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Holdings of the Jewish Community Linz

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Titles of the holdings

Archives of Upper Austria
Record group: **Weitere Bestände** (“Further holdings”)
Holdings: **Sonderbestände** (“Special holdings”)
Sub-holdings: **Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Linz** (“Jewish Community Linz”) 1938–1945
File series: **Vermögensanmeldungen** (“Property notices”)
File series: **Arisierungsakten** (“Aryanization files”)

Abbreviation for this type of file: IKG Linz

Origins of the holdings

The sub-holdings Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Linz (“Jewish Community Linz”) of the Archives of Upper Austria are comprised of two different file series, which differ in their provenance: the *Vermögensanmeldungen* (“Property notices”) and *Arisierungsakten* (“Aryanization files”).

The file series “Property notices” originated in May 1938 at the *Vermögensverkehrsstelle* (“Property Transaction Office”) in Vienna, established with the Ministry for the Economy and Labor. The Property Transaction Office concentrated on the “aryanization” (predominantly of real estate and companies) or the liquidation of small and medium-sized companies. In 1938, it controlled assets with a value of 2 billion Reichsmark; this corresponded to ca. two-thirds of the total Jewish assets in Austria. After the seizure of the majority of Jewish property, in 1939 the Property Transaction Office evolved into a “Liquidation Office” for the liquidation of the remaining Jewish companies in the fields of trade and commerce. It continued to exist under the name “Department III De-jewification” at the Office of the Reich Governor in Vienna until the end of the war in 1945.

The file numbers of the “aryanization files” document their origin from the former Office of the Reich Governor Upper Danube, “Special department de-jewification”, which was the highest authority for the “aryanizations” and property seizures. The “aryanizations” in the *Gau Oberdonau* (“Reich region Upper Danube”) were primarily dealt with by the department IV with the sub-department IVc (Economy and Labor) and the specialized area IVc/W4 (later Ib/J). The special area Ic/W4 was in charge of “de-jewifications” with the exception of agricultural and silvicultural estates. It was also known as the “De-jewification Department”, “Aryanization Office” and “Property Transaction Office in Linz”.

As a result of the competition between the German Reich, the “Country of Austria” [an administrative unit, *comm. by the translator*] and the Reich region Upper Danube and due to regular political intervention and semi-official activities, the “aryanization” measures documented in the files are often not easy to follow; moreover, in many cases they are related to the files of the *Finanzlandesdirektion* (“Financial Directorate”) Upper Austria (*Beschlagnahmte Vermögen – Vermögensrückstellungen* ["Confiscated assets – Restitution of assets"], abbreviated: FLD – *BV and FLD – VR*) and the Financial Department (*Finanzabteilung des Landes Oberösterreich*, abbreviated: FiRK ("Financial Department of the Province of Upper Austria").

The file material probably came into the possession of the Jewish Community Linz in around 1950. The Jewish Community transferred the “property notices” and the “aryanization files” to the Archives of Upper Austria in 2002 as a long term loan. The files were handed over in the form of 13 fascicles (fascicle 1–13). As the files were neither alphabetically nor numerically sorted, the Archives of Upper Austria allocated them new index numbers in order to make them accessible. The Archive then distributed these among 14 archive boxes for reasons of conservation. The concordance between the old fascicle numbers and the new box numbers can be gathered from an index containing the relevant information on each file. The holdings are comprised of the file series property notices (formerly: fascicles 1–3, now: boxes 1–4) and aryanization files on Austrian companies (formerly: fascicles 4–13, now: boxes 5–14). Neither the present order of the files (2012) nor the numbering in the index reveal that they were ordered according to any discernable criteria.

Contents of the files

The *Verordnung über die Anmeldung des Vermögens von Juden* (“Ordinance on the Registration of Jewish Property”) of 26 April 1938 (German Reich Law Gazette 1939 I p. 414, Austrian Law Gazette 102/1938) forced all persons who were considered Jewish pursuant to the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 (German Reich Law Gazette 1935 I p. 1146, Austrian Law Gazette 150/1938) who possessed assets of over 5,000 Reichsmark to submit a property notice (“List of Jewish property as at 27 April 1938”). Non-Jewish spouses were also affected by this Ordinance. Persons who did not have German citizenship and were subject to the Nuremberg Laws only had to state their assets which were located within the German Reich.

The four-page form contains information on the person filing it (name, profession, address, date of birth, nationality and religion and “race”) and the maiden name and “race” and religion of the spouse. Then followed questions about the domestic and foreign assets such as real estate, company assets, stocks and bonds, loan or mortgage claims, jewelry, insurance policies and pension income. On the last page, the person was required to submit a detailed list of their debts.

The “aryanization files” reflect the next stage in the process of seizing Jewish assets. The files, some of which are extremely comprehensive, contain the entire correspondence relating to the property seizure such as, for example, requests for approval to buy a property or a company, the appointment of a provisional administrator, valuation reports on the property, purchase contracts, approval of the purchase contract and much more.

Informational content

The property notices provide a very detailed picture of the asset status between April 1938 and early 1939 of the Jewish citizens who were persecuted by the National Socialists. In most cases the correspondence between the persecutee and the Property Transaction Office, statements of account of the auction house Dorotheum, the orders relating to *Judenvermögensabgabe* (“Jewish capital levy”) and *Reichsfluchtsteuer* (“Reich Flight Tax”), land register excerpts, valuation reports, company statements of account and not least a statistics sheet summarizing all statements regarding assets in brief, are usually allocated to the four-page form.

The property notices had to be filed in triplicate with the Vienna Property Transaction Office. Each property notice received was given a consecutive file number. Later on, notices which were filed for amounts under the amount 5,000 Reichsmark and were therefore not compulsory, were apparently allocated a number over 60,000. The file number which had subsequently been “freed up” was re-allocated to another property notice with the result that two people are occasionally listed under one number.

From November 1939, files on persons resident in the federal provinces/Reich regions were transferred by the Vienna Property Transaction Office to be further processed and stored. The documents in the property notices cover the period up to the turn of 1939/1940; personal correspondence or correspondence from the authorities dating 1941 or later is extremely rare.

The aryanization files predominantly relate to Upper Austrian companies which were partially or wholly under Jewish ownership and had been aryanized. They contain all kinds of file material which accumulated from the Property Transaction Office during the seizure of the company such as the appointment of a provisional administrator, applications of so-called “aryan” buyers or instructions for the liquidation of a company, the sale of company assets, etc. Sometimes the documents also reveal indications of the whereabouts of the former owners. They document the measures (those which could be recorded bureaucratically) leading to the liquidation of the asset, insofar as this occurred prior to 1944.

Alternative sources of information

There are many overlaps with other relevant file series at the Archives of Upper Austria (*Finanzlandesdirektion – Beschlagnahmte Vermögen* [“Financial Directorate – Confiscated assets”, abbreviated: *FLD – BV*], *Gauselbstverwaltung* [“Reich independent regional administration”, abbreviated: *GSV*] and *Finanzabteilung Rückstellungskommission* [“Financial Department Restitution Commission”, abbreviated: *FiRK*]

Explanations and comments

At the Archives of Upper Austria, the property notices are ordered alphabeitcally according to the surname of the persecutee. The aryanization files are not ordered in any discernable way; the files can, however, be located using the index numbers allocated by the Archives of Upper Austria.

Information of data processing: Property notices – Upper Austria (holdings of the Jewish Community Linz)
Information of data processing: Aryanization files – Upper Austria (holdings of the Jewish Community Linz)

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