

ab, darunter auch den Umsiedlungsvertrag.²⁰⁶ Riga befand sich in einer ausweglosen Situation zwischen zwei Großmächten, welche die baltischen Staaten ohne jegliche Rücksicht wirtschaftlich und politisch manipulierten.²⁰⁷ Die lettische Regierung zog es in dieser Situation vor, dem deutschen Druck nachzugeben.²⁰⁸ Zwar gibt es keine direkten dokumentarischen Zeugnisse darüber, dass die lettische Delegation in der Frage der Aufteilung der Kulturgüter dem deutschen Druck unter Berücksichtigung der wirtschaftlichen oder politischen Interessen des Staates nachgegeben hätte. Aber es existieren durchaus einige indirekte Hinweise darauf, wenn z. B. von einem „Entgegenkommen gegenüber den Regierungsinteressen“ oder von dem Wunsch die Rede war, „gute Beziehungen mit Deutschland“ zu unterhalten.

SUMMARY

*The Parity Committee 1939–1940:
The Distribution of Latvian Cultural Heritage*

According to the treaty of 30 October 1939 on the terms of the resettlement of Baltic German citizens of Latvia to Germany a Parity Committee was formed to determine how cultural heritage were to be divided between the resettlers and the Latvian Republic. The decisions of the Committee related mainly to collections of legal entities such as scientific societies or religious congregations and to objects of art and cultural history, archives and libraries. The biggest and most important collections of this kind were located in the capital Riga. Some of the cultural objects were personal property of Baltic Germans; another part of them belonged to and were administered by state or municipal archives, museums or libraries.

The Latvian members of the Committee initially adhered to the clauses of the treaty and tried to keep important collections of value for Latvia. During the final months of negotiations that ended already under Soviet control the Latvian members of the Committee had to acknowledge that

²⁰⁶ INESIS FELDMANIS: Molotova-Ribentropa pakts un Latvijas-Vācijas attiecības (1939–1940) [Der Molotov-Ribbentrop-Pakt und die lettisch-deutschen Beziehungen (1939–1940)], in: Latvijas Vēsture 2005, Nr. 2, S. 64-71, hier S. 67f.

²⁰⁷ Ebenda; AIVARS STRANGA: Latvijas ārējā tirdzniecība 30. gadu nogalē: ārējās politikas saimnieciskie aspekti [Der lettische Außenhandel Ende der Dreißigerjahre: wirtschaftliche Aspekte der Außenpolitik], in: Latvijas Vēsture 1995, Nr. 3, S. 12-22, hier S. 16-19.

²⁰⁸ FELDMANIS, Molotova-Ribentropa pakts (wie Anm. 206), S. 68.

they were forced to deviate from the terms of the treaty on more than one occasion. The implementation of the treaty and the distribution of cultural goods depended more and more on the strong influence the German positions maintained in economic and political matters in the first year of the Second World War when Latvia was willing to keep its neutrality. Thus eventually the German members of the Committee were increasingly able to gain positive decisions as regards the distribution of cultural property.

However, due to the time-consuming process of classification and distribution of cultural objects their export to Germany resp. Poland was delayed. After the Soviet Union had occupied Latvia the export was first interrupted and later stopped. Thus not all of the clauses of the *Umsiedlungsvertrag* were actually implemented.