

KAFKA PROJECT AT SDSU

FOUND: A CLUE TO KAFKA'S MISSING TREASURE

For more than 60 years, Kafka scholars have believed it possible that Kafka's last writings (unpublished notebooks and letters written in the last year of his life) may have survived, lost among Nazi-confiscated materials which were removed from Berlin during the Allied bombing for safekeeping in Silesia.

The Kafka Project at SDSU has made an exciting breakthrough in the ongoing search for this missing literary treasure, the last love letters, and writings of literary giant Franz Kafka. Since 1998, the Kafka Project at SDSU has organized the research into the 20 notebooks and 35 letters Kafka wrote in the last year of his life, which were confiscated by the Gestapo in Berlin in 1933.

Nazi files on German communists in the Bundesarchiv in Berlin in September of 2014. The Kafka Project examined stacks of files like these, similar to those compiled against Dora Diamant and the Lask family, by the Gestapo in the 1930s.



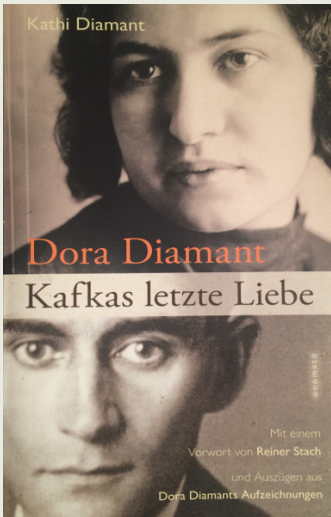
In 1998, the Kafka Project spent four months in Berlin's Nazi archives, followed by a six-week research project in Poland in 2008. A 2012 residency at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington D.C. led the Kafka Project team to look to Russia, where all confiscated German materials were sent by the Red Army following WWII.

In 2013, the Kafka Project discovery of a still-uncatalogued Third-Reich-era archive, which had been returned from Russia to Stasi control in East Germany during the Cold War, prompted a top Kafka German scholar to get involved and two German universities have pledged support. In May 2015, Kathi Diamant and Dr. Hans Koch met with Mr. Michael Steiner, executor of the Kafka estate in London, England, and renewed permission to continue the search on behalf of the Kafka family.

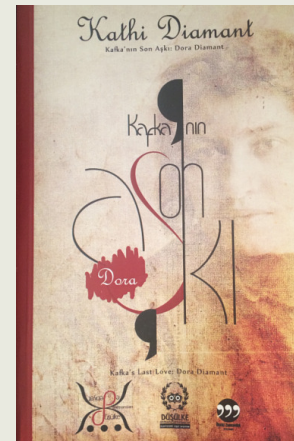


In September 2014, Kafka Project Director Kathi Diamant, and her sister, Trudi Diamant, who has worked alongside Kathi in the German Archives since 1998, returned to the Bundesarchiv in Berlin to review all the documents which have surfaced since the last visit.

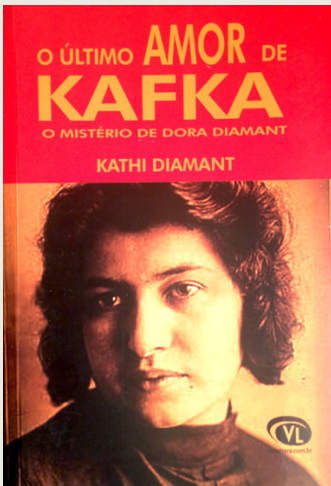
Since the first four-month research project in Berlin, Kafka Project research has resulted in remarkable discoveries, including Kafka's hairbrush and several sets of original letters, as well as numerous documents from Dora Diamant's life, including her letters, diaries and secret Nazi and Soviet Communist files, which led to the publication of her biography, *Kafka's Last Love*, published in the U.S. by Basic Books, and in the UK by Secker & Warburg in 2003 and Vintage/Random House UK in 2004. The book won the Theodor Geisel Award for the "Best of the Best" and has since been translated into French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Portuguese, German, Albanian, Turkish, and Czech in 2016.



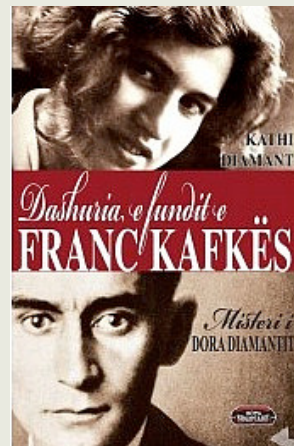
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