



Information on data processing: Files of the Restitution Commission at the Provincial Court Linz

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Terms of reference

The restitution files were opened during the course of proceedings conducted pursuant to the Third Restitution Act (Federal Law Gazette 1947/54) before the Linz Provincial Court and, until 1955 by the Provincial Court Linz-North for the Soviet Occupied Zone. The restitution proceedings involved assets that had been seized from the Jewish population and assets that had, for example, been expropriated from ecclesiastical institutions. Several sets of proceedings were merged for practical reasons and ultimately conducted as a single proceeding; others were transferred to the Financial Directorate for Upper Austria because they met the requirements of the First Restitution Act (Federal Law Gazette 1946/156) or the Second Restitution Act (Federal Law Gazette 1947/53), or were transferred to the Restitution Commissions of other provincial courts.

The restitution files mainly contain correspondence between the lawyers of restitution claimants and those of the adverse party, minutes of hearings and proceedings, land register excerpts, personal status documents, powers-of-attorney, requests to the court for measures of enquiry, valuations of various assets (mainly properties and companies) and, beyond that, they provide insight into the restitution practice at the time.

The restitution files were an important source of information for the General Settlement Fund when investigating facts relevant to restitution cases in the Province of Upper Austria.

Digitization

The finding aid for the files of the Restitution Commission at Linz Provincial Court held at the Upper Austrian Provincial Archives is taken from the access database "Aryanizations", which was created by the Upper Austrian Provincial Government of 17 October 2002. This "Aryanizations" database comprises three parts. Its part 2, *RK Linz* (as well as part 1 *BVVR* [Seized assets, asset restitution] and part 3 *RSTG* [Third Restitution Act]) was removed from this database so that it could be edited autonomously. The index for the files from the Restitution Commission at Linz Provincial Court contains 3729 records.

Processing the digitized data

Separate columns were created for natural persons and legal persons in order to be able to differentiate between the two. The data on the aggrieved person was attributed to the column for the natural or legal person and the spellings were standardized. In addition, where there were several historical persons in one row they were placed in the columns for natural and legal persons, each in their own row. As a result the finding aid for this series of files then contained 5099 records. Data on the adverse parties was not taken into account; these data can be gathered from the restitution files that were opened during the restitution proceedings.

Obvious orthographical errors and incorrect spellings were amended without comment. As far as one could be clearly established, a place was attributed to legal persons.

All procedural memos were recorded in the column "remarks", although the abbreviations taken on from the finding aid of the Upper Austrian Provincial Archives were written out in full, if they could be unambiguously identified. However, it was not possible to write out all abbreviations ("Al. [plus Zusatz]", "B", "Ea", "EB", "Est.", "fl/FL", "UB", "unz.", "ZE", "Zw"), not least because they were often written differently to describe the same set of circumstances, or were used in such a way that left a lot of room for interpretation:

- "zr" and "zrk" were used interchangeably and could stand for either "zurückgewiesen" (the rejection of a restitution application by the Restitution Commission) or "zurückgezogen/zurückgenommen" (the withdrawal or retraction of an application by the applicant). At times, however, it is also used to stand for "zurückgestellt" (restitution of an asset).
- "zkg", "zkgz.", "zkgz." can be interpreted as "zurückgezogen" (the withdrawal or retraction of an application by the applicant), "zkg." Can, however, also be interpreted as "zurückgenommen" (taken back).

The work on the data holdings took place between July 2011 and December 2012. As a rule the formal processing standards developed by the working group were applied and the data entry field designations complied with, insofar as the relevant data was available.