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Restitution files of the Financial Directorate Vienna – “Seizure of Jewish claims”

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Titles of the holdings

Austrian State Archives/Archives of the Republic
Record group: **Entschädigungs- und Restitutionsangelegenheiten** (“Compensation and restitution matters“), 1938–1985
Holdings: **Finanzlandesdirektion** (“Financial Directorate”), 1940–1947
File series: **Files of the Financial Directorate pursuant to the First Restitution Act**
File: **registry number 21340** (title: “Jewish claims”; four boxes)

Abbreviated title for the type of file: **FLD**

Origins of the holdings

Among the assets which were forfeited to the German Reich on grounds of the Elfte Verordnung zum Reichsbürgergesetz (“Eleventh Decree to the Reich Citizenship Law”) were also financial claims arising from the business activities of people who were deemed Jewish according to the Nürnberger Gesetzen von 1935 (“Nuremberg Laws of 1935”). In the present case, these almost exclusively constitute reimbursement obligations of aryan debtors and – to a lesser extent – claims against the Postal Savings Bank originating from checking and current account balances. These were collected by the Chief Finance President Vienna-Lower Danube, recorded at the Government Higher Pay Office and then forwarded to Berlin. Another Nazi legal provision for the confiscation of financial claims was the Verordnung über die Behandlung von Vermögen der Angehörigen des ehemaligen polnischen Staates (“Ordinance on the Treatment of Assets Belonging to Nationals of the Former Polish State”) of 17 September 1940 (Secs. 1, 2, 9 and 12), although these sums came under the disposition of the so called Hauptreuhandstelle Ost (“Main Trustee Office East”) in Berlin.

The notices regarding the debt repayments by “aryan” employees or pensioners to Jewish creditors were received for acknowledgement by the Chief Finance President Vienna-Lower Danube from the companies’ and institutions’ departments responsible for paying the salaries or pensions: companies and organizations transferring these amounts included the Vienna Transport Services, various departments of the Reich Railway, the Municipal Administration of the Reich region Vienna or the Pension Fund of the Chief Finance President Vienna-Lower Danube. Another part of the information contained in this holding originates from court cases concerning the settlement of old debts and the corresponding communications of the Chief Finance President Vienna-Lower Danube by the competent Local Court.

In isolated cases the Chief Finance President Vienna-Lower Danube examined the submissions of the “aryan” debtors regarding estates of deceased persons and settled the debts through

- repayment of the debt writing off interest and costs or
- writing off part of the debt or writing off the residual debt or
- paying off the debt with a single lump sum payment

Contents of the files

The contents of the files is a dossier distributed among four boxes dealing with National Socialist acts of seizure and which can be qualified as an unordered Varia holding. After the end of the war in 1945, the reestablished Financial Directorate for Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland (Financial Directorate Vienna) consolidated the material under registry number (file number) 21340 and recorded it with the title “Jewish claims” in the corresponding index for the files according to the First Restitution Act. Subsequently, the Financial Directorate evaluated these documents in a manner which was only to a certain extent logical and collected payments from outstanding executory titles in accordance with the First Restitution Act. This is gathered from the comprehensive lists with written annotations, which, however, were not taken into account when being recorded in the Findbuch for Victims of National Socialism. The work of the Financial Directorate Vienna came to an end with the 21. declaratory decision of 23 December 1959 on grounds of the Auffangsorganisiationsgesetz-Novelle (“Amendment to the Receiving Organizations Act”) of 16 December 1958, with which 433,815.91 Schilling, for which no entitled persons or heirs of the creditors had as yet filed claims, was transferred to the Sammelstellen (“Collection Agencies”) A and B. The corresponding alphabetical list of the original creditors (natural and legal persons) comprises 28 pages. There are only a few instances where the names of the individuals of companies are supplemented with a specific address or other identifying features.

Informational content

Generally, the files contain various filled out forms or typewritten lists with the personal details of Jewish creditors (surnames, forenames, sometimes also dates of birth and addresses), as well are the name of the business and the outstanding claim amount either in Reichsmark or Austrian Schilling. For payments in instalments, the documents appear again in various places. The materials are supplemented by entries on “aryan” debtors and on the institution which paid off the debt through deductions from salaries or pensions. In many cases, the income collected by the Chief Finance President Vienna-Lower Danube through so called “acceptance dispositions” are marked and noted in the account books and affixed with narrow paper strips containing basic information as to the amount and origin of the money. In a small number of cases, collective notifications on court decisions in proceedings for the settlement of debts can be found. Written requests and explanations made by debtors to the Chief Finance President Vienna-Lower Danube for release from debt can often be found, supplemented by confirmation slips issued by the salary or pension funds.

Explanations and comments

The documentation of the contents of the file with the registry number 21340 and title “Jewish claims” is to be considered complementary to the Findbuch records from the index on the files in accordance with the First Restitution Act of the Financial Directorate Vienna.

Information of data processing: Restitution files of the Financial Directorate – “Seizure of Jewish claims”

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