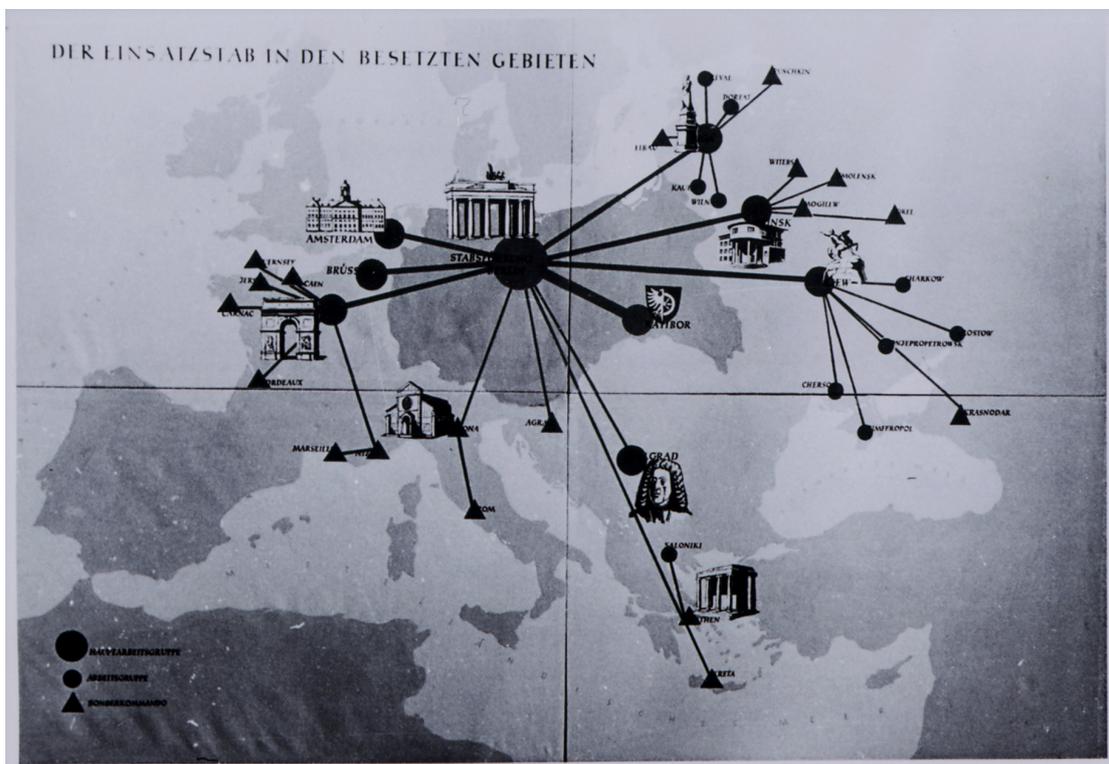


RECONSTRUCTING THE RECORD OF NAZI CULTURAL PLUNDER

A GUIDE TO THE DISPERSED ARCHIVES OF THE EINSATZSTAB REICHSLEITER ROSENBERG (ERR) AND THE POSTWAR RETRIEVAL OF ERR LOOT

Patricia Kennedy Grimsted



Expanded and Updated Edition

Published on-line with generous support of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims
Against Germany (Claims Conference), in association with
the International Institute of Social History (IISH), Amsterdam, and
the NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Amsterdam

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<http://socialhistory.org/en/publications/reconstructing-record-nazi-cultural-plunder>.

Also now available at <http://www.errproject.org> is the updated *Introduction*:

“Alfred Rosenberg and the ERR: The Records of Plunder and the Fate of Its Loot” (*LAST REVISED* August 2015)

Chapter 6 (earlier Ch. 5): The Netherlands (*LAST REVISED* October 2015)
and

Chapter 10 (earlier Ch. 9): United States of America (*LAST REVISED* March 2015)

Other updated country chapters will be available as completed at:

<http://www.errproject.org/guide>

The Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR), the special operational task force headed by Adolf Hitler’s leading ideologue Alfred Rosenberg, was the major NSDAP agency engaged in looting cultural valuables in Nazi-occupied countries during the Second World War. The detail with which the ERR documented the art, archives, books, and other Judaica it plundered has proved essential for the recovery of cultural valuables after the war and their return to victims or heirs.

The original 2011 edition describes the archival remains of the ERR in 29 repositories in 9 countries – from Washington and Brussels to Moscow and Kyiv. The expanded edition underway adds a 10th country with the new Israeli chapter, while additions in the United States and the Netherlands bring the total coverage to over 35 repositories.

This volume serves as a preliminary guide to remaining documents generated by the ERR, and in many cases it goes well beyond ERR and related M-Aktion materials. Attention also focuses on key records of postwar U.S., French, British, and Soviet agencies seeking to retrieve the ERR loot, particularly those components that incorporated wartime ERR documents or reports on key ERR repositories and staff, including war-crimes trials. Links are also provided to many related but dispersed archival sources now available on the Internet: These include records from the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), the German Federal Archives (Bundesarchiv), the National Archives (TNA) of the United Kingdom, one of the State Archives of Ukraine (TsDAVO), and other repositories, with additional digital contributions, providing improved access to a major component of the record of wartime plunder and retrieval of cultural loot.

Chapter 4: Israel
(*LAST REVISED* December 2015)

A Preliminary chapter for

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AND THE POSTWAR RETRIEVAL OF ERR LOOT**

Updated and Expanded Edition (2016)

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N.B. See the additional Front Matter, including the Foreword, Summary Table of Contents of the entire volume, Technical Note, and List of Acronyms with the updated Introduction,

**“Alfred Rosenberg and the ERR: The Records of Plunder
 and the Fate of Its Loot”** (LAST REVISED August 2015)

at: <http://www.errproject.org/guide>

4.0. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The ERR did not operate in territories that are now Israel and, as far as is known, no original documents created by the ERR are now preserved there. Nevertheless, related resources available in Israel involve first, collected copies of many ERR documents; second, a great deal of actual ERR loot seized from European Jewish communities, cultural institutions, and individual Jewish families during the Holocaust, as well as from other sources; and third, considerable documentation about the fate and migration of ERR loot.

Of importance in the first instance, Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, has collected copies of ERR documents from many countries similar to, and often overlapping with the collections in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (see Section 10.2). Yad Vashem collections provide some limited research resources relating to the ERR and its cultural plunder (see Section 4.1.).

In the course of the Second World War, an estimated six million European Jews perished in the Holocaust, and many more fled abroad. As a result many Jewish communities through the European continent were tragically annihilated. Synagogues were destroyed; libraries seized and dispersed, along with archives, rich manuscript collections, and ritual Judaica. As a result, extensive prewar Jewish-owned cultural valuables were declared “heirless” in the collecting points for Nazi cultural loot operated under the Office of Military Government in Germany (US) (OMGUS) during the postwar period. Following pressure from international Jewish leaders it became government policy that such heirless Jewish cultural materials and religious artifacts should not be returned to the “country of origin,” i.e. European countries from which they had been seized, as was the general designated Allied policy for cultural restitution. Rather they were turned over to Jewish organizations for “redistribution” to surviving Jewish communities, in locales to which many European Jews had fled, and Jewish cultural organizations throughout the world. At the same time, pressure from leaders of the Hebrew University and Israeli museums sought to make Jerusalem the major beneficiary of remaining European Jewish-related cultural treasures, to enrich cultural institutions in the new state of Israel, as guardian of the Jewish international cultural legacy. As specialists look back from a more distant perspective today, there appears to have been too little scrutiny as to whether or not all of the cultural treasures involved were really heirless, and insufficient effort to identify potential heirs.¹

In this context, it is important to note the extent to which ERR cultural loot made its way to Jerusalem after the war – namely movable cultural property seized from Jewish owners, ritual Judaica from Jewish communities and synagogues, and even books and manuscript Hebraica and Judaica from major public libraries in many European countries. It is virtually impossible today to quantify the works of art, books and manuscripts, archives, and ritual Judaica, acquired and still located in Israel. Only recently have details of identification and provenance started to become publicly available. To be sure not all of the Jewish cultural assets transferred to Israel after the war were the loot of the ERR, but some examples are highlighted below.

¹ For an introduction to the problem, see Michael Kurtz' chapter, “A Special Concern: the Jewish Inheritance,” in his *America and the Return of Nazi Contraband: The Recovery of Europe's Cultural Treasures* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006; paper edn, 2009), pp. 151–76 (expanded from his 1985 account). See also Kerstin Röhling, *Restitution jüdischer Kulturgüter nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg: Eine völkerrechtliche Studie* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2004; *Saarbrücker Studien zum internationalalen Recht*, Band 26).

Third, also now located in Israel are many sources needed for investigating the fate of ERR loot, such as documentation about its migration and transfer, particularly within the records of one of the major Jewish agencies responsible for redistribution, and papers of the Jewish specialists who travelled throughout postwar Europe to locate Jewish cultural assets and promote their transfer to Jerusalem. The examples described below may help researchers discover sources documenting postwar migration of cultural assets in search of provenance, potential individual or community heirs, and possible claims for restitution. Attention to these issues has been increasing since adoption of the Israeli Holocaust Victims' Assets Law in 2006 and the establishment of the non-profit Hashava–The Company for Location and Restitution of Holocaust Victims Assets.² However, the focus has been so far on appropriate restitution to individuals, while claims on behalf of communities or Jewish institutions have remained more difficult to resolve, as noted below in recent examples regarding archives and ritual Judaica.

The Jewish Restitution Successor Organization (JRSO), Jewish Cultural Reconstruction (JCR), and Postwar Redistribution of Heirless Jewish Cultural Property

The JRSO was founded in New York in 1947, bringing together a number of the largest international Jewish organizations. Initially incorporated in May 1947 as the Jewish Restitution Commission, in 1948 its name was changed to JRSO, with its first European office in Nuremberg. The JRSO was recognized and empowered by American occupation authorities in Germany to serve as trustee for heirless Jewish property, and hence claim and receive property (movable and immovable) within the U.S. Zone of Occupation (including the American Sector in Berlin) owned by Jews who perished without heirs as well as property of dissolved communities and other Jewish organizations persecuted by the National-Socialist regime. The assets of such property, and/or the heirless cultural property itself, obtained were distributed to Jewish institutions and organizations throughout the world.³

One specialized off-shoot organization, associated with the JRSO in terms of logistics and finance, the JCR, was also initially established in New York in 1947, growing out of the earlier Commission on European Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, established in 1944, by American Jewish scholars concerned about the postwar revival of Jewish culture. When it became associated with the JRSO it was given the specific mandate for collecting and distributing heirless Jewish cultural property, especially books and Judaica in the U.S. Zone of Occupation. Operating until 1952, JCR was headed by Salo Baron (1895–1989) as executive director,⁴ with Joshua Starr and Hannah Arendt as executive secretaries in New York.⁵ JCR also worked closely with Gershom Scholem and other scholars and librarians in Jerusalem, although

² See further information about Hashava on the company website, including an extensive list of potentially unclaimed Holocaust victim assets (real estate as well as cultural) in Israel, at http://www.hashava.info/template/default.aspx?catid=28-.VR_6qktLr1o.

³ See Saul Kagan and Ernest H. Weismann, *Report on the Operations of the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization, 1947–1972* (New York: JRSO, 1972).

⁴ The Salo W. Baron Papers, held by Stanford University Library (Palo Alto, CA), contain extensive documentation from JCR, including minutes of meetings, field reports, financial statements, reports on distribution of books and ceremonial objects, among others; and also considerable documentation from JRSO. A “Guide to the Salo W. Baron Papers, 1900–1980,” is available on-line at: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/ft509nb07b/>, and also available in PDF.

⁵ Additional primary documentation about the JRSO and JCR can be found in the Hannah Arendt Papers, held by the Library of Congress, which have been digitized for public access. The finding aid and parts of the collection are available for public access on the Internet at: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/arendhtml/arendthome.html>. Regarding Arendt's role in JCR and especially the book salvaging operation, see Dov Schidorsky, “Hannah Arendt's Dedication to Salvaging Jewish Culture,” *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 59 (2014), no. 1, pp. 181–95.

differences of opinion developed over Israeli demands for larger shares; given its U.S. orientation compromise was sought in the percentages allotted to Israel. The JCR was directly involved in the redistribution of approximately 500,000 books, 8,000 Jewish ritual items and other Judaica, and 1,000 Torah scrolls. Approximately 80–85% were divided between Jewish communities and organizations in the United States and Israel, while the remaining 15–20% went to other countries, including 8% to Western Europe (half to the UK), and 7% to Latin America, Australia, and South Africa.⁶

After the war, while many Jewish leaders were understandably anxious to promote the new state of Israel as major custodian of the world Jewish cultural legacy, others were concerned to assist and supply the expanded Jewish communities across the seas to which many European Jews had migrated. Since the revival of strong Jewish communities in many countries of Europe by the end of the 20th century, attitudes differ today, and new questions are being asked about the provenance of the redistributed cultural heritage. Many European Jewish leaders and local communities are searching for their historic, pre-Holocaust heritage. While understanding the postwar impetus to assist Israel, the need for redistribution to burgeoning Jewish communities outside of Europe, and the difficulty of identifying cultural assets then declared heirless and finding potential surviving heirs, recent research has been seeking restitution on national, as opposed to the earlier Zionist principles. And on further examination, researchers are finding many items declared “heirless” in the postwar period can indeed be identified as of provenance in many European communities or belonging to important libraries and organizations in Europe. Some have even been identified with individual owners.⁷

Several well-researched accounts of the redistribution of books have recently appeared and deserve particular attention in this regard, especially the Hebrew-language account of retired Hebrew University Library School director and library historian, Dov Schidorsky.⁸ Approximately 500,000 books labeled “heirless” – predominantly of prewar Jewish ownership – that passed through the Offenbach Archival Depot (OAD) near Frankfurt am Main, the postwar U.S. collecting point for books and archives in the U.S. Zone of Occupation in Germany, were turned over to JRSO and JCR. Many of those had been collected by the ERR for Alfred Rosenberg’s Institute for Study of the Jewish Question (IEJ) in Frankfurt and Hungen, as part of his planned Hohe Schule for Nazi elite. It has also come to light that, apart from those processed officially for redistribution, additional rare books and manuscripts were taken

⁶ See most recently the study by Dana Herman, *Hashavat Avedah: A History of Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Inc.*, PhD dissertation (Montreal: McGill University, 2008), accessible in PDF at http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/R/-?func=dbin-jump-full&object_id=99925&silos_library=GEN01. Herman’s bibliography well documents remaining JCR records in various locations. See also Herman’s summary article, “‘A Brand Plucked out of the Fire’: The Distribution of Heirless Jewish Cultural Property by Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Inc., 1947–1952,” in *Neglected Witnesses: The Fate of Jewish Ceremonial Objects During the Second World War and After*, ed. Julie-Marthe Cohen and Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek (Institute of Art and Law (UK), 2011), pp. 29–61. See also Katharina Rauschenberger, “The Restitution of Jewish Cultural Objects and the Activities of Jewish Cultural Reconstruction Inc.,” *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 53 (2008), pp. 191–211.

⁷ See, for example, the essays by representatives of several European Jewish museums, in *Neglected Witnesses*.

⁸ See in English, Dov Schidorsky, “The Salvaging of Jewish Books in Europe after the Holocaust,” in *Jüdischer Buchbesitz als Raubgut: Zweites Hannoversches Symposium*, ed. Regine Dehnel, pp. 197–212 (Frankfurt a/M: Vittorio Klostermann, 2005). It is to be hoped that Schidorsky’s impressive Hebrew-language study of the issue, which includes many important documents and references to other sources, will soon be available in English: Schidorsky, *Burning Scrolls and Flying Letters: A History of Book Collection and Libraries in Mandatory Palestine and of Book Salvaging Efforts in Europe after the Holocaust* (in Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2008). The lengthy English-language review article by Natan Sznajder, “Retelling the Book of Lamentations,” *Yad Vashem Studies* 37 (2) (2009), pp. 207–19, discusses Schidorsky’s coverage with much appreciation. See also the recent doctoral dissertation by Elisabeth Gallas, “*Das Leichenhaus der Bücher*”: *Kulturrestitution und jüdisches Geschichtsdenken nach 1945* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013).

without permission (some even stolen) from OAD for transfer to Jerusalem, although that full story is yet to be told.⁹

When the U.S. collecting points for cultural property were closing down in Germany in 1949, JRSO took over unclaimed, or otherwise heirless Jewish cultural assets for redistribution to Jewish communities and institutions throughout the world, most of the books and Judaica through JCR auspices. From OAD heirless Jewish books and Judaica were joined by another c. 30,000 books from the Baltic countries, most with clear ownership markings from institutional and private collections, not all of which were Jewish. For the political reason of not recognizing the Soviet annexation of the Baltic countries, U.S. and British authorities refused to return cultural property of Baltic provenance to the Soviet Union. JCR transferred approximately 40–45% of the cultural items received to Jerusalem.

Many books that had been seized by the ERR and collected together for the Central Library of the Hohe Schule (ZBHS), first in Berlin and later in Austrian Carinthia (Kärnten), ended the war in the monastery of Tanzenberg (near Klagenfurth). That area became part of the British Zone of Occupation, with restitution proceedings documented in The National Archives (TNA) of the UK (see Section 9.1.2). Like the situation in OAD, many books that the British could not identify as to owner or return to the countries of origin from Tanzenberg were later shipped to Jerusalem from Austria.¹⁰

An estimated 70,000 or more books from all over Europe that ended the war in Czechoslovakia shared the same fate, particularly under scrutiny by Scholem and several leading Jerusalem librarians themselves of Czech origin.¹¹ Those were among the million books brought together by the Reichssicherheitshaupt Amt (RSHA) in Berlin and then evacuated to Sudeten castles and Theresienstadt (*Czech: Terezín*) in 1943.¹² Because most of those books had come from the library collections assembled in Berlin by the RSHA, it is unlikely that many books confiscated by the ERR would be found among the estimated 70,000 books sent to Jerusalem from Czechoslovakia.

Many books were identified elsewhere in Europe after the war by leading scholars and librarians from the Hebrew University among others, together with specialists from JCR, who toured various sites in Europe searching for abandoned or heirless books and manuscripts they considered of importance to academic and community libraries in the new state of Israel. Many books among the so-called “Diaspora Treasures” destined for Jerusalem may well have been seized by the ERR. Most of the Judaica and Hebraica from Europe were destined for the Jewish

⁹ As one example, Dov Schidorsky documents the unauthorized seizure from OAD of 5 crates with 366 manuscripts specially selected by Gershom Scholem, implemented by US Army Chaplain, Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman, as described in his memoirs, *Roots of the Future* (Jerusalem, 1999), pp. 106–12. See Schidorsky’s comment in “The Salvaging of Jewish Books,” pp. 210–11. Crate lists and U.S. reports on the transfer are preserved in the U.S. National Archives in College Park (NACP), along more complete OAD records (see Section 10.1.5.4.4.).

¹⁰ Regarding Tanzenberg and the Austrian scene, see particularly the writings of Evelyn Adunka, including her important *Der Raub der Bücher: Plünderung in der NS-Zeit und Restitution nach 1945* (Vienna: Czernin Verlag, 2002), and her subsequent article “Die Zentralbibliothek der Hohen Schule in Tanzenberg,” in Murray Hall, Christina Köstner, and Margot Werner, eds., *Geraubte Bücher. Die Österreichische Nationalbibliothek stellt sich ihrer NS-Vergangenheit* (Vienna, 2004), pp. 71–81.

¹¹ See Dov Schidorsky, “The Hebrew University’s Book Salvaging Activities in Postwar Czechoslovakia and the Problems of Restitution in Israel,” at the 2009 Prague Holocaust Era Assets Conference, available at: <http://www.holocausteraassets.eu/en/working-groups/judaica-and-jewish-cultural-property/>. See also Schidorsky’s other important publications on the subject listed in note 8.

¹² See Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, “Sudeten Crossroads for Europe’s Displaced Books: The ‘Mysterious Twilight’ of the RSHA Amt VII Library and the Fate of a Million Victims of War,” in *Restitution of Confiscated Works—Wish or Reality? Documentation, identification and restitution of Cultural property of the victims of World War II. Proceedings of the international academic conference held in Liberec, 24-26 October 2007* (Prague, 2008), pp. 123–80; available at: http://socialhistory.org/sites/default/files/docs/pkg-sudeten_crossroads.pdf, also published in a Czech edition.

National and University Library (JNUL), now the National Library of Israel (NLI), but duplicates were dispersed to many other libraries in Israel. In terms of sources for the retrieval and transfer, the Archives Department of NLI, in addition to its own institutional archives preserves the papers of many of the key Israeli individuals and involved in the postwar recovery of cultural property (see Section 4.2.).

Embracing the international Jewish archival legacy, the Central Archives of the History of the Jewish People (CAHJP) reflects on the archival front the establishment of the State of Israel as a homeland for Jewish culture. Although already under agreement (as of 2013) to be merged with the NLI, CAHJP nonetheless deserves separate treatment below. CAHJP now holds some scattered original archives of European Jewish communities and other organizations that were seized during the war by the ERR, as well as others that were sent to Israel for 'safekeeping'. CAHJP coverage highlights one example of original ERR-seized Jewish community archives returned to their home country of Greece after the war, but then deposited in Jerusalem. CAHJP also holds some records of postwar agencies for redistribution of Jewish cultural property, namely the records of the New York and Berlin offices of JRSO (see Section 4.1.3 below). While JCR records do not survive as a separate institutional archive, many documents relating to their acquisition and dispersal of books and other cultural items, including those sent to Israel, will be found among the JRSO records. Meanwhile, other important documents from the JCR records are to be found in the United States among the papers of the JCR leaders Salo Baron and Hannah Arendt, as noted above.¹³

Today, museums and private collections in Israel also retain extensive works of art that had been deemed heirless, along with Jewish ritual objects, and other Judaica that were transferred to the JRSO/JCR from U.S. postwar cultural collecting points for redistribution. The Bezalel National Museum in Jerusalem was undoubtedly the largest recipient, thanks to the efforts of its director Mordechai Narkiss (1898–1957), who spent several months in Germany examining and identifying dispersed Jewish treasures, many originally seized by the ERR. Following establishment of the successor Israel Museum in Jerusalem (IMJ) in 1965, these treasures were transferred there (see Section 4.4.).

Given the recent interest in the so-called "Diaspora Treasures" and related restitution issues, there has been increasing pressure for more exhaustive identification of works of art and books acquired from JRSO/JCR and other Diaspora sources. Reportedly planning is underway for further digitization of documents related to the looting and restitution of cultural assets located in the archives and libraries of Israel. The International Forum on Restitution of Holocaust Era Cultural Assets in Israel, sponsored by Hashava in June 2014 in Tel Aviv, followed by a two-day workshop on provenance research for museum professionals, brought together specialists from abroad focusing on those issues with more attention to restitution. A second Forum is planned for December 2015.

Two recent Israeli court decisions with regard to archives have raised further attention to these issues. In July 2015, a Tel Aviv Court added an additional decision in favor of the National Library of Israel in the long legal battle over private family claims for the Franz Kafka papers, some of which were sold and others held abroad. Another Israeli appeal decision this year again ruled against the Viennese Jewish Community's bid for the return of its archives that had been transferred on deposit to the Central Archive of the History of the Jewish People after the war. One aspect of the latter decision was based on the fact that CAHJP could better provide public access. Both cases reinforced "the claims of the state of Israel to collect and administer the cultural heritage of Jews" abroad "...as the centre of the Jewish people."¹⁴

¹³ See notes 4 and 5.

¹⁴ See statement on the website of the Israel State Archives, under the Prime Minister's Office, "The archives of the Vienna Jewish Community will stay in Israel," at http://www.archives.gov.il/ArchiveGov_Eng/about/Notices2/ViennaJewishcommunity.htm.

4.0.1. GENERAL INTERNET RESOURCES

4.0.1.1. PORTAL OF THE EUROPEAN HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE INFRASTRUCTURE (EHRI): Israeli Archival Coverage: <https://portal.ehri-project.eu/countries/il>

The newly opened EHRI Internet Portal as of 2015 locates and describes some 52 repositories in Israel. Some are only briefly identified, but for others, descriptions are provided on the level of record groups with documentation relating to the Holocaust. Some of those not covered in this *Guide* may be expected to have documentation on cultural spoliation by the ERR and related Nazi agencies, and some may also have documentation relating to restitution issues. Of special importance, the EHRI Portal provides much more detailed coverage of holdings in Yad Vashem (Section 4.1.) than will be found below.

4.1. YAD VA-SHEM. RASHUT HA-ZIKARON TA-SHO'AH VELA-GEVURAH. ARKHIVON HA-MERKAZI LA-SHO'AH VELA-GEVURAH

[YAD VASHEM. THE HOLOCAUST MARTYRS' AND HEROES' REMEMBRANCE AUTHORITY.
ARCHIVE]

Address: Har Hazikaron

Postal Address: P.O.B. 3477; Jerusalem 9163401, Israel

Telephone: (+972) 02-644-3720

Fax: (+972) 02-644-3719

Website: <http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/about/archive/>

E-mail: Instructions for e-mail contact and special search forms for off-site reference are available on the website

Opening Hours (Archives and Library Services): Sunday–Thursday 8:30–17:00

Over 154 million pages of documentation, some on microfilm; over 112,000 survivor testimonies; over 420,000 photographs, and ca. 2.6 million names registered on pages of testimony

Yad Vashem, established in 1953, is recognized throughout the world as Israel's unique center for commemoration of the Holocaust with a major museum, together with research and educational activities, and extensive archival holdings. While the Yad Vashem Archive does not hold any original archival materials of the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR), its staff have collected copies of many ERR documents among its extensive microfilms of Holocaust-related files from many of the archives throughout the world, including those mentioned elsewhere in this *Guide*. Thus far a search of the Yad Vashem sophisticated database system and extensive consultations with its exceedingly helpful staff, however, have not revealed any significant files or microfilm that are not described more completely in this *Guide* within their parent record group (or fond) in the present archive holding the originals.

Yad Vashem has arranged its microfilm copies in collections according to the countries and in some cases also individual archives where the originals are preserved, and has carefully noted the archival signatures of the original files from which they were extracted. It should be understood, however, the copies of documents from a single fond or record group have not been retained as a unique series, and in most cases copies of the original archival finding aids are not available for consultation, so it will be difficult for researchers to assess contingent documents in the same fonds. Some of the microfilm holdings, nevertheless, and especially those from repositories where the originals are not yet digitized and on line, may provide a good starting place for research.

Research on cultural assets seized from Holocaust victims during the National Socialist regime can also benefit from many other Yad Vashem archival resources. Especially important are resources for genealogical components in identifying and following the fate of the victims from whom cultural property was seized (such as, for example, the Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names), extensive testimonies of survivors, and wide-ranging related reference materials on the history of the Holocaust. Yad Vashem has also amassed extensive audiovisual records, with many of its photographic holdings now arranged in a research-friendly database.

On-Line Finding Aids

See also the EHRI Portal (Section 4.0.1.1.)

“Listing of the Record Groups in the Yad Vashem Archives.” Yad Vashem website at:

http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/about/archive/pdf/list_of_record_groups.pdf

A full list of current record groups, covering both microfilms and original documents. However it is not possible to browse the contents of individual groups of records. Names are listed in English without the original language, which may on occasion cause difficulties in identification, particularly when names of the archives containing the original documents have changed. In a few cases more detailed annotations are provided.

Digital Collections on Line

Subject searches can be made on-line for the Documents Archive:

<http://collections1.yadvashem.org/search.asp?lang=ENG&rsvr=8>

Offenbach (OAD) Albums

On-Line version: Photos Archive: “Offenbach archival depot”

Of special note, as an example, in terms of ERR-seized libraries, Yad Vashem holds an original copy of two albums from the series of photograph albums prepared after the war at the Offenbach Archival Depot (OAD) near Frankfurt am Main (Archival Signature: 368). This was the major collecting point for looted books and archival materials in the U.S. Zone of Occupation, often described as “the U.S. Antithesis to the ERR.” One of the albums prepared at OAD is devoted to the wartime activities of the ERR. A second “Photographic History” documents OAD activities and the book restitution processing.¹⁵ Photographs from the albums held by Yad Vashem are displayed on the Yad Vashem website in the Photo Archive database.

¹⁵ Other original copies of these and other OAD albums are held in the U.S. National Archives in College Park (NACP), and are described in more detail (see Sections 10.1.5.3.5., and 10.1.9.2.13) and available on-line at Fold3.com and also on line within the Seymour Pomrenze Papers at the Center for Jewish History in New York City (see Section 10.6.1.).

4.2. SIFRIYAH HA-LI'UMIT ISRAEL [THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF ISRAEL] (NLI)

Previous names:

1925–2008: Jewish National and University Library (JNUL)

1892: Initially founded as the B'nai Brith Library in Jerusalem.

Address: Edmond J. Safra Campus, Givat Ram
Postal address: POB 39105, Jerusalem, Israel

(future location: Kiryat Ha'Leom)

Telephone: (+972) 074-733-6336

Fax: (+972) 074-733-6122

Website: <http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/Pages/default.aspx>

E-mail: reference@nli.org.il (reference inquiries)

(See website contact form for other queries)

The National Library of Israel (NLI) assumed its present name in 2008, when the Israel Library Law of 2007 took effect. Still located (2015) on the Hebrew University campus at Givat Ram, it was earlier known as the Jewish National and University Library (JNUL) since the foundation of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1925. It dates its origin to the first public library in Palestine, the B'nai Brith Library founded in Jerusalem in 1892, the holdings of which formed the basis for JNUL. Housed in the present building since its completion in 1960, architectural plans for the larger contemporary NLI building in Kiryat Ha'Leom, Jerusalem, were announced in November 2014, and preparations are already being made for the transfer once the new building is completed.

Although NLI itself holds no ERR archival materials, it is important for this *Guide*, first because among its holdings are huge quantities of books acquired after the war, especially from Jewish public and private collections throughout the European continent that were looted by the ERR and other German agencies. Most of the books that came to Jerusalem from European sources were accessioned by what was then JNUL, although some were distributed to other libraries and Jewish organizations in Israel. Given the difficulty of quantifying the books acquired by JNUL through postwar retrieval and salvaging efforts, Dov Schidorsky recently concluded, “there is no doubt that over half a million books had been received by the mid-1960s.”¹⁶ Second, the library contains considerable related archival materials. Recently, in response to protests about the decades of silence on the issue, more efforts are underway to identify the ‘Diaspora Treasures’ with more transparency.

4.2.1. ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT – PERSONAL ARCHIVES

Opening Hours: Sun. – Thu. 9:00–18:00

Telephone: (+972) 074-733-6266

The NLI Archives and acquisition records, located today in the library building on the campus of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, should shed considerable light on postwar acquisitions.

¹⁶ See Schidorsky, “The Salvaging of Jewish Books in Europe,” p. 211. See more details in his impressive Hebrew-language study, *Burning Scrolls and Flying Letters*. See the Introduction above, with notes 6 and 8, and Gallas, “*Das Leichenhaus der Bücher*.”

Mention should also be made of several fonds of personal papers currently held by the NLI Archives Department, representing library specialists who made special trips to Europe to locate and arrange transport of displaced books in the immediate postwar period.

Finding Aid

The NLI website provides a complete list of personal papers available within the NLI Archives Department in English and Hebrew at:

<http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/collections/personalsites/Pages/default.aspx>

Additional more detailed finding aids (in Hebrew) are also available.

Of particular importance are personal papers of leading librarians and other specialists involved in the postwar search and recovery of books in the “Diaspora Treasures” and their transfer to Jerusalem, all of which are held in the Archive of Hebrew University, most on Mount Scopus. Finding aids are available for many of them.

ARC. 4° 1502. Shmuel Hugo Bergman (Prague 1883–Jerusalem 1975), philosophy professor and former rector of Hebrew University and JNUL director.

ARC. 4°. Zeev Scheck (Olomouc 1920–Rome 1978). In addition to other papers, the Scheck Report (1948) is available as file 048(1948) in the University Archive on Mount Scopus; a copy is in the NLI Archive, file **ARC. 4° 793/212**.

ARC. 4° 793. Includes a number of documents related to the “Diaspora Treasures”, including a copy of the Scheck 1948 report, no. 212.

ARC. 4° 1599. Gershon Scholem (Berlin 1897–Jerusalem 1982), librarian, philosophy professor, and leading authority on Jewish mysticism and Kabbalah. Scholem was the most outspoken advocate for bringing displaced Jewish and other “heirless” books and manuscripts to Jerusalem.

Sholomo Shunami (Munkas 1898–Jerusalem 1984), librarian who headed the special JNUL section charged with collecting and processing the books and manuscripts brought to JNUL.¹⁷

ARC. 4° 1682. Curt David Wormann (Berlin 1900–Jerusalem 1991), director of JNUL (1947–1967). He directed the operation in Europe after the war to salvage hundreds of thousands of looted books for JNUL. His papers (being processed 2015) contain particularly important correspondence with Scholem and Shunami regarding absorption and redistribution of the Diaspora Treasures.

ARC. 4° 1610. Avraham Yaari (East Galicia 1899–Jerusalem 1966), bibliographer, scholar of the Hebrew book, head of JNUL Hebrew Department.

¹⁷ Although not in the on-line catalogue (2015), the Shunami Papers are available in NLI.

4.3. ARKHIYON HA-MERKAZI LE-TOLDOT HA-‘AM HA-YEHUDI [THE CENTRAL ARCHIVES FOR THE HISTORY OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE] (CAHJP)

Address: Hi-Tech Village 3/4 (future location: Kiryat Ha’Leom, within NLI)
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Edmond J. Safra Campus on Giv’at Ram, Jerusalem
Postal Address: POB 39077, Jerusalem 91390

Tel.: (+972) 02-658-6249

Fax: (+972) 02-653-5426

Website: <http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/collections/personalsites/CAHJP/Pages/default.aspx>

E-mail: cahjp@nli.org.il

Hours: Sunday through Thursday, 8:15–15:15

The Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People (CAHJP) was established in 1939, with the aim of salvaging, reconstructing, and preserving historical documentation reflecting the past of the Jewish people from all lands, from the Middle Ages to the present. CAHJP considers its extensive international archival mission, as it explains on its website: “The written records of our common past are here held in trust as a crucial part of the national heritage of the Jewish People.” An agreement was signed in 2013 for CAHJP to merge with the National Library of Israel (NLI). While as of early 2015, CAHJP is still located on the campus of Hebrew University in the Giv’at Ram area of Jerusalem, the Archive is due to be transferred to the new building under construction for the National Library.

As of 2014, CAHJP has collected archival materials from thousands of Jewish communities and organizations, as well as the personal papers of families and prominent individuals in 64 countries, with close to 60 million pages of original material, dating from the 14th to the 20th century. In addition to country-specific collections, the CAHJP holds the records of many Jewish organizations and private collections. An extensive collection of microfilms provide copies of supplemental Jewish documentation from throughout the world. Of special interest the archives also have extensive genealogical materials from many countries.

The CAHJP has no original ERR files as covered in this Guide to ERR and related records. Undoubtedly, however, a number of the original Jewish archival materials collected in CAHJP were seized by the ERR during German wartime occupation of countries where the ERR operated. Such materials are found in a number of the separate country-specific collections. Original Jewish materials from Greece are highlighted below as an example of a case where ERR seizure has been documented. A few of the Jewish organizations records represented in CAHJP were undoubtedly also seized by the ERR during the war, such as the Jewish Colonization Association (JCA), founded in Paris in 1891 by Baron Maurice de Hirsch. The head office in London after the Second World War sent most of its earlier files to CAHJP in Jerusalem in 1980–1981.

Of particular importance for the postwar restitution and redistribution of Jewish cultural property seized by the ERR, are the records of the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization (JRSO), here below represented by the records of the New York offices.

On-Line Finding Aids

The CAHJP website under ‘Holdings’ displays an overview of Collections (Record Groups) of documentation from individual ‘Countries’, ‘Organizations’, ‘Private Collections’, and ‘Selected illustrations’. In many cases more detailed digital finding aids are available.

Publications

A complete bibliography of publications by CAHJP is found on the website, including some describing its holdings.

4.3.1. GREEK COLLECTION

CAHJP has original materials from the Jewish Communities of Athens (1916–1941), Cavalia (1897–1938), Comotini (1914–1941), Thessaloniki (Salonika) (1700, 1882–1941), Volos (1910–1958), Xante (1913–1958), and Yanina (1814–1944), along with some in various collections relating to the Jews in Rhodes (19th–20th cc.). Most of these cities are listed as operational sites in the ERR final report of its Greek mission (15 November 1941).¹⁸ Most of the Jewish Communities in these cities were wiped out during the Holocaust. In the late 1940s, some of the German-captured archives were returned to Greece from Germany, and the Jewish Communities of Volos and Thessaloniki sent their archives to the CAHJP in 1971.¹⁹

The largest group of Greek Jewish files is from Thessaloniki, which was the principal ERR target during their raid of Jewish and Masonic archival and library materials throughout the country in 1941. The ERR Greek Sonderkommando made its headquarters in the building of the American Consulate in Thessaloniki, while Johannes Pohl, head of the Hebraica section of the library of the Institute for Research on the Jewish Question (IEJ) in Frankfurt, visited during a short period and headed retrieval efforts, as his notes from the trip held by YIVO in New York make clear (see Section 10.5.1.).²⁰ The Thessaloniki collection also includes files from several different agencies, in addition to the Jewish Community.

Additional contingent original files from the Greek Community and related agencies in Thessaloniki remain today in YIVO in New York (see Section 10.5.). Others that fell into Gestapo and SD hands during the war were among the captured archives seized by Soviet authorities in Silesia in 1945 and taken to Moscow, where they were long held in the Special Archive (TsGOA SSSR), now part of the Russian State Military Archive (RGVA); after long negotiations, their return to Greece was projected by the end of 2014, but as of late 2015 this has not as yet happened.²¹ A few documents from the Thessaloniki Jewish Community were inadvertently returned to the Netherlands with Dutch Jewish files from Moscow and were presented to the Jewish Community in Thessaloniki in August 2008. The Community would now like to receive back the collection held on deposit in CAHJP.

¹⁸ Copies of that report are listed in other sections of this *Guide*: in CDJC (Paris), CCXXXII, 17; Bundesarchiv-Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 30/75; and NIOD (Amsterdam), Archief 265/15.

¹⁹ A transfer document to Greece of 41 crates with 8,511 items comprising unspecified books and archives is found in the OAD Administrative Records, subseries Cultural Object Restitution and Custody Records, file Greece OAD 9, within RG 260 (OMGUS) records in NACP (displayed on Fold3.com, from *NARA Microfilm Publication M1942*), dated 9 Nov. 1946, together with a bill of lading from the shipping firm in Hamburg. See the contingent Salonika documents in YIVO, RG 207 (see Section 10.5.7.)

²⁰ See also Yitzchak Kerem, “The Confiscation of Jewish Books in Salonika in the Holocaust,” in *The Holocaust and the Book: Destruction and Preservation*, ed. Jonathan Rose (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), pp. 59–65.

²¹ Professor Minna Rosen, historian at Haifa University, video-taped the Thessaloniki collection in Moscow and reportedly has compiled a document-level catalogue, but has refused to make the material public.

RI-33. Salonika [Thessaloniki] – Community Archives (GR/Sa)

The 462 files in this series are arranged in various subject categories, ranging from the Official and Legal Situation to Finances, Economic Activity, Religious Affairs, Education and Culture, Welfare and Health. Files of several Jewish organizations, including the Salonika-Palestine Society, are intermixed with those of the Jewish Community.

Finding aid: “Salonika list.pdf.” A folder list covering the 462 files is available on the CAHJP webpage within the new NLI website.

The final four files comprise correspondence regarding Nazi confiscation and postwar restitution, confirming ERR seizure and transfer to IEJ (Frankfurt), and the return of this collection to Greece:²²

GR/Sa 459: Bibliothek zur Erforschung der Judenfrage (IEJ), Frankfurt am/Main, with descriptions in German of various documents.

GR/Sa 460: Notes from Greek documents made by IEJ Library staff.

GR/Sa 461: Letter from P. Theocharidis [Greek interpreter listed by ERR Sonderkommando with Salonika team] to Dr J. Pohl [Head of Hebraica section of the IEJ Library], Aussenstelle Frankfurt, about confiscated archives of Macedonian Jews.

GR/Sa 462: Lists (incomplete) in Greek of the Greek Jewish community archives (compiled by Jewish Community in Athens) taken by the ERR that were returned to Greece from OAD in Germany (c.1947).

4.3.2. OTHER COUNTRY-SPECIFIC COLLECTIONS

The following country-specific collections containing scattered original archival holdings from countries occupied by the National Socialist regime during the Second World War may well include some fragmentary materials seized by the ERR and related documentation:

Estonia

France

Italy

Latvia

Lithuania

The Netherlands

USSR

Yugoslavia

The case of CAHJP retention of a major segment of records of the prewar Vienna Jewish Community has come to public attention in recent years, with an unsuccessful lawsuit to regain possession by the current Jewish Community in Vienna.²³ This case, however did not involve archives seized by the ERR, which did not operate in countries that were part of the German Reich during the war.

²² See note 19 above.

²³ See note 14 above.

4.3.3. JRSO/NY. RECORDS OF THE JEWISH RESTITUTION SUCCESSOR ORGANIZATION (JRSO), NEW YORK – ADMINISTRATIVE FILES (1946–1975)

ca. 870 files, 1939–1976

The Jewish Restitution Successor Organization (JRSO) was founded in New York in 1947, bringing together a number of the largest international Jewish organizations. Initially incorporated in May 1947 as the Jewish Restitution Commission, in 1948 its name was changed to JRSO, with its first European office in Nuremberg. The JRSO office was empowered by American occupation authorities in Germany to serve as trustee for heirless Jewish property, and hence claim and receive property (movable and immovable) within the U.S. Zone of Occupation (including the U.S. Sector of Berlin) owned by Jews who perished without heirs as well as property of dissolved organizations persecuted by the N-S regime. The assets of such property, and/or the heirless cultural property itself, were distributed to Jewish institutions and organizations throughout the world.²⁴

As explained in more detail in the Introduction above, the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction (JCR), established in New York in 1947, was associated with JRSO in terms of logistics and finance. JCR had the more specific aim of collecting and distributing “heirless” Jewish cultural property, especially books and Judaica found in the U.S. Collecting Points in Germany. Some JCR reports are found among JRSO records.²⁵

CAHJP now retains the administrative records of the JRSO New York, Frankfurt, and Berlin offices, as well as additional related materials. A few examples of files with selected documents relating to the fate of ERR-seized cultural loot are highlighted below, most notably several files from the JCR (New York) specifically relating to cultural property seized by the ERR. Scattered relevant data will undoubtedly be found in other files within these records.

Other series of JRSO records may also cover seized cultural property of interest. For example, the JRSO Frankfurt Office administrative records have some files covering paintings seized from Jewish owners in Austria, but the ERR would not have been involved with these.

Finding Aid

“Jewish Restitution Successor Organization (JRSO), New York – Administrative Files (1946–1975),” Record Number: JRSO/NY. A PDF file is available on the CAHJP webpage within the new NLI website.

JRSO/NY 301. List of objects transferred from Munich Central Collecting Point (MCCP) to JRSO Nurnberg (incomplete), May 1949

This small folder contains original mimeographed copies of the MCCP property release papers to the JRSO for works of art, including the entire ERR Neuwied Collection of approximately 185 items, along with scattered others from various sources, all of which were declared “heirless” by U.S. restitution authorities in Munich. “Schedule A” attached lists for the first and third loads (29 May 1949), indicate individual works of art by their Munich CCP (Mü) accession numbers with artists (if known) and brief titles. The “Schedule A” for the second load covers coins and medals confiscated by the Gestapo and sold to the Linz Collection. Outgoing copies of these same papers remain with the MCCP records with the OMGUS records in the U.S. National Archives in College Park (digitized copies of which are now available on

²⁴ See more details in Saul Kagan and Ernest H. Weismann, *Report on the Operations of the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization, 1947–1972* (New York: JRSO, 1972).

²⁵ See Herman, *Hashavat Avedah: A History of Jewish Cultural Reconstruction*, which lists additional JCR records in various locations.

Fold3.com), as listed in U.S. chapter (see Section 10.1.5.4.2.1. and Section 10.9.1.5.3.4.2.). Of particular importance, however, these JRSO copies have penciled annotations “Sold” for many of the entries, which may prove important in following their fate.

JRSO/NY 923a. Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Jan.–June 1949

- Joshua Starr, JCR Field Report #6 (8 Apr. 1949), “Cultural Property in Berlin and Soviet Zone”;
- Saul Kagan (JCR), memo (28 June 1949) regarding JCR taking over Baltic books [seized by ERR];
- Joshua Starr to Eli Rock (15 June 1949) regarding Baltic books to JCR;
- Memo of Agreement regarding Jewish cultural property;
- JCR resolution (14 Mar. 1949) with note on 1st priority art to Bezalel Museum, Jerusalem;
- Memo (29 Mar. 1949) with detailed breakdown of owners for Baltic books from Lithuania and Latvia; comment on priority for JNUL;
- Memo regarding transfer of 300,000 books to JCR at Offenbach.

JRSO/NY 923b. Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, July–Dec. 1949

Many memos and correspondence regarding disposition of books, for example:

- JCR memo (Dec. 1949) notes Prof. Shunami selected 2,800 books for Israel; details of disposition of different collections, including those from the Frankfurt Jewish Community, and French communities; the Kirchheim Collection for Israel; provisions for claims of allocated property (for 2 years) and proposals for seeking owners;
- Annual report (19 Oct. 1949);
- Hannah Arendt, Field Report #12, with statistics on distribution; ERR caches found in the Soviet Zone of Germany: e.g. 50,000 vols. from ERR (Jewish and Hebrew) in private shop Poesneck, Saasfeld/Thuringia; some books removed by Russians; many books with ERR stamp near Halle, turned over to Halle University library
- JCR report (Sept. 1949), regarding distribution of ceremonial objects; 29,764 vols. of Baltic collection shipped 31 Aug. in custody of JCR for 2 years; more sent to Israel;
- Final closing and distribution of remains from OAD;
- Distribution from Wiesbaden;
- Survey reports RE Jewish archives and libraries found in Germany.

JRSO/NY 923c. Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Jan.–Dec. 1950

- Dec. 1950 report, includes notes on Baltic collection JCR is keeping for two years, some in warehouses in Paris (JDC) and Antwerp;
- Summary reports from Germany with more discoveries and pending claims;
- Report on British Zone, with notes on Jewish ceremonial silver;
- JCR lists of distribution of books and ceremonial objects in the U.S. from NY depot (June 1949–Nov. 1950);
- Report on European distribution (Dec. 1950) Paris – Baltic collection, 16,000 books, 136 cases, 100–150 cases of 20,000 individually owned books;
- Scholem report (14 Sept. 1950) on “non-Jewish books in Frankfurt” and Judaica;
- Additional British Zone reports and correspondence;
- OAD: 100,000 non-Jewish books to Hesse Ministry of Culture for distribution;
- Shipments from Wiesbaden (May–June 1950), some to South America;
- Microfilm project report;
- E.G. Lowenthal (Wiesbaden), Field Report #20; investigative trip to Austria (17–23 June 1950), including Tanzenberg;
- Hannah Arendt, report on mission to Germany (12 Apr. 1950);

complains of difficulty of finding information about Russian Zone;
note that 20 RR wagons that had been due to leave Ratibor for Tanzenberg were seized by the Russians;

- Dr Shunami selected c.5,000 out of 11,000 Breslau books for Israel; remainder will go to Switzerland (from minutes of 19 Dec. 1949);
- Königsberg collection: 3,663 books: 1,217 Hebraica, 137 Yiddish, 2,197 Judaica; Hebraica and popular materials to South America;
- Hannah Arendt, Field Report #15 (15 Feb. 1950), Germany, London, and Paris.

4.4. MUZE'ON YI'SRA'EL, YERUSHALAYIM [THE ISRAEL MUSEUM, JERUSALEM] (IMJ)

Previous name:

1925–1965: Bezalel National Museum

Address: 11 Ruppin Boulevard, Hakyria

Postal address: POB 7117; Jerusalem, 9171002, Israel

Telephone: (+972) 02-670-8811

Fax: (+972) 02-677-1332

E-mail: info@imj.org.il

Website: <http://www.imj.org.il/en/>

The Israel Museum in Jerusalem, founded in 1965, Israel's largest cultural institution, now occupies an extensive twenty-acre campus. It is highlighted here, not because it retains ERR documents, but rather because of the extensive "heirless" works of art and Judaica it holds today, many of which were seized by the ERR in German-occupied countries during the war. As one of Israel's national cultural centers, IMJ has recently been making efforts in provenance research and providing internet access to the identification and website display of the many works of art and Judaica that came to Jerusalem as "heirless" after the war.

The IMJ predecessor, the Bezalel National Museum, was undoubtedly the largest recipient of these treasures in Jerusalem, largely due to the efforts of Bezalel director Mordechai Narkiss (1897–1957), who spent several months in Germany examining and identifying many dispersed Jewish treasures, many originally seized by the ERR. These were all transferred to the successor IMJ after its establishment in 1965. Current estimates suggest that the Bezalel Museum received from JRSO/JCR "some 250 paintings, 250 works on paper, and about 700 objects of Judaica." The personal papers of Mordechai Narkiss in the Israel Museum Archives document these figures and his search for Museum acquisitions.²⁶ Many of these items are today beautifully exhibited in the extensive museum complex. Various files in the IMJ Archives and Registration office, including acquisition registers, preserve transfer papers and document the source of many of the heirless works of art that came to Israel.

Given the present increased international concern about provenance of items of Jewish ownership earlier declared "heirless," and heightened demands for restitution to heirs or to revived Jewish communities in Europe, IMJ staff are today paying considerable attention to such issues. Some of the museum divisions have recently been more open to possible restitution and identification of possible heirs; IMJ can cite the recent restitutions of several important paintings. In 2008, IMJ staged a special exhibition with published catalogue, *Orphaned Art: Looted Art from the Holocaust in the Israel Museum*.²⁷ Simultaneously, the IMJ jointly hosted an exhibition from Paris, *Looking for Owners*, featuring a selection of the so-called MNR paintings that were recovered by the National Museums of France, but with heirs not identified or as yet unclaimed.²⁸

²⁶ Shlomit Steinberg, "On the Road to Recovery: World War II and the Retrieval of Looted Artworks," in *Orphaned Art: Looted Art from the Holocaust in the Israel Museum* (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 2008), quote from p. 16; Steinberg provides several quotes from the Narkiss papers, pp. 13–16.

²⁷ Steinberg, *Orphaned Art*, catalogue of the exhibition with accompanying CD-ROM.

²⁸ The exhibition from Paris was curated by Isabelle Le Masne de Chermont and Laurence Sigal-Klagsbald, accompanied by their catalogue, *À qui appartenaient ces tableaux? La politique française de recherche de provenance, de garde et de restitution des oeuvres d'art pillées durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale/ Looking for*

Of special interest in connection with ERR loot, for example, 25 still “heirless” paintings and works on paper have been identified as having been registered in the ERR Neuwied Collection, transferred by the JRSO to the Bezalel Museum after the MCCC was closed down. That ERR collection, while its inventory is retained with other ERR-seized French and Belgian Jewish art collections that were processed in the Jeu de Paume, did not pass through Paris. Reportedly comprising works of art seized by the Möbel-Aktion in Belgium and the Netherlands, it was assembled in a customs warehouse in the town of Neuwied on the Rhine north of Koblenz, whence it was dispatched to the ERR repository in Schloss Kögl in Austria. Removed to the MCCC by U.S. Museum, Fine Arts and Archives (MFA&A) officers in 1946, it was turned over to JRSO in 1949. As with other Möbel-Aktion seizures, it is exceedingly difficult to trace the original owner of individual items. All of the 25 paintings and works on paper recently identified are now included with images in the IMJ website database (see below); although they are not there identified with the ERR Neuwied Collection numbers. They are, however, all now listed with their Neuwied codes (Neuw. or NWD) in the ERR Jeu de Paume database with indication that they are now held in IMJ.

The IMJ Judaica Department, on the other hand, has been less responsive to restitution claims, especially those from Jewish communities as opposed to individuals. A blatant example is the 18th century Dutch Ashkenazi Torah mantle now held in IMJ and exhibited on the “Provenance Research Online” website (see below), which the Leiden Jewish Community had loaned in 1936 to the Jewish Historical Museum (JMH) in Amsterdam. Seized with the rest of JMH collections and taken to Frankfurt for IEJ, it was found by the US Army in Hungen and taken to the Offenbach Archival Depot, but not properly identified nor returned to the Netherlands with the rest of the collection. Instead it went to JRSO and eventually to the Bezalel Museum in Jerusalem. The Leiden Jewish Community submitted a claim after it was discovered in 2007, but as of late 2015, the mantle remains in as part of an IMJ display.²⁹ Current legal provisions in Israel make restitution easier to individual Holocaust victims than to prewar communities, but, the principles in this case involved will require further clarification.

4.4.1. WEBSITE EXHIBIT: “World War Provenance Research Online”

<http://www.imj.org.il/Imagine/irso>

The Museum website section “World War Provenance Research Online” has developed a special display with three subsidiary databases from different departments of the museum – Paintings, Prints and Drawings, and Judaica – with full descriptions and images of individual items, including JRSO number (which in most cases was the same as the MCCC number), or in the case of Judaica, the number from the Wiesbaden Central Collecting Point, and the Bezalel

Owners. French Policy for Provenance Research, Restitution and Custody of Art Stolen in France during World War Two (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 2008); on-line version (with images of paintings) at <http://www.imj.org.il/exhibitions/2008/MNR/index.html>. See the more detailed French on-line version of the MNR database, as part of the Rose Valland website: <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/mnr/pres.htm>. The introduction to that catalogue focuses on the ERR seizure of French Jewish art collections is also presented at the same website in English and French: <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/mnr/AH/MnR-apercu-hist.htm>.

²⁹ As recounted with images by Julie-Marthe Cohen, “Theft and Restitution of Judaica in the Netherlands During and After the Second World War,” in *Neglected Witnesses* (2011), p. 220. The mantle is shown on the IMJ website with the Wiesbaden CCP no. T87, and the IMJ accession number B50.02.1838; 151/003.

(now IMJ) accession number. Contact is suggested in connection with any item listed in case of information or questions about any item listed.³⁰

Website Links to Foreign Internet Sources: “Looted Art Data Bases”

<http://www.imj.org.il/exhibitions/2008/MNR/Kiosk/index.html>

In addition to its own database of ‘orphaned’, unclaimed, or heirless art in its own collections, the IMJ website provides links to a number of related Internet sites in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States.

³⁰ For questions or further information about any of the items listed, IMJ suggests contacting Bareket Mann, Registrar, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, P.O.B. 7117 (bareket@imj.org.il).