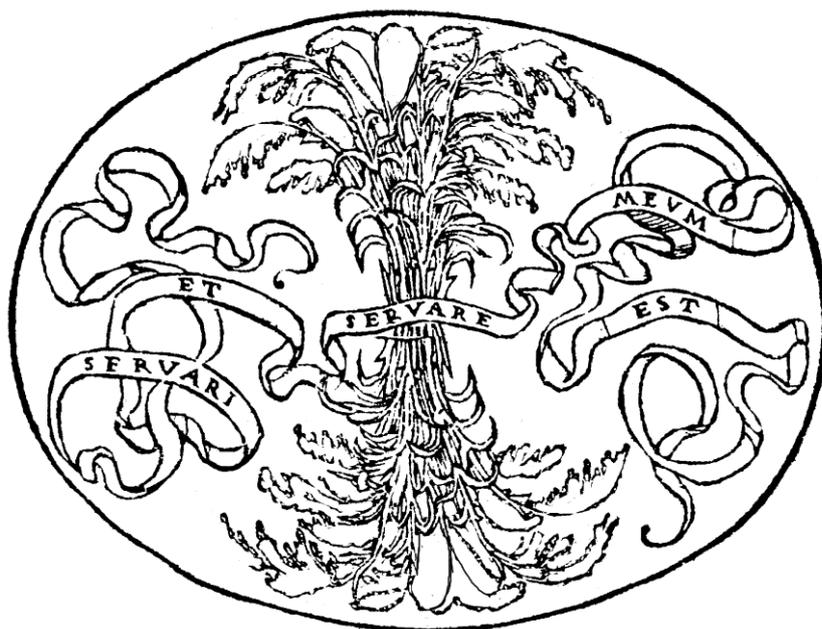


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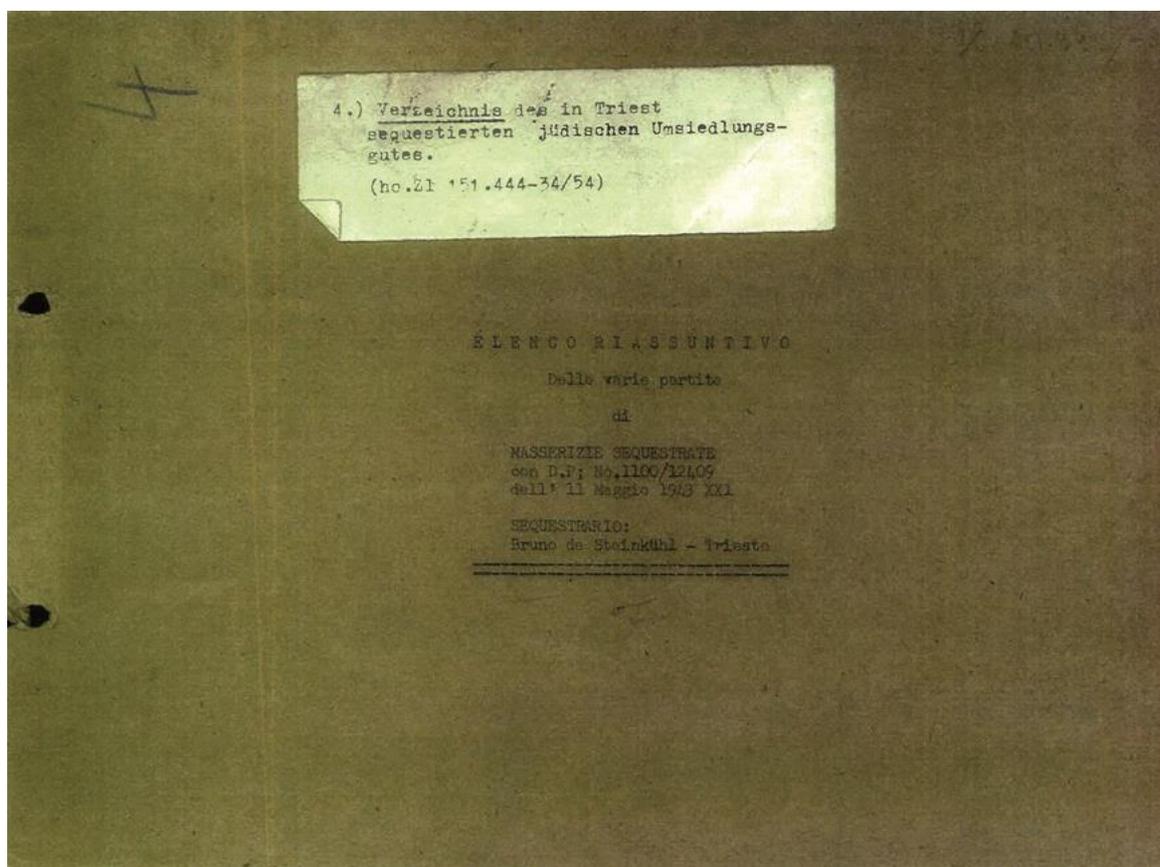
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**SEQUESTERED/CONFISCATED ASSETS IN TRIESTE:
A LIST OF AUSTRIAN JEWISH OWNERS IN VIENNESE ARCHIVES.
A WORKSHOP REPORT**

The basis for the ongoing research is a document entitled *Summary List of Household Effects sequestered with the decree N.o 1100/12490 of May 11th, 1943¹*, in the holding of the Finance Department – Property Declaration Office in the Austrian State Archives². It lists 475 Jewish emigrants (mainly from the German Reich), whose removal goods were stored in some warehouses in the name of various forwarding agents in the Free Port of Trieste.

The Trieste list is unrelated to the other material in the box and probably had remained undiscovered until an employee of the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism became aware of the document in 2015. Subsequently, personal data relating to Austrians were included in the so-called Findbuch, a database of the National Fund, which provides – constantly growing – data on various files from Austrian archives³.



¹ Hereinafter Trieste list.

² Vienna, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv (from now: OeStA), Archiv der Republik (from now: AdR), 06, BMF, VVSt, K 1574, *Elenco Riassuntivo. Delle partite delle varie masserizie sequestrate con D.P. No. 1100/12490 dell'11 Maggio 1943 XXI*.

³ www.findbuch.at, <July, 2018>.

Sequestered/Confiscated Assets in Trieste:
A List of Austrian Jewish Owners in Viennese Archives. A Workshop Report

56	2645	1	2260	Paola Schüller	Vienna	U.S.A.	5.461,- 200	Probabile ebrea tedesca emigrata in U.S.A.. Mantenere sequestro. Sp. Dworak, Vienna	23 si
56	2641	1	1880	Felix Neumann	Vienna	U.S.A.	1.231,- 100	Ebreo tedesco emigrato negli U.S.A.. Mantenere sequestro. Sp. F. Ruter, Vienna	si
23	1528	1	2100	Elsa Rotschild	Würzburg	Tel-Aviv	6.225,- 200	Ebrea tedesca emigrata in Palestina. Mantenere sequestro. J. Walk, Würzburg	si
30	3313	1	3600	Leo Israel	Bremen	Haifa	3.644,- 200	Ebreo tedesco emigrato in Palestina. Mantenere sequestro. H. Newkirsch, Bremen	si
30	3315	1	3025	Adolf Reich	Vienna	Grenoble	2.943,- 200	Ebreo tedesco emigrato a Grenoble. Merce arrivata a disposizione Giacomo Saif-Trieste, Via Milano 5, secondo procura estesa dal proprietario. Mantenere sequestro. Sped. Hofbauer & Co. Vienna	si
56	2680	1	3430	Helene Boerne	Praga	Berlino	7.110,- 200	Sembra trattarsi di suddita tedesca residente a Berlino (ultima sua lettera 10/6/43) Probabile dissequestro. F. Marsik, Praga	no ?
56	2637	1	2670	Martin Kallir	Vienna	Trieste	1.531,- 200	Posizione proprietario non chiara, sembra sia residente a Trieste. Chiedere chiarimenti. In attesa mantenere no sequestro. Sp. Dworak, Vienna	no ?
56	2646	2	6452	Paul & Johann Schüller	Vienna	ignoto	4.250,- 400	Probabili ebrei tedeschi di attuale ignota dimora. Esclusa dalla spedizione vendita parziale: ricevo depositato Banca Italia. Mantenere sequestro. F. Reitter, Vienna	si ?
30	3316	1	4070	Dr. Ernst Hasserberg	Vienna	New York	3.849,- 300	Ebreo tedesco residente in paese nemico. Mantenere sequestro. Sp. E. Btunal, Vienna	si
56	2686	1	2225	Ludwig Salz	Praga	U.S.A.	5.891,- 200	Probabile ebreo Boemo emigrato in U.S.A., Banca Lavoro ha un deposito di \$ 476, per pagamento spese. Mantenere sequestro. V. Weiss, Praga	?
30	3326	1	3030	Hanni Baumgarten	Bremen	Verden	8.639,- 200	Ebrea tedesca residente in Germania. Probabile dissequestro. Newkirsch A.G., Bremen	

Fig. 1: Austrian State Archive (OeStA), Archive of the Republic (AdR) 06, BMF, VVSt, K 1574, Elenco Riassuntivo. Delle partite delle varie masserize sequestrate con D.P. No. 1100/12490 dell'11 Maggio 1943 XXI / Summary list of household effects sequestered with the decree 1100/12490 from May, 11th 1943, cover, pp. 23. © Österreichisches Staatsarchiv (ÖStA) 2018

Historical Background

One of the basic requirements for the sequestration of removal goods stored in the port of Trieste was the Italian War Law, issued on July 8th, 1938⁴. It defined as «public enemies» those persons who, before having been defined stateless, had once been in possession of an enemy state citizenship or who were residing in an enemy state after the law came into effect. The property of these persons has been released for sequestration: «[...] Sequestration under the preceding paragraph may also be ordered in the case of property in respect to which there is reason to suspect that it belongs to enemy nationals even though it appears to be owned by persons of a different nationality»⁵.

In April 1943, the Office of Requisitions of the Ministry of Exchange and Currencies in Italy gave instructions on how to deal with the lift-vans stored in the port of Trieste. The removal goods – mainly property of Jewish emigrants from the German Reich – suspected as being enemy ownership, would be accordingly treated under the provisions of the Italian War Law. In May 1943, the Prefect of Trieste was requested, referring to letter No. 254944/DA by the Office of Requisitions, to sequester the stored removal goods in the warehouses of the forwarding agents. By Decree No. 1100/12490 of May 11th, 1943, Bruno de Steinkuehl was appointed as sequestrator. The decree of sequestration issued by the Prefecture of Trieste in accordance with the Italian War Law resulted in the sequestration of all the stored removals classified as Jewish property⁶. The Magazzini Generali, a public-private company, and

⁴ Royal Decree, July 8th, 1938, No. 1415 Articles 3, 292, 293, 295, 296.

⁵ The Feldman-Case—Decision No. 28, in *REPORTS OF INTERNATIONAL ARBITRAL AWARDS*, pp. 213-215.

⁶ *Ibidem*.

forwarding agents were requested to declare and report all personnel data about the assets and to determine which one belonged to emigrated Jews living in enemy states⁷.

How did the List get into the Austrian State Archives?

The questions of why and how the Trieste list came into the holding of the former Vermögensverkehrsstelle (Property Declaration Office) remains unresolved. Only assumptions can be made.

By Article 26 (2) of the 1955 Austrian State Treaty⁸, the Republic had to make sure that the assets and legal rights that belonged to persons, institutions, religious and secular communities before their persecution by National Socialism were safeguarded and administered. Due to several objections from Jewish organizations and the Protestant church, Austria agreed to establish collecting agencies for heirless or unclaimed property. Two collection agencies were created: Collecting Agency A, which took over assets from persons who belonged to the Jewish community on December 31st, 1937, and Collecting Agency B, which managed the assets of other Nazi victims⁹. Both organizations tried to identify heirless or unclaimed assets of victims of National-Socialist persecution. The proceeds were used for the benefit of Nazi victims in Austria.

In August 1957, the Federal Monuments authority, as custodian in trust, had already been informed that all of the unclaimed assets from the so-called «Masse Adria»¹⁰, taken over from the British occupying forces in 1949, had to be transferred to the property of the Collection Agencies¹¹, according to the *Auffangorganisationengesetz*¹².

Investigations carried out by Georg Weis, the president of the Collection Agencies, and his staff on the confiscated assets from Trieste, are documented in a fascicle in the Austrian State Archives. It contains several copies of original documents from the *Operationszone Adriatisches Küstenland (Operational Zone of the Adriatic Littoral)* and also gives references to a list in Italian, which was known at the time of the investigations in 1959-1960¹³: «Immerhin besteht aber die Möglichkeit festzustellen [sic] welches Umzugsgut von Österreich aus nach Trieste gebracht wurde, da im Archiv der Abt. 34 (VVST) im Amalientrakt eine in italienischer Sprache abgefasste Liste aufliegt [...]»¹⁴.

Records of the Collecting Agencies pointed out that the list was found in March 1959 in the basement of the building of the Carinthian provincial government in Klagenfurt¹⁵. But this contradicts the date of the reference number indicated on the cover of the Trieste list (see Fig. 1, Zl. 151.444-34/54). The list had to be known as early as 1954, as it was in the filing of the Austrian Ministry of Property Security and Economic Planning (*Ministerium für Vermögenssicherung und Wirtschaftsplanung*). It is therefore possible that the list was part of the

⁷ To the further fate of the removal goods during the German occupation see the excursus of Gabi Anderl at the end of the contribution.

⁸ BGBl. 152/1955.

⁹ WLADIKA–WERNER 2004, pp. 16-17.

¹⁰ Term for the removal goods from the port of Trieste which were brought to Klagenfurt for auction at the Dorotheum during the German occupation.

¹¹ Vienna, Bundesdenkmalamt Archiv (from now: BDA-Archiv), Restitutionsmaterialien (restitution materials), K 14, M 4, GZ. 6423/1957; 9243/1959, Letters Ministry of Finance to the Federal Monuments Office, August 27th, 1957 and October 30th, 1959.

¹² BGBl. Nr. 73/1957.

¹³ OeStA, AdR, 06, E-uReang, Hilfsfond (HF), Sammelstelle A (SStA), interne A, GZ. J 7.

¹⁴ OeStA, AdR, 06, E-uReang, HF, SStA, interne A, GZ. J 7 General report on the removal goods seized in Trieste, March 5th, 1959.

¹⁵ OeStA, AdR, 06, E-uReang, HF, SStA, interne A, GZ. J 7, Explanatory notes of List IV of the Jewish Removals confiscated in Trieste, March 1959.

objects handed over by the British administration to the Republic of Austria in 1949 from the Klagenfurt Dorotheum. However, how the Trieste list came to Austria or to Carinthia has to remain open.

Structure and Description of the Trieste List

The forty-six-page list covers a total of 478 entries for 475 persons whose removal goods were stored during the Second World War in five warehouses of various forwarding agents in the port of Trieste¹⁶. It concerns the storage facilities of twenty-one companies¹⁷ and provides in ten columns information on the stored lift-van(s).

The numbers in the first column refer to the magazine where the goods were stored. The four-digit numbers next to it indicate the freight. The third column refers to the number of the crates, followed by their weight. The fifth refers to the names of the persons who were in contact with the freight or appeared on the shipping documents. The sixth and seventh columns contain the place of dispatch and the destination. Furthermore, the outstanding storage costs in Italian currency, which had incurred up to the time of registration. The meaning of three-digit number under the missing amount could not be attained until now. The ninth section refers to the whereabouts of the person and whether the country in question was an enemy state according to Italian War Law. Furthermore, it was determined whether the persons were Jewish or not. The transmitted information in this column was the decisive factor for sequestration. Finally, short comments are made, which are explained on the last page of the list: «si», «si?», «no», «no? », «+»). The first category classifies entries that have been ascertained as Jewish property. The requisition was possible because the owners resided in enemy states. «si?» considers the possibility of the first category, but if the owners lived in neutral states a dissequestration was possible. The category «no» refers to the removal goods of persons, living in neutral states or in Italy or to non-Jewish citizens in the German Reich. The sequestration of the removal goods could be lifted on request. «no?» denotes the entries of persons who did not clearly state whether they were Jews or not, or whether they still lived in the German Reich or in a neutral state. A dissequestration was possible on request. The symbol «+») indicates that the owner had deposited his removals not only in the warehouses of the Magazzini Generali, but also in private warehouses¹⁸.

Proceedings

Once the Trieste list had been transcribed, the next step was to consider which materials from which archives could be used for a first evaluation and for further information. Out of the total number, 270 entries are from the Alpen- und Donaugau, the former «Ostmark», 250 refer to Vienna; the others refer to persons in the «Altreich» and from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

¹⁶ The number of entries in the transcription of the authors diverges with the information in the database of the National Fund of the Republic of Austria. <https://www.findbuch.at/de/informationen-zur-datenbearbeitung/items/35.html>, <July, 2018>.

¹⁷ Francesco Parisi, Villain & Fassio, E. Kobau, Fratelli Gondrand, Marangoni S.A., Rudolf Exner, A. Prezioso & Co, Alexander Billitz, E. Havlicek, Marittima S.A., Francesco Reitter, G. Sofianopulo, Julia Intertrans S.A, Paul & Krehbiel, Linee Triestine per l'Oriente, Deschmann & Terrible, E. Schufer [E. Schäff(er)], Fritz Egel, A. Prezioso & Co., Missaglia & Ventura, Sorveglianza S.A.

¹⁸ OeStA, AdR 06, E-uReang, BMF, VVSt, K 1574, Elenco Riassuntivo, p. 46.

The list in fact covers only a fraction of the persons whose possessions were sequestered in accordance with Decree No. 1100/12409 by the Prefecture of Trieste in May 1943.

An attempt to identify the names of persons involved has been made, from lists in various archives, initially in Viennese archives: Austrian State Archives, Archive of the Republic (A), the Municipal and Provincial Archives of Vienna (B) and the Archive of the Federal Monuments Authority (C).

(A) The *Vermögensanmeldungen* (Asset Registrations)¹⁹, to be made by all persons defined as Jews according to the Nuremberg Laws²⁰ whose entire property exceeded RM 5,000, with the exception of foreign citizens. The registration had to include assets in Austria and abroad, including art objects and jewellery²¹.

(A) *Akten der Finanzlandesdirektion* (Records of the Financial Directorates) (FLD)²², which controlled and coordinated the confiscation of assets by setting the Jewish Property Levy and the Reich Flight Tax. After the entry into force of the restitution legislation in 1946, it was the FLD that decided on restitutions. The files contain information about the assets of persecuted persons and restitution decisions.

(A) Files from *Spedition Franz Reitter*²³, entered in the possession of the Austrian State Archives, containing individual portfolios of different sizes and diverse information about shipping to Trieste and elsewhere.

(A) The *Fonds zur Hilfeleistung an politisch Verfolgte, die ihren Wohnsitz und ständigen Aufenthalt im Ausland haben* (Fund to Assist Political Persecutees Living or Permanently Residing Abroad) – *Alter Hilfsfonds* – established in 1956, served to compensate victims of the Nazis living or permanently residing abroad. It provided for one-off payments, depending on age and health status, to exiles from Austria who had no entitlement to regular payments under the Victim Welfare Act, because they no longer possessed Austrian nationality. The payments were subsequently continued in the *Neuer Hilfsfonds I and II*. The files were created between 1955 and 1982. The *Hilfsfonds* files offer an important source of name-based research because they contain information about the date and course of emigration, including sometimes detailed reports on personal experiences.

(B) The files *Magistratische Bezirksämter* of the various Vienna district councils are incomplete. Of relevance for this project is the *Allgemeine Registratur* (General Register)²⁴, arranged by years and, within each year, alphabetically. For the years after 1938 there are also numerous requests for the export of possessions with detailed lists of objects, almost exclusively used household items and small pieces of furniture, as well as objects of personal and little material value. On some of the forms there are references to the Federal Monuments Authority file numbers of the requests for the export of objects of cultural significance. Apart from the Exchange Control Office, officials of the regional councils also had to check the lists. Officials of the Market Department (*Marktamt*) were involved in these checks. In the attestations of the shipping companies, the emigrants had to confirm with their signatures that the objects belonged to them and that they were to be exported duty-free and imported, also duty-free, to another country. After the inspection by the Market Department, the information was confirmed.

¹⁹ «Reichsgesetzblatt», 1938 I S. 414, *Verordnung über die Anmeldung des Vermögens von Juden*, of April 26th, 1938.

²⁰ *Ivi*, 1935 I S. 1146.

²¹ OeStA, AdR 06, E-uReang, VVSt., Vermögensanmeldung (VA).

²² OeStA, AdR 06, E-uReang, Finanzlandesdirektion (FLD).

²³ OeStA, AdR 04, Verkehr, Spedition Franz Reitter.

²⁴ Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv (WStLA), Magistratische Bezirksämter, Allgemeine Registratur (Central Register).

It should be pointed out that the regulations for the export of objects became increasingly strict, with the result that objects in approved consignments that had not been removed immediately often failed later to comply with the new regulations. The lists also became more detailed, with the objects subdivided into various categories.

(C) The holding of the *Personenbezogenen Restitutionsmaterialien* (Personal Restitution Materials)²⁵ in the Archive of the Federal Monuments Authority (BDA) represents an important and interesting source with regard to the processing of individual cases of restitution. The records are arranged alphabetically, usually according to the name of the applicant. Besides documenting the cases of the victims, the material also offers evidence of perpetrators. The holding covers the period from 1938 to the 1980s, including materials on restitution affairs.

(C) The sub-holding of the *Ausfuhrmaterialien* (Export Materials)²⁶, which is similar to the personal files, is a source of research on withdrawal and restitutions. The Austrian Export Prohibition Law, which limited export of objects of historical, artistic or cultural significance, was enacted in 1918 and amended and integrated into the Law on the protection of historic monuments in 1923, thus avoiding the risk of the export or sale of nationally valuable art. During the Nazi-era the Export Prohibition Law became a tool for art theft, as the export prohibitions were a precedent for expropriation. The export forms range from 1938 to 1977, the records from 1863 to 1945.

Systematic Approach

In a first attempt, the 270 Viennese entries of the Trieste list were compared with the list of Asset Registrations containing more than 50,000 names²⁷. In a first run, 144 matches were found. This was followed by a comparison of the data in the export forms and export records in the BDA archive. It includes names of persons who had applied for permission to export their works of art to the Federal Monuments Authority in Vienna in the period 1938-1945. Subsequently more than 18,000 permits were digitalized and linked to the personal data of the forms. 154 names in the Trieste list are associated with export applications. Sometimes the destinations indicated on the export forms specified by the applicants do not conform with the Trieste list. In most cases the applicants had to escape from the Austrian territory as part of the German Reich, as a consequence of the NS-persecution of Jews; therefore they could give only vague data.

Examples

Viktor and Lilly Fürth

Lilly and Viktor Fürth, the latter a shareholder in the company Ernst Fürth, a manufacturer of orthopaedic footwear in the 10th district of Vienna, were forced to leave Vienna as a result of the seizure of power by the National Socialists. They declared their assets on July 13th, 1938²⁸. In the asset registration of Lilly Fürth, jewelry, 15 kilos of silver objects and carpets amounting to RM 4,192 were listed. In early August 1938 Viktor requested

²⁵ BDA-Archiv, Restitutionsmaterialien, Personenmappen (personal records).

²⁶ BDA-Archiv, Ausfuhrmaterialien (export materials), Ausfuhransuchen (export forms).

²⁷ STEINER—KUCSERA 1993.

²⁸ OeStA, AdR 06, E-uReang, VVSt., VA no. 19745; OeStA, AdR 06, E-uReang, VVSt., VA no. 19744. See also : BDA-Archiv, Restitutionsmaterialien, K 35/1, PM Fürth.

permission to export several art and cultural objects with no more detailed specification²⁹. Only the number of seven carpets declared for export was the same as the estimate of Lilly's declaration. The Federal Monuments Authority approved the export. Giovanni Rossi is indicated as shipper both here and in the Trieste list. On the back of the export form it can be seen that the goods were controlled on November 12th, 1938, at Maribor Customs Office. As this was an early export operation, it is all the more surprising that the consignment did not go to the USA, where Viktor and his wife Lilly managed to emigrate.

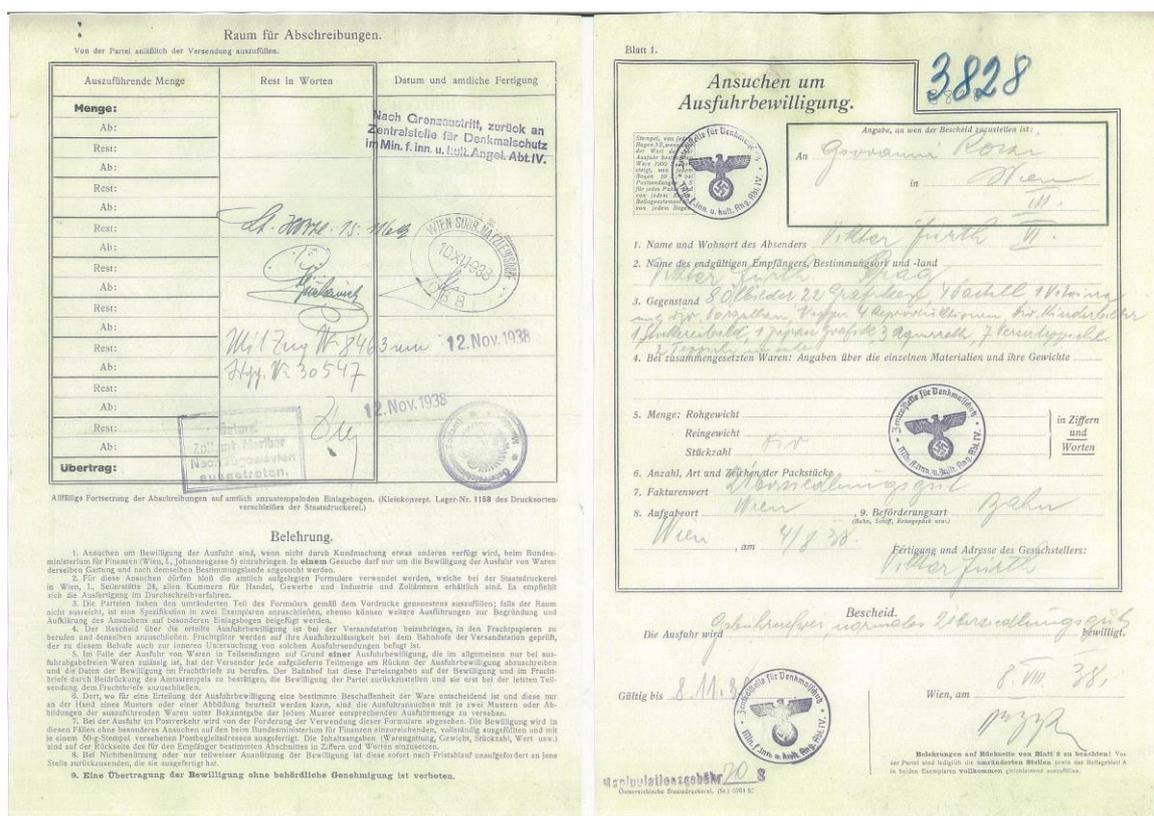


Fig. 2: Export form Viktor Fürth – Elen. BDA-Archiv, Ausfuhrmaterialien, Export, Nr. 3828/1938. © Bundesdenkmalamt Wien (BDA) 2018

After the war, the couple, who had heard that some of the goods shipped to Trieste had been transported to a warehouse in Klagenfurt towards the end of the war, inquired with the monument authorities³⁰ and the Office of the Carinthian Provincial Government about whether any of their removal goods with the consignment no. 2369 had been in the so called «Adriatic Depot», also known as «Masse Adria» in Klagenfurt³¹. They specifically mentioned two Dutch paintings by Van Bommel, depicting harbours, a female portrait by Hugo Ruzek, etchings by William Ungar, porcelain and 15 kilo of silver objects. By 1950 none of the objects formerly owned by Fürth had been found, and they still remain untraced today.

²⁹ BDA-Archiv, Ausfuhrmaterialien, Zl. 3828/38, Viktor Fürth.

³⁰ BDA-Archiv, Restitutionsmaterialien, K 35/1, GZ. 7730/50, Forwarded Letter from the Austrian Ministry of Finance to the Federal Monuments Authority, July 15th, 1950.

³¹ OeStA, AdR 06, E-uReang, BMF, Abt. 3VST, K 3596, GZ. 193.462-3/50, Letter Heinrich Schwamm (Attorney) to the Office of the Carinthian Provincial Government, January 14th, 1948. In the correspondence regarding claims, the term «Adriatic Depot» is used as synonym of «Masse Adria».

Hugo Friedmann³²

Hugo Friedmann, born in 1901, became sole proprietor of the Trifa knitting factory in Hackengasse in Vienna 15 in 1925. He was actively involved in culture, supporting the (old) Jewish Museum in Vienna with its purchases. In the registration of his assets, his art collection and library were valued at RM 4,271.10. After an inspection of the objects from the Far East by an expert from the Staatliche Kunstgewerbemuseum in Wien (today's Museum für angewandte Kunst / Gegenwartskunst – MAK), their export was approved. The last page of the export form is missing, so it is not possible to determine when the goods were shipped. Hugo Friedmann, his wife Hilde and their two children were deported in 1942 and became victims of the Holocaust³³. Under the 11th Decree to the Reich Citizenship Act of November 25th, 1941, their assets became the property of the German Reich. No one in the family survived. In 1947, Else Spielmann, the sister of Hilde Friedmann, made an inquiry with the Central Claims Registry in the British zone and registered her claim to restitution or compensation for the loss of assets³⁴. Several of the art objects that had formally been owned by Hugo Friedmann were identified from consignment number 3266 as having been among the objects from the «Adriatic Depot» secured by the British military authorities in the depot of the Dorotheum in Klagenfurt. The inventory of the «Adriatic Depot» was transferred to the Austrian Government in 1949, upon which employees of the Federal Monuments Office drew up two inventory lists: A list of paintings, watercolour, drawings and applied art totaling 897 item numbers; A list of silver, gold and jewelry objects with 1,414 item numbers. Restitution was made to the successors of Hugo Friedmann in the years 1953-1954. Not all of the claimed objects were returned, however, but only those that were documented as being part of consignment number 3266 or books that could be identified by the Hugo Friedmann *ex libris*.

In April 2004, printed materials and autographs from the Friedmann library were restituted from the Austrian National Library pursuant to the new restitution legislation. Having probably been intended for the central library of the planned Hohe School of the Nazi Party, they were identified by the Friedmann *ex libris*. A comparison of the number of objects listed in the asset registration and in search lists handed over by heirs to the Federal Monuments Office with the actually restituted objects shows that some research still needs to be done in this case.

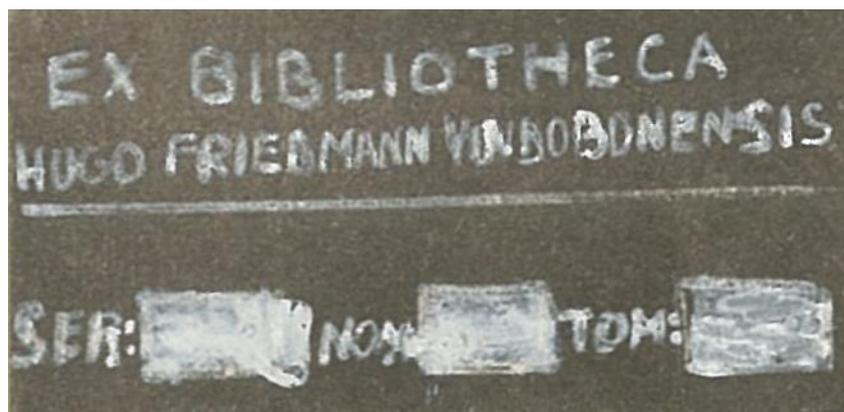


Fig. 3: *Ex libris* Hugo Friedmann, BDA-Archiv, Restitutionsmaterialien, K 14, M 2. © Bundesdenkmalamt Wien (BDA) 2018

³² OeSTA, AdR, 06, E-uReang, VVSt., VA no. 24646, Hugo Friedmann; BDA-Archiv, Ausfuhrmaterialien, Zl. 7132/38 Hugo Friedmann; BDA- Archiv, Restitutionsmaterialien, K 35/1 PM Hugo Friedmann.

³³ www.doew.at, <September, 2018>.

³⁴ OeSTA, AdR, 06, E-uReang, HF, Abgeltungsfonds 9186, Spielmann Else.

Paul and Johanna Schüller³⁵

Paul Schüller was the owner of a shoe factory in Vienna. Under point IV of the asset registration – luxury goods, jewelry and art objects – and in his application for export, he gave no specific details of the cultural objects in his transport consignment. The export refers only to four oil paintings, three pastels and eight carpets³⁶. The Reich Flight Tax decision accompanying the list of assets values the total assets at RM 215,969. The value of the removal goods in the Trieste list is put at RM 4,250. According to the transport documentation of Spedition Franz Reitter in the Austrian State Archives, Paul and Johanna Schüller's consignment consisted of twenty-four crates and nine boxes with an insured value of RM 20,000. The goods were stored in April 1939 in Vienna and were transported from the Reitter warehouse to Trieste only in February 1940 in a combined shipment by Spedition Caro & Jellinek. Paul and Johanna Schüller managed to escape to the USA in the second half of 1940. The estimate files of Paul Schüller was found not in his asset registration file but in the Reitter transport files, which is unusual. The value, put at RM 2,674, was not communicated to the Property Registration Office. Internal correspondence by Reitter indicates that two large and four small carpets from the Schüller consignment were sold in February 1943 in the port of Trieste to cover the storage costs³⁷.

Considerable research is still necessary in order to compare the extensive material with the Trieste list. In the Trieste list we are focusing not only on art and cultural objects but also on the fate of the people behind them, that is on the fate of the owners.

In summary, the sources offer an incomplete picture of what happened to the removal goods left in Trieste after 1944. The inclusion of files from other countries, collected by the research teams of the HERA project TransCultAA (Transfer of Cultural Objects in the Alpe Adria Region in the 20th Century)³⁸, will result in a much more complete picture.

Excursus

Following the German advance in Europe, shipping was possible only to overseas destinations – above all the USA, the countries of South America, Shanghai and the Philippines. As early as 1939 – shortly after the outbreak of the Second World War, the shipping Company Dr. Franz Reitter in Vienna pointed out in a war economy notification (*Kriegswirtschaftliche Mitteilung*) the possibility of using the free Port of Trieste and its subsidiaries therefore export and import business with the USA, South America, Africa, Spain etc.³⁹. With Italy's entry into the war on June 10th, 1940, the Mediterranean became a war zone, and regular shipping – the transport of goods and passengers – was considerably restricted. Italian submarines, for example, were operating off the coast of the British mandate Palestine in July 1940, and mines were laid by them and by British ships in the eastern Mediterranean. This also played a crucial role in the attempts made by Jewish refugees to leave the territories of the German Reich – the so called «Altreich», former Austria and the «Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia». An illegal and hazardous ship transport with refugees to Palestine took place in autumn 1940. Three worn-out ships left the European mainland from a port on the lower Danube in early October (Example: Isaak Schwertfinger from the Trieste list was on

³⁵ OeStA, AdR 06, E-uReang, VVSt., VA no. 11141, Paul Schüller.

³⁶ BDA-Archiv, Ausfuhrmaterialien, Zl. 3549/39, Paul and Johanna Schüller.

³⁷ OeStA, AdR 04, Verkehr, Spedition Franz Reitter, K 24, Fasc. Paul Schüller, Letter of the branch of the shipping company Reitter to the head office in Vienna, March 4th, 1943.

³⁸ www.transcultAA.eu, <September, 2018>.

³⁹ OeStA, AdR 04, Verkehr, Spedition Reitter, K 24, Fasc. Schüller Paul.

this transport organised by the Viennese Jewish merchant and bank owner Berthold Storfer). It was the last in a series of similar transports from the German Reich during World War II.

On October 28th, 1940, Fascist Italy attacked Greece, turning the Aegean into a war zone as well. The escape route via the Mediterranean – and thus from the port of Trieste – and onwards through the Suez Canal was cut off. After the collapse of the former kingdom of Yugoslavia and the invasion of Greece in April 1941, the land routes via the Balkans were also closed. From then on escape from the *Reich* was possible only to overseas destinations – above all the USA, the countries of South America, Shanghai and the Philippines⁴⁰.

The last overseas transports were organised from Berlin by Robert Prochnik, an official of the Vienna Jewish Community. One section of the passengers went via the western route, used from November 1940 until November-December 1941, in other words even after the official ban of Jewish emigration by the Nazis in October 1941. They went from Berlin in sealed wagons through France (which had been invaded by German troops in June 1940) to ports in Spain and, above all, Portugal, from where ships were still sailing overseas. The other route from Berlin was with the Trans-Siberian Railway via Manchuria and Vladivostok and then by ships from Japanese ports. It was used until shortly before the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941⁴¹.

It is generally assumed that the removal goods stored with Viennese transport companies at the start of the war in September 1939 were no longer removed⁴². It may be assumed, however, that until Italy entered the war and as long as the Mediterranean was open to merchant shipping, consignments could be transported to countries not involved in the war. Anyway – this possibility also ceased to exist after June 1940, which makes the date for the Gestapo order for confiscation in August 1940 plausible. On the basis of this order, the *Vugesta* (Verwaltungsstelle für jüdisches Umzugsgut der Geheimen Staatspolizei) was founded in Vienna and entrusted with the task of disposing of the removal goods stored with transporters. It was a detail specific to Nazi Austria and placed under the responsibility of Karl Herber, director of a transport company and head of the Reichsverkehrsgruppe Spedition und Lagerei (Reich Transport Group for Removals and Storage) – a forced association created by the Nazis – in former Austria. The *Vugesta* worked in close cooperation with the Gestapo but was dealt with by the removal and transport industry. The transporters were mainly concerned with reducing the storage costs that had accrued; hence they urged the sale of the goods.

The action also shows the degree to which the entire branch was involved in and profited from the large-scale confiscation of Jewish property during the Nazi era. There was massive corruption in some transport companies and the appropriation of movable assets, and in some cases at least Antisemitism played an important role. In a letter of November 1940, for example, Franz Reitter, the owner of a transport company, spoke of the 'Jewish plague'⁴³.

After the overthrow of Mussolini in July 1943, the *Operationszone Adriatisches Küstenland* was created in autumn of that year and incorporated in the German civilian administration. The *Ganleiter* and *Reichsstatthalter* of Carinthia, the lawyer Friedrich Rainer, became Oberster Kommissar (Supreme Commissioner) of the Operational Zone with headquarters in Trieste. This appears to have made it easier for the *Vugesta* to get access to the removal goods stored in Trieste, which had been transported there from Vienna.

Herber was given authority on August 28th, 1940, and, in particular, through a letter from the Vienna Gestapo on October 5th, 1943, to remove these goods and return them to Vienna and sell them on behalf of the German Reich. There were considerable claims by the

⁴⁰ ANDERL 2012; ROHWER 1986.

⁴¹ ANDERL 2019.

⁴² Gabriele Anderl presumes that in autumn 1939 not all consignments were made, but only those destined for enemies of Germany, i.e. Great Britain, France or the British mandate Palestine. Further research is required.

⁴³ OeStA, AdR 04, Verkehr, Spedition Franz Reitter; ANDERL-BLASCHITZ 2004, pp. 105-122.

Trieste transporters and the Magazini Generali for delivery and storage costs, and advance payments were demanded in order to get access to the goods at all. The bank Krentschker & Co. in Vienna was involved in these transactions and was also deeply implicated elsewhere in the confiscation of Jewish property.

Herber stressed that the transport was urgent because of the threat of air raids on the port of Trieste and, in addition, because the Reichsstatthalter of Vienna, Baldur von Schirach, had urged that the objects be brought to Vienna as soon as possible.

Towards the end of November 1943, Herber travelled with Karl Ebner, deputy head of the Vienna Gestapo, to Trieste. A meeting took place there in the offices of the Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei und des Sicherheitsdienst (SIPO/SD) in Trieste, the SS-Obersturmführer Ernst Weimann. It was attended by Herber as regional manager of the Reich Transport Group for Removals and Storage in the «Ostmark» and representative of Vugesta, as well as Karl Ebner and Ernst Havlicek as representative of the Trieste transporters and Herber's deputy in Trieste. Havlicek was also managing director of Kirchner & Co. in Trieste and owned there his own transport company as well.

It was argued at the meeting that the consignments were now the property of the German Reich, because their owners had lost their German nationality under the *11. Verordnung zum Reichsbürgergesetz* (*11th Decree to the Reich Citizenship Act*) of November 1941. The commander of the Security Police and SD in Trieste was to be provided with lists from the Gestapo in Vienna of the names of the forwarding in Trieste, details concerning the émigrés, i.e., the former owners, whose goods were to be sent back, the last addresses of the persons concerned, and the extent and size of the confiscated goods.

The movable property of Jews in the «Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia» was also to be disposed of by Vugesta. Persons who were not German citizens or citizens of the Protectorate or the former Polish State were to be excluded from the action. Their belongings were to remain in the custody of the Italian administrator. The action was also coordinated with the Oberfinanzpräsident (Senior Finance President) in Vienna.

A few days after the meeting of November 26th, 1943, Herber notified the Devisenstelle (Exchange Control Office) in Vienna that there were no further obstacles to the transport of the removal goods to Vienna – around two thirds of the goods stored in Trieste. Beforehand, however, the transport, storage and delivery costs were to be paid by the German Reich. The Exchange Control Office approved a first instalment of RM 50,000 for the Vugesta from Bankhaus Krentschker & Co., which was followed by further instalments. The costs accrued until then had been calculated by Havlicek and the administrator Bruno von Steinkuehl. The military authorities in Trieste were also urging the immediate removal from the port.

It transpired, however, that the transport of the removal goods to Vienna had been forbidden at a higher level. On the basis of the German decree III/4/81 of January 12th, 1944, the removal goods belonging to German emigrants still stored with various forwarding agents in Trieste were to be regarded as having been confiscated. The Senior Finance President (*Oberfinanzpräsident*) for Berlin-Brandenburg initiated the return of the removal goods from Trieste to the «Altreich», commissioning the Trieste subsidiary of Kühne & Nagel in Berlin to carry out the task. The Reich Finance Minister ordered this company to be provided with every assistance and forbade any further independent measures, stating that according to the *11th Decree to the Reich Citizenship Act* of November 25th, 1941, the Senior Finance President in Berlin was responsible for the administration and disposal of the goods. In the Reich, the removal goods were to be distributed among victims of air raids in the most seriously affected areas. The Vienna Gestapo was instructed to revoke the order given to Herber and Havlicek.

Kühne & Nagel was also heavily involved in the transport to Germany of the possessions of Jewish deportees from the occupied countries of Western Europe, the «M

action», as it was called. Property of Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria was also affected.

In Trieste, Senior Commissioner Rainer had originally forbidden the return of the goods to Germany. But in late February 1944 he was requested to revoke this instruction. The removal goods were to be returned to the *Reich* and distributed among air raid victims in the most seriously affected regions. Some of the goods confiscated in Trieste were removed to Carinthia, however, and stored in various warehouses there.

Herber must have come to an arrangement with the E. Havlicek company, which had already become active and paid advances to Magazini Generali. In mid-April 1944, negotiations took place in Vienna between Herber, Ebner from the Gestapo and Havlicek. As the Israeli judge Eli Nathan established after intensive research in the late 1950s, items from the removal goods confiscated in Trieste with a total weight of over 1,200 tonnes and owned by over 1,900 different persons were transported to Carinthia, where they were stored for the most part in the Silberegg warehouse, with particularly valuable objects, especially silver and Oriental carpets, being taken to Hochosterwitz Castle.

Pursuant to an agreement between the Senior Commissioner and the *Gau* office of the National Socialist People's Welfare (*Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt*, NSV) in Carinthia of May 9th, 1944, most of the removal goods in Trieste belonging to German and Austrian Jews already transported or scheduled for transport, with the exception of valuable items, were to be purchased by the NSV. Some of the goods were sorted in Trieste, others in Silberegg, art objects, etc., removed and transferred to the Adria Gütergesellschaft. All these procedures made it impossible later to identify the original owners.

The goods still in the NSV storehouse in Silberegg were confiscated in May 1945 by the British military authorities, after the stock had been plundered some days before. The British still found about 500 to 600 unopened crates. Immediately after the end of the Second World War other objects of value (including five crates with silverware and 200 carpets), which had been brought to the castle of Hochosterwitz during the war, were also seized by the British occupation forces. These objects were transferred to the Dorotheum in Klagenfurt.

Before the end of the war assets of emigrants had already been brought to the Dorotheum in Klagenfurt for sale. The sales continued by order of the British until 1948, concerning especially bulky objects difficult to store. The British authorities, as well as the Dorotheum, were convinced that it was impossible to identify the former owners. The BDA and the Dorotheum subsequently wrote lists of the remaining objects. In June 1949, the remaining 5000 cultural objects which had been brought from Trieste to the Dorotheum in Klagenfurt were handed over by the British to the Ministry of Property Security and Economic Planning (*Ministerium für Vermögenssicherung und Wirtschaftsplanung*) and subsequently transferred to the BDA. Export stamps made it clear that the majority of the former owners had been Austrians. But until mid-1949 only some objects belonging to Paul Gerngross und Paul Oettinger and some others had been identified and returned.

Three officials of the BDA sorted out the goods in Klagenfurt, deciding which ones were to be auctioned and which ones had to be transferred to the BDA in Vienna. A relatively small part was finally transferred to a depot in Vienna, Löwelstraße 20.

The BDA consulted with the more important shipping companies in Vienna, hoping to get information on the former owners of the lifts, but the companies were not able or willing to help.

Until the end of 1957 Edith Podlesnigg from the Federal Monuments Authority made a list on the basis of the lists already made by the Dorotheum in Klagenfurt. Textiles, carpets and objects of minor cultural value were supposed to be sold at auctions.

As early as August 1957 the Austrian Ministry of Finance had informed the BDA that the goods stored in the Dorotheum in Klagenfurt under the designation «Adria», originating

from lifts of Jewish emigrants had to be transferred to the Collecting Agencies according to the *Auffangorganisationengesetz* passed in the same year by the Austrian parliament – provided that no claims had been made before.

The Collecting Agencies found out that in 118 cases goods from the «Masse Adria» that had been confiscated in Trieste had been transferred from Austria to Germany.

In September 1959, the Finance Regional Direction for Carinthia (*Finanzlandesdirektion für Kärnten*) stated by decree that the lifts of Jewish owners from the «Masse Adria» which had been brought to the NSV stocks in Silberegge and Hochosterwitz in Carinthia and afterwards were safekept by the Dorotheum and administered by the BDA should be transferred to the Collecting Agencies A and B. Only items marked with «Ju...» had to be excluded since they were property of Jews from Trieste⁴⁴.

According to Eli Nathan most of the goods were transported to Berlin. However, later, in a letter to the Viennese historian Evelyn Adunka in 1999, he wrote that it had never been possible to document this assertion. The question of transport to the «Altreich» had been of such importance to him because it was the basis for claims under the German Federal Restitution Act⁴⁵.

⁴⁴ ANDERL-BLASCHITZ 2004, pp. 195-223; SCHRÖCK 2006.

⁴⁵ Wien, IKG Archiv, Bestand CG, XXIX, B, d, K 59; ADUNKA 2002, p. 70.

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ABSTRACT

The focus of the contribution is a list of personal names, preserved in the Austrian State Archives in Vienna. The list is written in Italian and dates back to 1943, even before the installation of the *Operational Zone of the Adriatic Littoral*. The list contains, among other things, the names of persons who, mainly for racial reasons, were forced to leave the German Reich. But also by those who were unable to flee and became victims of the Holocaust. More than half of the 450 registered persons came from Vienna. Their removal goods remained in the port of Trieste due to the events of the war. In May 1943, the prefect of Trieste considered a sequestration of the goods. After September 1943, the removal goods fell under the administration of the Supreme Commissioner of *Operational Zone of the Adriatic Littoral*. As a first step, an attempt was made to show holdings in Viennese archives in which the names of the persons were documented and in which their fates were thematised over the years.

Questo lavoro ha per oggetto una lista di nomi conservata agli archivi statali di Vienna. Il documento è in italiano e risale al 1943, prima della creazione della *Zona di operazioni Litorale Adriatico* sotto diretta amministrazione tedesca. Sono qui elencati i nomi di coloro che dovettero abbandonare il Reich a causa delle persecuzioni razziali, ma anche di coloro che non poterono fuggire. Più della metà delle 450 persone nella lista proveniva da Vienna e le loro proprietà sarebbero rimaste stipate al porto di Trieste, prima soggette a possibile sequestro da parte del prefetto della città, e poi, da settembre 1943, gestite dalle autorità tedesche della *Zona di operazioni*. La presente ricerca si propone di risalire ad altri documenti conservati a Vienna che permettano di approfondire le vicende di queste persone e il destino dei loro beni.