

*Joachim Neander*

A STRANGE WITNESS TO DACHAU HUMAN SKIN  
ATROCITIES: ANTON PACHOLEGG A.K.A. ANTON BARON  
VON GUTTENBERG A.K.A. AANTOINE CHARLES DE  
GUTTENBERG

From February 1942 to March 1944, SS doctor Rascher made various experiments, mostly ending lethally, with prisoners of Concentration Camp Dachau as human guinea-pigs. One of Rascher's co-workers was "Dr. Pacholegg", himself a political prisoner, whose testimony given on May 13, 1945, found entry into the trials of German war criminals at Nuremberg as prosecution document PS-2428 and from there into the history books. Among other things, he told about human skin atrocities perpetrated at Dachau. It will be shown that his testimony is to a large degree concocted. In mid-May 1945, "Dr. Pacholegg" suddenly disappeared, but reappeared shortly thereafter as "Anton Baron von Guttenberg." After obtaining a Ph.D. in 1950 he became a prolific conservative-catholic writer and respected lecturer on the history of mind and culture. The role he played at Dachau, the reasons why he changed his name several times, why he gave false testimony in May 1945 and why he never since has appeared as a witness to the many atrocities that, indeed, were perpetrated at Dachau still remain mysterious.

*Nuremberg document PS-2428 and its origins*

From 13:00 to 16:00 hours on May 13, 1945, exactly two weeks after the liberation of Concentration Camp Dachau by the 7th U.S. Army, Colonel David Chavez, Jr., Investigator-Examiner at the U.S. Judge Advocate General's Department, War Crimes Branch, interviewed Anton Pacholegg, a former inmate of this camp, under oath about "the alleged atrocities

committed by the SS” there.<sup>1</sup> In the second half of the interview, Captain Clyde Walker joined the party as cross-examiner. The eight-page protocol of this session, signed by Chavez, is part of a pre-trial document, a collection of affidavits with the title *Report of the Atrocities Committed at the Dachau Concentration Camp Volume II – Testimony – Exhibits 3 to 24, May 1945*. It shall henceforth be referred to as “Pacholegg 1945.”

A slightly, but not insignificantly altered version of the protocol was introduced as evidence for the prosecution into the trial of the major war criminals at Nuremberg on August 9 and 20, 1946.<sup>2</sup> It was presented also at Case Two of the subsequent Nuremberg trials, the trial of former Luftwaffe Field Marshal Erhard Milch, on January 14, 1947, and it is mentioned in the concurring opinion to the judgment by Judge Musmanno.<sup>3</sup> It obtained the document number PS-2428 and is reproduced in *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression* under the headline “Rascher Experiment.”<sup>4</sup> From the Nuremberg trials it found its way into the literature on Nazi doctors’ crimes. A snapshot taken on May 4, 2009, with Google books alone showed 35 hits for the

<sup>1</sup> Anton Pacholegg, Testimony of Anton Pacholegg at Dachau, Germany, at 1300 hours on 13 May 1945, in: War Crimes Investigation Team no. 6823, *Report of the Atrocities Committed at the Dachau Concentration Camp Volume II[.] Testimony – Exhibits 3 to 24*, Dachau, May 1945; Exhibit 19, pp. 291-298; here: p. 1. On the Web via <http://nuremberg.law.harvard.edu>, HLSL Item No. 2586. Last accessed June 17, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> IMT, *Trial of the major war criminals before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg, 14 November 1945 – 1 October 1946*; 42 vols. Nuremberg, Germany, 1947-1950 (“The Blue Series”); vol. XX, pp. 536-536, and vol. XXI, p. 310.

<sup>3</sup> Misspelling, however, the witness’ name as “Pacheleff.” NMT, *Trials of the war criminals before the Nuernberg Military Tribunals under Control Council Law No. 10. Nuernberg, October 1946 – April 1949*. Volumes 1-15. Washington D.C., 1950-1952 (“The Green Series”), vol. II, p. 838.

<sup>4</sup> NCA. Office of the United States Chief of Counsel For Prosecution of Axis Criminality (eds.), *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, Nuremberg, 1945-1946, 8 volumes, 12 books (“The Red Series”), Supplement A, pp. 414-422.

input <Pacholegg AND Rascher>.<sup>5</sup> Pacholegg's statement, as presented in PS-2428, still plays a significant role in the discussion whether, in fact, persons were killed in the concentration and extermination camps to obtain their skin for the manufacture of leather goods.<sup>6</sup>

On October 19, 1945, the U.S. Deputy Theater Judge Advocate's Office, War Crimes Branch, issued a search warrant for "Anton Pacholegg or Pacholik." He was wanted as a witness for the prosecution in the forthcoming trial of the SS crew of Camp Dachau.<sup>7</sup> The search was of no avail. The

<sup>5</sup> Without duplicates and the respective volumes of the IMT and NCA series, the following books were shown: Victor H. Bernstein, *Final Judgment—The Story of Nuremberg*, 1947; Eugene C. Gerhart, *America's Advocate—Robert H. Jackson*, 1958; Richard Gallagher, *Nuremberg—The Third Reich on Trial*, 1961; Jacques Delarue, *The History of the Gestapo*, 1964; Jacques Delarue, *The Gestapo—A History of Horror*, 1964; Nicolas H. Pronko, *Panorama of Psychology*, 1969; Teodor Musiol, *Dachau 1933-1944*, 1971; François Sarcinelli/Evelyne Rolland, *Vie et mort dans les camps de concentration et d'extermination*, 1975; Christian Bernadac, *La Luftwaffe*, 1983; Robert E. Conot, *Justice at Nuremberg*, 1983; Fernando Jorge, *Getúlio Vargas e seu tempo*, 1985; William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, 1990 (translated into nearly all languages of the world); Peter Gadfield, *Himmler—Reichsführer SS*, 1990; Julián Monge Nájera, *Introducción al estudio de la naturaleza*, 1991; Paul Hoedeman/Ralph de Rijke, *Hitler or Hippocrates*, 1991; John J. Michalczyk, *Medicine, Ethics, and the Third Reich*, 1994; Lorraine Glennon, *Our Times—The Illustrated History of the Twentieth Century*, 1995; Whitney R. Harris, *Tyranny on Trial—The Evidence at Nuremberg*, 1999; John A. Williams, *Clifford's Blues*, 1999; Giorgio Viberti, *Lager Inferno e follia dell'Olocausto*, 2004; Nick Redfern, *Body Snatchers in the Desert*, 2005; Alfred Pasternak, *Inhuman Research—Medical Experiments in German Concentration Camps*, 2006; David White/Daniel P. Murphy, *The Everything World War Two Book*, 2007; Whitney R. Harris, *Tyrannen vor Gericht*, 2008.

<sup>6</sup> The discussion has taken place mainly on the Web among "Revisionists" and their opponents. See, for example, the CODOH, Axis History, or RODOH discussion forums and the *Nizkor* Web site.

<sup>7</sup> ITS. Letter from the *International Tracing Service*, Bad Arolsen, to Dr. Hans-Albrecht Kind, Düsseldorf, Germany, of November 16, 1949. ITS Archives Bad Arolsen, file no. ITS/ARCH/Korrespondenzablage T/D 12 096, p. 1.

witness himself did never appear personally at court, neither at Dachau, nor at Nuremberg, nor at any other war crimes trial. He therefore was never cross-examined. Apart from a brief critical remark by the defendant Hermann Goering at the Nuremberg trial of the major war criminals,<sup>8</sup> his testimony as presented in PS-2428 has never been questioned.

As already mentioned, PS-2428 and the protocol differ slightly. We do not know who tampered with the original document, and why. The difference between the two texts does not lie in the wording—both texts contain the same sentences, identical up to misspellings and typing errors. The layout of PS-2428, however, suggests that the interviewee had personally signed the document,<sup>9</sup> which is not the case, as the protocol clearly shows.<sup>10</sup> The main alteration, however, consists of cutting out a later part of the protocol and pasting it a few paragraphs ahead. It concerns a text passage that begins, in the protocol, near the end of page 5 with the phrase “Q[uestion]. Were there any other personnel involved in these things?” and ends near the end of page 6 with the sentence “They would then examine this blood and check the time of coagulation from the time it was extracted.” In the version of PS-2428 printed in NCA, the insert is on pages 417 to 418.

The change in the sequence of paragraphs does not only tear apart the affiant’s testimony about the experiment with a styptic preparation, but also his account of the high-altitude experiment. It inserts reports on other experiments into the affiant’s account of the high-altitude experiment and in this way suggests that statements made and conclusions drawn by the affiant about these other experiments apply also to the high-altitude experiment, and vice versa, thus not insignificantly altering the meaning of his deposition. With regard to the human skin issue, it is important to know that Pacholegg’s original statement about the flaying of prisoners’ corpses re-

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<sup>8</sup> IMT vol. XXI, p. 310.

<sup>9</sup> NCA Supplement A, p. 422.

<sup>10</sup> Pacholegg 1945, p. 8.

ferred to victims of the high altitude experiments only and not, as one must conclude from PS-2428, to all the victims of Rascher's experiments. For this reason, in the following the original protocol and not the version edited as PS-2428 will be discussed and analyzed.

*SS doctor Rascher and his criminal high-altitude experiments*

The person interviewed by Colonel Chavez introduces himself as "Anton Pacholegg."<sup>11</sup> He gives a detailed description of the events at "Station No. 5," the "Experimental Station," where from early spring 1942 until the end of 1944 medical experiments were made with prisoners for the benefit of the German Luftwaffe. Many, if not most, of the prisoners died during these experiments or shortly thereafter. Head of the station, until the turn of April 1944, was Dr. med. Sigmund Rascher (1909-1945), a physician in the service of the Luftwaffe. In the beginning of 1943 he was transferred to the SS on demand of Himmler—among other things, because Luftwaffe officials had questioned the ethical side of Rascher's experiments on human guinea pigs.<sup>12</sup> Rascher since then acted in the framework of the SS *Ahnenerbe* (Ancestors' Heritage) institution, in an almost law-free space. His "experimental station" was veiled in secrecy and off limits to unauthorized personnel: "These experiments were conducted by SS men on the prisoners. No one else was allowed to witness these experiments."<sup>13</sup>

The most shocking account Pacholegg gives is about Rascher's high altitude experiments. Their aim was to study the

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<sup>11</sup> Pacholegg 1945, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Nuremberg Document PS-1617; NMT vol. II, pp. 629-630.

<sup>13</sup> František ("Franz") Blaha, Exhibit 5, in: War Crimes Investigation Team no. 6823, *Report of the Atrocities Committed at the Dachau Concentration Camp Volume II[.] Testimony – Exhibits 3 to 24, Dachau, May 1945*, pp. 68-112; here: p. 80. On the Web via <http://nuremberg.law.harvard.edu>, HLSL Item No. 2586. Last accessed June 17, 2008.

reaction of the human body under conditions of rapidly decreasing atmospheric pressure, a situation that occurs when the crew of a high-flying airplane has to parachute. About 1942, Allied aircraft already was approaching flight altitudes of 13,000 meters (about 40,000 ft), and German fighter planes had to follow them into these regions. Atmospheric pressure at that altitude is only about 164 hPa<sup>14</sup>, that is 16 per cent of its value at sea level. At this pressure, the solubility of the gases that are dissolved in the body fluids is drastically reduced, which leads to the quick formation of gas bubbles within the blood vessels, causing embolism of the brain, the heart, the lungs and other internal organs, and in consequence, severe pain and lasting health defects or even death, depending on the duration of exposure<sup>15</sup>.

Rascher arrived at Dachau in the beginning of 1942 and conducted his high-altitude experiments there from the middle of February 1942 to the middle of May 1942.<sup>16</sup> He used a mobile low-pressure chamber unit (*fahrbare Unterdruckkammer*) that had been developed by the German Aviation Research Institute (*Deutsche Versuchsanstalt für Luftfahrt, DVL*)

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<sup>14</sup> Calculated for an ICAO standard atmosphere.

<sup>15</sup> It is, in principle, the same mechanism that leads, in diving, to the generally better known “Sudden Decompression Syndrome” (“Caisson Disease”), when the diver comes up too quickly.

<sup>16</sup> Barbara Distel/Wolfgang Benz, *Das Konzentrationslager Dachau* [Dachau concentration camp], ed. Bayerische Landeszentrale für Politische Bildungsarbeit, Munich, Germany, 2006. On the Web: <http://www.km.bayern.de/blz/web/300117/kzdachau.asp>. Last accessed July 27, 2008. See also Nuremberg Document PS-343. According to some testimony given at Case One of the subsequent Nuremberg trials, the “Doctors’ Case,” Rascher continued his high-altitude experiments until July 1942. The testimony, however, is inconsistent. A works record from the *Deutsche Versuchsanstalt für Luftfahrt* shows the unloading of the experimental device used by Rascher at Dachau, at Berlin-Adlershof on June 2, 1942. Fohlmeister affidavit, Defense document Ruff-33, available on the Web: Harvard Law School Library, Nuremberg Trials Project, HLSL Item No. 1015, via <http://nuremberg.law.harvard.edu>.

in Berlin-Dahlem.<sup>17</sup> It was quite a big device, consisting of three parts: a huge tractor with an (approximately six meters long) compartment attached to it and containing the low-pressure chambers, and a second, smaller trailer housing the air pumps and the power supply. The low-pressure chambers had a window for observation.<sup>18</sup> They were not made for use as a high-pressure chamber.<sup>19</sup> In aviation, high atmospheric pressure is of no concern.

Pacholegg gives a dramatic description of a high-altitude experiment with a deadly outcome. His account has found its way into the transcripts of the trial of the major war criminals at Nuremberg and from there into numerous books and articles about Nazi doctors' crimes:

*"I have personally seen, through the observation window of the chamber, when a prisoner inside would stand a vacuum until his lungs ruptured. Some experiments gave men such pressure in their heads that they would go mad and pull out their hair in an effort to relieve the pressure. They would tear their heads and faces with their fingers and nails in an attempt to maim themselves in their madness. They would beat the walls with their hands and head and scream in an effort to relieve pressure on their eardrums. These cases of extremes of vacuums generally ended in the death of the subject . . . I have known Rascher's experiments to subject a prisoner to vacuum conditions or extreme*

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<sup>17</sup> Confirmed unanimously by all witnesses and documents presented at the „Doctors' case."

<sup>18</sup> A photo of the mobile low-pressure chamber unit, published in Siegfried Ruff/Hubertus Strughold, *Grundriß der Luftfahrtmedizin* [An outline of aviation medicine], 2nd edition, Leipzig 1944, is reproduced on the Web: [http://www.dtv.de/special\\_remes\\_extern/d\\_dachau.cfm](http://www.dtv.de/special_remes_extern/d_dachau.cfm). Last accessed August 27, 2008. A sketch of the compartment showing two low-pressure chambers inside, a one-man cell and a bigger one for group experiments, and made after liberation by a former prisoner, is reproduced in Barbara Distel (ed.), *Konzentrationslager Dachau 1933-1945—Ausstellungskatalog* [Concentration Camp Dachau 1933-1945—Catalogue of the exhibition], Dachau 2005, p. 182.

<sup>19</sup> A device used by the Navy to test fitness for service on board of a submarine.

*pressure* conditions or combinations of both for as long as thirty minutes.”<sup>20</sup>

Pacholegg describes correctly “the reaction of the subject”: being driven crazy out of pain and eventually dying. There is also ample evidence presented at Case One of the subsequent Nuremberg trials, the “Doctors’ Case,” that more than one hundred of such experiments were, indeed, carried out by Rascher at Dachau, and that about eighty of them had a deadly outcome. These are facts which no serious scholar would dispute, and they were proven independently from Pacholegg’s testimony.

### *A dubious eyewitness*

But could Pacholegg actually have observed these experiments personally? It is reasonable to have serious doubts. First, an observer from outside could not have seen whether an internal organ of the test subject, the lungs, had “ruptured.” What is more, lung embolism results in severe coughing, followed by respiratory paralysis, but not in “rupturing.” Second—and most important—let us look if Pacholegg could have been present at these experiments at all. In his affidavit he states that he “actually came to Dachau at the end of 1942.”<sup>21</sup> That would mean, months after Rascher had finished his high-altitude experiments. Probably for that reason Pacholegg told his interrogator that “these experiments were continued until September 1943 beginning in 1941,”<sup>22</sup> which, as we know, is not true. But the date of his intake given in his affidavit is also false. In the *Zugangsbuch* (camp ledger) of Camp Dachau we find the following information:

“Pacholegg, Anton; born January 23, 1894, in Graz (Austria); profession Diplom-Kaufmann (business school graduate); Cath-

<sup>20</sup> IMT vol. XX, p. 536; Pacholegg 1945, p. 3; emphasis added.

<sup>21</sup> Pacholegg 1945, p. 1; emphasis added.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.* p. 4.



olic; married; citizenship Deutsches Reich; taken in on April 12, 1942, as *Schutzhäftling* (political prisoner).”<sup>23</sup>

On intake, he obtained the prisoner number 29716.<sup>24</sup>

So Pacholegg *could* have witnessed personally some of Rascher’s high-altitude experiments, if he would have been assigned to Rascher’s station immediately after intake. This, however, he himself excludes in his affidavit:

“In the first year from 1942 to 1943 I spent my time in the punishment company doing different manual labor such as sweeping the streets or in conjunction with seven other men pulling the street roller, digging in the gravel pit [,] and then I managed somehow to be transferred into Station No. 5.”<sup>25</sup>

Pacholegg’s assignment to the penal company is proven by a remark on his *Schreibstubenkarte* (a personal file card): “To punishment block 25.4.42/3.”<sup>26</sup> This means that he, after two weeks of obligatory “quarantine on arrival,” was sent for three months to the penal company. But neither in quarantine nor as a prisoner in the penal company he could have been an eyewitness to the experiments made at Rascher’s station. And at the time of his release from the penal company, the high-altitude experiments were already finished.

After the war, a former fellow prisoner from Lorraine wrote that Pacholegg was the *Bürokapo* (clerk in the function of a prisoner overseer) of the *Kabelkommando*<sup>27</sup> before he joined Rascher’s department,<sup>28</sup> a version obviously approved by Pa-

<sup>23</sup> Letter from the Dachau Memorial to the author, dated June 23, 2008.

<sup>24</sup> ITS, *Certificate of Incarceration*, issued by the International Tracing Service, Bad Arolsen, on July 30, 1964. ITS Archives Bad Arolsen, file no. ITS/ARCH/Korrespondenzablage T/D 12 096, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> Pacholegg 1945, p. 2.

<sup>26</sup> ITS 1964, p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> A work detail, where prisoners recycled crap cables from destroyed military equipment.

<sup>28</sup> François (“Franz”) Goldschmitt, Un exploit unique [A unique experience]; in: *Tragédie vécue par la population des marches de l’Est – Haut Rhin, Bas Rhin, Moselle – sous l’occupation nazie* [The tragedy experienced by the people of the eastern parts of France – Alsace and Lorraine

cholegg.<sup>29</sup> We do not know how long he, after release from the penal company, has stayed in the Kabelkommando. At any rate, it further prolonged the period of time in which he could not have observed Rascher's criminal experiments personally. We will come back to this later when discussing the human skin allegations in detail.

It is remarkable, too, that Pacholegg misremembered the date of his arrival at Dachau, reporting an event that took place in springtime as having occurred in late autumn or in winter. We also already observed his mistake concerning the period of time in which Rascher's high-altitude experiments were performed, and that he personally could not have observed them, contrary to what he told in his affidavit. This should make one suspicious and ask whether other details reported by Pacholegg in his affidavit stand scrutiny, and in consequence, How trustworthy is his testimony at all?

#### *A trusted co-worker of Dr. Rascher*

Let us therefore follow the advice of Judge Musmanno in the Milch Trial, who recommended with regard to Pacholegg that "his testimony must still be carefully scrutinized,"<sup>30</sup> and see, for example, what the affiant reports about his camp career. After having been in the penal company and the Kabelkommando for some time,

"I managed somehow to be transferred into Station No. 5 which is the office of the Experimental Station. I received a job as a clerk in cases concerning patents of that station."<sup>31</sup>

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– under the Nazi occupation]. Rech (Moselle) 1947, pp. 24-25; here: p. 24.

<sup>29</sup> By attaching a copy of it to letters to the Austrian Federal Chancellery (May 31, 1947) and to Austrian Ex-Chancellor Gorbach (in 1968, before March 27), for example.

<sup>30</sup> NMT vol. II, p. 838.

<sup>31</sup> Pacholegg 1945, p. 2.

In addition, he says, he typed the laboratory reports that Dr. Rascher dictated him.

The fact that Pacholegg was employed by Rascher in his experimental station is confirmed by other sources as well, e.g. Schwarz n.d., Goldschmitt 1947, and before all, by the business diary of Wolfram Sievers, CEO of the SS Ahnenerbe organization.<sup>32</sup> The few extant documents do not allow to say with absolute certainty which position Pacholegg had had there. Sievers calls him an “assistant”, “a co-worker of Rascher’s” in connection with “the work on a styptic preparation, Polygal.”<sup>33</sup> Rascher tested Polygal on prisoners, often ending with the death of the test subject. The real inventor of this medicine was the prisoner Robert Feix. Rascher, however, had appropriated the relevant documents and was applying for a patent under his own name. To which degree Pacholegg, who was in charge of the “cases concerning patents of [Rascher’s] station,” was involved in this matter, is not known.

At any rate, Pacholegg must have been a trusted co-worker of Rascher. He made business trips with him<sup>34</sup> and had access to Rascher’s safe.<sup>35</sup> He belonged to those prisoners in Rascher’s entourage who enjoyed considerable privileges and who, for that matter, bribed him with large amounts of money, a fact that did not remain unnoticed in the camp. “This Dr. Pacholegg was an important financial backer of Dr. Rascher,” a former fellow prisoner remembered.<sup>36</sup> It is also very probable that Pacholegg’s cryptical remark “I managed *somehow* to be

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<sup>32</sup> Wolfram Sievers, *Diensttagebuch 1944* (Business diary, 1944). Nuremberg document PS-3546, pp. 32 and 90. Facsimile on the Web via <http://nuremberg.law.harvard.edu>, HLSL Item No. 2593.

<sup>33</sup> IMT vol. XX, p. 531.

<sup>34</sup> IMT vol. XX, pp. 531 and 539.

<sup>35</sup> Pacholegg 1945, p. 7.

<sup>36</sup> Hans Schwarz, *Wir haben es nicht gewusst. Erlebnisse, Erfahrungen und Erkenntnisse aus dem Konzentrationslager Dachau* [We didn’t know it. Experience and insight from concentration camp Dachau]. Unpublished typescript. Dachau Memorial archives, file no. 21523, no date.

transferred into Station No. 5” hints that, at this “transfer,” money had been in the game.

Besides a career in the SS and in aviation medicine, Rascher pursued his own commercial aims. According to Hans Schwarz, a former Dachau inmate, Rascher pursued his own commercial aims. According to Hans Schwartz, a former Dachau inmate, Rascher “was a big profiteer . . . At Lake Constance he established a small factory where eight prisoners were working. Among the prisoners he selected suitable chemists, business and organizational men who managed this factory. These prisoners had a good time of it, since they were under a special order by Himmler. They could leave the camp more or less freely, because Dr. Rascher personally had vouched for them before Himmler.”<sup>37</sup>

Rascher had excellent contacts with Himmler—his wife, Karoline (“Nini”), was a good friend of the Reichsführer’s family.<sup>38</sup> The “small factory” mentioned by Schwarz was planned for the production of *Polygal*.<sup>39</sup> It was located in Schlachters,<sup>40</sup> a village situated about three miles northeast of Lindau-on-Lake-Constance, on the border between Bavaria and Vorarlberg, the most western province of Austria.<sup>41</sup>

One of the privileged prisoners at Rascher’s experimental station was Max Riccabona. He came from Feldkirch, a middle-sized town in Vorarlberg, about twenty-five miles south of

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<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> For details, see Wolfgang Benz, Dr. med. Sigmund Rascher – eine Karriere [Sigmund Rascher MD – a career], *Dachauer Hefte* no. 4, pp. 190–214.

<sup>39</sup> Sievers, *Diensttagebuch*, *passim*.

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.* p. 81.

<sup>41</sup> An *Außenkommando* (sub-camp) Schlachters of Concentration Camp Dachau existed from April 5, 1944, until April 7, 1945, when its inmates were transferred to Lochau, a small town a few miles further south in Vorarlberg proper. Markus Naumann, *Außenkommandos des KZ Dachau am Bodensee* [Sub-camps of CC Dachau at Lake Constance], no date. On the Web: <http://www.gedenkstaettenpaedagogik-bayern.de/f-bodensee.htm>. Last accessed November 2, 2008.

Lindau.<sup>42</sup> In a certificate (*Bescheinigung*) issued on January 12, 1944, Rascher testified that Riccabona is “a co-worker in my institute” and that “he travels on duty to Vorarlberg in my company and can be identified by me if controlled.”<sup>43</sup> Pacholegg also made business trips for Rascher’s institute, certainly neither with his hair cropped,<sup>44</sup> nor in the blue-and-white striped outfit of a concentration camp prisoner. On January 29, 1944, for example, he accompanied Rascher on a trip to Berlin to attend a meeting with Sievers at the Ahnenerbe headquarters in Dahlem. From 7 p.m. until 1:30 a.m. they discussed matters of Rascher’s station, with *Polygal* being the main topic on the agenda.<sup>45</sup>

Pacholegg was even granted a one and a half week’s leave from camp, from March 4 to March 13, 1944 (according to the *Zugangsbuch*), something very exceptional in the concentration camp system and only awarded to prisoners who the camp Gestapo deemed absolutely loyal. About the same time, he gave Rascher 5,000 Reichsmarks.<sup>46</sup> Both must be seen in connection with Rascher’s plans for the commercial produc-

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<sup>42</sup> Documents studied by Werner Dreier show that the family of Max Riccabona several times gave Rascher money to secure Max’ employment at the “experimental station.” As a “half-Jew,” Max Riccabona was specially endangered in Nazi Germany. Werner Dreier, Max Riccabona im KZ Dachau – Worüber er nicht schreiben konnte [Max Riccabona in the concentration camp Dachau – About what he could not write], in: Holzner, Johann, and Barbara Hoiß (eds.) *Max Riccabona. Bohemien – Schriftsteller – Zeitzeuge* [Max Riccabona. Bohemian – writer – contemporary witness], Innsbruck/Wien/Bozen, 2006, pp. 5-7. Quotes are from the version published on the Web: <http://www.malingesellschaft.at/pdf/dreier-riccabona.pdf>. Last accessed June 21, 2008.

<sup>43</sup> Quoted from Dreier, *Riccabona*, p. 6.

<sup>44</sup> A “privilege” that Rascher’s prisoner co-workers enjoyed. Documented in the case of Max Riccabona, a colleague of Pacholegg (Decision by the 1st Director of the Prisoners’ Camp (*1. Schutzhaftlagerführer*) permitting Riccabona “to wear long hair”; Brenner Archives of the University of Innsbruck, Austria, Max Riccabona files, 20.6.62; quoted by Dreier, *Riccabona*, p. 5.

<sup>45</sup> Sievers, *Diensttagebuch*, p. 32.

<sup>46</sup> Pacholegg 1945, p. 7.

tion of *Polygal*: making inquiries on the spot to prepare the decision where to locate the plant,<sup>47</sup> and acquiring the necessary starting capital. Five thousand marks were quite a load of money at that time (a skilled worker in the German armaments industry earned on the average two hundred marks a month), and it would be naive to assume that Pacholegg just “donated” it. Timing and amount make it look rather like an investment in a planned “joint venture.”

Rascher did not only plan to establish a pharmaceutical factory of his own. He “also made business with the SS and the Luftwaffe,” employing at his estate near Salzburg “a special work detail of over forty prisoners who made luxurious furnishings and fixtures,” a fact that evoked jealousy among other SS leaders.<sup>48</sup> There were also rumors that he tried to make clandestine contacts with foreign institutions via some prisoners when he realized that Germany would lose the war.<sup>49</sup> What is more, the Luftwaffe experts had found out that Rascher’s experiments with human beings were made sloppily, that they—apart from the ethical side—did not conform to scientific standards, and that their results, therefore, were practically worthless.<sup>50</sup>

### *Pacholegg’s adventurous escape and his recapture*

The decisive blow that would trigger off Rascher’s rapid downfall, however, came from a totally unexpected side. On March 23 and 24, 1944, the local press reported about the kidnapping of a baby in Munich. The traces led to the Rascher family. On March 28, 1944, criminal police appeared at the

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<sup>47</sup> According to Sievers’ diary, from January to March, 1944 Rascher and his co-workers were busy to find a suitable facility. The final decision to set up the “Polygal” factory at Schlachters was taken on March 22 and 23, 1944, together with Sievers (Sievers, *Diensttagebuch*, pp. 82-83).

<sup>48</sup> Schwarz, *Nicht gewußt*, p. 80.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Pacholegg 1945, p. 6; Benz, *Rascher*, p. 210.

Raschers' home and interrogated the head of the household.<sup>51</sup> It turned out quickly that the Raschers had illegally acquired all the children with whom they were posing as a large, model SS family.<sup>52</sup> This led to Rascher's—first—arrest in the beginning of April 1944.

Exactly in these days, Pacholegg escaped from camp. On April 6, 1944, Sievers noted down in his diary: "1:30 p.m. Detective Superintendent Kieck, Dachau, reports (by telephone) that prisoner Pacholegg is missing."<sup>53</sup> There exist two versions of this event: an early one given 1945 by Pacholegg in his affidavit, and another, later one, given by Franz Goldschmitt and published in 1947. Let us first begin with Pacholegg's own account.

"The circumstances of my escape were that in Rascher's absence I cleaned out his safe and took all signed receipts of sale for gloves and pocketbooks that Rascher had sold, i.e., gloves and pocketbooks made from human skin. There were other documents which I can't remember now. My English friend in camp who has since been killed made a contact for me on the outside. When I left camp I met this intermediary from the British and handed him all these compromising documents. This person took them to Switzerland. I do not know where he is now nor where the documents are. I came back under guard and thought I would be killed but Rascher saved my life. Rascher was in trouble charged with negligence and he thought I could save him. He in turn said he had burned the documents in question and I was merely thrown into the dungeon . . ."<sup>54</sup>

The description given by Goldschmitt is much more fantastic and ornate. It starts with an observation that, "in 1943, A[n]ton v[on] Guttenberg" (Pacholegg's other name; see

<sup>51</sup> Michael H. Kater, *Das "Ahnenerbe der SS 1935-1945. Ein Beitrag zur Kulturpolitik des Dritten Reiches* [The SS "Ancestors' Heritage" 1935-1945. Some remarks on the Third Reich's cultural and educational policy], Munich 2005, p. 466.

<sup>52</sup> Benz, *Rascher*, p. 212.

<sup>53</sup> Sievers, *Diensttagebuch*, p. 96.

<sup>54</sup> Pacholegg 1945 p. 7.

later) together with four other prisoners from different nations had “formed a clandestine organization with the aim to make sabotage and to convey information about the camp to foreign radio stations.”<sup>55</sup>

“In March 1944, an Ukrainian fellow prisoner . . . partially denounced the secret organization . . . Guttenberg knew well that his days were numbered. He staked everything on one chance. He stole as many written documents that could unmask the SS as possible. He then decided to escape from the camp to convey the fruits of his boldness to foreign radio stations. A very favorable circumstance aided exceptionally in this operation: Guttenberg had been employed at the horrible experimental station of SS doctor Rascher as a clerk. Our comrade, with unparalleled audacity, had got himself civilian clothes and a complete SS officer’s uniform. Even the pistol was not lacking. The decisive hour arrived. One had to grit one’s teeth and to control one’s heartbeat. In the night from April 5 to 6, 1944, he broke into Dr. Rascher’s bureau and forcibly opened the box which contained the secret orders. And he took them all with him. In the darkest corner of the station, the prisoner Guttenberg changed himself first into a civilian person, and then put on a complete uniform of an SS officer as a second layer. Shortly before daybreak, the first work details left the camp through the big gate. In this very moment our comrade, the ‘SS officer,’ crossed the inner border of the camp, proudly passing by the new SS guards, Ukrainians, who saluted with a perfect *garde-a-vous*. But at the main gate, where the regular guard was on duty, the situation became precarious. Quickly determined, Guttenberg jumped into the first car that, at that time of the day, was departing for Munich.

The SS driver saluted respectfully. Guttenberg turned up the collar of his coat to hide his face a bit. The sentry presented arms *comme il faut*, and soon our baron arrived at Munich. He was a free man. In the restroom of a train, the SS officer changed himself once more. He came out in civilian clothes. The journey from Lindau to Feldkirch was full of adventures, but went trouble-free. In a village near Feldkirch Guttenberg had an appointment with an Allied intelligence agent, who was known to Dachau prisoners. He took all the dangerous papers for himself.

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<sup>55</sup> Goldschmitt, *Un exploit*, p. 24.



In the village presbytery, the plan for the escape into Switzerland was hatched. But at the border, Guttenberg, betrayed, fell into the clutches of the Gestapo. He came back to Dachau in chains . . .”<sup>56</sup>

It should be noticed that Goldschmitt lets his protagonist take unspecified “secret orders” out of Rascher’s safe, in which Allied Intelligence, at that time, certainly would have been far more interested than in receipts of sale for artifacts made out of human skin.

Schwarz, in his camp memoirs, also mentions Pacholegg’s escape, but only briefly and without going into details. He too writes that Pacholegg had connections with the clandestine international resistance movement in the camp, but—contrary to Goldschmitt—that the Gestapo got onto it through Pacholegg’s arrest and not before that,<sup>57</sup> a by far not unimportant detail. Schwarz also does not mention a word about the incriminating documents that Pacholegg allegedly had with him for handing them over to the Allies and which, according to Pacholegg’s and Goldschmitt’s accounts, were the reason for his escape. According to Schwarz, Pacholegg had just had enough from concentration camp life:

“Dr. P[acholegg] admitted that he wanted to escape to Switzerland, because he disliked life in the concentration camp and he had longed for freedom.”<sup>58</sup>

It is highly improbable that Pacholegg’s escape took place as told by Goldschmitt. The story contains too many implausibilities, which to discuss would go beyond the scope of this paper. It rather belongs to the literary genre of “The lies of Ulysses”: the copiously embellished tales that returnees from wars have told since ancient times to impress those who had been at home. In 1947 the editors of the *Rot-Weiß-Rot-Buch*, an anthology about Austria under National Socialism, asked Pacholegg/von Guttenberg to submit a paper about his

<sup>56</sup> *ibid.* p. 24 f.

<sup>57</sup> Schwarz, *Nicht gewußt*, p. 80.

<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*

“contribution to the Austrian anti-Nazi resistance.” He did not submit anything that he himself had written, but delivered a translation of Goldschmitt’s narration without any commentary<sup>59</sup>, as if he would have left open the possibility to distance himself from it if unpleasant questions were asked. The documents that he allegedly had handed over to a British intelligence agent who brought them safely to Switzerland have never appeared again. Particularly those concerning human leather artifacts would have been a godsend for the prosecution in postwar war crimes trials. Maybe they are buried in some British archives, most probably, however, they never did exist.

At any rate, at the turn of April 1944, both Rascher and his co-worker Pacholegg had gotten into serious trouble. An entry in Sievers’ diary from March 31, 1944, three days after Rascher’s first interrogation by the criminal police, reads: “No further employment of Pacholegg,” without, however, giving reasons.<sup>60</sup> On April 4, 1944, Sievers reports to SS Obersturmbannführer Dr. Brandt, ADC to Himmler, that “Dr. Rascher probably will have to leave his department at Dachau,”<sup>61</sup> an indication that the police was about to arrest Rascher. The same day, the prisoner *Kommando* for Schlachters leaves Dachau, without Pacholegg.<sup>62</sup> Two days later, on April 6, 1944, Rascher is already in prison, and Sievers announces that he himself will come to Dachau on April 14. Until then, “Rascher’s

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<sup>59</sup> Letter from A. v. Guttenberg, Zurich, to the editors of the *Rot-Weiß-Rot-Buch*, May 31, 1947. Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes (DÖW), Vienna, Anton von Guttenberg files, no pagination.

<sup>60</sup> “Auf weitere Beschäftigung von Pacholegg ist zu verzichten.” Sievers, *Diensttagebuch*, p. 90.

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.* p. 94.

<sup>62</sup> Date taken from Sievers, *Diensttagebuch*, p. 90. The transport list for Schlachters has not come down to us. Survivors of *Kommando Schlachters* did not mention Pacholegg’s name in postwar interviews. E-mail from the Dachau archives to the author, November 10, 2008.

work shall be continued by SS Hauptsturmführer Dr. Plötner and Police Sergeant Neff.”<sup>63</sup>

It is, therefore, much more probable that Pacholegg’s escape was less adventurous than depicted by Goldschmitt: that he simply had used the leeway that he enjoyed all the time at Rascher’s station, such as wearing civilian clothes,<sup>64</sup> not having his hair cropped, the permission to possess money, and a permit for business travel to Vorarlberg—like that known from Max Riccabona’s files—and that he just took the last chance on taking his heels when he realized that the days of Rascher, his boss and protector, at Dachau were numbered, and that he himself was in danger of being dragged into the vortex of Rascher’s looming fall. As the further development of Rascher’s case shows, such fears were not at all without foundation. In the verdict (*Strafverfügung*) pronounced by Himmler on February 14, 1945, against Rascher, “making business with prisoners”<sup>65</sup> and “granting prisoners inadmissible liberties” were mentioned as serious infractions.<sup>66</sup>

Pacholegg’s escape even made it into the trial of the major war criminals at Nuremberg. On August 9, 1946, Major Jones, member of the British Prosecution Counsel, examined the witness Sievers:

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<sup>63</sup> Sievers, *Diensttagebuch*, p. 96. Walter Neff was a political prisoner, released from camp and taken over by the police on condition that he continued working for Rascher.

<sup>64</sup> In the course of his escape, Pacholegg had left, at a member of Max Riccabona’s family, a Burberry coat and a Borsalino hat, items which he wanted back after the end of the war. Learning that they had been burnt (in an air raid?), he demanded from Max Riccabona financial compensation. (Letters from Anton Guttenberg to Max Riccabona, Brenner Archives, Innsbruck, Max Riccabona files, file no. 22/13). It is hardly conceivable that he had worn these clothes under an SS uniform, as stated in Goldschmitt’s narration.

<sup>65</sup> It should be remarked in this context that in German law he who offers a bribe is as guilty as he who accepts it.

<sup>66</sup> Benz, *Rascher*, p. 213.

“MAJOR JONES: I want you now to go back to your diary . . . You will see an entry for 14 April [1944], ‘Political department<sup>67</sup> about escape of Pacholegg.’ This prisoner Pacholegg escaped, didn’t he?

SIEVERS: Yes, at any rate he had disappeared.

MAJOR JONES: Why did you go to the political department about it?

SIEVERS: Because I had been in Vorarlberg together with Rascher and Pacholegg, and I was accused of aiding Pacholegg to escape. All the circumstances of the arrest at the time when the Rascher affair was suddenly uncovered were at issue.

MAJOR JONES: You must have been extremely anxious when Pacholegg escaped; he knew a lot of the facts about your work, didn’t he? You must have been anxious to secure his recapture.

SIEVERS: I was mainly anxious about myself, for it is not hard to imagine what would have happened to me, since Pacholegg knew much—if it had been proved that I had favored his escape, as was being maintained.”<sup>68</sup>

Sievers had conferred for only ten minutes with the political department of Camp Dachau about Pacholegg’s escape.<sup>69</sup> This points to the fact that, at that time, Pacholegg already had been recaptured and the camp Gestapo did not need much information from Sievers any more. Sievers’ Nuremberg testimony, however, shows that Pacholegg, indeed, “knew much”—most probably too much—about *Ahnenerbe*, and that Sievers had gotten into trouble himself, because he had

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<sup>67</sup> The “Political Department” was the Gestapo branch in the concentration camps, responsible, among other things, for personal affairs of the prisoners.

<sup>68</sup> IMT vol. XX, p. 539.

<sup>69</sup> Sievers, *Diensttagebuch*, p. 103.

approved Rascher's demands for "granting prisoners inadmissible liberties" in connection with the *Polygal* project.<sup>70</sup>

Pacholegg's attempt to escape failed. He undoubtedly reached Feldkirch, one mile distant from the frontier to Liechtenstein and four miles distant from the Swiss frontier. There he contacted the family of his fellow prisoner Max Riccabona, seeking a hiding-place<sup>71</sup> and preparing for crossing the border into Switzerland, where, as we will see later, his wife had found shelter since the summer of 1939. At any rate, it was not a wise decision. It was plain to see that the Gestapo, who had arrested Rascher and was now hunting Pacholegg, would also investigate all contacts of the fugitive, and that, as a matter of routine, the homes of Riccabona's parents and close relatives would be observed. In an undated private letter to Max Riccabona, most probably sent in 1947, Anton von Guttenberg accuses Max' father Gottfried of having him betrayed to the Gestapo,<sup>72</sup> an accusation that, however, does not seem substantiated and which, if true, undoubtedly would have led to legal investigations against Gottfried Riccabona immediately after the war.

On April 17, 1944, Rascher was released from arrest, but not allowed to return to the "experimental station" at Dachau.<sup>73</sup> On May 11, he was again—this time finally—arrested.<sup>74</sup> In this period of time, Pacholegg was brought back to Dachau—according to the *Zugangsbuch*, on May 3, 1944—and committed to the camp prison, where he remained until liberation. The day before, Sievers had discussed the Rascher affair in great detail with police officials at the Munich police headquarters. There he also "accepted a statement by Pacholegg about Dr.

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<sup>70</sup> *ibid.* pp. 34 and 53.

<sup>71</sup> Dreier, *Riccabona*, p. 7.

<sup>72</sup> ". . . who in a most cowardly way passed me on to the Gestapo when I was busy bringing most important documents for the Allies to Switzerland"; Brenner Archives, Innsbruck, Max Riccabona files, file no. 22/13.

<sup>73</sup> Sievers, *Diensttagebuch*, pp. 106 and 107.

<sup>74</sup> *ibid.* p. 130.

Punzengruber – Riccabona.”<sup>75</sup> We do not know its contents. But Sievers must have gauged it important enough to hand it over to Himmler’s ADC, Dr. Brandt, on May 9, 1944.<sup>76</sup>

It seems that Rascher and Pacholegg in the face of the Gestapo mutually supported their cases, as Pacholegg hints in his affidavit (“he saved my life . . . and he thought that I could save him”). Each of them “knew much,” maybe too much, about the other. This suspicion is hardened by the fact that Pacholegg, after the war, never showed up in court, where he would have run the risk of being cross-examined and confronted with other evidence. Apparently his affidavit from May 13, 1945, is the only testimony he gave about Nazi crimes perpetrated at Dachau.<sup>77</sup> Did he have to hide something? What had Max Riccabona, after the war, revealed to others about him that made him threaten to take revenge on his former fellow prisoner?<sup>78</sup> We do not know, and most probably, will never know.

*Human skin gloves, pocketbooks, and ladies’ handbags made at Dachau ?*

In the narration about his escape, Pacholegg mentions “gloves and pocketbooks that Rascher had sold, i.e., gloves and pocketbooks made from human skin.” According to Pacholegg, they were a by-product of Rascher’s high-altitude experiments:

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.* p. 121. Dr. Rudolf (or Rolf) Punzengruber, chemist, was also one of Rascher’s “co-workers,” who enjoyed the same privileges as Pacholegg and Riccabona.

<sup>76</sup> *ibid.* p. 128.

<sup>77</sup> E-mail from the archives of the Dachau Memorial, of July 4, 2008 (“We don’t have any reports which Pacholegg himself has written”), and letter from DÖW, ref. S36 S07/EK, of August 7, 2008, to the author.

<sup>78</sup> “If you’d dare once more to tell lies about me, I’ll see to it that you fly there where you should have been long since” (undated private letter, see footnote 23). The Brenner Archives, Innsbruck, which administer Max Riccabona’s legacy, do not have a document that could give any information about the content of Riccabona’s accusations against von Guttenberg (E-mail from the Brenner Archives to the author, July 29, 2008).

“Q[uestion]. Is there anything else that you would like to add about this experiment? A[nswer]. Yes. I can never forget the way Rascher acted . . . The most disgusting part was that when the prisoners lined up, Rascher would go along and make what he called the leather inspection. He would grab a man by the buttocks and/or thighs and say ‘good.’ After the group had been killed, the skin from these bodies would be removed from these thighs and buttocks. I was in the office many times when human skin with blood still on it was brought into Rascher. After the bodies had been carted away, Rascher would inspect them carefully, holding them up to the light for flaws, and would pass on them before they were tanned. They were always stretched over small wooden frames when they came to Rascher. I saw the finished leather later made into a handbag that Mrs. Rascher was carrying. Most of it went for driving gloves for the SS officers of the camp.”<sup>79</sup>

There remain, however, serious doubts as to the veracity of this account. First, apart from a “pocketbook from Dachau” that appeared in the 1980s in Poland and the origin of which has never been clarified,<sup>80</sup> no human skin artifact allegedly made at Dachau was ever presented in public, neither in a museum, nor at court. If there had, indeed, been a considerable output, as Pacholegg’s deposition suggests, more than one (and, moreover, dubious) object made out of human skin should have survived the war. Second, among the many persons who must have been involved in the tanning, preparing, and finishing of the skin—which takes quite a lot of experience—and in

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<sup>79</sup> Pacholegg 1945, p. 4.

<sup>80</sup> In 1983, a former Dachau prisoner presented a pocketbook that, according to his account, had been made at Dachau from human skin. The Institute of Forensic Medicine at Szczecin, Poland, found signs pointing to human origin of its leather. T. Marcinkowski, *Badanie przedmiotu wyprodukowanego ze skóry ludzkiej w okresie okupacji* [Analysis of an object made from human skin in the times of occupation], in: *Wojna i okupacja a medycyna.* *Materiały z międzynarodowej sesji naukowej w Krakowie, 25-26 kwietnia 1985* [“War, occupation, and medicine.” Materials from an international scholarly conference held at Cracow from April 25 to 26, 1985], Cracow 1986. It was, however, neither proven that the object was made at Dachau, nor in wartime, nor on order of the SS.

the production and distribution of the handbags, pocketbooks, and gloves, at least one person should have been able to testify after the war. What is more, none of Rascher's other co-workers who were interrogated after the war and frankly told about the numerous criminal and unethical activities of their former superior, did mention the human skin issue with a single word. If things had been as told by Pacholegg, it would not have gone unnoticed by them.

Third, it is highly improbable that Rascher had his test subjects lined up in the nude before forcing them into the low-pressure chamber. As the photographs from his high-altitude experiments clearly show,<sup>81</sup> the test subjects were fully clothed. Even if the experiment was planned from the outset to be lethal, it would not have made sense at all to perform it with naked subjects. The experiments, their methodological flaws notwithstanding, were designed to simulate conditions in combat, and no airman performs combat duty in the nude.

Fourth, and most important, Pacholegg was not yet employed at Rascher's department when the high-altitude experiments were carried out, as was already shown in a preceding paragraph. Like in the case of the alleged observation of a lung rupture, he could not have been an eyewitness, neither to the "leather inspection," nor to the alleged delivery of bloody human skin from victims of high-altitude experiments to Rascher's office, contrary to that which he told in his affidavit.

The striking similarity of Pacholegg's narration to the Buchenwald human skin atrocities tale immediately catches the eye. At Buchenwald, it was widely rumored among the prisoners that Ilse Koch, the wife of the first camp commandant, had prisoners parade before her in the nude to select those with good and healthy skin—preferably with fine tattoos—and had them killed. The story goes that the corpses of her victims were then flayed, the skin was tanned, and she made

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<sup>81</sup> Photographs made by Rascher himself and captured by the Americans were presented at Nuremberg as Document NO-610, available on the Web: Harvard Law School Library, Nuremberg Trials Project, HLSL item no. 27, via <http://nuremberg.law.harvard.edu>.



(or let make) artifacts out of it, for example book covers, lampshades, and also ladies' handbags which she proudly showed around.<sup>82</sup> Immediately after the liberation of Buchenwald (April 11, 1945), the human skin atrocities tale was widely spread by Allied propaganda at home and among the military through numerous press articles and newsreel documentaries screened in Allied army cinemas.

It can be assumed with certainty that, about the middle of May 1945, the Buchenwald story had reached former Dachau prisoners, be it "top down," from Allied sources to the liberated prisoners, or "bottom up," from Buchenwald prisoners who, still before liberation, had been transferred to Dachau, or jointly and in mutual reinforcement. Let us also not forget that rumors, especially about crimes, have a tendency to spread like wildfire. This holds particularly for concentration camps, which always have been hotbeds of rumors and where even the most incredible rumors found their believers. Pacholegg's human skin atrocity story, therefore, must be taken as an example of the wandering of an urban legend, a well known phenomenon in folktale studies and typical for this literary genre.

Like in all rumors that achieved a high degree of credibility, there was a core of truth in the Dachau human skin story. First, Rascher was a criminal, even from the perspective of the SS, which eventually led to his death sentence pronounced by an SS court and his execution at Dachau immediately before the Americans arrived there. He was known as cruel and greedy, so it could be well believed of him that he even tried to make money with selling objects made from the corpses of his victims. Second, and probably most important in this context, is that until the spring of 1942 Dachau had a "museum of abnormalities" where, among other things, prepared human skin with tattoos was collected and exhibited.<sup>83</sup> This

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<sup>82</sup> See, for example, Arthur L. Smith jr., *Die Hexe von Buchenwald* [The witch of Buchenwald], Weimar/Cologne/Vienna 1995, passim.

<sup>83</sup> Konrad J. Just (*Erlebnisbericht* [Memoirs]), unpublished typescript, no date, Dachau Memorial archives, file no. A 667, p. 12; Stanislav Zámečník, *Das war Dachau* [That was Dachau]. Translated from the

“museum,” however, was liquidated when, on March 1, 1942, Martin Weiß was appointed camp commandant, and “without further ado, ordered to throw the whole museum stuff onto the attic of a nearby horse stable,”<sup>84</sup> weeks before Pacholegg arrived at Dachau.

Small wonder that, under these circumstances, a Dachau human skin atrocity legend could develop and even spread, as the testimony of another Dachau survivor, the Czech physician Dr. Franz Blaha, shows, given on November 24, 1945, at the trial of the Dachau SS crew before an American military court (The Camp Dachau Parent Case, November 15 to December 13, 1945), and introduced as Document PS-3249 into the trial of the major war criminals at Nuremberg on January 11, 1946. Blaha, by the way, was never employed at Rascher’s department, and his and Pacholegg’s are the only known testimonies to human skin atrocities from Dachau.<sup>85</sup> Favorable to the spreading of a human skin atrocity tale about Rascher was also the fact that Rascher was no more alive at that time—a fact that Pacholegg already knew on May 13, 1945<sup>86</sup>—and that he therefore could not have answered to such an accusation.

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Czech by Peter Heumos and Gitta Grossmann, Luxembourg 2002, p. 322.

<sup>84</sup> Just, *Erlebnisbericht*, p. 13.

<sup>85</sup> An in-depth discussion of Blaha’s testimony would go beyond the scope of this paper. It should be mentioned here only that he was interviewed several times by the Americans at Dachau between May 3 and May 18, 1945. The protocols of these interrogations (Blaha 1945) comprise 44 pages describing in much detail dozens of various crimes and atrocities, among others the “air pressure experiments” (May 4 and 13). But they do not contain a single word about human skin. Six months later, however, he told many things differently.

<sup>86</sup> “Rascher was convicted of negligence and many other things . . . and I understand has since been killed by the SS, for what he knew” (Pacholegg 1945, p. 7).

*Who was “Dr. Anton Pacholegg” in reality?*

Let us now take a look at the particulars of “Doctor Pacholegg” who, after the middle of May 1945, so mysteriously disappeared from the scene. We already found in the Goldschmitt narration another name: Anton Baron von Guttenberg. When, on May 13, 1945, Col. Chavez asks the interviewee, “What is your name?” he answers: “Anton Pacholegg.”<sup>87</sup> Did Goldschmitt in his story about Pacholegg’s escape perhaps make a confusion with another person? To find out, let us see what the archives of the police department of Graz, Pacholegg’s place of birth and acting as residents’ registration office (*Einwohnermeldeamt*), and a scholarly book<sup>88</sup> about the genealogy of the Guttenbergs, a branch of the German nobility, tell us—or let us conclude—about Anton Pacholegg resp. Anton Baron von Guttenberg.<sup>89</sup>

In the beginning of 1893, Gustav Freiherr von Guttenberg, a Regular Officer in the Bavarian military service, born 1858, single and member of a landed, ancient noble family, has an affair with 26-year old Juliane Ranftl. She becomes pregnant and marries, on October 25, 1893, Anton Pacholegg (Sr.), born 1867, an innkeeper and mineral water manufacturer at Graz, Austria. Three months later, on January 23, 1894, she gives birth to a son, Anton Karl Josef. Anton Jr. obviously was baptized a Protestant, as his registration form from 1917 has

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<sup>87</sup> Pacholegg 1945, p. 1.

<sup>88</sup> Johannes Bischoff, *Genealogie der Ministerialen von Blassenberg und Freiherren von (und zu) Guttenberg 1148-1970* [Genealogy of the Ministerials of Blassenberg and Barons of (and at) Guttenberg 1148-1970]. Veröffentlichungen der Gesellschaft für Fränkische Geschichte IX/27, Würzburg 1971, pp. 124 and 274.

<sup>89</sup> Thanks to Dr. Klaus Rupprecht from the Bamberg, Germany, State Archives, and Dr. Antonia Leugers, Munich, Germany, for providing me with excerpts from Bischoff’s book, and to Dr. Gerhard Kurzmann, Graz City Archives, who provided me with scans of the relevant files on August 18, 2008.

the entry *evang.* (Protestant) under “confession.”<sup>90</sup> In 1897, Gustav von Guttenberg marries Natalie Basl (or “Basel”), but already in 1914 the childless marriage ends by divorce. Demobilized after the end of World War I, Gustav von Guttenberg runs, from 1918, a bank agency in Munich, Germany. On June 2, 1922, he adopts Anton Pacholegg (Jr.). The adoption is confirmed by the Munich *Oberlandesgericht* (Provincial Court of Appeal) on June 27, 1922. In consequence, Anton’s family name is changed to “von Guttenberg”. After his father’s death in 1933, he inherits the title of *Freiherr* (Baron) and a fortune which allows him to live without the necessity to earn money from work.

In a postwar document, issued by the Swiss Federal Department of Justice and Police (Department of the Interior), we find, however a different version:

“Mr. Guttenberg, who is the son of Friedrich Karl Zellweger, purportedly a Swiss citizen, and Juliana Ranftl, is said to have been adopted in 1904 by his stepfather, Anton von [!] Pacholegg, a resident of Vienna.”<sup>91</sup>

The Swiss authorities could have got this information, which contradicts all other documentary evidence, only from Anton von Guttenberg himself. Concocting a Swiss family tree obviously was motivated by his application for the much sought-after status of a resident alien,<sup>92</sup> which was certainly easier to obtain if he could prove Swiss descent.

There still remains an unsolved question, Why did Anton von Guttenberg appear at Dachau again as “Anton Pacholegg”?

<sup>90</sup> Comparison with the entry “Catholic” in the Dachau Zugangsbuch shows that, some time before 1942, he had converted to Catholicism.

<sup>91</sup> EJP, Letter from the *Eidgenössisches Justiz- und Polizeidepartement*, Bern, Switzerland, to the Commission préparatoire de l’organisation internationale pour les réfugiés, Geneva, of November 6, 1947. ITS Archives Bad Arolsen, file no. ITS/ARCH/CM1-Umschlag Schweiz G-1475, p. 1. The French original text frequently uses the conditionnel (“il aurait été adopté, obtenu, travaillé, exercé,” etc.), indicating reported speech.

<sup>92</sup> *ibid.* p. 2 - .

legg”? From extant Gestapo files we know that he was under Gestapo surveillance as “Guttenberg” before his arrest on August 2, 1939<sup>93</sup>. We do not know what he did and where he was in the nearly three years until he, on April 14, 1942, was committed to Dachau. The Gestapo did not keep prisoners for such a long period in custody. It is therefore reasonable to assume that he, after interrogations by the Gestapo, was handed over to a court, stood trial for violations of laws in force at that time, was sentenced to imprisonment and, after having served his sentence, was taken into “protective custody” by the Gestapo, which meant committal to a concentration camp—a fate that he would have shared with tens of thousands of his compatriots.

In the police files, von Guttenberg is mentioned as “a dangerous currency smuggler” (*ein gefährlicher Devisenschieber*) and, in addition, as suspected of “spying” and “high treason”—most probably actually infractions that today would be considered as not criminal or, in hindsight, even as laudable acts of resistance against the Nazi regime. At any rate, in this period of time he must have officially changed his name back to “Pacholegg,” because in all Dachau sources he is mentioned as “Pacholegg” and never as “Guttenberg.”<sup>94</sup> We do not know what made him change his name, but it seems that it was his own decision. Otherwise he would have told his American interrogators something like “My real name is Anton von Guttenberg, but the Nazis forced me to assume my name of birth again.”

In a letter from the Swiss Red Cross, Bern, to the International Tracing Service (ITS) at Bad Arolsen, Germany, dated June 27, 1949, we find another explanation:

“It is said that the real Anton Pacholegg died from typhus in the concentration camp Dachau in 1945 and that his documents were given to one Mr. Gutenberg [*sic*], who left the camp under

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<sup>93</sup> ITS 1964, pp. 1-2.

<sup>94</sup> E-mail from the archives of the Dachau Memorial to the author; July 4, 2008. Similarly ITS 1964, p. 2.

Pacholegg's name in the course of its liquidation. He is said to have appeared, always as Pacholegg, at one Mrs. Andres, living at Thundorferstrasse no. 54, Frauenfeld/Thurgau, Switzerland, and that he, together with his wife, has left for the U.S. under his real name Gutenberg [*sic*]."<sup>95</sup>

There remains, however, a problem: the "two-persons-solution" as presented in this letter is not backed by camp documents. It is not the only unsolved mystery in the life of our witness.

Next asked by Col. Chavez about his address, Pacholegg answers: "Thurndorferstr [*sic*] #52, Frauenfeld/Turgan [*sic*], Switzerland," and confirms that this is his "permanent address."<sup>96</sup> An inquiry at the city archives of Frauenfeld/Thurgau, however, yielded as a result that, in the period of time from 1919 to the present, no Anton Pacholegg or (von) Gutenberg was registered there as a resident.<sup>97</sup> The address that Anton Pacholegg gave in his affidavit, therefore, never was his own *permanent* address.

But apart from three minor mistakes in spelling and an error in the house number (which may have been the translator's or reporter's fault), we find there a close family member of our witness. The registration office of Frauenfeld has a file card of one Aloisia Guttenberg,<sup>98</sup> born June 14, 1900, in Graz, Germany, married, Protestant, former abode: "Germany," profession: "visit."<sup>99</sup> Doubtlessly it is Anton von Guttenberg's second wife, née Stepanek, the daughter of a Graz post office official. She and Anton von Guttenberg married at Graz on

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<sup>95</sup> Archives of the ITS, Bad Arolsen, file ITS/ARCH/Korrespondenzablage T/D 12 096.

<sup>96</sup> Pacholegg 1945, p. 1.

<sup>97</sup> E-mail from Dr. Hannes Steiner, Frauenfeld City Archives, to the author; July 2, 2008.

<sup>98</sup> The "von" in her surname is missing in the files, probably due to the fact that Austrian law after World War I had abolished all marks of nobility in the family names.

<sup>99</sup> E-mail from Dr. Hannes Steiner, Frauenfeld City Archives, to the author; July 2, 2008.

May 15, 1926, a few weeks after he was divorced from his first wife.<sup>100</sup> The couple remained childless.

The Guttenbergs had left the Greater German Reich for Switzerland already in 1939. This follows from an entry in Anton von Guttenberg's Frankfurt/Main Gestapo file:

“July 15, 1939. G[uttenberg] is the brother-in-law of Karl Stepanek, who was arrested on suspicion of espionage. He went to Switzerland together with his wife, probably he fled the country.”<sup>101</sup>

At the turn of August 1939, Anton von Guttenberg returned to the Reich to meet his “business agent” in Feldkirch “to discuss personal matters”<sup>102</sup>—most probably to find a way for transferring money or other assets abroad. There he was arrested on August 2, 1939, by the Gestapo, which had been observing him already for some time.<sup>103</sup> His wife had remained in Switzerland and registered at Frauenfeld on January 23, 1940. She eventually moved to Thundorferstrasse no. 51 there. Every six months she had to ask for renewal of her residence permit, each time presenting her—German—passport.<sup>104</sup>

### *“Dr. Pacholegg’s” strange educational career*

We can pass over the answer to the next question, about the witness’ nationality: “Austrian.”<sup>105</sup> The following question,

<sup>100</sup> Bischoff, *Genealogie*, pp. 124 and 274. Anton von Guttenberg married for the first time in London, UK, in 1923. The name of his spouse is not known. The childless marriage was divorced on March 21, 1926, at Graz, Austria (*ibid.* p. 274).

<sup>101</sup> ITS 1964, pp. 1-2.

<sup>102</sup> Pacholegg 1945, p. 1.

<sup>103</sup> ITS 1964, p. 1.

<sup>104</sup> E-mail from Dr. Hannes Steiner, Frauenfeld City Archives, to the author; July 2, 2008.

<sup>105</sup> Pacholegg 1945, p. 1. According to the Reich Citizenship Law (*Reichsgesetzblatt* [Reich law gazette], 1913, pp. 583 ff.), a person obtained Reich citizenship if adopted by a German father. The entry “Deutsches Reich” for him in the Dachau Zugangsbuch, therefore, is correct.

however, is again critical: “What was your occupation or profession?” The answer: “I was a patent lawyer.” A few lines later, the witness gives more details: his academic degree, he says, “authorizes” him “to practice as a patent lawyer in Switzerland.”<sup>106</sup> A former fellow prisoner even had heard from him that he had been practicing as a *Rechtsanwalt* (lawyer) in Switzerland for over twenty years.<sup>107</sup> Inquiries at the Swiss Federal Patent Office, in Swiss telephone directories, at the Thurgau State Archives, and at the Swiss Lawyers Association in the summer of 2008, however, all had a negative result: no Anton Pacholegg, no Anton (von) Guttenberg is known as a patent lawyer in Switzerland in prewar times.<sup>108</sup> We can, therefore, conclude that in his affidavit he did not tell the truth about his occupation before arrest.

Anton Pacholegg’s Graz registration form from July 19, 1917, mentions as profession *Beamter* (civil servant). As no title is given, he must have been a civil servant in a low or medium position. Postwar sources about Anton von Guttenberg give more, and in addition contradictory, information: “From 1932 to 1954 University Professor of Philosophy and the History of Mind and Culture in Quebec, Canada; factory owner; retired, last abode: Graz,”<sup>109</sup> or, in the Graz University Archives:

“After his father’s death [1933], management of an agricultural estate at St. Radegund near Graz, in addition from time to time

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<sup>106</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> Schwarz, *Nicht gewußt*, p. 79.

<sup>108</sup> E-mails to the author from Dr. Hannes Steiner, Thurgau State Archives, Frauenfeld, of July 3, 2008; from Ronny Trachsel, Historical Archive of the Swiss Post, Telegraph and Telephone Company, of July 7, 2008; from Rachel Lüthi, Swiss Lawyers Association SAV/FSA, of August 6, 2008; and from Rolf Hofstetter, Swiss Institute for Intellectual Property (the Federal Patent Office), of August 8, 2008.

<sup>109</sup> Bischoff, *Genealogie*, p. 274.



work as an independent scholar at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, France, and the Biblioteca Vaticana in Rome, Italy.”<sup>110</sup>

The underlying information in both cases must have been given by von Guttenberg himself.

In a letter of application for immigration to Canada from August 11, 1947, von Guttenberg introduces himself as “university graduate, experienced agronomist, former proprietor of a big model farm in Austria”<sup>111</sup>—which at least partially tallies with the information from the Graz University Archives. A few lines later he reveals the reason why he presents himself as an expert in agriculture:

“I would like to buy a small farm to grow apples and, in particular, to make trials of acclimatization and cultivation of subtropical fruit . . . I promise that I will be a valuable asset to Canada’s economy with my scientific research in the field of fruit-growing.”<sup>112</sup>

There exists still another, fifth, version about his professional career, which he obviously had told the Swiss authorities. In the already mentioned letter from the Swiss Department of the Interior we read:

“It is said that, after finishing his studies, he was graduated *Diplom-Kaufmann*, and that he had been working for several years with the Thomson-Houston Company in France, England, and in America. After returning from America in 1928, he is said to have practiced as a consulting engineer in patent matters in Vienna.”<sup>113</sup>

Here again it is not difficult to find out why he, this time, tells a story about having worked for the Compagnie Française Thomson-Houston, a sister company of General Electric and

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<sup>110</sup> E-mail from Prof. Dr. Alois Kernbauer, Graz University Archives, to the author, of July 23, 2008.

<sup>111</sup> Letter from A. de Guttenberg, Zurich, to S. Excellence l’Ambassadeur du Canada, Bern, of August 11, 1947. ITS Archives Bad Arolsen, file no. ITS/ARCH/CM1-Umschlag Schweiz G-1475.

<sup>112</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> EJP 1947, p. 1.

manufacturer of heavy electric equipment, such as generators, transformers, or high-voltage switching gear:

“Mr. Von Guttenberg belongs to an Austrian working party that, among other things, is dealing with the restructuring and the development of the electricity business and the Federal Railways in Austria.”<sup>114</sup>

Col. Chavez then asks the witness, “What has been your education?” The answer is: “I studied at the University of Gretz [read: Graz] from 1912 to 1914 and the University of Paris from 1924 to 1926 having been in the Austrian Army in the interim.”<sup>115</sup> A thorough inspection of the register of all students of Graz University in the years 1912-1914 did not show any “Pacholegg,” and even no “Guttenberg.”<sup>116</sup> It is, however, possible (and even probable) that Anton Pacholegg after finishing *Gymnasium* school went to a *Höhere Handelsschule* (business school) in Graz, where he, in the course of two years, could have been graduated *Diplom-Kaufmann*, the profession he mentioned on various occasions. It would also tally with the entry in his registration form at the Graz police department (“*Beamter*”) and the work as a manager of an agricultural estate.

There is no doubt that Anton Pacholegg, a healthy young man, in World War I served in the Austrian Army. This is corroborated by an observation in his Graz registration form under “Changes in abode”: “*Felde*” (in battlefield) in 1917. It has, however, not been verified whether he actually studied at “the University of Paris from 1924 to 1926.” Maybe we should interpret this statement as tantamount to “work as an independent scholar at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris,” which we find in the Graz University Archives. Anyhow, if he in 1945 held a “Doctor of Science”—as he states in his answer

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<sup>114</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> Pacholegg 1945, p. 1.

<sup>116</sup> E-mail from Prof. Dr. Alois Kernbauer, Graz University Archives, to the author, of August 7, 2008.

to the next question, “What degrees do you hold?”<sup>117</sup>—and if his statement in the affidavit about his educational career is correct, he must have obtained this degree from the University of Paris. In the registry of all doctorates awarded in the 1920s and 1930s in France, however, neither a “Pacholegg” nor a “Guttenberg” does appear.<sup>118</sup>

In the Graz University Archives, however, we find a different information about Anton Pacholegg/von Guttenberg’s academic education:

“After graduating from *Gymnasium* school with the *Matura* exam—presumably at Graz—he studied German (*Germanistik*) in Breslau and “Natural Sciences” (“*Naturwissenschaften*”) in Königsberg, and French (*Romanistik*) in Montreal, where he was graduated Ph.D.”<sup>119</sup>

It is quite possible that he, indeed, studied at the universities of Breslau (today Wrocław, Poland) and Königsberg (today Kaliningrad, Russian Federation) after the end of World War I. But because of the loss of the relevant files due to war effects, this statement cannot be corroborated.

The alleged subject of study “*Naturwissenschaften*,” however, looks strange. At the times concerned, at German universities no such subject was taught. One studied either Physics, or Chemistry, or Biology, maybe Geology or Astronomy, but never “Natural Sciences.” Anyhow, if he studied at Breslau and Königsberg, it must have been before World War II. Maybe he obtained a doctor’s degree at a German university? A search in the files of the *Deutsche Bibliothek*, which keeps a copy of all doctoral dissertations accepted at German universities, did not show a Pacholegg, nor an Anton (von) Guttenberg. We can therefore conclude that he made a false state-

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<sup>117</sup> Note that he appeared as “Doctor” Pacholegg already at the time he was at Dachau (IMT vol. XX, p. 531).

<sup>118</sup> E-mail from Alice Chateau, Service des Archives, Rectorat de l’Académie de Paris, to the author, of June 27, 2008.

<sup>119</sup> E-mail from Prof. Dr. Alois Kernbauer, Graz University Archives, to the author, of July 23, 2008.

ment about his educational career as well as about his doctoral degree in his affidavit.

*On the way to Canada, and back to Europe*

There still remains to investigate the “Canadian Connection” of Anton von Guttenberg. The statement in Bischoff, *Genealogie*, p. 124, referring to Kürschner, *Deutscher Gelehrten-Kalender*, that he had been a university professor in Quebec, Canada already since 1932 is neither compatible with his affidavit nor with the data in his file at the Graz University Archives. There we read that he was graduated Ph.D. in Canada, and that “in 1945 he went to North America and stayed in Ottawa and Montreal.”

This information is only partially correct. Immediately after his interrogation by the Americans in the afternoon of May 13, 1945, Pacholegg/von Guttenberg had left Dachau for Switzerland, where he arrived on May 15, 1945. He was committed to a “quarantine camp” at Gattikon a/Albis, but released after a short time “because he told that, due to his health conditions, he could not live in a camp.”<sup>120</sup> He then turned to Frauenfeld, as reported by Mrs. Andres, to meet his wife who lived next door to her. The couple obviously decided to stay in Switzerland and to take residence in Zurich. So Anton traveled to Graz, his home town, and to Vienna (where he obviously also registered as a resident; see later) to obtain the necessary documents for proving his identity and his status as a victim of National Socialist persecution. What is more, he must have arranged for securing revenue from his property. Swiss immigration authorities would not have allowed the Guttenberg couple to take residence in the country if they could not prove that they possessed sufficient means to maintain a decent living. Since also no work permit was issued to them, a necessary (and strictly observed) condition for a foreigner to be employed or to work as a freelancer in

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<sup>120</sup> EJP 1947, p. 1.

Switzerland, none of them had worked for a living during the three years that they stayed in Zurich.<sup>121</sup>

Within the three weeks from May 13, 1945, when he was interviewed by the Americans, until June 6, 1945, when he registered at the Zurich residents' registry office, "Anton Pacholegg" from Dachau had disappeared. Instead "Anton Karl von Guttenberg-Stepanek" from Vienna had entered the scene, presenting at Zurich a passport bearing this very name. For a third time he had officially changed his name. He took residence at Hotel Neues Schloss, Stockerstrasse 17, a middle class hotel, where he and his wife stayed all the time until they moved to Canada. Two weeks later, on June 22, 1945, his wife joined him from Frauenfeld. Both were registered as "Austrian" citizens.<sup>122</sup>

But in Switzerland, the couple's resident's status was shaky. Aloisia—having upgraded her name to "Louise"<sup>123</sup>—lived there only "with the connivance of the authorities,"<sup>124</sup> which could be retracted any time without giving grounds, and Anton's status as a war refugee could not last for ever and ever. For reasons unknown, the Guttenbergs did not want to settle again in Austria. So Anton von Guttenberg applied, in the summer of 1947, to the Canadian authorities and the International Refugee Organization for admission as an immigrant to Canada. He obviously was successful, and on July 20, 1948, the couple moved to Montreal, Canada, "without canceling their registration."<sup>125</sup> That means, they left the way back to Switzerland open for themselves, if need be.

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<sup>121</sup> E-mail from Halina Pichit, Zurich City Archives, to the author, of July 31, 2008.

<sup>122</sup> E-mail from Halina Pichit, Zurich City Archives, to the author, of July 29, 2008.

<sup>123</sup> Under which first name she was registered at Zurich. *Louise* is the female form of *Ludwig* (in French *Louis*) and was a name common among middle and upper class women at that time, whereas *Aloisia*, the female form of *Aloisius*, was rather a name favored by the lower classes.

<sup>124</sup> EJP 1947, p. 1.

<sup>125</sup> E-mail from Halina Pichit, Zurich City Archives, to the author, of July 29, 2008.

In Canada, Anton von Guttenberg-Stepanek changed his name again, this time to “Antoine Charles de Guttenberg,” a name which he later on also used as *nom de plume*. Instead of becoming an innovative fruit-grower—and thus contributing to Canada’s economic development—he pursued a university career. Inquiries at all Quebec universities in the summer of 2008, with a focus on the francophone institutions,<sup>126</sup> showed that he made contact with the Université de Montréal, a Catholic, francophone university. He was graduated *Docteur ès Lettres* (Ph.D.) there in 1950 with a thesis *Cultures et littératures de l’Occident: étude comparée de leurs origines* [Cultures and literature of the occident: a comparative study of their origins].<sup>127</sup> He apparently left Montreal for Europe at the turn of 1954. According to the university’s department of human resources, he had not held a position there as a lecturer or professor.<sup>128</sup> That he, in some documents, is addressed as “professeur” does not mean much: in France and the *Francophonie*, the title of “professeur” is given to everybody who teaches above the primary school level. The entry “Universitäts [-]professor . . . in Quebec, Kanada” in Bischoff 1971, therefore, most probably is not correct.

Anton von Guttenberg attracted some attention, however short-lived, in the years from 1954 to 1968 as a prolific conservative Catholic writer in the field of the history of mind and culture.<sup>129</sup> His book debut *Der Aufstieg des Abendlandes* [The rise of the Occident] was a late contribution to the *Abendland*

<sup>126</sup> E-mails to the author from the archives of Université Laval (July 10, 2008), Université du Québec à Montréal (July 9, 2008), and McGill University (July 29, 2008) unanimously state that neither an “Anton Pacholegg,” nor an “Anton (von) Guttenberg,” nor an “Antoine Charles de Guttenberg” is known at the respective institution.

<sup>127</sup> E-mail from Emmanuel Dor, archives of the Université de Montréal, to the author, of July 31, 2008.

<sup>128</sup> E-mail from Héléne Saulnier-Dubord, Université de Montréal, Adviser for Human Resources, Department of Teaching Personnel, to the author, of July 15, 2008: “No information about a person of this name in our files.”

<sup>129</sup> See list of books published and edited by him in the appendix.

(“Occident”) discourse in Germany.<sup>130</sup> It was first published in 1954, had a second printing in 1959 and appeared also in a French translation in 1963. Less successful were his excursions into the field of natural sciences, critically examining the epistemological foundations of biology and physics.<sup>131</sup> The scientific community ignored them, and it seems that outside a narrow circle of humanity scholars, little notice was taken of them. Together with the eight-volume series *Frauen fremder Völker* [Women of foreign peoples] that he edited between 1958 and 1960, they long since have sunk into oblivion. His last German language book publication, *Der blinde Mensch* [The blind man] (1968), though issued by a renowned German publishing house, was mercilessly shredded in a scholarly journal: “Summarizing, one may ask why this book has been written.”<sup>132</sup> In 1969, his last book publication appeared on the market: *Early Canadian Art and Literature* (in English), a work that, at least, has still sometimes been quoted.

Von Guttenberg’s relations to universities in this period of time are unclear. The entry in the Graz University Archives: “in 1954 he received an appointment at the University of

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<sup>130</sup> The “Occidentalists” were scholars and politicians who, in the immediate aftermath of World War II, thought about overcoming European nationalism, which they saw as the cause for both world wars, by a rebuilding of Western Europe (the “Occident”) as a federal state in the boundaries of the medieval empire of Charlemagne, based on common Christian values and tradition. They were not without influence on the political project that, later on, would become the European Union. For a comprehensive analysis see Axel Schildt, *Zwischen Abendland und Amerika. Studien zur westdeutschen Ideenlandschaft der Fünfziger Jahre* [Between Occident and America. Studies in the realm of ideas in West Germany of the 1950s], Munich 1999.

<sup>131</sup> *Mensch, Tier und Schöpfung* [Man, animal, and creation], 1961; *Auf den Spuren der Schöpfung* [On the traces of creation], 1963; *Biologie als Weltanschauung* [Biology as a weltanschauung], 1967.

<sup>132</sup> J. Schappert-Kimmijser, A. Ch. Von Guttenberg: “Der blinde Mensch.” Book review in *Documenta Ophthalmologica* vol. 25/1, December 1968, p. 361.

Würzburg,” Germany,<sup>133</sup> must be taken with a pinch of salt. He obviously was never on this university’s payroll.<sup>134</sup> The same holds for the University of Graz,<sup>135</sup> whose Faculty of Catholic Theology, however, bestowed on him the title of *Honorarprofessor*.<sup>136</sup>

Von Guttenberg returned together with his wife from Germany to his hometown Graz at the turn of 1964 and registered there as “Austrian” and “professor” on January 23, 1964.<sup>137</sup> Obviously based on information given by himself, his file card shows the entry “moved from Bad Schwalbach,” a statement that, however, could not be confirmed, because he had not been registered there as a resident citizen.<sup>138</sup> In Germany, he had applied for *Wiedergutmachung* (compensation for acts of Nazi injustice) at the respective authorities of Upper Bavaria, which dealt with cases concerning former inmates of Concentration Camp Dachau. For reasons unknown, but probably

<sup>133</sup> E-mail from Prof. Dr. Alois Kernbauer, Graz University Archives, to the author, July 23, 2008.

<sup>134</sup> “Unfortunately there is no personal file of a lecturer called Guttenberg or Pacholegg in the university archives.” E-mail from Marcus Sporn, Würzburg University Archives, to the author, of August 4, 2008.

<sup>135</sup> E-mail from Prof. Dr. Alois Kernbauer, Graz University Archives, to the author, of July 23, 2008.

<sup>136</sup> Franz-Josef zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst (ed.), *Genealogisches Handbuch des in Bayern immatrikulierten Adels* [Genealogical handbook of Bavarian nobility], vol. 13, Neustadt an der Aisch 1980, p.431. Guttenberg also stated this in a short biographical note published together with his book *Der blinde Mensch* (“Honorarprofessor der Philosophie an der Theologischen Fakultät der Karl-Franzens-Universität in Graz”); e-mail from Beltz Publishers, Weinheim, Germany, to the author, December 18, 2008.

<sup>137</sup> The information in this and the following paragraph is based on Guttenberg/Pacholegg’s file cards from the *Meldebehörde* (residents’ registry office) of Graz. Letter from the *Meldebehörde* Graz to the author, September 18, 2008.

<sup>138</sup> E-mail from the city museum of Bad Schwalbach to the author, December 4, 2008: “Inquiries at the residents’ registry office did not give an indication that A. von Guttenberg has lived at Bad Schwalbach.” Inquiries made by the author at the other Schwalbachs in Germany yielded the same—negative—result.



in connection with his application for *Wiedergutmachung*, he had his name changed back to “Anton Pacholegg.” This follows from a remark on his file card at the residents’ registry office of Graz, referring to a letter from the Graz Criminal Police Department to this office dated October 5, 1964.<sup>139</sup>

Therefore on October 26, 1964, the residents’ registry office of Graz started a new file card for “Anton Pacholegg” with the remark “previously Guttenberg” and the entries “Profession: writer” and “Citizenship: Austria.” Nearly four years later, on December 13, 1968, Anton Pacholegg canceled his registration at Graz and moved to “Bavaria, Federal Republic of Germany.” But already after four days, on December 17, 1968, he and his wife registered again at Graz. He received a new file card as “Anton Karl von Guttenberg” with the remark “previously Pacholegg” and the entries “Profession: university professor” and “Citizenship: Canadian.” Obviously his stay in Bavaria had served to change again name and citizenship, a step most probably prepared already a long time ago.

Von Guttenberg/Pacholegg’s Dachau experience and the reasons why he never appeared as a witness in post-war war crimes investigations or trials still continue to be mysterious. In the case of the Dachau human skin allegations, he represents—to put it mildly—the type of the “fantasy prone witness” in the classification given by Elizabeth Loftus. His testimony to this matter—through its publication within a document introduced by the prosecution at the Nuremberg trial of the major war criminals—received the status of an unquestionable “fact” in public perception (and in considerable sections of the profession worldwide). From the point of view of an historian, it must, however, be considered worthless.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> It is also strange that the *criminal* police dealt with this matter and not the regular—order—police.

<sup>140</sup> His testimony to other atrocities committed at Dachau is not within the scope of this study. At any rate, it should be neither rejected off-hand nor naively taken at face value, but critically examined, like every source in history.

With his frequent change of names and the various conflicting stories he spread about his educational and professional career, Anton (von) Guttenberg/Pacholegg remains an enigmatic personality. Not everything can be explained and excused or even justified by his camp experience. Something must have driven him round in his life, he never could rest. At the age of 76, he again left Europe for the New World. The last entry on his file card at the Graz residents' registry office is dated May 26, 1970, and reads "Registration canceled, moved to New York."

### *Appendix*

- Books written or edited by Antoine Charles de Guttenberg  
*Cultures et littératures de l'Occident: étude comparée de leurs origines*. Montreal: Université de Montréal, 1950.  
*La manifestation de l'Occident*. Montreal: Florus, 1952.  
*Der Aufstieg des Abendlandes*. Wiesbaden: Limes, 1954. 2nd edition Wiesbaden: Limes 1959. French translation by Lucien Piau: *L'occident en formation: Essai de synthèse et de critique des fondements du 20e siècle*. Paris: Payot, 1963.  
 Aldenhoff, Michael, and Frank O'Connor. *Frauen fremder Völker. Die Amerikanerin: Ihre Macht und ihre Moral*, ed. Antoine Charles de Guttenberg. Düsseldorf: Hellas, 1958. Italian translation by Guido Gentili: *L'americana. Il suo potere e la sua morale*. Milan: Rosso & Nero, 1963. Spanish translation: *L'americana*. Barcelona: AHR, 1962.  
 Burghardt, Friedrich, and Hanns Kurth. *Frauen fremder Völker. Die Orientalin*, ed. Antoine Charles de Guttenberg. Düsseldorf: Hellas, 1958. 2nd edition Düsseldorf: Hellas, 1958. Italian translation: *L'orientale*. Milan: Rosso & Nero, 1964.  
 Kurth, Hanns, and Manfred Delacour. *Frauen fremder Völker. Die Pariserin*, ed. Antoine Charles de Guttenberg. Düsseldorf: Hellas, 1958. 2nd edition Düsseldorf: Hellas, 1958.

- Italian translation: *La parigiana*. Milan: Rosso & Nero, 1962.
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