

# From the prefect's desk: Gerard van Swieten's library correspondence.

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From the Prefect's Desk: Gerard van Swieten's library correspondence  
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### **Abstract**

This article investigates library-related documents written by Gerard van Swieten (1700-1772) during his tenure as Library Prefect (1745-1772) in the Imperial Library of Vienna. Van Swieten's time as Library Prefect is considered through a textual analysis. Handwritten letters were deconstructed in terms of their appearance, layout and tone in order to mine them for meaning. Furthermore, the contents were examined for library matters such as censorship, catalogues and collection development. The Court Library held a prominent role as a repository for rare and valuable works, later becoming the National Library of Austria.

Gerard van Swieten's work as a librarian tends to be overlooked, perhaps because he is better known as the private physician of Maria Theresia, as well as a medical reformer. Nevertheless, he was a hard-working chief librarian deeply involved in all aspects of librarianship. Van Swieten endorsed modern scientific works, which were otherwise banned officially by the censorship commission, for the use of scholars in the library, expanded the collection by acquiring books through his network of scholars and publishers and reissued library catalogues. He also provided for the comfort of users in the library reading room, at a time when such considerations were unusual. In conclusion, a proposal was made that van Swieten viewed his role as librarian with some importance and pride.

### **Keywords**

Gerard van Swieten, Correspondence, Imperial Library of Vienna, Hofbibliothek, Court Library, Maria Theresia, Eighteenth century, Vienna, Austria

## Introduction and Background

The Imperial Court Library in Vienna, Austria, originally founded in 1368, provided the nucleus for the contemporary Austrian National Library (ÖNB).<sup>1</sup> One of the most celebrated Prefects of the Library was Gerard van Swieten, who held this position from 1745 until his death in 1772, for a total of about twenty-seven years.<sup>2</sup> Although he is primarily known as a medical reformer, he also instituted a number of sweeping changes in the administration of the library, with the support of his employer, Empress Maria Theresia.<sup>3</sup> He was not only Library Prefect, but also Maria Theresia's personal physician,<sup>4</sup> held in high regard by the Empress and uniquely placed to carry out reforms.<sup>5</sup>

Klingenstein refers to van Swieten as a *Wissensorganisator*,<sup>6</sup> a term that may perhaps be loosely interpreted as also being part of the duties of a librarian.<sup>7</sup> Because of van Swieten's far-ranging interests and skills, and the interdisciplinary nature of his knowledge, comprising medicine, social welfare, botany, chemistry and education, he is a complex personality.<sup>8</sup> Whether school reform, founding of the medical school, or the refurbishment of the library, he left a lasting impact with his structured organisational skills. The different roles van Swieten undertook during his employment with Maria Theresia often interconnected or were generously interpreted due to his wide powers during her reign. His authority as a *Wissensorganisator* extended well beyond the walls of the Imperial library.

[INSERT FIG 1 HERE]

Figure 1. *Gerard van Swieten (1700-1772)*, by an unknown artist, around 1763. Oil on canvas (Archiv der Universität Wien, 105.P 291). Reproduced by permission of the University of Vienna Archive.

An important milestone in the history of the Imperial Library was Karl VI's construction of a grand baroque building in Vienna in 1723 which underlined the library's privileged and representative status.<sup>9</sup> A practical reason for constructing this new building was the need for more space for the collections. However, the library's financial and personnel resources remained limited.<sup>10</sup> Maria Theresia's father, Karl VI, expressly wished the library to be open for public use, although, at that time, this meant only scholars were allowed access to the library's holdings.<sup>11</sup> As the baroque emphasis on glorious presentation gradually eroded,

the library as a secular institution supporting learning and the propagation of knowledge became more paramount. There was a desire to ameliorate the neglected state of the library holdings, not only to reflect the glory of its founders but also to consolidate the Imperial Library's reputation as a place of erudition in Europe. When Maria Theresa ascended the throne, she inherited the financial difficulties and stultified and neglected institutions of higher education, which after the years of war and disease had perhaps lost the lustre and reputation they had once had within Europe. One could say that Maria Theresa wished to reinstate this glorious reputation and rebuild not only the financial state but also the intellectual structure to support and repair it.<sup>12</sup>

On fine hand-crafted paper, Maria Theresa wrote to Gerard van Swieten when he was still in the Netherlands. With refined eloquence, as well as the pragmatic offering of economic stability, she was eventually able to convince the Dutchman to move with his family across Europe and settle in her city. In late June 1745, three weeks after their arrival in Vienna, he was officially appointed *Protomedicus et Bibliothecarius*.<sup>13</sup> He was an outsider in the rarefied world of the Viennese court, in manner and dress. Van Swieten referred to himself as the 'little Republican' in a letter to his friend António Ribeiro Sanches (1699-1783).<sup>14</sup> He chose to wear his simpler traditional Dutch clothing, which Maria Theresa generously allowed.<sup>15</sup> Lesky notes that it was a sign of his sovereignty and his non-conformist approach that he was able to attend the baroque, aristocratic Viennese court without wig and lace frills on his cuffs, forty-four years before the French Revolution. Only when Maria Theresa herself crocheted lace frill cuffs for him, did he acquiesce to her sartorial wishes.<sup>16</sup> His eccentricities were not always viewed with consideration. The Viennese royal court found him too blunt and principled, 'hollandais plat et ferme ayant plus d'esprit et droiture que de façons et politesse'.<sup>17</sup>

Few detailed accounts exist for van Swieten's life.<sup>18</sup> His life in more austere Holland, where he lived for nearly forty-five years, moulded his character and values. He became an orphan at the age of twelve and so was aware of how precarious life could be from an early age. This personal tragedy perhaps instilled in him a specific sensitivity to the plight of vulnerable children and young people. As his father, a notary, had provided for him in his will, he was able to live with his guardian and continue his studies, going on to manage a pharmacy and

receive his doctorate on the structure of arteries in 1725. Van Swieten was a devout Roman Catholic, yet he grew up in the relatively free-thinking and modern atmosphere of eighteenth-century Holland, with its thriving economy and solid middle class.

Dr. Boerhaave's work ethic, which highlighted the importance of scholarly pursuits and the common good, was to him worthy of emulation. One unsubstantiated anecdote, which discloses a firm integrity, explains how he refused a well-paid position in England, because he would not be allowed to practice his religion freely. Van Swieten was initially reluctant to accept Maria Theresia's offer of employment and leave the peaceful city of Leiden. However, when it became apparent that he would not be able to teach at the University of Leiden because he was Catholic, and that the Empress offered generous conditions in which he could continue his work as a physician, librarian and educator, he accepted. A key motivating factor in his work was his desire to re-awaken 'le gout pour les sciences (sic)' in the Habsburg territories, as mentioned in a letter to Sanches dated 16 November 1746.<sup>19</sup>

In Vienna, he kept a disciplined daily schedule in order to be able to fulfil the duties of his positions, as well as seeing patients on a charitable basis as a medical doctor.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, learning, education and social welfare were important values to him. The value of education was so deeply ingrained in him, that in his fifties, he began learning Hungarian and Arabic. For thirty years, he compiled the many volumes of his *Commentaries*,<sup>21</sup> partly driven by a sense of wanting to help others with what he had learned under Dr. Boerhaave. In Vienna, he established a home for orphans, and for the elderly and infirm. Donating his own money for poor students' scholarships, he also gave funds towards the acquisition of new collections for the Imperial Library. Gerard van Swieten was recognized for his determination in standardizing medical texts<sup>22</sup> and in scientifically disproving the existence of vampires with the full support of his Empress.<sup>23</sup> Overall, one has the impression of a man with a high degree of integrity and intelligence, who was motivated by compassion and the unwavering desire to improve the quality of life for others.

## Methodology

*Nine Models of library history*<sup>24</sup> and Bloch's *The Historian's Craft*<sup>25</sup> provided methodological and theoretical frameworks for this investigation. Therefore, within the *Nine Models* framework, this article focuses on the biography of Gerard van Swieten as a librarian. In addition, a further model considers library history as focused on a particular library, the Imperial Court Library, within a set time, 1745-1772, embedded within pre-Enlightenment Austria.<sup>26</sup> Methods of text analysis as proposed by O'Leary were applied to provide the chain of evidence on data collection and analysis<sup>27</sup> and enabled a more exhaustive study of these historical texts on linguistic, thematic and hermeneutical levels. The individual items of written evidence may be regarded as the 'tracks' of history,<sup>28</sup> which enable the reconstruction of context.

Underpinning O'Leary's proposals, Foucault<sup>29</sup> and Blommaert<sup>30</sup> provide a theoretical basis for different approaches to text analysis. Exploring court protocol and traditions at the time of Maria Theresa, as well as the historical events and key personalities of the period 1745-1772, was indispensable in providing a broader context and understanding in which the more specific research and data analysis may take place. This provided a constructive and supportive basis for the exploration of primary sources. Secondary sources were consulted in the areas of eighteenth-century Austrian history,<sup>31</sup> biographical works<sup>32</sup> and library history<sup>33</sup> to construct a broad historical and social context for the developments in the library. Once analysis of the primary sources began, another field of research was also required, namely, the history of letters and writing,<sup>34</sup> which seemed a logical extension from the library and literacy aspects of this investigation in the spirit of Chartier's *The Order of Books*.<sup>35</sup>

Extensive historical research was conducted on site in Vienna at various institutions such as the Austrian National Library, as well as online in digital archives, with a biographical focus on correspondence and reference to library activities. An emphasis was made not only to incorporate the multilingual richness of the data but also to disengage van Swieten from his role as *physician* in order to focus on his role as *librarian*. This task was accomplished in part by the close inspection of indexes and footnotes for references including both van Swieten and the library. A fine index was found in Maria Theresa's biography by

Stollberg-Rilinger,<sup>36</sup> while a poignant analysis of contemporary letters by Czernin and Lavandier influenced the direction of the research.<sup>37</sup>

### **Analysis of the correspondence: parameters of surviving documents**

Correspondence attributed to Gerard van Swieten has a scattered nature, as he had a wide acquaintance mainly in scholarly and medical circles. At the Austrian National Library, 38 results appear using van Swieten's name and correspondence as the search criteria, of which 4 are digitized. Some digitized elements appear to contain more than one letter, thematically related (e.g., censorship). After Maria Theresia's death in 1780, Joseph II ordered letters his mother had received during her reign destroyed for reasons of state<sup>38</sup>, and these likely included many from van Swieten and so would partly explain the scarcity.<sup>39</sup>

Online research<sup>40</sup> indicated the existence of letters to contacts in Sweden, France and Germany; only a limited number have been so far digitized, although in many cases notes on the contents were made. These notes aided in eliminating which letters dealt with purely medical matters, such as prescriptions. Letters written by van Swieten to his scholarly colleagues (which were found to contain library references) were also included as documentation. Müller<sup>41</sup>, Stummvoll<sup>42</sup> and Lesky in her chapter on Gerard van Swieten<sup>43</sup> provided additional source material, albeit disengaged from the original format. All formats and variations discovered were then implemented for purposes of comparison and analysis.

### **Physical attributes of the correspondence**

The Dutchman's correspondence, including letters to his colleagues, was written on high quality paper, thick and robust. The dimensions of the letter paper were approximately 23 x 18 cm or 23 x 36 cm, and typically folded to create an easily transportable document, which could be held in a hand and at the same time conceal the contents from view. These could be then sealed with wax and embossed with a heraldic stamp. It was quite likely that others were also privy to their contents, such as van Swieten's family or staff. The wax seal would have not hindered others in opening the letters. These documents might be categorised as business letters, and so to a degree, public. They also vary in length, some being messages rather than letters *per se*. Envelopes as commonly defined were not used at the time for court correspondence, but rather another

piece of paper with the address might be used to cover the letter in the case of international missives.<sup>44</sup>

The quality and durability of the writing paper is evident, as it retains its substance and texture even after having been handled by many in the intervening centuries. Holding the paper up to the light, one can observe the regular lines of the cellulose structure and form, which are smooth and even. Some of the sheets have the watermark *C & I Honig*,<sup>45</sup> which seems to refer to the name of paper manufacturers who supplied paper for contemporary illustrators and printers in Vienna.<sup>46</sup> There was a certain emotional immediacy in handling the actual pieces of paper on which the librarian wrote, which was completely lacking in edited compilations of contemporary letters, such as Arneht.<sup>47</sup>

Other aspects of layout such as greeting, forms of address, formalities of expression and closing were considered. Van Swieten typically wrote with the honorific *vous*-form, customary at the time. Sometimes, Van Swieten's formal opening was, for example, 'Sacred Majesty',<sup>48</sup> concisely respectful. However, greetings and formal address were often dispensed with. Many documents are entitled impersonally 'Note'. In these cases, only a perusal of the contents revealed the potential addressee. His European contacts might be addressed as 'Monseigneur' or 'Mon Excellence',<sup>49</sup> according to the status of whom he was writing to. For scholars he showed a more open appreciation: in letters to von Linné in Sweden, van Swieten was effusive, beginning, 'most honourable and celebrated'.<sup>50</sup> Van Swieten typically dated his letters at the closing, adding his location. His signature appeared laconically and frequently as 'Van Swieten', even after he had been created a Baron. When writing to his esteemed peers or nobility, he used the standard closure, 'very humble and obedient servant'.<sup>51</sup> Even with all his 'republican' tendencies, it is somehow touching to observe that he was not averse to deference.

### **Language and handwriting**

The majority of the primary sources was handwritten in French or Latin, French being the language of the court in Vienna during the reign of Maria Theresia.<sup>52</sup> In contrast to the use of German cursive (*Kurrentschrift*) which was used for



administration in the German-speaking parts of Europe at that time,<sup>53</sup> the correspondence studied was chiefly in Latin cursive, which is likely more recognizable to modern readers. However, orthography was not standardised at the time, so that fluctuations in terms of spelling and the placing of accents were noted. Though for the most part, van Swieten maintained a consistent and cohesive style in his handwriting.

Van Swieten was known to be a prolific note-taker,<sup>54</sup> as evidenced by his enormous output in the many volumes of his *Commentaries* in which he compiled many years of medical notes taken during Boerhaave's lectures<sup>55</sup> He appeared to believe in the importance of writing his correspondence himself, in a well-defined, highly legible Latin cursive. His originality is evidenced in his employment of a cryptographic shorthand code for assigning his judgement to works in the list of censored books. His cryptic stenography was not deciphered until the early twentieth century by van Leersum.<sup>56</sup> The reason for the secrecy was perhaps his wish to conceal his comments from others, especially the religious members of the censor commission.<sup>57</sup>

Van Swieten's handwriting in French tended to be upright and rounded, with few ligatures between the letters. The elegantly curved trajectory of the letter *D* is a distinctive characteristic of his handwriting. Frequently he wrote in Latin, whether recording his *Commentaries* or corresponding with scholars, with great facility.<sup>58</sup> His Latin script reveals fewer spaces between the letters and a certain compactness of form. However, both scripts show striking similarities, suggesting a mastery of both.<sup>59</sup> There is a confident deliberation in the pressure as he applied his quill to the paper. The regularity, evenness and clear definition of the words belie his steadfastness of belief and strength of character. In his initial acceptance letter to the Empress, he crossed out many words and replaced them with less superlative language (Figure 2). Later, he did not cross many words out, at least in the documents that have survived. Possibly he became surer of his position, and therefore did not question himself in his choice of words to the same extent. He determined how to phrase what he wanted to say in a way that was appropriate for him to address others, without any loss to his personal integrity.

[INSERT FIG 2 HERE]

Figure 2. *Korrespondenz. 29.01.1745, Leiden.* (contained within Autogr. 296/7-18).<sup>60</sup>  
Reproduced by permission of the Manuscript Collection of the Austrian National Library.

### **Tone and register**

In October 1744, when Gerard van Swieten had ultimately accepted Maria Theresia's offer to relocate to Vienna, he wrote to his friend Sanches that he had received several hand-written letters from her and that these letters were decisive in convincing him and his wife to leave their home country.<sup>61</sup> In particular, he refers to her very cordial tone and to the assurances she warmly repeated for the care that would be taken with him and his family. He also was quite moved that she had taken the time to write the letters *herself*.<sup>62</sup> Although the financial arrangements were handled by Maria Theresia's representatives in the Netherlands, it appears that even before he met her he had formed a positive impression of her, simply through her letters (and the actions carried out on her behalf as a fulfilment of her promises<sup>63</sup>), that he and his family were willing to quit their peaceful existence in Leiden, sell their family home at a loss, and move across Europe to a country where they were unfamiliar with the language and customs.

Van Swieten's correspondence with the Empress formally imparts the intellectual methods and reasons behind his decision-making, with a logical structure.<sup>64</sup> In his letters to Maria Theresia, the altruistic sense of working towards the common good overrode his desire to express his personal opinions on matters. The contained, strong emotions connected to his work seem to hover below the surface of his words. On the other hand, Van Swieten's fastidious professionalism and candour are revealed through his correspondence with fellow scholars and contacts. These letters request specific editions for the Imperial library, confirm receipt of book deliveries, and relay a forthright gratitude and willingness to send books in return.<sup>65</sup> His pride and commitment to his duties as chief librarian and the library itself imbue the letters. Using the medium of the letter, he implemented what might be termed public relations and outreach services, promoting the reputation, collections and goals of the Imperial library throughout Europe.

**Library Aspects: censorship**

Van Swieten's role as censor falls into the category of library aspects since he dealt with the review and selection of many books, the reading of which was partly accomplished by library staff.<sup>66</sup> His appointment as censor seemed a natural extension of his position as Imperial Library Prefect, and aligned with his intellectual skills.<sup>67</sup> The workings of the censorship committee evolved over time. The Jesuit Order's prominence in this area diminished as van Swieten exerted more influence over what was considered acceptable, and to what degree.<sup>68</sup> The general effect van Swieten had on censorship was a loosening of the regulations which had been very restrictive under the influence of the Jesuit Order.<sup>69</sup> He was actively engaged in this sector, putting his arguments persuasively before the Empress, who made the final decision.

In his determination to restructure how knowledge was used and studied, Gerard van Swieten undertook duties in the Censorship committee, from 1749.

Censorship in the context of eighteenth-century Austria is a complex topic, a reflection of the values and beliefs of those making the decisions what ought to be banned or restricted.<sup>70</sup> Specifically, the issue of religion, and the definition of what was chaste or acceptable within the religious norms of the time was a substantial issue, along with materials that criticized the rulers.<sup>71</sup> Where van Swieten distinguished himself was in the endorsement for scientific books which were modern, providing the latest research and thus in his mind, useful and effective in supporting the advancement of the sciences.<sup>72</sup> His attitude toward these scientific books served to raise the standard of intellectual and scientific study in Vienna as a model for the rest of the Habsburg territories. The Empress and van Swieten made the process of censorship more efficient and promoted reading and the book trade, despite erratic restrictions.<sup>73</sup>

The theme of censorship is present in a number of the surviving letters from van Swieten to Maria Theresia. In a letter dated 26 October 1762, he was at pains to fulfil the Empress' commands in terms of censorship and dutifully elaborates reasons for his decision-making.<sup>74</sup> The implications of this letter are that requests are ultimately to be made of her rather than her husband in the case of condemned books, and these books, although officially condemned on the list of prohibited books, yet still might be retained for the Imperial library for the use of

scholars. This seemingly contradictory approach nevertheless represented a dismantling of baroque cultural structures and a receptivity to certain kinds of innovation.<sup>75</sup> The Dutch Prefect also argued delicately on this theme of allowing a certain access to condemned books by referring to the Bible and the necessity of protecting young people from inappropriate materials on 14 March 1760.<sup>76</sup> Further evidence of Maria Theresia's close involvement in censorship on a case by case basis, is found in two of van Swieten's letters dating from 1764.<sup>77</sup>

Taken on voluntarily as part of his duties, van Swieten applied himself with great conviction to his position on the censorship board. Challenges included permeable territory borders, the expansion of print culture<sup>78</sup> as well as conflicting religious and intellectual issues.<sup>79</sup> Censoring the increasing number of publications while attempting to maintain a level of intellectual freedom in the library in an environment of political intrigue was laborious and mentally draining. Eventually, this activity took a mental toll on his health. In a letter to his Empress on 18 December 1764, van Swieten wrote 'je traine le penible fardeau de la censure pendant treize ans (sic)', adding he no longer wished to continue under the circumstances.<sup>80</sup> Maria Theresia responded directly on the same piece of paper, writing that she would like the others to possess his upright and moral character which was not commonly found in people of that place and time. In essence, this was an indirect order and laudatory encouragement for van Swieten to remain in his position. She needed him as a censor because of his unique qualifications and strong character. This desire to retire from his censorship duties was echoed several years later with more insistence on his advanced age, when he was 67 years old.<sup>81</sup> However, he would continue working on the censorship committee for several more years, until his last illness prevented him from fulfilling his duties.

Furthermore, the composition of lists of prohibited books and their distribution was relegated to him.<sup>82</sup> With his customary dedication and thoroughness, he applied himself to the task. The publication of prohibited books in the *Realzeitung* newspaper in Vienna however aroused more curiosity about the prohibited books themselves so much that in 1777, the index of prohibited books had itself to be prohibited.<sup>83</sup>

### Collection development and maintenance

As Stummvoll notes, in the first few years of inhabiting the role of Library Prefect, van Swieten became acquainted with the state of the library and gained a deeper understanding of its operation. He needed some time to adapt to his new surroundings, where also envy of his appointment emerged.<sup>84</sup> Throughout his tenure as Library Prefect, especially once he had become familiar with the library, he was constantly engaged in expanding the collections and bringing order to them. An acquisition method, which often evolved through his network of scholarly contacts in Europe, was the purchase of books and precious documents to fill gaps in the literature and magnify the assets, on imperial orders. In a letter dated 13 September 1755, he exhorts his contact in Paris to choose the copy of the book 'qui est le plus beau', adding that her Majesty wishes the delivery to ensue quickly.<sup>85</sup> By 17 December 1755, he had received the books in good order, commenting that her Majesty was satisfied by the delivery<sup>86</sup> (Figures 3 and 4).

[INSERT FIG 3 and 4 HERE]

Figures 3 and 4. Van Swieten, G., 1755. Correspondence (Autogr.6/80-2 and Autogr.6/80-3) [manuscript]. Book request (Figure 3) and confirmation of receipt (Figure 4). Manuscript Collection, Austrian National Library.

Three weeks after being declared Imperial Librarian by decree,<sup>87</sup> van Swieten acquired the library funds from Nicolaus De Forlosia (1694-1758), the interim Prefect, and initiated his own ledger book.<sup>88</sup> His first entry in the ledger is dated 14 July 1745, where he acknowledges the reception of library funds from De Forlosia. For nearly twenty-seven years, from July 1745 until April 1772, two months before his death, Van Swieten maintained this ledger diligently. This account book details credit and debit by year, with a balancing of the books at the end of each year. Due to the scope and content of the notations inscribed by van Swieten, this unique ledger demonstrates the nature and rhythm of his library activities. According to the ledger notations, he had started making purchases for the library by 26 August 1745. The debits for the rest of that year amounted to less than 50 Gulden (Fl., *florins de vienne*), a modest sum for a library of this size. As van Swieten familiarized himself with his new working environment, he spent cautiously.

[INSERT FIG 5 HERE]

Figure 5. *Kassabuch. Ledger book. 1745-1772.* (contained within Cod.Ser.n.4215). Excerpt from van Swieten's library ledger book which shows the last entries he made in April 1772, shortly before his death, which included payments for bookbinding and books acquired. The entries in German cursive indicate a final settling of accounts. Reproduced by permission of the Manuscript Collection of the Austrian National Library.

However, a substantial increase was noted in the years following where he generally spent no less than 2000 Gulden per year, and often double that amount. The library budget was set each year at 3100 Gulden, paid in quarterly installments, without much adjustment for the period of his tenure. The Prefect's spending was thorough and sustained year after year. For example, standard expenditures were on bookbinders, leather, paper, and above all, the acquisition of new books through booksellers and publishers in Venice (Pasquali), Paris, Leipzig and Leiden (Verbeek). The purchase of books from all over Europe entailed substantial transport costs, which in the year 1751 amounted to about 510 Gulden. Carpenters and daily workers were hired to complete chores and repairs, which, alongside the general renovations of the library taking place at this time, must have made the library anything but quiet. As his final ledger notations in April 1772 indicate, he was paying for books and bookbinding services even shortly before his death in June 1772 (Figure 5).

During his tenure, he appears to have kept a strict control on the spending, even though sometimes problems were experienced in balancing the books. In a letter dated 23 January 1754, he explains that there were difficulties in the library account due to a payment for a valuable set of Latin poetry books, and the order of new books from Venice.<sup>89</sup> Occasionally, in the acquisition of precious library materials, the Dutch librarian amplified the budget with his own personal funds. One such purchase was the geographic collection from the estate of Baron von Stosch (1691-1757) in 1768. Documentary evidence includes a promissory note (Figure 6) in van Swieten's hand, agreeing to the purchase for a total of 12 500 Gulden, an enormous sum.<sup>90</sup>

[INSERT FIG 6 HERE]

Figure 6. *Korrespondenz*. Promissory note, dated 04.06.1768, Hietzing. Written by Gerard van Swieten (1700-1772). Ink on paper, approx. 23 x 18 cm, with a red wax seal (Autogr. 6/80-13). This note concerns the purchase of the expensive geographic collection from the estate of Baron von Stosch, Prussian antiquarian and erstwhile spy. Noteworthy is also this signature, title and location, his summer palace, Kaiserstöckl in Hietzing, just outside of Vienna. Reproduced by permission of the Manuscript Collection of the Austrian National Library.

Other forms of collection development were through more unusual channels. Bachleitner showed that part of the increase in the number of books in the *Hofbibliothek* was, from the 1760s, due to the confiscation of theological and political books forbidden by the censors.<sup>91</sup> The presence of these books is confirmed by Gottfried van Swieten, who wrote that his father's intention was to complete and expand the library's collection in all subjects of knowledge, notwithstanding those books that presented solecisms.<sup>92</sup> This underlying principle of intellectual freedom, to resist all efforts to censor library resources, one of the core values of librarianship (as well as of the Enlightenment), is reflected here in the words of van Swieten's son.

Relying on his linkages to scholars throughout Europe, van Swieten actively solicited new works and translations of works to be sent to him. In the letter to Carl von Linné in 12 March 1755, van Swieten requests books from Sweden, assuring von Linné that costs will be covered promptly. This letter illustrates the extent and minutiae of van Swieten's scholarly pursuits (Figure 7).<sup>93</sup> Thus, van Swieten's zeal for the procurement of new books and the advancement of the sciences becomes apparent.

[INSERT FIG 7 HERE]

Figure 7. *Letter 12 March 1755, Wien to Carl Linnaeus, Uppsala*. Latin. Gerard van Swieten (1700-1772), author; Carl von Linné (1707-1778), addressee, 3 pages (L1887 Linnaean Correspondence Collection).<sup>94</sup> Reproduced by permission of the Uppsala University Library.

With the procurement of so many new books, the space needed to store them likely became an issue. An indication of how this issue might have been handled is suggested by the contents of a letter dated 04 September 1765 in van Swieten's hand.<sup>95</sup> In this letter he responds to a request for more books for the library in Insprugg (Innsbruck), stating that on his arrival in Vienna, he found many duplicates in the Imperial Library (Figure 8). After he had redistributed the duplicates to libraries in Prague and the triplicates to Innsbruck (after Her Majesty had graciously approved his proposal), resources had been depleted, so the library in Insprugg was not to expect anymore books. As the chief Imperial librarian, he also had a certain degree of responsibility for the outlying libraries in the Habsburg territories.

[INSERT FIG 8 HERE]

Figure 8. Van Swieten, G., 1765. *Korrespondenz* (Autogr.6/80-9), Reproduced by permission of the Manuscript Collection, Austrian National Library.

### **Reading room**

With the dissolution of the University of Vienna Library in 1756<sup>96</sup> over 3 000 of the most precious manuscripts and incunabula were absorbed into the holdings of the *Hofbibliothek*, many of which then permanently remained there. Part of the reason given for this decision, apart from the lack of space and poor conditions in the University Library, was to ensure that these items remained accessible to the public.<sup>97</sup> This curious detail implies that it was the policy of the Imperial Library to maintain public access to its holdings. At the time however, *public* was rather narrowly defined in terms of scholars and elite members of society.

Gerard van Swieten made efforts to revitalise the reading room, so that it would be comfortable for readers. Referred to as the old reading room (*Alte Lesezimmer*), it was located on the upper floor of an adjoining wing of the State Hall, near the offices of the Prefect. His additions included installing heating for the cold winters, as well as proper seating and tables, which was appreciated so much that it was even mentioned in van Swieten's eulogy.<sup>98</sup>



The reading room was open the whole year from 8 a.m. until noon for the use of scholars (from 9 a.m. in the winter), with one or two library assistants in attendance.<sup>99</sup> This was however only an interim solution. Fingernagel indicates that the dimensions of the room were small, and that it was poorly lit. With space for only about forty people, the demand soon outstripped the available resources. Reports state that in the decades following there were between eighty to one hundred readers in the room at the same time, which also was intended as an office for library staff.<sup>100</sup>

### **Catalogues**

The updating and revision of the library catalogues became a priority for van Swieten, since the century-old catalogues were in a lamentable state and no longer aided in finding books as they once had, due to alterations and additions to the holdings. Thus, Custos Adam Kollár (1718-1783) was given the project to revise the catalogues, and one hundred copies were then printed by Trattner, the official court publisher. The contract and the invoice may be found in the Archive of the Austrian National Library.<sup>101</sup>

It states in the contract, dated 02 September 1760, that Kollár was to improve and expand upon Peter Lambeck's<sup>102</sup> original work, and give the publisher each catalogue as it was completed to be published, until all twelve volumes had been published.<sup>103</sup> Final corrections to the proofs would be carried out by Kollár. Two qualities of paper were to be used, the more expensive *Franzpapier* was used for twenty-four copies. These luxurious copies may have been destined for the perusal of the aristocratic library clientele. The publisher committed himself to printing three pages each week, notwithstanding holidays and other circumstances. Mention was also made of the additional complication of printing ancient Greek and Latin letters, the regulation of costs incurred through errors. This administrative project was one of Kollár and van Swieten's long-term library objectives to facilitate access and to inventorize the treasures within the *Hofbibliothek*.

### **Van Swieten's role as librarian**

Van Swieten's role as librarian may be described as integrative, fluid and all-powerful, embedded in and related to his other myriad activities. Although he

was trained primarily as a medical doctor, teaching, writing and the advancement of sciences in general were deeply important to him, since his time in Leiden under Professor Boerhaave. Gerard van Swieten dedicated himself to the public good, with sustained energy and conviction.

In his capacity as Library Prefect, he promoted the pursuit of knowledge and the advancement of the sciences on different levels. Gerard van Swieten and his Custos<sup>104</sup> Adam Kollár, in voluntary roles as professors, held lectures in ancient Greek in the halls of the *Hofbibliothek* for university students. As the premier library institution in Vienna, the Imperial Library already suggested by default the possibility of intellectual pursuits. Yet this Greek instruction also signalled a break away from the tradition of giving lectures in Latin as was the case at the Jesuit-dominated University of Vienna, which tended to be more conservative and less open to change.<sup>105</sup> Lectures were also given in mathematics, philosophy and the natural sciences over a period of about six years.<sup>106</sup> Implicitly, van Swieten redefined his library as a multi-functional space rather than simply an outward indication of prestige. The implementation of library space as a lecture hall brought vitality and signalled a shift in priorities. It is possible that he allowed university classes to be held in the library since he himself was not officially designated to teach students on the University grounds. Yet, he wished to be an active participant in higher education and exercise his devotion to teaching, which he had developed in Holland. By using the library's premises for attending lectures, more students and scholars were encouraged to visit the library. In this way, the *Hofbibliothek* promoted higher education in an unofficial capacity, effectively extending the scope of the Imperial Library outside its traditional boundaries.

The nature of van Swieten's role as librarian may be defined as integrative (interwoven with his other significant duties) and steadfastly idealistic. He singled out his work as a librarian in his letter to fellow scholar François de Boissier, dated 08 May 1751 in Pressburg (Bratislava) where he was staying with the court.<sup>107</sup> He acknowledged receiving works from him, apologizing that has not been able to read them because he has 'mille occupations sur les bras'. Van Swieten stated that his functions include those of professor, librarian and president of the faculty of medicine and first doctor in the land. Striking is how

the duty as *librarian* appears before his medical roles. It appears that van Swieten perceived his work as librarian perhaps with pride and a certain importance. His activities as librarian underscored and united his great intellectual, linguistic and organisational skills.

Not one prone to exaggeration, the Dutchman was genuinely very occupied with a variety of intellectual pursuits. This sentiment is echoed in a note to a French editor of Tacitus<sup>108</sup> on 22 September 1761, where van Swieten clarifies his duty as librarian. This duty consists largely of being useful to scholars: 'Je m'acquie avec plaisir de mon devoir de Bibliothécaire, qui consiste en grande partie a estre utile au scavants (sic)'.<sup>109</sup> His statement reflects the paradigm shift occurring in libraries at the time, namely the transformation of the *Schaubibliothek* to *Gebrauchsbibliothek*<sup>110</sup> where the innate usefulness of a library was gaining prominence over outward display. A reference is also made to the intended library user group. Essentially, this short statement encapsulates van Swieten's approach to librarianship. In addition, van Swieten's response implies that those intellectual activities he participated in voluntarily, for example, as censor, he perceived as being conceptually related to his occupation as librarian. Where his Empress regarded him as increasing the public good and advancing the sciences in her name, it was more or less at his discretion to act as librarian and initiate the projects relevant within this sphere of influence.

## **Conclusion**

The examination of handwritten materials revealed Gerard van Swieten to be a librarian, through and through – even though he is primarily associated with his extensive work as a medical reformer. Van Swieten helped prepare the way for the Austrian Enlightenment and to build an infrastructure for modern European scholarship and research. His scientific background, inclinations and reputation informed and enlarged his achievements as a librarian.

The Dutch librarian's handwritten documentation and correspondence provide vivid, personal glimpses into the microcosm of the *Hofbibliothek* in eighteenth century Vienna. Earle refers to an oversight in the literature in the study of letter-writing which may reveal valuable information not only about their writers and readers, but also about the wider historical context in which they were

written.<sup>111</sup> Since this article takes as its starting point and inspiration letters written by Gerard van Swieten, it also seeks to address this oversight.

This article represents one of the few English-language records of van Swieten's correspondence. Specifically, there is a significant gap in the literature about van Swieten's intellectual network and his library activities in this context. Bolstered by precious handwritten documents, this study reframes and illuminates Gerard van Swieten's compelling character as Prefect of the Imperial library of Vienna. Thus, it makes a wider contribution to the study of European court libraries in the eighteenth century.

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Abbreviation for Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (ÖNB) which is used in this article.

<sup>2</sup> Austrian National Library, *Austrian National Library* [online]. (Vienna: Austrian National Library, 2018). Available from: <https://www.onb.ac.at/en/> [Accessed 08 May 2018].

<sup>3</sup> Proper names are generally given in their original or most commonly used German or Dutch version. Common English usage would say *Maria Theresa*; but the preference here is *Theresia*. Similarly, *Gerard* was chosen over *Gerhard*.

<sup>4</sup> Brechka, F. T., *Gerard van Swieten and His World, 1700-1772. In International Archives of the History of Ideas, No. 36.* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970). However, the main focus of the book is on van Swieten's life in the Netherlands, before he moved to Vienna.

<sup>5</sup> Egghardt, H., *Maria Theresias Männer* (Vienna: Kremayr and Scheriau, 2015) and Walter, F., *Männer um Maria Theresia*. (Wien: Verlag Adolf Holzhausen, 1951) include chapters emphasizing Gerard van Swieten's accomplishments in relation to Maria Theresia.

<sup>6</sup> An organiser of knowledge.

<sup>7</sup> Klingenstein, G., 1968. 'Vorstufen der thesesianischen Studienreform in der Regierungszeit Karls VI', *Mitteilungen des Instituts Österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, 76 (1968), pp. 327-377.

<sup>8</sup> Brechka.

<sup>9</sup> Unterkircher, F., Fiedler, R. and Stickler, M., *Die Bibliotheken Österreichs in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*. (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1980), pp. 44-45.

<sup>10</sup> Hochedlinger, M., Mat'a, P., and Winkelbauer, T., *Verwaltungsgeschichte der Habsburgermonarchie in der Frühen Neuzeit: Band 1: Hof und Dynastie, Kaiser und Reich, Zentralverwaltungen, Kriegswesen und landesfürstliches Finanzwesen* (Wien: Böhlau, 2019), pp. 165-168.

<sup>11</sup> Wien Geschichte Wiki-Bearbeiter, *Österreichische Nationalbibliothek*. (Wien: Wien Geschichte Wiki, 2019), [online]. Available from: [https://www.geschichtewiki.wien.gv.at/Österreichische\\_Nationalbibliothek](https://www.geschichtewiki.wien.gv.at/Österreichische_Nationalbibliothek) [Accessed 17 August 2019].

<sup>12</sup> Unterkircher et al., p. 45.

<sup>13</sup> 'First Physician and Imperial Librarian': Stummvoll, J., *Geschichte der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Erster Teil 1368-1922*. (Wien: Prachner, 1968), p. 231; Maria Theresia, Archduchess of Austria, *Ernennung Gerard van Swietens zum Präfekten der Hofbibliothek*. [manuscript]. ÖNB, Archivbestand, HB 38/1745.

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- <sup>14</sup> This letter is referred to in Lesky, E. and Wandruszka, A., *Gerard van Swieten und seine Zeit: Internationales Symposium, veranstaltet von der Universität Wien im Institut für Geschichte der Medizin, 8.-10. Mai 1972*. (Wien: Böhlau, 1973), p. 39.
- <sup>15</sup> Brechka, pp. 91-92.
- <sup>16</sup> Lesky and Wandruszka, p. 16.
- <sup>17</sup> Czeike, F., *Historisches Lexikon Wien, Band 5* (Wien: Kremayr & Scheriau, 1997), p. 404.
- <sup>18</sup> For example, Brechka and Lesky and Wandruszka.
- <sup>19</sup> Referred to in Lesky and Wandruszka, p. 24.
- <sup>20</sup> Stummvoll, pp. 236-237.
- <sup>21</sup> One of many editions and volumes: Swieten, G. Van, 1771. *The Commentaries upon the Aphorisms of Dr. Herman Boerhaave, the late Learned Professor of Physic in the University of Leiden. Concerning the Knowledge and Cure of the several diseases incident to Human Bodies, translated into English, the Second Edition, Vol.I*. London: Robert Horsfield and Thomas Longman [online]. Available from: [https://archive.org/details/b30532826\\_0001/page/n5](https://archive.org/details/b30532826_0001/page/n5) [Accessed 10 June 2019].
- <sup>22</sup> Stollberg-Rilinger, B., *Maria Theresia, die Kaiserin in ihrer Zeit, eine Biographie*. (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2017).
- <sup>23</sup> Windgassen, M. and Hartwig, S., 'Historischer Van Helsing', *Rechtsmedizin*, 27/6 (2017), pp. 497-499. The character of van Helsing is said to be based on van Swieten.
- <sup>24</sup> Davis, D.G. and Aho, J.A., 'Whither Library History? A critical essay on Black's Model for the Future of Library History', *Library History*, 17/1 (2001), pp. 21-37.
- <sup>25</sup> Bloch, M., *The historian's craft*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1953).
- <sup>26</sup> Davis and Aho, p. 25.
- <sup>27</sup> O'Leary, Z., *The essential guide to doing your research project*. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2014).
- <sup>28</sup> Bloch, p. 78.
- <sup>29</sup> Foucault, M., A.M. *Archaeology of knowledge, translated by Sheridan Smith, A.M.* (London: Routledge, 2013).
- <sup>30</sup> Blommaert, J. and Bulcaen, C., 'Critical Discourse Analysis', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 29 (2000), pp. 447-466.

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<sup>31</sup> Evans, R.J.W., *Austria, Hungary and the Habsburgs: Essays on Central Europe c.1683-1867*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Robertson, R., 'Curiosity in the Austrian Enlightenment', *Oxford German Studies*, 38/2 (2009), pp. 129 – 142; Beales, D., *Enlightenment and Reform in Eighteenth-century Europe*. (London: I.B. Taurus, 2005); Bodi, L., *Tauwetter in Wien: zur Prosa der österreichischen Aufklärung 1781–1795*. (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1977); Winter, E., *Der Josefinismus*. (Berlin: Rütten & Loenig, 1962).

<sup>32</sup> Brechka; Czeike; Lesky and Wandruszka; Müller, W., *Gerhard van Swieten: biographischer Beitrag zur Geschichte der Aufklärung in Österreich*. (Wien: Braumüller, 1883); Wurzbach, C. Von, 'Swieten, Gerhard Freiherr van', *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Oesterreich, 41. Theil*. (Wien: Kaiserlich-königliche Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1880), pp. 37-50.

<sup>33</sup> Brinker-Von Der Heyde, C., *Frühneuzeitliche Bibliotheken als Zentren des europäischen Kulturtransfers*. (Stuttgart: S. Hirzel Verlag, 2014); Harris, M.H., *History of Libraries in the Western World, 4th Ed.* (London: Scarecrow Press, 1999); Smith, K. A., A Select Annotated Bibliography of Library History in the Germanic Language Areas of Continental Western Europe (Excluding Germany) Austria, Switzerland, The Netherlands, and Belgium. *Library History*, 17/2 (2001), pp. 143-164; Stummvoll; Unterkircher et al.; Wiegand, W.A., and Davis, D.G., Jr., *Encyclopedia of Library History*. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1994).

<sup>34</sup> Earle, R., *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers, 1600-1945*. (London: Routledge, 1999); Fischer, S.R., *A History of Writing*. (London: Reaktion Books, Ltd., 2001); Furger, C., *Briefsteller: das Medium "Brief" im 17. und frühen 18. Jahrhundert*. (Köln: Böhlau, 2007); Huber, R.A., *Handwriting identification: facts and fundamentals, in collaboration with A.M. Headrick*. (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 1999).

<sup>35</sup> Chartier, R., *The order of books: readers, authors, and libraries in Europe between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries, translated by Lydia G. Cochrane*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994).

<sup>36</sup> Stollberg-Rilinger. Van Swieten is frequently mentioned in conjunction with Maria Theresia.

<sup>37</sup> Czernin, M. and Lavandier, J.-P., *Liebet mich immer, Maria Theresia: Briefe an ihre engste Freundin*. (Wien: Carl Ueberreuter Verlag, 2017).

<sup>38</sup> Czernin and Lavandier.

<sup>39</sup> Lesky notes that the catastrophic loss of original documents due to the forcible division and relocation of archival materials in 1919 and a fire in the archives of the Palace of Justice in Vienna in 1927 were the main causes for the limited amount of original documents available on van Swieten's time in Vienna (Lesky and Wandruszka, p. 34).

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<sup>40</sup> In particular with the search capabilities of CERL (Consortium of European Research Libraries, <https://www.cerl.org>).

<sup>41</sup> Müller, W., *Gerhard van Swieten: biographischer Beitrag zur Geschichte der Aufklärung in Österreich*. (Wien: Braumüller, 1883).

<sup>42</sup> Stummvoll.

<sup>43</sup> Lesky and Wandruszka, pp. 34-62.

<sup>44</sup> Swieten, G. Van, *Letter 1758-10-26, Wien*, addressed to Sauveur François Morand (1697-1773). [manuscript]. Uppsala University Library, The Erik Waller Manuscript Collection. waller-id 22979 [online]. Available from: <http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:alvin:portal:record-28846> [Accessed 29 August 2019].

<sup>45</sup> The British Association of Paper Historians (BAPH) present a useful collection of historical watermark images: <http://baph.org.uk/watermarks.html> [Accessed 08 October 2020] (Watlington: BAPH, 2020). This particular watermark is number 18/51 in that collection.

<sup>46</sup> Lack, W.H., and Ibáñez, V., 'Eighteenth Century Botanical Drawings: Sydney Parkinson, Ferdinand Bauer and Thaddäus Haenke', *Curtis's Botanical Magazine*, 14/2 (1997), p. 95 and Bower, P., 'The Papers used by John Downman', *The BAPH Quarterly*, 20 (1996), pp. 7-16.

<sup>47</sup> Arneht, A., *Briefe der Kaiserin Maria Theresia an ihre Kinder und Freunde. 4. Band*. (Wien: Braumüller, 1881).

<sup>48</sup> Swieten, G. Van, and Maria Theresia, Archduchess of Austria, 1745-1772. *Korrespondenz*. [manuscript]. ÖNB, Handschriftensammlung, Autogr. 296/7 (1-18).

<sup>49</sup> Swieten, G. Van, 1745-1772. *Korrespondenz*. [manuscript]. ÖNB, Handschriftensammlung, Autogr. 6/80 (2-3).

<sup>50</sup> Swieten, G. Van, *Letter 12 March 1755, Wien to Carl Linnaeus, Uppsala*. Latin. Gerard van Swieten (1700-1772), author; Carl von Linné (1707-1778), addressee, 3 pages (L1887 Linnaean Correspondence Collection).

<sup>51</sup> Autogr. 6/80 (2-3).

<sup>52</sup> Czernin and Lavandier.

<sup>53</sup> Fischer, S.R., *A History of Writing*. (London: Reaktion Books, Ltd., 2001).

<sup>54</sup> American Medical Association, 'Gerhard van Swieten (1700-1772): Boerhaave's Boswell', *JAMA*, 198/9 (1966), pp. 1028-1029; Wurzbach.

<sup>55</sup> Lesky and Wandruszka, p. 74.



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<sup>56</sup> Leersum, E.C. Van, 'Gérard van Swieten en qualité de censeur', *Janus, Archives internationales pour l'Histoire de la Médecine*, 11 (1906), pp. 381-398, 446-469, 501-522, 588-606.

<sup>57</sup> Bachleitner, N., *Die literarische Zensur in Österreich von 1751 bis 1848*. (Wien: Böhlau, 2017). [online]. Available from: [http://www.boehlav-verlag.com/download/164840/978-3-205-20502-9\\_OpenAccess.pdf](http://www.boehlav-verlag.com/download/164840/978-3-205-20502-9_OpenAccess.pdf) [Accessed 29 July 2018], pp. 53-54.

<sup>58</sup> Swieten, G. Van and Linné, C. Von, *Linnaean Correspondence 1745-1759* [manuscript]. University of Uppsala, Linnaean Correspondence Collection, L0619, L0695, L1887, L2502, L2589 and L2615. University of Uppsala.

<sup>59</sup> Van Swieten attended Latin school in Leiden as a child, and an inference may be made that he was taught how to write there, since he had been orphaned by the time he was twelve. When van Swieten became an orphan, his father, a notary, had secured two guardians for his son, one of whom he went to live with (Brechka).

<sup>60</sup> This shows part of a letter that van Swieten wrote to Maria Theresia as he was preparing to leave Holland. The potent sense of destiny and awareness of a dramatic change in his life is transmitted by his choice of language. Unusual for him is the multitude of crossed out words.

<sup>61</sup> Lesky and Wandruszka, p. 43.

<sup>62</sup> Stummvoll, p. 231.

<sup>63</sup> He received lavish gifts and the promise of 12 000 Gulden per year, which was ten times more than an Imperial physician would usually receive (Lesky and Wandruszka, p. 43f).

<sup>64</sup> An example of this is found in his *plaidoyer* for protecting young people, referring to the Bible: Swieten, G. Van, and Maria Theresia, Archduchess of Austria, *Note:1760* [manuscript]. ÖNB, Handschriftensammlung, Autogr. 1853/17-1.

<sup>65</sup> In addition to the Linnaean correspondence, see also: Swieten, G. Van, *Letter 1758-10-26, Wien*, addressed to Sauveur François Morand (1697-1773). [manuscript]. Uppsala University Library, The Erik Waller Manuscript Collection. waller-id 22979 [online]. Available from: <http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:alvin:portal:record-28846> [Accessed 29 August 2019]; Swieten, G. van, *Korrespondenz*, addressed to Gabriel Brotier (1723-1789), 22.09.1761. Autogr. 1876/1-1. Austrian National Library; Swieten, G., Van, *Letter, 1751-05-08, Bratislava*, addressed to François Boissier de Sauvages de Lacroix (1706-1767). [manuscript]. Uppsala University Library, The Erik Waller Manuscript Collection. Waller Ms benl-00708a [online]. Available from: <http://waller.ub.uu.se/25133.html> [Accessed 29 July 2019].

<sup>66</sup> Custos Quandt alone perused 761 titles (Bachleitner, p. 54; Leersum, pp. 395-397).

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<sup>67</sup> Gerster, A.G., *The life and times of Gerhardt van Swieten*. [online]. (Baltimore: publisher not identified, 1909). Available from: <https://archive.org/details/lifetimesofgerha00gers/> [Accessed 22 April 2019], p. 13.

<sup>68</sup> Fournier, A., *Gerhard van Swieten als Censor* [online]. (Wien: Adolf Holzhausen, 1877). Available from: <https://archive.org/details/gerhardvanswiete00four/> [Accessed 22 April 2019].

<sup>69</sup> Bachleitner.

<sup>70</sup> Common adjectives used to describe condemned books were: 'impudique', 'sale' and 'abominable'.

<sup>71</sup> For example, Voltaire's publications were frequently banned (Heilingsetzer, G., 'Voltaire and Austria: personal connections and the reception of his work' in *Voltaire et ses combats: Actes du congrès international Oxford-Paris 1994*. (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1997), pp. 809-818.

<sup>72</sup> Bachleitner, N., 'Maria Theresia und die Zensur', *Hungarian Studies* 32/2 (2018).

<sup>73</sup> Morrison, H., 'Authorship in Transition: Enthusiasts and Malcontents on Press Freedoms, an Expanding Literary Market, and Vienna's Reading Public', *Central European History*, 46/1 (2013), p. 5.

<sup>74</sup> Swieten, G. Van, and Maria Theresia, Archduchess of Austria, 1762. *Korrespondenz*. [manuscript]. ÖNB, Handschriftensammlung, Autogr. 1459/21-1 HAN MAG.

<sup>75</sup> Evans, R.J.W., *Austria, Hungary and the Habsburgs: Essays on Central Europe c.1683-1867*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 60.

<sup>76</sup> Swieten, G. Van, and Maria Theresia, Archduchess of Austria, 1760. *Note*. [manuscript]. ÖNB, Handschriftensammlung, Autogr. 1853/17-1.

<sup>77</sup> Swieten, G. Van, 1764. *Note sur la petition de l'envoie Comte de Bachoff*. [manuscript]. ÖNB, Handschriftensammlung, Autogr.1437/4-1 and Swieten, G. Van, 1764. *Note sur le livre de Febronius*. [manuscript]. ÖNB, Handschriftensammlung, Autogr.1437/4-2.

<sup>78</sup> Melton, J. Van Horn, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Morrison.

<sup>79</sup> Klingenstein, G., 'Modes of Religious Tolerance and Intolerance in Eighteenth-Century Habsburg Politics', *Austrian History Yearbook*, 24 (1993), pp. 1-16.

<sup>80</sup> Autogr.1437/4-2.

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- <sup>81</sup> Swieten, G. Van, 1765-1771. *Korrespondenz*. [manuscript]. ÖNB, Handschriftensammlung, Autogr.1279/5(1-5) HAN MAG.
- <sup>82</sup> Swieten, G. Van, 1700-1799. *Supplementum librorum prohibitorum*. [manuscript]. ÖNB, Handschriftensammlung, Cod.11934 HAN MAG.; Swieten, G. Van, 1759. *Bücherliste - Zensurprotokoll*. ÖNB, Handschriftensammlung, Autogr.1437/4-3.
- <sup>83</sup> Robertson, R., 'Curiosity in the Austrian Enlightenment', *Oxford German Studies*, 38/2 (2009), p. 5.
- <sup>84</sup> Stummvoll, p. 232.
- <sup>85</sup> Autogr.6/80-2.
- <sup>86</sup> Autogr.6/80-3.
- <sup>87</sup> Maria Theresia, Archduchess of Austria, 1745. *Ernennung Gerard van Swietens zum Präfekten der Hofbibliothek*. [manuscript]. ÖNB, Archivbestand, HB 38/1745.
- <sup>88</sup> Swieten, G. Van, 1745-1772. *Kassabuch der Hofbibliothek*. [manuscript]. ÖNB, Handschriftensammlung, Cod.Ser.n.4215 HAN MAG.
- <sup>89</sup> Autogr. 6/80-1.
- <sup>90</sup> Maria Theresia herself authorized the release of extra funds to cover the costs for this substantial procurement, in which even State Chancellor Kaunitz (1711-1794) became involved (HB 58a/1768, ÖNB Archivbestand).
- <sup>91</sup> Bachleitner (2017), p. 55.
- <sup>92</sup> Excerpt of Gottfried's letter found in Stummvoll, pp. 235-236.
- <sup>93</sup> L1887, Linnaean Correspondence; Waller Ms benl-00708a.
- <sup>94</sup> Abstract from the University of Uppsala: van Swieten has got the latest edition of *Species plantarum* [the first edition], but not the fifth edition of *Genera plantarum*; it is also missing in the Royal Museum [the natural history cabinets at the royal court]. Van Swieten hopes that their representative in Sweden will be able to procure it. Van Swieten would like to have access to Swedish academic publications, even if they are translated into German, as well as other literature that Linnaeus finds interesting, so they can find a place in the Royal Library. All costs will be covered immediately. It does not matter in what language the books are written because in this library they know all major European and Asian languages. It is a pity, though, that scientists do not use their common language [Latin]. Apart from his mother tongue, van Swieten knows eight others, now also Hungarian, but he finds it regrettable that so many excellent scholars' works are inaccessible to so many.
- <sup>95</sup> Autogr.6/80-9.

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<sup>96</sup> Pongratz, W., *Geschichte der Universitätsbibliothek Wien*. (Graz: Böhlau, 1977), pp. 20-21.

<sup>97</sup> Stummvoll, 240.

<sup>98</sup> Wurz, I., *Trauerrede auf den hochwohlgebohrnen Herrn, Herrn Gerard Freyherrn van Swieten* [online]. (Wien: Trattner, 1772), pp. 54-55. Available from: <https://archive.org/details/b30504685/> [Accessed 01 May 2019].

<sup>99</sup> Stummvoll, 243-244.

<sup>100</sup> Fingernagel, A., 'Historische Bücher in historischen Räumen - am Beispiel des Augustinerlesesaals der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek', *Bibliothek Forschung und Praxis*, 34 (2010), p. 325.

<sup>101</sup> Swieten, G. Van, and Trattner, J.T. Von, *Vertrag betreffend den Neudruck der Handschriftenkataloge Lambecks, 1760* [manuscript]. ÖNB, Archivbestand, HB 53/1760; Swieten, G. Van, and Trattner J.T. Von, *Rechnung des Hofbuchdruckers Johann Thomas von Trattner*, undated. [manuscript]. ÖNB, Archivbestand, HB 57/1763.

<sup>102</sup> Peter Lambeck (1628-1680): respected historian and scholar, significant Prefect of the Imperial Library (1662-1680) who was instrumental in the creation of the first catalogue for its collections and a chronological history of literature.

<sup>103</sup> Stummvoll, p.251.

<sup>104</sup> Custos were so-called custodians of the library; there were approximately three of them, with the first Custos holding the most senior position after the Prefect. They could be learned scholars, deeply involved with the collections.

<sup>105</sup> Klingenstein, G., *Staatsverwaltung und kirchliche Autorität. Das Problem der Zensur in der thesesianischen Reform*. (Wien: Oldenbourg, 1970), p. 108.

<sup>106</sup> Stummvoll.

<sup>107</sup> Waller Ms benl-00708a.

<sup>108</sup> Gabriel Brotier (1723-1789).

<sup>109</sup> Autogr. 1876/1-1.

<sup>110</sup> Rovelstad, M., 'Two Seventeenth-Century Library Handbooks, Two Different Library Theories', *Libraries and Culture*, 35/4 (2000), p. 549.

<sup>111</sup> Earle.