Restoring Knowledge and Fairness

Vienna University‘s Jewish Studies Library and National Socialist Provenance Research

70 Years after World War II

Nazi loot among library‘s holdings? Restitution of loot

Provenance research at Jewish Studies is but a part of larger project going on at the Vienna University Library.

Monika Schreiber
AJL Proceedings - June 2015
Orientalisches Institut

- Founded in 1887
- Hebrew and Judaica division
- Library, a trove of Nazi-confiscated books

BUT:

- Looted Hebraica restituted in 1945

- approx. 15 remaining items of looted stock
• Autopsy of 400,000 volumes published up to 1946
• Loot in Oriental Department revealed

Exterior Research of Academic History

• Continuity between pre-war, Nazi and modern Jewish Studies?
• Modern departments and libraries “beneficiaries” of National Socialist plundering of Jewish books?
Restituted Item - Title Page

Orientalisches Institut

J.M. Belf, Buchhandlung [Bookstore], Wien, I, Rabensteig No. 3
Oriental Department’s Inventory List

Inventory date 1951

„Sepher hoq le-Jisrael“
Looted books...  

... awaiting restitution

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Oriental Department’s Inventory List

„Tōrāh šēlēmāh by S. Schück“

„Geschenk der Geheimen Staatspolizei in Wien“ [Gift from the Vienna Gestapo]
Tracing Heirs

National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism

Established in 1995
Torah shelemah

**Restitution status:** Heirs being sought

**Request Object**  **Print Version**  **Artist's Objects**  **Provenance Research**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Object Data</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>Torah shelemah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Artist/Author</strong></td>
<td>Shik, Shelomoh Tsevi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Museum/Collection</strong></td>
<td>University of Vienna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inventory number/Shelfmark</strong></td>
<td>Jewish Studies Library BIB-505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imprint</strong></td>
<td>Szatmár, 1910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Period</strong></td>
<td>20th Century</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Provenance Data</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Former owner according to museum/collection</strong></td>
<td>Signature Sem.I 791, inv. Nr.55/1943 (Orientalism); inventoried on 13.May 1943; Gift from the Gestapo in Vienna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provenance</strong></td>
<td>Acquisition from the VUGESTA/GESTAPO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Committee in charge</strong></td>
<td>The Rectorate of the University of Vienna, represented by the competent Rector/Vicerector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decision</strong></td>
<td>The body in charge has decided to restore the art or cultural object to the owners or their legal successors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implementation</strong></td>
<td>The art or cultural object is kept in the museum/in the collection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vienna University’s research and teaching collections

New project in provenance research
Department of Egyptology
(est. 1923)
Teaching collection

Berlin workshop mold number

Vienna inventory number
Thank you for your attention!

http://bibliothek.univie.ac.at/fb-judaistik/
http://bibliothek.univie.ac.at/fb-judaistik/jewish_studies_library.html