

given an account of the author's perseverance in identifying archival repositories relevant to her research, obtaining permissions for access and the struggle to identify and view the needed records (foreign scholars were not permitted to see detailed descriptions of records, such as item lists or inventories, and had to rely on archivists to interpret their topic and identify the relevant files).

Fitzpatrick also writes about her relationships with archivists, who had to obey the not so well concealed orders of the Communist Party and KGB bureaucracy. She observes that they formed their own judgements about who was and was not a legitimate scholar with the main criterion being hard work. Many reference archivists will sympathise, even if secretly, with this attitude: 'if people regularly put in a lot of hours ... the archivists tended to think well of them, but if they made a big fuss about getting material but then left it untouched for days, they thought badly' (p. 208). For the author an individual archivist's goodwill could sometimes result in unexpected additional material brought to her as a reward for hard work.

The thrill of chasing archival sources is addictive at any time, but the experience of Fitzpatrick in the Soviet archives of the 1960s with the inevitable game of matching wits with Soviet officialdom can be hardly surpassed. She writes herself of becoming addicted to the fight for knowledge, saying:

I thought it must be terribly boring to work, say, on British history, where you just went to the archives, checked the inventories, ordered some documents, and they brought them to you ... What would be the fun of it? (p. 209)

Winding through this book are the complementary themes of archives and personalities, documents and memories. The archival evidence is enriched by the reminiscences and personal insights that Lunacharsky's daughter and Igor Sats brought to Fitzpatrick's research. They also invited old Bolshevik colleagues of Lunacharsky to talk to the young foreign researcher. The book itself is a memoir based on the author's diary, her letters to her mother and a former fiancé. However, quite often when quoting these documents the authors says that she now has no recollection of this or that fact, but it must be true since it is recorded in her diary or letter. Thus the book is a fascinating example of how memory and archival evidence interact on a number of levels: human memory may be fallible but the truth is often more than merely a sum of facts in written documents. I recommend it to anyone interested in the writing of history, events of the Cold War or archives in a state that no longer exists.

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**Astrid M Eckert**, *The Struggle for the Files: The Western Allies and the Return of German Archives After the Second World War*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2012. xv + 427 pp. ISBN 0 521880 18 1 (hardback). USD\$99.00.

The English translation of Astrid M Eckert's meticulously researched and eminently readable book *The Struggle for the Files: The Western Allies and the Return of German*

*Archives After the Second World War* was awarded the 2013 Waldo Gifford Leland Award of the Society of American Archivists. The award committee commended Eckert for her 'fascinating detective work' and noted that '*The Struggle for the Files* contains lessons and scenarios that archivists, historians, politicians, and others can utilize in their work.'<sup>1</sup>

The book is based on Eckert's dissertation on the history of the records captured from Germany by the Allies in 1945. That work received the 2004 Friedrich Meinecke Dissertation Prize of the Free University's history department, and the biennial Hedwig Hintze Dissertation Award of the German Historical Association in 2004.

Given these impressive credentials it is not surprising that the book engages the reader's attention at the outset, starting with the seizure of the German foreign ministry archive, the Auswärtiges Amt, by the American Counter Intelligence Corps on 19 April 1945. The Auswärtiges Amt promised 'to offer a glimpse into the minds of those who had helped plunge Europe and the world into an unprecedented war of destruction' (p. 1). The 400 tons of archives had been stored in the Harz Mountains, technically in the Soviet zone of occupation. Eager to exclude the Soviets from their find, the American and British troops acted quickly, moving the collection to Marburg Castle in the American Zone. Here the British and Americans started going through the files in secret and, to quote Eckert, 'played havoc with the organisation of the files' (p. 347).

Eckert examines the history of this collection of German records and archives captured by the British and Americans in the aftermath of World War II. She follows the protracted negotiations for the return of the documents to West German custody. In the course of this discussion she explores the history of relations between West Germany and its Western allies. As she notes, in addition to the Auswärtiges Amt, the collection of material in Allied hands included material from the registries and archives of Reich ministries, military offices, Nazi party organisations and research institutes. These records were initially used for intelligence purposes, war crimes trials and denazification. Some of the records were pulped. Others were catalogued, microfilmed and published by the Allies to document Germany's road to war.

The first chapter, 'The Confiscation of German Documents, 1944–1949', looks at the Anglo-American plans for capturing the German records and explores the role played by British and American archivists in raising awareness within the military of both the value and vulnerability of the archives collection. As Eckert points out, even routine administrative records were important to the Allied leadership when the American military government replaced the German administration. Allied attention also turned to a variety of other government and Nazi party records following the decision to hold war crimes trials and to undertake the planned denazification of significant numbers of Germans.

Chapter two, 'The First German Calls for Restitution', deals with the background behind the initial calls for German restitution in 1949 and also looks at the early history of the archival profession in the Federal Republic. Eckert makes the point that it was the archivists once again, this time on the German side, who drew attention to the issue. She points out, however, that the same archivists accusing the Western Allies over the continuing retention of the archives had 'played a role in the spoliation efforts in countries under German occupation during the war' (p. 6).

In the third chapter, 'The Positions of the United States and Britain', Eckert explains how the British and Americans eventually reached agreement on a common position about the return of the German records.

Eckert begins by looking at the legal status of the confiscated records in the fourth chapter, 'Negotiation Marathon'. She then moves on to discuss the negotiations between the governments of England, the United States, France and West Germany. Eckert notes that by the 1950s the 'issue of the captured documents had turned into one that everyone said they wanted to see resolved but for which no solution was forthcoming' (p. 219).

The final chapter, 'Ad Fontes: The Captured Documents and the Writing of History', examines the publication of the multi-volume publication *Documents on German Foreign Policy*, which chronicled the foreign relations of the Third Reich. Produced by a select group of British, American and French historians, the absence of West German scholars was decried by the West German press and German scholars themselves. They objected not only to their exclusion from the publication of the diplomatic records but also to the vast project undertaken by the Americans to microfilm the captured documents.

In examining the history of the documents and archives, once collectively known as the captured German records, Eckert reminds us that this collection has its own 'biography'. As she puts it, 'they stand for an unprecedented situation in which the "documentary material covering all aspects of a nation's life during a whole era" had fallen into the hands of its wartime enemies' (p. 12). For historians using this collection, this post-war history adds an additional layer to their understanding of the records.

Finally, the book's genesis as a dissertation is obvious in the copious footnotes on almost every page. A lengthy bibliography includes archival sources from the United States, Great Britain and Germany, document and source editions, memoirs and diaries, an extensive list of secondary literature and an all-important index. *The Struggle for the Files* would be a welcome addition to the bookshelves of archivists and historians alike.

### Endnote

1. Society of American Archivists, '2012 Fellows and Award Recipients', Waldo Gifford Leland Award: Astrid M. Eckert, *The Struggle for the Files*, available at <<http://www2.archivists.org/node/17719>>, accessed 13 December 2013.

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**Marta Werner and Jen Bervin with a Preface by Susan Howe**, *Emily Dickinson: The Gorgeous Nothings*, New York, A Christine Burgin/New Directions Book published in association with Granary Books, 2013. 272 pp. ISBN 978 0 811221 75 7. USD\$39.95.

*The Gorgeous Nothings* is a work of such beauty and curiosity that the phrase 'facsimile edition' falls well short of capturing the achievement and interest of this volume. It takes its title from an excerpt of Emily Dickinson's manuscript A 821, 'the gorgeous | nothings | which | compose | the | sunset | keep'. The 'nothings' at stake here are Dickinson's envelope writings, fragments of text written late in the poet's career on a series of