

Resources and Research in the Hoover Institute and Library

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The Hoover Institute and Library

THE Hoover Institute and Library at Stanford University is dedicated to the study of war, revolution, and peace in the twentieth century. Its collections offer unusual opportunities to the historian, whether his interests center in Europe or in Asia or whether they extend beyond geographic confines to the great upheavals that have swept the world within this century.

The beginnings of the library go back to the First World War. While directing relief operations in Belgium and northern France, Herbert Hoover decided to make a collection of the interesting and historically important papers that came into his possession. The collection grew rapidly and Mr. Hoover decided that it should be placed in a university. As an alumnus and trustee of Stanford he made this proposal in 1919 to the university's president, Ray Lyman Wilbur, who responded immediately and favorably. At his request E. D. Adams, then chairman of the history department, went to Europe to initiate the program. These steps led to the establishment of the Hoover war collection.

In the years since 1919, the war collection has grown rapidly and extensively into the Hoover Institute and Library on War, Revolution, and Peace, which is today housed in a 285 foot tower on the Stanford campus. Many persons, both here and abroad, have shared in the development. Principally its growth is due to the efforts of Mr. Hoover himself; to the wise and skillful leadership of Profs. E. D. Adams, Ralph H. Lutz, and Harold H. Fisher; and to the tireless and fruitful work of Nina Almond, who served as librarian during the first 25 years. Throughout its development the Hoover Library, a specialized research institution, has enjoyed the great advantage of close relationship with the excellent university library.

¹ The author of this paper, which was read at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago, December 29, 1953, is the director of the Hoover Institute and Library. After teaching at Stanford University and Reed College, 1932-41, he served as an official of the Department of State, 1941-46. In 1947 he joined the staff of the Hoover Institute and Library, and since 1952 he has been its director.

The records of relief activities and other documentation on the First World War formed the nucleus of the original collections. These included the archives of the Commission for Relief in Belgium, those of the American Relief Administration of 1919-23, certain files of the American National Red Cross and the International Red Cross during the First World War, together with Mr. Hoover's personal files as Food Administrator in 1917-19 (the records of the Food Administration are in the National Archives). Other documentation on this period took the form of books, pamphlets, propaganda leaflets, and similar material.

Soon after the war it became evident that the problems of peace-making rivaled in importance those of war itself. Moreover the ground swells of social and political change, which stemmed from the war or were accelerated by it, equaled or surpassed the war in historical significance. Consequently, the scope of the library was extended in the 1920's to include these aspects of twentieth century change. As Mr. Hoover put it,

I became impressed with the fact that the most important aspect of the century was perhaps not the war so much as the consequences of the war; that is, the social, economic, and political currents which had sprung from it. The rise of democracy in Europe after the war and its collapse into Communism, Fascism, and National Socialism have contributed to make one of the greatest human crises in history. Therefore, instead of limiting the new Library to purely war material, I determined that the work of collecting should be continued and should be directed especially to securing records of these movements. . .

This period of world-wide experimentation in social, economic, and political institutions will be of importance for a thousand years to come. The work of collection will not be complete until these social and economic currents have run their course and have reached again some common elements of stability.²

Until the Second World War, the library was principally European in focus. Concern with such matters as international communism, colonialism, and the mandates system had led, however, to the development of small collections on other areas of the world. When the recent great war engulfed the Middle East and Asia, it became clear that the basic problems which the library sought to document were worldwide in range and should be so treated. This fact, together with the impact of wartime training programs in the Hoover Institute that centered upon Asia and the Pacific, prompted the building of new collections on China, Japan, Southern and Southeastern Asia, and the Middle East.

² Nina Almond and H. H. Fisher, *Special Collections in the Hoover Library on War, Revolution and Peace*, pp. x-xi. (Stanford University, 1940).

The Hoover Library has thus greatly enlarged its scope, but its major research collections are those on Western and Central Europe, Russia and the other Slavic areas, China, and Japan. The collections on Turkey and the Arab countries are rapidly approaching major proportions. Smaller but unique bodies of material have been assembled on Southern and Southeastern Asia, Iran (Persia), and Africa.

Several basic principles have governed the acquisitions of the Hoover Library and have shaped the nature of the collections. Every effort has been made to fulfill the basic purpose — to document war, revolution, and peace. The staff has discovered, however, that developments pertaining to war, revolution, and peace reach deeply into the tissues of society. This circumstance has, in effect, produced a library of the social sciences. Although the main bodies of research material pertain to the twentieth century, and more especially to the period since 1914, they are supported by reference or background materials reaching further into the past.

Because of the overriding topical interests of the Hoover Library, the materials on the various areas are highly comparable. With due recognition of cultural and historical differences, there is much the same subject and documentary range in the collections, whether they are Russian, Chinese, German, or Egyptian. For this reason, the library is well suited for comparative historical studies. Moreover, the topical breakdown within the individual area collections supports the library's general collections on such subjects as international communism, peace movements, and international organizations.

The research collections consist very largely of primary documentary sources. These range from government archives through political party organs to pamphlets and posters, journals and newspapers. Some very important manuscript material is included, particularly in the Western and Central European and Slavic collections. The library adheres carefully, however, to the policy of acquiring manuscripts for their research value rather than as museum pieces. Supporting the primary documentation are such basic reference tools, monographs, and secondary works as may prove necessary to the scholar. For all non-European areas, the materials in indigenous languages have been supplemented as necessary by others in the European languages.

In building its collections, the Hoover Library has taken into account the holdings of other libraries. A division of responsibility has been worked out with the Stanford University Library, which

has excellent collections complementing those of the Hoover Library, both as to time and field. Collecting on Southern Asia has been correlated with that of the University of California Library. The development of the Southeastern Asian collection takes into account what is being done at Cornell. The collections of the Hoover Library are in many respects parallel to those of the Library of Congress in comparable fields, although each institution possesses much unique documentation. Experience has shown that some duplication is unavoidable in libraries situated 3,000 miles apart.

This necessarily brief account of the development of the Hoover Library and its present character leaves much unsaid. Fortunately, I am able to refer you to a more comprehensive statement on these subjects by the present librarian, Philip T. McLean.³

In this short paper it will also be impossible to describe in adequate detail the major collections of the library. I shall be able to touch upon only the more important holdings in some of them. However, I shall be happy to send to those who may be interested the first of a series of resource surveys that have been compiled during the past 3 years. The first pertains to the Russian collection and was prepared by Witold S. Sworakowski, curator of Eastern European collections.⁴ Those on the other collections will be distributed to interested libraries and individuals as rapidly as they are published.

The strength of the German collection lies in the rich background material on the First World War and the exceptional files of the war period; in the documentation of the development of socialism in Germany and that on the history of the Weimar Republic; in the coverage of all facets of the rise and activities of the National Socialist regime and the resistance to it within and outside of Germany; and in the materials on the Second World War, postwar developments, and Germany under Allied occupation. The extensive holdings of German Government publications include Foreign Office documentation, laws and statutes of the central and provincial governments, and long files of ministry reports. Among the more noteworthy research holdings are the early materials on the Nazi movement, parts of the Himmler files, and some sections of the anti-Komintern archive.

The Himmler material comprises about a hundred folders of photostatic copies of the S. S. chief's own files. They are concerned

³ Philip T. McLean, "The Hoover Institute and Library," in *Library Quarterly*, 19: 241-249 (Oct. 1949).

⁴ *The Hoover Library Collection on Russia* (Stanford University Press, 1954. 42 pp.).

largely with S. S. activities in the occupied Eastern areas during the war period although there are some folders concerning the Scandinavian and Low Countries also. These files complement similar holdings in the Library of Congress. The rather voluminous anti-Komintern archives covering the years 1936-44, in some 200 folders, were used as a tool by the Ministry of Propaganda and other German Government agencies. They are almost global in their scope and are of particular interest as a source of information for the history of the Communist Party in the various countries where the Germans worked through counterorganizations. In addition to collecting data on Communist activity these organizations often served as a front for Nazi infiltration.

The library has in addition the *Deutsche Kongress Zentrale*, which contains the records of German participation in international meetings and congresses during the Nazi period. In part they are not archival as they contain the printed records of many meetings available elsewhere. In part they are strictly archival as they contain personal data on participating members.

For France, there are complete sets of the most important government publications from 1914 to 1952: the *Journal officiel*, parliamentary debates, and foreign policy documents. The holdings are good on the "phony war" of 1939-40, the Vichy period, the collaboration trials, and Free France and de Gaulle. Materials on the French resistance movement are excellent and in the main unexploited. Among them are the records of various organizations participating in the resistance. The period of the Fourth Republic has been covered systematically, with special attention to the political parties, in particular the Communist Party.

For Spain there is excellent coverage of the civil war, together with Spanish refugee materials published in France and Latin America.

For Italy, parliamentary records and some significant serial and newspaper holdings are continuous from the period of the First World War. Available also are publications of the Socialist and Communist Parties, an excellent collection on the Fascist movement, and a substantial group of materials on the resistance.

The collections for Eastern Europe are outstanding among the resources open for use in the United States. By far the most comprehensive is that on Russia. I shall treat it only briefly, as copies of the recently compiled survey are now available. It is sufficient to say that the materials cover thoroughly the late Czarist period, the revolutions of 1917 and the ensuing civil war, the provisional government, and the Soviet period. Here should be mentioned a con-

siderable number of archives and collections of personal papers covering the Czarist period and the civil war. They include diplomatic files from Russian legations in European countries, private papers of prominent and political leaders, and files of various anti-Bolshevik governments. Among the topics for which the collection on the Czarist period is particularly rich are the land and peasant problem during the imperial regime, industrialization and the expansion of trade, the rise of the revolutionary movement and Bolshevik activities before 1917, and Asiatic Russia and its colonization. The documentation of the Soviet period is unusually complete for the early years (1918-23) and provides a thorough body of research materials on internal developments and international communism from 1917 to the present time.

Of the collections on other countries of Eastern Europe, those on Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Yugoslavia are outstanding. Despite the difficulties of acquisition in recent years, it has been possible to maintain the strength of the Slavic collections.

The Chinese collection is one of the most useful bodies of documentation on modern China in the United States. It differs from other American collections in that it is designed for research on the political, social, and economic development of China only since 1850. Extensive files document the developments of 60 years leading to the establishment of the Chinese Republic in 1912 and follow the course of China through war and civil war to the consolidation of the Peking regime on the continent and the removal of the Nationalist Government to Formosa. In these files are the publications of the central government, and of important provincial, county, and municipal governments for the period since 1912, together with the archives of dissident and puppet administrations. There are long runs of wartime papers and journals of opinion representing different regions and diverse political viewpoints. The collection of Chinese Communist publications is very extensive; but is particularly noteworthy for the period 1927-31, when the party underwent reorientation, and contains materials unavailable elsewhere. The Chinese Communist materials are also unsurpassed for the period since 1941.

In addition to the general survey of the Chinese collection, two bibliographies are in preparation to inform scholars more precisely of the Hoover Library holdings. One of them concentrates upon Japanese-sponsored governments in China, with main emphasis on the Nanking regime, 1937-45. The other is an annotated list of cataloged biographical works.

The Japanese collection affords an extensive body of research and

background materials for the study of Japanese history and institutions since 1850. It includes a comprehensive record of the changes that have occurred in Japan under Allied occupation, covers the countries of Eastern Asia that were in the Japanese sphere of influence, and contains limited but rare files on Korea. In line with the general purposes of the library, special attention has been given to obtaining materials on the development of both socialism and communism in Japan. Special mention should be made of some 50,000 photographs of documents originally in the Japanese Consulate General in Seoul, Korea, covering the period 1895-1910. The Japanese collection is particularly suited to large-scale research projects in the following fields: political history, 1850 to the present; left-wing movements, 1900 to the present; the rise of ultranationalism and militarism, 1930-45; and agrarian problems and peasant movements.

Relatively small collections have been made on Southeastern Asia and on India, Pakistan, and Ceylon. For the several newly independent countries in this group, emphasis has been on the postindependence period, especially governmental organization and political movements, and on major problems such as those of international relations, land reform, and minorities. Although these collections have somewhat limited research value, important work can be done on them because of their topical concentration.

For Africa south of the Sahara, a comparatively small but significant collection has been assembled over the past 30 years. The strength of these resources lies in the long files of government documents and periodicals from colonial offices and from societies concerned with colonial affairs in Germany, Belgium, France, and England. Some of these files go back to the Berlin Conference of 1884-85. They offer the basis for important studies of colonial policy. Reports of the native affairs offices of various African colonies and within recent years the legislative proceedings and laws, as well as files of local newspapers and periodicals, have been added to the African collection.

Finally, for the Middle East, the Hoover Library collection is one of few in the United States with materials of sufficient strength and quality for the study of the modern period. The collection is made up of three principal units — Arabic, Turkish, and Persian — and each is significant for its concentration upon materials essential to an understanding of the present-day problems of the area. More specifically, the collection documents the breakup of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish revolution; it emphasizes nationalist, Islamic, and modernist movements in the successor states of the

Ottoman Empire, together with the political, social, and economic problems of these countries; and it includes unique materials on the Azerbaijani and Kurdish separatist movements in Persia and on communism in that country.

A notable collection on international organization includes rare records of the Paris Peace Conference. The extensive holdings of mimeographed, or printed but unpublished, documents include minutes of the plenary sessions of the conference; minutes of the meetings of the Supreme Council; minutes of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of the Conference of Ambassadors (1920-21); and minutes and reports of 36 commissions and committees of the Conference. The library maintains complete coverage of printed records of the League of Nations, with records of technical committees, the World Court, and the International Labour Office.

In handling collections that have area characteristics, knowledge of the language, history, and institutions of the various regions is important. Qualified scholars with unusual experience and training, as well as special bibliographic knowledge of their respective areas, have been named as curators of the major collections. Under the general supervision of the directing officials of the library, the curators have the responsibility for the acquisitions program; they advise on organization of materials, consult with scholars on research problems, and conduct graduate seminars or direct special research.

Let me turn now to the research opportunities in the Hoover Institute and Library. In this connection, I should say something about the nature of the research that has been done and explain the role of the institute in the research program.

The research has been of three kinds. By far the greatest use of the library has been by individual scholars for the preparation of dissertations or of postdoctoral monographs and documentary studies. Such use is steadily increasing. Visiting scholars come in ever larger numbers from all parts of the United States and from abroad, thanks in part to fellowship programs and to opportunities under the Fulbright and Smith-Mundt Acts. The Hoover Library Series of 23 volumes is in large measure the result of documentary and monograph research by the officials and the staff of the library and others who worked under their direction. Some individual inquiry has been for the purpose of providing specific information for various official agencies.

The second type of research might be described as a program of individual but additive studies made possible by a fellowship fund administered chiefly by the Hoover Institute and Library. This type is exemplified by the Slavic studies program, conducted over a

period of 5 years under a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. Some 40 scholars participated. Out of the program have come a number of books and monographs based primarily upon the Hoover Library's Slavic resources. They range from philosophy and history to economics and law, and taken as a group they shed considerable light upon the historical development and contemporary activities of Russia and the other Slavic countries.

The third form of research has been coordinated group enterprise. Within recent years small research staffs have produced a handbook on the Trust Territories of the Pacific, with supporting documentary material, and studies of military and scientific leadership in certain countries. Some of these projects have been under the auspices of Government agencies. Currently a small group, with foundation support, is reviewing Soviet attitudes, policies, and actions in international organization. The most ambitious group enterprise, however, has been the extensive study of revolution and the development of international relations, or the RADIR project, made possible by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

The research programs of which I have just spoken have been conducted by the Hoover Institute, which is integrally related to the library. The institute grew from a special research project on the Russian revolution begun in 1925 and followed a few years later by a similar project on the German revolution. In 1940 the earlier Russian Revolution Institute and German Revolution Institute were merged in the Research Institute, Hoover Library on War, Revolution, and Peace. Finally, in 1946, the name was changed to the Hoover Institute and Library on War, Revolution, and Peace.

The range of research opportunities in the Hoover Library is generally indicated, I believe, in the brief descriptions I have given of the principal collections. These opportunities are made more specifically apparent in the resource surveys which have already been mentioned. I must now mention some of the little-exploited bodies of material that could be made the basis for important historical contributions.

There is, for example, a wealth of material to support reasonably definitive studies of the Weimar period in Germany and of the trends and circumstances that led to the Hitler triumph. A broader subject for which ample documentation is available is the very important sequence of demographic changes in Germany between 1914 and the present. Materials are likewise at hand for a series of studies on basic transformations in the social structure, intellectual orientation, and political behavior of France during the past 35

years. There are virtually untapped resources for research on the civil war in Spain and its international ramifications. Indeed, the Hoover Library materials would provide much of the essential documentation for a fresh historical evaluation of the contest between democratic liberalism and authoritarianism in Europe during the twentieth century.

Among the numerous topics for which the collection on Russia provides unique documentation are the land and peasant problem during the last 100 years, the short period of the provisional government, the period of war communism that immediately followed the Bolshevik revolution, and the role of the intelligentsia in social change and revolution.

The Middle East collections also afford broad research opportunities. A study of Egypt in the modern world is now in progress. There are abundant materials for research on nationalist, constitutional, and associated political movements in the Arab world, Turkey, and Persia, and for a study of the literary renaissance in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and its effects on the intelligentsia of the Arab world and Turkey.

The Chinese collection offers documentation on a series of topics relating to the broad theme of the modernization of China. It is suitable for studies of China's response to the Western impact, intellectual ferment between 1915 and 1949, the Nationalist regime and its opponents, and the development of Chinese communism and the growth of Communist power.

Comparable opportunities exist for research on Japan, with special emphasis on three main themes: Japanese political and social institutions; Japanese policies toward foreign countries, especially the United States, the Soviet Union, and China; and the Western impact on Japan.

This brief review of the research potentials of the Hoover Library collections has necessarily omitted reference to those on Africa, Southern Asia, and Southeastern Asia. In the general field of peace endeavor, however, it must be said that materials now in the library would provide the foundation for a significant new history of the Versailles Conference.

Thanks to a grant recently received from the Ford Foundation, most of the materials in the Hoover Library will be processed and made available for use within the next 3 years. A very large proportion is now accessible to scholars. It is our hope that historians will increasingly avail themselves of this large store of resources that can yield so much knowledge about the complexities and problems of our twentieth-century world.