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The author would be grateful for any comments and corrections to this Survey. Please send comments and corrections to pkg@iisg.nl.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, ABBREVIATIONS, TECHNICAL NOTE AND FOREWORD) AND THE**

INTRODUCTION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	9
Abbreviations and Acronyms	13
Technical Note	19
Foreword	23
Introduction	25
1. BELGIUM	49
Introductory Remarks	50
1.1. Archives générales du Royaume (AGR) / Algemeen Rijksarchief (AGA), Brussels	53
1.1.1. Ministère des Finances, Office des Séquestres. Archives du séquestre de la Brüsseler Treuhandgesellschaft / Ministerie van Financiën, Dienst van het Sequester. Archief van het sekwester van de Brüsseler Treuhandgesellschaft	53
1.1.1.1. Brüsseler Treuhandgesellschaft (BTG), blok / bloc III: Files related to the Möbel-Aktion (examples)	54
1.1.2. Ministère des Affaires économiques (MAE), Office de Récupération économique / Ministerie Economische Zaken (MEZ), Dienst Economische Recuperatie	55
1.1.3. Ministère des Travaux publics et de la Reconstruction, Administration Dommages de Guerre / Ministerie van Transport en Infrastructuur, Dienst Oorlogsschade	55
1.2. La Direction générale Victimes de la Guerre, Service Archives et Documentation / De Directie-generaal Oorlogsslachtoffers, Dienst Archief en Documentatie, Brussels	57
1.2.1. Documents Relating to the ERR	58
1.2.2. Documents Relating to the Möbel-Aktion	58
1.3. Centre d'études et de documentation Guerre et sociétés contemporaines (CEGES) / Studie- en documentatiecentrum Oorlog en Hedendaagse Maatschappij (SOMA), Brussels	61
1.3.1. ERR-Related Materials	61
1.4. Stadarchief Gent / Archives de la ville de Gand	63
2. FRANCE	65
Introductory Remarks	66
2.1. Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes (MAEE), Direction des Archives, La Courneuve	73
2.1.1. Collection des fonds des services de la récupération artistiques (RA), y compris la Commission de récupération artistique (CRA)	73
2.1.1.1. ERR Inventories and Related Documents	78
2.1.1.1.1. Archives Rosenberg (Photocopies of ERR Inventories from the MCCP)	78
2.1.1.1.2. ERR Shipping Inventories of French Collections (Photocopies from Washington, DC)	82

2.1.1.1.3. Related Documentation from U.S. Sources Regarding the Above ERR Inventories	83
2.1.1.1.4. Other Original ERR Documents or Copies Collected by Rose Valland	84
2.1.1.2. Selected Case Research Files (from French restitution offices)	85
2.1.1.3. Sous-commission des livres (SCL)	90
2.1.1.4. RA Card Files	91
2.1.1.5. Photographs	94
2.1.1.6. French Postwar Claims Files for Plundered Cultural Property	96
2.1.1.6.1. CRA Claims Files (Dossiers des propriétaires spoliés), Cartons RA 1- 69	96
2.1.1.6.2. OBIP Files for Owner Claims for Plundered Cultural Property	98
2.1.1.6.3. Printed French Registers of War Losses	98
2.1.2. Archives de l'occupation française en Allemagne et en Autriche	99
2.2. Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes (MAEE), Centre des archives diplomatiques de Nantes (CADN)	101
2.2.1. Records of the Office des biens et intérêts privés (OBIP)	101
2.3. Archives des Musées Nationaux (AMN), Paris	103
2.3.1. Série R: Les Musées nationaux pendant la Seconde guerre mondiale et l'évacuation des oeuvres	104
2.3.2. Annotated reference copies of <i>Répertoire des biens spoliés en France</i>	104
2.4. Archives Nationales – site de Paris (AN-Paris)	106
2.4.1. Série AB XIX: Documents isolés et papiers d'érudits	106
2.4.2. Série AJ 38: Commissariat général aux questions juives (CGQJ) et du Service de restitution des biens des victimes des lois et mesures de spoliation	107
2.4.3. Série AJ 40: Archives allemandes de la Seconde Guerre mondiale	109
2.4.3.1. AJ 40/1-415 and 439-990: Militärbefehlshaber in Belgien und Nordfrankreich (MB BelgNfr, Commandant militaire en Belgique et le Nord de la France) and Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich (MBF, Commandant militaire en France)	109
2.4.3.2. AJ 40/1027-1105: Devisenschutzkommando Frankreich (DSK)	112
2.4.3.3. AJ 40/1671-1683: Trial of Hermann Bunjes	113
2.4.4. Série 3W/347-359: Archives de Berlin	113
2.4.5. Série BB 35: Tribunaux militaires internationaux (TMI)	114
2.4.6. Série F 17: Ministère de l'instruction publique	114
2.4.7. Série F 37: Ministère de Finances, Commissions financiers	116
2.4.8. Série Z 6: Les archives de la Cour de justice	116
2.5. Mémorial de la Shoah, Centre de documentation juive contemporaine (CDJC), Paris	117
2.5.1. Archives de Nuremberg	118
2.5.1.1. Archives de Nuremberg – Rosenberg	118
2.5.1.2. Archives de Nuremberg: Other ERR and Rosenberg Documents	129
2.5.2. Les Authorities allemandes en France	131
2.5.2.1. L'État-Major Allemand / Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich (MBF)	132
2.5.2.2. Fonds Gestapo France	135

2.5.2.3. Collection Ambassade d'Allemagne	136
2.5.2.4. Dossier du procès Otto Abetz	137
2.5.3. Direction des services de l'armistice (DSA)	139
2.5.4. Commissariat général aux questions juives (CGQJ)	139
2.5.5. Copies of Documents from the Bundesarchiv Koblenz	142
2.6. Dépôt central des archives de la justice militaire, Le Blanc	144
3. GERMANY	145
Introductory Remarks	146
3.1. Bundesarchiv (BArch), Berlin-Lichterfelde	151
3.1.1. Bestand NS 30: Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR)	154
3.1.2. Bestand NS 8: Kanzlei Rosenberg	155
3.1.3. Bestand NS 15: Beauftragter des Führers der NSDAP für die Überwachung der gesamten geistigen und weltanschaulichen Schulung und Erziehung der NSDAP (DBFU)	159
3.1.4. Bestand NS 43: Aussenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP	163
3.1.5. Bestand R 6: Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete (RMbO)	163
3.1.6. Bestand R 94: Reichskommissar für die Ukraine (RKU)	166
3.1.7. Bestand R 90: Reichskommissar für das Ostland (RKO)	167
3.1.8. Bestand R 92: Generalkommissar in Riga	169
3.1.9. Bestand R 93: Generalkommissar für Weissruthenien in Minsk	170
3.1.10. Bestand R 91: Gebietskommissare im Geschäftsbereich des Reichskommissars für das Ostland	170
3.1.11. Bestand NS 6: Partei-Kanzlei der NSDAP	171
3.1.12. Bestand R 153: Publikationstelle (PuSte), Berlin-Dahlem	172
3.2. Bundesarchiv (BArch), Koblenz	174
3.2.1. Bestand B 323: Treuhandverwaltung für Kulturgut bei der Oberfinanzdirektion München (TVK)	174
3.2.1.1. ERR Art-Looting Activities in Occupied France	178
3.2.1.1.1. ERR Inventories of Seized Jewish Art Collections	178
3.2.1.1.2. ERR Inventories of Art Objects from the Möbel-Aktion (M-Aktion)	184
3.2.1.1.3. Other Inventories of Seized French Jewish Collections	185
3.2.1.1.4. Other Documentation on ERR Cultural Plunder in France	188
3.2.1.1.5. ERR Art Shipping Lists and Repository Files	191
3.2.1.1.6. ERR Restoration Office: Files of Otto Klein	194
3.2.1.2. ERR Photographs (French and Belgian Jewish Collections)	195
3.2.1.2.1. ERR Fotothek (Art Photo Collection)	195
3.2.1.2.2. Miscellaneous ERR Exhibition Photographs and Lists	196
3.2.1.2.3. Photographs of Möbel-Aktion Operations	197
3.2.1.3. Art Collections of Nazi Leaders: Plunder, Exchanges, and the Art Market	198
3.2.1.3.1. Sonderauftrag Linz	198
3.2.1.3.2. Martin Bormann Activities and Art Collection	201
3.2.1.3.3. Hermann Göring Collection	201
3.2.1.3.4. Dienststelle Mühlmann	203
3.2.1.3.5. Wartime Dealers and the Art Market (selections)	203

3.2.1.4. Postwar MFA&A and MCCP Processing and Restitution Files	204
3.2.1.4.1. MFA&A Removal Reports (with some ERR Repository Files)	204
3.2.1.4.2. MCCP Property Cards Art	207
3.2.1.4.3. MCCP Art Photograph Collection on Microfiche (not part of B 323)	210
3.2.1.4.4. Wiesbaden Property Cards Art and Custody Receipts	210
3.2.1.4.5. MCCP Restitution Documentation for ERR Art Loot	211
3.2.1.4.6. MFA&A, MCCP, and TVK Reports and Reference Files	215
3.2.3. Bestand B 401: Bundesamt für äussere Restitutionen	217
3.2.2.1. U.S. Microfilms with ERR Documentation from France	217
3.2.2.2. Microfilms of ERR Photo Albums for Hitler	218
3.3. Bundesarchiv-Bildarchiv, Koblenz	219
3.3.1. Bild 131 (ERR)	219
3.3.2. Bild 1-3: Subject Collections (with Scattered Photographs from the ERR)	220
3.3.3. E2.0915814/3: ERR (films 1-100) and E2.0915814/4: ERR (films 101-135): ERR Staff Photographs	220
3.4. Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv (BArch-MA), Freiburg	221
3.4.1. Bestand RS 4: Sonderkommando Künsberg	221
3.4.2. Military Commanders in Occupied France (RW 35) and Belgium (RW 36)	222
3.4.2.1. RW 35: Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich (MBF)	224
3.4.2.2. RW 36: Militärbefehlshaber in Belgien und Nordfrankreich (MB BelgNfr)	227
3.5. Auswärtiges Amt, Politisches Archiv (PA AA), Berlin	228
3.5.1. Sonderkommando Künsberg	230
3.5.2. Handakten Luther	232
3.5.3. Deutsche Botschaft Paris	232
3.6. Bundesamt für zentrale Dienste und offene Vermögensfragen (BADV), Berlin	234
3.7. Institut für Zeitgeschichte (IfZ), Munich	239
3.8. Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte (ZI), Munich	240
4. LITHUANIA	243
Introductory Remarks	244
4.1. Centrinis Valstybinis archyvas (CVA), Vilnius	245
4.1.1. Fond R-633: Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg / Reichsleiterio Rozenbergo operatyuinis stabas okupuotoms sritims	
4.1.2. Fond R-1390: Vilniaus žydų muziejaus dokumentų kolekcija	245
4.1.3. Fond R-1421: Vilniaus žydų getas	248
4.1.4. Žydų mokslo institutas (YIVO)	249

5. THE NETHERLANDS	251
Introductory Remarks	252
5.1. NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Amsterdam	256
5.1.1. Archief 093a: Einsatzstab Rosenberg	256
5.1.2. Archief 094: Omnia Treuhandgesellschaft m.b.H.	260
5.1.3. Archief 265: Rosenberg Files	260
5.1.4. Doc II-215C: Einsatzstab Rosenberg	262
5.1.5. Doc I-1434: Alfred Rosenberg (Diary 1939-1940)	263
5.1.6. Archief 077: Generalkommissariat für das Sicherheitswesen / Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer Nordwest	263
5.1.7. Archief 091: Deutsche Krankenkasse für die Niederlande	263
5.1.8. Archief 281: A.J. Van der Leeuw Collection, Oorlogsmisdrijven, roof en recuperatie	264
6. THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION	267
Introductory Remarks	268
6.1. Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi voennyi arkhiv (RGVA), Moscow	270
6.1.1. Fond 1401k: Operativnyi shtab Rosenberga	270
6.1.2. Fond 1358k: Ministerstvo po delam okkupirovannykh vostochnykh oblastei, g. Berlin [Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete]	272
6.2. Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (GA RF), Moscow	275
6.2.1. Fond 7445: Mezhdunarodnyi voennyi tribunal dlia glavnykh nemetskikh prestupnikov (Niurnbergskii protsess)	275
7. UKRAINE	277
Introductory Remarks	278
7.1. Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv vyshcheykh orhaniv vldy ta upravlinnia Ukraïny (TsDAVO), Kyiv (Kiev)	279
7.1.1. Fond 3676: Shtab impers'koho kerivnyka (reikhsliaitera) Rozenberha dlia okupovanykh skhidnykh oblastei [<i>sic</i>], mm. Berlin, Kyiv	283
7.1.2. Fond 3674: Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg Shtab imperskogo rukovoditelia (reikhsliaitera) Rozenberga dlia okkupirovannykh Zapadnykh oblastei i Niderlandov. Rabochaia grupa Bel'hiï	290
7.1.3. Fond 3206: Reichskomissariat Ukraïny (RKU), Rivne	291
8. THE UNITED KINGDOM	295
Introductory Remarks	296
8.1. The National Archives of the United Kingdom (TNA), Kew	297
8.1.1. T 209: British Committee on the Preservation and Restitution of Works of Art, Archives and Other Material in Enemy Hands (Macmillan Committee): Minutes, Correspondence and Papers	297
8.1.2. FO 1020: Foreign Office and Predecessors: Allied Commission for Austria (British Element): Headquarters and Regional Files (ACA Series)	297
8.1.3. Other TNA Record Groups of Potential Relevance	298

8.2. The Imperial War Museum (IWM), London	299
8.2.1. FO 645 (DX): International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg (IMT), November 1945-October 1946	299
9. THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	301
Introductory Remarks	302
9.1. National Archives of the United States, College Park (NACP)	304
9.1.1. RG 242: Foreign Records Seized (Captured Records)	311
9.1.1.1. Microfilms of German Records prepared at Alexandria, VA	311
9.1.2. RG 239: Records of the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas (The Roberts Commission)	313
9.1.3. RG 226: Records of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS)	319
9.1.3.1. Formerly Security-Classified Intelligence Reports (XL Series)	320
9.1.3.2. Security-Classified Reports Concerning Recovery of Looted Art Treasures in Germany	322
9.1.3.3. Records of the OSS History Office	322
9.1.3.4. Director's Office and Field Station Records	322
9.1.3.5. Washington and Field Station Records	324
9.1.4. RG 331: Records of Allied Operational and Occupation Headquarters, World War II, Records of Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF)	324
9.1.5. RG 260: Records of U.S. Occupation Headquarters, World War II, Records of the Office of Military Government for Germany, U.S. (OMGUS)	330
9.1.5.1. Records of the Office of the Adjutant General	332
9.1.5.2. Records of the Property Division: Records of the Property Control and External Assets Branch, Museums, Fine Arts, and Archives Section (MFA&A)	332
9.1.5.3. Records of the Property Division: Records Concerning the Central Collecting Points ("Ardelia Hall Collection")	336
9.1.5.3.1. Records of OMGUS Headquarters Relating to the Central Collecting Points	336
9.1.5.3.2. Records of the Wiesbaden Central Collecting Point (WCCP)	341
9.1.5.3.3. Records of the Offenbach Archival Depot (OAD)	348
9.1.5.3.4. Records of the Munich Central Collection Point (MCCP)	351
9.1.5.4. Records of the Property Division: Miscellaneous Records	377
9.1.5.5. Records of the Education and Cultural Relations (ECR) Division, Records of the Cultural Affairs Branch	380
9.1.6. RG 153: Records of the Office of the Judge Advocate General [U.S. War Department], War Crimes Branch	381
9.1.7. RG 238: Collection of World War II War Crimes Records: Records of the Office of the U.S. Chief Counsel for the Prosecution of Axis Criminality (OUSCCPAC)	382
9.1.7.1. PS (Paris-Storey) Files	387
9.1.7.2. Staff Evidence Analysis (SEA) Forms	388
9.1.7.3. Prosecution Exhibits, United States	388
9.1.7.4. Prosecution Exhibits, France	396

9.1.7.5. Interrogations, Summaries of Interrogations, and Related Records	397
9.1.7.6. Audiovisual Documentation from the IMT	398
9.1.8. Still Pictures Branch	398
9.1.8.1. Images from RG 239: Roberts Commission (Series PA and RC)	399
9.1.8.2. Images from RG 260 (OMGUS)	400
9.1.8.2.1. RG 260, Series ERR (260-ERR): Photographs of Artworks Appropriated by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg in France	400
9.1.8.2.2. RG 260, Series ERRA (260-ERRA): Photographs of Artworks Appropriated by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg in France, used by the Chief of Counsel for the Prosecution of Axis Criminality (collection of copy prints)	401
9.1.8.2.3. RG 260, Series JP (260-JP): Photographs of an Exhibit of Artworks Appropriated by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg, held at the Jeu de Paume Museum, Paris, France, November 1943	402
9.1.8.2.4. RG 260, Series MP (260-MP): Photographs Made by the Munich Central Collecting Point, OMGUS, of Artworks Appropriated by Germany during World War II	402
9.1.8.2.5. RG 260, Series M CCP (260-M CCP): Photographs of the Restitution of Art and Other Activities at the Munich Central Collecting Point	405
9.1.8.2.6. RG-260, Series L (260-L): Photographs of Artworks Looted for the Museum of German Culture, Linz, Austria	405
9.1.8.2.7. RG 260, Series WAE (260-WAE): Photographs of Activities and Exhibits at the Wiesbaden CCP Restitution	406
9.1.8.2.8. RG 260, Series W (260-W): Negatives from the Wiesbaden CCP	407
9.1.8.2.9. RG 260, Series PHOAD (260-PHOAD): Photographs of the Operations of the Offenbach Archival Depot	409
9.1.8.2.10. RG 260, Series LM (260-LM) and RG 260, Series XL (260-XL)	411
9.1.8.3. RG 242, Series RPG (242-RPG): Photographic Prints Assembled by German Occupation Forces, Depicting Social, Economic, and Cultural Life in the Soviet Union	412
9.1.8.4. RG 59, Series RT (59-RT): L Negatives of Images of Russian [Ukrainian] Icons	413
9.2. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), Archive, Washington, DC	414
9.2.1. Collections of Original Documents	414
9.2.1.1. RG-06.022: Lena Fishman Fagen Collection	414
9.2.1.2. Robert M.W. Kempner Collection	414
9.2.2. Microform Copies of ERR Documentation	415
9.2.3. On-line Jeu de Paume Database	415

9.3. YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, New York City	416
9.3.1. RG 215: Berlin Collection	417
9.3.2. RG 216: Hauptamt Wissenschaft (Berlin)	424
9.3.3. RG 222: Institut der NSDAP zur Erforschung der Judenfrage (IEJ), Frankfurt	425
9.3.4. RG 207: Salonika Jewish Community	430
Appendix 1: French and Belgian Jewish Art Collections Processed by the ERR in the Jeu de Paume, 1940-1944: A Preliminary Correlation Table for Sources	A1-1
Appendix 2: Major ERR Repositories for Plundered Cultural Property	A2-1
Appendix 3: U.S.-U.K. Investigative Reports and Interrogations	A3-1
Appendix 4: ERR Internal Publications	A4-1
Bibliography	B-1

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PKG

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

The following list contains abbreviations and acronyms used in the Survey. Location has been given only for institutions that still exist. Details concerning historical institutions and units are provided in the Survey text.

AA	Auswärtiges Amt (Foreign Office), Berlin
AG	Arbeitsgruppe (Working Group)
AGR	Archives Générale de Royaume (National Archives), Brussels
AHC	Ardelia Hall Collection
ALIU	Art Looting Investigatory Unit
AMG	Allied Military Government
AMN	Archives de Musées Nationaux (Archives of the National Museums), Paris
AN-Paris	Archives nationales de France, Site de Paris (National Archives of France, Paris Site)
APA	Aussenpolitisches Amt (Foreign Policy Office)
ARA	Algemeen Rijksarchief (National Archives), Brussels
BA	Bundesarchiv, former acronym; now BArch
BADV	Bundesamt für zentrale Dienste und offene Vermögensfragen (Federal Office for Central Services and Unresolved Property Issues), Berlin
BArch	Bundesarchiv (Federal Archives)
BArch-MA	Bundesarchiv, Militärarchiv (Federal Archives-Military Archives), Freiburg
BIA	Bureau d'investigation artistique (Office of Art Investigation)
BTG	Brüsseler Treuhandgesellschaft (Brussels Trust Company)
CADN	Centre des archives diplomatiques de Nantes (Center for Diplomatic Archives in Nantes)
CARAN	Centre d'accueil et de recherche des Archives nationales (National Archives Center for Reception and Research), Paris
CCP	Central Collecting Point
CDJC	Centre de documentation juive contemporaine (Center of Contemporary Jewish Documentation), Paris

CEGES	Centre d'Études et de Documentation de Guerre et Sociétés contemporaines (Center for Historical Research and Documentation on War and Contemporary Society), Brussels
CGQJ	Commissariat général aux questions juives (General Commissariat for Jewish Questions)
CHAN	Centre historique des Archives nationales (Historical Center of the National Archives), Paris; now AN-Paris
CIR	Consolidated Intelligence Report
CRA	Commission de récupération artistique (Commission for the Recovery of Art), Paris
CVA	Centrinis Valstybinis archyvas (Central State Archive), Vilnius
DBFU	Beauftragter des Führers für die Überwachung der gesamten geistigen und weltanschaulichen Schulung und Erziehung der NSDAP (Commissioner of the Führer for the Supervision of the Entire Intellectual and Ideological Schooling and Training of the NSDAP)
DGER	Direction général de l'enseignement et de la recherche (General Directorate for Study and Research), Paris
DHM	Deutsches Historisches Museum (German Historical Museum), Berlin
DIR	Detailed Intelligence Report
DOS	Dienst voor de Oorlogsslachtoffer (Service for War Victims), Brussels
DSK	Devisenschutzkommando (Currency Protection Commando)
ERR	Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (Operational Staff Reichsleiter Rosenberg)
GA RF	Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation), Moscow
Gestapo	Geheime Staatspolizei (Secret State Police)
GFP	Geheime Feldpolizei (Secret Field Police)
HAG	Hauptarbeitsgruppe (Main Working Group)
IEJ	Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage (Institute for Research on the Jewish Question), Frankfurt am Main, later Hungen
IfZ	Institut für Zeitgeschichte (Institute of Contemporary History), Munich
IISG / IISH	Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (International Institute of Social History), Amsterdam
IMT	International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg

JHM	Joods Historisch Museum (Jewish Historical Museum), Amsterdam
LV ABM	Landesverwaltung der Archive, Bibliotheken und Museen (Provincial Authority for Archives, Libraries, and Museums)
MAEE	Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes, (Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs), Paris
M-Aktion	Möbel-Aktion (Furniture Operation)
MBF	Der Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich (Military Commander in France)
MCCP	Munich Central Collecting Point
MEA	Ministère des Affaires économiques (Ministry of Economic Affairs), Brussels
MEZ	Ministerie van Economische Zaken (Ministry of Economic Affairs), Brussels
MFA&A	Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives
MNR	Musées Nationaux Récupération (National Museums of Recovered Artwork)
MVD	Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del (Ministry of Internal Affairs)
NACP	National Archives of the United States, College Park, MD
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
NKVD	Narodnyi komissariat vnutrennikh del (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs)
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (National-Socialist German Workers Party)
OAD	Offenbach Archival Depot
OBIP	Office des biens et intérêts privés (Office of Private Property and Interests)
OUSCCPAC	Office of United States Chief Counsel for the Prosecution of Axis Criminality
OKH	Oberkommando des Heeres (High Command of the Army)
OKW	Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (High Command of the Armed Forces)
OMGUS	Office of Military Government, United States
OSS	Office of Strategic Services

PA AA	Politisches Archiv, Auswärtiges Amt (Political Archive of the Foreign Office), Berlin
PRO	Public Record Office; now TNA
PS	Paris-Storey
RA	Collection des fonds des services de la récupération artistiques (Collection of fonds from art recovery agencies), MAEE fond designation
RG	Record Group, NACP designation
RGVA	Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi voennyi arkhiv (Russian State Military Archive), Moscow
RIOD	Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (Royal Institute of War Documentation); now NIOD
RKO	Reichskommissariat / Reichskommissar für das Ostland (Reich Commissar / Commissariat for Ostland)
RKU	Reichskommissariat / Reichskommissar Ukraine (Reich Commissar / Commissariat for Ukraine)
RMbO	Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete (Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories)
RSHA	Reichssicherheitshauptamt (Reich Security Main Office)
RV	Rose Valland, former MAEE fond designation
SEA	Staff Evidence Analysis
SCL	Sous-commission des livres (Sub-Commission for Books)
SD	Sicherheitsdienst (Security Service)
SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force
Sipo / SiPo	Sicherheitspolizei (Security Police)
SOMA	Studie en Documentatiecentrum Oorlog en Hedendaagse Maatschappij (Center for Historical Research and Documentation on War and Contemporary Society), Brussels
SROA	Service de remise en place des oeuvres d'art (Service for the Return of Works of Art)
SVG	Service des Victimes de la Guerre (Service for War Victims), Brussels
TMI	Tribunal militaire internationale (International Military Tribunal)
TNA	The National Archives, London-Kew; formerly PRO

TsDAVO	Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv vyshchych orhaniv derzhavnoi vldy ta upravlinnia Ukraïny (Central State Archive of the Highest Agencies of State Power and Administration of Ukraine), Kyiv (Kiev)
TsDAZhR URSS	Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv Zhovtnevoï Revoliutsii Ukraïns'koï Radians'koï Sotsialistychnoï Respubliki (Central State Archive of the October Revolution, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), now TsDAVO
TsGAOR SSSR	Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Oktiabr'skoi Revoliutsii Soiuzu Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik (Central State Archive of the October Revolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), now part of GA RF
TsGOA SSSR	Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi osobyi arkhiv Soiuzu Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik (Central State Special Archive of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), now part of RGVA
TsKhIDK	Tsentr khraneniia istoriko-dokumental'nykh kolleksi (Center for the Preservation of Historico-Documentary Collections), now part of RGVA
TVK	Treuhandverwaltung für Kulturgut (Trust Administration for Cultural Assets)
URO	United Restitution Organization
USHMM	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC
YIVO	YIVO Jewish Research Institute, before 1939 in Wilno, Poland; after 1939 in New York
ZBHS	Zentralbibliothek der Hohen Schule (Central Library of the Hohe Schule NSDAP)

TECHNICAL NOTE

Numerical Hierarchy: Given the scope and complexity of this compendium, the publisher has introduced a numerical hierarchical system often found in European archival literature. This system is intended to facilitate cross-referencing within the text and to provide a modicum of consistency for the description of archival materials within varying repositories in different countries. The repositories described differ widely in their own organization and usage, and at times, the numerical system imposed may appear at odds with the internal usage of a given repository. In general, the levels breakdown as follows:

Level 1 COUNTRY

Level 2 REPOSITORY

Level 3 RECORD GROUP (BESTAND, FOND, ETC.)

Level 4 SERIES

Level 5 SUB-SERIES

Levels 3-5 tend to denote the formal names of record groups, series, and sub-series within an archive, but this is not always the case. In some instances, unnumbered headings have been inserted to designate or highlight particular group of ERR-related documents not indicated as such by the archive itself.

Document-level descriptions are usually preceded by an en-dash.

Documentary Coverage: The descriptions of archival holdings here focus on two broad groups of documentation.

First and foremost are those documents created by the ERR, its working groups and special staffs, as well as the projected university-level Hohe Schule for the Nazi elite and its Central Library (ZBHS) and institutes, in particular the Institute for Research on the Jewish Question Research (IEJ). Also included are the records of the related Furniture Operation (Möbel-Aktion), which was initially run by the western affairs office (Amt Westen) of Rosenberg's Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories (RMbO). The documents discussed address not only the confiscation and processing of cultural assets, but also their shipment, distribution, and storage in repositories throughout the prewar Reich, Austria, and the Sudetenland.

The second general group consists of the documentation created by the western Allies and various governments in the process of locating, recovering, identifying, and returning the archives, books, art, and other cultural or religious objects seized by the ERR or during the the Möbel-Aktion.

Beyond these two groups are such related records as the materials prepared for the Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg, where Rosenberg was among the defendants.

Level of Detail: Descriptions herein differ from repository to repository in depth and extent. In larger repositories where detailed finding aids are available to researchers, the tendency is to rely on those finding aids and to provide only summary descriptions. Two key exceptions are: 1) the Bundesarchiv Koblenz, because the descriptions of record group B 323 located here were prepared for this Survey long before the recently completed German finding aid went on-line, and 2) the Archives of the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MAEE) in

La Courneuve (near Paris), because the coverage of select files found in this Survey represents the first detailed descriptions of these records available to the general public. More detail is also given to record groups where the only available finding aids are brief folder lists, as is often the case at the National Archives of the United States in College Park, MD (NACP).

For smaller repositories and for repositories with limited ERR-related materials, such as YIVO in New York and the Central State Archive (CVA) in Vilnius, more detail is provided at the file and document levels.

Transliteration of Cyrillic: For transcription of Cyrillic references, the Library of Congress system of transliteration is used throughout, modified by the omission of ligatures. Exceptions may appear when an alternate is used in a documentary title or text.

Geographic Names: In general, place names are rendered in accepted English forms (Moscow, Cracow, etc.) or in a form derived from the present-day official language of a country. The major exception to this rule are the ERR evacuation sites and repositories in the Sudetenland. These are given in German first with Czech in parentheses, for example, Troppau (Cz. Opava). These sites appear so often in the German and the U.S. documentation that asserting the Czech and switching to German repository names would disrupt the text and create confusion.

Where names are almost phonetically identical in their English, German, and local forms, the local form alone is used, for example, Novgorod, Dnipropetrovsk, Tukums, Pärnu, etc. Where the German and local names fundamentally differ from one another, the local names come first with the German in parentheses: Tallinn (Ger. Reval), Pskov (Ger. Pleskau), Mohileu (Ger. Mogilew), etc. Here, too, when a well-known English form is nearly the same phonetically as either of the forms given, no additional variation is added.

Where cities changed hands in 1939 or in 1945, they are noted as follows: Niasvizh (prewar Nieśwież, Poland), Ratibor (postwar Racibórz, Poland), etc. In the case of Vilnius, Vilna is added to accommodate the predominant English form from between the world wars, as well as the YIVO preference: Vilnius (also Vilna; prewar Wilno, Poland).

U.S. postwar documents refer to Altaussee as Alt Aussee. Within this Survey, Altaussee has been used.

Acronyms: Acronyms reflect the original language of the institution or other agency they represent. In the case of Belgium, both Flemish and French acronyms are presented. A list of the acronyms used in this text (along with names in their original language and English translation) is given. The full form of a repository or agency name is also provided upon first use in each country chapter and repository-level section.

Archival Terminology in the Post-Soviet Realm: In the Soviet Union, as well as archives today in Russia and Ukraine, the Russian and Ukrainian archival term *fond* can be more extensive than a “record group,” because it can include personal papers or what Western archivists would refer to as a “collection.” Hence the term has been anglicized and should not be translated as “collection.” That would create confusion about the type of archival materials involved.

For citations from Russian and Ukrainian archives, references are given as follows: archival acronym, fond number, inventory or series (*opis'* in Russian or *opys* in Ukrainian) and file unit (*edinitsa khraneniia* or *delo* in Russian or *sprava* in Ukrainian). In both Russian and Ukrainian, an *opis'* or *opys* is a series within a fond and a finding aid or inventory of file units. In citations of folios (pages) within a file, the letter “v” after a folio number indicates the overleaf (*verto*).

Names of Individuals and Art Collections: Particular attention has been given to identifying the correct names of owners whose cultural assets were confiscated by the ERR. Often, the only available documentation for these are ERR records, and in several cases, the ERR rendered names incorrectly or in a Germanized form. Of particular concern are the Jewish owners of art collections seized in France and processed by the ERR in the Jeu de Paume building in Paris.

The on-line database “Cultural Plunder by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR): Database of Art Objects at the Jeu de Paume,” a project of the Conference on Jewish Materials Claims Against Germany located at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (see Section 9.2.3.), is based on the original ERR records and thus adheres largely to ERR spellings, some of which went on to circulate in postwar documents, including U.S. intelligence reports and, most recently, *The AAM Guide to Provenance Research*. Appendix 1 of this volume is based on the names of collection owners such as they are found in French claims dossiers or other sources. ERR versions of names are also provided.

The French or ERR versions may not be the only versions of the names encountered. Some of the owners were of foreign nationality and their names often took another form upon assuming French citizenship. Some later filed postwar claims from countries other than France. In addition, different members of the same family sometimes used different forms of their name (or even a pseudonym) in different countries in the course of their flight from Nazi persecution. Accordingly, names can appear in slightly variant forms in the descriptions of the records below. It has not been possible to correct inconsistencies or provide alternate spellings for all of the victims, but where possible, corrections have been added.

Repository Websites: The links inserted in Survey functioned as of the date of publication. This does not preclude the possibility that some will change over time or be discontinued.

On-line Research Resources: The number of digitized resources available to researchers, including specialists working in provenance research, has expanded significantly in the last five years, ranging from the offerings of commercial vendors such as Footnote to those of state archives such as the ARGUS system of the Bundesarchiv. Most of these resources are explained at length in the text (see in particular Chapter 3, pp. xxxx-xxxx, Section 3.1.1., Section 3.1.2, and Section 3.6, as well as Section 9.1., pp. xxxx-xxxx, and Section 9.2.3.). Two items, however, should be mentioned here, as they bear on specific features of this Survey.

First, the company Footnote has so far posted on the Internet four NARA microfilm publications relevant to this Survey. During the editing of this volume, it was discovered that the links to images were did not change each time they were accessed. Therefore, for three of the four microfilm publications, the editors inserted the links beneath the proper file descriptions. Thus readers may quickly view the documents described in:

- *NARA Microfilm Publication M1942: Records Concerning the Central Collecting Points (“Ardelia Hall Collection”): Offenbach Archival Depot, 1946-1951;*
- *NARA Microfilm Publication M1782: OSS Art Looting Investigation Unit Reports, 1945-1946); and*
- *NARA Microfilm Publications M1270: Interrogations Records Prepared for War Crimes Proceedings at Nuernberg, 1945-1947.*

Time did not permit doing the same for the files described in *NARA Microfilm Publication M1947: Records Concerning The Central Collecting Points (“Ardelia Hall Collection”): Wiesbaden Central Collecting Point, 1945-1952*, which is much larger than the others. At the time of insertion, access to these collections was free. Since the summer of 2010, this is no longer the case. Readers who wish to view the holdings at footnote.com will have to subscribe.

Second, less important to provenance research, but important to the overall history of Alfred Rosenberg's activities, including the ERR, are the documents processed for the Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal (IMT) in Nuremberg. The proceedings and most of the documents entered in evidence before the IMT were later published in *Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg*, known to specialists as the "Blue Series." Within the Blue Series, the Nuremberg editors placed an asterisk after documents appearing in the document volumes of the series. The editors of this Survey have also adopted this practice as a service to researchers. This is all the more convenient, since the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress has posted the English edition of the Blue Series on-line (see Section 9.1.7.).

Telephone Numbers: Depending on provider, mobile or land-line, private or public, making local or long distance calls within some of the countries discussed in this Survey is not as straightforward as in other countries. Researchers should consult the Internet for the most up-to-date information on dialing telephone numbers in the country they plan to visit.

Printing: The Survey and its appendices are for the most part formatted on U.S. Letter-size throughout, as this prints well on DINA4-size paper as well. The sole exception is Appendix 1, which is on DINA4 and can be printed to U.S. Legal.

Updates: At least one update is planned twelve months after this Survey goes on-line. Thereafter, additional updates should follow on an annual basis. The compiler and the publisher would be exceedingly grateful for comments and corrections. Please send comments and corrections to pkg@iisg.nl.

FOREWORD

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference) is most pleased to sponsor the electronic publication of *Reconstructing the Record of Nazi Cultural Plunder: A Survey of the Dispersed Archives of the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR)* and to have assisted in some of its preparation. Compiled by Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, the preeminent expert on archives displaced as a result of the Second World War, this work promises to be of great use to historians, archivists, provenance researchers, museum curators, art dealers, and the heirs of families and communities that were plundered. Appropriately, it is being published by the International Institute for Social History, whose massive Amsterdam and Paris library and archival collections were plundered by the ERR beginning in 1940, and whose building on the Keizersgracht was used for the ERR headquarters in the Netherlands.

Dedicated since 1951 to providing a measure of justice for Jewish victims of Nazism, the Claims Conference has always been concerned with the restitution of plundered artworks, religious artifacts, archives, libraries, and other cultural property. But restitution efforts in this area have in the past yielded far fewer results than have efforts to reconstitute non-cultural assets such as immovable property and bank accounts, insurance policies, and other financial holdings. The reasons for this lack of progress include the ease of transporting artworks and books across international borders, the lack of public records documenting original ownership, the difficulty of tracing art transactions through the decades, and in some countries, the lack of government commitment to restitution, appropriate legislation, or a central authority to arbitrate claims.

At the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets in 1998, attention turned to the importance of archival records in understanding the plunder of art and other cultural property by the Nazis and their allies. Subsequently, at a seminar presentation at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in February 2000, Patricia Grimsted made an appeal for a virtual compendium of the widely dispersed records of one of the most important Nazi cultural looting agencies, the ERR. This idea was discussed with interest by delegates from many countries later in October of that year at the Vilnius International Forum on Holocaust-Era Looted Cultural Assets. During the next few years, Dr Grimsted continued to uncover the locations of scattered ERR files and wrote an article on patterns of ERR library and archival plunder during the Second World War, as well as articles on the postwar fate of the ERR's loot and its documentation.

At the same time, the Claims Conference and the World Jewish Restitution Organization (WJRO) began a comprehensive program to assist the further restitution of Jewish-owned art and cultural property lost and plundered during the Holocaust. Although a number of countries have compiled lists of cultural losses, there has been no large-scale attempt to determine the full scope of cultural property seized by the specific agencies of the Nazis and their allies that has not been restituted. Instead, the focus has been on checking the provenance of museum collections and on claims made by individual survivors and heirs of owners. But more often than not, families and communities do not have full knowledge of what was taken from them. Art dealers, major collectors, and institutions may have kept lists of artworks or catalogs of libraries and archives prior to the war, but often such lists and catalogs – like their owners – did not survive the Holocaust, and in any event, the vast majority of the millions of persons who were robbed had no such lists or catalogs. We therefore decided to try to reconstruct the historical-archival record so as 1) to develop listings of what was plundered by the Nazis and their allies; 2) to assemble

listings of cultural property known to have been restituted; and thereby 3) to produce net listings of outstanding items of cultural property that have yet to be returned.¹

In consultation with Dr Grimsted, the Claims Conference therefore undertook to support three major activities in regard to the records of the ERR. The first is the online publication of the current survey and preliminary guide. The second is the ongoing imaging of the ERR files located in Kyiv (Kiev), Moscow, Vilnius, Berlin, Koblenz, Amsterdam, Paris, New York, and Washington with a view to making the ERR records generally available. And the third is the joint creation with the USHMM of a Database of Art Objects at the Jeu de Paume that brings together in searchable form documentation, including photographs, of the over 20,000 major art objects that the ERR confiscated from Jews in Paris, in other parts of France and parts of Belgium and brought for processing to the Jeu de Paume in the Tuileries Gardens.²

These three activities should prove to be very helpful to the field of provenance research that has developed so greatly in the art world – but also in regard to libraries and Judaica - over the past decade or so. Indeed, in some respects these three activities taken as a whole may constitute a paradigm shift for the field. Instead of looking at collections in museums today, at lists of objects being sought by claimants, or at lists of objects found after the Second World War, the aim is to reconstruct the original record of what was seized and from whom by bringing together what remains of the detailed records that the Nazis – in this case specifically the ERR – kept of their looting.

This approach should prove helpful not only in the restitution of Jewish cultural property but also in the identification of the losses by non-Jewish institutions and families. In particular in its activities on the Eastern Front, the ERR necessarily had different priorities and different patterns of plunder than in Western Europe, since the only small private or Jewish-held collections were found in western areas annexed to the Soviet Union in 1939. As a result, unlike France, the ERR plundered cultural items primarily from Soviet state institutions. Countries such as Russia and Ukraine that are seeking the return of their cultural property often lack knowledge of what was taken from where by which Nazi agency and what was returned after the war.

In June 2009, 47 countries along with relevant non-governmental organizations participated in the Holocaust Era Assets Conference held in Prague and agreed to the Terezín Declaration, which calls for international cooperation in provenance research and the restitution of cultural property. This Survey directly relates to the goals of the Terezín Declaration and such international cooperation, and Dr Grimsted appropriately presented the project at the Prague Conference.

The importance of this Survey goes well beyond its relevance to provenance research and the restitution of cultural property, however. In its allocation grants to institutions in research and education, the Claims Conference has for many years been the principal supporter of Holocaust-related archival work. The importance of this Survey is equally in its relevance to the restitution of history.

Wesley A. Fisher, Director of Research
Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany

¹ Information regarding the Claims Conference / WJRO Looted Art and Cultural Property Initiative may be found at <http://www.claimscon.org> under “Artworks” and “Judaica”; for .

² See <http://www.errproject.org/jeudepaume/>.

INTRODUCTION

Alfred Rosenberg and the ERR: The Records of Plunder and the Fate of the Loot

The Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR), the special operational task force headed by Adolf Hitler's ideological henchman Reichsleiter Alfred Rosenberg (1893-1946), was the agency of the National-Socialist German Workers Party (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, NSDAP) organized specifically for plunder of cultural assets in German-occupied countries during the Second World War. Alfred Rosenberg, its chief, was hanged in Nuremberg on 16 October 1946, following conviction for "crimes against humanity," at the Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal. Although hardly the only culprit, the scale of systematic looting of art, archives, and libraries by the ERR from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Baltic and Black seas in the east was staggering. Memory of those crimes against culture linger on in the thousands of cultural and religious objects never returned to their owners or heirs and the hundreds of thousands of books never returned to the libraries from which they were seized.

Thanks to fastidious ERR documentation, much of the cultural loot found by the western Allies was ultimately returned. By bringing together more of the paper trail left by the ERR in the Survey that follows, perhaps we can better map the plunder if not hope for more returns. Some looted items repatriated to the country of seizure, to France for example, have yet to be identified as to their owners. Soviet authorities never utilized the ERR documents they captured for cultural restitution, and many objects returned to the Soviet Union after the war never reached their home institutions. Identifying and utilizing the paper trail has been complicated in the past, not only by long-closed archives and the politics of restitution, but because surviving ERR documentation today remains dispersed over nine countries and more than 29 archives.

To help resolve these issues, at least in the ERR case, the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference) has undertaken the tripartite ERR project described in the Foreword. Already as a result, considerably more surviving ERR and related documentation is being made available on the Internet, and a database of over 20,000 individual art objects from Jewish collections in France and Belgium processed by the ERR in the Jeu de Paume in Paris has recently been released. As a third and coordinating component, the present Survey guides the researcher to ERR and related documents describing its plunder and the postwar fate of its loot. In this brief Introduction, we first sketch how and where the ERR operated, as a context for the records it created. We next describe postwar efforts to find and return the ERR loot, showing the further dispersal of ERR records, including their incorporation in western restitution and war crimes trial records. Then in the Survey itself, country by country coverage will describe those files in their present archival locations, and alert the researcher to many that are becoming more publicly available on the Internet.

The Man and His Mission

The ERR chief and namesake, Alfred Rosenberg, was born in Reval (Tallinn), when Estonia was still part of the Russian Empire.¹ In 1910, he went to Riga to study architecture, but his

¹ Parts of this introduction are summarized from my earlier article, "Roads to Ratibor: Library and Archival Plunder by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 19, no. 3 (2005), pp. 390-458, and its

polytechnic was moved to Moscow, where he finished his studies in 1917. Witnessing the war and revolutionary turmoil that left the Bolsheviks triumphant, he returned to Reval in February 1918, just days before the German army arrived in the city and Estonia declared its independence. On 30 November 1918, he delivered his first political speech – “Marxism and Jews” – then boarded a train for Germany, heading first to Berlin and then to Munich.

Within weeks of arriving in the Bavarian capital, Rosenberg was already working at the weekly of one of the future founders of the NSDAP. During the next few years as a part of Adolf Hitler’s inner circle, Rosenberg rose to editor of the party newspaper *Völkischer Beobachter*, edited a monthly on the Jewish question, and penned many polemics concerning Jews, Free Masonry, and Bolshevism. His apocalyptic response to his imagined Judaic-Masonic-Bolshevik conspiracy came together in many writings, including his own ponderous *The Myth of the Twentieth Century (Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts)*, first published in 1930.²

Rosenberg’s Baltic roots and experience in revolutionary Russia helped make him a party expert on Eastern Europe. When Hitler became Reich Chancellor in January 1933, Rosenberg was put in charge of the Foreign Policy Office (Aussenpolitisches Amt, APA) of the NSDAP, soon followed by his promotion to Reichsleiter (Reich director), a party rank in theory parallel to that of a government minister.

A year later, Hitler appointed Rosenberg Commissioner of the Führer for the Supervision of the Entire Intellectual and Ideological Schooling and Training of the NSDAP (Der Beauftragte des Führers für die Überwachung der gesamten geistigen und weltanschaulichen Schulung und Erziehung der NSDAP, DBFU). Rosenberg used that office to build up a vast network of ideological and cultural operations.³ By 1937 the DBFU under Rosenberg’s guidance had special offices for art and music, along with other fields of culture, which were later to provide staff, bureaucracy, and a cultural network for the ERR as an operational offshoot.

This rapid expansion of enormous responsibilities led Rosenberg to reorganize his private office into what became known as the Rosenberg Chancellery (Kanzlei Rosenberg), which oversaw his official correspondence on behalf of the APA and his ideological organizations, especially the DBFU.⁴ As reorganized and expanded in 1938, the DBFU included an Office for

sequel, “The Postwar Fate of Archival and Library Plunder by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR), and the Dispersal of ERR Records,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 20, no. 2 (2006), pp. 278-308; a revised version of the latter will appear in the *Journal of Art Crime*, December 2010. See also the Grimsted chapter on ERR archival seizures in *Returned from Russia: Nazi Archival Plunder in Western Europe and Recent Restitution Issues*, edited by Grimsted, F.J. Hoogewoud, and Eric Ketelaar (Institute of Art and Law, UK, 2007), pp. 65-80. Since only a few references are provided in this Introduction, more extensive related listings will appear in the bibliography at the end of this volume, and in selected earlier publications cited.

² An English translation of Rosenberg’s *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts*, first published in 1930, appeared in 1982: Rosenberg, *The Myth of the Twentieth Century: An Evaluation of the Spiritual-Intellectual Confrontations of our Age*, trans. Vivian Bird (Torrance, CA: Noontide Press, 1982).

³ Regarding Rosenberg’s intellectual background and his activities as DBFU, see Reinhard Bollmus, *Das Amt Rosenberg und seine Gegner: Studien zum Machtkampf im Nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem* (Stuttgart, 1970; 2nd edn. with bibliographic essay by Stephan Lehnstaedt: Munich: Oldenbourg, 2006; = *Herausgegeben vom Institut für Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 1). Ernst Piper’s impressive biography of Rosenberg, *Alfred Rosenberg: Hitlers Chefideologe* (Munich: Karl Blessing Verlag, 2005), fills in important background on Rosenberg’s political career and varied activities, but does not add significant coverage of the ERR or the Hohe Schule. See also the early biography and register of related documents by Joseph Billig, *Alfred Rosenberg dans l’action idéologique, politique et administrative du Reich hitlérien: Inventaire commenté de la collection de documents conservés au C.D.J.C. provenant des archives du Reichsleiter et Ministre A. Rosenberg* (Paris, 1963; = *Les inventaires des archives du Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, Paris*, vol. 1).

⁴ See the Introduction to the Bundesarchiv finding aid for the Rosenberg Chancellery records (NS 8).

Science (Amt Wissenschaft), which oversaw planning for a university-level Hohe Schule for the future Nazi elite, a training center Rosenberg planned to build in Bavaria after the war.

Despite the Nazi-Soviet pact (German-Soviet Treaty of Non-Aggression) in 1939, Rosenberg and his close associates continued to pursue their ideological struggle against Bolshevism in preparation for invasion of the Soviet Union in what became Operation Barbarossa in July 1941. Rosenberg was appointed as the Führer's Commissioner of the Führer for the Central Handling of Questions concerning the Eastern Area (Beauftragter des Führers für die zentrale Bearbeitung der Fragen des osteuropäischen Raumes).

Simultaneously, Rosenberg's energies expanded on behalf of the Hohe Schule, for which Hitler authorized preparatory work in January 1940. Indeed, the Central Library of the Hohe Schule (Zentralbibliothek der Hohen Schule, ZBHS) was already operative in Berlin from early 1939, before moving to Austrian Carinthia (Kärnten) in 1942. In March 1940 Rosenberg inaugurated the Institute for Research on the Jewish Question (Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage, IEJ) in Frankfurt, the only Hohe Schule institute that operated during the war, although the ERR was actively collecting materials for other Hohe Schule institutes as well. Later in 1943 the IEJ was largely evacuated to Hungen, 70 kilometers northeast, while Masonic materials were deposited in a hunting lodge in Hirzenheim in the same vicinity. The invasion of France in June 1940 presented Rosenberg with an opportunity to start more active plundering of materials for the Hohe Schule, with the resulting establishment of the ERR.

ERR Aims and Agency Structure

As an operational offshoot of the DBFU with the aim of plunder of cultural materials, the ERR, effectively started immediately after the invasion of France on 14 June. Rosenberg dispatched a key DBFU staff director, Reichshauptstellenleiter Professor Georg Ebert, who already by 18 June 1940 occupied the building of the largest Masonic lodge, the Grand Orient of France (15, rue Cadet). Ebert's reports of the great abundance of "abandoned" cultural property led Rosenberg to request, already on the 1 July, Hitler's authorization for... "the organization, with the help from an Einsatzstab (composed of political leaders and experts) and from the Wehrmacht, of a thorough examination of items left behind by Jews and Freemasons, that would provide a basis for future intellectual study, as considered necessary for the political, ideological, and academic operations of both the NSDAP and the Hohe Schule."⁵ After establishment in Paris, the ERR organized office and working units in Belgium and the Netherlands.

A year later, just before the invasion of the Soviet Union, Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring was also taking credit for organizing the ERR, but his role was principally focused on art looting in France. He emphasized to Hitler in May 1941 that:

the war against Jews, Free Masons, their Allies, and other obviously pernicious spiritual agencies is an urgent task for National Socialism to accomplish during the War. That is why I approved Reichsleiter Rosenberg's creation of his Special Command Force in Occupied Territories [ERR. Its] mission... is to seek out and

⁵ This explains why Ebert is often credited with the idea of the Einsatzstab. Note that no conclusive date for founding the ERR was established in the Rosenberg interrogation at Nuremberg, Office of United States Chief of Counsel for Prosecution of Axis Criminality, *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1946), vol. 2, pp. 1333-1337.

seize all manner of research materials and cultural goods belonging to the above-mentioned groups and transport them to Germany.⁶

In Alfred Rosenberg's "know thy enemy" justification for plunder, he often emphasized the importance of "saving for study" the books and related materials of the "enemies of the regime."

In the course of the war the ERR embraced a vast bureaucracy for ideological and propaganda research, as well as cultural plunder, working in conjunction with, and often in service of, other Nazi agencies in the field, including the Wehrmacht, yet maintaining its own independence. Rosenberg's personal Chancellery coordinated his many functions in the Nazi Party, among them the DBFU. Gerhard Utikal, who directed the DBFU central office, also served as chief of operations for the ERR. The ERR headquarters (Stabsführung) was centered in Berlin (Margarethenstr. 17/18, Berlin W35), which also housed offices for the DBFU and Rosenberg's Chancellery, with additional offices in the building of the former Haus am Knie (Bismarckstr. 1). Other principal ERR units and research operations were located in and around Berlin in the early years of the war.

With increased Allied bombing in 1943 and orders to evacuate cultural property from Berlin, the ERR maintained only a skeletal office in the Reich capital. Several of its divisions and major research operations were evacuated to the isolated Silesian city of Ratibor (postwar Racibórz, Poland), south of Kattowitz (postwar Katowice, Poland). Some of its Berlin records from the early years of the war were lost in a November 1943 bombing raid, and others were transferred to the Silesian center. Meanwhile, the Special Staff Music (Sonderstab Musik) evacuated to the castle of Langenau (postwar Czernica, Poland), further west in Silesia, while the Special Staff Fine Arts (Sonderstab Bildende Kunst) under Robert Scholtz evacuated to the castle of Kogl in Austria, which the ERR also used as one of its repositories for looted art. In both cases, important files went with them.

ERR operations in Western Europe based in Paris were headed by Baron Kurt von Behr, who later headed the western affairs office (Dienststelle or Amt Westen) of the RMbO. Separate main working groups (Hauptarbeitsgruppen, HAG), often started as simply working groups (AG), were organized as successive territories were occupied. Changes in the military situation and the focus of ERR priorities brought several stages of reorganization among the working groups in different areas. Occupied lands under the Amt Westen were serviced by the HAG France, HAG Belgium and Northern France, and HAG Netherlands, at times with subsidiary units.

Simultaneously special staffs ran different types of cultural operations: visual arts, music, prehistory, and libraries, among others, growing out of and often overlapping DBFU offices.⁷ Their task designations shifted over the years, with changing personnel and priorities, while subject- and geographic-area designations were frequently intertwined.

The amorphous and changing affiliations of the ERR and its staff are hard to pin down, although primarily it continued to function administratively within the DBFU until the end of the war. At least through early spring of 1941, the ERR was using the name "Einsatzstab of the Offices of Reichsleiter Rosenberg" (Einsatzstab der Dienststellen des Reichsleiters Rosenberg),

⁶ Göring memorandum to Hitler (Berlin, 1 June 1941), French translation in Jean Cassou, ed., *Le pillage par les Allemands des oeuvres d'art et des bibliothèques appartenant à des Juifs en France: Recueil de documents* (Paris: CDJC, 1947; "Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, Série "Documents," no. 4), p. 90. The same point is reiterated in Hitler's order (Führererlass) dated 1 Mar. 1942, reproduced in *ibid.*, between pp. 96-97, with a French translation, p. 99.

⁷ Willem de Vries, *Sonderstab Musik: Music Confiscations by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg under the Nazi Occupation of Western Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996), while primarily focused on ERR music operations, brings together considerable western documentation on the ERR.

but in other instances it was designated as the “Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg for the Occupied Western Territories and the Netherlands” (Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg für die westlichen besetzten Gebiete und die Niederlande). In both cases the name is usually found rubber-stamped below the DBFU designation on printed NSDAP letterhead.

On the heels of Operation Barbarossa, as the Wehrmacht advanced into Soviet lands, the ERR followed the invading armies on the Eastern Front, it dropped the “western” designation and used the name “for the Occupied Territories” (für die besetzten Gebiete). Meanwhile, Rosenberg himself already in July had been appointed to head the newly established Reich Ministry for Occupied Eastern Territories (Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete, RMbO), although that appointment was not publicly announced before December. In occupied Soviet territories, the ERR was organized along geographic lines, following the civil administration under the RMbO. Initially most visible were the Reich Commissariat for Ostland (Reichskommissariat Ostland, RKO), embracing the Baltic and much of western Belarus, and the Reich Commissariat for Ukraine (Reichskommissariat für Ukraine, RKU), based on pre-1939 borders, but extending rule into conquered lands to Crimea and the Caucasus. Eventually, on the Eastern Front, the ERR was organized into three main working groups: HAG Ostland for the Baltic, HAG Ukraine, and HAG Mitte for Belarus and western Russia. Territorial operations of the working groups or main working groups and sub-units varied in the course of the war, depending on the changing configuration of occupied lands.

Additional special commandos were designated, similar to those in the west, for libraries, archives, prehistory, or other specific goals. Many of these operated in conjunction with staff from other German agencies, such as the Reichsarchiv in connection with archival exploits. Representatives of the ZBHS and the IEJ were often involved in ERR library confiscations and plunder, first in Western Europe and later on the Eastern Front. The ZBHS Control Office for Books (Buchleitstelle), jointly operated with the ERR, was first based in Berlin, but then in 1943 moved to Ratibor, Silesia, with the ERR library and research operation center.

In Ukraine, ERR cultural research and seizure functions were further complicated by the formation in the autumn of 1942 under Erich Koch’s Reichskommissar Ukraine of a separate Provincial Administration for Libraries, Archives, and Museums (Landesverwaltung der Archive, Bibliotheken und Museen, LV ABM), which overlapped in staff and many functions with the ERR. It was headed by Georg Winter from the Reichsarchiv, who earlier helped organize ERR operations in Ukraine, and especially organized archival surveys.

In Western Europe, early in 1942 an ERR offshoot, the Furniture Operation (Möbel-Aktion, M-Aktion), was formed to strip furnishings from the homes of Jews who had fled or were deported. Rosenberg had recommended the program to Hitler in December 1941, and it was established under the ERR in the following months with offices in Belgium and the Netherlands as well as France. By April 1942, however, the M-Aktion was administratively shifted to Amt Westen of the RMbO, allegedly because many of the goods seized were to be destined for German offices on the Eastern Front. This also meant that the M-Aktion was bureaucratically under state rather than Nazi Party auspices, separate from but closely linked to the ERR. However, a strict demarcation was not always observed, and frequently M-Aktion leaders were reporting to the DBFU, to the extent that in the Netherlands, for example, Dutch specialists have considered the M-Aktion a part of the ERR.

The ERR did not operate in Germany itself or territories annexed to the Reich such as Czechoslovakia and Poland. The ERR was active in Italy starting in the autumn of 1943 and briefly in Hungary in the spring of 1944. By November 1944, with German retreat from both the eastern and western fronts, and most of the “occupied territories” abandoned, the ERR name “for Occupied Territories” was dropped on Hitler’s orders. By the end of 1944, the RMbO had also

become inoperative, and at this point, Rosenberg officially shifted the RMbO Amt Westen, along with the Möbel-Aktion it controlled, back to ERR jurisdiction, where both the Amt Westen and the M-Aktion had started.

Even more important than its own various official agency names, the ERR reported to different agencies at different times or to different offices within the Rosenberg bureaucracy. Its effectiveness, however, often depended more on who was pulling the strings from the outside, such as Göring for the ERR art seizures in France, or competing for the spoils, such as Reinhard Heydrich and the Reich Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt, RSHA) – the home office of the Security Service (Sicherheitsdienst, SD), the Gestapo, and the Criminal Police – rather than its actual bureaucratic alignment.

The ERR in Action on the Western Front

Books and Archives (France, Belgium, and the Netherlands). The ERR started operations in occupied France in June and early July 1940, when Hitler authorized seizure under Rosenberg's direction of cultural materials of Jews and Masons, particularly those who had fled the country. The ERR remained independent but functioned within military authorities, in the case of France, often reporting to the Military Commander for France (MBF), paralleled by the Military Commander for Northern France and Belgium. Plundering operations were assisted by the Secret Field Police (Geheime Feldpolizei, GFP) and often accompanied by associates from the Hohe Schule or other German agencies. Even before orders came through from Hitler in late June, the GFP began securing abandoned Masonic lodges, Jewish institutions, and private homes of Jewish leaders.

At first the ERR concentrated on books and archives. Initially ZBHS director Walther Grothe and IEJ director Wilhelm Grau headed a special library commando in Western Europe, seizing the most important private French Jewish and Masonic collections, such as those of the Alliance israélite universelle, the École rabbinique, the three largest Masonic lodges, and Jewish book stores, among others. While many books went to Berlin for the ZBHS, others went directly to the IEJ library in Frankfurt, which could boast an estimated half million volumes projected by early 1943. Through June 1941, Gerd Wunder headed library plunder efforts in Paris, before his recall to Berlin. Starting in 1943, he headed operations in Ratibor, utilizing materials collected for anti-Bolshevik research and propaganda efforts.

The ERR also confiscated Slavic libraries, such as the Turgenev Russian Library, the Petliura Ukrainian Library, and private socialist collections in Paris, some of them destined for other research operations. After seizure of the Polish Library, for example, the ERR was forced to turn over its 130,000 volumes to the Publication Office (Publikationsstelle, PuSte) under the Ministry of the Interior in Berlin-Dahlem.⁸

In securing books and archival materials, the ERR was actively competing with the RSHA. For example, the ERR initially seized the books and archives from the Paris Branch of the International Institute of Social History (IISG, Amsterdam), with important Russian émigré

⁸ See, for example, Grimsted, "Twice Plundered, but Still Not Home from the War: The Fate of Three Slavic Libraries Confiscated by the Nazis from Paris," *Solanus* 16 (2002), pp. 39-76; updated in Polish as "Dwukrotnie zrabowane i nadal z dala od ojczyzny. Losy trzech bibliotek słowiańskich przejętych przez nazistów w Paryżu," *Archeion* 106 (2003 [2005]), pp. 47-84. See my related case study, *The Odyssey of the Turgenev Library from Paris, 1940-2002: Books as Victims and Trophies of War* (Amsterdam: International Institute of Social History, 2003; "IISG Research Papers," no. 42; electronic version (PDF file): <http://www.iisg.nl/publications/respap42.pdf>), and related studies are listed in the Bibliography.

socialist collections transferred to Paris in 1935. Most of the socialist archives from that collection were eventually turned over to the RSHA and other agencies, as were many other looted Jewish and Masonic archives.⁹

Similar ERR ravages proceeded in Belgium and the Netherlands, where they were likewise competing for library and archival materials with the SD and other organizations. In Amsterdam, the ERR set up headquarters in the building of the IISG, to which they transferred socialist materials seized in Belgium, including rich records of the Second International.

Art Looting (France and Belgium). Meanwhile, important French Jewish-owned collections of art were being seized under German Foreign Office orders of Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, and assembled for “safeguarding” in an annex of the German Embassy in Paris in control of German Ambassador Otto Abetz. These included gems owned by various members of the Rothschild family, and by Jewish dealers such as the Seligmanns and Paul Rosenberg. Starting in October 1940, however, on Göring’s instigation, the ERR took over almost all of the seized art. Göring was anxious to enrich his own collections, while he cleverly manipulated further ERR art-looting operations in France. He organized assistance from the Currency Protection Commando (Devisenschutzkommando) for seizure from bank vaults, while the Luftwaffe also often assisted transport arrangements. Collections assembled in the German Embassy were moved to the Louvre, and then by the end of October, the ERR set up shop for processing in the Jeu de Paume, a prewar museum in the Tuilleries Gardens. That was the start of what became the ERR’s best-known claim to the status of war criminals, namely the seizure of over 20,000 art objects from over 200 private Jewish collections in France and Belgium.

The ERR art-looting program was run by the Sonderstab Bildende Kunst and headed in Berlin by Robert Scholtz, another long-time DBFU associate. The Art Looting Investigating Unit (ALIU) of the U.S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS), characterized ERR seizures in France as “the most elaborate and extensive art looting operation undertaken by the Germans in World War II.”¹⁰ Other than a few Belgian Jewish collections brought to the Jeu de Paume, the ERR was not involved in art-looting elsewhere in Western Europe, such as the Netherlands, where other specialized Nazi art agents were operating, such as the office of Kajetan Mühlmann. In Western Europe, it should be emphasized, the ERR concentrated on private Jewish art collections, and with few exceptions avoided plunder from state museums.

In the Jeu de Paume, the ERR carefully recorded their achievements, in part to control their art loot, but also to justify their activities and increased funding in trying wartime conditions and with competing predators. They brought in art specialists to identify the provenance of the art objects seized in detailed inventories for each named collection, and went to great pains to register wartime destinations. Alpha-numeric codes were assigned with the code name of the collection and numbers within, with photographs prepared by ERR art photographers.

Thanks to the surviving documentation and its postwar retrieval, it has been possible today to create a database for the individual art objects the ERR processed in the Jeu de Paume (launched on the Internet in October 2010: <http://www.errproject.org/jeudepaume>). This major new effort compiled under the direction of Marc Masurovsky, brings together data for 21,700 art objects

⁹ See more details about the fate of archives the ERR turned over to the RSHA in Grimsted, “Twice Plundered or Twice Saved? Russia’s ‘Trophy’ Archives and the Loot of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 15(2) (Fall 2001), pp. 191-244.

¹⁰ “Activity of the ERR in France” (15 Aug. 1945), OSS ALIU, Consolidated Interrogation Report, No. 1, “Activity of the ERR in France” (15 Aug. 1945), compiled by J.S. Plaut, p. 1. See the full listing in Appendix 3; it is now available at footnote.com: http://www.footnote.com/browsemore/231997495_WWII:%201935-1950^Holocaust%20Collection/. See additional literature cited at the beginning of the French chapter.

from ERR registration cards preserved in the National Archives in College Park, MD (NACP), combined with original ERR images of the art objects from the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, and some from smaller NACP collections.¹¹

Most of the early art shipments from Paris went to Füssen, the closest railway junction for the main ERR art repository in the legendary Bavarian castle of Neuschwanstein. Later French shipments went to the former Cistercian Abbey of Buxheim, but there were also other Bavarian destinations and several castles taken over as ERR art repositories in Austria. The castle of Kogl became Robert Scholtz's evacuation headquarters for the Berlin Office of the Sonderstab Bildende Kunst, while Füssen and the castle of Neuschwanstein remained headquarters for Bavarian operations. Starting in 1944, on Hitler's orders, much of the most valuable art from French collections was transferred to the salt mines above Altaussee in near-by Austria.¹²

Möbel-Aktion (France, Belgium, and the Netherlands). Even more horrendous in Western Europe was the plunder by the ERR offshoot, the Möbel-Aktion (M-Aktion), which, as mentioned above, stripped furnishings from the homes of Jews who had fled or were deported. By April 1942, when the program became fully operational, the M-Aktion was administered by Amt Westen of the RMbO.

The M-Aktion nevertheless was headed by ERR staff, and the ERR reaped many of the prize cultural proceeds. In France, for example, the M-Aktion was run by Baron Kurt von Behr, as head of Amt Westen. Massive collection points, such as the warehouse near the Gare d'Austerlitz brought in extensive stores of household goods from pianos to pots and pans and children's dolls from an estimated no less than 38,000 homes in France.¹³ By August 1944, the M-Aktion boasted removal of furnishings from over 68,000 dwellings in Western Europe, most of which was sent to bombed out areas in Germany. The first choice of art objects plundered by the M-Aktion, including fine furniture, was turned over to the ERR for processing at the Jeu de Paume. Other M-Aktion branches operated with ERR personnel in occupied Belgium and the Netherlands.

The ERR separated art objects from the M-Aktion transferred to the Jeu de Paume into a number of special type-specific "M-A" collections, from paintings and Oriental *objets-d'art* to weapons and rare books. Inventoried at the Jeu de Paume without revealing the name and address of the home from which they had been seized, most of the M-A collections were forwarded to special ERR art repositories in neighboring Austria, such as Kogl and Seisseneg.¹⁴ Choice musical instruments were turned over to the Sonderstab Musik, many of them sent to the ERR music center in Leipzig. They were later evacuated to the Abbey of Raitenhaslach in southern Bavaria near the Austrian border. Most of the books seized by the M-Aktion were processed through ERR library collecting centers, such as several large ones in Paris and Amsterdam.¹⁵

¹¹ See Section 9.1.7.3. The database is housed at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington, DC, and jointly created with the Claims Conference. Citations to the original sources for the ERR-processed art objects at the Jeu de Paume are also all recorded in the chart of French collections (and a few from Belgium) that accompanies this Survey as Appendix 1. Included are references to many of the newly opened French restitution claims dossiers.

¹² See Appendix 2 for a description of principal ERR repositories.

¹³ See the recently published album of photographs edited by Sarah Gensburger, *Images d'un pillage. Album de la spoliation des juifs à Paris, 1940-1944* (Paris: Éditions Textuel, 2010), which reproduces an album of original photographs of the Möbel-Aktion and its exploits in Paris found among the TVK restitution files in Bundesarchiv Koblenz.

¹⁴ See the full list of M-Aktion collections, including those from Belgium, in a separate section of Appendix 1.

¹⁵ See an initial account and examples of M-Aktion library plunder by Sem Christian Sutter, "The Fate of Books Confiscated in the Möbel-Aktion," 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*

The ERR on the Eastern and Southeastern Fronts

Occupied Soviet Lands. Western Europe was only the start of ERR operations. With the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 and Rosenberg's appointment as Reich minister for the occupied eastern territories in July, the ERR followed the Wehrmacht to the east. Rosenberg's long-standing attitude towards the Bolshevik regime may well reflect the harsher treatment of peoples on the Eastern Front as opposed to Western Europe, as apparent when he was queried in Nuremberg:

Q. Why were the occupied countries of the West treated differently from the occupied countries of the East?

A. Because those whom we considered as our adversaries or opponents from the point of view of our conception of the world are different in the West from what they are in the East. In the West there were certain Jewish organizations and Masonic lodges, and in the East there was nothing more than the Communist Party.¹⁶

Such reasoning also justified anti-Bolshevik research and confiscation of related research materials for ideological and propaganda aims. The ERR found no rich private Jewish art collections in the Soviet lands (save for the Baltic countries), where all major private property had long-since been nationalized. The Masons and "other pernicious" elements had already been eliminated and outlawed by the Bolshevik regime, while significant Judaica and Hebraica were integrated into state repositories, if not sold off to the west in the interwar period. Hence even in the library realm, in contrast to the private Jewish and Masonic collections in the west, the ERR turned to the plunder of Soviet state cultural, academic, and other institutions on the Eastern Front. In occupied Soviet territories, the ERR seized hundreds of thousands of books and other cultural assets – from Estonia in the north to Ukraine and Crimea in the south. They seized Communist Party archives that the Soviets had left behind or failed to destroy, including those from Smolensk and Dnipropetrovsk, so that the records could be used for research and propaganda ends.¹⁷

In Lithuania, which had been annexed to the Soviet Union only in July 1940, as an exception the ERR pillaged such important Jewish institutions as the Jewish Scientific Institute (Yidisher Visnshaftlekher Institut, YIVO) in Vilnius (prewar Wilno, Poland; also Vilna), only part of which had been evacuated to the west before the German invasion, along with many private Jewish collections. IEJ library director Johannes Pohl was brought in to supervise the systematic plunder. Many materials not shipped to Frankfurt were destroyed. In Riga, which became a sorting center for its book shipments to the west, the ERR also netted a significant amount of Judaica. At one point, they boasted one million books gathered in Riga, 90,000 of which had already been catalogued for the Ostbücherei, a special ERR library on Bolshevism. ERR reports

academic conference held in Liberec, 24-26 October 2007 (Prague, 2008), pp. 102-113.

¹⁶ "Testimony of Alfred Rosenberg, taken at Nurnberg, Germany" (29 Sep. 1945)... "Reason for Harsh Treatment of Eastern Peoples," in *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, vol. 2, p. 1347.

¹⁷ See Grimsted (editor and major contributor), *Vozvrashchenie "Smolenskogo arkhiva" / The Return of the "Smolensk Archive,"* Bilingual edition, edited by Marianna Tax Choldin, Karina Aleksandrovna Dritrieva, Ekateriana Iur'evna Genieva, and Patricia Kennedy Grimsted (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2005).

from the Soviet Union often exactly indicate the quantities and list which books were removed from which libraries, and where they were sent.

Soviet authorities, with museum and archival specialists working overtime, had barely enough time to evacuate the most important museum treasures from Leningrad and neighboring imperial palaces. There the ERR was only able to plunder libraries, while officers from the Wehrmacht's Art Protection Office (Kunstschutz) removed the Amber Room and remaining trimmings from the former Russian palaces. Moscow museums, libraries, and archives had also evacuated their most prized holdings. Fortunately the German army ground to a halt outside the Soviet capital.

In occupied Soviet lands, as in the west, the ERR initially concentrated on books. In addition to the imperial palace library books outside Leningrad, they netted prize early editions from Novgorod and Kyiv (Kiev), some of which were initially seized by the Künsberg commandos, the trophy scouts from the German Foreign Office. After exhibitions in Berlin, and some handouts to top Nazi leaders, most of that literature ended the war in the ZBHS in the monastery of Tanzenberg, Austria.

Ukraine suffered two-thirds of the cultural losses of the entire Soviet Union. By the end of 1942, many ERR staff members were serving in the LV ABM, based in Kyiv, under the RKU.¹⁸ The LV ABM was in fact headed by Georg Winter from the Reichsarchiv, who had first been sent with the ERR to Ukraine in the autumn of 1941. The ERR sent several hundred thousand Jewish and Hebrew books from Kyiv to the IEJ, along with considerably more "Bolshevik" literature and art, to say nothing of archives and photo archives, collected for further analysis of the main Nazi enemy on the Eastern Front. As they were retreating from Ukraine, convinced many treasures would not survive Soviet recapture, the Germans also sent many collections of art and archeological exhibits, as well as archives, from major state collections, to the extent that rolling stock was available. Even Erich Koch, the Reich Commissar for Ukraine, who was often at odds with Rosenberg, brought together a private collection of art with ERR help, confiscating the cream of what had not been evacuated from major art museums in Kyiv.

Together with the RmBO and other German agencies, the ERR sent trainloads of selected archeological and ethnographic collections, Orthodox icons, and some prime examples of Bolshevik art to designated ERR repositories in Bavaria. For example, the castle of Colmberg, near Lehrberg (Ansbach County), was the principal repository for shipments of art (paintings, icons, furniture, decorative arts) from northwest Russia, particularly Pskov and Novgorod, the imperial palaces outside of Leningrad (Gatchina, Pavlovsk, and Peterhof), and also Kyiv. Most of the art and archeological treasures from Ukraine and the Crimea went to the ERR repository of Höchstädt, and that was where they took some Ukrainian specialists they intended to employ as the basis for a projected research center there. Other shipments went to the former Cistercian abbey of Buxheim, which the ERR had already used for some of the overflow art collections from Paris.¹⁹

The LV ABM itself, together with its chief Georg Winter, evacuated first to Kam'ianets'-Podil's'kyi, and then to the Reichsarchiv archival center in Troppau (Cz. Opava), then part of the Sudetenland. (That was where Soviet archival scouts found many of the archives and the LV AVM records.) When further retreat was imperative after Troppau was bombed in January 1945, many of the plundered Ukrainian and Latvian archives, rare books, and Riga museum

¹⁸ See Patricia Grimsted, *Trophies of War and Empire: The Archival Heritage of Ukraine, World War II, and the International Politics of Restitution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute, 2001).

¹⁹ See Appendix 2 for a description of principal ERR repositories.

exhibits ended the war in a Bohemian castle west of Pilsen (Cz. Plzeň), also then part of the Sudetenland, where they were recovered by the U.S. Third Army.²⁰

Greece, the Balkans, and Italy. ERR units were also active in Greece and former Yugoslavia, where they removed countless archival and library treasures, and even some important art. For example, in the autumn of 1941, IEJ library director Johannes Pohl headed a special ERR expedition to Greece, based in Thessaloniki, from where over 90 percent of the Sephardic Jewish Community were later deported to their deaths by the Nazi regime. The ERR seized most of the community archives for the IEJ. A surviving report from November 1941, for example, graphically details their exploits between May and November of 1941, when their plunder had extended to Jewish communities and Masonic lodges throughout Greece.

During 1942 and early 1944, the ERR was also active in Croatia and Serbia, confiscating many library books and archives, most of them first shipped to Ratibor, but earlier some directly to Berlin and Frankfurt. Reports, book lists, and even a card file remain to document their library seizures from Jews and Masons in Zagreb and Dubrovnik.

Starting in the autumn of 1943, the ERR was busy removing prime Judaica from Rome, with a wagonload from the Rome Synagogue sent to the IEJ in Frankfurt, while at least some books from the Rome Rabbinical College (Biblioteca del Collegio Rabbinico) reached Hungen. However, major ERR exploits in Italy were apparently more directed to propaganda, and as far as is known, they were not confiscating art collections. By early 1944 an ERR office for Special Commando Italy (Sonderkommando Italien; later AG Italien) was organized in Verona under the direction of Dr Hans Maier, who had earlier headed a task force under HAG Ostland. Only a few ERR reports survive from the brief visits and confiscations in Italy by the Sonderstab Musik, as well as purchases and microfilming of music manuscripts. Documentation also survives for a small shipment of music materials from Trieste, and there are indications of other books removed from that Adriatic port.

Postwar Fate of ERR Cultural Loot

The postwar location, identification, and restitution operations, heroically carried out by western Allied “Monuments Men” – officers of Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives, MFA&A – brought the ERR and other looted objects together with wartime reports about the looting.²¹ With the help of art-looting intelligence officers, they further succeeded in tracking down and interrogating many of the perpetrators.²² As a result of these operations, wartime ERR documents became interspersed in postwar restitution, intelligence, and trial records, as will be seen in the descriptions of many of them in the Survey that follows. Thus wartime migration and postwar cultural restitution operations – or non-restitution in the Soviet case – have much to do with the dispersal of the records of plunder and their present locations.

²⁰ See Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, “The Fate of the Kyiv Central Archive of Early Acts: A Triple Tragedy of Destruction, Plunder, and Propaganda,” in *Synopsis: A Collection of Essays in Honour of Zenon E. Kohut*, ed. Serhii Plokhly and Frank E. Sysyn (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2005); also published serially as *Canadian Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 29 (Summer-Winter 2004), pp. 73-114 (updated from the Ukrainian 2004 version in *Arkhivy Ukrainy*).

²¹ See the recent account by Robert Edsel (with Bret Witter), *The Monuments Men: Allied Heroes, Nazi Thieves, and the Greatest Treasure Hunt in History* (New York: Center Street, 2009).

²² See Appendix 3 for postwar art-looting intelligence and interrogation reports.

Central to the western Allied postwar restitution program, the MFA&A organized a series of collecting points in the U.S. Zone of Occupation in Germany under the Office of Military Government, U.S. (OMGUS) for the cultural loot found in thousands of castles and salt mines. Restitution also proceeded in the French and British zones, but in both cases, records of cultural restitution were intermixed with documentation on the return of non-cultural materials plundered by the Germans. Restitution, as operated in postwar occupied Germany and Austria, actually meant repatriation to the country from which it was seized. In all four Allied occupation zones, items were not restituted to individual owners or institutions outside of Germany, even when they had been identified.

Restitution of ERR-Looted Art to France and Belgium. Postwar restitution of a large percentage of the ERR art loot from Jewish collections in France and Belgium processed through the Jeu de Paume was possible because of the careful detail with which the ERR documented and photographed the art objects. Identification and return was aided, often with the help of French sources and postwar investigatory agents, who succeeded in tracking down that documentation and the valuable looted art. Half a century later, Hector Feliciano explains in *The Lost Museum* (1994): “many of the obsessively precise Nazi looting inventories and art files are still the best and most reliable source to be used to reconstruct the history of these looted missing paintings.”²³

The Munich Central Collecting Point (MCCP) was the most important transit point in the migration and restitution processing of ERR-looted art objects after the war. Because most of the ERR art loot from Paris was shipped to ERR art repositories in Bavaria and near-by Austria (both part of the U.S. zones of occupation), most of the art objects were removed for restitution processing to the MCCP. There, however, the ERR loot was intermixed with even more art captured by other Nazi looting agencies, and also art evacuated for safekeeping from many German and Austrian public and private collections in major cities during the war. To aid the restitution process, MFA&A officers succeeded in bringing together many of the surviving German documents pertaining to art looting in a Document Center at the MCCP. Among those collected were voluminous documents on art looting created by the ERR, although several other Nazi art plundering agencies were also represented.²⁴

When crates of objects arrived in Munich, registration cards were prepared in multiple copies for each object, and a Munich accession number assigned to each “Property Cards Art,” which usually also recorded ERR codes or other registration data found. MCCP property cards also bear “exit” dates, documenting when the item was shipped out to the country of seizure. In the case of the extensive ERR loot from France found in Neuschwanstein and Buxheim, the MFA&A arranged shipments back to Paris in the autumn of 1945 and early 1946, but usually MCCP property cards were prepared for those items returned directly. Many of the objects were photographed in Munich, although often wartime ERR photographs were utilized, all of which became intermixed in the MCCP photo collection. Many different series of MCCP Property Cards Art and photographs survive to this day but, like other ERR documentation described in the Survey, have been widely dispersed.²⁵ Yet they constitute important clues to track their life cycle of wartime plunder and migration.

The MCCP was only one of several collecting points for cultural objects organized by OMGUS. Some of the ERR loot that ended up in museums or other collections in other parts of

²³ Hector Feliciano, *The Lost Museum* (New York, 1997; French edn.: Paris, 1944), p. 7.

²⁴ For MCCP records now in U.S. custody, see Section 9.1.5.3.4.

²⁵ See more description of the MCCP Property Cards Art and related photographs, among other documents remaining in U.S. custody in the NACP (see Section 9.1.5.3.4., Entry 520-Entry 523).

Germany at war's end were collected and processed through the Wiesbaden Central Collecting Point (WCCP), also under OMGUS, where they were registered on similar Property Cards Art, numbered, and photographed. Property cards from NACP OMGUS records for those Wiesbaden items are already on the Internet at footnote.com.²⁶

After the OMGUS Central Collecting Points closed down at the end of 1949, in Munich the German office known as the Trust Administration for Cultural Assets (Treuhandverwaltung für Kulturgut, TVK) continued restitution operations in Bavaria until 1962. Many residual working files were retained by that office, including recovered ERR documentation, MCCP property cards, and photographs, and hence those records today, as described below in the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, remain crucial for determining the fate of wartime cultural loot.²⁷ Many of the original photographs, along with art objects not yet returned to their legal owners, however, remained in the custody of the West German Ministry of Finance, which explains why they are now held in the Berlin Federal Office for Central Services and Unresolved Property Issues (Bundesamt für zentrale Dienste und offene Vermögensfragen, BADV) under the German Federal Ministry of Finance (see Section 3.6.).

MCCP Database. As an aid to continuing provenance research and verification of returned art objects processed in Munich, a bilingual German database was compiled by specialists from the BADV and the German Historical Museum (Deutsches Historisches Museum, DHM) in Berlin. Launched in 2009 on the DHM website, the database combines images of the Property Cards Art held today in the Bundesarchiv-Koblenz, with the 50,000 correlated images of individual art objects from MCCP (previously not publicly accessible) that are now held by BADV.²⁸ Plans are underway to expand this key database with additional MCCP property cards, including the equally extensive batch and also images of objects held by the NACP, RG 260; those are also scheduled to go on line soon with footnote.com.

Database for the Sonderauftrag Linz. Another related Internet database recently launched combines images or individual objects and registration cards for art objects that had been brought together during the war for Hitler's projected museum in his hometown of Linz, the so-called Sonderauftrag Linz, also now available in bilingual format on the website of the German Historical Museum (DHM) in Berlin.²⁹ However, only 53 items (56 objects) of provenance in French collections processed by the ERR in the Jeu de Paume have been identified in the Linz Collection, most of which were also processed for restitution after the war in MCCP.

Göring Collection. Over 875 art objects from the Jeu de Paume went to the private collection of Reichsmarschall Herman Göring, although some of those he utilized for his elaborate system of art exchanges to further enrich his own holdings. Nancy Yeide's impressive 2009 printed catalog of the Göring Collection, although not yet available in an on-line database, is a must for

²⁶ As of June 2010, the set of Property Cards from Wiesbaden that came to the States after the war are already on the Internet from *NARA Microfilm Publication M1947* (see Section 9.1.5.3.2, Entry 501-Entry 505).

²⁷ See remaining TVK records and remaining MCCP Property Cards Art in the Bundesarchiv Koblenz, B323 (Section 3.2.1.).

²⁸ "Datenbank zum 'Central Collecting Point München'," http://www.dhm.de/datenbank/ccp/dhm_ccp.php?seite=9. Although ERR loot is only a small part of the art objects processed, the MCCP database regrettably does not have a field for ERR code numbers (although some may be accessible in the full-text mode).

²⁹ "Datenbank "Sammlung des Sonderauftrages Linz": <http://www.dhm.de/datenbank/linzdb>.

researchers following the fate of the ERR Jeu de Paume collections.³⁰ Eventually, it may be hoped that its wealth of data may be linked electronically with other Internet resources.

Many objects looted by the ERR, however, never made it to any of the restitution centers. Among many art objects registered by the ERR at the Jeu de Paume, an estimated 500 art objects were destroyed by the ERR in Paris in July 1943, as part of its campaign against “degenerate art.” Others were stolen, while many were sold locally or exchanged by the ERR or its agents during the war, some sent for sale in Switzerland or other neutral countries, Still others were hidden away and remained missing for decades, such as the Impressionist painting recently identified in a Zurich bank, associated with one of the ERR art-looting operatives, Bruno Lohse.

Many of the major French Jewish families and dealers whose art collections were seized and processed by the ERR in the Jeu de Paume have now been identified, but as of October 2010 provisional figures suggest that only half of the items now listed in the Jeu de Paume database have been restituted.³¹ French specialists further estimate that those items that passed through the Jeu de Paume probably represent only one-fifth of the works of art that left France during the war, many of them, to be sure, not through the hands of the ERR. Many more families who lost their libraries, art objects, or home furnishings, or who for various reasons were not on the priority ERR lists, have never known the fate of the treasures seized from the homes they were forced to abandon. Many paintings seized in France, including many that passed through the Jeu de Paume, are still “Looking for Owners,” as apparent in a 2008-2009 exhibition in Jerusalem and Paris,³² and the existence of the National Museums of Recovered Artwork (Musées Nationaux Récupération. MNR), which contains works of art repatriated to France after the war, but whose owners could not be identified.³³ Such exhibitions and catalogues call attention to the continuing need for further provenance research with expanded reference aids, such as the Survey that follows.

Cultural Restitution to the Soviet Union. Tracing art and other cultural items plundered from Soviet museums that ended the war in the ERR repositories in Bavaria remains much more difficult today, as is apparent in the Survey coverage for Russia and Ukraine. Because of the extensive cultural destruction and the fact that cultural seizures there were by and large from state institutions, different problems are involved. Given the inadequacies of Soviet postwar compilations and restitution claims tendered to western occupation authorities in Germany, for the staggering Soviet cultural losses, it is still exceedingly difficult to differentiate wartime destruction from plunder by the invader, and local looting. Unfortunately for identification purposes today, the ERR did not create a similar system of codes as they did for art processed in the Jeu de Paume, although some item-level inventories of Soviet art objects shipped out to their Bavarian repositories have been found.

³⁰ Nancy H. Yeide, *Beyond the Dreams of Avarice: The Herman Goering Collection* (Dallas: Laurel Publishing, 2009); see <http://www.goeringart.com>.

³¹ Additional checking in newly opened French sources in MAEE will probably raise that total. See Appendix 1, but many of the names of owners and collections listed there are still being identified.

³² See *À qui appartenait 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 Owners. French policy for provenance research, restitution and custody of art stolen in France during World War Two. Catalogue de l'exhibition Jerusalem-Paris*, edited with an introduction by Isabelle le Masne de Chermont and Laurence Sigal-Klagsbald (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 2008).

³³ Lesné, Claude, and Anne Roquebert, *Catalogue des peintures MNR* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 2004); on-line edition: <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/mnr/pres.htm>.

With the Internet launch of the ERR records in Kyiv described in the Ukrainian chapter, much more documentation is available about ERR operations on the Eastern Front, with more inventories of cultural plunder. Often for objects that arrived in Bavaria and processed at MCCP, registration numbers or other identifying markings from the plundered repositories are found on the Munich Property Cards, while U.S. restitution shipment inventories provide Munich registration numbers for items turned over to Soviet authorities. Many of those property cards can now be found in the on-line MCCP database, some even with photographs. But again, the ERR was not the only agency responsible for cultural plunder on the Eastern Front, and it is often impossible to distinguish their loot from others.

Despite the lack of ERR documentation and lack of knowledgeable Soviet cultural representatives in the MCCP or WCCP, the U.S. collecting points in Germany restituted over half a million items to the Soviet Union immediately after the war, many more than Soviet authorities formally claimed or that many Russians today admit as having been received.³⁴ Additional Soviet valuables were returned from French and British occupation zones in Germany, although relatively few of those items returned had been plundered by the ERR. While Red Army Trophy Brigades were actively seizing cultural trophies of their own, Soviet authorities cooperated only minimally in cultural restitution efforts of the western Allies and never utilized the extensive ERR records they captured for cultural restitution purposes. Yet despite their large receipts and extensive cultural retrieval on their own, they complained bitterly about the lack of restitution from the west. That charge is repeated even today by Russian politicians seeking to justify retention of the Soviet unilateral cultural seizures in Germany and Eastern Europe at the end of the war.

Meanwhile, even the Soviet copies of western inventories of cultural restitution shipments to the Soviet Union as processed by the Soviet Military Administration in Germany (SVAG) were hidden away. When they still were not found by 2000, preserved U.S. inventories of the outgoing restitution shipments to the Soviet Union from the MCCP, WCCP, and other points, were issued by the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) on CD-Rom in 2001, including many items plundered by the ERR.³⁵ Finally, the Soviet copies of these inventories were identified in 2009. However, as of October 2010, that series of SVAG files is again closed for reprocessing and hence could not be included in the Russian coverage below. While some Soviet cultural retrieval documents are now available, other restitution files held by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and most relevant documentation under the Ministry of Defense, still remain classified, thus barring our description.

Given the unavailability of adequate Soviet documentation into the mid-1990s, the Research Center for East European Studies (Forschungsstelle Osteuropa) at the University of Bremen searched many archives and compiled a German-language database with the items of Soviet provenance that passed through the MCCP on the basis of Bundesarchiv Koblenz and NACP documents. Unfortunately, as then created, that compilation is obsolete today, not only in terms

³⁴ See the Grimsted article with chart of transfer shipments, "Spoils of War Returned: U.S. Restitution of Nazi-Looted Cultural Treasures to the USSR, 1945-1959," *Prologue: Quarterly of the National Archives and Records Administration* 34(1) (Spring 2002), pp. 27-41. Electronic version: <http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2002/spring/spoils-of-war-1.html>.

³⁵ *U.S. Restitution of Nazi-Looted Cultural Treasures to the USSR, 1945-1959: Facsimile Documents from the National Archives of the United States*, compiled with an Introduction by Patricia Kennedy Grimsted; Foreword by Michael J. Kurtz (CD-ROM edn.: Washington, DC: GPO, 2001), prepared in collaboration with the National Archives of the United States. Free copies can still be ordered from NARA.

of software, but also because the object descriptions were not combined with photographs, as has been done in the 2009 MCCC database.³⁶

Perhaps today, the additional documents gathered earlier by the Bremen Center could augment the data available about still lost cultural valuables seized during the war from occupied Soviet lands, some of which are already available in recent Russian and Ukrainian compendia. Once the Soviet copies (with Russian translations) of the inventories and other documents about returns through SVAG can be reprocessed, expanded coverage could be created, including more details about Soviet cultural receipts from the French and British zones of occupation in Germany and Austria. Indeed, international cooperation could bring together surviving data seizure and retrieval of cultural objects from occupied Soviet territories to dispel prevailing beliefs that little was returned. Today for independent Ukraine, Belarus, and the Baltic republics, such efforts may also help overcome the continuing impression that many items repatriated to the Soviet Union never reached their home institutions.

Postwar Fate of ERR-Looted Books and Archives

U.S. Restitution: Offenbach Archival Depot (OAD). ERR library loot that ended the war in Germany was generally returned by the western Allies to the country of origin, and thence to the prewar institutions, owners, or their successors – to the extent they could be located and their claims legitimized. The Offenbach Archival Depository (OAD) outside Frankfurt am Main, characterized as the “American antithesis to the ERR” and “the biggest book restitution operation in library history,” served as a centralized American restitution facility for many collections plundered by the ERR and other agencies. Yet it functioned without the significant ERR documents about wartime library seizures now available. Between its March 1946 opening and its closure in April 1949, OAD nevertheless processed more than three million displaced books and manuscripts, along with related ritual treasures, relying largely on ex libris and book markings for identification.³⁷ These included loot the ERR had collected from Jewish and other sources all over Europe for the IEJ in Frankfurt and Hungen, and the ERR-captured Masonic collections from Western Europe stored in Herzenheim. Although OAD returned nearly 300,000 books to the Soviet Union, most plundered by the ERR, Russian publications have only recently started to acknowledge any part of this restitution from the west.³⁸ OAD records described in the U.S. chapter below are now on the Internet, thanks to NARA arrangements with footnote.com (see Section 9.1.5.3.3.), and many of the French records of retrieval and restitution of library books are now open for consultation in Paris (see Section 2.1.1.3. and Section 2.4.6.). Large numbers of the library returns from OAD, however, represented books plundered by other German agencies. Those included many from the equally large collections brought together by the RSHA that had survived the bombing of Berlin, as well as those found in other sources.

³⁶ Wolfgang Eichwede and Ulrike Hartung, eds., *Property Cards Art, Claims and Shipments. Amerikanische Rückführungen sowjetischer Kulturgüter an die UdSSR nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg – Die CD der Arbeitsstelle “Verbleib der im Zweiten Weltkrieg aus der Sowjetunion verlagerten Kulturgüter”* (Bremen: Forschungsstelle Osteuropa, 1996). See also Gabriele Freitag, “Die Restitution von NS-Beutegut nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg,” in “*Betr: Sicherstellung, NS-Kunstraub in der Sowjetunion* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1998), pp. 170-208.

³⁷ See Leslie I. Poste’s article, “Books Go Home from the Wars,” *Library Journal* 73 (1948), pp. 1699-1704. See the Internet exhibit by the USHMM at: <http://www.ushmm.org/oad>, with links to images and bibliography.

³⁸ See Grimsted, “Pokhishchennyye natsistami knigi vozvrashchaiutsia s voyny: Zabytaia istoriia britanskoi i amerikanskoi bibliotechnoi restitutsii v SSSR,” *Istoriia bibliotek. Sbornik nauchnykh trudov* 6 (St. Petersburg: Rossiiskaia natsional’naia biblioteka, 2006), pp. 242-293.

British Restitution: Tanzenberg. The British found over a half million books in the remote monastery Tanzenberg in Austrian Carinthia that the ERR had collected from all over the continent for the ZBHS. British MFA&A officers kept several captured librarians under house arrest to assist in restitution. The ZBHS librarians had managed to burn most of their wartime files, leaving only a fraction of the ERR library-seizure and shipping records in Tanzenberg. Unfortunately, we do not know today the fate of all the German documents the British reportedly found. However, The British National Archives (TNA), as will be noted below, preserves extensive British restitution records indicating the books returned from Tanzenberg to many European countries, many documenting the owners involved, all of which are now being prepared for Internet launch during 2011.³⁹

For example, the largest single shipment of 975 crates that went home to the Netherlands contained materials from the IISG in Amsterdam, plundered by the ERR. French restitution library restitution records follow the trail of those returned to Paris in considerable detail (see Section 2.1.1.3. and Section 2.4.6.). Another 569 crates with a total of about 65,000 volumes were transferred to Soviet authorities, including some 35,000 rare books from the former imperial palaces in suburban Leningrad, as well as many valuable early printed books from Novgorod, Kyiv, and Voronezh. Most of those were collected by the ERR working groups in occupied Soviet lands, although some were captured by the Künsberg commandos and transferred to the ERR in Berlin. This British restitution effort in Tanzenberg was only recently revealed to the Russian public.⁴⁰

The ERR Ratibor Center: Soviet Retrieval and No Return to the West. Until recently, much less has been known about the third major concentration of ERR library loot in and around the Silesian city of Ratibor, site of the major ERR research and library center evacuated from Berlin in the summer of 1943. ERR documentation long hidden in Kyiv, together with other files in Berlin-Lichtefelde, makes clear that through the end of 1944, Ratibor continued to be the main collecting point for ERR book loot from all over the Continent, including the Eastern Front, particularly as the ERR was retreating from Soviet lands.⁴¹ As the ERR was retreating from Silesia in early 1945, the Germans evacuated millions of books from Ratibor and its vicinity, leaving them in warehouses in the small town of Myslowitz (Pol. Mysłowice), a suburb of Kattowitz on a main east-west rail line. Red Army trophy scouts found the Myslowitz warehouses in the spring of 1945 and used them as a collecting point for additional library loot found in the vicinity, including one large abandoned German echelon in a railway junction near one of the several ERR satellite facilities.

In late October or early November 1945, 54 railroad cars containing over a million books were dispatched from Myslowitz to Minsk. Close to half of that shipment were volumes that the ERR had looted from Western Europe and the Balkans and gathered in the Ratibor center, while the rest the ERR had plundered from Soviet libraries, especially in Belarus and the Baltic republics. Unfortunately, a large part of the books and archives that the ERR had amassed in the Ratibor

³⁹ See especially, Evelyn Adunka, *Der Raub der Bücher: Plünderung in der NS-Zeit und Restitution nach 1945* (Vienna: Czernin Verlag, 2002), and her several subsequent articles.

⁴⁰ Regarding British restitution to the Soviet Union, see Grimsted, "Rare Books from Voronezh to Tartu and Tanzenberg: From Nazi Plunder and British Restitution to Russian 'Lost Book Treasures,'" *Solanus* 18 (2004), pp. 72-107; Grimsted, "Knigi iz Tsarskogo Sela vozvrashchaiutsia domoi s voiny," in *Kniga: Issledovaniia i materialy*, ed. I.N. Tarasenko (Moscow: Nauka, 2005), 72-94; and Grimsted, "Pokhishchennye natsistami knigi vozvrashchaiutsia s voiny."

⁴¹ See Grimsted, "Roads to Ratibor," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 19, no. 3 (Winter 2005), pp. 390-458.

area were never returned to their prewar homes, including many books from many Soviet libraries retrieved from Silesia. They remain to this day in Minsk, including an estimated 400,000 twice-plundered books from Western Europe. Belarusian librarians still consider all of them legitimate “compensation” for their own horrendous library war losses. Although it is hard for many in Western Europe to understand why they would insist on claiming even those books bearing library markings or fond inscriptions to Holocaust victims and that remain as hostages in Belarus libraries to this day.⁴² Additional Soviet book shipments from Silesia went to Moscow, and from there were dispersed throughout the former Soviet Union, but relatively few of those represent ERR loot, in so far as can be determined. Many other books and related materials the ERR had amassed in the Ratibor area were left for the Poles, who found those and more in various parts of Silesia themselves, only some of which were returned to their home countries.⁴³

The Dispersal of ERR Records and Their Present Locations

Already the account above of ERR wartime plunder and postwar Allied restitution has revealed much about the dispersal of ERR records of plunder, and sources today relating to the location and return of its loot. It may nonetheless be helpful briefly to review some of the highlights here. General ERR policy when faced with retreat at the end of the war called for the destruction of operational records that they were not able to evacuate. However, many files the ERR did not succeed in evacuating or destroying were left behind in the countries they were forced to abandon. Those, together with many outgoing ERR documents addressed to other agencies during the war, have been incorporated into various record groups of German occupation agencies in different countries, or of the Allied governments that occupied Germany. Those are among the reasons why remaining ERR records or related records have been located in 29 repositories in nine countries.

For example, the ERR arranged destruction of most of their own working and administrative files that they were unable to evacuate from the Ratibor area. ERR documents they did evacuate attest to that fact. Some of them that they tried to expedite further west, including some of the records they had brought there from Berlin in 1943, were found en route by Red Army trophy scouts, namely the large group described below in Kyiv. Some of the ERR records from Ratibor (December 1944-January 1945) did nonetheless reach their evacuation center in Bavaria at the castle and former abbey of Banz on the estate taken over during the war by Baron Kurt von Behr, who had fled there from Paris. Those hidden there and in several other neighboring locations in Staffelstein, Bavaria, and vicinity were joined by others that the chief of Ratibor operations, Gerd Wunder, brought with him in February 1945. Those included many of his own office files from Ratibor, along with some books saved from the Ostbücherei. He set up a working office in Staffelstein.⁴⁴ The materials gathered in the Banz/Staffelstein area were mixed in with records

⁴² See Grimsted, “The Postwar Fate of ERR Archival and Library Plunder and the Dispersal of ERR Records,” originally published in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 20, no. 2 (Fall 2006), pp. 278-306; an updated version will appear in the *Journal of Art Crime* (December 2010). See also Grimsted, “Silesian Crossroads for Europe’s Displaced Books: Compensation or Prisoners of War?” in *The Future of the Lost Cultural Heritage: The documentation, identification and restitution of the cultural assets of WW II victims. Proceedings of the international academic conference in Cesky Krumlov (22.-24.11. 2005)*, ed. Mečislav Borák (Prague: Tilia Publishers, 2006), pp. 133-169.

⁴³ See Grimsted, “The Road to Minsk for Western ‘Trophy’ Books: Twice Plundered but Not Yet Home from the War,” *Libraries & Culture*, 39, no. 4 (Fall 2004), pp. 351-404.

⁴⁴ See especially Wunder’s detailed report on the evacuation from Ratibor, in his “Meldung an den Stabsführer”

taken there from ERR headquarters units that had remained in the Berlin area. Some of the records removed from Banz by U.S. Army MFA&A officers were transferred first to a U.S. Army document center in Germany. Those not forwarded to Nuremberg for war crimes trials were shipped to the United States, ending up in the Captured German Records Center in Alexandria, Virginia. They were all returned to West Germany in the 1960s and are here described as reprocessed in the Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichtefelde.

Simultaneously, as mentioned above, the ERR sent many of its remaining Paris records from the Jeu de Paume, along with art plundered from French Jewish collections, to its art repositories in Bavaria or to Kogl in near-by Austria. Early in 1945 many of those records held in Kogl were moved back to Füssen, joining others already stored in nearby Neuschwanstein. Likewise, some original ERR inventories for art and archeological treasures from the Eastern Front were found after the war by the MFA&A in the castle of Höchstädt and the abbey of Buxheim, along with related documentation and hand-drawn plans of the castle storage areas. Those recovered by U.S. MFA&A officers were taken to the MCCP Document Center.

The most extensive “restitution research files” organized at the MCCP incorporated various ERR and related documents from western sources. When MFA&A specialists prepared property cards for the individual art objects, they often used the ERR photographs rather than making new ones, and they used ERR inventories of artworks in preparing restitution case files. As a result, many of the relevant ERR wartime documents became interspersed with, and incorporated into, U.S. restitution files. When the Central Collecting Points were closed down, many of their records were incorporated into OMGUS records for transfer to the United States. Subsequently, as integral components of OMGUS records transferred to the U.S. National Archives, they were long held in the Suitland Branch, but are now held in NACP, RG 260. Many of those files were microfilmed in Germany before transfer, and copies of those films are now preserved both in Koblenz and in the NACP.

As explained in the U.S. chapter below, in recent decades NARA has microfilmed most of the remaining OMGUS restitution records, especially those from the Central Collecting Points. Starting in 2009, NARA started making some two-and-a half million documents among those records even more widely available through digitization and Internet display in cooperation with the vendor Footnote. As of the autumn of 2010, the OMGUS records from the OAD and the WCCP are already searchable in full-text format, and more, including those from MCCP, are scheduled to follow.⁴⁵

Residual CCP files stayed in Munich, together with copies of the microfilms and/or printouts from them, for the German restitution office TVK that continued restitution operations in Bavaria until 1962. The TVK files were transferred in 1992 to the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, where they are now held as a separate record group (B 323). This explains why many ERR files of correspondence, seizure reports, inventories, and photographs are now found among the MCCP/TVK records in Koblenz, not always duplicating those among the OMGUS records (RG 260) in the NACP. Because restitution activities continued longer in Munich after OMGUS withdrawal, original ERR inventories and many more ERR photographs are found today in Koblenz rather than in the NACP. In 2009, the Bundesarchiv completed a detailed new finding aid for the Koblenz B 323 records, which is now available on its Bundesarchiv Koblenz website,

(Staffelstein, 23 February 1945), BArch, NS 30/50. See more details in Grimsted, “The ‘Smolensk Archive,’” in *Vosvrashchenie “Smolenskogo arkhiva”/The Return of the “Smolensk Archive.”*

⁴⁵ See the chart of the series of NARA microfilm publications for the Ardelia Hall Collection within RG 260 (OMGUS), Section 9.1.5.

and as of autumn 2010, digitized versions of many of the ERR documents themselves are now being processed for Internet display joined to the new finding aid.⁴⁶

A large part of the ERR records captured by the U.S. Army after the war, especially those from the region around Banz and Staffelstein, known as the Rosenberg Collection (with the exception of those incorporated in other record groups including Nuremberg records), after several intermediate transfers in Germany, was shipped to the United States and deposited in what later became the Captured German Records Center in Alexandria, Virginia. That group of Rosenberg files, in addition to those created by the ERR, contained many documents from other agencies Rosenberg headed, most notably the RMbO. Before their return to the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1960s, they were all microfilmed with a printed descriptive English-language guide; the large series was erroneously entitled as if all of the documents were created by Rosenberg's RMbO.⁴⁷ After their return to Germany in the 1960s, as will be seen in the German chapter, those Rosenberg records were all reprocessed by the Bundesarchiv according to their German offices of creation, and the U.S. microfilms are not used today in Germany.

The ERR files themselves comprising a record group (Bestand NS 30) are now available on the Internet linked to an electronic finding aid (see Section 3.1.1.). However, many ERR or ERR-related documents are found with the records of other Rosenberg agencies, including the ERR's parent agency, the DBFU, now classed as NS 15 (see Section 3.1.3.). Since the DBFU was also the parent agency for the Hohe Schule, many of remaining files of the Hohe Schule, the ZBHS, and the IEJ.⁴⁸ Many ERR planning, personnel, and correspondence files are interfiled in the Bundesarchiv with records of the Rosenberg Chancellery (NS 8), now also available on the Internet linked to a recent finding aid (see Section 3.1.2.). Long held in the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, following German unification, the Bundesarchiv brought together most remaining records of Rosenberg and other agencies from the Third Reich in its Berlin-Lichterfelde facility. However, most of the surviving ERR art-looting files from Western Europe, as mentioned above, are now incorporated in the TVK records in the Bundesarchiv Koblenz (Bestand B 323; see Section 3.2.1).

The Netherlands is one of the few countries where the ERR was operating during the war where relatively complete operational files were found locally thereafter. These were discovered in the late 1950s in the building of the IISG on the Keisersgracht, which the ERR had used as its Dutch headquarters. They are now preserved at the NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Amsterdam, together with the only surviving collection of original inventories of household goods seized from Jewish dwellings in the Netherlands (see Section 5.1.1).

Most important in France, as will be seen in the French chapter, are the now opening French restitution records in the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (Ministère des affaires européennes et étrangères, MAEE), which will make it more possible to trace the fate and restitution of French Jewish art and library collections plundered by the ERR. When the admirable French handbook for research in sources related to World War II displaced cultural assets appeared in 2000, the French compiler could not legally have access to the Quai d'Orsay archives.⁴⁹ Ten years later the present international survey of ERR and related archives can

⁴⁶ The 2009 finding aid for B 323 is available at: http://startext.net-build.de:8080/barch/MidosasSEARCH/B323-52029_Version_online/index.htm (see Section 3.2.1.).

⁴⁷ See the introductory section on the Bundesarchiv (see Section 3.1).

⁴⁸ Technically the Hohe Schule was not part of the ERR, although both were functioning under the DBFU. The ERR was main supplier of its books and other research materials, and often Hohe Schule staff were simultaneously serving in ERR special commandos.

⁴⁹ *Guide des recherches dans les archives des spoliations et des restitutions*, edited by Caroline Piketty, with Christophe Dubois and Fabrice Launay (Paris: La documentation française, 2000; Mission d'étude sur la spoliation

describe much more of that documentation. French restitution agency records themselves, long closed to the public, are now finally being processed with publicly accessible finding aids. With the 2009 reopening of the MAEE archives in their new facility in La Courneuve, and thanks to the 2008 French archival law lowering the period of closure to 50 years, several series of these crucial sources have already been opened for public research. As of late 2010, for example, newly created finding aids are already available for two major groups of French claims dossiers.⁵⁰

A few scattered ERR and ERR-related documents have recently been surfacing in the Archives Nationales in Paris (see Section 2.3.). Some that were used for postwar French collaboration trials are incorporated into court records, and hence are subject to more restricted use in France. British occupation records from Austria, with ERR library documentation found in Tanzenberg, mentioned briefly below, are now open for public research in the British National Archives in Kew. Indicative of the problem of dispersed ERR files in many countries, the most complete reports of ERR priority library seizures in France and Belgium have recently surfaced among the ERR records in Kyiv.⁵¹ A recent study French libraries during the war has brought together lists of the thousands of individuals whose books were seized. Utilizing French library restitution records, the author has been expanding a database covering the victims of plunder.⁵²

For a long time we did not even know about the major complex of ERR records held secretly in Kyiv, which became available to researchers only in 1990. Initial published notes about them by the present author in 1991 represented an early step in the present Survey being launched two decades later.⁵³ Since then Ukrainian colleagues have done much to analyze and describe them. As of September 2010 they are now on the website of the Central State Archive of Highest Agencies of Power and Government of Ukraine (TsDAVO), together with a Russian-language “guide-index.” That Kyiv “Rosenberg Collection,” in addition to ERR files from Ratibor, as will be explained in the Ukrainian chapter, now includes several other diverse groups of files found elsewhere. It was launched on the Internet 1 September 2010.⁵⁴ Remaining records of the RMbO contain one series (*Opys 5*), namely the related files of the LV ABM, under the Reich Commissar of Ukraine.⁵⁵

A few additional files from ERR Ratibor operations have ended up in the Russian State Military Archive (RGVA) in Moscow, which had earlier been accessioned by the formerly separate Special Archive (Osobyi arkhiv; TsGOA SSSR). Most of those files arrived in Minsk with the book shipment from Silesia mentioned earlier. The ERR fond now in RGVA (fond 1401k) in the 1990s acquired a major file of Rosenberg historical monument registration cards

des Juifs de France), On-line edition: <http://lesrapports.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/BRP/014000425/0000.pdf>.

⁵⁰ See, for example, the newly opened series RA 1-69 in Section 2.1.1.6.1. and the OBIP series in Section 2.1.1.6.2.

⁵¹ Central State Archive of Highest Agencies of Power and Government of Ukraine (TsDAVO), 3676/1/172, fols. 274-276, together with other lists, fols, 273, 283, and 277-282, and the Brethauer memo bound in the same file, now fol. 324.

⁵² Martine Poulain, *Livres pillés, lectures surveillées: les bibliothèques françaises sous l'occupation* (Paris: Gallimard, 2008). Poulain's rapidly expanding database of individuals and institutions whose libraries were seized can be accessed at http://www.cfaj.fr/publicat/livres_pilles.html.

⁵³ See Grimsted, “The Fate of Ukrainian Cultural Treasures during World War II: The Plunder of Archives, Libraries, and Museums under the Third Reich,” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 39, no. 1 (1991), esp. pp. 54-57. A Ukrainian monograph version was expanded with appended documents with the collaboration and translation of Hennadi Boriak (Kyiv: Arkheografichna komisiia, 1991; 2nd edn.: L'viv, 1992).

⁵⁴ The “Rosenberg Collection” in Kyiv is now available on the Internet at the website of TsDAVO: <http://www.tsdavo.org.ua>. See the newspaper note by Leigh Turner, British Ambassador to Ukraine, at: http://www.kyivpost.com/news/opinion/op_ed/detail/81263/#ixzz0ym5AILyP.

⁵⁵ See more details in Grimsted, *Trophies of War and Empire*, pp. 323-327, and Section 7.1.

prepared in occupied Soviet areas but found later in Poland.⁵⁶ These include some 300 cards from the Baltic republics that also remain in RGVA but are not included in the publication. Another 150 ERR cultural registration cards remain today in the separate but fragmentary ERR fond in Vilnius, which also includes fragmentary files from local ERR operations there (see Section 4.1.).

Soviet authorities used some of the ERR documents now held in the former Soviet Union for postwar domestic collaboration trials, but none were offered to the International Military Tribunal (IMT) in Nuremberg, where Alfred Rosenberg was interrogated, tried, and hanged for war crimes in October 1946. In contrast, many of the most important ERR documents relating to cultural plunder found in the west were sent to Nuremberg to be processed for the war crimes trials. Documents used as evidence by the IMT were assigned exhibit numbers, sequentially under the code for the country introducing them: Great Britain (GB), France (FR), and the United States (USA). Copies of all those documents, translated into several languages, remain with the trial records in the National Archives of each of the participating countries, including the Soviet Union, or in the British case, now in the Imperial War Museum in London (see Section 8.2.). Those complexes are all mentioned below.

While official French records from Nuremberg remain in the Archives Nationales in Paris, many of the Rosenberg documents submitted but not used for the trial went to the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine (CDJC) after the trials. Now part of the Mémorial de la Shoah in Paris, the CDJC accordingly now has one of the most extensive collections of original and copied ERR documents, as well as documents from other Rosenberg operations (see Section 2.5.). Recently, the CDJC Rosenberg Collection has been digitized, and the card catalogues are being reprocessed in a database system. While as of the autumn of 2010, only a small selection has been launched on the Internet, many more documents are currently in preparation for launch, thanks to sponsorship of the extended Claims Conference ERR project.

A Guide to ERR and Related Files

As this Introduction makes clear, the present Survey should help overcome the problem of locating remaining original ERR documents and those of related wartime agencies such as the Möbel-Aktion and the Hohe Schule, as well as records relating to the postwar location and restitution of ERR cultural loot. Research in the records of ERR plunder and the fate of its loot is still seriously hampered by their wide dispersal, including their incorporation into many different groups of records in many different archives. The international politics of restitution make it impossible for the ERR files to be physically consolidated in Germany, where they could best be appropriately processed for research. For example, neither Ukraine nor France would consider turning over to Germany the large collections of ERR records from all over Europe that have been held in archives in Kyiv and Paris for the last 60 years: hence, the need to bring together virtually as many of the scattered ERR records (and related files) as possible in electronic form.

Initially the Claims Conference planned to bring the remaining ERR records together in a virtual reconstruction with a systematic electronic finding aid, as had been suggested by this

⁵⁶ They were published in facsimile with Russian translations by Mikhail A. Boitsovyi and Tat'iana A. Vasil'eva, eds. and comps., *Kartoteka "Z" Operativnogo shtaba "Reikhsliaiter Rozenberg": Tsennosti kul'tury na okkupirovannykh territoriiakh Rossii, Ukrainy i Belorussii, 1941-1942* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1998); = *Trudy istoricheskogo fakul'teta MGU 5* (ser: "Istoricheskie istochniki" 1). See the coverage of the rest of the ERR and related M-Aktion records in RGVA in Section 6.1.

author in a seminar at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum a decade ago in 2000.⁵⁷ However, such an ambitious plan for virtual integration into a single international database system has proved too costly and administratively too complicated to realize. Besides, even as digitization was starting to get underway in connection with the project, several of the holding repositories in the United States, Germany, and France, and most recently Ukraine, initiated their own digitization projects, often involving larger groups of records incorporating ERR documentation.

The Holocaust Era Assets Conference held by the Czech Republic in June 2009 (as part of the Czech presidency of the European Union), brought together representatives of 47 countries and some 24 non-governmental organizations. Of relevance here, the Conference had Working Groups devoted to Looted Art and to Judaica and Jewish Cultural Property (the latter including library books as well as ritual silver, Torah scrolls, and other Judaica). In the opening Archives Panel for the Working Group on Looted Art, Deputy Archivist of the United States Michael Kurtz, who directs the NACP, announced NARA plans for expanded Internet launch of some 2.5 million documents relating to Holocaust-era looted cultural property through the vendor Footnote. He further announced an international initiative for an Internet portal bringing together contributions on that subject from the national archives of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, together with those of the United States. Later in that same panel, the participating archivist now in charge of the French restitution records from the Archives of the MAEE, Anne Georgeon-Liskenne, announced plans of her repository to launch more digitized files on the MAEE website from those long closed to public access. The present author reported on the forthcoming Survey.⁵⁸

A year later, as this Survey is being launched, a mock-up of the projected international portal for records relating to Holocaust-era looted cultural property is already displayed on the NARA website, with current postings from France, Germany, and the United States. On the first of September 2010, Ukraine was formally invited to participate in the international portal when TsDAVO launched an on-line version of its “Rosenberg Collection” in a formal ceremony in Kyiv with Bundesarchiv participation. Meanwhile, significant progress has recently been made in the United Kingdom for preparing British Second World War restitution records for launch as its contribution to the international portal.⁵⁹ In the British case, among the most important records of ERR pertinence are the files on library restitution from the Austrian monastery of Tanzenberg, the final wartime site of the collections amassed for the ZBHS. Other British restitution files preserved from the British Zone of Occupation in Germany do not appear to involve many returns of objects plundered by the ERR, because few were found in the British zone.

While notes about the increasing digitization and Internet availability have been added to the description of the relevant records, this Survey itself has also been invited to join the international portal. The electronic publication of this Survey, with data gathered over the past two decades, has accordingly been adapted to serve as an integrating guide to accompany and facilitate

⁵⁷ I first submitted a proposal for the project at the request of Wesley A. Fisher in 2000, when he was director of international programs (and later director of external affairs) at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, after a seminar on the ERR that I presented as a visiting fellow. That proposal was further developed in October 2000 at the Vilnius Conference on Holocaust-Era Cultural Assets.

⁵⁸ Michael Kurtz spoke as chair of the panel; the reports of Anne Georgeon-Liskenne and Grimsted appear on the conference website: <http://www.holocausteraassets.eu/en/working-groups/looted-art>. I also presented a related report on the ERR project for the Judaica Working Group, which can also be accessed on the same website.

⁵⁹ Initial listing of many of the files to be included already appears on the website of the Central Registry of Looted Art, 1933-1945 (London): <http://www.lootedart.com/MFEU4P39718>; the more detailed descriptions on a document level are now being processed (as of autumn 2010) for transfer to the TNA site, where eventually they will be joined by digital images of the documents themselves as part of the international portal.

electronic access to the ERR files described within component record groups, including those currently being launched on the Internet by holding repositories in many countries and linked by the NARA international portal.

The brief sections of the presentation above regarding the postwar restitution of ERR loot and the dispersal of ERR records suggest some of the highlights to be found in the text that follows. The present volume as it now is being publicly issued for the first time in electronic form on the Internet remains something of a hybrid between a survey and a guide to remaining documentation of – and relating to – the ERR and the fate of the cultural loot it seized in occupied countries across the European continent. The coverage has grown in length and depth during its compilation over the past two decades since the compiler first discovered in 1990 and started exploring the most extensive extant collection of ERR files now located in Kyiv. For some repositories, not already well described, or where the documents are incorporated in other groups of records, the coverage has been extended to that of an actual file-level – and at times a document-level – finding aid. The reasons for this reflect the state and level of descriptions publicly available to researchers. More details about the organization of individual country chapters and the coverage of archival repositories within each country is explained in the Technical Introduction above.

The Survey remains a preliminary step, and it is to be expected that more ERR documents will emerge beyond those listed below. Nonetheless, the data described here should provide background and context for researchers in many fields who may want to utilize remaining ERR documents, as well as the newly launched object-level database of plundered works of art that were processed through the Jeu de Paume. Eventually as more documentation becomes accessible electronically and links established among the scattered parts, a more comprehensive study of the ERR and its wartime culture ravages may also emerge.

As it is now, we are dealing with the record of plunder and fate of the loot of only one key Nazi agency during the Second World War. That is only a small step in terms of the extent of wartime looted art, library books, and archives. There were many other competitors in wartime cultural looting and the horrendous destruction and losses to the European cultural heritage. Nevertheless, it is to be hoped that this attempt to track the sources for ERR exploits and the recovery of its loot may constitute a significant example of the resources available for piecing together the broader record of wartime cultural plunder and postwar restitution.