

The truth [...] is that the German lobby has been very active indeed; and that while we have been able to persuade the [British] Foreign Office to keep a sense of proportion, Washington has swallowed the bait. [...] I personally have considerable sympathy with the German objection to seeing title pass to the Italians (which you will recall the Union itself protested and only accepted – ironically enough on the insistence of the American Embassy in Rome – as the only way of ensuring a speedy solution); I have no sympathy at all with the present German attitude which, characteristically feeding on success, is demanding the libraries back as a right, and blackguarding the Union. It is all very dispiriting, and is going to make the job of reintegrating German scholarship within the community of scholarship in Italy ten times harder than it would have been a year ago.<sup>407</sup>

The difficulty of the reintegration process is just one reason why the International Union and UNESCO were so adamant in their position in favor of an international solution. Desire to avoid or bypass national conflicts and divisions was the primary motivation behind their continued resistance to the national solutions being given priority by the allied authorities. The International Union, despite its great frustration with the lengthy process and with the direction in which the debate seemed to be heading, expressed its gratefulness to UNESCO for the support, both financial and in principle. One such letter of thanks came to Carter in March of 1950, "I am glad however to have this opportunity of thanking you and the friends of the Union in UNESCO for the steady support which you have given us in the matter and particularly for

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<sup>406</sup> André de Blonay to Secretary General, International Union of Institutes of Archaeology, History and History of Art, 26 September 1949, 17 September 1949. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries PI.

<sup>407</sup> Ward Perkins to Edward J. Carter, 18 November 1949. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries PII.

your statement that the permanent establishment should be on an international basis which is what the Union has been fighting for throughout these negotiations.”<sup>408</sup>

As previously discussed, during these same years, the later 1940s, UNESCO was in the process of easing Germany into some of its other library reconstruction and rehabilitation work, primarily through its participation in the sharing and exchange programs of the ICHP and the *Bulletin*. It turns out that UNESCO was walking a bit of a fine line between working with Germany’s library community, and risking to alienate it by supporting the Union’s position which, by extension, seemed to constitute a rejection of Germany’s claim to the Hertziana and DAI. In April 1951, right around the time West Germany became a UNESCO member nation,<sup>409</sup> Carter alerted the office of the Director General to the impact UNESCO’s position was having on its relationship with Germany, writing, “As you know, the German committee [...] has been very sensitive in the past to any action taken by Unesco in this matter without their being at least advised.”<sup>410</sup> In a meeting with one German library representative, Carter attempted to explain UNESCO’s position on the matter, “Unesco’s main interest had been to give informal financial aid to the libraries and to use its limited authority to seek means by which adequate funds could be provided for their full maintenance in the future.”<sup>411</sup> Ultimately, how Germany may or may not have felt regarding UNESCO’s alliance with the International Union, became irrelevant.

Among the last correspondence in UNESCO’s files regarding the fate of the Hertziana and the DAI dates to March 1952. At that point, despite Carter’s best efforts to shift the

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<sup>408</sup> C.R. Morey to Edward J. Carter, 16 March 1950. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part II.

<sup>409</sup> The Federal Republic of Germany was admitted to UNESCO on 11 July 1951, a vote that, according to Germany, “ended the spiritual isolation into which Germany had fallen since 1933.”

[http://www.unesco.de/deutsche\\_unesco\\_kommission.html?&L=1](http://www.unesco.de/deutsche_unesco_kommission.html?&L=1). Last accessed 15 March 2013. The German Democratic Republic became a member in 1972.

<sup>410</sup> André de Blonay to Office of the Director General, 24 April 1951. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part II.

<sup>411</sup> Ex-German Libraries in Italy, Memo of discussion between Dr. Rudolf Salat, Delegate of Germany at the 6<sup>th</sup> General Conference of Unesco and Edward J. Carter. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part II.

conversation away from the conflict over national ownership and to the library's collections and usage, even he still had to refer to the ex-German libraries in Italy, as they were still known, when he wrote, "I can assure you that we in Unesco, in the Libraries Division and also in the Humanistic Studies side, want to continue the closest possible contact with the International Union, and I, for my part of course, welcome your statement that in the future the Union will continue with libraries as its main interest."<sup>412</sup> The International Union's role as trustee turned out to be far from "perpetual" for in 1953 "The Italo-German negotiations about the restitution of German institutes were brought to a conclusion [...] when the German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and the Italian Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi reached an agreement on their return." Both libraries resumed their old names and the Bibliotheca Hertziana became an institute of the Max Planck Society (successor to the Kaiser Wilhelm Society), specifically, the Max-Planck-Institut für Kunstgeschichte (Max Planck Institute for Art History).<sup>413</sup> In other words, the final agreement returned the libraries precisely to their prewar state, they were once again German libraries located in Italy. The resolution was entirely national and was precisely what the International Union and UNESCO had been doggedly resisting, ultimately unsuccessfully, since 1946. As the next chapter will demonstrate, this was not the only occasion when UNESCO was singled out by some, but ultimately by too few, as able to provide the ideal international and impartial solution to a problem regarding the postwar fate of confiscated library materials.

## **VI. Conclusions**

Despite the final outcome of the ex-German libraries, UNESCO's involvement in helping to decide the fate of the various categories of confiscated books had by no means been immediately dismissed out of hand by the Americans. In May 1947, Charles Fleischner,

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<sup>412</sup> Edward J. Carter to Perkins, 7 March 1952. UNESCO Archives, Ex-German Libraries Part II.

<sup>413</sup> <http://www.biblhertz.it/en/institute/history-of-the-institute/>. Last viewed 2 March 2013.

MFA&A Deputy Chief, wrote to Carter stating that his Division was looking forward “with great pleasure to close and pleasant relations with you and with UNESCO, though they may of necessity be on an informal basis.”<sup>414</sup> Then, in August 1947 the State Department’s Charles Thomson wrote that it was still “altogether possible that the United States would welcome the cooperation of a UNESCO Advisory Committee.”<sup>415</sup> These statements, among other encouraging messages being sent to UNESCO, are ultimately, despite their optimistic tone, entirely vague and non-committal. The reasons for the consistent hesitance on the part of the Americans were never fully clear. While it was repeatedly pointed out that UNESCO did not have authority to act regarding the books, it was precisely that authority that UNESCO was seeking prior to taking any action. Either the problem was one of miscommunication, or, it went deeper into American ambivalence regarding the extent to which it wanted to empower the very organization that it had been one of the primary forces behind founding and supporting. As Carter later explained, “an effort was made to exert Unesco authority in the books found in Germany—but this proved to be too hard a nut to crack because the Allied Control Commissions would not allow interference with their powers from a body which, being widely international, represented other interests than their own.”<sup>416</sup> Given the fact that UNESCO’s main argument for being given some authority over confiscated books was that it could rise above national interests and conflicts, coupled with the rising tensions between nations as the Iron Curtain solidified further and further, it is not terribly surprising that those very national interests and conflicts eventually won the day.

The nascent UNESCO expected to serve as the transnational representative of the universalist aims for peace in the postwar world. As such, the failure of its proposals to establish

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<sup>414</sup> Charles M. Fleischner to Edward J. Carter, 19 March 1947. NARA, RG 260, MFAA, OMGUS, M1921, Roll 2, Folder 77 Archives-Libraries: UNESCO.

<sup>415</sup> Charles Thomson to Edward J. Carter, 28 August 1947. UNESCO Archives, World Jewish Library.

<sup>416</sup> Edward Carter, “The Birth of UNESCO’s Library Programmes,” in *Med Boken Som Bakgrunn: Festskrift til Harald L. Tveterås* (Oslo: Forlagt av Johan Grundt Tanum, 1964), 192.

its Advisory Committee or to convene its Conference was as disappointing as it was enlightening, demonstrating some of the unexpected ways in which the organization's scope and activities would be limited by the political interests and tensions of its member states. The failure alerted UNESCO to the fact that it would be a much greater struggle than anticipated to receive the authority, even, or perhaps especially, from its own membership, that would allow it to pursue its constitutional mandate. At the same time, however, beyond barring UNESCO from the leading role it had hoped to play in the restitution and distribution of confiscated books, the failure did little to impede its broader efforts in the field of library reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Indeed, despite the setbacks, mixed messages and outright dismissals, the Libraries Section refused to easily be dissuaded. It remained motivated by its conviction that the confiscated books issues remained a pressing one in desperate need of fair, international solutions. The problem with the refusals and rejections coming from the Allied Control Authority was that they, according to Carter, "do not seem to imply that they understand that the problem of distribution exists." Of particular concern, Carter pointed out, was that "many books of unidentified ownership will remain, of which many may have come from occupied countries and which are not, so it has always seemed to Unesco, works which must remain in Germany but which should be made available to war-damaged countries."<sup>417</sup> The issue of unidentified ownership was further complicated when it came to the specific issue of books looted from Jewish collections, of Judaica and Hebraica treasures. In many cases, even if the ownership of books falling into these categories was identifiable, neither the original owners nor any potential relations or inheritors survived, making direct restitution or return impossible. UNESCO's involvement in the fate of these non-restitutable books is the focus of the following chapter.

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<sup>417</sup> Edward J. Carter to Howard Wilson, 12 May 1947. UNESCO Archives, Confiscated Books.

### Chapter Three: The Library that Never Was

In 1960, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem (HU) published an illustrated brochure about its Library that included a description of the “‘survivors’ of the holocaust” contained in its collections – those books that had been looted, confiscated and plundered by the Nazis, recovered by the allies, and transferred to Palestine, then Israel. These books, according to the brochure, were “the legacy of the Jewish people – living symbols of the immortality of Jewish scholarship and values.”<sup>418</sup> This was neither the first nor the last time that the books were referred to as survivors or as symbols of all that had not survived. For historian Lucy S. Dawidowicz, the books were “orphaned and homeless mute survivors;” being able to save them postwar by transporting them out of Europe helped ease some of her guilt and sorrow over not having been able to have done the same for friends who had perished.<sup>419</sup> Such sentiments led her and others to become, in her words, “obsessed” with the salvage and transport of these books.<sup>420</sup> As HU President Judah Magnes wrote in January 1947, “Unfortunately the lives of six million Jewish victims cannot be restored. But these books belong to the Jewish people, and to its scholars and students,” by which Magnes meant that the books should be restored by Jewish authority to Jewish trusteeship primarily in Palestine, then Israel, as well as in the United States.<sup>421</sup> The fact that they would follow such a path, however, was not a foregone conclusion at the time.

This chapter will examine the three main perspectives that emerged over what the fate of the books should be, and will situate the debate within the early postwar cultural reconstruction

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<sup>418</sup> *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem Jewish National and University Library* (Jerusalem, 1960).

<sup>419</sup> Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *From That Place and Time: A Memoir 1938-1947* (Rutgers University Press, 2008), 316. For further analysis of Dawidowicz and the books see Elisabeth Gallas, “Restoring and Remembering East European Jewish Culture – Lucy Dawidowicz and the Salvage of Books after the Holocaust,” *Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook XI* (2012): 73-. With thanks to Dr. Gallas for sending me the manuscript of this article.

<sup>420</sup> Dawidowicz, *From That Place and Time*, 319.

<sup>421</sup> Judah Magnes to Rafael Edelmann, 22 January 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

context and UNESCO's role therein. For the majority of Jews in the United States and Palestine, the fate of the books was a strictly Jewish matter of salvage and rescue; some Jews remaining in Europe took a broader view, seeing the books as a key tool for the reconstruction of European Jewry in particular and of Europe more generally; for UNESCO, the books were one element that fit into its vision to help construct, in the pursuit of peace and progress, a more universal, tolerant and knowledgeable world. Documenting the nature and extent of the debate as it revolved around questions regarding UNESCO's involvement contributes to the more nuanced histories of European cultural reconstruction and of postwar European Jewry that are currently being written.<sup>422</sup>

In contrast to what the opening quotes of this chapter suggest, some viewed the books not as surviving remnants or symbols in need of rescue, but as valuable resources that, by continuing to be accessible and utilized within Europe, would serve as a bridge between Jewish Europe's past and its future within world Jewry as world Jewry was being (re)constructed after the Holocaust, a vision that complicates the traditional narrative of immediate flight and dispersion. Rafael Edelman, one of the main proponents of this view and who will be fully introduced shortly, argued that Nazi plunder had created "an opportunity that never will recur" by bringing

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<sup>422</sup> Interest in postwar European-Jewish history outside of Germany and France, including as an alternative to Zionism, is on the rise. Most recently see Marci Shore, "The Jewish Hero History Forgot," *New York Times*, op-ed, 18 April 2013. See also the first issue of *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History*, "Jews in Europe after the Shoah: Studies and Research Perspectives," (April 2010). Additional new and forthcoming work includes, Shira Klein, "A Persistent Past: Italian Jews from Emancipation to Post World War II," PhD dissertation, New York University, 2012; Karen Auerbach, "A Window on Postwar Warsaw: The Jewish Families of 16 Ujazdowskie Avenue," PhD dissertation, Brandeis University, 2009; Elana Jakel, "'Ukraine without Jews?' Nationality and Belonging in Soviet Ukraine, 1943-1948," PhD dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, in process; Zachary Levine, "Chevrolets to Budapest: Transnational Cooperation and a Jewish Aid Regimen for the Cold War, 1948-1957," PhD dissertation, New York University, in process. See also Natalia Aleksun, "Was There a Future for Polish Jewry? Bundist and Zionist Polemics in Post-World War II Poland," in Jack Jacobs, ed., *Jewish Politics in Eastern Europe: The Bund at 100* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 227-242; Chaya Brasz, "After the Shoah: Continuity and Change in the Postwar Jewish Community of the Netherlands," *Jewish History* 15:2 (2001), 149-168; David Weinberg, "Between America and Israel: The Quest for a Distinct European Jewish Identity in the Post-War Era," *Jewish Culture and History* 5:1 (Summer 2002): 91-120.

“the greater part of all the Jewish books in Europe together.”<sup>423</sup> As such, he argued that “the Jews in Europe must rebuild their cultural life with the help of this material.”<sup>424</sup> For many surviving Jews and those concerned about their fate, the right to a restored cultural life in Europe, including access to books and libraries, was viewed as a vital element of the rehabilitation process. This chapter will examine how, in 1945, the nascent UNESCO provided a framework which contributed to making this hoped-for restoration of Jewish life in Europe, including by way of a new library to house the recovered books, both conceivable and desirable.

Throughout the World War II era, Jewish libraries and books were specifically targeted by fascist censorship, confiscation and plunder policies; by its end, Europe’s Jewish libraries were as devastated and dislocated as the populations that had once owned and made use of them.<sup>425</sup> As seen in the previous chapter, the collecting impulses of Hitler and some of his henchmen, including their plan to build and curate material for their envisioned Museum of the Extinguished Race in Prague, resulted in allied forces pushing across Europe encountering expansive stores of Nazi-looted Jewish cultural property.<sup>426</sup> The millions of texts found, which ranged from rare and unique examples of Judaica and Hebraica to countless copies of prayer

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<sup>423</sup> Rafael Edelman to Aaron Steinberg, 1 May 1946. DKB, Edelman Papers.

<sup>424</sup> Rafael Edelman to Aaron Steinberg, 2 January 1947. DKB, Edelman Papers.

<sup>425</sup> Scholarship on the aftermath of Nazi policy toward Jewish cultural property is increasingly expansive. A small selection of recent works that focus on books and libraries includes, Dov Schidorsky, *Burning Scrolls and Flying Letters: A History of Book Collection and Libraries in Mandatory Palestine and of Book Salvaging Efforts in Europe after the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2008) [in Hebrew], and Schidorsky, “The Library of the Reich Security Main Office and Its Looted Jewish Book Collections,” *Libraries & the Cultural Record* 42:1 (2007): 21-47; Dana Herman, Hashavat Avedah: A History of Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Inc. PhD thesis, McGill University, 2008; Regine Dehnel, ed., *Jüdischer Buchbesitz Als Raubgut: Zweites Hannoversches Symposium* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2006); Evelyn Adunka, *Der Raub der Buecher: Pluenderung in der NS-Zeit und Restitution nach 1945* (Wien: Czernin, 2002); Robert G. Waite, “Returning Jewish Cultural Property: The Handling of Books Looted by the Nazis in the American Zone of Occupation, 1945 to 1952,” *Libraries & Culture* 37:3(Summer 2002): 213-28, as well as the extensive output of Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, see <http://socialhistory.org/en/russia-archives-and-restitution/bibliography>.

<sup>426</sup> Joshua Starr, “Jewish Cultural Property under Nazi Control,” *Jewish Social Studies* 12:1 (January 1950): 27-48. Starr asked, “to what extent were Jewish books [...] saved as a matter of Nazi cultural policy?” (27). About the material collected for the Museum see Jana Vytrhlik with Suzanne Rutland, *Precious Legacy: Treasures from the Jewish Museum in Prague* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan: Powerhouse Publishing, 1998).

books, sacred texts, and Jewish-related content textbooks and popular literature in any number of languages, gave rise to an urgent effort to salvage and reconstitute any surviving Judaica and Hebraica.<sup>427</sup> Just as with the categories of confiscated books discussed in the last chapter, however, for close to one million of these books, such recipients either could not be identified or had been, as stated in a 1945 UNESCO report, exterminated.<sup>428</sup> Various referred to as unclaimed, heirless, unidentifiable, unrestitutable, or, most accurately, by Lucy Schildkret (later historian Lucy S. Dawidowicz)<sup>429</sup> as “without ascertainable ownership” (for the purposes of clarity and consistency, non-restitutable, will be used here), these in-limbo books were haphazardly scattered throughout a Europe whose Jewish population had been decimated and continued to dwindle; a reality that raised complex legal and political - as well as highly emotional - questions regarding their fate.<sup>430</sup> While some duplicates and general interest books were distributed to displaced persons camps, the fate of the majority of the non-restitutable texts, and certainly of those considered unique or valuable, quickly became uncertain and disputed.

The highly sensitivity nature of this reality is illustrated in a poignant appeal made by rabbi and librarian Kurt Wilhelm for a portion of the non-restitutable books to be allotted to surviving Jews in postwar Scandinavia. Wilhelm asked, “Are not these Jews in a sense the heirs of what remained from European Jewry?”<sup>431</sup> His apparent need to defend the right that the small

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<sup>427</sup> The terms Judaica and Hebraica are generally used to refer to texts in Hebrew, Yiddish and other Jewish languages, as well as to religious and other books with specifically Jewish or Judaic content. The issue of what to do with the non-restitutable books was further complicated by the fact that Jewish collections also contained non-Judaic or Hebraic works and non-Jewish collections contained Judaic and Hebraic works.

<sup>428</sup> Julian Huxley draft letter to Allied Control Authority for Germany in Berlin, 1945. UNESCO Archives, World Jewish Library.

<sup>429</sup> Nancy Sinkoff, “Introduction: Yidishkayt and the Making of Lucy S. Dawidowicz,” in Dawidowicz, *From That Place and Time*, xvi.

<sup>430</sup> Lucy Schildkret to Max Weinreich, 25 May 1947. Papers of Lucy S. Dawidowicz; P-675; Box 55; Folder 4; American Jewish Historical Society, Newton Centre, MA and New York, NY (hereafter AJHS, Dawidowicz Papers).

<sup>431</sup> Dr. Kurt Wilhelm, Stockholm, to Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Inc., 28 July 1949. MssArc 5737. RG 7. Research Libraries - Jewish Division. Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations (hereafter NYPL, Jewish Division).

but diverse population of survivors living in Scandinavia had to a portion of the books was understandable given the tone of the discussions at the time. HU's Magnes, for example, emphasized the need to "establish living contact between Jerusalem and America,"<sup>432</sup> and argued that decisions should be made by a Board of Advisors appointed "upon nomination by the Hebrew University [Palestine] and the Commission on European Jewish Cultural Reconstruction [mostly USA] [brackets in original]."<sup>433</sup> Such statements cut to the heart of the painful transition from Europe as Jewish center to Europe as Jewish periphery that the relatively few Jews remaining in Europe had to contend with. They raise two key questions that will be addressed in this chapter:<sup>434</sup> where and how, if at all, did Europe fit into this America/Palestine focused vision of the Jewish future, and what role did UNESCO play in the fate of the non-restitutable books?

## I. Possible Solutions

As the debate over the fate of the books evolved during the early postwar years, most attention was directed to the establishment of Columbia University historian Salo Baron's organization, Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Inc. (JCR). Its mission, in line with that of HU, was to ensure that books that could not be identified or restituted were transferred by Jewish authority into Jewish trusteeship in the new centers of Jewish life. JCR, which developed out of Baron's earlier Commission on European Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, employed American- and Israeli-based émigré Jewish intellectual luminaries such as Hannah Arendt and Gershom Scholem in its effort to locate, identify, restitute and reallocate the recovered books. In the

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<sup>432</sup> Judah Magnes to Salo Baron, 3 September 1946. Hebrew University of Jerusalem Central Archives, Mount Scopus Campus, Jerusalem, University/University Library Archives, University, (hereafter HU, U/ULA), 1946.

<sup>433</sup> Judah Magnes to General John H. Hilldring, 4 June 1946. Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, Judah Magnes Papers (hereafter CAHJP, Magnes Papers), P3/2056.

<sup>434</sup> For more about Jewish geography see Moshe Rosman, "Jewish History Across Borders," in Jeremy Cohen and Moshe Rosman, eds., *Rethinking European Jewish History* (Oxford and Portland, OR: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2009), 15-29; Minna Rozen, ed., *Homelands and Diasporas: Greeks, Jews and Their Migrations* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2008); André Levy and Alex Weingrod, *Homelands and Diasporas: Holy Lands and Other Places* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).

interim these were amassed mainly in the Offenbach Archival Depot (OAD) - which Lucy Schildkret referred to as a “mortuary of books” – located near Frankfurt, in the American zone of occupied Germany.<sup>435</sup> While JCR represented the majority opinion of the postwar Jewish world, the birth of UNESCO helped inspire some to envision a more universal, rather than strictly Jewish, future for some of the books.

It was within this charged context of transition and renewal that a new and controversial proposal emerged out of Denmark, suggesting that a portion of the non-restitutable books form the basis of a new World Jewish Library in Europe. In November 1946, during the first UNESCO General Conference in Paris, the Danish delegation made the following statement: “The Danish delegation would like to repeat the offer made by the Danish Government to set up a Central Jewish Library at Copenhagen, under the auspices of Unesco, as suggested by the Preparatory Commission.<sup>436</sup> At stake, just as in the previous chapter, was how UNESCO’s power and authority to act on behalf of all nations and universal humanism would be interpreted and perceived, in this case in relation to what was widely perceived as the particular Jewish matter of confiscated and looted Jewish books. Also at stake was not only the postwar shape and identity of European Jewry, but also how the rest of the world, Jewish and non-Jewish, would perceive a postwar European Jewry.

The World Jewish Library and many of the broader hopes and plans for the revival of postwar Jewish Europe that it represented had to overcome the perception, exemplified by JCR and its supporters, that “the books should go with the Jews themselves and not be converted into

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<sup>435</sup> Dawidowicz, *From That Place and Time*, 316. For the only comprehensive study of JCR available see Herman, “Hashavat Avedah.”

<sup>436</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Session, Provisional Verbatim Record, 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, 28 November 1946. UNESCO/C/Prog.Com./S.C.Lib.&Mus./V.R.2. UNESCO Archives, General Conference 1. Session Paris 1946, Programme Commission I, Vol. 5 Documents.

a museum in a European country where nobody would actually use them.”<sup>437</sup> Yet, Jewish voices resisting the wholesale transfer of the non-restitutable books out of Europe emerged from London to Warsaw, Paris to Vienna, and beyond. These voices argued against such a potentially “short-sighted view of the future of European Jewry.”<sup>438</sup> Keeping a portion of the books in Europe was not a sure way to condemn them to be housed away, unused, as in some museum, but rather, was both a way to connect with aspects of a traditional European-Jewish past and a tool for constructing a new European-Jewish future. This opposing point of view, then and since, has been largely forgotten.<sup>439</sup>

The World Jewish Library itself was a short-lived, little-known and long-since almost entirely forgotten idea, chiefly because relatively few people were aware of it even at the time. Discussion of its pros and cons occurred internally, almost entirely among the select few insiders who were involved in the debates over how to create a structure that could handle the recovered books as fairly and impartially as possible.<sup>440</sup> The process was neither easy nor quick as interest and emotion over the fate of the books ran deep. The view that Jewish life in Europe had been extinguished to the point that its future was no longer conceivable or desirable and that energy and resources were to be directed to building up Jewish life in its new centers, quickly prevailed. This attitude made it seem to those Jews who did plan to stay in Europe “as if the mere existence

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<sup>437</sup> M. Fekete, Rector and D.W. Senator, Administrator, HU to Le Conseil d’éducation et de la culture juive en France, 26 May 1947. HU, U/ULA, 1947 I.

<sup>438</sup> Aaron Steinberg to Rafael Edelmann, 24 April 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>439</sup> “Prague Lodz other European communities for allocation books.” cable from Joseph Schwartz to Judah Magnes, 10 May 1946. CAHJP, Magnes Papers, P3/2056; Basia Bermanowa to Central Committee of Jews in Poland, 4 April 1945. Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego, Centralny Komitet Żydów w Polsce (hereafter ZIH, CKZP), Prezydium i Sekretariat, sygn. 303/I134; Schidorsky, “The Salvaging of Jewish Books,” 205-208.

<sup>440</sup> “Public” mention of the plan has only been found in a handful of press releases and in two Jewish newspapers: “‘UNESCO’ First Conference: Ambitious Plans for ‘World Education,’” *The Jewish Chronicle*, 15 November 1946, 14; A.d.J. [A. de Jong], “Displaced Books: Joodse bibliotheken naar Amsterdam?” *Nieuw Israelietisch Weekblad* (29 November 1946), 5.

of Jews in Europe in any future is not taken into consideration at all and is fully ignored.”<sup>441</sup> Yet as Joseph Hyman, Executive Vice-Chairman of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) said in November 1946, “The next years will see increased efforts on the part of the JDC to find new havens for Jews who wish to emigrate from the continent, *and to help build new roots for those men, women and children who will remain in Europe* [emphasis added].”<sup>442</sup> In other words, European Jewry was not entirely decimated, nor were survivors uniformly fleeing.<sup>443</sup>

Indeed, for those inspired by UNESCO, post-Holocaust Europe did not have to cease to be an important Jewish center. Rather, the rehabilitation of European Jewry had to be achieved in ways that would appropriately and sensitively reflect the realities of a tragically diminished and continuing to decline European Jewry, but without submitting to the notion of its total disappearance. Some involved in these efforts were motivated by non-Zionist, anti-Zionist, Communist, or other political ideology, some by the desire to counter the widely held notion that Europe had become nothing more than a graveyard for Jews and Jewish life, some by the belief that Jews remaining in Europe, whether by choice or circumstance, had a right to Jewish communities and institutions, and some by a new vision for European and world Jewries.<sup>444</sup>

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<sup>441</sup> Raphael Edelmann to Aaron Steinberg, 10 February 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>442</sup> Quoted in *JTA Daily News Bulletin* XIII:251 (4 November 1946), 6.

<sup>443</sup> Research by Jan Gross and others has demonstrated the extent to which survivors who did attempt to return to their prewar lives and homes in central and eastern Europe, if only in the hopes of reuniting with lost family members and reclaiming confiscated property, faced antisemitic discrimination, even deadly violence. Jan Gross, *Fear: Anti-Semitism in Poland After Auschwitz* (Random House, 2006). See also Natalia Aleksion, “Jewish Responses to Antisemitism in Poland, 1944-1947,” in Joshua D. Zimmerman, ed., *Contested Memories: Poles and Jews During the Holocaust and its Aftermath* (Rutgers University Press, 2003), 247-261.

<sup>444</sup> “In the light of the lessons of the immediate wartime past, the community was torn between different visions of the future. The Zionists believed that Jewry had no future in Hungary, and that their main task was to prepare the young people for life in Palestine, while others, especially the pro-Soviet factions, argued that the Jews had a role in the construction of socialism in the country of their birth.” Ronald W. Zweig, *The Gold Train: The Destruction of the Jews and the Looting of Hungary* (New York: William Morrow, 2002), 159. See also Bozena Szaynok, “The Impact of the Holocaust on Jewish Attitudes in Postwar Poland,” in Zimmerman, *Contested Memories*, 240; Aleksion, “Zionists and Anti-Zionists;” Aleksion, “Was There a Future for Polish Jewry;” Dov Schidorsky, “The Salvaging of Jewish Books in Europe after the Holocaust,” in Dehnel, *Jüdischer Buchbesitz Als Raubgut*, 206-208;

During a July 1948 Jewish European Cultural Conference in Paris, American Jews were admonished for claiming to be *the* heirs of European Jewry, and were urged that it was “not too late to become [...] partners with the Jews of Europe in the strengthening of world Jewish culture.”<sup>445</sup> Looking only within Europe, a World Jewish Congress (WJC) report advised that “the present distribution of World Jewry makes it more imperative than ever before to establish close unity between Western and Eastern European Jewry.”<sup>446</sup> The World Jewish Library represented just such an attempt to strengthen postwar European and world Jewish cultures by applying UNESCO’s model of transnational cultural exchange and cooperation to bridge the gaps between past and future, crisis and continuity, destruction and construction, center and periphery, particular and universal, and east and west.<sup>447</sup>

## II. Wartime Origins of an Inter-Allied Solution

Based on the wartime belief that “locating stolen paintings, statues, books and manuscripts, of expert verification and restitution bears with it a tremendous responsibility that will have to be assumed by those best qualified to perform this duty under the aegis of the victorious United Nations,” some concerned with this issue had already turned to CAME, UNESCO’s founding body, while the war was still in full swing.<sup>448</sup> An early 1943 meeting of the Jewish Historical Society of England convinced Louis Kahn of the Alliance Israélite Universelle (AIU) in Paris, who attended as a delegate, that the recuperation and management of the

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Dr. N. Barou and Dr. S. Barber, WJC Circular Letter No. 4, 6 November 1946, p.2. ZIH, CKZP, Wydział Kultury i Propaganda, sygn. 303/XIII/206.

<sup>445</sup> Mr. J. Gershman, President of the Conference, quoted in Special Correspondent, “The World Jewish Congress,” *The Jewish Monthly* 2:5 (August 1949), Appendix I, 285.

<sup>446</sup> Draft memo of WJC Political Report to the European Council, 4. ZIH, CKZP, Wydział Kultury i Propaganda, sygn. 303/XIII/205.

<sup>447</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Judah Magnes, 2 January 1947. Salo W. Baron Papers. M0580. Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, Calif., Box 43 Folder 5 (hereafter Stanford, Baron Papers).

<sup>448</sup> Isidore Meyer, “The War and Our Books,” undated [citations through mid-1943], 4. Bound typed mss. Isidore Meyer Papers; P-90 [collection was processed after viewing]; American Jewish Historical Society, Boston, MA and New York, NY (hereafter AJHS, Meyer Papers).

recovered book stocks would be an inter-allied project (*une oeuvre interalliée*).<sup>449</sup> Following that meeting, in April 1943, the Jewish Historical Society of England sent a message to CAME requesting that in its discussions on postwar cultural reconstruction and restitution the Conference keep in mind the particular issue of “despoiled Jewish libraries.”<sup>450</sup> Also in mid-1943, historian and American Jewish Historical Society librarian Isidore Meyer wrote, “it is hoped that the competent agencies of the United Nations (...) interested in the preservation and restoration of the art and letters of Europe despoiled by the Nazis, will assist also in restitution of Jewish books, manuscripts and art objects to their rightful owners when that day comes.”<sup>451</sup> Librarian of Congress Archibald MacLeish in January 1944 also expressed the belief that “every effort should be made by the United Nations to insure return of looted property.”<sup>452</sup> After the war, however, suggestions such as these, looking to an international solution for the Jewish books, even more than the international solutions suggested, pursued, and ultimately rejected or abandoned in the previous chapter, became a highly charged topic of cultural contestation, with UNESCO at the epicenter.

Beginning at least in August 1945, in the lead-up to the November 1945 Conference for the Establishment of UNESCO, the World Jewish Library plan had been informally presented to and discussed among Danish delegates and other representatives at CAME.<sup>453</sup> As Sir Ernest Barker, Head of CAME’s Books and Periodicals Commission (BPC) and supporter of the Plan

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<sup>449</sup> Minutes, AIU Central Committee meeting, 13 December 1944. Archives, Alliance Israélite Universelle (hereafter Fonds AIU) PVCCAIU, Cote CCI 1941-1947, Dossier Comité Centrale 1941-1946 [procès-verbaux].

<sup>450</sup> CAME Memorandum AME/B/7, undated; 4<sup>th</sup> meeting draft minutes, 15 April 1943, UNESCO Archives, CAME, London 1942-1945, Vol. III BPC, History, Committees and Sub-Committees; CAME Interim Report of the Books and Periodicals Commission, July 1943, p.3. UNESCO Archives 361.9 02 Reconstruction Libraries; Aaron Steinberg to Rafael Edelman, 10 October 1945, DKB, Edelman Papers.

<sup>451</sup> Meyer, “The War and Our Books,” 79.

<sup>452</sup> Harry M. Lydenberg to Oskar Halecki, 22 January 1944. Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America, PIASA Archives 17.173.

<sup>453</sup> UNESCO Preparatory Commission, Documents Disposal Sheet, Issuing Officer: Delegation Danoise, Subject: Looted of books of Germany [sic], Sent to liaison officer on: 27/11 [1946]. DKB, Edelman Papers.

reported to Danish Royal Library librarian K. Schmidt-Phiseldeck, “I felt that they [CAME] agreed warmly with your views, which are also mine.”<sup>454</sup> Indeed Barker clearly stated his belief that “the Jewish collections should be kept in Europe and not removed to Jerusalem.”<sup>455</sup> Sir Alfred Zimmern at the head of CAME felt the same, writing:

It does not seem reasonable that the surviving Jewish collections in Europe should be transferred to Jerusalem nor that they should be naturalized in Germany (of all places). In so far as they cannot be restored to their previous locations they might well be cared for by UNESCO. This would involve working out a form of organization which might well become a model for future undertakings of the same kind.<sup>456</sup>

The hope that situating UNESCO at the center of the postwar restitution and distribution process would both bring attention to the new organization and help it to construct its identity and programs on a transnational cooperative basis helped to propel UNESCO’s interest in and pursuit of such a role for itself. From the outside, its universalist mission coupled with its active role in postwar library reconstruction and rehabilitation is what led others to see UNESCO as having a role in the matter. In December 1945, for example, Theodore Gaster, Chief of the Library of Congress’s Hebraic Section and a founding member and advocate of what became JCR, recommended that “Hebrew and Jewish books which fall into the category of legitimate booty of war, or which cannot be restored to their original owners...should be vested in the international UNESCO organization.”<sup>457</sup> As we will see, Gaster’s was one of the only letters openly backing UNESCO to come out of the JCR context.

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<sup>454</sup> Ernest Barker to K. Schmidt-Phiseldeck, 24 October 1945. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>455</sup> 54<sup>th</sup> meeting draft minutes, 29 November 1945. UNESCO Archives, CAME, London 1942-1945, Vol. III BPC, History, Committees and Sub-Committees.

<sup>456</sup> Sir Alfred Zimmern to Dr. Kotschnig and M. Darchambeau, undated but attached to Nancy Parkinson to Zimmern, 18 December 1945. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 43, 38/2/309.

<sup>457</sup> On the other hand, Gaster believed books in the American zone “should pass into the trusteeship and control of the Library of Congress, as being the national library of the United States.” Theodor H. Gaster to Luther H. Evans, 30 December 1945. Library of Congress Archives, European Mission & Cooperative Acquisitions Project (hereafter LoC, European Mission), Container 34, Folder Restitution of “unrestituted materials” (Jewish Books).

### III. Jewish Voices at UNESCO

Although it may come as a surprise to some twenty-first-century readers, UNESCO's historic roots include sometimes close, sometimes contentious, cooperation with numerous Jewish organizations. During its early days, its primary relationship was with the London-based British Section of the WJC.<sup>458</sup> As early as January 1945 the WJC had identified "the newly created United Nations Organization for Education and Cultural Reconstruction"<sup>459</sup> as one of three bodies whose assistance "can and will be expected" in Jewish cultural reconstruction in Europe.<sup>460</sup> The WJC turned to UNESCO in part because of its frustration with "the slowness of the progress of educational and cultural reconstruction in the liberated countries," and "the failure of UNRRA [the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Association] to cope with this matter."<sup>461</sup> The WJC wanted more to be happening faster for European-Jewry in the realm of cultural reconstruction. As this realm was a specific focus of UNESCO, "the necessity of maintaining closer cooperation with the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Section of Unesco" was emphasized, including "in order that Jewish schools, institutions of learning and libraries benefit."<sup>462</sup> Moreover, the WJC felt that the primary Jewish organization aiding survivors in Europe, the JDC, was necessarily focused on providing immediate physical relief to displaced

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<sup>458</sup> Established in the 1930s, headquartered in New York and with offices worldwide, the WJC was the first and most influential Jewish voice at UNESCO, with observers present from the first UNESCO General Conference in Paris in November 1946. The WJC received consultative status at UNESCO in the fall of 1948.

<sup>459</sup> In fact, in January 1945, UNESCO's establishment was still very much in process, as reflected by the fact that in this quote Science does not yet appear in the proposed organization's name.

<sup>460</sup> Arieh Tartakower, "Problems of Jewish Cultural Reconstruction in Europe," *Journal of Educational Sociology* 18:5 The Jew in the Postwar World (Jan., 1945), 274-275. In addition to what would soon be UNESCO, the other two bodies Tartakower expected to assist in postwar Jewish cultural reconstruction were national governments and the Jewish population outside of Europe, primarily in the United States.

<sup>461</sup> Aaron Steinberg, Report on the Establishment of UNESCO, November 1945. American Jewish Archives, World Jewish Congress Records, Series B, Box 127, Folder 7 (hereafter AJA, WJC, Series/Box/Folder).

<sup>462</sup> Wolf Blattberg memo, 4 April 1947. AJA, WJC, B/127/7.

persons,<sup>463</sup> leaving a door open that invited the WJC to cooperate with UNESCO and to assist both a broader spectrum of survivors and of needs.<sup>464</sup>

Also meaningful to the Jewish community was the prominent role of Léon Blum at the founding of UNESCO. The widely admired thinker and politician, and, in 1945, Holocaust survivor, was elected Vice-President of the November 1945 Conference for the Establishment of UNESCO. A WJC observer at the Conference believed that “The enthusiastic applause which accompanied his election was no doubt meant partly as a tribute to European Jewry, to its sufferings and endurance, somehow focused in the eyes of the world in personalities like Léon Blum.”<sup>465</sup> Similarly, American Jewish lawyer James Marshall, who was also present, later wrote, “It is hard to forget the great inspiration of the London conference when the constitution was adopted, the great demonstration when Léon Blum, the head of the French delegation, first entered the hall and was cheered by every nation as the very symbol of the resistance and the defeat of Nazidom.”<sup>466</sup> Thus, even more than being recognized as a potential source of cultural reconstruction aid,<sup>467</sup> UNESCO came to be perceived in some Jewish circles as sympathetic to both the horrors that the Jews had endured during the war years as well as to the possibilities for their future. As such, UNESCO came to be seen as a model for Jewish cultural reconstruction

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<sup>463</sup> Wolf Blattberg to Dr. Kubowitzki, 1 April 1947. AJA, WJC, E/3/7. See also Weinberg, “Between America and Israel,” 95; Bernard Wasserstein, *Vanishing Diaspora: The Jews in Europe since 1945* (Harvard University Press, 1996), 58.

<sup>464</sup> Wolf Blattberg to Kubowitzki, 1 April 1947. AJA, WJC, E/3/7. Other Jewish organizations involved in relief efforts also collected and distributed books, including the JDC through its SOS (Supplies for Overseas Survivors) Books program, but its campaign was smaller and less concentrated than that of the WJC. American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee Archives (hereafter JDCA), 45-54 #1264-1269 Relief Supplies: Books.

<sup>465</sup> Aaron Steinberg, Report on the Establishment of UNESCO, November, p.2. AJA, WJC, E/B127/7 UNESCO 1945-1947.

<sup>466</sup> JM Confidential Memo of Mexico City Conf, p.4-5. AJA, Marshall Papers, 30/5, UNESCO Mexico City Conf 1947-1948; 1952.

<sup>467</sup> Jozef Sandel to UNESCO Directorate, 2 June 1947. AAN, Ministerstwo Oświaty, sygn. 765.

planning, especially through the expansion of European-based transnational networks of cooperation and exchange as was envisioned for the World Jewish Library.<sup>468</sup>

Some turned to UNESCO for backing of their own, specific, reconstruction plans, such as the Jewish community in Lvov, Poland, which requested funding from UNESCO (which UNESCO did not have) to travel throughout Poland to salvage looted Jewish books and other cultural material and to publish a book in memory of murdered Jewish artists.<sup>469</sup> Others sought UNESCO's support more generally in the establishment of new cultural institutions that would help to rehabilitate European-Jewish culture life, in part by serving as central connecting points with the new dispersion of world Jewry. Such proposals ranged from the relatively small, such as compiling a list of Jewish libraries worldwide,<sup>470</sup> to the markedly ambitious, such as founding within post-Holocaust Europe, in addition to the World Jewish Library, a World Jewish Center for Cultural Relations (*Centre Mondial Juif pour les Relations Culturelles*) and a World Jewish Organization for Intellectual and Educational Cooperation (*Organisation Mondiale Juive de Coopération Intellectuelle et Educative*).<sup>471</sup> The fundamental aim of ideas such as these was to ensure that the long history of European-Jewry would not be relegated to the past, only to Jewish memory, but would play an active role in re-constructing its own future. The global language employed in naming these proposed organizations closely echoes that used by and associated with UNESCO's universalist mission and the global scope of its first projects.

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<sup>468</sup> Wolf Blattberg to Dr. Kubowitzki, 6 December 1945. AJA, WJC, E/8/12.

<sup>469</sup> Jozef Sandel to UNESCO Directorate, 2 June 1947. AAN, Ministerstwo Oświaty, sygn. 765.

<sup>470</sup> Asnath Klausner to Jacob Zuckerman, 6 June 1947. Central Zionist Archives, Aaron Steinberg Papers (hereafter CZA, Steinberg Papers), Zuckerman and Steinberg correspondence, June to October 1947, C2/4444 Libraries & Museums.

<sup>471</sup> C.L. Lang, "Exposé sur un centre mondial juif pour les relations culturelles à Paris," 22 June 1946. Southampton, Steinberg Papers, 6/2/6 ; M. Schliachter, "Editions – Publications – Bibliothèques, Hier, Aujourd'hui, Demain," undated, p.1-2. Archives, Alliance Israélite Universelle, Fonds Edmond-Maurice Levy [AIU bibliothécaire] AP 1 (hereafter AIU, Fonds Levy), AP 1/43.

Post-liberation, a few of Europe's prominent, historic Jewish libraries, most famously the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana in Amsterdam and the AIU in Paris, reopened relatively quickly and began reconstituting their confiscated collections through the restitution process.<sup>472</sup> Representatives from both of those libraries, as well as from the Centralnej Biblioteki Zydowskiej (Central Jewish Library) in Warsaw, the Jewish Community of Prague's Library and the Jewish Bibliotheca Simonseniana of Denmark's Royal Library, each suggested a portion of the books contribute to a new Jewish library or a specialized expansion of their own institutions.<sup>473</sup> Why should the surviving bulk of Europe's rich Jewish cultural heritage be removed from Europe when Jewish communities and institutions, including their own distinguished libraries, were quickly reconstituting themselves with a view to (re)building a new Jewish future of Europe?

Interestingly, given Denmark's proposal mentioned in the previous chapter to build a collection of Nazi literature at its Royal Library, Denmark also formulated the most comprehensive plan for what it called the World Jewish Library, which it hoped would "be viewed as a part of a common plan of reconstruction of Jewish cultural life in Europe and even, if possible, in other parts of the world."<sup>474</sup> Also referred to as the Danish Proposal or the Copenhagen Plan, it was to be associated with the Bibliotheca Simonseniana and a key element of a larger Centre for Jewish Learning planned at the University of Copenhagen. This plan can be traced to Rafael Edelman, Librarian of the Simonseniana. After surviving the war in Sweden, Edelman returned to Denmark determined "with the support of the Danish authorities,

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<sup>472</sup> See for example Jean-Claude Kuperminck, "La reconstruction de la bibliothèque de l'Alliance israélite universelle, 1945-1955," *Archives juives* 1:34 (2001): 98-113 and H. de la Fontaine Verwey, "The Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana During the German Occupation," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 38/39 (2005-2006): PGS.

<sup>473</sup> There may have been others but this list represents all that this research uncovered evidence for.

<sup>474</sup> Rafael Edelman to Aaron Steinberg, 2 January 1947. DKB, Edelman Papers.

to make Copenhagen a European centre of Jewish learning.”<sup>475</sup> As Edelman wrote in 1960, “When, at the end of the war, Jewish life in Europe was in ruins, I considered that the Jewish library could serve as an important instrument for the Jewish cultural reconstruction. The situation then was that most of the Jewish libraries in Europe were destroyed or at least damaged, whereas the Jewish Department of the Royal Library in Copenhagen was completely intact.”<sup>476</sup> As such, the Danes argued that they could be trusted to provide an ideal home and safe haven for the books. According to Edelman, “Of all countries in Europe Denmark has no Antisemitism,”<sup>477</sup> an argument that was boosted by the reported activities undertaken by Danish non-Jews in order to protect their Jewish compatriots during the war.<sup>478</sup>

Denmark envisioned the World Jewish Library as a new institution physically and conceptually; it would house a portion of the non-restitutable books and would serve a broad international audience through transnational inter-library and academic exchange programs. It would “relieve the National Library in Jerusalem [HU] of the very expensive and troublesome task of sending her books abroad when needed in Europe or elsewhere – and they will be needed there. The library should work in permanent collaboration with the National Library in Jerusalem and with other Jewish and non-Jewish Libraries and institutions elsewhere [emphasis in original].”<sup>479</sup> Despite the hope to found a truly collaborative international Jewish library, centered in Europe but working in full cooperation with Palestine, HU representatives turned out to be the most vocal opponents of the World Jewish Library plan.

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<sup>475</sup> Rafael Edelman to Fanny Goldstein, 8 August 1946. American Jewish Archives, Fanny Goldstein Papers, Box 2 Folder 16 (hereafter AJA, Goldstein Papers, Box/Folder).

<sup>476</sup> Rafael Edelman to Mark Uveeler, Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, 16 November 1960. London Metropolitan Archives (hereafter LMA), Acc/3121/E3/224/4.

<sup>477</sup> Rafael Edelman to Aaron Steinberg, 1 May 1946. DKB, Edelman.

<sup>478</sup> Most studies on this topic are several decades old. For a more recent analysis see Vilhjálmur Örn Vilhjálmsson and Bent Blüdnikow, “Rescue, Expulsion, and Collaboration: Denmark’s Difficulties with its World War II Past,” *Jewish Political Studies Review* 18:3–4 (Fall 2006).

<sup>479</sup> Rafael Edelman to Aaron Steinberg, 2 January 1947. DKB, Edelman Papers.

This plan did appeal, on the other hand, to UNESCO's Libraries Section and to its active promotion of such transnational collaborative programs as part of its library reconstruction and rehabilitation activities. One important expression of support came from Julien Cain of France's Bibliothèque nationale who pointed out that "In multiple countries there are collections which were lost or displaced and which UNESCO could, perhaps, under its authority, reconstitute to select owners or concentrate in Copenhagen."<sup>480</sup> Much of the debate about the fate of these books, just as with the confiscated and objectionable books in the previous chapter, would come to turn on questions about what authority UNESCO did or did not have, legally and formally as well as perceptually, in the eyes of the world community and the Jews within it.

Despite the fact that the World Jewish Library was intended to demonstrate that "the books, in reality, belong to the entire Jewry in Europe and elsewhere,"<sup>481</sup> and despite the perception that the early postwar represented a deliberately universalist moment in which Jews and Jewish groups actively participated, there was no uniform Jewish response to the proposal or to the issue of non-restitutable books in general.<sup>482</sup> If anything, the universalist solution involving UNESCO was overwhelmingly rejected by world Jewry. From the outset the WJC British Section communicated a very different message than the New York headquarters, particularly through the activities of Russian-born scholar Aaron Steinberg, Director of the Cultural Department of the WJC British Section and the main WJC representative at UNESCO. Steinberg considered it his WJC responsibility "to represent the interests of Jewish culture in the

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<sup>480</sup> UNESCO Preparatory Commission Provisional Record of 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, London, 10 July 1946, 3pm. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, London-Paris, 1945-1946, Vol. II Records of Plenary Meetings.

<sup>481</sup> Rafael Edelman to Luther H. Evans, 14 August 1946. DKB, Edelman Papers.

<sup>482</sup> For recent debates about Jews and postwar universalism see for example Samuel Moyn, "René Cassin, Human Rights, and Jewish Internationalism," in Jacques Picard et al., eds., *Thinking Jewish Modernity* (forthcoming); Jay Winter, "René Cassin and the Alliance Israélite Universelle," *Modern Judaism* 32:1 (2012): 1-21; Samuel Moyn, *A Holocaust Controversy: The Treblinka Affair in Postwar France* (Brandeis University Press, 2005); Pieter Lagrou, "The Politics of Memory: Resistance as a Collective Myth in Post-War France, Belgium and the Netherlands, 1945-1965," *European Review* 11:04 (October 2003): 527-549.

non-Jewish world,” which he “achieved primarily through maintaining close relations with Unesco.”<sup>483</sup> This explains why, in the early days of the Copenhagen Plan, a Danish delegate to UNESCO wrote to Steinberg asking, “What do you think about the Library being under the auspices of the UNESCO?” He went on to reassure Steinberg that the Danish library authorities would “defray the working expenses of the Jewish library,” information with which, the delegate hoped, “we surely will succeed in gaining the support of [...] the World Jewish Congress in America.”<sup>484</sup> Denmark had turned to the right person.

Already in November 1945 Steinberg had written to Edelman, “As for myself, I am doing my best to secure a refuge for Jewish learning in some corner of Europe, and well believe that Denmark might become this blessed seat.” For Steinberg, working to secure this refuge included approaching the Friends of HU based in London to convince them that the World Jewish Library would not be “in any way detrimental to the future of the University of Jerusalem.” His efforts, he continued, “are therefore directed towards the overcoming of this possible obstacle.”<sup>485</sup> Steinberg also took it upon himself to sway the opinion of his WJC colleagues, even after “a very definite refusal on the part of our friends in New York to go further into this matter.” He decided, after consulting with his London colleagues, “to try and try again.” His continued efforts included raising the matter at UNESCO, “In order to keep the idea of the establishment of a centre of Jewish learning on the Continent alive, I made a special reference to it when the opportunity arose in a statement presented on behalf of the World Jewish Congress to the Preparatory Commission of UNESCO. The relevant sentence reads as follows: ‘Negotiations are in progress for establishing a new centre of Jewish learning in one of the

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<sup>483</sup> Report, “The Department of Culture and Education,” 31 January 1950. AJA, WJC, E/10/15.

<sup>484</sup> C.E. Aagaard to Aaron Steinberg, 6 February 1946. UNESCO Archives, WJL.

<sup>485</sup> Aaron Steinberg to Rafael Edelman, 13 November 1945. DKB, Edelman Papers.

Western European capitals.”<sup>486</sup> Certainly Edelmann saw Steinberg, as a high level WJC official with a respected voice at UNESCO, as ideally positioned to generate support for their shared vision of the future of European Jewry.<sup>487</sup> As he wrote to Zuckerman, familiar from previous chapters, “the Jewish organizations, especially those in America, are claiming for their own libraries a share of the books alongside with Palestine, and this in accordance with *their giving up of Europe as a living place for Jews*. Of course this view must not be allowed to get any decisive influence upon the solution of the matter in question, and I am trying to do what I can to fight it, and we have a great help in Dr. Steinberg who is now staying in New York [emphasis added].”<sup>488</sup>

Nevertheless, the combined efforts and shared desire of Steinberg and Edelmann “to try and meet the cultural needs of our people,” usually fell flat.<sup>489</sup> One rare letter of solidarity came to Edelmann from a member of the HU Curatorium, who, at least prior to a planned consultation with Magnes on the matter, expressed support for the Library, “especially the idea of preserving Jewish literature in Europe.”<sup>490</sup> The general division between Jews inside and outside of Europe, however, is particularly evident within the WJC.<sup>491</sup> The pro-World Jewish Library position taken by the British Section as represented by Steinberg stands in stark contrast to the strident opposition of the Congress’s American headquarters, which deemed the European proposals (whether from Copenhagen, Prague or Amsterdam) to be “motivated by local patriotism and [...]

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<sup>486</sup> Aaron Steinberg to Rafael Edelmann, 11 June 1946. A few months prior Steinberg had already expressed this same determination, “I think it is my duty to try and try again.” Steinberg to Edelmann, 24 April 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>487</sup> In addition to representing the WJC at UNESCO, Steinberg was also appointed by UNESCO to serve on the Committee of Experts for UNESCO’s Temporary International Council for Educational Reconstruction (TICER).

<sup>488</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Jacob Zuckerman, 24 June 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>489</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Aaron Steinberg, 28 August 1946. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>490</sup> Edelmann conversation with Professor Ehrenpreis in Stockholm, referred to in Edelmann to Steinberg, 10 February 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>491</sup> This was of course not a strict division as plenty of Jews within Europe were also against the plan. To give just one example, “I may add that the legal advisor of UNESCO, Mr. Warendorf, is a Dutch Jew; he too is not in favour of the Danish proposal.” Dr. Henriette Boas to Professor Bentwich, 10 July 1946. CAHJP, Magnes Papers, P3/2060.

incongruous with general Jewish interest to place the books in the most important national Jewish institutions located in large Jewish centers,” which Europe no longer was.<sup>492</sup>

The WJC in New York went beyond opposing the Copenhagen Plan, however, also stating that “The less UNESCO deals with the recovery of books, particularly Jewish books, the better for us. [...] to us the problem of recovery is not a field suitable for cooperation with UNESCO.”<sup>493</sup> Interestingly, a February 1946 press release quotes a WJC report presenting a slightly more ambiguous position:

In a memorandum to the United Nations Organization [...] the congress requests the appointment of ‘some special instrument’ to concern itself with the problem of Jewish reconstruction. It also asks for support in the collection and preservation of those libraries, manuscripts and art collections which escaped destruction. ‘One of the main tasks now facing us,’ says the report, ‘is the *restitution in Europe* of historically valuable books, documents, art and religious objects to preserve them for the future cultural development of the Jewish people. Jewish libraries, manuscripts and archives plundered systematically by the Germans, must be restored [emphasis added].’<sup>494</sup>

The “special instrument” could refer either to an entirely Jewish body such as JCR, which the WJC was involved with from inception, or to a broader body such as that proposed at UNESCO. Nor is it clear if this report was referring not to the non-restitutable books under discussion here, but only to those books which could in fact be restituted to surviving owners, institutions or their heirs in Europe. WJC official policy vis-à-vis the books, according to the New York headquarters in December 1947, was not much clearer, with its Office Committee confirming:

that our policy with regard to heirless cultural property in Germany has been and is that the Hebrew University in Jerusalem has first right to the properties, which do not belong to or are not claimed by existing Jewish communities and/or institutions in Europe, the remainder to be used for the cultural rehabilitation of surviving Jewish communities in Europe and destitute Jewish communities outside Europe.<sup>495</sup>

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<sup>492</sup> Simon Federbush to Aaron Steinberg, 5 February 1947; Simon Federbush memo, “Representation of the World Jewish Congress at the UNESCO Conference held in Paris from November 19<sup>th</sup> to December 10, 1946,” 12 February 1947. AJA, WJC, E/1/7.

<sup>493</sup> Wolf Blattberg to Asnath Klausner, 25 June 1947. AJA, WJC, E/3/8.

<sup>494</sup> WJC, NY press release, 21 February 1946, for release in Monday papers, 25 February 1946. AJA, WJC, E/1/3.

<sup>495</sup> Minutes of Office Committee meeting, 10 December 1947. Southampton, Steinberg Papers, 6/2/9 Folder 1/2.

While surely the Bibliotheca Simonseniana and Copenhagen could be counted among those existing institutions and surviving communities in Europe, they ultimately do not appear to have been viewed that way by the Library's vocal opponents, key among them, the HU's Magnes.

Zuckerman tried appealing to him directly, writing in early 1947:

The offer of the Danish Government includes the possibility of having a centre for Jewish studies in Europe, which I personally think is a very important factor when so many centres for Jewish studies in Europe have disappeared. At the same time, the Danish Government will offer possibilities for exchange of students and professors, which would represent an excellent means for students of the Hebrew University to get acquainted with Europe and vice versa.<sup>496</sup>

While Czech, Dutch and Danish interests regarding the non-restitutable books were communicated, unofficially or officially, to UNESCO by each country's national delegation, their proposals were initiated and advocated by Jewish leaders and librarians within those countries, just as it had been other Jewish/Judaica librarians in Europe who expressed interest in the books. In addition to the Royal Library's Edelmann, and the WJC's Steinberg, Denmark's strongest supporters included UNESCO's Zuckerman, a German-born Jew with a British visa for Mandate Palestine. Yet those who wanted the books to remain in Europe were consistently accused of going against Jewish interests and the Jewish people, that European Jewry's surviving cultural heritage should rightfully be dealt with by and made accessible to the majority of the world's surviving Jews where they were going to live, study and work, in America and Palestine.

This divide is further visible in debates that arose during JCR's search for "a European man, well acquainted with Jewish libraries as well as with all problems involved" to lead JCR missions within Europe.<sup>497</sup> Both Zuckerman, if he had been "prepared to leave UNESCO

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<sup>496</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Judah Magnes, 17 January 1947. Stanford, Baron Papers, 42/11.

<sup>497</sup> Simon Federbush to Jiří Liban, 21 October 1947 [same request sent to various others]. AJA, WJC, E/1/7.

permanently or temporarily,”<sup>498</sup> and Edelmann, fit the description. When Edelmann’s name was suggested, however, Gershom Scholem responded with a vehement dismissal:

As to Dr. Edelmann we should like you to know that we strongly oppose his appointment as member of this mission. We have no confidence in him. He is a man who tried to get the books from Prague and Offenbach first by diplomatic intervention through the Danish Government and then by applying to UNESCO. *His appointment would be against the interests of Palestine.* His proposal to transfer the books to Copenhagen was one of the most phantastic[sic] features in these whole negotiations [emphasis added].<sup>499</sup>

Zuckerman, on the other hand, was more seriously considered.<sup>500</sup> He was initially recommended to JCR’s founder and president Salo Baron by the JDC as someone with “familiarity with some of the problems to be overcome by your organization,” as well as someone “exceedingly interested in facilitating the restoration of Jewish cultural objects.”<sup>501</sup> As one JCR memo responded, “Dr. Zuckerman [...] has good possibilities, but in our opinion his connections with UNESCO and the plans of this organisation which are *calculated to endanger the interest of the Jewish people*, cause us some misgivings. The position would be different if Dr. Zuckerman has perhaps severed his connections with UNESCO which we do not think he has done [emphasis added].”<sup>502</sup> Although Zuckerman initially was reported to be in favor of “the formation of a Jewish committee to claim the books,” his position quickly evolved to support a broader, international solution, even prior to his arrival to UNESCO in October 1946.<sup>503</sup> Once there, he

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<sup>498</sup> Salo Baron to Jerome Michael, August 14, 1947. Stanford, Baron Papers, 43/5.

<sup>499</sup> The position was first given instead to JCR’s Executive Secretary Joshua Starr, also of the New York Public Library. Gershom Scholem to Leo W. Schwarz, 11 November 1947. HNUL, Oztrot ha-Golah papers, Arc. 4° 793/212 III 1947 NL.

<sup>500</sup> Social worker Ernst G. Lowenthal was also dismissed out of hand as untrustworthy specifically because he had chosen to resettle in Germany. “He was seen as a German for whom it would be impossible to act in the spirit of the Jewish community.” Katharina Rauschenberger, “The Restitution of Jewish Cultural Objects and the Activities of Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Inc.,” *Leo Baeck Year Book* 53:1 (2008), 203-204.

<sup>501</sup> Edward Phillips, to Salo Baron, 25 June 1947. JDCA, 45-54 #1745 JCR 1947-1948.

<sup>502</sup> Observations of Scholem and Dr. Senator on the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Inc. – 7.10.47, p. 2. Stanford, Baron Papers, 42/11.

<sup>503</sup> Library of Congress Mission memo, 26 February 1946. AJA, WJC, E/1/3.

had no intention of severing his connections with UNESCO. In any case he would not have seen the roles as mutually exclusive but as complementary.

Yet, if Europe was no longer and would never again be a Jewish center or homeland, as was widely believed, it had neither right to nor need for the cultural treasures or for the proposed library.<sup>504</sup> It seemed to be a simple question of numbers. As the WJC New York office put it, “the loss [of] six million Jews [...] considerably reduced the need for books of the European Jewish community.”<sup>505</sup> Numbers were used in arguments between European Jews as well. In February 1947, for example, the Council for Jewish Culture and Education in France voted unanimously against the establishment of a central Jewish library in Copenhagen, where, it claimed, a Jewish community had never existed (“*communauté n’ayant jamais existé*”), or in Amsterdam where the Jewish community no longer existed (“*communauté n’existant plus*”), and argued instead for a central distribution center at the AIU in Paris.<sup>506</sup>

The fact that Paris did quickly become an important postwar Jewish center did not prevent Gershom Scholem and his colleagues from seeking to obtain books from French collections for HU as well. An April 1946 document reported that “The Jews in France are not at all eager to give up even as a temporary loan – as been suggested by Scholem – although there is *certainly no use for them [...] now in France*. They dream of a future in which someone may come and use them, and our suggestion was received very coolly [emphasis added].”<sup>507</sup> Already during a BPC discussion at CAME in November 1945, a representative from the AIU cautioned that “if it were suggested that French libraries should give up their Jewish collections, the idea

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<sup>504</sup> “*Yeziath Europe*, the exodus from Europe, they [survivors] conceive of this epoch as the liquidation of European Jewry as a whole.” Koppel S. Pinson, “Jewish Life in Liberated Germany: A Study of the Jewish DP’s,” *Jewish Social Studies* 9:2 (Apr., 1947), 115. See also Weinberg, “Between America and Israel,” especially pgs. 92-101; Salo W. Baron, “The Year in Retrospect,” *American Jewish Year Book* (1946), 116-122.

<sup>505</sup> Simon Federbush to Jerome Michael, 3 June 1946. AJA, WJC, E/1/4.

<sup>506</sup> From ‘*La Terre Retrouvée*’, Paris, 15 February 1947. HU, U/ULA, 1947 I.

<sup>507</sup> Gershom Scholem and Abraham Yaari to Judah Magnes, 24 April 1946. HNUL, 4°1599/23/2.

would most certainly be rejected.”<sup>508</sup> But HU continued to suggest just that. In December 1950 Scholem was still insisting that “As it has become clear, rabbinical literature – and the Paris holdings consist of such material in its major part – is urgently needed *in Israel only* [emphasis added],” a view that was certainly not shared by Paris.<sup>509</sup>

An article Edelman wrote two decades later, in the mid-1960s, describing the Simonseniana Collection, reads as a direct response to these number-based arguments:

Copenhagen...could never be counted among large Jewish centers...The establishment of a library of Jewish books, however, does not always depend upon the existence of a large Jewish community...Many big collections of Jewish books, among them some of the most important in the world, are to be found in libraries that in no way can be considered Jewish, such as the Vatican library and public libraries in Europe, America and elsewhere.”<sup>510</sup>

Of course Denmark’s Royal Library also fits this description and for its supporters, the drastically reduced and declining numbers of Jews in postwar Europe should never have been the deciding factor in the fate of the books or in dooming the Copenhagen Plan. On the contrary. While many may agree with the notion that numbers matter, Edelman’s question was, how many would be enough? “We are becoming more and more nervous that the Zionist circles dispose of the rest” (referring to the books that could not be restituted),<sup>511</sup> circles which would not share his conviction that “It surely will be necessary to have a big Jewish library left in Europe, even if most of the Jews should leave this continent.”<sup>512</sup> Edelman believed that UNESCO offered the best hope to negotiate such a solution, writing, “I hope for the sake of

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<sup>508</sup> 54<sup>th</sup> meeting draft minutes, 29 November 1945. UNESCO Archives, CAME, London 1942-1945, Vol. III BPC, History, Committees and Sub-Committees.

<sup>509</sup> Gershom Scholem to Hannah Arendt, 7 December 1950. HNUL, 4<sup>o</sup> 793/288/212.

<sup>510</sup> Rafael Edelman, “The Jewish Collections in the Royal Library of Copenhagen,” *Jewish Book Annual* 24 (1966-67), 38.

<sup>511</sup> [Edelman?] to Dr. E. Schram-Nielsen, 3 May 1946. DKB, Edelman Papers.

<sup>512</sup> Rafael Edelman to Fanny Goldstein, 27 February 1947. AJA, Goldstein Papers, 2/16.

Jewish culture in Europe that the UNESCO will not let herself be outmanaged.”<sup>513</sup> HU’s Magnes felt exactly the opposite, that UNESCO should take itself out of the picture entirely:

It is only to be welcomed that Unesco wants to help, and we can well understand that Unesco would like at the beginning of its activities to have authority in relation to these books. But our appeal to Unesco is to look at the matter from the point of the Jewish people, whose cultural possessions these books and documents are, and to forego whatever organizational advantage Unesco may acquire, if authority in relation to these books be conferred upon it.<sup>514</sup>

While UNESCO’s central concerns, as discussed in the previous chapter, were preservation, distribution and access of and to Jewish and non-Jewish material confiscated by the Nazis as well as Nazi and other fascist material confiscated by the allies, not about the organization taking a particular interest in what most viewed as a strictly Jewish matter, Magnes’ words illustrate that the source of much conflict and misunderstanding lay precisely therein.

In large part, disagreement stemmed from the fact that by turning to UNESCO in the first place, advocates of the World Jewish Library, most of whom were European Jews themselves, were expressing the controversial view that the fate of the non-restitutable Jewish books was “not a matter of exclusively Jewish concern.”<sup>515</sup> Rather, they believed the books should “be at the disposal of everybody everywhere who needs Jewish books for his study,” Particularly important was that the books be accessible to the relatively few Jews remaining in Europe who otherwise would have severely limited exposure or access to any form of Jewish education, and to non-Jews as an educational tool to fight against antisemitism stemming from ignorance of Judaism and Jewish history, culture and learning.<sup>516</sup> Edelmann argued that the books

must be handled in the most rational way. They must be placed where they can be of most use for as many as possible and they must be placed where there is a certain amount of security against anti-Semitic abuse and from where the books without difficulty can be

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<sup>513</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Aaron Steinberg, 16 August 1946. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>514</sup> Judah Magnes to Jacob Zuckerman, 29 January 1947. Stanford, Baron Papers, 42/11.

<sup>515</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Jacob Zuckerman 26 September 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>516</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Jacob Zuckerman, 8 January 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

lent out to be used at other libraries, everywhere in Europe where they are needed. Further it seems to be reasonable to establish a central library at a place where there already exists a big Jewish library.<sup>517</sup>

In a postwar Europe in which most Jewish libraries had been entirely destroyed or dismantled through confiscation and plunder, the Simonseniana had indeed become a big Jewish library.

Opponents, particularly those associated with HU, disagreed with this position, sometimes vehemently, as exemplified by Scholem's insistence that the Danes "withdraw their claim *in favor of the Jewish people*" [emphasis added].<sup>518</sup> The intensity of the fervent opposition Scholem expressed throughout the debates over the Library is quite in line with the fact that, according to historian Arthur Hertzberg, Scholem was "committed more deeply to Zionism than to anything else" and that it was "the center of Scholem's intellectual and moral endeavor."<sup>519</sup> Specifically, Hertzberg writes that Scholem's "deepest commitment was to Jewish particularism" which put him in conflict with Jewish universalist thinkers inspired by the Enlightenment and the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Historian David Biale argues that Scholem's criticism of the *Wissenschaft* "must be read as a Zionist critique of the possibility of a healthy Jewish life in Europe as a whole."<sup>520</sup> This conviction is clearly revealed in Scholem's inability to see any value

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<sup>517</sup> Rafael Edelman to WJC London, 1 October 1945. DKB, Edelman Papers.

<sup>518</sup> Gershom Scholem to Dr. [Amerik] Sharp, 4 August 1946; Scholem to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, 29 July 1946, in Itta Shedletzky, ed., *Gershom Scholem Briefe 1: 1914-1947* (Munich: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1994), 321-22. Scholem's strident opposition was not restricted to the World Jewish Library plan. After JCR received a request from prominent German Rabbi Leo Baeck for a portion of the books to go towards the library he was founding in London, Scholem asked his JCR colleagues, "Should JCR encourage the allocation of quantities of books to institutions founded effectively only in the post-war II period and which propose to utilise mainly JCR material as a nucleus? In my opinion, requests of this kind should be considered only after provision has been made for firmly established institutions with a large student body or a large reading public." Of course the World Jewish Library was to be closely connected to the Bibliotheca Simonseniana, a firmly established institution, although almost certainly not one with what Scholem would consider a large public. Gershom Scholem to Salo Baron, 31 May 1949. HNUL, 4° 793/288/19.

<sup>519</sup> Arthur Hertzberg, "Gershom Scholem as Zionist and Believer," *Modern Judaism* 5:1 (February 1985), 13, 4.

<sup>520</sup> David Biale, *Gershom Scholem: Kabbalah and Counter-History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 8.

in UNESCO's involvement with the non-restitutable books or in a universalist solution to Europe's postwar dearth of Jewish libraries such as the World Jewish Library represented.<sup>521</sup>

How might Scholem's position have impacted Jews remaining in Europe and especially those in favor of the World Jewish Library? Certainly they were very troubled by the exclusionary right-to-claim arguments coming from outside of Europe that seemed to entirely negate the reality that there were in fact Jews remaining in Europe, regardless of how diminished their numbers were. Edelman wrote, "As an exponent of European Jewry I must emphasize that the cultural property of the Jews in Europe should be disposed of by the Jews in Europe themselves with more right than by the Jews of America. [...] the *Jews in Europe must insist upon their existence* and on not being deprived of those cultural values they may need for their own cultural development [emphasis added]."<sup>522</sup> He was determined to counter what he saw as "the common attitude of the American Jews [...] one of wanting to evacuate all Jews and Jewish from this continent," which Edelman dismissed as "wishful thinking." He wanted to bring other voices into the conversation, asking, "what do European Jews themselves want, and what can be done? We here in Europe, at any rate, know that up to 1 ½ Million (without the Jews in Russia) will (or are forced to) stay and live here. And we do not want to deprive ourselves of our cultural treasures, thus giving up every possibility to develop our cultural life on a Jewish base."<sup>523</sup> The Congress' Steinberg was even more adamant, declaring to Edelman, "What appears intolerable to my sense of justice [...] is the disposal of our cultural treasures quite independently of what we ourselves think of our cultural needs."<sup>524</sup> He used even stronger language in a letter to the Libraries Section's Carter, writing, "In our submission all [rival] claims [...] could be without

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<sup>521</sup> Hertzberg, "Gershom Scholem," 14-15.

<sup>522</sup> Rafael Edelman to Aaron Steinberg, 10 February 1947. DKB, Edelman Papers.

<sup>523</sup> Rafael Edelman to Fanny Goldstein, 2 July 1947. AJA, Goldstein Papers, 2/16 Edelman, R. 1946-1960.

<sup>524</sup> Aaron Steinberg to Rafael Edelman, 20 September 1946. DKB, Edelman Papers.

great difficulty either reconciled or disposed of, if only the *moral duty of the Jewish people to resume its cultural activity where it was stopped by the persecution would be recognized as the over-riding consideration in this matter* [emphasis added].”<sup>525</sup> From this perspective, the books were vital for renewing the Europe that had largely been responsible for their creation, preservation, use and study.

#### **IV. Denmark and the World Jewish Library Proposal**

The tense tone of the debate and the charged language used made it impossible for Denmark to transcend the emotional, as it had hoped to do, beginning with Edelmann’s insistence that “the importance of the creation of a Judaic Library in Europe, or Copenhagen, must be seen from a purely scientific standpoint.” He continued:

I know that within circles close to UNESCO they are sympathetic to the thought solely from this point of view, while the connection with Jews and the particular Jewish interests do not interest. Naturally we wish to cooperate with the interested Jewish organizations, and the realization of the plan can really only be done with their cooperation. But the solely Jewish standpoint is taken care of by the Jewish organizations, while we as mentioned ought to emphasize the scientific standpoint.<sup>526</sup>

Nevertheless, regardless of the approach, of how inclusive and universalist proponents attempted to present themselves and their intentions, opponents perceived Denmark and UNESCO as trying to wrest control of the distribution process away from Jewish organizations, which they boiled down to an attempt to deprive surviving world Jewry of its cultural and intellectual heritage. Edelmann clearly had a professional and personal interest in serving as the head of what he hoped would become the most important Jewish library in Europe and one of the most important internationally. But he even had to convince Steinberg that he was motivated by a greater vision when Steinberg sought assurance that “you too will act in this matter not only as a representative

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<sup>525</sup> Aaron Steinberg to Edward J. Carter, 4 September 1946. CZA, C2/4444 Libraries & Museums Section.

<sup>526</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Jakob Nielsen, 30 June 1946. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

of Scandinavian or even European Jewry but of ‘Klal-Israel’ [all of Israel].”<sup>527</sup> To which Edelmann responded, “my efforts for the Copenhagen scheme are not dictated – and this I assure you – by local or other [...] interests but only and exclusively by the wish to find an arrangement which can be of so great a benefit for the very Klal-Yisroel as possible.”<sup>528</sup> Yet the World Jewish Library became much bigger than this one man and was supported not only by Denmark’s Jewish community, whose leadership expressed its “greatest joy” at being able “to strongly recommend” that the community stand behind the plan, but also by Danish governmental and academic circles.<sup>529</sup>

In October 1945, the Danish Delegation to the Preparatory Commission of UNESCO officially presented its proposal in a statement by Denmark’s National Librarian, Svend Dahl:

In connection with the question of where to deposit the treasures of Jewish literature which were saved, I hereby declare that the Danish library authorities are prepared to receive them and to develop them, together with the great Judaic collection already kept at the Royal Library of Copenhagen, into a Jewish central library that can be utilized by Judaic scholars of all countries. In Denmark it will be considered an honourable obligation to perform the task as well as possible if this country is charged with it.<sup>530</sup>

What drove Denmark’s interest in the matter? According to Edelmann, “The standpoint of the Danish authorities has always been a friendly one and their proposal to the UNESCO with regard to the Jewish Books was *only dictated by the wish to offer a haven to Jewish learning in Europe* [emphasis added].”<sup>531</sup> Was it that simple and straightforward? A Danish delegate to UNESCO offered a bit more detail, explaining that “The Danish Government is of the opinion that this literature is of so great importance not merely from a Jewish point of view but as a part of the

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<sup>527</sup> While Klal Yisroel translates as all of Israel, depending on who is using the phrase and in what context, it can refer to all of world Jewry or only to the Jews in Israel. In this context and given the convictions Steinberg and Edelmann had about the reconstruction of European Jewry, their usage almost certainly refers to all of world Jewry. Aaron Steinberg to Rafael Edelmann, 22 August 1946. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>528</sup> Aaron Steinberg to Rafael Edelmann, 22 August 1946. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>529</sup> Repræsentanterne for Det Mosaiske Troessamfund i København, 16 April 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>530</sup> Svend Dahl, 25 October 1945. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>531</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Aaron Steinberg, 24 September 1946. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

general humanistic studies as a whole that the unic[sic] opportunity to get a special Library of this important literature established should not be neglected but, on the contrary furthered with all means.”<sup>532</sup> Those means included not only some abstract pledge of support, but also including Edelmann as a Technical Counselor (*Conseiller Technique*)<sup>533</sup> to the Danish Delegation attending UNESCO’s First General Conference specifically to discuss the World Jewish Library proposal, despite his not being otherwise qualified to serve as a national delegate.<sup>534</sup> Even more significant was Denmark’s concrete offer “to pay the expenses in connection with her establishment and management etc.”<sup>535</sup> Steinberg was confident that “the probability of gaining the support of our American friends would be much greater” once they received word of this financial assurance.<sup>536</sup>

While the records of the governmental bodies involved in this endeavor, namely the Danish National Commission to UNESCO and the Danish Ministry of Education, do not reveal any more complex or ulterior motivations, they do demonstrate an awareness of the highly sensitive nature of the issue.<sup>537</sup> The Danes involved, ranging from librarians to academics to government officials, were aware or were made aware that they walked a fine line regarding how they worded their communications, the language and tone they used. The Danish delegate’s explanation quoted above, for example, continued by making a careful distinction, “To avoid any

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<sup>532</sup> UNESCO Preparatory Commission, Documents Disposal Sheet, Issuing Officer: Delegation Danoise, Subject: Looted of books of Germany [sic]. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>533</sup> Helge Wamberg to Jean Thomas, 8 November 1946. Rigsarkivet [The Danish National Archives], Collection 1248 Den Danske UNESCO-Nationalkommission, Box 3 1947-1960 UNESCO-sager, 1947, 1721, Folder: Udstilling Paris 1946 (hereafter Rigsarkivet, 1248, Box/Folder).

<sup>534</sup> Referat af Møde, 12 October 1946. Rigsarkivet, 1248, Box 2 1947-1960 UNESCO-sager, 1947, 1721/Brev No. 27196, 4 Febr? 1946, UNESCO 1721/46 (810) 1721/47.

<sup>535</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Jacob Zuckerman, 26 September 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers; C.E. Aagaard, [undated report, first 3pgs missing]. Rigsarkivet, 1248, Box 1 1947-1960 UNESCO-sager 1947 1721/ Brev No. 12863, 22 Juni 1946, 1721/45.

<sup>536</sup> Aaron Steinberg to Rafael Edelmann, 29 January 1946. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>537</sup> As did UNESCO, with it being suggested to Director General Julian Huxley, “In view of the importance of Dr. J.L. Magnes in the Jewish world, I suggest that it might be appropriate for you to write him a brief letter.” Dr. Kuo to Huxley, 16 December 1946, UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 43, 38/2/309.

misunderstandings I must emphasize that the Danish proposal is *not a claim but an offer* [emphasis added].”<sup>538</sup> The word “claim” implies previous ownership or having a right or due to. The significance attached to the word in these discussions and the reason the Danes carefully distanced themselves from it is highlighted by looking at any number of statements made by their opponents. To give just one example, Magnes wrote in May 1946, “we are not putting forward a claim to books or property, so much as we are putting forward a claim which no one else can put forward, i.e. the claim to be the chief spiritual heir of those Jewish institutions for whose books we want to be appointed trustees.”<sup>539</sup> Submitting its proposal to UNESCO rather than pursuing the unclaimed Jewish books on its own was a key means by which Denmark sought to assuage anxieties about its intentions and to garner international support.

The Danes recognized that placing the World Jewish Library under the auspices of UNESCO was vital to demonstrating that the proposed library was to be an international and not a strictly Danish endeavor. To that end, Danish advocates of the Library were reminded that it was “not just a Danish, but very much a European interest. This should be emphasized as much as possible, if the matter comes up in conversation.”<sup>540</sup> However, these steps had the unintended consequence of alienating the international Jewish support which was equally, if not even more vital, to the proposal’s success. In early 1947, in an attempt to prove that its offer was based on the best universalist intentions, that the World Jewish Library represented not only a Danish or European interest, but was also of interest to world Jewry, Denmark proposed that the leadership of the World Jewish Library be Jewish, including that it be governed by a Jewish Trustee Board.

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<sup>538</sup> UNESCO Preparatory Commission, Documents Disposal Sheet, Issuing Officer: Delegation Danoise, Subject: Looted of books of Germany [sic]. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>539</sup> Judah Magnes to Koppel Pinson, 3 May 1946. CAHJP, Magnes Papers, P3/2056.

<sup>540</sup> unsigned to Dr. Schram-Nielsen, 23 May 1946. DKB, Edelmann Papers. Steinberg had also been concerned that the language of the proposed Centre not be Danish, which the Danes assured him it would not be. Unsigned-Edelmann or C.E. Aagaard, to Aaron Steinberg, 6 February 1946. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

Steinberg was as encouraged by this shift as he had previously been by Denmark's promise to maintain the Library financially. Upon receiving the news he wrote confidently to Edelman, "With the inclusion of this point, the main objection to the Copenhagen scheme is, I think, removed."<sup>541</sup> The hope was for the international and cooperative, as well as the Jewish character of the proposed library, to be assured:

There must be established a Jewish Central Library in Europe. This Library should be at the fullest disposal of the Jews all over Europe and elsewhere and it should work under the joint auspices of the UNESCO and the World Jewish Congress. Its main task should be to provide Jewish research work and other legitimate purposes with material wherever it is needed and to spread knowledge about Jews and Judaism – through publications – among the European peoples.<sup>542</sup>

As implied by its name, the World Jewish Library was to be open and accessible to all, Jewish and non-Jewish, in Europe and the world over. Who better than UNESCO, the new impartial multinational cultural organization, to manage the collection, identification, restitution or other allocation of books that the Nazis had stolen and hidden, that remained ownerless, dislocated, and whose future was therefore in jeopardy?

## **V. UNESCO and The World Jewish Library Proposal**

Concern about the uncertain future of the books was widespread enough that as CAME transitioned into the UNESCO Preparatory Commission in November 1945, the proposals initially selected and highlighted as among the most urgent included: to "Take action to stop casual distribution of books found in enemy territory" as well as the "Formation of a World Jewish Library in Copenhagen, consisting of Jewish literature dispersed by the Nazis."<sup>543</sup>

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<sup>541</sup> Aaron Steinberg to Rafael Edelman, 22 January 1947. DKB, Edelman Papers.

<sup>542</sup> Rafael Edelman to Aaron Steinberg, 1 May 1946. DKB, Edelman Papers.

<sup>543</sup> 15 May 1946, Committee on Libraries, Museums, etc., Memorandum on Problem and Policies in the Development of World Library and Information Services, Appendix 4. Summary of Proposals. UNESCO/PrepCom/LM&SP.ProjCom/2. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, London-Paris, 1945-1946, Vol. V Programme Committees.

Regarding the latter, Carter drafted the following statement, unanimously approved by the Libraries Committee:

This Committee draws the Preparatory Commission's attention to the proposal received from the Danish Government for the establishment of a World Jewish Library in Copenhagen, also to the discussions in Committee in which other proposals were made. They agree that it is desirable for the assistance of world Jewish studies, that the books should be preserved in a suitable library or libraries, and suggest that the matter is one for careful consideration by the Preparatory Commission.<sup>544</sup>

This statement ensured that the Copenhagen Plan would be given serious attention and consideration by UNESCO, at the very least during its preparatory year.

Since neutrality was expressed and understood from the outset to be at the core of UNESCO's mission and goals, its interest in the non-restitutable Jewish books in general, and its support for the World Jewish Library in particular, raised questions about intention and motivation. After all, why get involved in a discussion regarding the fate of Jewish books that was otherwise taking place almost entirely among Jewish groups? As previously discussed, for Denmark the answer appears to have been primarily academic. For UNESCO, the explanation, while more complex, boils down to two main points. First was its overarching interest in what the UNESCO document registry termed "confiscated books after World War II," an interest inherited, as seen in the previous chapter, from CAME. Second, once again, was Jacob Zuckerman, the single individual who connects all aspects of this story together. Steinberg referred to him as "a prominent member on the staff of Unesco and [...] most devoted to the interests of our people."<sup>545</sup> After having been appointed to UNESCO but still months away from the start of his contract, Carter wrote to Zuckerman with a request:

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<sup>544</sup> The other proposals came to UNESCO from Prague and Amsterdam and are mentioned in various documents through 1946, but were never finalized in formal submissions. Statement drafted by Edward J. Carter, Libraries Committee meeting, London 6-7 June 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission Vol. V Programme Committees.

<sup>545</sup> Aaron Steinberg to Mr. Z. Shazar, Israeli Minister of Education, 17 March 1949. AJA, WJC, B/127/1.

we are attempting to produce some sort of statement for the November Conference on the legal problems governing the disposal of enemy and other property found by the Control Commissions. [...] If you can find anything definite on this we shall be most grateful, but I shall also be glad if you can find time even before you come to us officially to prepare a fairly detailed memorandum on the whole position, particularly as regards ownership and authorities.”<sup>546</sup>

Zuckerman’s response was a memorandum entitled, “The Problem of Unclaimed Jewish Books.”

Here again his central role in the Library of Congress Mission cannot be overstated. Importantly, in that capacity, he had official permission to access the Offenbach Archival Depot, where most of the recovered Jewish books were brought and stored by the allies, from Colonel John H.

Allen, Chief of the OMGUS Restitution Branch: “To facilitate the transfer of above listed books and other library materials from Berlin to your Depot [OAD] the appointment of Dr. Jacob

Zuckerman as deputy in the procurement, boxing, crating, security and shipment of materials is authorized.”<sup>547</sup> Zuckerman’s memorandum, in addition to demonstrating his personal knowledge about and concern for the non-restitutable books, helped to bring even more attention to the issue within UNESCO.<sup>548</sup>

Vernon Clapp of the Library of Congress, as an American delegate to UNESCO, said outright what no one else had or was willing to when he cautioned that the various interested parties represented “competition” for the non-restitutable books. In July 1946, during an in-depth discussion of what was described as the “generous offer” on the part of the Danes, Clapp urged UNESCO to fully investigate each of the different proposals as well as the role of the Allied

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<sup>546</sup> Edward J. Carter to Jacob Zuckerman, 29 August 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 43, 38/1/308

<sup>547</sup> OMGUS, Colonel John H. Allen, Chief, Restitution Branch to Director Offenbach Archival Depot, 16 April 1946, Subject: Removal of Books from Berlin MFA&A to Offenbach. NARA, M1942, Roll 1, OAD Correspondence 1946-1949.

<sup>548</sup> Memorandum, “The Problem of Unclaimed Jewish Books,” 30 November 1946. UNESCO Archives, World Jewish Library.

Control Authority and Reparations Commission in the matter.<sup>549</sup> Clapp was referring not only to JCR and to Prague, Amsterdam and the other interested cities previously mentioned, but also to HU's Commission for Jewish Libraries Recovered in Europe<sup>550</sup> and the Jewish Historical Society of England's Committee on Restoration of Continental Jewish Museums, Libraries and Archives. These and other interested bodies variously cooperated and clashed over the fate of the books, although most involved agreed that the majority of the books, and certainly the most valuable, should not remain in Europe.

To that end, Magnes expressed a very different notion of what he believed would represent a "generous offer" on the part of the Danes: "It would – if I may be allowed to speak frankly – be a real demonstration of your Government's sense of generosity and its genuine understanding of the plight of the Jewish people if they were to support a plan, which has been agreed upon by recognized agencies of the Jewish people, rather than to oppose it through a plan of their own."<sup>551</sup> This binary between "the Jewish people" who were flowing into the new centers of Jewish life in Palestine and America, versus Europe where "the Jewish people" and Jewish life no longer existed nor should exist, came to define the debate at the time.<sup>552</sup> Its prevalence, however, did not make it convincing to everyone.<sup>553</sup> Hannah Arendt, for example, worried about the impact on the international Jewish community, writing of "The danger of an

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<sup>549</sup> UNESCO Preparatory Commission Provisional Record of 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, London, 10 July 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, London-Paris, 1945-1946, Vol. II Records of Plenary Meetings.

<sup>550</sup> Also referred to as the Committee on the Treasures of the Diaspora. Schidorsky, "The Salvaging of Jewish Books," 197.

<sup>551</sup> Judah Magnes to Rafael Edelman, 22 January 1947. DKB, Edelman Papers.

<sup>552</sup> See also Rauschenberger, "The Restitution of Jewish Cultural Objects," 204.

<sup>553</sup> Schidorsky, "The Salvaging of Jewish Books," 197-212; Herbert A. Friedman, "The Stolen Books of Offenbach," in Friedman, *Roots of the Future* (Jerusalem and New York: Gefen, 2002), 107-112. Although it is beyond the scope of this chapter, there was also tension between interested institutions in Palestine/Israel and the United States. Hannah Arendt, for example, reported to Gershom Scholem that American librarians Alexander Marx (Jewish Theological Seminary, New York) and Edward Kiev (Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, OH) believed that of all the non-restitutable cultural treasures, only about 10% represented texts that were not already in HU's collection and that therefore they were not needed there but at Jewish institutions, including their own, in America. Arendt to Scholem, 11 October 1949. HNUL, 4° 793/288/47.

abyss opening before our eyes between us – and I mean European and American Jews, everybody who was not in an extermination camp – and them.”<sup>554</sup> When Magnes wrote to Edward Warburg, Chairman of the Reparations Commission, seeking the support of Warburg and his Commission in the campaign against the Copenhagen Plan, for example, Warburg responded, “since it is inconceivable that Jewish life will disappear from Europe, consideration should be given to some of the books being placed at the disposal of Jewish communities in Europe. Should that not occur and if in the next ten or twenty years Jewish life should die out in Europe, the books thereafter could very well be sent to Jerusalem.”<sup>555</sup> Despite the dominant usage of this either-or binary in the counter-arguments, in fact, most World Jewish Library supporters were arguing for a collective solution, in which a portion of the books would stay in Europe and a portion would go to the HU and/or other appropriate institutions. Already at CAME the BPC had stated that “After some discussion it was agreed that it would not be wholly desirable to concentrate all Jewish collections in one library.”<sup>556</sup> The World Jewish Library was always intended to be home to just a portion of the non-restitutable books.

Nevertheless, within the United States National Commission for UNESCO, the Round Table on Cultural Institutions reached a consensus that, “On the question of a central library of Jewish literature, opinions expressed were against the establishment of any such center, whether it be by the Danish scheme or any other scheme.”<sup>557</sup> Despite this clear opposition to the Copenhagen Plan on the part of the Americans, the scheme was not immediately dropped. Instead, UNESCO’s proposed Advisory Committee on Disposal of Book Stocks once again

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<sup>554</sup> Hannah Arendt, notes for a lecture, undated. Library of Congress Archives, Hannah Arendt Paper, Box 78, Folder "Remarks to European Jewry" lecture, n.d.

<sup>555</sup> Edward M.M. Warburg to Judah Magnes, 29 January 1948. HU, U/ULA, 1948.

<sup>556</sup> 54<sup>th</sup> meeting draft minutes, 29 November 1945. UNESCO Archives, CAME, London 1942-1945, Vol. III BPC, History, Committees and Sub-Committees.

<sup>557</sup> Technical Document No. 1: Libraries and Documentations Submitted by Round Table on Cultural Institutions (Chap. 5) (Libraries, Museums, Archives, and Publications), 25 September 1946. AJA, Marshall Papers, 31/11.

came into play. As described in the previous chapter, the Committee was to be made up of international experts, including, but not exclusive to, representatives of Jewish organizations, who would negotiate with all four occupying governments to decide which confiscated, plundered, looted and otherwise displaced books would go where.<sup>558</sup> Similar proposals to create an international mediating body were simultaneously being discussed elsewhere. Coming out of London, the WJC British Section also advocated for a committee with a broad make-up, proposing in May 1946 that “Heirless or unclaimed Jewish properties should be handed over the specialised funds for Jewish rehabilitation and resettlement and should be administered under international control,” referring perhaps to UNESCO, and “in co-operation with and on the advice of representative Jewish organisations.”<sup>559</sup> This was precisely what UNESCO’s Advisory Committee was intended to do. Major Lester Born of OMGUS, who provocatively asked, “Are Jewish collections of interest solely to Jews, as claimed? I think not; part of heritage of country of which Jews were a part,” also advocated for close and cooperative relations with UNESCO.<sup>560</sup> Also in August 1946, a similar proposal, although with the US State Department instead of UNESCO at its center, came out of the MFA&A:

It is suggested that a representative body should be created by State Department action, including State Department representation authorized to protect State Department interests, but also including a Library of Congress official, a representative of UNESCO, and representatives of the Commission on European Jewish Cultural Reconstruction and

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<sup>558</sup> Maurice Kaplan, United Jewish Educational and Cultural Organisation, to UNESCO Secretary-General, 21 January 1947. UNESCO Archives, World Jewish Library.

<sup>559</sup> Resolution on Relief and Rehabilitation proposed by Dr. Stephen Barber, National Conference of the World Jewish Congress (British Section), London, 12 May 1946, Report of the Executive Officers, Summary of Proceedings (London: British Section of the World Jewish Congress, 1946). Southampton, Steinberg Papers, 6/4/4 Folder 2/5.

<sup>560</sup> Major Lester K. Born notes, August 1946; Lester K. Born to J.W.R. Thompson and Zuckerman, 21 March 1949. NARA, RG 260, MFAA, OMGUS, M 1949, 456 (MFA&) Arch-Libr. Offenbach Archival Depot and M1921, Roll 4, 96 General Correspondence, respectively. Born’s statement touches on the complex and controversial issue which emerged at the time but is beyond the scope of this work, of national-based restitution claims from countries whose Jewish populations had been decimated. For more on this issue see Martin Dean, Constantin Goschler and Philipp Ther, eds., *Robbery and Restitution: The Conflict over Jewish Property in Europe* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2007).

other Jewish interests as the State Department may select, for the purpose of arriving at a decision on the disposal of material.<sup>561</sup>

These international, cooperative proposals stood in stark contrast to what most Jewish organizations seemed to prefer, that is, that discussion and decisions about the issue be contained within the Jewish world, as in Baron's Commission for European Jewish Cultural Reconstruction (later JCR).

Members of the Libraries Section, where most UNESCO discussion of the fate of the non-restitutable books occurred, appear to have been in general agreement on the matter and for the World Jewish Library idea specifically. No dissention appears in meeting minutes, internal correspondence or other documentation. Even more revealing is the fact that the 1946 First General Conference approved the proposed Advisory Committee, "in which all conflicting interests would be represented."<sup>562</sup> The Libraries Section thought that because the texts in question were, to varying degrees, historically, intrinsically, culturally, economically, and even sentimentally valuable, their distribution should be carefully thought out. There was concern that the urgent push to immediately transfer the books out of a chaotic postwar Europe might later be found to be too hasty and unreflective, as later proved true in certain cases;<sup>563</sup> such concerns were exacerbated by the fact that some books were disappearing (stolen or rescued depending on

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<sup>561</sup> Colonel John Allen, 16 August 1946. NARA, RG 260, MFAA, OMGUS, M1949, 456, Arch-Libr. Offenbach Archival Depot.

<sup>562</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Edward J. Carter, 9 December 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 43, 38/1/308.

<sup>563</sup> For articulation of this concern at the time see Downs, "Wartime Co-operative Acquisitions," 162. Questions regarding whether recipient institutions were given books which could in fact have been restituted, or whether some of the books should be returned to Europe today, now that communities are sprouting up where others existed pre-WWII, have indeed surfaced over the past decade or so. "Some of these books were not in fact heirless but, because the Joint wanted a rapid solution to a very difficult problem, they had been sent 'prematurely' to the Hebrew University. This situation created problems later, when the heirs appeared." Peter Hayes, "Summary and Conclusions," in *Confiscation of Jewish Property in Europe*, 145. See also, Andrew S. Holbrook, "Harvard Holocaust Books to Remain on Widener Shelves," *The Harvard Crimson*, 19 January 2001; Rena Lipman, "Jewish Cultural Reconstruction Reconsidered: Should the Jewish Religious Objects Distributed Around the World After WWII be Returned to Europe?" *Kunst und Recht* 4 (2006); Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, "Tracing Patterns of European Library Plunder: Books Still not Home from the War," in Dehnel, *Jüdischer Buchbesitz als Raubgut*, 152.

the point of view) from the warehouses they were being centralized in, leading Edelman to worry to Steinberg, “Is it to be feared that when the UNESCO meets to discuss the establishment of a Jewish Central Library it will not have any books to dispose of?”<sup>564</sup>

For help in stabilizing the situation, UNESCO appealed to Harry Lydenberg of the Library of Congress Mission (and from New York Public Library and the American Library Association), one of America’s top library figures and a force in international librarianship.<sup>565</sup> UNESCO hoped Lydenberg’s influence could implement better protection of the unclaimed books in the American zone in their temporary warehouses until a suitable and mutually acceptable decision could be made regarding their fate.<sup>566</sup> In response, Lydenberg tried to offer some reassurance to UNESCO:

It seems safe to say that you need have no fear of precipitate action [...] Members of this [Library of Congress] Mission have seen the work now under way at Offenbach, recognize the care being taken to seek in all reasonable and proper ways for marks of ownership, and have witnessed the happy return to such places as Amsterdam [the Rosenthaliana] of collections raped from it by the Nazis. We have heard of the pleas for Palestine, for various other places, are convinced that much time and thought are now being given to the final disposition best for all concerned.<sup>567</sup>

To help facilitate agreement on the final disposition, as discussed in the previous chapter, UNESCO hoped to convene its Conference on Disposal of Book Stocks during the summer of 1947. Based upon the Advisory Committee that never was, the Conference was to include representatives from all UNESCO member states, national and international Jewish organizations, as well as delegates from Austria, Italy, Switzerland, the Soviet Union,

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<sup>564</sup> Rafael Edelman to Aaron Steinberg, 1 May 1946. DKB, Edelman Papers. For analysis of the disappearing books issue see Herman, *Hashavat Avedah*, 169-180.

<sup>565</sup> Lydenberg has been called “an internationalist long before it became fashionable in either politics or librarianship.” Dain, “Harry M. Lydenberg and American Library Resources,” 451.

<sup>566</sup> Jean Thomas to Harry M. Lydenberg and to Mr. Johnson, American Embassy, London, and Mr. Richardson, Ministry of Education, London, 17 May 1946. UNESCO Archives, World Jewish Library.

<sup>567</sup> Harry M. Lydenberg to Jean Thomas, 25 May 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 43, 38/2/309.

Yugoslavia, the Allied Control Authority, and International Federation of Library Associations, among others.

The breadth of the proposed participant list reflects again the fact that the fate of Jewish and all other confiscated books as well as Nazi and other fascist publications were at stake for UNESCO. Regarding the Jewish material, Edelman believed that “an appeal from such a conference where the authority of Jewish organisations and that of UNESCO are united” was the best hope for achieving consideration of the European position he represented, and could help convince central and east European governments to release Jewish books found within their borders.<sup>568</sup> However, without sufficient Jewish or American support, UNESCO was unable to take any action. The previously mentioned 1946 UNESCO General Conference approval of the Advisory Committee hung on the assumption that the books would be turned over to UNESCO by the Allied Control Authorities. It began to seem less and less likely that the turnover would occur as JCR and its growing body of support remained adamant that distribution had to be undertaken not by UNESCO, but entirely by and for Jewish trusteeship, whose population and power centers were no longer in Europe, as UNESCO’s unquestionably were at the time.<sup>569</sup>

This is why the assessment of Lucy Schildkret, had it been widely known at the time, could perhaps have been helpful. After spending a considerable amount of time sorting through the books in the OAD identifying those belonging to YIVO and those suitable for distribution to DP camps, she concluded, “The important thing, however, is that there is plenty to go around [...] There is enough here for everyone: restitution to German Jewish institutions, Hebrew University, YIVO, and rabbinical institutions.”<sup>570</sup> Two days later, in another letter, she presented

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<sup>568</sup> Rafael Edelman to Aaron Steinberg, 23 June 1947. AJHS, Dawidowicz Papers, 55/5.

<sup>569</sup> Unsigned letter to Secretary of State, May 1946, p. 11. Stanford, Baron Papers, 209/12.

<sup>570</sup> Lucy Schildkret to Max Weinreich, 25 May 1947. AJHS, Dawidowicz Papers, 55/4, Personal Correspondence – 1947.

her evaluation of the material she was finding: “most of the other books (i.e. excluding publishers’ stocks) should be considered of value, regardless of whether or not they have been assigned to the Torah Room. In most instances, these are all remnants of great Jewish libraries, and a great part of these books may not be found in Jewish libraries in other parts of the world that were not affected by the war.”<sup>571</sup> While Schildkret had first-hand knowledge of the situation, many others were misinformed and the exchange of incorrect information often exacerbated the debate. For example, Zuckerman reported on a December 1946 visit from AIU librarian J. Gordin who “was under the wrong impression that there were still millions of books left at Offenbach and I tried to give him a picture of the actual situation.”<sup>572</sup> Similarly, mathematician and Danish delegate to UNESCO Jakob Nielsen argued in response to Clapp’s concern about competition that:

in all cases where there are more copies of existing books (and I think that would be in the majority of cases) we would be fully satisfied if we had, say, two copies at the library at Copenhagen : one for stationary use, and one for exchange to libraries which request them ; and this and all surplus material could, at the decision of the authorities concerned, be supplied to such Jewish communities as are interested in the use of them. Therefore I think the question of competition is not so serious, and might perhaps be dealt with without great difficulty.<sup>573</sup>

Particularly in the case of any “cultural treasures,” the chance of there being multiple copies of texts, at least three in Nielsen’s plan, was hardly realistic. In any case, in a November 1946 meeting, UNESCO officials informed Danish delegates that given the number of interested parties, “only 10% of the books may be used for the proposed Jewish World Library.” As explanation for this decision, UNESCO “stressed that other Member States had made similar requests and that, therefore, the Secretariat is unable to commit itself to a preferential treatment

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<sup>571</sup> AJDC memorandum, Lucy Schildkret to Joseph Horne, 27 May 1947, Report for May: NARA, M1942, Roll 5.

<sup>572</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Edward J. Carter, 16 December 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 43, 38/2/309.

<sup>573</sup> UNESCO Preparatory Commission Provisional Record of 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, London, 10 July 1946, 3pm. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, London-Paris, 1945-1946, Vol. II Records of Plenary Meetings.

of any particular claim.” However, since none of the other requests to UNESCO were formalized or pursued beyond early 1946 or so, it is unclear as to whether this 10% figure would have been held to; no other reference to it has been found.<sup>574</sup>

The confidence some, whether well-informed or not, felt regarding the viability of a collective solution was not shared by the many who felt terrible anxiety that the books could end up in whatever one considered to be the wrong hands (those of non-Jews or those only of Jews in Palestine and America) or the wrong places (in Europe – to Magnus and many others a stronghold of antisemitism,<sup>575</sup> or not in Europe at all). Although Edelman started out with an extreme view of his own, that “The idea of transferring the collections to the U.S.A. for distribution is an absurd one. Of two bad solutions this one would be the worst, the other one being Palestine,” he too, necessarily, came to adopt a more nuanced position, writing less than one year later that “of the Jews in Europe surely nobody would deny the importance of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem with regard to the allocation of the Jewish cultural property in Germany,”<sup>576</sup> understanding that support of the American and Palestinian Jewish communities was vital if his proposal was to have any chance of succeeding.<sup>577</sup>

Steinberg agreed, writing to Edelman, “Neither you nor I are in the least degree biased against our dear University in the Holy City. The whole difference is whether one takes a narrow or a broader view, not only of the Jewish present and future, but also of the past experience of our people.”<sup>578</sup> Edelman tried to convince opponents of this broader view, writing to HU Librarian Curt Wormann in November 1947, “it is my hope that the Library here may become a

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<sup>574</sup> Notes on discussion between Mr. Svend Dahl and Mr. R. Edelman, Danish Delegates, with Mr. Carter and Dr. Zuckerman, Libraries & Museums Section, 21 November 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 43, 38/2/309.

<sup>575</sup> “We are convinced that these libraries must be removed from countries where anti-Semitism is rampant.” Judah Magnes to General Hilldring, 4 June 1946. CAHJP, Magnes Papers, P3/2060.

<sup>576</sup> Rafael Edelman to Aaron Steinberg, 10 February 1947. DKB, Edelman Papers.

<sup>577</sup> Rafael Edelman to Aaron Steinberg, 20 June 1946. DKB, Edelman Papers.

<sup>578</sup> Aaron Steinberg to Rafael Edelman, 24 April 1947. DKB, Edelman Papers.

substantial part of the planned reconstruction of Jewish cultural and learned institutions as a European Jewish Central Library in close cooperation with your Library and supplementing it. In this way, I am sure, the treasures of our Jewish collections here will be of real value for wide circles.”<sup>579</sup> Here, as in countless similar statements, the key characteristics of the proposed library - universalism, transnational exchange and cooperation - paralleled the defining characteristics of UNESCO at the time. These extended to its library reconstruction and rehabilitation projects, which, as seen in previous chapters, sought to assist in particular the most war devastated countries of central and eastern Europe.

## **VI. The Soviet Zone**

Zuckerman’s first known statement on the topic, previously quoted, made during the Library of Congress Mission in which he wondered if a new Jewish library under United Nations auspices might be the solution, continued with an equally significant remark: “Such a library would be able to dispose over all those Jewish books which had been evacuated to places in Czechoslovakia, Poland and localities in the Russian Zone.”<sup>580</sup> Because of the postwar and early Cold War instability in countries like Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary - all UNESCO member nations at the time - Zuckerman helped formulate one of UNESCO’s most powerful arguments regarding the books. Specifically, that UNESCO would “undoubtedly encounter less difficulties in negotiations with the countries in question” than JCR, a Jewish commission

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<sup>579</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Curt Wormann, 28 November 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>580</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to David Clift, 18 February 1946, LoC, European Mission, 33/Representatives Zuckerman, Jacob 1946; Jacob Zuckerman to Judah Magnes, 17 January 1947; Jacob Zuckerman to Rafael Edelmann, 20 February 1947; Jacob Zuckerman to Theodore Besterman, 28 March 1947; Rafael Edelmann to Jacob Zuckerman, 24 June 1947. UNESCO Archives, World Jewish Library. Rafael Edelmann to Aaron Steinberg, 23 June 1947. AJHS, Dawidowicz Papers, 55/5. Rafael Edelmann to Fanny Goldstein, 2 July 1947. AJA, Goldstein Papers, 2/16. JCR also reported on this disturbing finding. Commission on European Jewish Cultural Reconstruction Meeting Minutes, 26 June 1946. Stanford, Baron Papers, 209/12.

established on an American basis.<sup>581</sup> Carter made a similar argument, namely that UNESCO “could deal with the books found in all zones, whereas [JCR] can only be considered to apply to the large but none the less limited publications found in the American zone.”<sup>582</sup> The scope of the problem, as librarian Svend Dahl explained to the leaders of Denmark’s Jewish community, was that “in the Eastern European countries is an emergence [of] Jewish Literature, which in one way or another have survived the war. But even these remnants are now threatened with destruction because of the chaos that reigns in Eastern and Central Europe.”<sup>583</sup> While the focus of the various involved parties, particularly those based in the United States and Palestine, was necessarily on the books in the American zone of Germany, and in particular at the OAD, in fact, lesser-known and thus far undiscovered stores of looted, plundered and confiscated books were scattered throughout the other occupied zones as well, particularly in areas under Soviet control.

UNESCO officials came from every member state and often maintained close ties to their home countries. As a result they knew how, where, and with whom to communicate, even, or perhaps especially, in states where American voices were increasingly unwelcome.<sup>584</sup> While information about books beyond the American zone was spotty at best, Czechoslovakian delegate, archivist Jan Opocensky, pointed out in a UNESCO meeting that a large store of Jewish literature (*un grand dépôt de littérature juive*) could be found in his country, just one example of how the forum of UNESCO could be useful in the matter, at least for creating a

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<sup>581</sup> Jacob Zuckerman memo, 2 December 1946. UNESCO Archives, World Jewish Library; Jacob Zuckerman to Judah Magnes, 17 January 1947, p.3. UNESCO Archives, World Jewish Library.

<sup>582</sup> Edward J. Carter to Charles A. Thompson, 19 February 1947, p. 2; Notes on discussion between Mr. Svend Dahl, Mr. R. Edelmann {Danish delegates} and Mr. Carter, Dr. Zuckerman {Libraries & Museum Section}, 21 November 1946. UNESCO Archives, World Jewish Library.

<sup>583</sup> Svend Dahl to Karl Lachmann, 17 March 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>584</sup> Interestingly, when Lydenberg was asked if he knew anyone “open minded enough” to help with culture and education in the Soviet zone, Lydenberg recommended UNESCO, demonstrating that the organization was thought of by some as a potential mediator between east and west. “In theory I should think the Paris headquarters would be the source to turn to for advice as to where to find men thinking as you do and willing to work as you want to do.” Harry M. Lydenberg correspondence with Dr. Anselm Glücksmann, 22 August 1948 and 4 October 1948. Harry Miller Lydenberg Papers, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations (hereafter NYPL, Lydenberg Papers), 8/Germany 1947-52.

forum for open communication with countries outside of the American zone.<sup>585</sup> Edelmann sought out information as well, requesting that the Danish Military Mission in Berlin seek information about books in the Soviet zone, especially in the towns of Arnstadt, Greiz and Thuringia; the Soviet authorities responded that they were “not in the possession of informations about collections of Jewish books in the towns,” nor in their zone of Germany more generally.<sup>586</sup> Back at UNESCO, as discussed in the previous chapter, Zuckerman himself had extensive first-hand experience negotiating with Soviet officials regarding looted books and periodicals from his time with the Library of Congress Mission.<sup>587</sup>

After his arrival at UNESCO in October 1946, Zuckerman traveled again to central and eastern Europe, this time on mission for UNESCO, and sought to bring attention to Jewish book stores he uncovered or was informed about there, reporting, for example, on three churches in Poznan, Poland that contained “great stock piles of Hebrew books.”<sup>588</sup> He also worried about thousands of books being carelessly dealt with, including damaged or sold, in Poland and Czechoslovakia.<sup>589</sup> According to Steinberg, Zuckerman “drew my attention to the muddle with regard to our Jewish books heaped up in Czechoslovakia, and urged me to persuade my friends in London to be more energetic.”<sup>590</sup> Zuckerman also encouraged Edelmann to travel, to look for Jewish books, especially among those confiscated by Czechoslovakia, and to report back to him in detail.<sup>591</sup> Edelmann followed through, traveling in the summer of 1947 to central and eastern Europe to survey stores and caches of Jewish books, and, when possible, to collect and solicit

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<sup>585</sup> UNESCO Preparatory Commission Provisional Record of 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, London, 10 July 1946, 3pm. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, London-Paris, 1945-1946, Vol. II Records of Plenary Meetings.

<sup>586</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Jacob Zuckerman, 30 June 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>587</sup> “Mr. Clapp’s report of his trip to Europe,” *Library of Congress Bulletin* (6-12 August 1946), 12.

<sup>588</sup> Jacob Zuckerman memo, 2 December 1946. UNESCO Archives, World Jewish Library.

<sup>589</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Judah Magnes, 17 January 1947; Jacob Zuckerman to Rafael Edelmann, 20 February 1947; Jacob Zuckerman to Theodore Besterman, 28 March 1947. UNESCO Archives, World Jewish Library.

<sup>590</sup> Aaron Steinberg to Rafael Edelmann, 24 April 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>591</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Rafael Edelmann, 20 February 1947; Jacob Zuckerman to Rafael Edelmann, 5 June 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

books for the Simonseniana. Upon his return to Denmark, the tone of Edelmann's report to UNESCO was downcast, having seen, like Zuckerman, pervasive mishandling and disregard for Jewish books,<sup>592</sup> a disturbing finding also reported on by JCR.<sup>593</sup> Whether antisemitism, ideology, apathy, ignorance, or some combination therein was perceived to be the explanation for this worrying treatment, is never articulated in their accounts. Regardless of the explanation, for those on the side of UNESCO, JCR's exclusive focus on the American zone endangered looted and unclaimed Jewish books elsewhere.

JCR did not think much of this argument, countering that there were few Jewish books in the French or British zones and that anyway, the French and British would certainly follow the American example.<sup>594</sup> This was not, in fact, always the case. According to Hannah Arendt, "the British Occupation authorities, as distinguished from the Foreign Office in London, have shown a not too friendly attitude towards the claims of the Jewish organizations, and that even the London authorities were willing to recognize a Jewish successor organization only if they were confronted with a united Jewish front," a united front which, as we will see, did not fully coalesce until early 1949 in the form of JCR, and which in any case, never represented a total consensus.<sup>595</sup> Much more at stake, however, were the large numbers of books in the Soviet zone.

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<sup>592</sup> Svend Dahl to Karl Lachmann, 17 March 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers; Rafael Edelmann to Aaron Steinberg, 23 June 1947. AJHS, Dawidowicz Papers, 55/5; Rafael Edelmann to Jacob Zuckerman, 24 June 1947. UNESCO Archives, World Jewish Library; Rafael Edelmann to Asnath Klausner, 1 July 1947, DKB, Edelmann Papers; Rafael Edelmann to Fanny Goldstein, 2 July 1947. AJA, Goldstein Papers, 2/16.

<sup>593</sup> Commission on European Jewish Cultural Reconstruction Meeting Minutes, 26 June 1946. Stanford, Baron Papers, 209/12.

<sup>594</sup> See for example, "Very little ownerless Jewish property of a kind suitable for a library has been found in the British Zone to date, and as far as can be ascertained none has been sent out of the British Zone." Cowell to Jean Thomas, 22 July 1946. Also discussed in Thomas to Cowell, 26 July 1946; Cowell to Thomas, 26 August 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, Box 43, 38/2/309.

<sup>595</sup> Hannah Arendt, Field Report No. 18, Strictly Confidential, February 15-March 10, 1950. AIU, Fonds Levy, AP 1/43.

In her pioneering research, Patricia Kennedy Grimsted refers to these books as “twice plundered,” first by the Nazis, then by the Red Army.<sup>596</sup> Archivist and linguist Captain Seymour Pomrenze, in charge of the OAD for the US military beginning in 1946, suggested in a 1946 report to JCR that the bulk of surviving Jewish books were in Poland and the Russian zone. In contrast to Pomrenze’s conclusion that most of the books in these books were of lesser intrinsic or cultural value,<sup>597</sup> however, when in December 1950 “Dr. Steinberg raised questions regarding material in the Russian zone,” Hannah Arendt is reported to have “explained that there is a considerable amount of important material in the Eastern zone of Germany.”<sup>598</sup> A year earlier she had already reported that “this matter looks pretty hopeless.”<sup>599</sup> Arendt worried that any attempt to claim Jewish books found in the Soviet Union or its new satellites would be perceived as a provocation, that the states in question would automatically claim the books as their property, or at least as fair recompense for their own losses to Nazi looting, a scenario that would ensure that the books would be lost to world Jewry, yet another set of victims of the war and its aftermath.<sup>600</sup> Unlike her colleague at JCR Scholem, Arendt’s primary concern does not appear to have been where the books would end up, but rather that they did not remain in a Europe threatened by another totalitarian system.<sup>601</sup>

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<sup>596</sup> Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, “Twice Plundered or ‘Twice Saved’? Identifying Russia’s ‘Trophy’ Archives and the Loot of the Reichssicher-heitshauptamt” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 15:2 (2001): 191–244.

<sup>597</sup> JCR meeting minutes, 26 June 1946. Stanford, Baron Papers, 209/12; Seymour Pomrenze to Rafael Edelmann, 13 November 1946. DKB, Edelmann Papers. In a brief telephone conversation prior to his recent passing, Mr. Pomrenze he insisted that then and now he knew only about the books at the OAD and could not answer questions about any other books. Phone interview, 20 October 2010.

<sup>598</sup> Minutes of special meeting of Board of Directors, 9 October 1950. HNUL, 4° 793/288/326.

<sup>599</sup> Hannah Arendt, Confidential Field Report No. 12, December 1949. AIU, Fonds Levy, AP 1/43.

<sup>600</sup> Hannah Arendt to Salo Baron, 1 October 1945; Hannah Arendt Memorandum, Conversation with Dr. Karbach, Friday, 5 April 1946. Stanford, Baron Papers, 39/2; Scholem to Arendt, 30 April 1950. HNUL, 4° 793/288/117.

<sup>601</sup> This view would fall well in line with her well-known stance toward both fascism and communism. See Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1951).

According to Grimsted, no one had a clear idea at the time of the quantity or provenance of those books, facts which she herself is still only slowly extricating today.<sup>602</sup> She writes that “Some books were burned in spectacular bonfires. Many went to pulping facilities. The most valuable were saved, but many of the confiscated books and archives still have not been located.”<sup>603</sup> She recently stated that “millions”<sup>604</sup> of these “POWs”<sup>605</sup> still remain in Russia today.<sup>606</sup> Her reference to the books as POWs is reminiscent of earlier references to them as survivors; such terms not only imbue the books with human experience but go even further, suggesting that the books are proxies for people.<sup>607</sup> The intensity of the issue meant that some preferred to remain neutral, expressing only general support or interest for the best possible solution to be found.

From Pomrenze, for example, no clear opinion has been recorded regarding UNESCO or the World Jewish Library, although he knew about both, knew all the primary actors involved, and wrote at least once to Edelmann about the matter:

It so happened that by the time your letter of 4 October [1946] reached me I was already aware of the unusual humanitarian offer made by the Danish Government to UNESCO. The tenor of the whole proceeding cannot but fill every person who has fought for the

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<sup>602</sup> The problem does not only exist in the former Soviet Union. See Catherine Hickley, “Nazi-Looted Books Spell Decades of Labor for Libraries,” *Bloomberg Business Week*, 7 April 2013. <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2013-04-07/nazi-looted-books-spell-decades-of-labor-for-libraries> Last accessed 5 June 2013.

<sup>603</sup> Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, “Roads to Ratibor: Library and Archival Plunder by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 19:3 (2005), 391.

<sup>604</sup> Grimsted, “Tracing Patterns of European Library Plunder,” 140, 157.

<sup>605</sup> Patricia Kennedy Grimsted speaking on the panel, “Libraries and Archives: Restitution of Recorded Cultural Heritage,” at the conference, Human Rights and Cultural Heritage: From the Holocaust to the Haitian Earthquake, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, Yeshiva University, New York, 31 March 2011.

<sup>606</sup> For example, “Many remain in Minsk today, where librarians in the National Library of Belarus still consider them as partial ‘compensation’ for the millions of books plundered or destroyed during the war.” Grimsted, “Tracing Patterns of European Library Plunder,” 156.

<sup>607</sup> This is particularly true as the debate over the fate of the books closely echoed discussions over where DPs should go or be sent. The literature on DPs is also rapidly expanding. A brief sampling includes Gerald Daniel Cohen, *In War's Wake: Europe's Displaced Persons in the Postwar Order* (Oxford University Press, 2011); Avinoam J. Patt and Michael Berkowitz, eds., “*We Are Here*”: *New Approaches to Jewish Displaced Persons in Postwar Germany* (Wayne State University Press, 2010); Margarete Myers Feinstein, *Holocaust Survivors in Postwar Germany, 1945-1957* (Cambridge University Press, 2009); Hagit Lavsky, *New Beginnings: Holocaust Survivors in Bergen-Belsen and the British Zone in Germany, 1945-1950* (Wayne State University Press, 2002).

‘four freedoms’<sup>608</sup> with hope for the future. [...] I am deeply interested in your whole problem and do wish to say, as a Jew proud of his people’s cultural heritage, that I hope God speeds your way and you are successful in whatever you undertake.<sup>609</sup>

Here again it is noteworthy that Pomrenze described Denmark’s offer to house the books as “humanitarian,” a term normally reserved for actions that assist people. Otherwise, the fact that Pomrenze expressed no opinion one way or another regarding the plan is significant. After all, Pomrenze’s approval or disapproval may have had some impact with the American authorities, since he was a respected military official, and perhaps among Jewish groups, as his word was highly respected in that world as well. In fact, Pomrenze’s low appraisal of the books in the Russian zone, coupled with a dismissive message from the WJC in New York that “the information furnished by Dr. Zuckerman is very sketchy,” perhaps helped to undermine UNESCO’s strongest argument in favor of its involvement, that as a neutral, coordinating body with broad international membership, it had potentially greater access to and influence within central and eastern Europe than the other concerned parties, which were all American and/or Jewish.<sup>610</sup>

At the same time, JCR was not giving up on the matter and asked the State Department to negotiate with the Polish and Russian governments.<sup>611</sup> This seems somewhat counterintuitive and counterproductive as the relations those governments had with America were part of the problem in the first place. As Scholem wrote in September 1948, “Stress the enormous difficulties [getting books from Czechoslovakia] owing to the Prague Government’s mistrust of the Western powers. They are willing to give to Palestine, but to nobody else,” meaning that

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<sup>608</sup> The Four Freedoms refers to the freedom of speech and of worship, freedom from want and from fear, as outlined by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in his 1941 State of the Union address. See the full text of the speech at <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrthefourfreedoms.htm>. Last accessed 26 October 2012.

<sup>609</sup> Seymour Pomrenze to Rafael Edelman, 13 November 1946. DKB, Edelman Papers.

<sup>610</sup> JCR meeting minutes, 26 June 1946. Stanford, Baron Papers, 209/12; Wolf Blattberg to Asnath Klausner, 25 June 1947. AJA, WJC, E/3/8.

<sup>611</sup> Unsigned letter to Secretary of State, Washington, D.C., May 1946; Commission on European Jewish Cultural Reconstruction Meeting Minutes, 26 June 1946. Stanford, Baron Papers, 209/12.

JCR, an American organization albeit with some international representation, was unlikely to be able to successfully serve as the mediating or negotiating body.<sup>612</sup> And, as time passed and tensions between east and west escalated within UNESCO regarding American influence on the organization, its own potential to serve in such a capacity also began to decline.<sup>613</sup> However, according to a 1948 news clipping, over 100,000 Jewish books from central and eastern Europe were transported to Israel following negotiations in which UNESCO was reported to have served as mediator.<sup>614</sup> This small success raises the question of whether, had it been given the chance, UNESCO could have negotiated the rescue of more of the books outside the American zone, even if it could not have kept them in Europe.

Over a year prior to this transfer, JCR did acknowledge that “Unesco should not deal with the whole question, but that in specific instances such as in Poznan their good offices might be sought” (apparently referring to, for example, Zuckerman’s “sketchy” report about Hebrew books in Polish churches).<sup>615</sup> At the same time, most of JCR’s leading members continued to look with great skepticism toward UNESCO. Scholem pointed out that UNESCO was not entitled to make any decisions about unclaimed Jewish books,<sup>616</sup> and JCR further tried to dismiss UNESCO as being neither in a financial position to meet the costs involved with managing such a large-scale organization and transportation project, nor as actually having the power or

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<sup>612</sup> Gershom Scholem to David Werner Senator, Vice-President, HU, Memorandum, 17 September 1948. HU, U/ULA, 1948.

<sup>613</sup> For example, during the 1947 General Conference, some discussions about restitution of cultural property quickly petered out after degrading briefly into polite but sometimes heated debates between Polish and Canadian representatives over Polish tapestries that the Poles believed had been given to Canada only for safekeeping but that Canada had not returned to Poland even after multiple requests. Program and Budget Commission, Second Meeting, 12 November 1947. UNESCO Archives, General Conference, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, Mexico 1947, Records.

<sup>614</sup> “Saving Books From Europe: 130,000 Volumes for National Library,” *Palestine Post*, 21 July 1948, 3; Wolf Blattberg to Members of the Office Committee, 20 May 1948. AJA, WJC, E/9/13.

<sup>615</sup> Judah Magnes to Salo Baron, 29 January 1947. Stanford, Baron Papers, 43/5; Edward J. Carter to Charles Thompson, 19 February 1947. UNESCO Archives, World Jewish Library.

<sup>616</sup> Gershom Scholem to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, 29 July 1946, and Scholem to Dr. Amerik Sharp, 4 August 1946, in Shedletzky, *Gershom Scholem Briefe*, 321-22.

authority necessary to implement it.<sup>617</sup> Technically, this was indeed true, a fact that UNESCO never denied and that helps explain its struggle to gain the support of the Allied Control Authority in order to establish its Advisory Committee even only in order to take *coordinating* action over those who could financially and logistically manage it.

While JCR had to ask an already inundated State Department to help, UNESCO was offering the full advantage of widespread enthusiasm over its establishment as well as its international position, delegates and connections to at least attempt to negotiate a solution regarding the books. Convinced, however, of the necessity of the books ending up where most Jews were postwar, JCR remained wary of any international or European-based agenda toward or involvement with the unclaimed books. Wolf Blattberg of the WJC in New York worried that “The UNESCO angle of approach to the problem of recovery of cultural property is not only contrary to the idea of a Jewish Restitution Commission but it might also *be dangerous from a Jewish point of view and detrimental to the entire work of recovery* [emphasis added].”<sup>618</sup> The perceived “danger” was that Europe had proven itself to be antisemitic and unsafe for any formal continuation of Jewish life. Therefore, if the books remained in Europe, even in a Jewish library, if they were accessed and utilized at all, it would be almost exclusively by non-Jews, while they would remain largely inaccessible and under-utilized by the majority of surviving world Jewry, which, after 1945, was located outside of Europe.

For some, however, it was Palestine that presented the greater potential danger to the books. As early as December 1945, the threat of war coupled with insufficient funding at the HU, led the Library of Congress’ Theodor Gaster to state that the books would be more secure as

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<sup>617</sup> Jerome Michael to Salo Baron, 18 February 1947. Stanford, Baron Papers, 39/2; Judah Magnes to Salo Baron, 29 January 1947. Stanford, Baron Papers, 43/5.

<sup>618</sup> Wolf Blattberg to Dr. Kubowitzki, 2 April 1947. AJA, WJC, E/3/7.

“UNESCO property and under the protection of the American flag.”<sup>619</sup> Indeed in March 1948 Magnes wrote, “The night before last at least 1000 shots were fired at [HU’s] Library, which contains irreplaceable treasures. If they should be destroyed, it would be a catastrophe[sic] approaching that of the destruction of the great library at Alexandria centuries ago.”<sup>620</sup> This reality led Svend Dahl to argue in July 1946 that “Palestine was one of the worst places to put such a Library, both [because] it was too remote and because of the turbulent conditions.”<sup>621</sup> These conditions were exacerbated with the establishment of the state of Israel in May 1948, which both sides used to try to further their arguments. From HU came the message that “The simple formula that the books should go where the Jews themselves are going should appeal to everybody, especially under the present circumstances created by the momentous decision of the UN.”<sup>622</sup> For their part, the Danes saw an opportunity to repeat their appeal that “On the occasion of the United Nations’ decision to establish a Jewish state in Palestine, [...] a collaboration between our Libraries, especially having the plan of the establishment of these collections as a European Jewish Central Library in mind, could develop in a way of mutual help.”<sup>623</sup> Neither side was prepared to give up their position, although even Scholem acknowledged in November 1948 that:

There is no safe place in Haifa or Tel Aviv which is at our disposal for storing the books and moreover there is no chance at present to transport them from the port to Jerusalem. The University Library is, as you may happen to know, in the so-called militarized area to which we have practically no access, to say nothing of bringing books there or taking them from there. Jerusalem is constantly subjected to shelling and we prefer to have these important books stored in a place where no possible harm can be done to them.<sup>624</sup>

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<sup>619</sup> Theodor H. Gaster to Luther H. Evans, 30 December 1945. LoC, European Mission, 34/Restitution of “unrestituted materials” (Jewish Books).

<sup>620</sup> Judah Magnes to Sir Alan Cunningham, High Commissioner for Palestine, 8 March 1948. AJA, Marshall Papers, 21/9 Magnes, Judah L. 1909-1948.

<sup>621</sup> Svend Dahl to Jakob Nielsen, 6 July 1946. DKB Edelman Papers.

<sup>622</sup> Gershom Scholem to Simon Federbush, 12 December 1947. HU, U/UL, 1947 I.

<sup>623</sup> Svend Dahl to Curt Wormann, [3 December 194?]. DKB, Edelman Papers.

<sup>624</sup> Gershom Scholem to Mr. Levine, JDC Paris, 10 November 1948. HNUL, 4°1599/23/4.

Such was the case with a shipment of books from Czechoslovakia destined for Israel in the spring of 1949. As JCR reported, “in view of present conditions there, they might have to be kept in Antwerp where they are at present, or sent elsewhere temporarily.”<sup>625</sup>

While the debate remained deadlocked and even as conditions inside of the new state remained highly unstable, a shift in mentality occurred among many Jews still in Europe, particularly those struggling to live amidst resurgent antisemitism and the solidification of the Iron Curtain, who began looking and moving more and more toward the new Jewish state. This state of affairs led Edelman to note that the relatively small group speaking for the future of European Jewry was becoming increasingly fragmented even as it shrank in size. In September 1948 he wrote, “The Jews of Europe are in a state of departure and have no mind for books or libraries. Certain powerfull[sic] circles are establishing themselves on political lines beyond special Jewish interests and are endeavouring[sic] to get the leadership in European Jewry on these lines. Rivalry and the like is doing the rest.”<sup>626</sup> The deepening divide also led Steinberg, in 1949, to speak out strongly against what he called “the priority complexion which is developing now” among world Jewry. “Culture means continuation,” he argued, insisting, “There are no Jews of first and second category – of Israel and of the Diaspora.”<sup>627</sup> Nevertheless, the future of European Jewry was becoming less and less certain, circumstances which did not help the case of those hoping to empower UNESCO and to establish the World Jewish Library.

## **VII. Decline of the World Jewish Library Plan**

This developing reality led Edelman to wonder if perhaps the association with UNESCO was at the root of opposition to Denmark’s proposal. Even in their early exchanges about how to

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<sup>625</sup> Report on the meeting of the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction Incorporated, 18 May 1949. CZA, C7/1284/1 Overseas-Commission on European Jewish Cultural Reconstruction.

<sup>626</sup> Rafael Edelman to Fanny Goldstein, 25 September 1948. WJC, Goldstein Papers, 2/16, Edelman, R. 1946-1960.

<sup>627</sup> European Members of the General Conference Session, Paris, 29-30 August 1949: Aaron Steinberg on 30 August 1949. Southampton, Steinberg Papers, 6/3/6.

gain the support of Jewish individuals and organizations in America and Palestine, Edelmann had asked Steinberg, “I could imagine that your idea is to establish the Library in Copenhagen without the intervention of the UNESCO or other non-Jewish organisations, it just strikes me.”<sup>628</sup> But for Steinberg, this was not the solution. He responded, “I am afraid you go a bit too far.”<sup>629</sup> Yet the question resurfaced for Edelmann after he received two letters from Magnes in early 1947 that seemed to hint at possible support for Copenhagen.<sup>630</sup> In response, Edelmann called it a “mere accident” that Denmark had turned to UNESCO in the first place. He continued:

As for the question of the Trusteeship Corporation I have by the responsible Danish authorities been authorized to say as follows: As the Danish proposal has been made primarily before UNESCO and Denmark thus has been involved in the activities of UNESCO in this matter, the Danish Government for matter of prestige cannot take any active steps which could be interpreted as a withdrawal. But they are ready, within these limits, to do what is possible to support the idea of a Jewish Trusteeship Corporation, at any rate in case the Allied Control Authorities in Berlin will deny to hand over the Jewish cultural material in Germany to UNESCO.

Edelmann added a handwritten plea to Magnes, asking, “Please, send me some hints as to what I can do and how I shall behave.”<sup>631</sup> This echoed a request Edelmann had made to Steinberg about six months earlier, “I beg you as one Jew of his fellow-Jew to write openly to me and tell me how you want me to act in our common task [...] Thus far I have acted blindly, more or less.”<sup>632</sup> These statements suggest that Edelmann felt rather isolated in his campaign, despite the backing he had accumulated from supporters scattered throughout the world, and that he was open to revising Denmark’s proposal, to the extent possible, if it would improve the chance that it would be more seriously considered and discussed, especially by other Jews and Jewish groups.

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<sup>628</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Aaron Steinberg, 28 August 1946. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>629</sup> Aaron Steinberg to Rafael Edelmann, 20 September 1946. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>630</sup> “Dr. J.L. Magnes, in his letter to me of 23th[sic] January 1947, wrote: ‘As an initial member of the Trusteeship Corporation /in USA/, the Hebrew University will be ready to advocate the idea of a Central Library at Copenhagen to be set up from among such works as may be available for such a purpose’, and again in his letter of 17<sup>th</sup> February 1947: ‘I should like to repeat this, and to emphasize our readiness to advocate the idea of a Central Library at Copenhagen.’” Rafael Edelmann to Curt Wormann, 28 November 1947. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>631</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Judah Magnes, cc Gershom Scholem, 28 February 1947. HU, U/ULA, 1947 I.

<sup>632</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Aaron Steinberg, 28 August 1946. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

Edelmann also had to convince the Jews of Europe of his plans. First and foremost, he insisted that as many books as possible, or at least a representative sample, remain in Europe. However, in a move that may not have won him as many friends from within European Jewry, he also hoped that some of the small and scattered surviving Jewish communities might be persuaded that some portion of any remaining or restituted books in their possession might be used to “collaborate on a big plan to the benefit of the Jewish people as a whole.” In other words, that even existing communities would consider donating or loaning their books to the World Jewish Library. Such an action would, Edelmann argued, release these small, scattered, often precarious communities “of a heavy financial burden, caused by the obligation of maintaining a big library in a workable condition.” Edelmann’s plan, his hope, was that “the owners of the books should be persuaded to take out so many of the books belonging to them as they may need in their daily work, and of the rest there should be established a central library, belonging to the entire European Jewry and to the general humanistic learning in Europe, which we never must forget for our own sake.” He also realized that such a plan might not be fully realistic and returned to his primary goal, continuing, “whether the persuasion of the communities etc. is practicable or not, the Jewish books must not be taken away from the European Jewry of which they are the mental products and which will be in need of them as well as the American Jews are in need of the Jewish books in America and the Palestinians are of the books in Palestine.”<sup>633</sup>

Despite a continuous flurry of correspondence, the situation did not evolve; in June 1947 Edelmann wrote again to Steinberg, this time in frustration, “I feel I should not press the question [...] against the obvious policy of our Palestinian and American friends.”<sup>634</sup> The World Jewish Library and the hopes for a European-Jewish future that it represented were beginning to seem

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<sup>633</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Aaron Steinberg, 1 May 1946. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

<sup>634</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Aaron Steinberg, 23 June 1947. AJHS, Dawidowicz Papers, 55/5.

less and less realizable. As American support increasingly rallied behind JCR, negotiations between UNESCO and the Allied Control Authority fell into “a state of complete stagnation”<sup>635</sup> and “deadlock.”<sup>636</sup> Ultimately, UNESCO did not dare push its case further. To act otherwise would have meant opposing the leading voices of world Jewry about a Jewish matter, and the American government, which at the time provided UNESCO with almost half of its budget.<sup>637</sup> Neither were risks that UNESCO wanted nor could afford to take. In December 1947, UNESCO Director General Julian Huxley was reported to have “expressed himself very strongly against Unesco handling this matter at all.”<sup>638</sup> If true, this represented a complete turnaround from the previous year when Huxley wrote to OMGUS in Berlin, introducing Zuckerman to the MFA&A in order to discuss “the possible transfer to Unesco of the unidentifiable books now stored at the Offenbach Archival Depot.”<sup>639</sup> Indeed Lucy Schildkret recalled hearing in early 1947 about “an idea afloat in MFA&A that the heirless Jewish property might be constituted into a comprehensive Jewish library under some international scholarly Jewish auspices.”<sup>640</sup> Throughout 1947, in fact, Carter was in regular correspondence with a number of different OMGUS and MFA&A individuals who, while willing to answer his questions and provide him with detailed explanations of the status of the book stocks, they remained entirely noncommittal

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<sup>635</sup> Asnath Klausner to Simon Federbush, 15 November 1947. AJA, WJC, B/127/10.

<sup>636</sup> Rafael Edelmann to Aaron Steinberg, 23 June 1947. AJHS, Dawidowicz Papers, 55/5.

<sup>637</sup> 44.03% as of 13 November 1947. Statement of contributions to the 1947 Budget at 13 November 1947, 2C/2 Annex E Add. 1 Page 1. UNESCO, *Budget Estimates for the Financial Year 1948 and Information Annex* (Paris: UNESCO, 1947); UNESCO Budget and Revolving Fund, 24 June 1947. AJA, Marshall Papers, 16/11.

<sup>638</sup> Asnath Klausner to Simon Federbush, 5 December 1947. AJA, WJC, B/127/10.

<sup>639</sup> Julian Huxley to the Adjunct General, 6 November 1946. UNESCO Archives, Jacob Zuckerman Personnel File.

<sup>640</sup> Dawidowicz, *From That Place and Time*, 315. Although no evidence has been found of Schildkret’s opinion of or reaction to this piece of information, in other cases she clearly expressed the view that Jewish life in Europe, certainly in eastern and central Europe, did not have a future and that she would do everything possible to transport the books to the United States. In a conversation with Pomrenze’s successor as Director of the OAD, Joseph Horne, she reported that, “Horne asked me to tell him about Poland and I helped him maintain the opinion he already had, that there is no hope for renewed Jewish cultural life in Poland. There may be a Jewish community there, but he feels that no one will ever make use of the materials.” Schildkret to Weinreich, 16 February 1947. AJHS, Dawidowicz Papers, 55/3, Letters from Lucy-AJDC – 1946-1947. See also Dawidowicz, *From that Place and Time*, especially 299-326, and Gallas, “Restoring and Remembering East European Jewish Culture.”

and ultimately kept him, and by extension, UNESCO, at arm's length and in the dark regarding their ultimate goals and intentions.

In her recent study of JCR, Dana Herman attributes its success to its ability “to convince the [American] government that their [JCR’s] restitution aims were compatible with U.S. post-war objectives,” which mainly and increasingly had to do with containing communism.<sup>641</sup> Were American interests so different from UNESCO’s? To return to UNESCO’s key argument that it could negotiate with governments beyond the American zone, including with its member states Poland and Czechoslovakia, which were becoming increasingly anti-American, perhaps what seemed like a clear advantage had in fact been, in the eyes of the Americans, a potential threat to their ability to control the postwar situation and the balance of power between its authority, that of the other occupying governments, and that of “neutral” international organizations such as UNESCO.

### **VIII. Conclusions**

Ultimately, despite what to many seemed the obvious, indeed the only outcome, it was only in February 1949 that Baron received authorization from the State Department and Allied Control Authority for his entirely Jewish, New York-based JCR to distribute the non-restitutable books amassed in the American zone. The World Jewish Library story ended for Denmark a few months later when Blattberg wrote to Edelman:

As to the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, it was the general opinion there that priority should be given to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and the other books should be distributed to the Jewish institutions and libraries in this hemisphere as well as in Europe. [...] I still hope that some allocations will be made [...] for your library. Should you have some special demands, please let me know and I will bring them up for discussion at one of the meetings of the JCR.<sup>642</sup>

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<sup>641</sup> Herman, *Hashavat Avedah*, 151-2.

<sup>642</sup> Wolf Blattberg to Rafael Edelman, 29 September 1949. AJA, WJC, E/4/7.

Blattberg's offer appears to have come only once the WJC was certain that neither UNESCO nor the Danish proposal, nor any other endeavor contrary to JCR, was to be adopted or endorsed by the Allied Control Authority. In any case, despite Blattberg's offer, whether it had been sincere or not, Edelmann was disappointed to report in 1951 that, "Of the books from the looted property I have not seen even a single copy [...] I have several times asked for an allotment, even a pro forma one, but have not even received an answer, though it is my conviction that the Jewish Dept. of the Royal Library of Copenhagen is not less entitled to it than certain other libraries which have received big lots."<sup>643</sup> Even without an allocation, Edelmann remained dedicated to expanding the Royal Library's Judaica collection, to European and international Jewish library collaboration, and to nurturing the renewal of Jewish life and culture in Europe more broadly. He launched Jewish studies at the University of Copenhagen in the fall of 1948 and organized the first Congress for Jewish Librarians in Paris in 1955, which led to his founding of the Association of Libraries of Judaica and Hebraica in Europe the following year. Edelmann always traced each of these achievements back to the destruction and dislocation of Jewish libraries and books during the war and to the subsequent need to reconstruct and continue to develop Jewish life in Europe, and he continued to turn to UNESCO to request financial and other support.<sup>644</sup> As an interesting side note, writing in the *Annales* in 1953, historian Henri Michel continued to identify UNESCO as having a potential role in the ongoing effort to locate, identify and potentially rescue looted and lost Judaica and Hebraica, particularly any material that remained in Soviet Union: "we still do not know what the Russians have; we do not know what they

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<sup>643</sup> In fact, according to Edelmann the Simonseniana was offered duplicates from its own founding collection. In other words, books that it had no interest in or use for and had already rejected from the original donors who had then sold the books to dealers in 1932. Rafael Edelmann to Fanny Goldstein, 10 September 1951. WJC, Goldstein Papers. See also R. Edelmann, "The Jewish Collections in the Royal Library of Copenhagen," *Jewish Book Annual* 24(1966-67): 41; Edelmann, *The Royal Library: Bibliotheca Judaica Simonseniana* (Copenhagen, 1957).

<sup>644</sup> Rafael Edelmann to M. le President [Cassin], AIU, 4 February 1953. DKB, Edelmann Papers.

inherited from the Germans or found in western European countries that had been German allies. Their absence from UNESCO is an impediment to knowing their publications and their projects.”<sup>645</sup>

While proponents had believed that the World Jewish Library would both benefit “general humanistic learning”<sup>646</sup> and offer Europe’s remaining Jews “a centre for Jewish studies in Europe” that would also be a draw to Jews the world over,<sup>647</sup> instead, by the early 1950s, JCR’s distribution had benefited primarily institutions in Israel and the United States, as well as in Latin and South America, Canada and Western Europe.<sup>648</sup> While representatives from interested national and international Jewish bodies, including the WJC, were represented in JCR in order to have a say in the fair distribution, as they saw it, of the books, UNESCO had no involvement whatsoever. In fact, this story appears to have ended for UNESCO in early 1948, when UNESCO’s Carter had the last identified communication with Edelman, informing him that a final decision had yet to be made regarding trusteeship or distribution of the books, but that UNESCO’s focus was necessarily shifting to other matters as American backing of JCR increasingly appeared inevitable.<sup>649</sup>

In fact, 1948 was equally a pivotal and trying year for the WJC and for Jewish interests more generally at UNESCO. Not only was 1948 the year that it became apparent that UNESCO would not have any role in the fate of the non-restitutable books, surely a devastating blow to Edelman, Steinberg and Zuckerman, who had seen the Library as a key element in the cultural reconstruction of Jewish Europe and in the future of European and world Jewry more generally,

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<sup>645</sup> Henri Michel, “Les travaux d’histoire sur la seconde guerre mondiale,” *Annales. Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 8:1 (1953): 102.

<sup>646</sup> Rafael Edelman to Jacob Zuckerman, 13 February 1947. UN ESCO Archives, World Jewish Library.

<sup>647</sup> Jacob Zuckerman to Judah Magnes, 17 January 1947. Stanford, Baron Papers, 42/11.

<sup>648</sup> Waite, “Returning Jewish Cultural Property,” 213-228; Anne Rothfeld, *Returning Looted European Library Collections: An Historical Analysis of the Offenbach Archival Depot, 1945-1948*, *Rare Books and Manuscripts* 6:1 (Spring 2005): 14-24; Herman, *Hashavat Avedah*.

<sup>649</sup> Edward J. Carter to Rafael Edelman, 26 January 1948. UNESCO Archives, World Jewish Library.

but it was also the year that UNESCO's Third General Conference was, despite much controversy and protest, held in Beirut. The impact on the Jewish world, which was euphoric over the birth of the state of Israel but simultaneously agonizing over the conflicts, war and bloodshed that statehood had precipitated, was profound. Lebanon, which had declared war on Israel, would not approve the required entry visa for Israeli representatives, nor for any Jewish representatives, to attend the Conference. This political conflict in turn left UNESCO in the extremely delicate situation of being perceived as taking sides, ultimately, against the Jewish side. Although the decision not to change the conference location was taken not by UNESCO's Secretariat or Executive Board or any other single or administrative part of the organization, but rather, (much like the recent decision to add Palestine as a member nation), by a majority vote of member states. The resultant tidal wave of protestation from world Jewry and far beyond against both Lebanon and UNESCO surely left a bitter impression on the opponents to the World Jewish Library planned discussed here who were already threatened or angered by what they perceived as UNESCO's misguided interest in Jewish matters. The issue, however, went entirely unmentioned in correspondence over the World Jewish Library issue.

The World Jewish Library story serves as a case study through which to better understand the hopes and disappointments of UNESCO's first years. The failure to ever convene its Advisory Committee or its Conference was as disappointing as it was enlightening. While these failures did largely bar UNESCO from participating in the restitution and distribution of confiscated books, neither the failure nor the 1948 General Conference in Beirut damaged its relationship with Steinberg and the WJC. It is notable that the WJC did not waver in its support for, belief in, or active participation with UNESCO. As Steinberg put it, "collaboration between Unesco and the WJC had not been impaired by the absence of a Congress representative at the

Beirut Conference.”<sup>650</sup> In fact, that relationship would continue to be fruitful as UNESCO began to think increasingly about cultural rights in the interrelated contexts of its role in the drafting of the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights, particularly Article 27, and as its work in libraries turned increasingly from reconstruction and rehabilitation into development and expansion.

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<sup>650</sup> Aaron Steinberg, Statement on the co-operation of the WJC with UNESCO, 18 January 1950. AJA, WJC, B/127/14.

## Chapter 4: (Public) Libraries: Cultural Right, Human Right

When, in June 1951, the WJC referred to UNESCO “as the natural protector of cultural rights,”<sup>651</sup> it articulated a perception that had developed over the course of the postwar years. Since its establishment, UNESCO was commonly associated in the minds of many with human rights in general and with cultural rights in particular. The association was further solidified after the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), with its inclusion of cultural rights, was approved on 10 December 1948.<sup>652</sup> Neither the contents nor the approval, however, were a foregone conclusion. As French Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain famously said at the time, commenting on a discussion about human rights that took place within a UNESCO National Commission, “we agree about the rights but on condition that no one asks us why.”<sup>653</sup> A similar sentiment had been understood in the speech Maritain gave opening the second UNESCO General Conference in 1947. As one attendee reported, Maritain’s message there too was that it “was hopeless for Unesco to seek a speculative or ideological community in its work. On the other hand, different as its members are in their views, they all seem to believe in doing the same things.”<sup>654</sup> In other words, while there was a general consensus about the elements that constituted human rights, including cultural rights, there was significantly less agreement about how to define them, about the historical, ideological, cultural, political or other factors that made them necessary or important, or about how best to protect and monitor their implementation.

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<sup>651</sup> Statement Concerning the Implementation of Cultural Rights (Articles 28 – 31 of The Draft International Covenant on Human Rights) Presented to the Director-General of UNESCO by the WJC, 8 June 1951, p.3. AJA, WJC, B/127/1.

<sup>652</sup> The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 10 December 1948.  
<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>. Last accessed 5 November 2012.

<sup>653</sup> Emphasis in original. Jacques Maritain, “Introduction,” Human Rights: Comments and Interpretations, A Symposium edited by UNESCO. UNESCO/PHS/3(rev), Paris, 25 July 1948, p. I.  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001550/155042eb.pdf>. Last viewed 19 April 2013. Unless otherwise noted all citations are from this UNESCO document rather than from the publication of the same title.

<sup>654</sup> John Marshall to his Rockefeller Foundation colleagues, November 1947. RAC, RG 3 Series 900 Box 24 Folder 191, 900 Program and Policy – Literature Aid 1945-1955.

Some of the points of convergence and divergence over the developing notion of cultural rights that played out within the forum of UNESCO during the early postwar years, examined through the lens of notions about the right to libraries, are the focus of this chapter.

Insight into why cultural rights were so important at UNESCO can be found in a 1949 speech given by then-Director-General Jaime Torres-Bodet to the Fourth General Conference in Paris, in which he said, “Men need culture, in fact, as much as they need bread. They want their share of mankind’s spiritual inheritance, they desire themselves to live its change and growth, to attempt to enrich it.”<sup>655</sup> Librarianship in particular, long viewed “as a profession concerned with the individual rights of access, inquiry, and speech,” meant that libraries were recognized at UNESCO as a key site through which people could claim and partake of their newly granted cultural rights.<sup>656</sup> Close examination of the points at which librarianship and cultural rights intersected at UNESCO during the early postwar years illuminates the interconnections between the two as both were being (re)formulated in the early aftermath of the war, in large part based on the experiences and perceptions of the crimes that had been committed against human rights during that war.<sup>657</sup> Yet, the postwar reality was that those experiences and perceptions varied enormously, as did the resultant goals and motivations driving those involved in the development of cultural rights.

As will be demonstrated throughout this chapter’s continued focus on the examples of France, Poland, and the World Jewish Congress, different groups had very different

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<sup>655</sup> Jaime Torres-Bodet, “An Act of Self Examination: Past Endeavors Future Action,” *UNESCO Courier* II:9 (1 October 1949), 9-10.

<sup>656</sup> Julie Biando Edwards, “Introduction,” in Edwards and Stephan P. Edwards, eds., *Beyond Article 19: Libraries and Social and Cultural Rights* (Sacramento, CA: Library Juice Press, 2010), 1.

<sup>657</sup> In a fascinating twist on the interrelationship between libraries (reading) and rights, Lynn Hunt argues that it was the experience of reading early novels during the eighteenth century that taught readers to empathize with those who were different from them by “identifying with ordinary characters who were by definition unknown to the reader personally” (38). This, in turn “opened the path to human rights,” although, as Hunt is careful to add, “it did not ensure that everyone would be able to take that path right away” (68). Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007), 35-69.

understandings of cultural rights and indeed of culture itself. As a result, each also had very different agendas regarding how these rights should be defined, protected and implemented, and of UNESCO's role in the process. A primary motivation for UNESCO was to stamp out any remaining fascist or other dictatorial or totalitarian leanings and therefore to nurture a peaceful and universalist world. France's interest in cultural rights was viewed as an obvious outgrowth of its historical positioning on the forefront of progress in the realms of culture and rights and was advanced by the leading involvement of René Cassin.<sup>658</sup> For the World Jewish Congress, cultural rights represented Jewish rights and therefore perhaps the best opportunity to create safe continuity for Jewish life in Europe and worldwide, to protect Jews where the minority rights implemented after World War I had failed to do so.<sup>659</sup> Poland appears to have understood cultural rights as a means of protecting Poland's own cultural heritage as well as a means of protecting its right to challenge what it increasingly viewed as America's imperialistic culture. While initial debates over cultural rights were occurring as Poland was becoming increasingly Sovietized and antagonistic at UNESCO, its continued participation in UNESCO Libraries Section activities even while it withdrew in other areas is illustrative of its desire to remain involved in means of providing books from abroad and libraries to its citizens. At the center of these differences, UNESCO found common ground in a widely shared desire and demand for public libraries, even if the specific manifestations of public libraries differed by country and context.<sup>660</sup>

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<sup>658</sup> See, for example, Moyn, "René Cassin, Human Rights, and Jewish Internationalism," and Winter, "René Cassin and the Alliance Israélite Universelle."

<sup>659</sup> See Mark Mazower, "The Strange Triumph of Human Rights, 1933-1950," *The Historical Journal* 47:2 (2004), 387-388.

<sup>660</sup> Here it is useful to situate libraries as part of the public sphere or civic space, defined as "the playing field for citizenship." Michael Schudson, *The Good Citizen: A History of American Civic Life* (New York: The Free Press, 1998), 12. More specifically we can look to research on the library as public place. Library historian Wayne Wiegand, for example, explains his preferred research on "library in the life of the user" has led him "to believe that increasingly in the last century libraries worldwide have done three things very well. They have: One, made

Arguably, the inclusion of cultural rights in the UDHR put them “on the same level as civil and political [individual] rights.”<sup>661</sup> Yet, according to one analysis, cultural rights have largely been a “neglected,” “under-developed” and “underestimated,” if not a “completely forgotten” category of human rights, often considered “poor relatives” in comparison with civil, political and economic rights.<sup>662</sup> Cultural rights were never sidelined, however, at UNESCO, where, as was the case with libraries, cultural rights were front and center from the first. In fact, the two were inextricably linked: “The concept of a library for all the people, without distinction as to race, religion, class or age, has grown in harmony with the belief in fundamental human rights, wherever this faith has taken root.”<sup>663</sup> As such, cultural rights, including via the right to libraries, offered a realm in which UNESCO could utilize its soft power position to potentially make a real impact. This chapter will demonstrate that from the outset, even if the impetus was not initially specifically articulated as such, a fundamental belief that all people everywhere had the right to libraries and to information was a driving belief behind UNESCO’s Libraries Section.

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information accessible to billions of people on many subjects; two, furnished billions of reading materials to billions of patrons; and three, provided hundreds of thousands of places where users have been able to meet formally as clubs or groups, or informally as citizens and students utilizing a civic institution and cultural agency.” Wayne A. Wiegand, “Library as Place,” Presentation to the 56<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference North Carolina Library Association, September 22, 2005. See also John E. Buschman and Gloria J. Leckie, eds., *The Library As Place: History, Community And Culture* (Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2006), with foreword by Wiegand.

<sup>661</sup> Paul Gordon Lauren, *The Evolution of International Human Rights: Visions Seen* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 236.

<sup>662</sup> Janusz Symonides, “Cultural Rights: A Neglected Category of Human Rights,” *International Social Science Journal* 50:158 (December 1998): 559.

<sup>663</sup> This quote is from a typed manuscript entitled “The Library and the People” filed amidst the Public Library Manifesto materials held in the UNESCO Archives. While the brief essay is neither dated nor signed, it reads as an early draft for the Manifesto and includes handwritten notes that appear to be in Carter’s hand. Despite the uncertainty of its origins or author, the document is instructive for further understanding how libraries were viewed as a human and cultural rights issue at UNESCO. UNESCO Archives 02 A 31 “Public Libraries Manifesto.”

Three articles of the UDHR in particular – Article 19 regarding freedom of expression and freedom to information,<sup>664</sup> Article 26 regarding education and Article 27 regarding culture – have been linked conceptually as well as practically to UNESCO from the time of their drafting. UNESCO itself has referred to the three as the “Human Rights within UNESCO’s direct competence.”<sup>665</sup> These three articles, and especially 19 and 27 insofar as they can be inextricably linked to libraries – cultural institutions that provide myriad opportunities for participation in the cultural life of a community as well as free and open access to information in a variety of forms and media – are at the heart of this chapter:

**Article 19:** Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and *to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers* [emphasis added].

**Article 27** (Excerpt): Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community.

Through examination of the early formulation and implementation of the activities of the UNESCO Libraries Section, this chapter will bring new attention to the history and early development of cultural rights insofar as they were viewed within UNESCO as being protected and advanced by and via libraries, public libraries in particular.

This chapter will examine two UNESCO case studies, the 1948 Summer School for Librarians and the 1949 Public Library Manifesto. Both projects developed out of the realization of the overarching role of the UNESCO Libraries Section, as expressed by its head, Carter: “We have, to put it simply, to sell the public libraries idea.”<sup>666</sup> Primarily, what selling the public libraries idea meant to UNESCO at the time was educating two populations, the vast majority of

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<sup>664</sup> Highlighting the importance of Article 19 to librarianship see the recent publication, Edwards and Edwards, eds., *Beyond Article 19*.

<sup>665</sup> “UNESCO and the Declaration,” <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/human-rights-based-approach/60th-anniversary-of-udhr/unesco-and-the-declaration/>. Last accessed 8 November 2012.

<sup>666</sup> Edward J. Carter, Paper read to the Unesco Summer School for Public Librarians, 27 August 1948, p.3. UNESCO Archives 02 A 073(41-4)”48” Int. Summer Course for Librarians-UK-September 1948 (hereafter Summer Course), Part II.

whom, in 1945, lived in countries, even continents, without a strong history, if any history at all, of public library service. One population consisted of librarians themselves, who were the targets of the Summer School; the second was the general public, who were the targets of the Manifesto. Public libraries, as institutions that any and all people, regardless of age, gender, education, profession, religion, belief or ideology, had the right to freely and openly access and utilize, were identified by UNESCO as one of the key sites in which people could freely participate in the cultural life of their community, precisely as outlined in Article 27 of the UDHR. Libraries also fit into the answer Eleanor Roosevelt gave to the question, “Where, after all, do universal human rights begin?” The key architect of the UDHR went on to explain that they begin:

In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.<sup>667</sup>

Although not mentioned in the quote, libraries unquestionably are one of those small places, close to home, where people can seek equality of access to information. It was this type of language and thinking, culminating in the UDHR, that provided librarians with language they could use to defend the rights of their users, readers, visitors.

Prior to delving into the two case studies that constitute the second part of this chapter, the first part of the chapter will briefly examine UNESCO’s involvement in the drafting of the UDHR and the ways in which human and cultural rights were interpreted by the nascent UNESCO, as well as the impact of the broader context of postwar cultural reconstruction in

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<sup>667</sup> Excerpt from a speech by Eleanor Roosevelt at the presentation of “In Your Hands: A Guide for Community Action for the Tenth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.” 27 March 1958, United Nations, New York.  
[http://www.eduplace.com/kids/socsci/books/bkd\\_oh/sources/bkd\\_oh\\_template.jsp?name=roosevelte&bk=bkd\\_oh&state=bo](http://www.eduplace.com/kids/socsci/books/bkd_oh/sources/bkd_oh_template.jsp?name=roosevelte&bk=bkd_oh&state=bo). Last viewed 3 February 2013.

Europe. In addition, the example of the WJC will be utilized in order to provide a glimpse into how one, out of many, non-governmental organizations associated with UNESCO both interpreted and participated in rights advocacy at UNESCO.

## **Part I**

### **I. UNESCO Committee on the Philosophic Principles of the Rights of Man**

At this point it is necessary to briefly step back in time in order to situate UNESCO's early interests and activities regarding the UDHR, which may not be familiar to all readers, within the broader UN context that is both more familiar and the topic of a rapidly expanding area of scholarly inquiry.<sup>668</sup> In fact, it was the UNESCO Committee on the Philosophic Principles of the Rights of Man, discussed at the First UNESCO General Conference at the end of 1946 before being convened in June 1947, that was charged with helping to build a single transnational and historical foundation to ease the passing and implementation of a Universal Declaration.<sup>669</sup> Former Librarian of Congress and Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, American delegate to CAME and then to UNESCO, Archibald MacLeish, speaking in 1947 on behalf of UNESCO and its Committee in an address to the UN Commission on Human Rights, was reported to have noted that UNESCO was "particularly interested [...] in the general question of a Declaration of human rights," and went on to emphasize "that Unesco had only one desire, which was to be as useful as it could, and place itself at the service of the

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<sup>668</sup> Some recent examples not previously referenced here include Aryeh Neier, *The International Human Rights Movement: A History* (Princeton University Press, 2012); Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, ed., *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge University Press, 2011); Akira Iriye, Petra Goedde and William I. Hitchcock, eds., *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History* (Oxford University Press, 2011); Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010); Roger Normand and Sarah Zaidi, *Human Rights at the UN: The Political History of Universal Justice* (Indiana University Press, 2008).

<sup>669</sup> Alexander Gordon Danilovic, "Pragmatism, Philosophy and International Politics: The UNESCO Committee on the Philosophic Principles of the Rights of Man and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights," MA Thesis, University of British Columbia, 2002. For more about the Committee see Mary Ann Glendon, *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York: Random House, 2001), 73-78.

Commission.”<sup>670</sup> The Committee’s task came about in part after the initial efforts of the UN drafting committee hit an impasse because of the ideological distance between the representatives from various nations.<sup>671</sup> It was believed that UNESCO, considered neutral, impartial and apolitical in ways that the UN could never even claim to be, could find a means of bridging that paralyzing ideological distance.

Emphasizing that their project was “a theoretical investigation,”<sup>672</sup> the Committee explained that it sought “the common understanding which makes the proclamation feasible and the faith practicable.”<sup>673</sup> The hope was that their questionnaire, surveying various intellectuals regarding their own national and cultural histories of rights, would help ensure that the Declaration would not simply result in a set of empty words on paper, but rather in “a programme of actions to be carried out.”<sup>674</sup> The goal was two-fold. First, to find “synthesis”<sup>675</sup> between various ideologies and traditions by identifying similar threads regarding rights in the practices, languages and beliefs of different cultures, countries and traditions the world over.<sup>676</sup> With this first goal achieved, the divisions threatening to prevent the UDHR from even being drafted would be calmed, which would in turn help ensure that the “document could be accepted as universal.”<sup>677</sup> However, while its survey was sent to 150 different intellectuals, with responses being returned from seventeen countries (the US, UK, Belgium, France, India, Australia,

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<sup>670</sup> Quoted in Danilovic, “Pragmatism, Philosophy and International Politics,” 7 and in Glendon, *A World Made New*, 51.

<sup>671</sup> Danilovic, “Pragmatism, Philosophy and International Politics,” 9.

<sup>672</sup> UNESCO, ed. *Human Rights: Comments and Interpretations*, with an intro. by Jacques Maritain (London & New York: Allan Wingate, ca. 1948), 8.

<sup>673</sup> “The Grounds of an International Declaration of Human Rights (Report of the Unesco Committee on the Philosophic Principles of the Rights of Man to the Commission on Human Rights of the United Nations), Paris, 31 July 1947. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001243/124350eb.pdf>. Last accessed 20 September 2012. Some of “the most significant” response texts were compiled in *Human Rights: Comments and Interpretations. A Symposium Edited by Unesco* (Paris: UNESCO, 1948), I.

<sup>674</sup> “The Grounds of an International Declaration of Human Rights.”

<sup>675</sup> Quoted in Danilovic, “Pragmatism, Philosophy and International Politics,” 15.

<sup>676</sup> Glendon, *A World Made New*, 72.

<sup>677</sup> Quoted in Danilovic, “Pragmatism, Philosophy and International Politics,” 13.

Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Canada, Denmark, Italy, China, the Netherlands, Spain, South Africa, Germany and the USSR), the Committee that wrote the final report consisted, in addition to various UNESCO officials, of seven representatives from western countries and one from China.<sup>678</sup> The clear occidental bias of the Committee can be attributed in part to the tight deadline imposed for its report which made it practical and feasible for primarily French, British, and other western European intellectuals to meet in person at UNESCO in Paris. In addition, the ultimate goal, to make it possible for the UN to formulate a purportedly “universal” document, demanded that the Committee reach internal consensus, or at least, in the words of Maritain, reach the more realistic “practical agreement” regarding the results of the UNESCO survey.<sup>679</sup>

It seemed that achievement of this necessary agreement would be easier and faster among men of similar backgrounds, educations and traditions, who, as a result, could hopefully more easily agree upon the reading and interpretation of the survey responses in order to single out common themes regarding what human rights meant and referred to that both fit with their own beliefs as well as with the expectations and hopes of UNESCO and the UN. In fact, the results of the survey and Committee discussions reveal surprising consensus. As Mary Ann Glendon put it in her history of the Declaration, similar ideas regarding rights “in one form or another, had long been a familiar part of the constitutional traditions of many countries, though not explicit.”<sup>680</sup>

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<sup>678</sup> This was already an expansion from the rights work conducted post-WWI by the League of Nations. For more about the escalating involvement of non-western and non-European countries in the UDHR see Roland Burke, “From Individual Rights to National Development: The First UN International Conference on Human Rights, Tehran, 1968,” *Journal of World History* 19:3, *New Histories of the United Nations* (Sep., 2008): 75-296. For more about India’s role, for example, see Manu Bhagavan, “A New Hope: India, the United Nations and the Making of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” *Modern Asian Studies* 44:02 (March 2010): 311-347.

<sup>679</sup> Quoted in Danilovic, “Pragmatism, Philosophy and International Politics,” 28.

<sup>680</sup> Glendon, *A World Made New*, 76.

The primary difference seems to have been ideas about duties which came more from Asian and East Asian participants and which were not explicitly included as such in the final document.<sup>681</sup>

The Committee's "conclusions were forwarded to the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations, in the hope that they would help to clarify its discussions and to explore the ground for a constructive agreement."<sup>682</sup> Indeed, one analysis concluded that "A *synthesis* of rights was thereby constructed by means of a pragmatic, yet subtly philosophical, compromise, which was substantially preserved in the final UDHR. Indeed, the concept of the *practical agreement* was the most significant, if implicit, contribution of the Unesco Committee to the formulation of the UDHR, and of decisive importance to its successful completion."<sup>683</sup>

Item number seven on the Committee's list of fifteen fundamental rights, that is, the right to information, is of particular interest here. In the report it is articulated as: "Every man, that he may play his part in human society, has the right to the fullest and most accurate information from all relevant sources."<sup>684</sup> Previewing what would become the UDHR's Articles 19, 26 and 27, information was listed in the report along with the right to education, freedom of thought and of self-expression, all considered rights that provided "opportunities for *self-development* and the advancement of the *common good*."<sup>685</sup> The right to information is inextricably linked to the right to libraries, which are often the primary means by which the broadest possible public is able to freely and openly access information in its various formats.

In June 1947 UNESCO argued "that all Unesco's other library activities would be stultified unless the ultimate object of all such work is achieved: to get into the hands of any

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<sup>681</sup> Glendon, *A World Made New*, 75-76. Moyn, however, argues that what is most interesting about UNESCO's Committee and the previously cited Maritain quote regarding the agreement it reached about rights "but on condition that no one asks us why," is in fact "the absence of parties," and he names the American Anthropological Association's rejection at the time of "human rights as Western and political." Moyn, *The Last Utopia*, 67.

<sup>682</sup> UNESCO, *Human Rights: Comments and Interpretations*, 8.

<sup>683</sup> Danilovic, "Pragmatism, Philosophy and International Politics," 48.

<sup>684</sup> "The Grounds of an International Declaration of Human Rights," 9.

<sup>685</sup> Quoted in Danilovic, "Pragmatism, Philosophy and International Politics," 38.

inquirer anywhere any book that he needs.”<sup>686</sup> Describing the motivation behind that goal, then UNESCO Director-General Torres Bodet wrote in 1949, “A book is everyman’s passport to education, science and culture. It opens the realms of ideas and knowledge for him when and as he wants. Unlike the newspapers, books do not tell him what to think at breakfast on some precise ‘today’s date’ or, like radio, compel him to attend at some set hour; and thus, because books are friends to come for entertainment or instruction at the wanted moment, their power is vast and enduring.”<sup>687</sup> The notion that books can serve as a passport to the world, both accessible to all and providing almost limitless access to ideas and topics, provides evidence that access to up-to-date and authoritative information was not only an urgent postwar necessity, as discussed in chapter one, but was also increasingly viewed as a universal human right. UNESCO’s defense of this notion was clearly articulated in its various educational and promotional activities on behalf of the UDHR, including in its 1949 Human Rights Exhibition in Paris.

## II. UNESCO Human Rights Exhibition

In order to formulate a clearer idea of what cultural rights with regards to libraries meant to the nascent UNESCO, it is instructive to look to the UNESCO Human Rights Exhibition that took place at the Musée Galliera in Paris from October to December 1949, timed to coincide with the Fourth UNESCO General Conference taking place in Paris in November of that year. UNESCO considered the exhibition to be “the most important achievement to date in Unesco’s plan to publicize the story of mankind’s age-old fight for freedom, so as to encourage modern man to defend and respect the rights on which it is founded.”<sup>688</sup> The exhibition hinged around fascism and World War II, which were presented, as was not uncommon at the time, as extreme

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<sup>686</sup> UNESCO, “Outline of the Proposed Activities of the Bibliographical and Library Centre in Promoting the International Flow of Books between Libraries,” 7 January 1947. UNESCO/Misc/85.1947, WBLG/Proj.1/1.

<sup>687</sup> Torres Bodet, “Books and Cultural Reconstruction,” 539.

<sup>688</sup> “Universal Rights,” *UNESCO Courier* II:9 (1 October 1949), 5.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0007/000741/074116eo.pdf>. Last accessed 12 November 2012.

and horrific aberrations in an otherwise fairly continuous and optimistic line of human progress.<sup>689</sup> In other words, the exhibition situated the Declaration as both a logical extension of a long history of human rights that was, nonetheless, made more urgent by the horrors of the war.<sup>690</sup> According to one reviewer, the portion of the exhibition that situated fascism and WWII as having directly precipitated the need for the UDHR was the most persuasive, leaving him feeling that it was “Less certain, after studying this graphic reminder, that Human Rights can be taken for granted;” precisely the message UNESCO hoped and intended that visitors would take away from the exhibition.<sup>691</sup>

Designed by British architect Clive Entwistle, visual panel displays were used to “pictorialize” the long, global history of human rights. Imagery was favored over long explanatory texts in order to make that history as accessible and digestible as possible and to introduce the Declaration to all visitors, from students of all ages “to the man in the street.”<sup>692</sup> The exhibit’s visual timeline of human rights featured, among other elements, pivotal legislation, from the Magna Carta of 1215 to Poland’s *Neminem Captivabimus* Act of 1430 (comparable to

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<sup>689</sup> This relates to the 1980s debate over the theory of the German *Sonderweg* as it was used after 1945 to explain Germany’s fascist turn. For thoughtful and informative analyses see David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, Introduction to *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford University Press, 1984); Jurgen Kochka, “German History before Hitler: The Debate about the German *Sonderweg*,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 23:1 (Jan., 1988): 3-16. Additionally, as Richard Bessel points out, belief that “German militarism” was to blame for both world wars led the allies to develop a “negative vision – a catalogue of what would *not* be permitted in a future Germany [emphasis in original]” after 1945. Bessel also touches on the problematic concept of 1945 as a “zero hour” dividing the war years from the postwar as it provided a break, at least mentally, for the German people and for perpetrators in general to cut themselves off from the horrors, to forget and to move on (395-396). Richard Bessel, *Germany 1945: From War to Peace* (New York: Harper, 2009), 280. See also Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich: A New History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000); Richard Evans, *The Third Reich in Power* (New York: Penguin Press, 2005).

<sup>690</sup> Michael Ignatieff has similarly argued, controversially, that “Without the Holocaust, then, no Declaration.” It is important to also note the sentence which follows that stark assertion: “Because of the Holocaust, no unconditional faith in the Declaration either. The Holocaust demonstrates both the prudential necessity of human rights and their ultimate fragility.” Michael Ignatieff, “Human Rights as Idolatry,” in Amy Gutmann, ed., *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry* (Princeton University Press, 2001), 81. This is precisely the reductive “morality tale” – the unsatisfactory notion that the UDHR emerged “out of the depths of evil” – that Mazower argues against. Mazower, “The Strange Triumph of Human Rights,” 380.

<sup>691</sup> W.E. Williams, “UNESCO Portrays History of Human Right,” *Museum* II:4 (1949), 201.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001274/127425eo.pdf#10023> Last accessed 11 November 2012.

<sup>692</sup> Williams, “UNESCO Portrays History of Human Right,” 201.

Habeas Corpus) to the American Declaration of Independence in 1776. In some cases these original documents were on display, some of which, including an early draft of Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation (1863), had never before left their home countries; facsimiles were prepared for a mobile version of the exhibition which traveled internationally. As an interesting sidenote, the WJC was responsible for the addition of one document - the 1791 decree emancipating the Jews of France - vitally important in terms of Jewish history and Jewish rights, and all the more meaningful in the aftermath of a war that had so devastatingly deprived Jews of any and all rights.<sup>693</sup> The exhibition is significant insofar as it situated the UDHR within a long and broad historical context rather than claiming it to be a new and unique invention of the UN and insofar as it created a history for the UDHR that was not entirely European, occidental or otherwise "western," but rather that was rooted in global and universal elements. This was intended to help ensure that the Declaration would more readily be accepted, adopted and monitored by governments and other bodies the world over.

During the planning of the exhibit, popular libraries were identified as one of the primary means by which people can participate in culture, which in turn was one of three themes the organizers highlighted as "points of illustration to which we desire to give a particular importance."<sup>694</sup> This was the case, with text and images of libraries and their history featuring quite prominently in three places in the exhibition catalog. The first mention of libraries is entitled, *The Creation of Libraries*, with a caption reading: "The powers that be did not wait for the modern era to create public libraries where anyone could go to consult the texts necessary to

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<sup>693</sup> "Emancipation Document Added to UNESCO Exhibition on WJC Initiative," *WJC Congress Digest*, 27 October 1949.

<sup>694</sup> *Project de lettre aux gouvernements pour l'exposition des droits de l'homme*, unsigned, undated. Archives, Musée Galliera, Dossier UNESCO.

their work. Libraries were sumptuous and rare. Today they are more humble, but countless.”<sup>695</sup> Two images accompany this text; one is a seventh-century silk panel from China depicting readers in the Imperial Library, which the caption explains the Emperor opened to his people.<sup>696</sup> The second image is an eighteenth century engraving depicting Saint Louis creating a public library. The second mention of libraries is entitled, Intellectual Exchanges, with the caption reading, “Who reads, enriches himself. He increases his knowledge about people and the world. The book is a link between men. It puts at the fingertips of each one the entire cultural heritage of humanity.”<sup>697</sup> The two accompanying images depict the famous library at Louvain and a modern library in Switzerland. The third mention of libraries is entitled, The Book as a Vehicle of Culture, and is captioned: “It is important that the book bypasses borders and oceans without obstacle, that it penetrates into every village, that it reaches the most remote regions. The book is the most practical tool of civilization.”<sup>698</sup> This caption was accompanied by four illustrations: a mobile library (bookmobile) in India, a popular library in London, a factory library in the USSR, and a circulating library in Canada. Anyone visiting the exhibition or browsing the catalog would get a clear message of how significant books, and books being made available and accessible by libraries, were to the entire world.

Particularly revealing is the list of countries the exhibition planners identified as successfully exemplifying the popular library concept, some of which were reflected in the overview of the catalog just provided: Russia, Poland, Denmark, Belgium, France and Czechoslovakia.<sup>699</sup> Notably absent from this list are Great Britain and the United States, the former widely viewed as the birthplace of public libraries as we know them today, and the latter

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<sup>695</sup> *Les Droits de L’Homme* (Paris: UNESCO, 1950), 89.

<sup>696</sup> *Les Droits de L’Homme*, 89.

<sup>697</sup> *Les Droits de L’Homme*, 90.

<sup>698</sup> *Les Droits de L’Homme*, 91.

<sup>699</sup> Plan de l’Exposition des droits de l’homme, undated. Archives, Musee Galliera, Dossier UNESCO.

widely viewed as having taken that public library concept and expanded it to an unprecedented degree. The selection and absence of particular countries on this list seems to reflect the exhibit's intent, which, "in abstaining from all polemic and all spirit of contestation," sought to "demonstrate the contributions of all people, of all nations, of all cultures to the statement and the conquest of the Rights of Man."<sup>700</sup> Moreover, UNESCO had an interest in drawing attention away from what was widely criticized as Anglo-American dominance of the organization. In fact, all of UNESCO's early contributions regarding the UDHR had to do with situating the document within the broadest and longest possible historical context.

The goal of the exhibition, and of UNESCO more generally, was expressed in the concluding text of the catalog, which argues that "if all people know their rights and if they fulfill their duty to humanity then no one force will have the power to oppress them."<sup>701</sup> Such a message was particularly welcomed by the World Jewish Congress, an organization that, as discussed in the previous chapter, saw itself as representing the voice of world Jewry, including of surviving Jews in Europe, and as responsible for helping to protect and preserve that population.

### **III. The World Jewish Congress**

Complicating UNESCO's significant but often contentious role, as expressed by the WJC, as "protector" of cultural rights, was the fact that these rights, like culture more generally, could be and were (and are to this day) defined very broadly. As among those rights considered to be "new rights" in the postwar period, as will be discussed shortly, cultural rights, at least insofar as they were explicitly expressed, pursued and granted as such, were particularly open to interpretation, negotiation and contestation, being neither clearly defined nor understood,

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<sup>700</sup> Projet de lettre aux gouvernements pour l'exposition des droits de l'homme, unsigned, undated. Archives, Musée Galliera, Dossier UNESCO.

<sup>701</sup> *Les Droits de L'Homme*, 110.

whether by governments, organizations or in people's minds. The ambiguity is particularly notable when looking at the previously quoted text of Article 27, which is so brief and succinct that it can mean almost anything to anyone, a perhaps intentional vagueness employed in order to avoid charges that the UDHR was imposing or favoring any one culture or any form of cultural expression over any other, charges which quickly surfaced anyway. As a result, however, Article 27's minimalist wording raises countless definitional questions:<sup>702</sup> What is culture? What is the cultural life of the community? What constitutes a community? What is meant by participation? What form or level of activity – observing, creating, evaluating, studying, etc. – does participation connote? The lack of clear answers to these and similar questions appears to have come to be both a blessing and a curse at UNESCO when it came to how each of its member states and consultant organizations decided to interpret Article 27 individually.

On the one hand, for the WJC, as for most religious and other special interest groups concerned and involved with UNESCO's activities, cultural rights were first and foremost about protecting the right of every individual or group to adhere to and practice their culture or the culture of their choosing.<sup>703</sup> In this sense, for the WJC cultural rights were synonymous with Jewish rights. Already in early December 1945, one WJC official asked another, "What is being done by the WJC in the field of restoration of Jewish rights in Europe?"<sup>704</sup> In the context of the WJC relationship with UNESCO, by Jewish rights, the official's question refers to the cultural

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<sup>702</sup> Here it might be useful to point to the chapter discussing, "What Are Rights? As of September 30, 2011," in which Neier defines rights as "an aspect of humanity." Neier, *The International Human Rights Movement*, 57-92.

<sup>703</sup> This is indicative of the shift from the post-WWI focus on group rights to the post-WWII focus on individual rights. For more about this shift see Carole Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great Powers, the Jews, and International Minority Protection, 1878-1938* (Cambridge University Press, 2004); and Mazower, "The Strange Triumph of Human Rights."

<sup>704</sup> Wolf Blattberg to Dr. Kubowitzki, 6 Dec 1945. AJA, WJC, E/8/12.

right to be Jewish, to live as a Jew, in any way, shape or form, whether of activity, practice, belief or lifestyle, in postwar Europe.<sup>705</sup>

The Congress' interactions with UNESCO were by no means limited to the debates over the World Jewish Library and the fate of the non-restitutable Nazi-looted books discussed in the previous chapter, but regarded issues of reconstruction and of rights more broadly. The conviction of the WJC British Section, as stated, in its own words in 1947, that it "actively supported the realisation of the principle [...] that the Jews are entitled to get the means for rehabilitation of European Jewry as of right and not as charity,"<sup>706</sup> coupled with the Congress' concern, expressed already in early December 1945, over what action the WJC was taking "in the field of restoration of Jewish rights in Europe?"<sup>707</sup> also contributed to steering the Congress toward UNESCO from the outset.<sup>707</sup> In the absence of a Jewish state that could speak and advocate on behalf of Jews, the WJC was urgently concerned with this pressing question. This was particularly true because, as reported in the minutes of a December 1947 WJC Office Committee meeting, "It has proved difficult to arouse the interest of our people in rather intricate questions such as the WJC fight for human rights, the peace treaties, questions of reparations, etc. at a time when the Jews everywhere are emotionally interested in only two things: the Jewish State on the one hand and relief to the Sharith Haplatah [surviving remnant] on the other."<sup>708</sup> In the Congress' view, the difficulty of drawing the attention of world Jewry to issues of human rights made it even more vital for the WJC to speak out on the issue on their behalf, even while working to bring it to their attention.

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<sup>705</sup> In fact such minority group protections were only explicitly outlined in the UN's International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966). Here again it is Article 27 that is key: "In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language."

<sup>706</sup> LMA, Restitution of Property Summary of Report of Dr. F.R. Bienefeld, undated [circa summer 1947], p.4-5.

<sup>707</sup> Wolf Blattberg to Dr. Kubowitzki, 6 December 1945. AJA, WJC, E/8/12.

<sup>708</sup> O.C. Minutes, December 1947. AJA, WJC, B/127/10.

To that end, the WJC, heartened by the passing of the UDHR, was proud of its role as a Jewish representative body that was taking and that had a history of taking a strong interest in the topic. The Congress' interest in cultural rights, insofar as they would protect Jewish rights, was clearly communicated to UNESCO throughout the postwar years, in particular by Steinberg, who, in his usual tireless fashion, was daunted neither by the failure of the World Jewish Library endeavor nor by the 1948 UNESCO General Conference taking place in Beirut.<sup>709</sup> Its advocacy of the UDHR was reported on in the WJC annual report to UNESCO: "On the 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1950, on the occasion of the second anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration, the WJC was the only international non-governmental organisation whose representative was privileged to be one of the speakers in the United Nations' official broadcast celebrating this event."<sup>710</sup> For the WJC, UNESCO constituted the link between Jews, Jewish rights, reconstruction, and the UDHR. Moreover, whereas the WJC had been so internally fragmented over the World Jewish Library issue, even in the aftermath of that debate it was unanimous in the desire to closely align itself with UNESCO, especially in the places of intersection between (Jewish) cultural reconstruction and (Jewish) cultural rights.

Interested in UNESCO's perceived role as the restorer and protector of cultural rights, WJC representatives and documents repeatedly made reference to the enormous significance to postwar Jewish life of what they identified as "UNESCO's" Articles 26 and 27. In January 1950, for example, Steinberg wrote about "the endeavor of the Cultural Department of the WJC to popularise the Universal Declaration on Human Rights [...] in particular of Articles 26 and 27. [...] The WJC is particularly active in all matters connected with human rights and kindred

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<sup>709</sup> Aaron Steinberg to Wolf Blattberg, 16 November 1951. AJA, WJC, H/164/1.

<sup>710</sup> Annual Report of the WJC to Director-General of UNESCO, 19 April 1951. AJA, WJC, B/127/14.

problems.”<sup>711</sup> Then, in an April 1951 report, “Our Cultural Department is particularly interested in the promotion of the principles embodied in Articles 26 and 27 of the Declaration, and in our submission Unesco appears to be called upon to take these Articles under its protection.”<sup>712</sup> In 1952, “the Declaration contains two articles, 26 and 27, dealing with education and culture, which seem to impose on Unesco and all its adherents a specific obligation insofar as the implementation of these articles, in law as well as in fact, appears to come under the purview of Unesco’s most vital concern.”<sup>713</sup>

Despite the Congress’ presence as an observer at UNESCO’s First General Conference and its active contact with UNESCO over the World Jewish Library issue, until the WJC achieved consultative status at UNESCO in the fall of 1948, the only official link between the two organizations was in UNESCO’s Temporary International Council on Educational Reconstruction (TICER), with the Congress’ Aaron Steinberg, key actor in the previous chapter, appointed as one of four individuals invited to serve on TICER’s Standing Expert Committee. In that prominent capacity, in 1949 Steinberg submitted the following resolution on behalf of the WJC to TICER:

TICER calls upon all member organizations, in this period of transition from reconstruction to construction, to be guided in their day-to-day work by the letter and spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular of its Articles 26 and 27; Urges the Reconstruction Section of UNESCO to give special study to the question of the extent to which the work of educational and cultural reconstruction is hampered by the neglect of the principles set forth in the above-mentioned Articles; Resolves to instruct the Standing Committee to assist the Reconstruction Section of UNESCO in the pursuance of this task.<sup>714</sup>

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<sup>711</sup> Aaron Steinberg, “Statement on the co-operation of the WJC with UNESCO,” 18 January 1950. AJA, WJC, B/127/14.

<sup>712</sup> Annual Report of the WJC to Director-General of UNESCO, 19 April 1951. AJA, WJC, B/127/14.

<sup>713</sup> Observations on the Draft Programme for 1952, 12 Apr 1951. AJA, WJC, B/127/14.

<sup>714</sup> Wolf Blattberg to Marcus, 11 May 1949. AJA, WJC, E/4/5; *Congress Digest*, 26 April 1949. AJA, WJC, B/126/17.

Steinberg's resolution was adopted by unanimous vote at TICER's March 1949 Paris conference. In it, the WJC was continuing to press for the cultural reconstruction they believed so vital to remaining European Jewry, but was combining that conviction with the long-term possibilities they saw offered by the UDHR, via the Articles most associated with UNESCO, to benefit the safe continuity of Jewish life.

The wording of this resolution reveals how, by 1949, supporters of reconstruction were increasingly being forced to compete for UNESCO's extremely limited resources, with supporters of development. This despite the fact that, as discussed in the introduction and as will be further demonstrated shortly, the two programs were inextricably interconnected, with reconstruction intended from the outset to evolve seamlessly into and, most importantly, to provide a strong foundation for long-term development and expansion. Nevertheless, 1949 was a vital moment for the WJC to push through its reminder that the implementation of cultural rights (for the WJC implicitly referring to Jewish rights) would ensure that cultural life in Europe would be rehabilitated in the immediate, allowing for its permanent protection, improvement and expansion. Indeed internal WJC correspondence makes clear how seriously the "resolution on human rights," as they referred to it, was taken, reporting that it had "found a wide response (as far as Argentina,)" and widespread agreement that the resolution "deserves the most serious consideration."<sup>715</sup> TICER provided the WJC a forum in which to insist that UNESCO continue to pay close attention to reconstruction. It was not only the WJC, however, that viewed cultural rights and reconstruction as inextricably linked. Cultural rights were part and parcel of the broader postwar reconstruction context.

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<sup>715</sup> Wolf Blattberg to Mrs. Beigel, 13 July 1949. AJA, WJC, H/123/7.

#### **IV. The Broader Context: The New Cultural Politics**

While notions of rights were clearly an integral element of UNESCO from its founding and began to be increasingly discussed and integrated into its programming with the drafting of the UDHR, it was only in 1952, which happened to also be the first full year in which Reconstruction was no longer a separate UNESCO program area, that the organization began to expand its concentrated attention from being primarily responsible for disseminating information and education about the UDHR, to increasingly employing the explicit language of cultural rights and implementing and advocating for their protection and pursuit. Prior to the early 1950s, the specific language of rights was utilized only occasionally at UNESCO, in very specific rights-related contexts, whether in internal discussions and correspondence or in publications and programs intended for a broader audience. By 1952 this began to change. In that year UNESCO undertook two key projects regarding rights. First, it conducted what it termed, Enquiry on the Right to Participate in Cultural Life, in part in order to “determine the sense and the range” and the “meaning and implications” of Article 27 of the UDHR. Second, UNESCO called one of its meetings of experts charged with examining the same questions.<sup>716</sup> However, looking back to the years prior to this shift, to UNESCO’s first years and its initial activities in the realm of library reconstruction and rehabilitation, allows for the identification of some of the roots and early expressions of what increasingly came to be a central area of interest for UNESCO: the specific language, interpretations and manifestations of notions of cultural rights.

Just as important as UNESCO’s conviction that public libraries were a universal cultural right, essential to building a peaceful world, was the wider postwar context in which UNESCO

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<sup>716</sup> Droit de prendre part à la vie culturelle Projet d’Enquête du Comité d’Entente des Fédérations du Personnel Enseignant, undated ; The Right to Participate Freely in the Cultural Life of the Community, Enquiry by the Comité d’Entente des Fédérations du Personnel Enseignant, undated. UNESCO Archives, 342.73 A 51 Enquiry on the Right to Participate in Cultural Life Part I.

was functioning. In this realm, UNESCO's focus fit neatly into a Europe whose postwar governments were passing new laws and decrees seeking to expand public librarianship to an unprecedented degree, even though financial limitations often impeded the extent to which these efforts could be immediately successful. While the individual motivations driving each nation's legislation and action in the realm of libraries are beyond the scope of this research, the broader atmosphere that they contributed to creating and of which UNESCO was an integral part, was one in which access to public libraries, perceived and provided as a universal right, offered a means of reconstructing people. According to this view, libraries contribute to improving literacy rates and access to education, thereby helping to spread knowledge and understanding as a means of reconstruction and of contributing to the pursuit of tolerance and peace. Moreover, by providing individuals and communities with free and open access to information and publications, libraries can be enormously empowering to those who are the beneficiaries of that access. Of course, individual library officials as well as local, regional and national governments, each having their own notions of what terms such as public, access and rights mean, control or seek to control, to varying degrees, the material collected by and made publicly available in public libraries.

This reality, however, took on newly problematic dimensions in a post-UDHR world. As later UNESCO Director General René Maheu wrote in his contribution to the 1949 UNESCO Symposium on Human Rights, "From the moment that information comes to be regarded as one of the rights of man, the structures and practices which make of it an instrument for the exploitation, by alienation, of the minds of the masses, for money or for power, can no longer be

tolerated.”<sup>717</sup> In other words, once information and culture had formally been declared among the human rights, as they were in 1948, they too had to be protected from abuses and misuses such as had been rampant during the war. Yet the political and ideological divisions between east and west, including among UNESCO member states, meant that even UNESCO, seen by so many as a neutral and impartial protector of people’s right to information and to culture, rapidly and perhaps inevitably came to be seen as one of the exploiters of information by those on both sides of the Cold War conflict, with communist countries accusing UNESCO of spreading propagandistic pro-American information through what one Polish representative referred to as the “warmongers for democracy”<sup>718</sup> portion of its membership, and with the Americans accusing UNESCO of spreading propagandistic pro-communist information.

Indeed, the Cold War conflict rapidly began to play out within the forum of UNESCO around the specific issue of cultural rights, defined and understood very differently by the opposing sides. The division stemmed in part from the fact that not every member nation, even while actively participating in the founding and early development of UNESCO and demonstrating (at least initially) strong dedication to its mission and programs, was considered democratic, nor wanted to be, nor was persuaded by the superiority of democracy or of democratic principles. Cultural rights proved to be a particularly contentious issue. In his recent overview history of UNESCO, Singh described how “tension” arose “between Western liberal democracies that favored, at least theoretically, notions of political and civil rights, and the

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<sup>717</sup> René Maheu, “The Right to Information and the Right to Expression of Opinion,” 226. Human Rights: Comments and Interpretations, A Symposium edited by UNESCO. UNESCO/PHS/3(rev), Paris, 25 July 1948, p. I. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001550/155042eb.pdf>.

<sup>718</sup> Mr. Wierblowski, Head of the Polish Delegation to the Second UNESCO General Conference writing in the Polish fortnightly periodical *International Revue* as quoted in Bernard Drzewieski, Confidential Memo, 2 March 1948. UNESCO Archives X 07.21 (438) Relations with Poland – Official Part I.

Eastern bloc led by the Soviet Union, which favored economic, social and cultural rights.”<sup>719</sup> In fact, while France’s 1946 constitution is lauded for its pioneering inclusion of the right to culture, culture is mentioned throughout the Soviet Union’s 1936 Constitution, including, “raising” the “cultural level” of its people,<sup>720</sup> the equal rights of all citizens, regardless of gender, race or nationality, including in cultural life,<sup>721</sup> and “the right to unite in public organizations,” including cultural.<sup>722</sup> At the time of the drafting of the UDHR, Jacques Maritain pointed out that the latter were considered to be “new rights,” and were therefore unfamiliar and unexplored. But Maritain tried to downplay the differences, writing:

it cannot be too strongly emphasized that admission of a particular category of rights is not the exclusive possession of any one school of thought: it is no more necessary to belong to the school of Rousseau to recognize the rights of the individual than it is to be a Marxist to recognize the ‘new rights’, as they are called, economic and social rights. The gains of the collective intelligence under the influence of its several cross-currents go far beyond the disputations of the schools.<sup>723</sup>

As seen throughout this work, Maritain’s optimism regarding the power of collective intelligence to overcome ideological disputation was characteristic of “Unescoans” at the time and is certainly visible in its early postwar rights-related programming.

In its universalist wording and intentions and in the insistence on the unparalleled freedom to information offered by libraries, undeniably inspired by western democratic ideals, UNESCO began to increasingly run into conflict between its Anglo-American and its Soviet satellite member states. Both sides were enormously wary regarding the blurry, and highly subjective, line separating freedom of information and cultural rights from propaganda and abuse

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<sup>719</sup> Singh, *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*, 44 [page number from unpublished manuscript].

<sup>720</sup> Chapter I, Article 11. <http://www.departments.bucknell.edu/russian/const/36cons01.html> Last viewed 12 April 2013.

<sup>721</sup> Chapter X, Articles 122 and 123. <http://www.departments.bucknell.edu/russian/const/36cons04.html#chap10>. Last viewed 12 April 2013.

<sup>722</sup> Chapter X, Article 126. <http://www.departments.bucknell.edu/russian/const/36cons04.html#chap10>. Last viewed 12 April 2013.

<sup>723</sup> Maritain, Introduction, VI.

of that freedom and those rights in the pursuit in the interest of nationalistic or other political or ideological ends. The clearly stated goal of the Libraries Section, articulated time and again and discussed in detail in chapter one: to help provide free and open access to the specific information, regardless of form or content, that libraries requested and required. UNESCO's Libraries Section sought to carefully avoid any imposition, or even the perception of imposition, of particular views or of biased, one-sided or otherwise partial information or cultural materials. Acutely aware of the danger of this shaky ground or of creating a "UNESCO orthodoxy" based on how selection of texts might be interpreted by different recipients, the Section sought to avoid the issue entirely by creating the means for libraries to obtain the books they wanted, rather than putting them into the position of having to accept unwanted donated texts.<sup>724</sup> How and by whom library material is selected easily and often becomes a subject of contention. But the right to culture and information inherently includes the right to select what one chooses to be exposed to or to engage with, whether that selection occurs at the level of the librarian acquiring new material or at the level of the reader or researcher selecting from among the material offered by their library.

UNESCO tried to make the best of this divisive situation, continuing to push through its programs, including, and sometimes especially, in the countries that were becoming its most ardent and harsh critics. Here Poland is a good example. While still viewed by UNESCO as one of the top target countries for library reconstruction, rehabilitation and development, its increasingly hostile stance vis-à-vis UNESCO in general began to interfere. Significantly, as seen in chapter one, an area in which the Polish government did allow contact and relations with UNESCO to continue even after its withdrawal from the organization had begun was in the

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<sup>724</sup>Revised Progress Report on the Programme of UNESCO, Chapter VI Cultural Institutions Libraries, Archives, Publications and Museums, 16 August 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, London-Paris, 1945-1946 Vol.I Documents.

sharing and exchange of texts between libraries. This decision reflected both the continuing extent of need for Poland's library's shelves to be restocked as well as more broadly the Polish government's acceptance of restocking those libraries via the mechanisms UNESCO had established through which libraries could seek and obtain the texts they wanted. By remaining thusly engaged with UNESCO, Poland had a means of (re)building its library collections in the manner it wished, significant at a time when it risked otherwise being inundated with unwanted donations from the United States, or by material seen as American propaganda, or by physical American libraries, such as US Information Agency Libraries Abroad, topics that have been written about elsewhere.<sup>725</sup>

Despite the inevitable and ongoing problems of censorship and control, coupled with financial constraints and other resource limitations, overall, the library situation in Europe improved vastly beginning during the immediate postwar moment of interest here. In order to fully appreciate the impact of this change and of UNESCO's role in it as a key proponent of libraries as institutions that all people had the right to access and to utilize, it is necessary to emphasize how relatively few and far between truly public libraries, in the sense that is familiar to most Americans, actually were in most of Europe prior to WWII. Institutions referred to as or considered public libraries can be traced as far back as the first forms of documentation. Public libraries more or less as we know them today first began to spread widely and rapidly in Great Britain and the United States during the early- to mid-nineteenth century.<sup>726</sup> By the twentieth

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<sup>725</sup> See for example Greg Barnhisel and Catherine Turner, eds., *Pressing the Fight: Print, Propaganda and the Cold War* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2012); Hench, *Books as Weapons*; Volker Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe* (Princeton University Press, 2002); Pells, *Not Like Us*; Christine Jenkins, "ALA Youth Services Librarians and the CARE-UNESCO Children's Book Fund: Selecting the 'Right Book' for Children in Cold War America," *Libraries & Culture* 31:1 Reading & Libraries 1 (Winter, 1996): 209-234; Joan Collet, "American Libraries Abroad: United States Information Agency Activities," *Library Trends* 20:3 (1972): 538-547.

<sup>726</sup> Even the publicness of these still come into question today. See Shannon Mattern, "Just How Public Is the Seattle Public Library?: Publicity, Posturing, and Politics in Public Design," *Journal of Architectural Education* 57:1 (Sep., 2003): 5-18.

century they were also fairly common in Scandinavia and existed, scattered, offering varying levels of access to a genuinely public user base, in a number of other European countries. But public libraries became increasingly commonplace on the continent beginning only in the aftermath of WWII.<sup>727</sup>

The significance of this shift is evident in the UNESCO Preparatory Commission's insistence on using the term, popular, rather than, public, in statements such as, "the essential feature of all popular libraries is that they should be free and open to all."<sup>728</sup> Today this might sound like the definition of a public library, but the distinction was significant in early postwar Europe, a continent with a long history of libraries often referred to as public, but which were in fact neither free nor open to all.<sup>729</sup> Although "popular libraries" never replaced "public libraries" in common usage, public understanding and, most importantly, expectation of libraries as institutions that all people had the right to demand for their communities, to be free and open to all, quickly began to spread and evolve after 1945. This expansion was part of a broader postwar shift identified in recent scholarship. Historian Philippe Poirrier explains that "the second half of the twentieth century corresponds to a phase of institutionalization of cultural politics."<sup>730</sup> Any number of developments provide evidence for this postwar shift; Poirrier focuses on the establishment of Ministers of Culture. Others look to the clause included in the preamble of

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<sup>727</sup> Fred Lerner, *The Story of Libraries: From the Invention of Writing to the Computer Age* (New York: Continuum, 2001), especially "Libraries for the People," 152-153; Harris, *History of Libraries in the Western World*, especially "Modern European Libraries, 207-239; Anne-Marie Bertrand, "Note 12 Les Bibliothèques," in Philippe Poirrier, ed., *Politiques et pratiques de la culture* (Paris: La Documentation française, 2010), 163-169; Martine Poulain, ed., *Histoire des bibliothèques françaises* Volume : vol. 4. *Les Bibliothèques au XXe siècle (1914-1990)* (Paris : Éditions du Cercle de la Librairie, 2009) ; Anne-Marie Bertrand, *Les Bibliothèques* Nouvelle édition (Paris: Editions de la Découverte, 2004).

<sup>728</sup> The more common public library will be used here, except in quotes or in other reference to occasions where popular library was used instead. UNESCO Preparatory Commission, Revised Progress Report on the Programme of UNESCO, Chapter VI, Cultural Institutions, Libraries, Archives, Publications and Museums, 16 August 1946. UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission Vol. I Documents.

<sup>729</sup> Indeed not all public libraries in Europe are free even today; many require an annual subscription fee, including the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

<sup>730</sup> Philippe Poirrier, ed., *Pour une histoire des politiques culturelles dans le monde 1945-2011* (Paris: Comité d'histoire du ministère de la culture, 2011), 14.

France's constitution of 27 October 1946, referred to above in passing. It famously included the words: "The Nation guarantees equal access to children and to adults [...] to culture."<sup>731</sup> While direct reference to this clause has not been found in discussions at UNESCO, given the prevalence of French officials and representatives at UNESCO it is difficult to imagine that this early instance of a nation explicitly granting cultural rights did not have some impact or influence on the organization or at least some of its officials when it came to how they understood and articulated their aims and activities. And while this clause does not mention books, libraries or any other specific cultural element, simultaneously emerging French government policies, which will be discussed shortly, aimed at broadly expanding national access to libraries and books, and indicate that the two developments were not mutually exclusive.

In this section just a few specific examples will be given of developments regarding libraries in order to better understand the context in which the UNESCO Libraries Section was operating. UNESCO's host nation was particularly important in terms of the flow of ideas, influence and inspiration that occurred between representatives of France and UNESCO meeting and working in Paris. As Philip Nord has recently shown, France's developing "culture state" was just as important to postwar reconstruction as were the economic and social aspects of reconstruction. According to Nord, the new "culture state" provided a means for France to regain its standing as a world cultural center and model.<sup>732</sup> This included efforts to bring, and here Nord quotes Matthew Arnold writing in 1869, "the best that has been thought and said" to a broad

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<sup>731</sup> Conseil Constitutionnel de France, "Constitution de 1946, IVe République" <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr>. Last accessed 10 March 2011.

<sup>732</sup> According to Richard Pells, France in particular, "predictably," has been using such cultural diplomacy methods since the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War. It is important to note that Pells goes on to argue that "No country deployed its media more spectacularly than Germany in the 1930s," the argument that supports the premise of work such as this that focuses on postwar cultural reconstruction. Pells, *Not Like Us*, 31-33.

public, both in France for “popular uplift” and beyond its borders for “reassertion of France’s presence.”<sup>733</sup>

Because of its historic interest in and concern for the rights of its citizens and for universalism, France saw itself and was often perceived by others as particularly well-placed within UNESCO in general and in terms of the UDHR specifically. Jacques Maritain expressed a similar sentiment when he wrote to France’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, stating, “It is in the measure that France will make herself the champion of an authentic and generous international spirit that she will be able [...] to exercise a strong influence that will be useful to her in the long term, our country being more or less the only one whose own interests coincide with the development of such a spirit.”<sup>734</sup> Maritain was reporting as President of the French Delegation to the second General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).<sup>735</sup> H.V. Evatt, Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, after presiding over the UN General Conference at which the UDHR was adopted, announced to UNESCO’s 1949 General Conference that he saw the UDHR as “a lasting monument” both to the UN as well as to “the great city of Paris, especially having regard to its historic association with many past struggles for the liberation of the human spirit.”<sup>736</sup> These statements exemplify the mix of idealism and opportunism France had regarding the “international spirit” that the newly-established UNESCO represented, and points to the tension inherent between the organization’s universalist mission and the aims of its individual nation-state members.

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<sup>733</sup> Nord, *France’s New Deal*, 14. Arnold’s full quote is instructive when thinking about the importance of culture to changing and improving life and thinking, as this work is seeking to do: “The whole scope of the essay is to recommend culture as the great help out of our present difficulties; culture being a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world; and through this knowledge, turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits” Matthew Arnold, Preface, *Culture and Anarchy* (London, 1869), 5-6.

<sup>734</sup> Jacques Maritain to Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, 28 January 1948, p.14. MAE, S50 3-5 UNESCO.

<sup>735</sup> Maritain was standing in for President Léon Blum, who was not well enough to make the trip to Mexico City, venue of UNESCO’s Second General Conference.

<sup>736</sup> Quoted in the *UNESCO Courier* II:10 (1 November 1949), 21.

Although France's close involvement with UNESCO and its cultural reconstruction efforts during this period, as well as the nationalization of and improvements to its library system go unmentioned by Nord, both are integral to France's establishment of its new culture state. Indeed, the cooperation and the parallel developments both France and UNESCO made and inspired in the realm of libraries during the first postwar years suggest the need to append two words to Arnold's phrase quoted by Nord so that it would read: "the best that has been thought and said" *and written*. It was postwar that France began to look abroad more avidly and to implement programs to encourage and pursue the country-wide establishment of public libraries.

In line with Poirrier's argument about the postwar appearance of Ministers of Culture and Nord's about France's new culture state is the postwar establishment of the *Direction des Bibliothèques de France* (DBF), which was officially founded under the *Direction générale des arts et des lettres* by decree of 18 August 1945 (Décret n° 45-1889) before being moved to the Minister of National Education in April 1947. The DBF did not appear out of nowhere. Such a body had been planned and discussed throughout the war years by some of France's top librarians and library officials. This included Bernard Faÿ, Vichy-appointed administrator general of the BnF to replace Julien Cain after the latter's removal from that position due to his political activities in the lead-up to France's shocking defeat in 1940. Ironically, it was Cain, after his return from Buchenwald and reinstatement at the head of the BnF as Director General, who became in 1945 the first official head of the DBF. The task of the DBF was to "promote a general policy by normalizing and coordinating the activities of different categories of libraries. The action of the Direction des Bibliothèques was considerable in all the domains: reconstruction of [war] stricken libraries [...] modernization and reorganization of university libraries, working out the status of different categories of personnel, organization of professional formation,

information and documentation, development of international relations.”<sup>737</sup> Each of these areas correlates directly to an aspect of UNESCO’s postwar library program as well, with reconstruction and international relations being of particular interest here.

The link between these developments and UNESCO’s role in advocating for public libraries as a universal cultural right can be seen, to give one example, in the French ordinance of 2 November 1945 calling for the “creation of central loaning libraries charged to effect via bookmobiles [*bibliobus*] temporary and renewable book depots in communities of less than 15,000 inhabitants.”<sup>738</sup> Expanding widespread public access to culture, including beyond France’s cultural center of Paris to the whole country through the establishment of public libraries or through bookmobiles and other outreach programs in rural areas where building physical libraries was not immediately feasible, represented a new undertaking. These efforts were inspired, at least in part, by the existing models offered by American, British and Scandinavian public librarianship, aspects and examples of which were being increasingly disseminated among other librarians, French and from all over the world, including through the UNESCO Libraries Section projects to be discussed in Part II of this chapter.

Current historians of libraries in France repeatedly question the government’s decision to pour resources into developing library resources for rural France, including mobile libraries to reach where physical structures could not be built, at a time when France’s population was flooding out of the countryside and into urban areas seeking employment and other opportunities.<sup>739</sup> Such questions can begin to be answered by looking beyond France and to the

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<sup>737</sup> Noë Richter, “Histoire de la lecture publique en France,” *Bulletin des Bibliothèques de France* 22 :1 (1977). <http://bbf.enssib.fr/consulter/bbf-1977-01-0001-001>. Last accessed 5 November 2012.

<sup>738</sup> Ordonnance n° 45-2678. Dated 2 November 1945.

<sup>739</sup> Anne-Marie Bertrand, *Bibliothèque publique et public library: Essai de généalogie comparée* (Villeurbanne: Presses de l’enssib, 2010), 22, 98; Pascal Ory, “La lettre volée ;” Max Butlen, “De la politique de la lecture publique aux politiques publiques de lecture,” and Anne-Marie Bertrand, “L’éternel retard,” all in *Regards sur un demi-*

broader postwar international context in which UNESCO was functioning, leading a global effort to provide library service not only to those who had lost it during the war years, but also to those who lacked it entirely.<sup>740</sup> We turn now to two of the most important UNESCO projects dedicated to that effort, the 1948 Summer School for Librarians and the 1949 Public Libraries Manifesto—the focus of Part II of this chapter.

## Part II

### V. UNESCO-IFLA Summer School for Librarians (1948)

There were two primary motivating factors behind the 1948 UNESCO-IFLA Summer School for Librarians: reconstruction and the people's right to public libraries. During UNESCO's Second General Conference in 1947 the School was categorized as a Priority I (out of IV) goal. Priority I goals were defined as "Projects and activities of first importance which the working party recommends with the strongest possible emphasis as matters for retention on the programme whatever the budgetary position may be, and for the fullest possible development."<sup>741</sup> Since all Priority I items were seen as equally essential, they were not internally prioritized within that category. By the late spring of 1948 the School was being planned in a flurry of last-minute activity. At that point, the School's "General Purposes" were identified as:

1. To examine ways in which public libraries can become more effective centres of popular and fundamental education.
2. To explore solutions of basic library development problems, particularly in reconstruction countries, which must be worked out before public library educational programmes can be completely effective.

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*siècle: Cinquantenaire du "Bulletin des bibliothèques de France" numéro hors série (Paris: Bulletin des bibliothèques de France, 2006), 9, 51, 123, respectively.*

<sup>740</sup> Carl Thomsen, Edward Sydney and Miriam D. Tompkins, *Le Rôle des bibliothèques publiques dans l'éducation des adultes* Manuels de l'Unesco à l'usage des bibliothèques publiques. 3 (Paris: Unesco, 1950).

<sup>741</sup> "News and Information," *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* II:1 (January 1948), 2.

3. To increase the awareness among the participants of the aims of Unesco, especially in relation to public libraries as centres for education in international understanding; and to enable Unesco to form a clearer picture of public library problems in the various countries.
4. To provide the students with an experience in international living and learning.<sup>742</sup>

While these points focus on the Libraries Section's early interest in public library development, improvement and expansion, the same document also highlighted the ways in which the School maintained an integral connection to reconstruction:

It will be limited to approximately fifty participants and preference will be given to qualified applicants from European countries, and particularly from those in which post-war reconstruction of educational, cultural and scientific institutions is most urgent. This is in accordance with the resolution passed by the Second Session of the Unesco General Conference which states that in choosing students of the school the needs of war-devastated countries should be especially borne in mind.<sup>743</sup>

In combination, the characteristics of the School demonstrate how it sought to create an unprecedented interactive, transnational, mutually instructive and enduring community of librarians from different countries, each with their own library traditions and with varying degrees of formal librarian education or experience with public librarianship.

While the School was labeled a UNESCO-IFLA undertaking and certainly a number of IFLA members were involved in organizing and leading it, all evidence points to the School as a UNESCO project. Although the two organizations had signed an agreement in 1947, their cooperation was still rather tentative and exploratory at the time of the School. Scheduled to coincide with the 14<sup>th</sup> IFLA Session in London, the School was held from 2-28 September 1948 in London and Manchester. IFLA had existed since 1927 but its activities had been, for all practical purposes, frozen by the war. Financial difficulties and organizational stagnation made its postwar progress frustratingly slow and laborious in an international library world, exemplified by the energy, optimism and enthusiasm of the UNESCO Libraries Section, that was

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<sup>742</sup> UNESCO, International Summer School for Librarians, 3 May 1948. UA, Summer School.

<sup>743</sup> UNESCO, International Summer School for Librarians, 3 May 1948. UA, Summer School.

eager to reconstruct, expand, modernize and progress. Indeed a new analysis argues that without the agreement signed with UNESCO in 1947 and the subsequent cooperation of the two organizations, IFLA might very well have remained doomed to be “dismissed as a gentlemen’s club of middle-aged library directors.”<sup>744</sup> This is in reference to IFLA’s leadership and much of its membership at the time, which was relatively limited, along with its influence, to countries with existing strong library traditions and high literacy and education rates. UNESCO, on the other hand, specifically sought to enlarge its membership, influence and reach as broadly as possible, including, or even especially, to places where libraries, literacy and education were not yet established. The beginnings of this expansion is reflected in the twenty countries (Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, India, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, South Africa, Switzerland, Turkey, the USA), that sent a total of forty-eight librarians to the School.<sup>745</sup> This diversity was made possible because the School, funded primarily by UNESCO, did not charge participants tuition, room, board, or any other fees that would have limited participation to wealthier nations. As a result, on the basis of attendance alone, with one significant caveat, UNESCO considered the School a success.

That caveat emerged after the British, or at least British Passport Control, almost entirely successfully prevented the librarians from Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland from attending the School. Mandated by the 1947 UNESCO General Conference “to emphasize in personnel and program needs of war devastated countries,”<sup>746</sup> the theme of the Summer School was: “Public libraries with particular emphasis on their services to popular education and *the*

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<sup>744</sup> Lor, “IFLA-UNESCO Partnership,” 269.

<sup>745</sup> Some records indicate that there were fifty and some fifty-two participants.

<sup>746</sup> Twelfth Summary Report to the Department of State regarding the Proceedings of UNESCO General Conference, 13 Nov 1947, AJA, Marshall, 30/4.

*promotion of international understanding* [emphasis added].”<sup>747</sup> The first and third of these points read quite ironically as it was arguably an absence of international understanding that left the librarians from these three countries to be treated as coming from hostile or dangerous Soviet satellite states and therefore to be denied the visas they required to enter Great Britain.

According to the School’s key aims, these librarians should have been among the most important and welcome participants as representatives of some of the most war devastated countries whose needs were to be emphasized at the School. Carter himself repeatedly insisted on the importance of these countries to the School, explaining that “In the disagreeable task of turning people away, special care was taken to see that reconstruction countries would be well represented.”<sup>748</sup> Despite that special care, the Poles received their visas just in time, the visas for the Hungarians were so delayed that they were only able to attend the last week of the School and no reports, evaluations or other documents from Hungarian librarians are filed among the various records submitted by other participants, and the Czechs never received visas at all and thus were entirely unable to attend.<sup>749</sup> Here is Carter speaking to the librarians who were at the School:

Yet we may recognize as one of the most thrilling effects of the present world situation that it is perhaps in those countries precisely where the effects of the war were greatest that the spirit of adventure and enterprise most vividly prevails. The will to create is at flood-tide, and this School is a craft that can ride on the flood. In your discussions we hope that the needs of the war-damaged areas will be borne in mind and that in framing your picture of library services positive contributions will be made to their development in these countries where ruin and destruction have both heightened the need for libraries and made it most difficult to meet the need.<sup>750</sup>

His comments may not, however, have had the full intended impact. In fact, Wilma Radford from the N.S.W. Public Library in Australia remarked that “few participants thought their

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<sup>747</sup> UNESCO International Summer School for Librarians, The Work of the Libraries Division, 1948, Paris, 17 September 1948. UNESCO Archives online <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001474/147429eb.pdf>.

<sup>748</sup> IMG\_3248-58 EJC Report, p.4.

<sup>749</sup> IMG\_3248-58 EJC Report, 9.

<sup>750</sup> IMG\_3207-14 Paper read to the Unesco Summer School for Public Librarians by EJC, 27 August 1948, p.4, 6.

Countries devastated.”<sup>751</sup> A reading of the reports submitted to the School tells a very different story, one that often revolves around war damage, but perhaps the delayed arrival of the Hungarians and the absence of the Czechs contributed to shifting the mood of the School, moving the group’s discussions at least more away from reconstruction and more in the direction of the development issues of greater interest than reconstruction to about half of the participant nations. Of course, as discussed throughout this work, development and improvement were equally important to reconstruction countries and in many cases were considered an integral element or direct extension of reconstruction. This is illustrated by one comment made by the Polish librarians, who wrote, “The problem of attracting a large public to culture, by a strong organization of public reading, is one of the principal directives of cultural reconstruction in Poland.”<sup>752</sup>

Despite the clear importance of the admission of these librarians into England for the School, somehow the British authorities were not given, did not receive, or simply disregarded the message, and UNESCO had to fight, along with each country’s embassy and consulate, to reverse the initial blockage of entry visas.<sup>753</sup> This incident came as a surprise to UNESCO because in 1948 all three of these nations were UNESCO member states, which, as Czechoslovakian Delegate to UNESCO Dr. Benjamin Jedlicka pointed out, “this attitude on the part of the authorities of the United Kingdom, which from the very outset has been a member of the Unesco, is in conflict with the principles of the Constitution as expressed in Article I, and has made it impossible for Czechoslovak participants to enjoy facilities which are their right as

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<sup>751</sup> Evaluation report by Wilma Radfod, N.S.W. Public Library, Australia, April 1949. UA, Summer School. IMG\_3326-33.

<sup>752</sup> IMG\_3101-2 Evaluation from Poland. UA, .

<sup>753</sup> Correspondence between UNESCO, IFLA, and the British Passport Office, Fall 1948. UNESCO Archives, Summer Course. The Polish librarians were eventually granted visas while the Czechoslovakian librarians were not. The Hungarian case remains unclear, their names are listed on some documents but not all, and no Hungarian report is found among the reports of all the other participant countries.

nationals of a UNESCO member State.”<sup>754</sup> Reflecting back, Carter expressed the hope that “In the case of future schools, the host Government should be required to give assurance in advance that participants from all Unesco Member States will be admitted.”<sup>755</sup> But despite UNESCO’s efforts to reverse the blockage and then to smooth over the damage done, it was too late. Another piece of damning evidence existed suggesting that UNESCO was too susceptible to the anti-communist stance of the Anglo-Americans who were its primary founders and funders. With only the three countries of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary impacted by visa issues it was surely some level of mistrust and hostility on the part of Great Britain that barred the attendance of these librarians. It is notable that, despite their mounting skepticism and frustration vis-à-vis UNESCO, these countries were even sending representative librarians to the School at all. Although still member nations in 1948, the National Commissions of each were beginning to exhibit some of the hostile behavior and increasing alienation within the forum of UNESCO that would soon lead to their slow, and by 1952, entire withdrawal from the organization. Just two months after the School, in fact, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland would all refuse to send any representatives to the Third UNESCO General Conference due to its Beirut setting.<sup>756</sup>

Even prior to the unfortunate visa incident, there were other tensions over the School’s being held in Great Britain. Some criticized what they perceived as a British bias in the School, specifically identifying a “somewhat chauvinistic attitude”<sup>757</sup> among the British library community, in part because the School grew out of a British Council proposal for a summer library school. Participants, however, generally expressed admiration and gratitude for the

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<sup>754</sup> Czechoslovak Government Delegate to UNESCO (Dr. Benjamin Jedlicka) to S.G. Gebelt Esq. Acting Head of Bureau of External Relations UNESCO, 29 November 1949. UNESCO Archives, Summer Course.

<sup>755</sup> Edward J. Carter, Report of the UNESCO/IFLA International Summer School for Librarians, p.9. UNESCO Archives, Summer Course Part II.

<sup>756</sup> David Revcolevschi, “L’Unesco et le conflit israelo-arabe : 1948-1967,” PhD Dissertation, Université Paris 1, 1992, 21.

<sup>757</sup> Edward J. Carter memorandum of discussions during London visit 21-24 April 1948, 26 April 1948. UNESCO Archives Summer Course.

opportunity to view what was widely considered to be the world's first modern public library system firsthand. The French librarians admired the English system in their report by focusing on its impact on English society, writing, "the frequenting of libraries having become a habit, public reading has attained a very high degree of development."<sup>758</sup> The Polish librarians agreed, writing, "It was instructive above all for the librarians from war devastated countries, where we have to completely reorganize the libraries, to get to know the highly developed network of English public libraries; the choice of England as the seat of the course was therefore very fortunate."<sup>759</sup> In a reminder of the history of public libraries that was very briefly outlined above, each of the most advanced public library systems of the time, the British, American and Scandinavian, were represented within the structure of the School: it took place in England and was directed by Norwegian librarian Arne Kildal, who was selected after UNESCO launched a search for a non-British Director of the School in order to avoid further bias charges. Kildal had trained to be a librarian in the United States and worked at the Library of Congress before returning to Norway. In 1949 he would be appointed first Director of the newly established Norwegian Directorate of Public Libraries. The School's other instructors came from India, Belgium, Great Britain and the United States.

The visa incident was the first to really open the eyes of the UNESCO Libraries Section to the fact that political conflicts were inevitably going to infiltrate even its perceived neutrality and impartial programs. In fact, the presence of librarians from ideologically opposed countries had been viewed as an opportunity rather than a danger. According to Kildal, the School provided a forum in which librarians could discuss means of cooperating, with an eye to overcoming the ideological barriers they saw solidifying, rather than diminishing, between their

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<sup>758</sup> Rapport final des participants français, undated, p.3. UNESCO Archives Summer Course Part I.

<sup>759</sup> Evaluation from Poland, undated. UNESCO Archives Summer Course Part I.

countries. The librarians agreed, Kildal reported, “that propaganda campaigns are being waged in many quarters. Everybody needs an objective illumination of international subjects and international cooperation. Understanding between nations is sponsored in this way, and perhaps even some of the barriers between certain countries may fall. The peace work as carried on in the world of today is handicapped through the ideological contrasts.”<sup>760</sup> Part of the work of UNESCO, broadly, was to find ways to overcome or bypass those contrasts through programs such as the School that brought together individuals from different countries who could have an impact both back in their home country as well as in an international cooperative network.

The School, by providing “librarians with an excellent opportunity to widen their professional horizons,” exemplified UNESCO’s belief that its member nations could learn from one another and that creating transnational networks of communication and cooperation was the primary way that the world would become more tolerant and peaceful, in this case, through the promotion of public librarianship and librarian education.<sup>761</sup> To that end, in his welcome address to the School’s participants, Carter said:

International understanding and reconstruction are not things that can be developed in a purely mechanistic way. Mechanism and technique are important, but it is the individual men and women who are serving public libraries on whom the responsibility for applying techniques rests. This School is, therefore, a direct contribution to the growth of personal contacts which we hope will have a lasting effort insofar as those of you who meet your colleagues and will make friendships which will have lasting value both spiritual and practical.<sup>762</sup>

The growth of personal contacts was viewed as essential by the participants as well. As previously discussed, the reinstatement and expansion of transnational networks of sharing and exchange, paralyzed throughout the war years, were seen as particularly urgent for countries

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<sup>760</sup> Synopsis of Arne Kildal Report to UNESCO, p.2. UNESCO Archives Summer Course Part II.

<sup>761</sup> UNESCO, International Summer School for Librarians, 3 May 1948. UNESCO Archives Summer Course.

<sup>762</sup> Edward J. Carter, Paper read to the Unesco Summer School for Public Librarians, 27 August 1948, p.4, 6. UNESCO Archives Summer Course Part II.

engaged in reconstruction. As the Polish librarians explained, “because of the war and the German occupation, our relations with foreign countries lapsed. Our participation in the course will not be without influence on the renewal of these relationships. The characteristic atmosphere of goodwill and friendship, as much on the part of the direction as the participants, greatly eased our interactions with colleagues from different countries.”<sup>763</sup> Beyond forging bonds of friendship and cooperation, the School also provided an opportunity for the participating librarians to compare and contrast their library practices with those of other countries. The Polish librarians, for example, were reassured that their country’s unprecedented postwar legislation (the previously discussed 1946 decree) regarding public libraries was in line with “modern postulates” based on what they saw firsthand in English libraries, primarily in the “laboratory” for the School, the Manchester Public Library,<sup>764</sup> as well as from what they learned from the School’s instructors.<sup>765</sup>

As evident in prior chapters, it remains difficult to assess in any detailed manner the impact of UNESCO Libraries Section’s early programs. To a certain extent, the same is true for the School, though there are some hints as to its positive influence. First is the fact that additional summer schools, each concentrating on a different theme, were held in future years (Sweden, 1950, Adult Education; Brazil, 1951, Public Library Development in South America; Nigeria, 1953, Libraries in Africa). Second are UNESCO Public Library Manuals Nos. 1, 2 and 3, *Education for Librarianship*, *Public Library Extension* and *Adult Education Activities for Public Libraries*, respectively, which emerged out of the 1948 School (additional manuals were published after the subsequent Schools).<sup>766</sup> These were published in English, French, and

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<sup>763</sup> Evaluation from Poland. UNESCO Archives Summer Course Part I.

<sup>764</sup> Everett N. Petersen, “Unesco and Public Libraries,” *Library Trends* 1:4 (April 1953), 533.

<sup>765</sup> Evaluation from Poland, p.2. UNESCO Archives Summer Course Part I.

<sup>766</sup> The full citations are: J.P. Danton, *Education for Librarianship* (Unesco Public Library Manuals No. 1) Paris,

Spanish, and some were also translated into Arabic and Italian. The first two manuals were supposed to be translated into Polish by one of the Polish librarians present at the 1948 School, but the discussion was dropped as Poland increasingly withdrew from UNESCO after 1948. This was not for lack of trying by UNESCO, who carried over funding allocated in 1949 for the Polish translations to 1950 in the hopes that the Polish editions would still appear.<sup>767</sup> These Manuals were referred to in 1953 as “‘best-sellers’ among Unesco publications-one country alone has ordered 3,000 copies of each volume-and many of the editions have been reprinted.”<sup>768</sup> While UNESCO would have liked to have been able, financially and logistically, to invite more than fifty librarians to the School, the manuals offered a way for librarians all over the world to learn, on a continuous basis, about some of the themes and ideas that were discussed at the School.

The library world avidly discussed the School, often in very positive terms. Carter was excited to report that Sweden, which had librarians at the IFLA Session underway at the same time in London who observed enough of the School to write “a strong article urging Swedish membership of Unesco on the strength of what Swedish librarians observed of the School,” which appeared in Sweden’s main library journal.<sup>769</sup> Even if IFLA was not nearly as responsible for the planning or running of the School as UNESCO was, the fact that the two overlapped was beneficial to UNESCO. During the early years of their agreement, some of the high-level librarians at IFLA looked down their noses a bit at the Libraries Section and at Carter specifically for not being a “real” librarian, regardless of the fact that he had directed the Library

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Unesco, 1949; L.R. McColvin, *Public Library Extension* (Unesco Public Library Manuals No. 2) Paris, Unesco, 1950; C. Thomsen, C., *et al.*, *Adult Education Activities for Public Libraries* (Unesco Public Library Manuals No. 3) Paris, Unesco, 1950.

<sup>767</sup> Emile Delavenay to Director, Department of Cultural Activities, 21 July 1950, Memo D&P/DAC/667. UNESCO Archives X07.353.321 UNESCO Publications General Part III.

<sup>768</sup> Petersen, “Unesco and Public Libraries,” 538.

<sup>769</sup> Edward J. Carter, Report of the UNESCO/IFLA International Summer School for Librarians, p.8. UNESCO Archives Summer Course Part II.

of the Royal Institute of British Architects from 1930 until his arrival in 1945 at UNESCO.<sup>770</sup> Mostly, they worried that UNESCO sought to usurp IFLA and render it irrelevant.<sup>771</sup> Knowing that IFLA officials and session attendees could witness in person the success of the School, therefore, offered an important opportunity for UNESCO to prove that it was serious and determined to improve the world of libraries and librarianship in cooperation with IFLA rather than in competition with it.<sup>772</sup>

Another significant point that emerged from the School was that public libraries, “because of the diversity of services that they provide and the possibilities that they offer,” constituted a key point of connection and communication between the elite culture of intellectuals and experts and the general public. UNESCO feared the latter increasingly risked losing touch with the former due to the rapid pace of technological change and innovation.<sup>773</sup> This central concern exemplifies the way in which the Libraries Section serves as a contradiction to the argument, made then and now, that UNESCO was an elitist organization, led by and catering to a very narrow population. The School was yet another way in which the Libraries Section demonstrated that it was at least as, if not more, concerned about the general public as it was about experts, and that it was determined to help narrow the gap seen as increasingly threatening to further divide them.

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<sup>770</sup> W.H. Ansell, “Edward Carter,” *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* (April 1946), 250.

<sup>771</sup> These tensions led Carter to write to IFLA’s Secretary General, “I hope you appreciate the fact now that Unesco has no aggressive intentions and that, as many people pointed out, we are only attempting quietly and, I hope, sympathetically, to assure that the work of the two Federations is developed so that the full resources of Unesco can be applied for the benefit of librarianship, documentation and bibliography. We are working on a long-term plan and certainly cannot expect to achieve everything in one or two afternoons.” Edward J. Carter to Tietse Pieter Sevensma, 21 July 1949. IFLA Archives, Box U/1, Folder UNESCO (dossier II) début à 1950.

<sup>772</sup> Edward J. Carter, Report of the UNESCO/IFLA International Summer School for Librarians, p.8. UNESCO Archives Summer Course Part II.

<sup>773</sup> Jaime Torres Bodet, Avant-Propos, in Carl Thomsen, Edward Sydney and Miriam D. Tompkins, *Le Role des bibliotheques publiques dans l’education des adultes* Manuels de l’Unesco a l’usage des bibliotheques publiques. 3 (Paris: Unesco, 1950), v.

To that end, perhaps inspired by Carter's call to "sell" the public library idea, in the concluding remarks of his final report to UNESCO, Kildal made a similar suggestion, "As it is a general impression that the inhabitants of most countries are not 'library-minded' at all, it might be a good plan if Unesco in collaboration with Ifla started a propaganda campaign for the purpose of calling the attention of the general public to the significance of public library work, particularly emphasizing what it can do to promote popular education and international understanding."<sup>774</sup> After the School helped to lay an international foundation for the education of librarians about the need for and benefits of public libraries, attention expanded to the need for widespread public library promotion to the general public. In the wake of the 1948 School, another project already under consideration at UNESCO became a central focus, the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto, which is the focus of this chapter's second case study.

## **VI. UNESCO Public Library Manifesto (1949)**

The plan to draft a Public Library Manifesto was agreed upon during UNESCO's second General Conference in 1947. Whereas the Summer School had been Priority I, the Manifesto was categorized as a Priority II goal, defined as "Projects and activities of importance which the working party recommends strongly as matters for retention on the programme but which can be modified in their actual scale of development to accord with the budgetary position."<sup>775</sup> At the 1948 General Conference a follow-up resolution was passed instructing the Director General to continue UNESCO's projects to "promote the publication, translation and dissemination of manuals and leaflets to aid in the development and understanding of public libraries."<sup>776</sup>

Expressing his strong support for the resolution and for the Manifesto it made reference to, then

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<sup>774</sup> Arne Kildal, official report as UNESCO document, 25 February 1949, p.12. UNESCO Archives Summer Course Part III.

<sup>775</sup> "News and Information," *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries* II:1 (January 1948), 2.

<sup>776</sup> Resolution 6.51112. Quoted in Jaime Torres Bodet to various, undated. UNESCO Archives, Public Libraries Manifesto.

UNESCO Director-General Jaime Torres Bodet wrote, “Public libraries, with their roots deep in local and national needs and traditions, are in close contact with the daily lives of the great masses of men, women and children all over the world, and thereby have immense power to aid educational work and to contribute to social, cultural and moral growth. For this reason Unesco should do everything in its power to encourage the development of public library services and the wide use of such services by people everywhere.”<sup>777</sup> Having served from 1922 to 1924 as Head of the Libraries Department of Mexico’s Ministry of Education, Bodet, like so many high-level officials at UNESCO discussed elsewhere in this work, had a particular interest in the topic.

Some claim French author André Maurois to have been the “anonymous author” of the Manifesto.<sup>778</sup> It is possible that Maurois had something to do with the typescript although no evidence has been found linking the two. Maurois certainly did speak and write on behalf of books and libraries for UNESCO in the early 1960s. In 1961 his book, *Public Libraries and their Mission*, was published by UNESCO; that same year he wrote an article in the *UNESCO Courier* with the sub-heading, “The Inalienable Right to Read,” in which he argued for what the UNESCO Libraries Section had been doing since 1945: “The public library must give children, young people, men and women the opportunity to keep in touch with their, times, in every sphere. By offering them, impartially, works representing conflicting points of view, it enables them to form their own opinions and preserve that attitude of constructive criticism towards public affairs without which there is no freedom.”<sup>779</sup> However, looking back to the postwar years, according to the archives the Manifesto as it was finally published was not authored by

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<sup>777</sup> Bodet to various, undated. UNESCO Archives Public Libraries Manifesto.

<sup>778</sup> Barbro Thomas, “Books and Libraries,” *Scandinavian Public Library Quarterly* 1 (2007), 16.

<sup>779</sup> André Maurois, “André Maurois Speaks of Books and Libraries,” *The UNESCO Courier* (May 1961): 4-13. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0006/000638/063847eo.pdf>. Last accessed 29 December 2012.

Maurois but emerged as a result of the combined initiative and efforts of Carter with Richard Hart and Emerson Greenaway, two librarians from Baltimore's famous Enoch Pratt Free Library.

Greenaway, as UNESCO's honorary consultant for public libraries at the time, played a particularly important role. First, during the summer of 1947, Greenaway traveled to Switzerland, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland to research and then write a survey of the postwar state of public libraries in Europe. Second, based in part on his extensive experience as a leading figure in the American library system and in part on what he observed during his European survey, Greenaway edited the Manifesto, making final revisions to the wording of the draft. The fact that Greenaway was sensitive to the reality that public libraries, as they existed in the United States, would not necessarily be a good match for all other countries, is reflected in the report he presented to the 1947 UNESCO General Conference:

Each country must develop its own system in relation to its cultural inheritance and the distribution of its population, its industrial, economic, and social conditions, and even its climate and geography. Although there is no one universally applicable system, there is a philosophy of public library service which underlies the operation of successful public libraries in the few countries which have had public libraries working successfully for many years. The type of library envisaged by UNESCO is a library serving the reading needs of citizens of all ages, occupations, creeds, classes, and races. A public library should be democratically controlled, mainly supported by public funds, and open free to all users. The whole UNESCO public library program recognizes the growing responsibility of public libraries as cultural centers for discussion groups, exhibitions, film shows, etc., and closely linked to adult education activities locally. It is realized that within these generalizations there must be considerable latitude to accord with national traditions and material conditions; nonetheless, in stating UNESCO's public library program we have such general principles in mind.<sup>780</sup>

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<sup>780</sup> UNESCO General Conference, Second Session, "UNESCO's Public Libraries Programme." 2C/38, 3 October 1947. The reference to libraries serving citizens regardless of creed, class or race is notable as libraries and librarianship were not fully desegregated in the United States the civil rights movement of the 1960s. See Alma Dawson, "Celebrating African-American Librarians and Librarianship," *Library Trends* 49:1(Summer 2000): 49-87; Elizabeth McHenry, "'An Association of Kindred Spirits' Black Readers and Their Reading Rooms," in Thomas Augst and Kenneth Carpenter, eds., *Institutions of Reading: The Social Life of Libraries in the United States* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), 99-118; John Mark Tucker, ed., *Untold Stories: Civil Rights, Libraries and Black Librarianship* (Champaign, IL: School of Library and Information Science, 1998).

Greenaway expressed a similar balance of sensitivity and awareness with determination and idealism in his final remarks to Carter regarding the text of the Manifesto, writing, “I know that there are some phrases in there that you will wish to consider carefully. For example [...] two words ‘without charge,’ which certainly would be questioned in many a European country.” At the same time, believing that free public libraries were “a long range objective that is all for the good,” he suggested that the words “without charge” remain in the Manifesto (as they did, see full text in Appendix II), but recommended that “If an individual country objects to it, they may omit it from their program.” As Diana Rosenberg explained in a 1993 analysis of UNESCO’s library development programs in Africa, that was not necessarily possible, especially in places where libraries were being built from scratch, almost inevitably based on the western model disseminated by UNESCO:

UNESCO believed libraries to be a ‘good thing,’ but this belief stemmed from the influence of Western liberal thinking. The formulation of UNESCO’s library programme relied much on the active role played by British and American librarians. Although the desirability of shaping public libraries to the local needs of their societies was recognized, there was little experience or knowledge of how to do it. Therefore national library systems with a central libraries administration, national advisory committee, a central planning function, state grants, and state supervision of public libraries was the favoured approach. It was felt that developing countries should build from scratch and avoid the mistakes of older countries.<sup>781</sup>

This analysis, however, excludes the vocal demand for public libraries that was coming to the Libraries Section from non-western states with non-(western style) liberal ideologies from 1945 on. In their cases, the ability to learn from the mistakes made by the countries that already had established public library systems, while also modeling on their successes, all the while adapting

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<sup>781</sup> Diana Rosenberg, “Imposing Libraries: The Establishment of National Public Library Services in Africa, with Particular Reference to Kenya,” *World Libraries* 4:1 (Fall 1993).  
[http://www.worlib.org/vol04no1/rosenberg\\_v04n1.shtml](http://www.worlib.org/vol04no1/rosenberg_v04n1.shtml). Last accessed 6 November 2012.

these models to local capacities and needs, meant that it was inevitable that library developers worldwide would be looking west, as much for examples of what to do as what not to do.<sup>782</sup>

However, Carter did feel the need to defend the Libraries Section's approach and the nuance contained therein, writing in August 1947:

From the earliest meetings of the Preparatory Commission, the promotion of public library development has been accepted as one of the most important of all Unesco's duties, but as an international body Unesco is not concerned, as the report seems to indicate, to promote public libraries exactly on the model of those existing in any one or two countries. In so far as any national systems were mentioned at the meeting, the remarks certainly included reference to the fine existing systems in Scandinavian and in some other countries, as well as to those in Britain and the USA but, more generally, it is written into our programmes that, whatever 'models' may be studied, a democratically organized public library system must be closely related in every way to local economic, social and educational and even physical conditions.<sup>783</sup>

Nevertheless, the western, democratic, and especially American influence cannot be denied in the very language of the Manifesto, which goes so far as to borrow from Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, employing the words, "by the people for the people" in its text (see Appendix II).<sup>784</sup> Ultimately, the choices and preferences of individual countries regarding specific elements of public libraries did not and could not all be expressed in the Manifesto, which represented UNESCO's ideal guideline for "a world program" for public libraries, based almost entirely on what librarians in western countries viewed as successful and important.<sup>785</sup>

The final text raises again the question of authorship. While Carter attributed the entire drafting of the Manifesto to Greenaway, the latter wrote to Carter that it was his colleague

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<sup>782</sup> Rosenberg argues that in Africa, libraries were built by the departing colonizers in order to leave behind a structure which would perpetuate their power, at least by disseminating, in the case of Kenya, British publications, ideas and history, which is contrary to the more adaptive model that UNESCO hoped to encourage. She suggests that these libraries should perhaps be abandoned in order to allow libraries by and for the local populations to develop more organically.

<sup>783</sup> Edward J. Carter, "International Co-Operation" *The Library Association Record* 49:8 (August 1947), 208.

<sup>784</sup> The Manifesto was surely also influenced by the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, first adopted in 1939. See <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>. Last viewed 12 April 2013.

<sup>785</sup> Emerson Greenaway to Carter, 27 May 1948. UNESCO Archives Public Libraries Manifesto.

Richard Hart who had written the original draft.<sup>786</sup> Either way, once Carter, Hart and Greenaway had finalized their text, the Manifesto was sent to all the members of the IFLA sub-commission on public libraries for additional comments and suggestions, rendering the final product very much a collaborative effort rather than the work of any single author, anonymous or not. As Edward Sydney, UNESCO library consultant in New Delhi, wrote in a recent essay, the Manifesto was “probably the most important and forward-looking short statement of the purpose and service of public libraries ever issued and certainly the only one to be published with international approval. There is a deep understanding of the market to which it is addressed – an understanding not yet frequent enough in general public library propaganda.”<sup>787</sup> Key in Sydney’s assessment is the reference to international approval, which is precisely what UNESCO sought by circulating its draft to IFLA members, who, while largely European, did represent a certain, albeit limited, international opinion.

As Carter explained in the accompanying letter to the sub-commission, the Manifesto was written to communicate “in simple but bold terms the aims and functions of public libraries.”<sup>788</sup> Its clear and direct language reflected the fact that its intended audience was primarily the general public, and that only secondarily was it to function as a set of guidelines for librarians and library-concerned officials. It was another element of what Carter termed UNESCO’s “promotion program” aimed once again at “selling the public libraries idea.”<sup>789</sup> Carter’s letter continued by explaining to the sub-commission that the Manifesto was “intended, not for the public library profession, but for the general public who may be stimulated by the

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<sup>786</sup> Edward J. Carter, “Unesco’s Library Programs and Work,” 241; Emerson Greenaway to Carter, 27 May 1948. UNESCO Archives, Public Libraries Manifesto.

<sup>787</sup> Edward Sydney, “Public Library Development in the Post-War Years: The First Decade,” in, J.L. Sardana, ed., *Libraries and Information Studies in Retrospect and Prospect Essays in Honor of Prof. D.R. Kalia*, Volume 2 (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 2002), 342.

<sup>788</sup> Edward J. Carter to Robert L. Hansen, Statens Bibliotekstilsyn, Copenhagen, June 1948. UNESCO Archives Public Libraries Manifesto.

<sup>789</sup> Carter, “Unesco’s Library Programme and Work,” 241.

manifesto to demand public library services, to get to know more about them and to support those they have.”<sup>790</sup> Members of the sub-commission responded very positively to the Manifesto, acknowledging the need for such a document, praising UNESCO’s undertaking of its publication and distribution, and suggesting relatively minor revisions to the final text.

As UNESCO constantly had to remind especially those who were frustrated at what they perceived as the organization’s disappointing lack of achievement, progress or action, UNESCO was not an operating agency, but rather a stimulating and coordinating agency. Importantly, in this context, the Manifesto has rightly been referred to as “a document of ideas.”<sup>791</sup> The Manifesto exemplifies this important nuance in that its aim was to inspire the public to demand public libraries, as Carter put it, “to stimulate awareness” about their cultural right to libraries, rather than to somehow impose or dictate public libraries, or even a certain type of public library, upon a global public, an undertaking that would have been impossible anyway.<sup>792</sup> After all, UNESCO had neither the resources nor the authority for enforcement. It was, however, in a position to guide, inform and motivate, forms of action for which the UNESCO Libraries Section was often lauded.

To that end, the Manifesto, like so many of the Libraries Section endeavors, first and foremost intended to reach the greatest possible number of people, regardless of age, rank, profession, gender, education or any other individual characteristic. The intended trajectory was that information would lead to empowerment which would lead to participation, coming full circle back to Article 27. Words led to action insofar as the Manifesto educated people not only

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<sup>790</sup> Edward J. Carter to Robert L. Hansen, Statens Bibliotekstilsyn, Copenhagen, June 1948. UNESCO Archives Public Libraries Manifesto.

<sup>791</sup> Kerstin Hassner, “The model library project - a way to implement the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto,” 64th IFLA General Conference August 16 - August 21, 1998. <http://ifla.queenslibrary.org/IV/ifla64/055-137e.htm>. Last accessed 6 November 2012.

<sup>792</sup> Carter, “Unesco’s Library Programme and Work,” 241.

about what public libraries could provide but also that public libraries were institutions that they quite simply had the right to have, to access, and, perhaps most importantly, to demand from their local and national leaders and governments. For this achievement, the Manifesto received high praise from the American Library Association *Bulletin*: “We are proud of Unesco’s Public Library Manifesto [...] We are proud that Unesco has deeds as well as these fine words to its credit in support of public libraries [...] in fact, all of Unesco’s assistance throughout the world not only to create and improve libraries but to create the conditions in which libraries can flourish.”<sup>793</sup> The emphasis on practical action over theoretical discussion is particularly key here as since, as previously discussed, UNESCO has since its birth contended with criticism that it was an unwieldy, bureaucratic organization, consisting mostly of some great ideas and much talk, but very little impact or effectiveness. Coming from the ALA, the largest and best-known library organization in the world representing some of the most free, open and accessible public libraries in the world, such praise of UNESCO’s action and influence was particularly meaningful and welcome.

While the Manifesto was intended primarily to encourage library development in places where there were not enough libraries or none at all – indeed “to convert the ideas into practical action” it resulted in the building of three “model” or “pilot” public libraries in New Dehli, Medellín and Nigeria.<sup>794</sup> Yet, like so many of UNESCO’s early library-related activities, the initial targets and beneficiaries of the Manifesto campaign were primarily libraries in European countries under reconstruction. Carter specifically addressed how he hoped the Manifesto would be useful even in countries, such as some in Europe, with existing public library systems, “It has been in our minds that such a statement as we have attempted to draft might be useful even in

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<sup>793</sup> Lucile M. Morsch, “Promoting Library Interests Throughout the World,” *ALA Bulletin* 51:8 (September 1957), 582.

<sup>794</sup> Hassner, “The model library project.”

places where there are good public library systems existing at present as a Unesco demonstration of its belief in the importance of public libraries and their place as an essential part of the educational and cultural organisation of the world. In this way the manifesto may help to build up the prestige of public librarians as men and women fulfilling a really important role in contemporary civilization.”<sup>795</sup> The Manifesto was published in the form of leaflets and posters and was quickly circulated to member states, primarily via UNESCO National Commissions, in many tens of thousands of copies in English, French, Spanish, Polish, Italian and Arabic. On a document charting the first round of distribution, about half of the printing was intended for European countries with the other half shipping all over the world, reaching from Afghanistan to Venezuela, Burma to Haiti, and beyond.<sup>796</sup> Germany, still considered an enemy nation and not yet a UNESCO member state, was, as a result, excluded from most UNESCO programs or activities. German librarians, however, impressed with the Manifesto, informed UNESCO that they were undertaking their own translation and distribution of the Manifesto within Germany, an enterprise that UNESCO quietly supported and was quite pleased about.<sup>797</sup>

Polish was the only language into which the Manifesto was translated in order to benefit only one recipient country. Additionally, with an original planned distribution of 950 posters and 9,800 leaflets, Poland was set to receive by far the greatest number of copies of the Manifesto, another reflection of the particular concern UNESCO felt for the extent of the war devastation of libraries in Poland and of the prominent interest Poles such as Drzewieski took in UNESCO’s library work. It is possible, although no evidence has been found documenting it, that the

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<sup>795</sup> Edward J. Carter to Robert L. Hansen, Statens Bibliotekstilsyn, Copenhagen, June 1948 [same letter sent to all members on IFLA sub-commission on public libraries, asking for comments on the draft text of the manifesto.] UNESCO Archives Public Library Manifesto.

<sup>796</sup> Bulk shipments of The Public Library A Living Force for Popular Education,” undated. UNESCO Archives Public Libraries Manifesto.

<sup>797</sup> Guido Geyer, Director, Rathaus-Stadtbücherei, Rheydt, 13 February 1950 to Petersen. UNESCO Archives Public Libraries Manifesto.

disproportionate effort to distribute the Manifesto in Poland may have also reflected a hope to rally public demand for free and open democratic institutions as exemplified by public libraries as a way to counterbalance the increasing non-democratization of postwar Poland.

Unfortunately, it has proven impossible thus far to trace the actual distribution of the Manifesto once it was shipped out by UNESCO.

The organization did request feedback from recipient countries although none were found in the archives. In a letter written after the 1948 General Conference, making reference to the Manifesto, Bodet asked UNESCO member nations to inform him “on the use made of this publication in your country and an estimate of its effectiveness.”<sup>798</sup> Perhaps the greatest evidence of the Manifesto’s effectiveness is the fact that it has endured, remaining relevant and useful to librarians the world over to the present day. At the 1996 IFLA General Conference, one speaker provided a history of the Manifesto, reminding listeners that it was “based on confidence in the liberating role of knowledge, necessary for freedom and progress,” and praising the “role which it assigns to culture, serving tolerance, understanding, mutual benefit and the respect and preservation of cultures.” The Manifesto, the speaker continued, “remains faithful to UNESCO’s humanist principles and the ideas on which the Organization is based. Finally, there is continuity in the desire to see the library recognized as a public institution essential to justice, freedom and social cohesion.”<sup>799</sup> Continuity is indeed present in the history of the Manifesto, which says a lot about the positive response that must have existed from its first printing.

The 1949 version remained in use until UNESCO asked IFLA to update it in 1972, additional revisions were made in 1994 and most recently in 1998, ensuring that today’s

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<sup>798</sup> Jaime Torres Bodet to various, undated. UNESCO Archives, Public Libraries Manifesto.

<sup>799</sup> Abdelaziz Abid, “Revision of the Unesco Public Library Manifesto,” *62nd IFLA General Conference - Conference Proceedings - August 25-31, 1996*. <http://ifla.queenslibrary.org/IV/ifla62/62-abia2.htm>. Last accessed 6 November 2012.

Manifiesto, while it has evolved to reflect advances in information and technology, remains very much based on the original version and still actively and widely used and distributed, often looked to and functioning as the best articulation of the guidelines for some best practices regarding public libraries.<sup>800</sup> As one librarian stated in 1998, after that year's revision, "Without a doubt, the previous 1949 and 1972 Manifiestos helped increase understanding and insight into the importance of public libraries for democracy and education in many countries, at both central and local levels." She went on to argue that the Manifiesto "is kept alive through our work. It is not a 'desk drawer' product for our municipalities, but can rather be a real tool in the dialogue with decision-makers and others. We can spread this means of working to more municipalities and in this way keep the Manifiesto alive."<sup>801</sup> This argument is reminiscent of the previously quoted praise the ALA had for the Manifiesto and UNESCO regarding action and results, praise that continues to be expressed to the present day but that peaked in 2008 for the sixtieth anniversary of the UDHR.<sup>802</sup>

In a brief message written on that occasion, Mexican librarian Felipe Meneses posted a message to a Spanish-language librarians' listserv in which he wrote, "Perhaps few have thought that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has some historical association with the UNESCO Public Library Manifiesto (version 1949)."<sup>803</sup> For Meneses, who went on to encourage his colleagues to continue upholding the principles of both the UDHR as well as the Manifiesto in their work as librarians, the association between the two documents was clear and undeniable.

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<sup>800</sup> For example, in 1999 the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) passed a resolution adopting Principles for Public Library Services based on the UNESCO Public Library Manifiesto.

<sup>801</sup> Hassner, "The model library project."

<sup>802</sup> See for example, Kathleen de la Peña McCook and Katharine Phenix, "Human Rights, Democracy, and Librarians," in Ken Haycock and Brooke E. Sheldon, eds., *The Portable MLIS: Insights from the Experts* (Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2008), 23-34; ADD MORE.

<sup>803</sup> Felipe Meneses, "60o aniversario de la Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos: 1948-2008," message posted to [Biblio-Info-Sociedad 2 \(Bibliotecas Informacion y Sociedad 2\)](http://www.filos.unam.mx/LICENCIATURA/BK_bibliotecologia/cv_profesores.html?accion=cv&seccion=meneses). ([http://www.filos.unam.mx/LICENCIATURA/BK\\_bibliotecologia/cv\\_profesores.html?accion=cv&seccion=meneses](http://www.filos.unam.mx/LICENCIATURA/BK_bibliotecologia/cv_profesores.html?accion=cv&seccion=meneses)). Last accessed 6 November 2012.

Yet, the association has rarely been discussed or analyzed as such. Within the last decade or so, this is beginning to change. Scholars in the history of library and information studies are increasingly concerned with human rights and are increasingly looking to UNESCO, to Articles 19 and 27 of the UDHR and to the Manifesto. Kathleen de la Peña McCook and Katharine Phenix are leading the field.<sup>804</sup> In 2006 they stated that “Public libraries and human rights are inextricably bound.” They continued, “We can use the sublime language of international experts to lift us up and support our efforts to standardize and improve libraries and library service. By internalizing the idealism of human rights and looking to the global manifesto of the realization of a librarian’s commitment to these ideals public librarians enter the 21st century with a clear agenda, with the goal to amplify that still voice.”<sup>805</sup> Finally, encouraging librarians in the United States to “embrace” UNESCO’s Manifesto, they connected libraries with human rights and with national interests, writing, “public librarians, in the quest to practice library service as a profession committed to human rights, should consider what human beings require to become content, enlightened and fulfilled. The codes and promises we make to ourselves and our patrons are the same bulwarks enlightened nations use to protect their citizens.”<sup>806</sup>

## VII. Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated that librarians’ codes and promises, in the form of UDHR Articles 19 and 27 in particular, and in their interpretation and implementation by the UNESCO Libraries Section, and insofar as they have helped to situate public libraries as a universal cultural right to the present day, can be traced directly to the immediate postwar moment. By identifying the intersections between UNESCO’s involvement in the UDHR and the postwar

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<sup>804</sup> See also Toni Samek, *Librarianship and Human Rights: A Twenty-First Century Guide* (Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2007); McCook and Phenix, “Human Rights, Democracy and Librarians.”

<sup>805</sup> de la Pena McCook and Phenix, “Public Libraries and Human Rights,” 69.

<sup>806</sup> de la Pena McCook and Phenix, “Public Libraries and Human Rights,” 69.

work of its Libraries Section, linking reconstruction, development expansion and cultural rights, this chapter has offered a vivid example of how UNESCO strove to make what risked being theoretical and abstract into practical, helpful, educational, informative and empowering action. The Summer School and Manifesto case studies illustrate the commitment of the Libraries Section to reaching out to people at all levels and stations and in all nations, to offer them the tools with which they could educate themselves and demand public institutions that the UDHR gave them the right to have. The influence and impact, while difficult to trace and identify in a detailed manner, are demonstrated by the reverberations that continue to be felt today of programs, activities and policies whose origins can be traced to the postwar and to those who used culture to help society recover and renew.

Looking back to the Jacques Maritain comment quoted at the opening of this chapter, “we agree about the rights *but on condition that no one asks us why* [emphasis in original],” the Summer School and Manifesto were contributions by a UNESCO intent on practical action over getting bogged down in potentially unresolvable theoretical discussions.<sup>807</sup> The success and longevity of both of these projects highlights UNESCO’s ability to rally support around the points of agreement regarding public libraries as a universal cultural right and to help overcome the inevitable differences that made impossible any explanation of how or why it was that the agreement existed in the first place.

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<sup>807</sup> Maritain, “Introduction,” I.

**Conclusion: “To revive tirelessly the feeling of solidarity among the various nations.”<sup>808</sup>**

On 4 March 2013 the American Library Association published a press release urging the United States to resume payment of its dues to UNESCO in order to regain its status as “a fully functioning UNESCO member.” As briefly mentioned in chapter two, the United States withdrew entirely in November 2011 after a majority vote approved Palestine as a UNESCO member state.<sup>809</sup> The ALA, continuing in the tradition outlined in this dissertation, is pushing the American government to transcend an ideological impasse by focusing not on politics but on the universal needs of individuals worldwide. The ALA is arguing that without American funding, there is “a significant deficit in UNESCO’s budget, resulting in either canceling or jeopardizing countless programs that improve people’s lives.”<sup>810</sup> The ALA’s recent press release also outlines the values that the organization shares in common with UNESCO, specifically, the “promotion and advancement of education around the world, freedom of expression, including a free and open Internet and media sector, the sharing of scientific knowledge and cultural understanding through the preservation of world heritage and intercultural dialogue.”<sup>811</sup> Aside from technology, these values regarding freedoms, rights and cooperation have remained unchanged since the

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<sup>808</sup> Unesco, Experts meeting on educational and scientific reconstruction of war-devastated countries, called by Unesco, unanimously adopts decisions on cultural reconstruction. Press Release 53/49, Paris 16 May 1949. UNESCO Archives, 361.9 A 06 (44) “49.05” Int. Conf. of Representatives of War Devastated Countries – Paris May 1949.

<sup>809</sup> This is not the first time that controversial new member nations have been voted into UNESCO prior to being voted into the UN. The same was true for Austria, Hungary and Japan. In the case of Hungary at least, the US delegation abstained on the vote that approved its membership. Summary Record 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of U.S. Delegation, 5 November 1947, 11am. AJA, Marshall Papers, Box 30 Folder 3, UNESCO Mexico City Conf 1947. Nor is this the first time the US withdrew from the organization. It has threatened to do so in the past and followed through in 1984, due to Cold War tensions, the UK in 1985. Various other states have also withdrawn and then returned over the years, a freedom that is allowed by UNESCO’s Constitution. See Bührle, “La France et l’UNESCO de 1945 à 1958,” 117-134.

<sup>810</sup> “ALA council urges Congress to act toward becoming fully functioning member of UNESCO,” *ALA News*, 4 March 2013. The resolution was adopted 29 January 2013 at the ALA Midwinter Meeting. <http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/news/ala/ala-council-urges-congress-act-toward-becoming-fully-functioning-member-unesco>. Last viewed 11 April 2013.

<sup>811</sup> “ALA council urges Congress.”

early postwar period when the same shared values drove the wider collaboration between libraries, librarians and UNESCO that has been discussed throughout this work.

ALA's attempt to convince Congress to look beyond national governmental interests to the concrete needs of people is indicative of what UNESCO's role and mission has represented to so many since its inception. As Hungary's Ambassador to UNESCO Katalin Bogyay put it in a 2012 speech, "UNESCO represents a vision of the world where the only legitimate power is soft. And through this soft power, UNESCO helps peoples and societies to transform and to learn the culture of peace."<sup>812</sup> In this idealistic vision, as in the ALA's statement - and just as in what drove the original Unescans and their supporters - to be a part of UNESCO, regardless of its weaknesses and failings, is to dedicate oneself to the possibility of forging a new, different, peaceful future that will no longer be based upon the ideological divisions that both reinforce and call into question national borders, sovereignty and identities. In the postwar, UNESCO envisioned that new future as one in which transnational networks of exchange, collaboration and communication would help to foster toleration and understanding. It would be one in which access within Europe to both non-restitutable Jewish books and fascist publications that had not been immediately pulped would help to prevent another world war based on violent hatred from originating on the continent. Overall, the expansion of public libraries would ensure that all people had free and open access to the information and publications they wanted or needed. The knowledge, education and experience gained by cross-border communication and cooperation and by access to libraries would, in turn, contribute to UNESCO's ultimate goal: creating a more peaceful world.

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<sup>812</sup> Katalin Bogyay speech opening the Soft Power Conference, Budapest, 23 November 2012. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002187/218708E.pdf>. Last viewed 13 April 2013."

The previous chapters establish that UNESCO, working with very limited resources and in a relatively short period of time, was able to make to some substantial contributions to postwar library reconstruction and rehabilitation in Europe as well as to the expansion and improvement of public library service. The successes were the International Clearing House for Publications, the *Bulletin for Libraries*, UNESCO Book Coupons, Summer Schools for Librarians and the Manifesto for Libraries. The previous chapters also expose occasions when UNESCO was unable to contribute, unable to successfully position itself as a serious, international, mediating authority in the eyes of the very countries that were most responsible for founding and funding the organization, and primarily, the United States. Such failures were exemplified by UNESCO being slowly excluded from consideration as a body that could be responsible for helping to resolve or even mediate the postwar debates over the fate of contested books and library collections, whether they were fascist texts or Judaic treasures. The achievements were possible because UNESCO successfully cultivated transnational, cooperative networks through which libraries were able to obtain the information and publications they needed while spending the least amount of money possible. The failures occurred when national or particular interests overshadowed UNESCO's universalist message and mission and the cooperative contribution that it hoped to make.

One theme that was omitted from the discussion, however, was physical reconstruction; generally speaking, UNESCO did not possess the funding, infrastructure or local authority to rebuild physically damaged or destroyed library buildings. There were a few exceptions to this general rule. Briefly looking at the example of one of these, a small municipal library, whose collection dates back to 1719, in the village of Valognes in Normandy, provides an ideal way to conclude this work. First, its reconstruction occurred from 1950 to 1951, just as the Libraries

Section's reconstruction and rehabilitation program was beginning to wind down, and second, its reconstruction combined so many of the elements discussed throughout the previous chapters: international cooperation and exchange of information and knowledge. This project and others like it reveal that physical reconstruction was one area in which France truly benefited from her host status. The geographical proximity and therefore visibility and accessibility of both her damaged sites and the local and national authorities whose approval was necessary for work to proceed, made it possible for UNESCO to help coordinate the reconstruction of libraries in a number of French cities. Moreover, since UNESCO's own resources were so severely limited, working within France was relatively affordable and logistically manageable, requiring minimal travel and no visas, permissions or other bureaucratic details that often impeded its work, even in other member states. Indeed, through these projects UNESCO demonstrated its ability to find the means, financial and otherwise, that allowed the libraries to be physically restored after several years of neglect had badly exacerbated wartime damage.

According to a French government report from the early 1950s, library losses in France's provinces had been heaviest, particularly in Normandy and other areas that had seen combat and that had been bombed by the allies as part of their landing in Europe and push east.<sup>813</sup> Nevertheless, the very limited resources available coupled with a strong focus on and interest in Paris, left many other French libraries, often those that were smaller, less immediately recognized as "important," or simply less geographically accessible, by the wayside when it came to reconstruction. Like many of these, the Valognes library building had been badly damaged by weeks of allied aerial bombardments before the town was liberated 20 June 1944.

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<sup>813</sup> Note sur les destructions des livres dans les bibliothèques publiques de province de 1939 à 1945, undated. Archives nationales à Fontainebleau, (hereafter AnF), N° de versement 19780678, Dossier 12 Rapports d'expertise, 1951-1958.

The library's contents, considered part of "France's cultural patrimony,"<sup>814</sup> included the most important incunabula collection in the region and about 4,000 works dating to the sixteenth century or earlier.<sup>815</sup> Yet, with almost the entire town lying in ruins, reconstruction priorities necessarily focused on housing, hospitals, schools and other vital services.

A representative from the Service des Bibliothèques sinistrées of France's Direction des Bibliothèques had visited Valognes while conducting a national survey to assess library damage and needs in order to secure support to address those needs from the Ministries of Reconstruction and of National Education. He had recommended the obvious, that Valognes quickly find a way to restore and protect its valuable collection, but had been unable to offer any assistance. Subsequently, the town had repaired the library's collapsed roof and shattered windows, but the books had remained untouched, scattered as they had fallen amidst building debris, and the library had been largely unusable since. Even the most valuable material, which had been transferred to an attic for safekeeping during the war, was deteriorating due to simple neglect.

Frozen in this suspended state, the Valognes library had the good fortune to be visited, by chance, in 1950 by American David Leff, editor of the UNESCO *Reconstruction Newsletter* and then of its successor periodical *Impetus* (translated as *Élan* in French). Leff, traveling in Normandy for UNESCO, had stopped in the town after hearing that its high school had made a "remarkable come-back since the war." Looking for the person responsible, Leff and his colleagues were directed to the library, a short distance down the road. In *Impetus* Leff described his reaction as he was shown around:

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<sup>814</sup> David Leff, "Tales of Three Cities in Normandy, Part I: Buried Treasure awaits discovery in abandoned library of bombed Valognes," *Impetus: A Monthly Review of Reconstruction in Education, Science and Culture* IV:5 (May 1950), 18.

<sup>815</sup> See Alain Girard, *Catalogues Régionaux des Incunables des Bibliothèques Publiques de France, vol. IV Bibliothèques de la Région Basse-Normandie* (Bordeaux: Société des Bibliophiles de Guyenne, 1984), 167-171.

The rubble of smashed buildings is a commonplace in Europe: a pictorial platitude in newspapers and magazines. One broken brick is very like another. Books are different. Most blasted or gutted libraries burned inside, leaving no useful remains. Here at Valogne, six years after a careless bomb shook up the books, the damage had only begun – but was continuing.<sup>816</sup> These books were not war victims, but they were fast becoming post-war casualties.

By referring to the books as victims and casualties, Leff was, like those quoted in chapter three who referred to the Jewish books as survivors or POWs, imbuing them with human values, meaning and experience. Such reactions, which were relatively common among those who, like Leff, unexpectedly came across stores of stolen or hidden books or damaged or destroyed libraries, further reveal why their ultimate fate was such a charged issue and was taken so seriously by so many at the time.<sup>817</sup> Then as now, books as physical objects hold certain value for certain people. But for many, the greatest value of books lies in their contents, in the fact that they record history, stories and information, that they document the creativity, productivity and evolution of societies. During the early postwar years, the fact that such records did not exist in the myriad of other formats that they do now, rendered books valuable as representative of those who had created them, those who had owned, collected, read and used them, and those who would in the future. Thus the genealogical trajectory – past, present and future – of books led them to be viewed as valuable, even vital tools for reconstructing people, identity, society, and nations.

This was the case in Valognes, where the library documented the unique history of a small and ancient town.<sup>818</sup> Leff's dismay upon seeing the state of the library inspired him to

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<sup>816</sup> David Leff, "Tales of Three Cities in Normandy," 17.

<sup>817</sup> Of course such emotionality regarding books was not limited to the postwar period. Very recently author and bibliophile Alberto Manguel wrote, "every book that has come down to us from the hands of distant readers, each of my books holds the history of its survival. From fire, water, the passage of time, neglectful readers and the hands of the censor, each of my books has escaped to tell me its story." Alberto Manguel, *The Library at Night* (Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf Canada, 2006), 235.

<sup>818</sup> Valognes dates to the eleventh century. See [http://www.mairie-valognes.fr/web/lhistoire\\_de\\_valognes.html](http://www.mairie-valognes.fr/web/lhistoire_de_valognes.html). Last viewed 16 April 2013.

propose a solution on the spot to Valognes' mayor, "for Unesco and the French library administration to sponsor the formation of an international restoration team to save the precious books in your library? We could invite students and young librarians from all over the world to come here." The fact that Leff would articulate this plan without first consulting UNESCO headquarters is indicative of the confidence he had in the organization's interest in the postwar fate of libraries based on the years of evidence that have been documented throughout these pages.<sup>819</sup> The invitation appeared in a long article Leff included in the next issue of *Impetus*. Describing Valognes' problem and outlining his solution, it announced that "Unesco invites bodies in this field – such as libraries, library schools, associations of librarians and University classics departments – to express an interest in undertaking to manage such a venture."<sup>820</sup>

The response Leff hoped for came almost immediately from Scandinavia and it was quickly arranged for about fifty college-age students and a number of professional librarians and book conservators, mostly from Denmark as well as from Sweden, to travel to Valognes on what one Danish newspaper referred to as a "rescue expedition."<sup>821</sup> The project, which proved to be a great success, was co-directed by UNESCO and by the Inspector General of France's libraries, and the reconstruction and rehabilitation process was documented by Eric Schwab, an official UN/UNESCO photographer.<sup>822</sup> Ultimately, two groups, led by a conservator from the Danish Royal Library, came to Valognes for about one month during the summer of 1950 and three months during the summer of 1951. The Scandinavian students, in addition to being able to

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<sup>819</sup> Leff, "Tales of Three Cities," 18.

<sup>820</sup> Leff, "Tales of Three Cities," 19.

<sup>821</sup> [partial clipping] "Danske studenter redder kostbar fransk bogskat," unknown newspaper, undated. Rigsarkivet, DISfonden 1948-1962 Avisudklip vedr. Studenterforhold 1950, m.m. 62-63, Box 10027, Folder: Presseudklip 1950-51, 7.

<sup>822</sup> M. Nicolet and Robert Brun, respectively. Girard, *Catalogues Régionaux des Incunables des Bibliothèques Publiques de France*, 168-169. Incidentally, Schwab, while a reporter and photographer for Agence France Presse assigned to the US military, was one of the first journalists to see the concentration camps, beginning at the 5 April 1945 liberation of Ohrdruf, then at Buchenwald (where he took some of the first post-liberation photographs of Julien Cain), Thekla, Dachau and Itter.

travel, camp and explore a desirable place during their summer vacation, also committed to working very hard in less than ideal conditions. They had access to rare texts, important, in some cases, to their own academic interests, and learned book and manuscript conservation techniques. The Scandinavian librarians were able to share their knowledge and expertise with a community that needed such capabilities in order to maintain its library. The French library authorities were associated with the restoration of a small but important French library and the rescue of one more collection of historic documentation of France's heritage - most importantly - without having to pay for or otherwise administer it. Looking back, the *Bulletin for Libraries* described the undertaking as one of "a few strikingly effective projects organized by Unesco, but, with finance provided by various Member States (Norway, Denmark, Sweden, the United Kingdom), to help in the rehabilitation of war-damaged libraries in France."

"In France" is a crucial element of that statement as similar UNESCO endeavors to physically reconstruct libraries elsewhere have not been found.<sup>823</sup> The fact that such projects that helped to preserve and save elements of "France's cultural patrimony" only occurred in France also serves to explain some of the competitive tensions that surrounded the broader UNESCO reconstruction program from its beginning. Indeed, frustration with unfulfilled needs coupled with the perception that they were being addressed in an imbalanced or biased manner, led Poland to accuse UNESCO of having "done almost nothing for the reconstruction of cultural patrimony in the countries that had suffered under the barbarous occupation of Hitler's

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<sup>823</sup> UNESCO did have various types of work camps throughout postwar Europe aimed at getting students involved in reconstruction and in reeducation efforts. These work camps often had UNESCO-mounted libraries and it is probable that some of the camps assisted libraries in need, but direct projects such as those in France for libraries have not been found. The French libraries of Douai, Strasbourg and Dunkirk benefited from similar arrangements. On Dunkirk: Press Release No. 549, Paris, 14 August 1951, British Students Reconstruct French Damaged Libraries. Biblioteki Narodowej w Warszawie [National Library of Poland], Library and Information Science Reading Room, TD-162 UNESCO 1946-1952.

Germany.”<sup>824</sup> This complaint was cited by Poland as a primary reason for its 1952 withdrawal from UNESCO.

Of course conflict between member states over how UNESCO’s budget, projects and activities were prioritized and distributed was (and remains) ever-present. While majority votes at the General Conference and agreement on the Executive Board are required in order for action to be taken, there are always those left in the minority who feel ignored, dismissed or misunderstood. Looking back, Zuckerman recalled the first years of UNESCO as a time when:

One of the first tasks given to Unesco in the aftermath of the Second World War was to lend assistance to the reconstruction of destroyed or damaged schools, universities, libraries and other institutions of learning. In those days, the term ‘developing countries’ had not even been invented and the so-called ‘Reconstruction Department’ was given the lion's share of Unesco's budget. Within this department the replacement of books and other publications in hundreds of destroyed libraries throughout the world became a major concern of the ‘Libraries Division’ which appealed to more fortunate libraries and the general public to donate books and magazines needed to rebuild burnt-out libraries in Poland, the Philippines, China, etc. [sic].<sup>825</sup>

Such a structure meant that from the outset, some, particularly those from non-war-impacted countries, argued that too much of UNESCO’s limited resources were being directed towards reconstruction. Those from war-impacted countries, on the other hand, tended to argue that they were not receiving enough given the extent of their needs and, later, that UNESCO’s reconstruction program tapered off too quickly, leaving behind a sea of unfulfilled needs.

To that end, a May 1949 meeting of experts from war-devastated countries insisted that UNESCO continue its work in the realm of reconstruction. “One of the best means of developing a better international understanding and of working for peace,” these experts argued, “consists in recalling incessantly to the world the wounds – still open – caused by war, and to revive

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<sup>824</sup> P. Ogrodzinski, Ministre Plenipotentiaire, Charge d’Affaires a.i. de Pologne, Ambassade Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej to John W. Taylor, Interim Director General, 5 December 1952. UNESCO Archives X 07.21 (438), Relations with Poland – Official, Part I – up to 31/XII/63.

<sup>825</sup> Jacob Zuckerman, “The CO-ACTION Programme of Unesco,” undated. Zuckerman Family Papers.

tirelessly the feeling of solidarity among the various nations.”<sup>826</sup> While the war-damaged countries saw these two projects as inextricably linked, part of the passion of their statement stemmed from the fact that they knew they had to convince the rest of the world to maintain interest in reconstruction. UNESCO was faced with the additional challenge of maintaining the interest of donors who were often distant from the on-the-ground realities. As Edward Carter explained it, “To many people, the days of international relief were virtually past as soon as they stopped being excited about having won the war.”<sup>827</sup> This was a subject of significant concern and discussion at the last Meeting of Representatives of War-Devastated Countries, which met in Florence in May of 1950:

in most countries, the attitude of the public towards reconstruction appeals has undergone a change. A fund of goodwill and popular support continues to exist, if not to grow, but new ideas and methods are now required for an organized effort to convert goodwill into money or supplies. In some countries, national campaigns are still possible; in others, Unesco’s efforts are increasingly directed through groups of voluntary bodies and national commissions with which Unesco’s work is associated.”<sup>828</sup>

In other words, beginning in 1951, UNESCO’s reconstruction work necessarily began to shift and evolve significantly as a result of and in line with changing needs, new competition for resources and as decolonization contributed to expanding UNESCO’s membership and the scope of needs it wanted and was expected to address.

This necessary shifting of resources and attention, however, became a serious point of contention for some of the original member nations, those from CAME for whom reconstruction had been the concern founding their initial interest and participation in UNESCO and that

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<sup>826</sup> Experts meeting on educational and scientific reconstruction of war-devastated countries, called by Unesco, unanimously adopts decisions on cultural reconstruction. Press Release 53/49, Paris 16 May 1949. UNESCO Archives, 361.9 A 06 (44) “49.05” Int. Conf. of Representatives of War Devastated Countries – Paris May 1949.

<sup>827</sup> Outline of the Reconstruction Programme for the Years 1951-1955. UNESCO Archives X07.55 REC Programme, Budget & Organization of Reconstruction, Relief & Rehabilitation.

<sup>828</sup> UNESCO Reconstruction Service, Conference on Working Machinery and Future Methods of Organization, 31 May 1950. UA, 361.9 A 06 (45) “50.05” Meeting of Representatives of War Devastated Countries - Florence – May 1950.

remained their primary concern. By the time Poland submitted its formal withdrawal to UNESCO on 5 December 1952, reconstruction, while still an element of UNESCO's programs and activities, had ceased to be the central program it had been, especially in Europe, through 1950.<sup>829</sup> As mentioned in chapter two, the Reconstruction Program was downsized in February 1951 to the new Rehabilitation Service and included transfer of staff, most importantly Zuckerman and his book coupons. Incidentally, in the 1990s a former colleague remembered these as the brainchild of Zuckerman's "brilliant and inventive mind."<sup>830</sup> In 1951 the Service still had sixteen employees in Paris, an additional five working on coupons and five more staffing the Reconstruction Campaign Unit in New York City.<sup>831</sup> The tasks outlined for the Service's 1952 budget year were "collection and distribution of information on reconstruction needs, reconstruction coupons, refugees in the Middle East."<sup>832</sup> But while reconstruction priorities were clearly changing, Cold War politics are necessary to explaining Poland's departure and, as some have argued, the demise of the Reconstruction Program as well.<sup>833</sup>

Citing its disillusionment in a litany of disappointments and perceived failures, from the above mentioned lack of reconstruction assistance to the accusation that UNESCO had done nothing to promote international cooperation or cultural exchange between countries either, the

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<sup>829</sup> Also in December 1952 and January 1953, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, withdrew, briefly leaving Yugoslavia as the only remaining eastern European nation as a member of the organization.

<sup>830</sup> Joan Smith, "A Man for all Seasons," *Lien/Link* (1993).

<sup>831</sup> UNESCO Staff Lists and Departments, 1945-1952.

<sup>832</sup> Director General to Head, Reconstruction Service, 14 November 1950. UNESCO Archives X 07.55 REC, Programme, Budget & Organization of Reconstruction, Relief & Rehabilitation.

<sup>833</sup> Gail Archibald and more recently Chloé Maurel have argued that the demise of the Reconstruction Program can be primarily attributed to pressure from the United States, which considered it to be overrun by communists and communist sympathizers, and particularly its head, Polish-born Bernard Drzewieski, to be a communist spy for Warsaw. Since the Program was not entirely shut down, but rather was significantly downsized in a transfer of staff and activities to the new Rehabilitation Service, and since Drzewieski did not depart UNESCO, neither by force nor willingly, from the organization as these authors state, but rather, stayed on in the education department until his death in 1953, the power of the United States to dictate the who and what at UNESCO may not have been quite so absolute. See Maurel, "L'action de l'Unesco dans le domaine de la reconstruction ;" Gail Archibald, *Les États-Unis et l'UNESCO 1944 -1963: Les rêves peuvent-ils résister à la réalité des relations internationales?* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1993).

final straw for Poland was the move to admit Franco's Spain to UNESCO, which, coupled with the increasing amount of aid going to Germany and the impact of American McCarthyism on the organization, led Poland to accuse the organization of being both a "refuge of fascist barbarism" and an "instrument of American aggression."<sup>834</sup> For about a month after the country's withdrawal Polish libraries were able to continue receiving publications through UNESCO's gift and exchange programs. Briefly, it seemed possible that UNESCO was still successfully "maintaining cultural interchange between Eastern and Western Europe," a success that it had been praised for in March 1949.<sup>835</sup> That too was put to an end, however, when a letter was sent to all of Poland's libraries on 30 January 1953 forbidding all contact with UNESCO.<sup>836</sup> The separation, however, was fairly short-lived. On 18 June 1954, two months after the USSR joined for the first time, Poland declared its intent to return to UNESCO and Polish libraries were once again able to participate in and benefit from UNESCO's programs and projects.<sup>837</sup>

So did UNESCO have any success in being "a kind of organizational Switzerland" that "ignored the politics of its member states?"<sup>838</sup> Throughout this work we have seen how the Libraries Section certainly hoped and tried, if not to ignore state politics which would have been entirely unrealistic, to transcend them by identifying avenues of cooperation and collaboration that made productivity possible between and across borders. Vernon Clapp of the Library of

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<sup>834</sup> Spain was officially admitted 30 January 1953. P. Ogrodzinski, Ministre Plenipotentiaire, Charge d'Affaires a.i. de Pologne, Ambasada Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej to John W. Taylor, Interim Director General, 5 December 1952. UNESCO Archives X 07.21 (438), Relations with Poland – Official, Part I – up to 31/XII/63.

<sup>835</sup> C.H.D., "Unesco in 1948: An Impartial Assessment," *The World Today* 5:3 (Mar., 1949), 116. How "impartial" this assessment is or is not depends on the identity, thus far undiscovered, of C.H.C.

<sup>836</sup> Ministry of Higher Education to all libraries in Poland, 30 January 1953. Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Warszawie (BUW), Warsaw University Library Archives. Correspondence with the archivist, September 2011.

<sup>837</sup> The USSR joined 21 April 1954. Jean Thomas, Director General to S.E. Stanislaw Gajewski, Polish Ambassador in Paris, 18 June 1954, expressing his pleasure that after consideration of the 11 December 1952 resolution Poland has decided to "renew its collaboration with UNESCO." Gajewski's letter stating Poland's intention to return to UNESCO to Director General Luther H. Evans, 18 June 1954. UNESCO Archives X 07.21 (438), Relations with Poland – Official, Part I.

<sup>838</sup> Donald G. Davis, assisted by Nathaniel Feis, "With Malice toward none" IFLA and the Cold War," *Libraries & Culture* 36:1 (winter 2001): 3.

Congress, in an editorial entitled “UNESCO – Ten Years After,” included the head of the Libraries Section, Carter, among those he credited for keeping “the program alive against odds of indifference and inertia which, at times, must have seemed over-whelming.”<sup>839</sup> The indifference and inertia often stemmed from the state politics that were always present, whether hovering beneath the surface or causing blatant disruption.

State politics also resurface in the question recently asked by French historian and librarian, Anne-Marie Bertrand: how and when did the cultural transfer take place that allowed France to adopt (however unfaithfully) the American model of public libraries? The same question could easily be extended to most other countries in Europe that had relatively weak public library systems until after 1945. UNESCO, the networks of communication and cooperation that it created such as the ICHP and the *Bulletin*, the Summer Schools for Librarians that it ran and the associated publications that it printed and circulated, all contribute to identifying what Bertrand sought: “The role of ‘cultural couriers’ [*passeurs culturels*], of the vectors of this importation, the reasons and the modalities of the adaptation of this model.”<sup>840</sup> In fact, as this research has shown, the model was not strictly American, certainly it was never articulated or attributed as such by a UNESCO that looked also to Great Britain and Scandinavia while developing its public library programs, intent on demonstrating that its influences and inspirations came not only from the United States.

Throughout the research and writing of this work, two current realities have been ever-present. Today funding for libraries is under siege, particularly in the United States and United Kingdom, the two countries with the strongest and oldest traditions of public libraries. It is also a time when UNESCO is often either vilified as in the Palestine vote or dismissed as irrelevant,

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<sup>839</sup> Vernon Clapp, “Editorial, UNESCO – Ten Years After,” *American Documentation* (1956): ii.

<sup>840</sup> Bertrand, *Bibliothèque publique et public library*, 202-203.

familiar to most only for its declaring of an overabundance of tourist-drawing UNESCO Heritage Sites. This dissertation contributes to the growing body of work examining the history of UNESCO and expanding the study of reconstruction to the cultural realm. This work has delved deeply into the past, into the earliest history of the interconnections between UNESCO and libraries, in order to reconsider a very particular time and place when both were taken far more seriously by those in power than they are now, when libraries were understood as essential tools in the process historian Volker Berghahn has referred to as “getting society out of catastrophe.”<sup>841</sup>

It may be the very fact that public libraries in this country and in the UK have such a strong history that has made it possible for them to be so easily taken for granted, something that is far less likely to occur in places where truly public libraries are few and far between, or still do not exist. During its first years of operation, the Libraries Section declared:

Books are fundamental for education, science and culture. Those who have not seen or experienced the cultural frustration of a really book-starved region might not be able to visualize the basic role of books for civilized life. Not only the destruction of war has made many areas in Europe and Asia poor in books and library-services. Poverty and isolation have probably a still greater responsibility for the sad state at present prevailing in so many places.<sup>842</sup>

These beliefs, which at the time were based equally on the dire need for information and publications to be freely and widely accessible to war-devastated countries in particular and to all countries worldwide in general, drove the work of the Libraries Section from the outset and continue to be relevant today.

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<sup>841</sup> Berghahn, “Debating the Future of Industrial Society.”

<sup>842</sup> Untitled, unsigned, undated [circa 1946-1947]. UNESCO Archives 361.9 : 02 Reconstruction Libraries.

## Appendix I

It would be difficult to write a history of the first years of UNESCO without quoting, in full, the preamble of the organization's Constitution as it was originally worded when signed in London on 16 November 1945 and then fully adopted 4 November 1946 after being ratified, as required, by twenty countries: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, France, Greece, India, Lebanon, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States:

The Governments of the States Parties to this Constitution on behalf of their peoples declare:

That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed;

That ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war;

That the great and terrible war which has now ended was a war made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races;

That the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfil in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern;

That a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.

For these reasons, the States Parties to this Constitution, believing in full and equal opportunities for education for all, in the unrestricted pursuit of objective truth, and in the free exchange of ideas and knowledge, are agreed and determined to develop and to increase the means of communication between their peoples and to employ these means for the purposes of mutual understanding and a truer and more perfect knowledge of each other's lives;

In consequence whereof they do hereby create the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization for the purpose of advancing, through the educational and

scientific and cultural relations of the peoples of the world, the objectives of international peace and of the common welfare of mankind for which the United Nations Organization was established and which its Charter proclaims.<sup>843</sup>

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<sup>843</sup> The full text of the entire Constitution is available at [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=15244&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=15244&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html). Last accessed 20 September 2012.

## **Appendix II**

### **UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 1949**

#### **The Public Library a living force for popular education (UNESCO 1949)**

##### **UNESCO and public libraries**

UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, has been created by the will of forty-six countries. Its aim is to promote peace and social and spiritual welfare by working through the minds of men. The creative power of UNESCO is the force of knowledge and international understanding.

This manifesto, by describing the potentialities of the public library, proclaims UNESCO's belief in the public library as a living force for popular education and for the growth of international understanding, and thereby for the promotion of peace.

##### **The public library A Democratic Agency for Education**

The public library is a product of modern democracy and a practical demonstration of democracy's faith in universal education as a life-long process. Though primarily intended to serve the educational needs of adults, the public library should also supplement the work of the schools in developing the reading tastes of children and young people, helping them to become adults who can use books with appreciation and profit. As a democratic institution, operated by the people for the people, the public library should be:

Established and maintained under clear authority of law.

Supported wholly or mainly from public funds.

Open for free use on equal terms to all members of the community, regardless of occupation, creed, class or race.

##### **What the Public Library should offer**

The complete public library should provide books, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, maps, pictures, films, music scores and recordings, and give guidance in their use. The public library should offer children, young people, men and women, opportunity and encouragement:

To educate themselves continuously;

To keep abreast of progress in all fields of knowledge;

To maintain freedom of expression and a constructively critical attitude towards all public issues;

To be better social and political Citizens of their country and of the world.

To be more efficient in their day-to-day activities;

To develop their creative capacities and powers of appreciation in arts and letters.

To aid generally in the advancement of knowledge;

To use their leisure time to promote personal happiness and social well-being.

##### **A vital community Force**

The public library should be active and positive in its policy and a dynamic part of community life. It should not tell people what to think, but it should help them decide what to think about.

The spotlight should be thrown on significant issues by exhibitions, booklists, discussions,

lectures, courses, films and individual reading guidance. Reading interests should be stimulated and the library's services publicized through a well-planned continuous public relations programme. The public library should link its activities with the work of other educational, cultural and social agencies—the schools, universities, museums, labour unions, study clubs, adult educational groups, etc. It should also cooperate with other libraries in the loan of publications, and with library associations for the advancement of public librarianship. The books in the library should be made accessible on open shelves and-by use of efficient technical processes; and the library's services should be brought close to the homes and work places of the people by means of branches and mobile units.

### **The People's University**

With a well-trained, resourceful and imaginative staff; an adequate budget and public support, a public library can become what it should be a university of the people offering a liberal education to all comers. Citizens of a democracy have need of such opportunities for self-education at all times. The complexity and instability of life today make the need an urgent one.

### **What you can do**

This manifesto has described the potentialities of the public library as agency for popular education. Obviously it is to your great personal advantage to have these potentialities realized in your community. What can you do to help? If your community does not have public library service:

Interest your friends and neighbours and local organizations in obtaining such service;

Ask your national library association or Ministry of Education what steps you should take to get public library service;

Follow through on the action recommended.

If your community now has a public library:

Get acquainted with the librarian;

Find out what services are offered;

Use these services;

Work with the librarian to promote local support and demand for the standard of service endorsed in this Manifesto.

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