

DOCUMENTING NAZI LIBRARY PLUNDER IN OCCUPIED BELGIUM AND LIMITED POSTWAR RETRIEVAL

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PART 1:

LIBRARY SEIZURES IN BELGIUM BY THE EINSATZSTAB REICHSLEITER ROSENBERG (ERR)

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An original two-part online publication, with auxiliary original wartime documents and charts and a new register of Belgian-related ERR documents online in Kyiv. This presentation provides the most complete coverage to date of ERR wartime library plunder in Belgium, with minimal restitution to only a few victims. The two-part narrative, ERR seizure lists, and charts of seizure data should help identify specific ERR library victims and their losses, while related documents should encourage and provide a basis for further research; assist in locating and identifying looted Belgian books still at large; and provide a basis for possible claims.

This July 2021 version and corrects a few details in the original launched online October 2020.

ABSTRACT

PART 1:

LIBRARY SEIZURES IN BELGIUM BY THE EINSATZSTAB REICHSLEITER ROSENBERG (ERR)

Part 1 focuses on the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR) – the Nazi Party agency organized by Hitler’s ideological spokesman, Alfred Rosenberg – created for seizure of library materials from ‘enemies’ of the Nazi Regime to provide library holdings for Rosenberg’s projected postwar Hohe Schule for the Nazi elite. Following initial review of earlier assessments of wartime cultural looting in Belgium, we describe ERR Belgian operations and its main rival, the Reichssicherheitshaupt Amt (RSHA). While we are unable to identify the source of all the 150 ERR numbered ‘work projects’ (i.e. library/archive confiscations) in Belgium, we identify victims of **136 seizure operations (AV)**, involving **113 individuals** (or families) and **32 institutions** (or organizations). These victims include Masons, Jews, political elite, liberal professors, socialist/communist sources, and Francophile institutions (including Jesuits), from whom the ERR seized predominantly books (often with considerable archives and sometimes art). We also discuss ERR book receipts from the Möbel-Aktion, responsible for the removal of furnishings from abandoned lodgings (mostly Jewish) of those who fled or were deported. Current estimates suggest the ERR shipped approximately 240,000 books from Belgium between fall 1940 and summer 1944.

PART 1:
LIBRARY SEIZURES IN BELGIUM BY THE
EINSATZSTAB REICHSLEITER ROSENBERG (ERR)

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RELATED COMPONENTS OF THIS BELGIAN LOOTED-BOOKS PRESENTATION

SIX ORIGINAL ERR BELGIAN LIBRARY SEIZURE LISTS

These six lists, naming 150 victims, were prepared during occupation by the ERR Working Group for Belgium and Northern France (AG/HAG BelgNfr) – the most important, and now best-documented, German agency of cultural plunder in Belgium.

CHARTS OF ERR BELGIAN LIBRARY SEIZURE VICTIMS

Table 1: 150 ERR LIBRARY SEIZURES IN BELGIUM, August 1940–February 1943

(in numerical order of ERR ‘Work Projects’ [*Arbeitsvorhaben*, AV])

Table 2: INDIVIDUAL PERSONS (OR FAMILIES) VICTIMIZED BY ERR LIBRARY SEIZURE

(in alphabetical order of family names)

Table 3: INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS VICTIMIZED BY ERR LIBRARY SEIZURE

(under main categories)

BELGIAN-RELATED ERR DOCUMENTS IN TsDAVO (KYIV): A SUMMARY REGISTER

PART 2:

LIMITED BELGIAN BOOK RETRIEVAL IN WESTERN EUROPE AND EASTERN POINTS OF NO RETURN <forthcoming>

PRELIMINARY ABSTRACT

Our forthcoming Part 2 will first survey the limited postwar retrieval of seized books from U.S. and British library-restitution centers in Germany and Austria, with new details from U.S. and British sources in lieu of lacking Belgian records. While Poland returned ten crates in 1947–1948, and Czech documents suggest the 1947 return of nine crates of Belgian books in July confirming Belgian receipts have not been found.

Second, following 1991 revelations about the extensive ‘twice-seized’ Belgian archives in Moscow, captured by Soviet authorities at the end of the war, we note the 40 Belgian ‘twice-captured’ archival fonds returned to Belgium from the Russian Federation in 2002. However, many Nazi-looted books and other printed materials identified with those archives in Moscow were not released. Three symbolic Dutch-language Belgian books looted by the ERR arrived home via Amsterdam from Moscow’s Foreign Literature Library (VGBIL) in 1995; but reportedly, thousands more remain in Russia. A few French-language books from Belgium have recently been identified in a second Moscow library. Many recently identified examples of Nazi-looted Belgian books and archival manuscripts in the National Library in Minsk suggest many more remain in Belarus, with little current hope for restitution. While considerable library loot from Belgium has also been found in Poland, a few looted Belgian volumes have surfaced in the Czech Republic.

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Our study also benefitted from considerable research in the Belgian National Archives, with special thanks particularly to archivists Filip Strubbe, Gertjan Desmet, Luc Vandeweyer, and Joachim Derwael among others. Desmet is now working in CegeSoma (under the National Archives), and we appreciate his additional more recent help there.

The compilers emphasize the crucial importance for this entire project of the ERR Collection in Ukraine, which includes most of the remaining office records of the ERR Belgian Working Group, now digitized online, thanks to the **Claims Conference ERR Project**, in cooperation with Ukrainian archivists, on the website of the Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine (TsDAVO). Full acknowledgement of the Ukrainian colleagues who aided this endeavor appears in our new '**Summary Register**' of Belgian-related documents in Kyiv. Additional acknowledgements appear in specific website components.

During the years of preparation, the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference) has generously provided funding for the ERR Project, and many of Patricia Grimsted's related travel and research expenses, including editorial work for this website. Research Director Wesley A. Fisher has had a key role in encouraging this production and our texts have benefitted greatly from his scrutiny. Michelle Lawrence deserves tremendous credit for her key role in carefully editing, reediting, and assuring consistency during the editorial process in preparation for digital publication.

Finally, we are extremely grateful to Michael Levy, webmaster for the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, for implementing the Belgian website, and for continuing technical assistance along the way.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The following list contains abbreviations and acronyms used for the various texts on the Belgian Looted-Libraries Website. Location has usually been given only for institutions that still exist. Details concerning historical institutions and units are provided in the text.

AA	Auswärtiges Amt (Foreign Office), Berlin
AB	Arbeitsbericht (Work Report), <i>Belgian ERR Working Group final document on each AV</i>
AG	Arbeitsgruppe (Working Group), <i>under ERR</i>
AG BelgNfr	Arbeitsgruppe Belgien-Nordfrankreich (Belgian–Northern France Working Group), ERR, August 1940–June 1941, <i>later HAG</i>
AGR	Archives générale de Royaume (National Archives), Brussels; (<i>Dutch: ARA</i>)
AGR2	Archives générale de Royaume (National Archives) – depot Joseph Cuvelier, Brussels
AIU	Alliance israélite universelle, Paris and Belgian branch
Amsab-ISG	Amsab–Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis, Ghent (Amsab Institute of Social History), <i>earlier AMSAB</i>
ARA	Algemeen Rijksarchief (National Archives of Belgium), Brussels; (<i>French: AGR</i>)
ARA2	Algemeen Rijksarchief (National Archives of Belgium) – Joseph Cuvelier Depot, Brussels (<i>French: AGR2</i>)
AV	Arbeitsvorhaben (Work Projects), <i>ERR Belgian Working Group seizure project</i>
BArch	Bundesarchiv ([German] Federal Archives)
BelgNfr	Belgien Nordfrankreich (Belgium and Northern France)
BN	Belgien-Nordfrankreich (<i>ERR art collection code for BTG art items</i>)
BTG	Brüsseler Treuhandgesellschaft (Brussels Trust Company)

CDJC	Centre de documentation juive contemporaine (Centre for Contemporary Jewish Documentation), <i>now part of the Mémorial de la Shoah</i> (Shoah Memorial), Paris
CEDOM	Centre d'études et de documentation maçonniques (Masonic Research and Documentation Centre), (<i>Dutch</i> : MADOC)
CEGES	Centre d'Études et de Documentation de Guerre et Sociétés contemporaines (Center for Historical Research and Documentation on War and Contemporary Society), Brussels, <i>now CegeSoma</i>
CegeSoma	Centre d'Étude Guerre et Société / Studie-en documentatiecentrum Oorlog en hedendaagse Maatschappij, Brussels (War and Society Study Center), <i>earlier CEGES/SOMA; since 2016 under AGR/ARA</i>
Claims Conference	Conference for Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, New York City and Frankfurt am Main
DBFU	Beauftragter des Führers für die Überwachung der gesamten geistigen und weltanschaulichen Schulung und Erziehung der NSDAP (The Führer's Commissioner for the Supervision of the Entire Intellectual and Ideological Schooling and Training of the NSDAP), <i>Office to which Alfred Rosenberg was appointed, 1934</i>
DER	Dienst Economische Recuperatie (Office for Economic Recovery), <i>under the Ministry of Economic Affairs (French: ORE)</i>
DOS	Dienst voor de Oorlogsslachtoffer (Service for War Victims), Brussels (<i>French</i> : SVG)
EHRI	European Holocaust Research Infrastructure
ERR	Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (Operational Staff of Reichsleiter Rosenberg)
FPS Economy	Federal Public Service Economy – Belgium <i>earlier</i> : Ministry of Economic Affairs (MAE/MEZ)
Gestapo	Geheime Staatspolizei (Secret State Police)
GFP	Geheime Feldpolizei (Secret Field Police)
HAG	Hauptarbeitsgruppe (Main Working Group), <i>under ERR</i>
HAG BelgNfr	Arbeitsgruppe Belgien und Nordfrankreich (Belgian–Northern France Working Group), <i>of ERR, June 1941–September 1944, earlier AG</i>

IEJ	Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage (Institute for Research on the Jewish Question), Frankfurt am Main, <i>later</i> Hungen
IISG/ IISH	Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (International Institute of Social History), Amsterdam
JdP	Jeu de Paume, <i>museum in the Tuileries Gardens, Paris,</i> <i>used by the ERR for processing looted art</i>
JRSO	Jewish Restitution Successor Organization
KIK/ IRPA	Koninklijk Instituut voor het Kunstpatrimonium/ Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique (Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage), Brussels
LSI	Labour and Socialist International (<i>German</i> : Sozialistische Arbeiter-Internationale, SAI), <i>HQ in Brussels, 1923–1939</i>
MADOC	Maconniek studie- en documentatiecentrum (Masonic Research and Documentation Centre), Brussels (<i>French</i> : CEDOM)
MAE	Ministère des Affaires économiques (Ministry of Economic Affairs), Brussels (<i>Dutch</i> : MEZ)
M-Aktion	Möbel-Aktion (<i>literally</i> Furniture Operation)
MB BelgNfr	Militärbefehlshaber in Belgien und Nordfrankereich (Military Commandant in Belgium and Northern France)
MBF	Militärbefehlshaber Frankreich (Military Commandant in France)
MCCP	Munich Central Collecting Point, <i>restitution-processing center under OMGUS</i>
MEZ	Ministerie van Economische Zaken (Ministry of Economic Affairs), Brussels (<i>French</i> : MAE)
MFA&A	Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives
NACP	[U.S.] National Archives, College Park, MD
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration, United States
NISG/NISH	National Institute of Social History (<i>Dutch</i> : Nationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis), <i>predecessor of Amsab</i>

NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (National-Socialist German Workers' Party)
OAD	Offenbach Archival Depot, <i>restitution-processing center for books and archives under OMGUS</i>
OMGUS	Office of Military Government, United States
ORE	Office de Récupération économique (Office for Economic Recovery), Belgium, <i>under the Ministry of Economic Affairs (Dutch: DER)</i>
RGVA	Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi voennyi arkhiv (Russian State Military Archive), Moscow
RMbO	Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete (Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories)
RSHA	Reichssicherheitshauptamt (Reich Security Main Office)
SAI	Sozialistische Arbeiter-Internationale (Labour and Socialist International, LSI)
SD	Sicherheitsdienst (Security Service), <i>component of the RSHA from 1939</i>
SOMA	Studie en Documentatiecentrum Oorlog en Hedendaagse Maatschappij (Center for Historical Research and Documentation on War and Contemporary Society), Brussels, <i>now CegeSoma</i>
SS	Schutzstaffel (Protection Squadrons), <i>NSDAP elite guard</i>
SVG	Service des Victimes de la Guerre (Service for War Victims), Brussels (<i>Dutch: DOS</i>), <i>since 2020 under AGR/ARA</i>
TB	Tagesbericht (Daily Report), <i>ERR Belgian Working Group document</i>
TsKhIDK	Tsentr khraneniia istoriko-dokumental'nykh kollektsii (Center for Preservation of Historico-Documentary Collections), Moscow, <i>remaining foreigncaptured records from the former Special Archive (TsGOA) now part of RGVA</i>
TsDAVO	Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv vyshchikh orhaniv derzhavnoi vlady ta upravlinnia Ukraïny (Central State Archive of the Highest Agencies of State Power and Administration of Ukraine), Kyiv (Kiev)
TsGOA SSSR	Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi osobyi arkhiv SSSR (Central State Special Archive of the USSR), Moscow, <i>1992–1999 TsKhIDK, remaining holdings now part of RGVA</i>

TVK	Treuhandverwaltung für Kulturgut, München (German Federal Trust Administration for Cultural Assets), Munich
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WCCP	Wiesbaden Central Collecting Point, <i>art-processing center under OMGUS</i>
ZBHS	Zentralbibliothek der Hohen Schule (Central Library of the Hohe Schule, NSDAP)

* An asterisk preceding an archival signature denotes that the file cited is available online.

Archival citations from TsDAVO provide *fond/opys*[series] and file numbers, respectively.

(*dates ??*) remain with question marks for various individuals, whose life dates are still under investigation, including some of the ERR staff in Belgium.

PART 1:

**LIBRARY SEIZURES IN BELGIUM BY THE
EINSATZSTAB REICHSLEITER ROSENBERG (ERR)**

1. ASSESSING BELGIAN LIBRARY LOSSES DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The 75th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe in 2020 merits renewed attention to the extent of wartime cultural plunder and still-displaced valuables. In Belgium, there are calls for the release of more accurate accumulated records, with data about works of art still missing that have never been publicly available, along with those that were returned to Belgium but never restituted to their owners. As recently as February 2020, the subject of looted art was the central issue in a session of the Cultural Committee of the Flemish Parliament, with concerns raised in the press about works of art that were sold following retrieval, and reached Belgian museums or other public repositories rather than being returned to their prewar private victimized owners. Promised government attention is projected on a national level, with anticipation of a federal website on this issue, in keeping with the Washington Principles.¹ Our current findings regarding wartime library seizures, with the meager postwar returns to victims in Belgium, merit renewed consideration, which is particularly appropriate in the anniversary context.

The present two-part study, surveying the Nazi confiscation of libraries in Belgium, attempts to fill a major gap in the study of wartime cultural plunder. Coverage in Part 1 is based heavily on the extensive, long-hidden Belgian ERR Belgian office files in Ukraine, including the six original German ERR Belgian seizure and shipping lists, posted herewith in digitized facsimiles. We focus on the Belgian library seizures by the ERR, the Nazi Party (NSDAP) agency organized after the invasion of Western Europe specifically for the systematic confiscation of private library and archival collections belonging to designated ‘enemies of the Reich.’² The library loot seized was intended for perverse postwar utilization by the future Nazi elite as study and research materials, so they could better understand those enemies from which the collections were seized. Given the new availability of extensive ERR files, we are now better able to document library seizures in Belgium more comprehensively than for similar seizures in either France or the Netherlands, although the ERR seized many more books in those neighboring countries than they did in Belgium.

¹ Vlaams parlement, Vergadering, Commissie voor Cultuur, Jeugd, Sport en Media [Flemish Parliament, Meeting of the Commission for Culture, Youth, Sport, and Media], 20 February 2020, at: <https://www.vlaamsparlement.be/commissies/commissievergaderingen/1371422>. See the recent example by Geert Sels, *Kunst voor das Reich. Het wedervaren van schilderijen in onze musea* (Ghent: Openbaar Kunstbezit vlaanmderenm, 2017). Sels is Culture Editor of the Flemish daily newspaper *De Standaard*, and also associated with CegeSoma in Brussels. Sels’ most recent related article reveals that the Royal Library of Belgium bought (in 1968 in ‘good faith’) an artwork of Félicien Rops that the Jewish Dorville family was forced to sell in 1942: “Koninklijke Bibliotheek bezit Nazi-roofkunst,” *De Standaard*, 4 February 2020, p. 1, D2-3.

² For brief background coverage on Alfred Rosenberg and the ERR, see P.K. Grimsted, “Alfred Rosenberg and the ERR: The Records of Plunder and the Fate of Its Loot,” on this website as a general introduction to *Reconstructing the Record of Nazi Cultural Plunder: A Guide to the Dispersed Archives of the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR) and the Postwar Retrieval of ERR Loot*, pp. 20–59, at: https://errproject.org/guide/ERR_Guide_Intro_10.15.2015.pdf.

In the forthcoming *Part 2*, we focus on the minimal postwar repatriation of books to Belgium retrieved by the Western Allies from Germany and Austria after defeat of the Nazi regime. We are finding, however, that available U.S., British, and other foreign documentation about returns to Belgium suggest a considerably higher total of books were repatriated than only the some 2,750 volumes that the Belgian government was reporting in the 1990s.³ However, because no comprehensive Belgian records of postwar book receipts from abroad and restitution to owners have been retained, apart from only a few scattered references in individual claims files, it remains impossible to suggest a reliable total. Nevertheless, when we analyze and augment the findings of the Buysse Commission *Final Report* (see below), we lament having to agree with their argument that relatively few of the books the Nazis looted were repatriated and many fewer were restituted to Belgian seizure victims, while many more were sold for state benefit.⁴

Furthermore in *Part 2*, we can now better explain, as few had realized in postwar decades and no one could document, how many books that ended the war East of the Elbe fell victim to Soviet trophy scouts or local ‘nationalization’ in Eastern Europe and still remain ‘prisoners of war’ (and/or ‘compensatory restitution,’ as the Russian government insists). Only starting in the 1990s could we begin to document the eastern migration of these books. We will provide several examples of ‘twice-looted’ Belgian books, first seized by the ERR, some recently identified in Moscow, and many more now in Minsk. Some of these books are now held in national or state libraries, some of them even with dedications to European Holocaust victims. Others are found today in Poland and the Czech Republic. However, current government tendencies in those countries do not suggest any inclination for appropriate restitution, nor do they give room for hope that any of this identified Nazi library loot will be returned to Belgium.

The European Parliamentary Resolution of 17 January 2019, *On Cross-Border Restitution Claims of Works of Art and Cultural Goods Looted in Armed Conflicts and Wars*, could well promote a reconsideration of broader issues in an anniversary context within the European Union.⁵ That resolution coincided with the 10th Anniversary of the Terezín Declaration on Holocaust Era Assets (2009), following the 20th Anniversary of the Washington Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art (1998). Those and other earlier ‘soft-law’ resolutions – calling for the location and identification of looted cultural assets and restitution of those still displaced – have promoted some recent restitution efforts in Western Europe and abroad, but fall short of the significant efforts still needed. Despite many Eastern European signatories to both Washington and Terezín resolutions, as our library findings here suggest, too many books still remain far from their prewar Belgian homes, especially many recently identified in Eastern Europe.

Looted art usually generates more government and public interest than looted books. Yet even coverage of wartime art looting in Belgium, with data about works of art still missing or never restituted to prewar owners, still awaits public release. With the liberation of Belgian territory, starting in September 1944, the Office for Economic Recovery (ORE/DER) was established within the Belgian Ministry of Economic Affairs (MAE/MEZ) to handle postwar retrieval and restitution

³ See below notes 19 and 21. As will be further explained in *Part 2*, that figure came from a November 1946 schematic map circulated by the Offenbach Archival Depot (OAD), showing numbers of books returned to European countries during only half of the first year of OAD operation.

⁴ See more details below and in the opening section of *Part 2*.

⁵ See the text adopted in Strasbourg, at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0037_EN.html, with reference to earlier as well as other related resolutions and background data, including relevant UNESCO documents.

of movable cultural property lost or displaced domestically or abroad during the Second World War. Recently the Belgian National Archives has digitized some of its less-than-complete ORE/DER records, which are now available online.⁶

In 1948, in connection with postwar claims to Western occupation restitution authorities in Germany and Austria, ORE/DER issued an initial listing of 293 works of art of national cultural importance seized during the war but still missing as of December 1948 (some were subsequently retrieved).⁷ In 1994, a government series was initiated (for limited distribution) on looted cultural assets still missing. Only two volumes were issued, however, covering art items from state and public collections; while a projected third volume on private art losses, and a fourth on looted libraries, never appeared.⁸

The prospective release of a central, Belgian government-produced database, with some 3,000 entries describing lost and missing works of art from the Second World War, should help correct the long neglect of available public information in Belgium on wartime art losses.⁹ The database nearing completion covers art seized or questionably purchased from private as well as government and public collections; it thereby includes information that should have been published in the projected third volume about private art losses for the government series in the 1990s. Wartime library losses, however, have still not benefitted from a similar government effort.

Apparently anticipating the projected library volume, a single preliminary 1993 ORE/DER file regarding wartime library losses remains today within ORE/DER records in the National Archives. However, the computer printouts in that file list only fifteen names of looted Belgian libraries (three of them state collections) from which books were still missing.¹⁰ If that is indicative of the only data then available to the Ministry regarding looted Belgian libraries, it is no wonder the projected volume in the ORE/DER series never appeared.

⁶ Office de Récupération économique / Dienst Economische Recuperatie (*hereafter* ORE/DER), established 17 November 1944, handled cultural retrieval and restitution under the Ministry of Economic Affairs (Ministère des Affaires économiques / Ministerie van Economische Zaken) (*hereafter* MAE/MEZ). Many of its remaining records are now available in the Belgian National Archives 2: Archives générales du Royaume / Algemeen Rijksarchief – Dépôt Joseph Cuvelier (*hereafter* AGR2/ARA2). Files are available online (registration required) with the original Dutch inventory: Filip Strubbe, *Inventaris van het archief van de Dienst voor Economische Recuperatie en rechtsvoorganger 1940–1968* (1997) (Brussels: Het Rijksarchief in België, n.d. [2007/2012]); AGR2/ARA2, Inventory I 21 (*hereafter*: I 21); at: https://search.arch.be/en/zoeken-naar-archieven/zoekresultaat/ead/index/zoekterm/ore/eadid/BE-A0545_006785_006783_DUT. English PDF version: *Inventory of the archive of the Department for Economic Recovery and Legal Predecessor, 1940–1968* (1997) (Brussels, 2013; National Archives 2, Joseph Cuvelier Repository, Inventory I 21) (*hereafter*: I 21): <https://www.archives.gov/files/research/holocaust/international-resources/belgium-inventory.pdf>. Subsequent references to archival signatures now online will be preceded by an asterisk (*).

⁷ Office de Récupération économique, *Répertoire d'oeuvres d'art dont la Belgique a été spoliée durant la guerre 1939–1945* (Brussels: ORE, 1948). A digital edition was issued online in 2009, at: https://issuu.com/hesiod/docs/r_pertoire_d_oeuvres_d_art_dont_la_belgique_a_t_9.

⁸ Belgium, Office Belge de l'Economie et de l'Agriculture, *Missing Art Works of Belgium*, 2 vols.: vol. 1: *Public Domain Art Works*; vol. 2: *Belgian State* (Brussels, [20 June 1994]). An original archival copy is held in the ORE/DER records: AGR2/ARA2, *I-21/407, 408. A revived MAE/MEZ successor office established in 1993 handled retrieval and restitution.

⁹ This project has been under the direction of Bart Eeman, who heads the Unit for Restitution Cultural Goods (Cel Recuperatie van Geroofde Goederen / Cellule de récupération des biens spoliés) under the current MAE/MEZ successor, the Belgian Federal Public Service Economy (FPS Economy); French: Service public fédéral Economie; Dutch: Federale Overheidsdienst Economie.

¹⁰ "Recuperation of libraries Belgium," computer printout (1993), AGR2/ARA2, *I 21/405. Those four individuals named who were included on the ERR charts are Alfred and Alexis Goldschmidt (AV 43), Eric Lyndhurst (AV 128), Jean de Sturler (AV 133), and Arthur Wauters (AV 28).

The six posted ERR facsimile seizure lists covering Belgian victims and the accompanying charts record data on 150 ERR library confiscations during German occupation, through March 1943. While those seizures represent only the ERR component of the Nazi wartime library plunder, at least they are now more completely documented. Similar documentation on SD and other seizures have not been found. In Part 2 we will discuss the comparatively small number of library claims submitted after the war in Belgium, together with more findings from the long-suppressed German data about seizures and migration. While ORE/DER postwar attention was mainly focused on art, here we focus on the extensive ERR library seizures during German occupation that can now be better documented, thanks to the increased availability of surviving files from ERR Belgian operations – quite surprisingly, in now independent Ukraine.

Wartime plunder by the Nazis, including the ERR, mainly targeted the ideological ‘enemies’ of the German Reich, focusing on representatives of an alleged ‘Judeo-Masonic-Bolshevik conspiracy,’ proclaimed by Rosenberg and Hitler himself. Cultural property looted in Belgium, however, was not limited only to those specific ‘enemies.’ The extensive inter-mixed nature of wartime Belgian confiscations needs to be recognized from the start, as many other cultural treasures were swept up by the same Nazi brooms. As retired CegeSoma director, Belgian historian Dirk Martin explained in an earlier essay on the ERR policies in Belgium, “In short, [the Germans were at war] with all organizations and persons who represented the pernicious liberalist-universalist spirit of Belgium and who could be regarded as political enemies of the *Reich*.”¹¹

In addition to Jews, Masons, and socialists, other priority targets for library seizures varied in different countries. In Belgium, for example, the ERR – together with the Sicherheitsdienst (SD) and the Gestapo – prioritized as well the personal collections of political leaders who fled to London with the Belgian Government in Exile. Francophile institutions in Belgium were also important targets. And when the Germans discovered a Jesuit series of virulent interwar tracts against Nazi ideology published anonymously in France, the Jesuit Order in Belgium became another priority target, even before the Gestapo identified the specific culprit as the archivist/librarian of the Jesuit Seminary in exile in Enghien.

Many of the ERR library seizures from the 150 private libraries we survey in the text that follows – including the Jesuits – were consistent with the ERR aim to obtain library resources to educate the future elite of the would-be victorious German Reich in Nazi ideology. In stark contrast, the goal during the initial German onslaught in May 1940 was total destruction of the libraries of ideological enemies. For example, “the convent of the Jesuits in Egenhoven (near Louvain), was devastated [...and] about 30,000 volumes disappeared in fire.”¹²

The most brutal and symbolic assault on Belgian libraries, early in the May invasion, was the total destruction of the University Library in Louvain, which had only recently been rebuilt and

¹¹ Dirk Martin, “Vergeten ideologen De Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg in België tussen cultuurroof en cultuurpolitiek, 1940–1944,” in *Bijdragen tot de Eigentijdse Geschiedenis* 15 (2005), p. 267; an insightful article dealing with the general policy and propaganda work of the ERR in Belgium. See also Martin’s French version, “L’Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg en Belgique, entre pillage culturel et politique culturelle (1940–1944),” in *Saisies, spoliations d’archives et de bibliothèques et logiques de restitution au XXe siècle*, ed. A. Sumpf & V. Laniol (Rennes, 2012), pp. 83–97; <https://books.openedition.org/pur/130212>.

¹² Jan F. Vanderheijden, “Belgium Counts Her Losses: A First-Hand Account of Her Devastated Libraries,” *Library Journal*, 1 May 1946, pp. 636–37.

restocked with internationally donated bibliophile treasures, following its total loss in the First World War. Writing already in 1946, a Belgian librarian reported about the Louvain disaster of the University Library in May 1940:

the bulk of the book collections, more than 900,000 volumes, 800 manuscripts, all incunabula, [and] 200 prints of Old Masters [were left in] a heap of smoldering ashes amid the distorted uprights of the steel framework of the main stacks.¹³



Figure 1.

“Picture of the Week” from the German occupation newspaper Brüsseler Zeitung, when the Germans were trying to accuse the British of arson, 5 October 1941.

Image from the publication Univeritsbibliotheek Leuven, 1425–2000 (note 13).

¹³ Vanderheijden, “Belgium Counts Her Lossess,” pp. 636–37. See the impressive memorial folio volume, issued in both Dutch and English editions: *Universiteitsbibliotheek Leuven, 1425–2000 / Leuven University Library, 1425–2000*, edited by Chris Coppens, Mark Derez, and Jan Roegiers (Louvain/Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005).

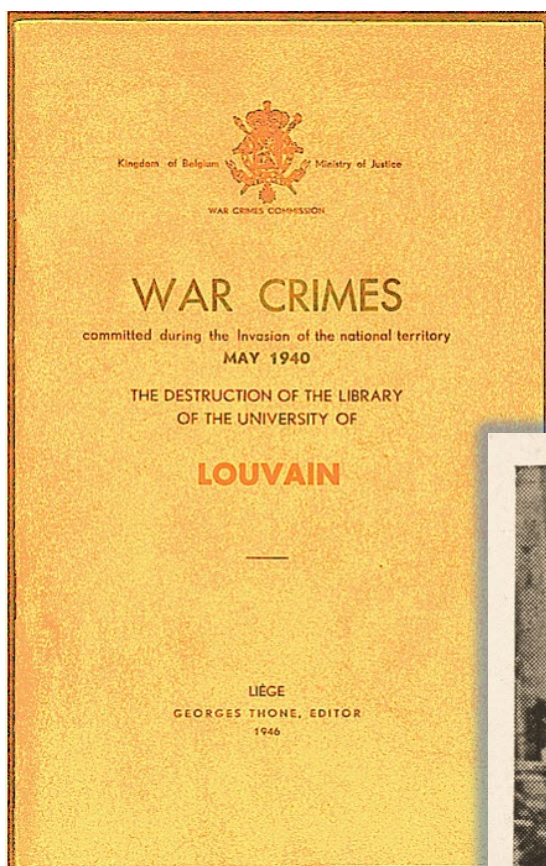


Figure 2. Aerial View of Louvain University Library; after the artillery shelling and fire in May 1940, “nothing was left except the tower, the walls, and a heap of distorted steel and iron.”

Image from the article by
Jan F. Vanderheijden in
Library Journal, 1946 (note 12).

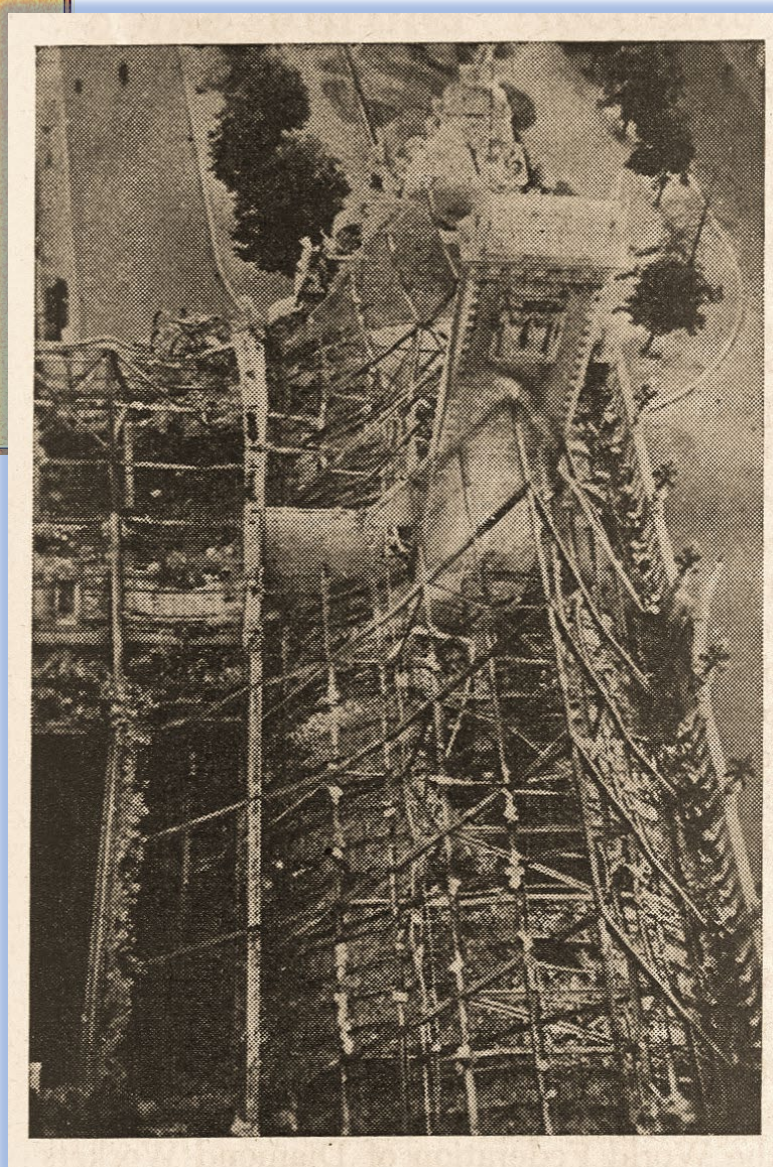


Figure 3.
Belgium, Ministry of Justice, War Crimes Commission,
The Destruction of the Library of the University of Louvain (1946).
Image courtesy, KU Leuven Artes University Library.

When that 1946 report was written, Belgian librarians had yet to learn of the 150 systematic confiscations of library materials registered as ‘work projects’ by the ERR. But the second German assault in a half a century on the Louvain University Library was a harbinger of the Nazi assaults on private collections of books to follow during occupation. Smaller libraries of Belgian private individuals, families, and institutions and organizations were seized, many of them wholesale, others dislodged of various treasures (often including personal files and papers) to the extent they could never adequately serve their owners. Those ERR-directed seizures were not intentionally destroyed by fire, but rather the chosen holdings were repacked for transport to the Third Reich. Yet those extensive ERR war crimes and their dispersal were little known, and the ERR reports about what was seized (often with detailed crate inventories) were too long kept secret. Already in 1945, Soviet Ukrainian archival scouts across the European continent had captured many ERR records from their Belgian exploits, containing the reports of confiscations. But Soviet officials never considered sharing the data contained with their erstwhile wartime Western Allied victims of Nazi seizure, which might have assisted identification and recovery after the war. Instead, those files were rushed into hiding (and NKVD search for collaborators) and remained inaccessible for half a century in Ukraine. Today, now that those ERR wartime operational records are available online for all to consult, and those documents identified from Belgium better analyzed and described (on this website), a more detailed account of the ERR role in Belgian wartime cultural plunder can be documented. Here we reveal many pertinent, more publicly available documents, identifying the looted cultural property of those 150 ERR priority victims, with simultaneous renewed hope of determining the fate and, for some, the current location of the surviving treasures – and perhaps even some distant hope of retrieval.

During occupation in Belgium, especially the first two and a half years, German agencies looted cultural valuables on a massive scale, similar to plunder in other occupied European countries, in what one renowned study entitles the *Rape of Europa*.¹⁴ Here, we focus on the ERR that Hitler’s ideological spokesman, Alfred Rosenberg, justified organizing after the invasion of France to obtain the needed library and research materials for his projected postwar Hohe Schule, whose purpose was to educate Nazi elite about their ‘enemies.’ Accordingly, ERR seizures usually focused on the private holdings of those enemies comprised in Rosenberg’s alleged ‘Judeo-Masonic-Bolshevik conspiracy,’ which was also used in Belgium as justification for ERR library confiscations. Library-looting victims in Belgium, however, also included prominent political leaders and Francophile institutions, from the Jesuit Order to the Pretender to the French throne.

The original six working lists of cultural seizures we now launch online, name and provide data for the 150 ERR priority numbered confiscations, including some 113 named individuals and 32 institutional victims in Belgium. Our accompanying charts (in three tables) combines data from the six lists, with characterization of the victims and loot seized: date(s), contents, quantity, shipping dates, and references to additional ERR documentation for each. These data on the 150 ERR Belgian seizures serve as blatant examples of premeditated Nazi brutality to the Belgian cultural legacy and pay tribute to those private individual and organizational victims.

¹⁴ Lynn Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe’s Cultural Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War* (New York: Knoff, 1994).

Looted and destroyed libraries in Belgium have received scant coverage compared to captured Belgian archives and looted art (although wartime looted art data has too long awaited public display). With the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991, continuing revelations about Western cultural ‘trophy’ transported to Russia, including the high-level state and private archives, aroused widescale public interest in cultural valuables still-missing or displaced from the Second World War. Public identification of many ‘twice-captured’ books and art initially looted in the West by the Nazis that had arrived in the Soviet Union intermixed with German ‘trophy’ treasures has been minimal in Russia. While somewhat more identification has emerged in other countries in Eastern Europe, restitution of Nazi loot has not usually followed.¹⁵

The major exception to this neglect were the twice-captured and long-hidden archives that finally came home to Western Europe from Moscow in 2002, as will be discussed briefly in Part 2. For those archives, considerable research on their seizure and migration was undertaken by Western specialists starting in the 1990s in connection with official Belgian and other government claims, following the 1991 initial revelations of their existence in Moscow.¹⁶ In connection with the major return of some 40 fonds (record groups) of Belgian state and private archives from Russia, more was published regarding their migration and dispersal over the half century since their initial German capture.¹⁷ The Belgian chapter in *Returned from Russia*, for example, and several specialized Belgian publications, provide more background data for the ERR seizure and migration of several of the key private library collections discussed below, which also included rich archives and other personal papers that the ERR confiscated during occupation.¹⁸ While some (but not all) of the archival portions came home fifty years later, the books seized with them from one and the same victim remain dispersed. Many of those books and others from private collections reached the Soviet Union, or other countries in Eastern Europe. With examples in Part 2, we will see that, with minor symbolic exceptions, restitution from Eastern to Western Europe has been virtually non-existent for Nazi-looted books from Western countries that have surfaced in the East since 1990.

In the West, however, international calls for restitution of ‘Holocaust-Era Assets’ arose strongly in the 1990s, focusing especially on Jewish community losses that had never adequately

¹⁵ See, for example, P.K. Grimsted, “Twice Plundered, and Still Far from Home: Tracing Nazi-Looted Books in Minsk and Moscow,” in *Collecting and Provenance: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach*, ed. Jane Milosch and Nick Pence (Pittsburgh: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019), Chapter 14, pp. 205–26. See also Michel Vermote, “Prospects for further research on the fate of Nazi-looted book collections: a report from Belgium,” in *Terezín Declaration – Ten Years Later. Proceedings of an international academic conference held in Prague on 18–19 June 2019*, pp. 156–67.

¹⁶ See P.K. Grimsted, “Why Do Captured Archives Go Home?: Restitution Achievements under the Russian Law,” in *Spoils of War v. Cultural Heritage*, = *International Journal of Cultural Property* 17 (2010, no. 2), pp. 291–334. See further discussion of this issue in Part 2.

¹⁷ P.K. Grimsted, F.J. Hoogewoud, and Eric Ketelaar (eds.), *Returned from Russia: Nazi Archival Plunder in Western Europe and Recent Restitution Issues* (Institute of Art and Law [UK], 2007; paper edn, 2013). The first half of that volume covers considerable background about the German agencies involved in the plunder of books as well as archives during the war.

¹⁸ See especially, Jacques Lust and Michel Vermote, “Papieren Bitte! The Confiscation and Restitution of Belgian Archives and Libraries (1940–2003),” in *Returned from Russia*, pp. 193–94. See also Jacques Lust, Evert Maréchal, Wouter Steenhaut, and Michel Vermote, *Een zoektocht naar Archieven: van NISG naar AMSAB* (Ghent, 1997); and Steenhaut and Vermote, “Où sont les archives d’antan? AMSAB op zoek in Russische archieven,” in *Belgisch tijdschrift voor nieuwste geschiedenis*, 23 (1992, nos. 1–2), pp. 219–31. In Jean-Philippe Schreiber’s initial survey, “Les archives du judaïsme belge conservées à Moscou,” *Les Cahiers de la mémoire contemporaine / Bijdragen tot de eigentijdse Herinnering*, 2 (2000), pp. 145–61, we find the names of many library seizure victims discussed below.

been analyzed or compensated. Concerned attention to displaced cultural assets followed revelations about Swiss bank accounts, insurance policies, and ‘Nazi Gold.’ Given those new concerns, in 1993, Belgium established an office to revive postwar ORE/DER functions for recuperation of cultural assets (within the successor Ministry of Economic Affairs and Agriculture), entitled the Service for the Recovery of Cultural Heritage. Headed by the well-versed specialist, Jacques Lust, its formation was justified “because of the opening of Eastern Europe and the conviction that only a part of the cultural goods was returned to their rightful owners.” Lust represented Belgium at the New York “Spoils of War” international conference in 1995, reporting on the Nazi spoils of war seized from Belgium, including the extensive library losses. He noted that by 1952, “only 2,748 books were returned to Belgium from Germany and Austria,” and called attention to the fact that “hundreds of thousands of books from private collections are missing [and] a large number were destroyed by the Germans during World War II.”¹⁹

In line with these concerns, and with the assumption that most of the losses were Jewish, Belgium established a Study Commission for Jewish Assets in 1997 under the Prime Minister’s Office. Chaired by Lucien Buysse, and hence known as the Buysse Commission, it paralleled the Matéoli Commission established the same year in France.²⁰ The following year, the Belgian representatives in the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets in 1998 again reported the return of only 2,749 books since the war. They explained that when ORE/DER was dismantled in 1967, “unfortunately its archives were not properly kept.” They noted nonetheless that “efforts continue” on “three other catalogs that will document the private losses [of artworks and also the looted] libraries and archives.”²¹ Twenty years later, none of those three catalogues have appeared.

While brief summary coverage of NS library plunder and Belgian losses was issued online in July 2001 as part of the Buysse Commission *Final Report* (in French and Dutch), with a partial correction for the low figure of books returned cited above, no other adequate publication covering library losses has followed.²² Several internal working papers, prepared for the Commission, are

¹⁹ Jacques Lust, “The Spoils of War Removed from Belgium,” in *The Spoils of War. World War II and Its Aftermath: The Loss, Reappearance, and Recovery of Cultural Property*, ed. Elizabeth Simpson (New York, 1997), pp. 58–62. Quoted passages are from pp. 61 and 62. See note 3 above and further discussion of this erroneous figure in Part 2. The Belgian chapter in *Returned from Russia*, Lust and Vermote’s “Papieren Bitte” (above note 18) corrects the quoted 1995 and 1998 figures. A copy of the November 1946 figures, including “2,749” for Belgium, on an OAD illustrative map of returns to countries in Europe is published by F.J. Hoogewoud, “The Nazi Looting of Books and its American ‘Antithesis.’ Selected Pictures from the Offenbach Archival Depot’s Photographic History and Its Supplement,” *Studia Rosenthaliana* 26 (1992), p. 192. The erroneous figure again reflects the incomplete restitution records available in Belgium (see Part 2).

²⁰ The so-called Buysse Commission, i.e. the Study Commission for Jewish Assets (Commission d’Études des Biens Juifs / Studiecommissie Joodse Goederen) was established by Belgian Royal Decree in 1997 to investigate Jewish community assets that were plundered, surrendered, or abandoned during the war (1940–1945).

²¹ Belgium, Ministry of Economic Affairs [Nicholas Vanhove (with data from Jacques Lust)], “The Spoliation of Cultural Goods in Belgium during the Second World War,” in *Washington Conference on Holocaust Assets, November 30–December 3, 1998: Proceedings*, ed. J.D. Bindenagel (Washington DC: U.S. Department of State/GPO, 1999), pp. 203–6; quoted passages from p. 205. That figure of “2,479” coincides with the November 1946 publicity map of book returns from OAD as mentioned in note 19 above. See further discussion in Part 2.

²² The Buysse Commission *Final Report* is currently online in several fragments on a new (2020) website of the Services of the Prime Minister of Belgium: Services du Premier Ministre, *Les biens des victimes des persécutions anti-juives en Belgique: Spoliation, Rétablissement des droits, Résultats de la Commission d’étude: Rapport final de la Commission d’étude sur le sort des biens des membres de la Communauté juive de Belgique spoliés ou délaissés pendant la guerre 1940–1945* ([Brussels], July 2001), in French at: <https://www.combuysse.fgov.be/fr/commission-detudes-des-biens-juifs>; and in Dutch at: <https://www.combuysse.fgov.be/nl/studiecommissie-joodse-goederen>. Only the title page, Preface, and Conclusion are available in English. The subsequent 2008 Buysse “*Final Report of the Commission for the Indemnification for the Belgian Jewish Community’s Assets, which were plundered,*

now included in the new 2020 government website with the Commission *Final Report*. Yet the most important analysis for our present study, Jacques Lust's Internal Paper on ERR library plunder in Belgium, was never published or released online.²³ Selections from Lust's text were subsequently included in his helpful section on seized Jewish cultural assets in the 2001 Commission *Final Report*, with an appended list naming 100 Jewish victims of private library and archival plunder (individual and institutional).

In that *Final Report*, the Commission gave an estimated figure of 120,000 volumes for the total number of books that the ERR shipped out of Belgium between 1940 and 1943 (i.e., not only those seized from the 100 named Jewish victims listed). That figure was based on the total of ca. 800 crates dispatched between November 1940 and March 1943.²⁴ The ERR preliminary seizure and shipping list, that we now entitle **ERR Belgian List #4** (posted online herewith) was the basis for the list of 100 Jewish victims appended to the Buysse Commission *Final Report* (Annex 5). Not included in the Commission *Report*, however, that early 1943 ERR list with names and numbered Belgian confiscations (with dates of shipment), also provides names of an additional 50 presumably non-Jewish victims. As explained in this account, the ERR seizures were not limited to Jewish libraries. We now include all of the 150 names given on that 1943 ERR list, along with the other five ERR lists posted herewith, all of which should be included in the total picture of ERR private library confiscations. As the Buysse Commission also emphasized, the ERR was not the only German agency that seized and shipped out books from Belgium. While documentation is lacking for seizures by other German agencies, at least we can now document relatively thoroughly the voluminous library seizures by the ERR that – as will be evident – were not only from Jewish victims. The introductory text describing the **six ERR Belgian Lists** posted analyzes and clarifies the coverage of each of those ERR original Belgian documents.

Book shipments out of Belgium (most to Berlin) listed on **ERR Belgian Lists #4 and #5** can now be augmented with data that have surfaced more recently for additional ERR book shipments. Given the more extensive ERR documents available for the current project (especially those in Kyiv), we can now document a total of 1,232 crates of books, archival materials, and miscellaneous items dispatched from Brussels by the ERR between November 1940 and August 1944. We can only speculate, however, in presenting a rough estimate of close to 250,000 books and periodical volumes shipped out of Belgium. Available ERR documents do not consistently provide the number of volumes or other miscellaneous items in most of the crates shipped. Because archives and personal papers, or an occasional work of art, Masonic museum exhibit, and other paraphernalia, and even steel shelving, were included in many crates of varying size, we suggest the estimated total number of books seized and shipped would nonetheless probably be at least double the figure of 120,000 volumes suggested in the 2001 Buysse *Final Report*. Given the

surrendered or abandoned during the War 1940–1945” (4 February 2008), only briefly mentions “Indemnification in the Sector of Cultural Assets,” pp. 56–57; in the English edition at:

https://www.combuysse.fgov.be/sites/default/files/eindrapport_commissie_schadeloosstelling_2_en_2.pdf.

²³ Jacques Lust, “De Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg en de bibliotheekroof in België (1940–1943),” (Brussels: Office of the Prime Minister, Studiecommissie joodse goederen, Internal Paper, 30 October 2000); unfortunately, never published and available only in Dutch. We are exceedingly grateful to Jacques Lust for making a copy available to Michel Vermote, which has greatly contributed to the current expanded study.

²⁴ [Jacques Lust], “Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg: ERR et la spoliation des biens culturels,” in the Buysse Commission *Final Report* (above note 22), pp. 133–41; Dutch edn, pp. 133–42, and Appendix 5 (in vol. 2), pp. 25–26. The full ERR report from which that list was prepared is posted herewith as **ERR Belgian List #4** (undated), with the last entry 29 February 1943. That figure was in contrast to the earlier estimate of 150,000 volumes based on an estimated 150 volumes per crate, in the still-unpublished Commission Internal Paper of Jacques Lust (above note 23), p. 10.

limitations of remaining documents, and discrepancies of figures among them, however, conclusive total figures are simply not possible to obtain. Technical details about our calculations, in comparison to those earlier presented in the Buysse 2001 *Final Report*, will be found in the Appendix at the end of this file, “**Victimized Owners, Quantities of Loot, and Book Shipments to the Reich, 1940–1944.**”²⁵

That original 1943 ERR wartime list of confiscations shipped (**ERR Belgian List #4**) is one of the five ERR seizure lists from Belgian ERR records in Kyiv (TsDAVO) now posted online with this article, together with a sixth list of ERR Belgian seizures from the ERR records now held in the German Federal Archives, or Bundesarchiv (BArch) in Berlin-Lichterfelde. The source and details about the six lists are all discussed in the introduction that accompanies and provides links to each of them. The data presented in all six lists are consolidated in our accompanying charts (with three separate tables) describing the 150 ERR-numbered seizure operations in Belgium through February 1943, and a supplement including documents on an additional March 1943 freight shipment to Berlin. Access to those first five lists and supplemental documents, however, became possible only with the collapse of the Soviet Union and Ukrainian independence: they are part of the largest collection of remaining ERR records captured after the war and long held in secret in Ukraine. The fastidious German data they reveal about ERR cultural plunder in Belgium unfortunately had never been utilized before the 1990s to trace cultural losses since their arrival in Kyiv in 1945 and top-secret classification thereafter.



Figure 4. Memorial sketch of the Louvain University Library on fire in May 1940, destroyed a second time by German wartime arson, on a symbolic First-Day-of-Issue cover for a series of memorial U.S. postage stamps, 14 September 1943.

Image courtesy KU Leuven Artes University Library.

²⁵ Given the technical numerical calculations and complexity involved regarding the number of victims, as well as the number of crates and books seized and shipped, and the incomplete surviving documents regarding rail transports, details have been brought together in that separate appended account.

2. THE EINSATZSTAB REICHSLEITER ROSENBERG (ERR) IN BELGIUM

As the key Nazi Party (NSDAP) agency specifically organized for cultural plunder, the ERR was formed and administered as an operational offshoot of Rosenberg's office as the Führer's Commissioner for the Supervision of the Entire Spiritual and Ideological Training of the Nazi Party (DBFU), to which Hitler appointed him in 1934.²⁶ As part of his responsibility for ideological training of party members, starting already in 1937, Rosenberg planned the postwar creation of the university-level, so-called Hohe Schule for the Nazi elite: to be based on the Chiemsee in Bavaria, with research institutes for specific subjects located throughout the country. Hitler authorized preparatory work in establishing the Central Library of the Hohe Schule (ZBHS) in Berlin early in 1939, before the invasion of Poland in September. Moved to Austrian Carinthia in 1942 (first to a lakeside resort hotel in Annenheim, *near Villach*), the chosen books collected from all over Europe ended the war in the isolated monastery of Tanzenberg (*near Klagenfurt*). That site fell within the British Zone of postwar occupation, and British MFA&A specialists found close to 700,000 books, along with some of the ERR staff, whom they kept under house arrest to assist with restitution processing.

The conduct of war on two fronts may have stifled immediate plans for the Hohe Schule, but German occupation opened abundant new opportunities for seizure of research materials in occupied countries. On the heels of the invading army in France in June 1940, Rosenberg dispatched Georg Ebert, who headed the DBFU Berlin office. Ebert's immediate reports about the extensive Masonic materials abandoned in major Masonic organizations resulted in the establishment of the ERR in Paris by early July 1940 as an operational agency with the aim of securing books, archives, and other research materials for the projected Hohe Schule library and its planned institutes. While reporting to Rosenberg and the DBFU Office in Berlin, the ERR in France was embedded in the Military Commandant in France (Militärbefehlshaber Frankreich, MBF), and hence also reported to German occupation authorities. Masonic materials and the rich Jewish libraries were the initial priority targets, as evident in the ERR French library-seizure lists earlier posted online.²⁷

The first Hohe Schule institute, and the only one fully operative during the war, was the Institute for Research on the Jewish Question (Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage, IEJ), established in Frankfurt am Main in early 1940, prior to the speedy occupation of Western Europe. By the time Rosenberg gave his inaugural IEJ lecture in March 1941, five freight cars of confiscated Masonic treasures and entire extensive Judaica and Hebraica collections from major French Jewish libraries had already arrived from Paris, followed by even more freight cars with the Rothschild French banking records.

²⁶ See more background about Rosenberg and the ERR, with bibliography, in Grimsted's Introduction to the *ERR Archival Guide*, "Alfred Rosenberg and the ERR: The Records of Plunder and the Fate of Its Loot" at: <https://www.errproject.org/guide.php>. See also the earlier article by Donald E. Collins and Herbert P. Rothfeder, "The Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg and the Looting of Jewish and Masonic Libraries During World War II," *Journal of Library History* 18, no. 1 (Winter 1983), pp. 21–36, although now considerably outdated by more recent research in newly available sources.

²⁷ See the French Looted Libraries website at: https://www.errproject.org/looted_libraries_fr.php. The original French version is at: http://www.cfaj.fr/publicat/listes_ERR_France.html.

Initially, a Masonic Division was planned for the IEJ, given all the books, archives, and exhibition materials seized from the large Parisian Masonic organizations and lodges. However, Heinrich Himmler – with a strong interest in Freemasonry, and the key figure controlling the Reich Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt, RSHA) – was quick to organize his own research center in Berlin. Himmler siphoned off a large portion of the Masonic materials from the ERR to supplement those the SD and Gestapo collected within Germany during the 1930s, along with those from subsequently annexed territories, including Silesia and Austria.



Figure 5. Reichsleiter Rosenberg welcomes his associates at an NSDAP National Conference.

Image courtesy CegeSoma, photo n° 207478.

The ERR expanded to Belgium and the Netherlands during the summer of 1940, under the initial name “Einsatzstab of the Offices of Reichsleiter Rosenberg for the Occupied Western Territories and the Netherlands.” With Hitler’s planned invasion of the Soviet Union (despite the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact), the ERR extended priority confiscations in Western Europe to East European émigrés and their well-established libraries in Paris, and to other key socialist collections, including the Paris Branch of the International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam), that might be needed for research on the ‘Bolshevik enemy.’ Similar seizures followed in Belgium and the Netherlands. Once the Soviet invasion was underway in June 1941, ERR units were organized in occupied Soviet lands, and the ERR name was modified to the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg for Occupied Territories.²⁸

²⁸ That initial ‘Western’ name for the ERR (Einsatzstab der Dienststellen des Reichsleiters Rosenberg für die westlichen besetzten Gebiete und die Niederlande) explains the Soviet Ukrainian archival designation of a fond with only three of the extensive captured ERR files from Belgium in Kyiv (now TsDAVO, fond 3674). The more general subsequent name (Einsatzstab Reichsleiters Rosenberg für die besetzten Gebiete [late 1941 until abolishment in 1944]), avoids geographic designation, and hence includes the Eastern Front.

AG/HAG Belgien-Nordfrankreich (BelgNfr): Organization and Staff

After organizing ERR Working Groups (Arbeitsgruppe, AG) for Western Europe in July 1940, Rosenberg personally visited Brussels towards the end of July. During a tour of the two largest abandoned Masonic organizations in Brussels on 25 July, he noted triumphantly that Hitler had ordered that Masonic libraries and pre-1933 archives from France, Belgium, and the Netherlands were all to be seized and designated for the projected Hohe Schule. The ERR started operations in Belgium on 15 August under the Administrative Division (Verwaltungsabteilung) of the Military Commandant for Belgium and Northern France (Militärbefehlshaber in Belgien und Nordfrankreich, MB BelgNfr).²⁹ Headquarters was in Brussels – rue du Châtelain, 32 – for the Working Group for Belgium and Northern France (AG BelgNfr). ERR staff led library and related archival seizure operations throughout the country, with all the proceeds purportedly for the benefit of Rosenberg’s projected postwar Hohe Schule, with some institutes and ZBHS already operating on a preliminary basis during the war.

Initially the AG BelgNfr was directed by Gauhauptstellenleiter **Hans-Wolfgang Ebeling**, one of Rosenberg’s key figures in the DBFU in Berlin.³⁰ **Georg Ebert** (DBFU Berlin), who had initiated the ERR in Paris, following his reports of the extensive Masonic loot in the French capital, was on hand early on as a key advisor (although not listed as staff), bringing his experience dealing with the rich Masonic materials from French lodges to initial Belgian confiscations.³¹ **August Schirmer**, who first started work with the ERR in Paris, was also well-versed on Masons, initially assisted in Brussels, before moving on to head operations in the Netherlands in September 1940.³²

Library and Masonic specialist **Hauptmann Karl Funk** was on the staff of the Belgian Working Group in August and September, when they were preoccupied with Masonic seizures, as evident from many reports, but he is not listed by the end of September.³³ **Dr Wilhelm-Jakob Schwartz** and **Gerhard Schilde** both appear on Ebeling’s initial August staff list and were named in working reports for some of the early inspections and seizures.³⁴ While Schilde continued at

²⁹ See the reference to Rosenberg’s visit and remarks about the Führer’s order for Masonic seizures in a postwar ORE report by Raymond Lemaire to U.S. restitution authorities in Germany, based on documents found in Brussels, at: <https://www.fold3.com/image/270094468.ff>. The first ‘work project,’ i.e. seizure operation, Le Grand Orient de Belgique, started on 17 August 1940.

³⁰ Professor Dr **Hans-Wolfgang Ebeling** (b. Hamburg, 6 December 1905–??). Ebeling submitted a list of the initial AG staff to the Feldpostmeister in Brussels, 18 August 1940, TsDAVO, 3676/1/166, fols. 253–54; and a subsequent list in the same file, 30 September 1940, fols. 249–50 (copy in 3676/1/239, fols. 693–94). A 19 November 1940 list, to the Quartieramt, Brüssel, is in 3676/1/239, fol. 484; while a 29 November list is in the same file (fol. 453); a 13 December 1940 list (fol. 375), and one dated 17 December (fol. 354). Attestations of birth date and home addresses for current staff, “Bestätigung [attestation],” for Ebeling, Vogel, Muchow, Köster, and Stampfuss, dated 18 December 1940, are in 3676/1/239, fols. 342–47.

³¹ Professor **Georg Ebert** (b. Chemnitz, 1898–??), in November 1933, was in the Rosenberg-led NSDAP Außenpolitisches Amt, and later was Head (Stabsführer) of DBFU offices under Gerhard Utikal in Berlin.

³² **August Schirmer** (1905–1948) was only briefly in Brussels as the AG was getting started. From September 1940 until May 1941, he headed the AG Niederlande, while he also (at least nominally) directed the anti-Jewish news agency and propaganda publication service, Welt-Dienst.

³³ **Karl Funk** (?? dates).

³⁴ Professor Dr **Gerhard Schilde** (?? dates). Schilde moved on to work in Paris, but was later killed on the Eastern Front. Dr **Wilhelm-Jakob Schwartz** (?? dates). Ebeling’s 18 August 1940 staff list (*above* note 30) also listed Rudolf Klein, Willy Klein, and Paul Lohmann, but their names have not appeared in connection with the seizures covered in this paper. The two women listed, Fraulein Anne Burmester and Eleonore Evers, served as secretaries, but there was frequent turn-over in that post. Of those last named, only Rudolf Klein appeared on the

least through September, Schwartz was replaced by Oberstudiendirektor **Professor Robert Köster** from Hamburg, who remained in Belgium only until the end of 1940.³⁵

By November 1940, **Hans Muchow** had joined the Belgian Working Group,³⁶ together with senior librarian and bibliographical specialist **Dr Adolf Vogel**,³⁷ both also like Ebeling, native to the Hamburg area; they were to remain the core professionals for the AG/HAG BelgNfr until retreat at the end of August and early September 1944. Their team varied in composition in subsequent periods: responsible for planning and executing priority inspections, often with SD assistance and always with representatives of the Geheime Feldpolizei (GFP) to seal the premises; then sorting the potential loot, and packing for transport. Once transferred to the ERR book depots in Brussels, they spent much time arranging, analyzing, and in many cases preparing reports, before final packing for shipment. Staff lists covering the Belgian Working Group, usually submitted to the MB BelgNfr monthly, are scattered among Kyiv ERR files with other documents, although a complete set has yet to be found.³⁸



Professor Dr Rudolf Stampfuss was initially among the senior staff of the AG BelgNfr, starting in September 1940, while simultaneously representing the DBFU Prehistory Office in Berlin. An expert in archeology and history of Germanic tribes, **Stampfuss** later headed the ERR Sonderstab Vorgeschichte (Prehistory).³⁹ His interest in Belgian history and archeology was

30 September list, but by November was not listed with the Working Group (September and November 1940 lists are cited above in note 30, but an October 1940 list has yet to surface).

³⁵ Professor Dr **Robert Köster** from the Hamburg area (b. Gr.Lobke g.Peine, 8 January 1896–??).

³⁶ **Hans Muchow** (b. Hamburg, 3 April 1900–d. 1981). See the postwar report he submitted to ORE/DER officer Marcel Amand in AGR2/ARA2, *I 21/364, starting with his cover letter to Amand, Hamburg, 10 June 1947, digital p. 11; and report, digital pp. 12–15; and a brief recap by Amand, digital p. 16 (see more in Part 2).

³⁷ Dr **Adolf Vogel** (b. Hamburg, 12 March 1901–??).

³⁸ **1940:** staff lists for August through December 1940 are cited in note 29.

1941: a staff list dated 13 February, addressed from Ebeling to MB BelgNfr, is in TsDAVO, 3676/1/166, fol. 122 (copy on fol. 239); and verification of vital data for the two staff present, Vogel and Wörmke, on 16 May 1941, is on 3676/1/212, fols. 135–37; a summary staff list sent to Berlin 1 October 1941, file 212, fol. 288. A list Muchow submitted to the MB BelgNfr, 29 October is in 3676/1/166, fol. 549. He addressed to Berlin HQ a staff list dated 1 November 1941 (fol. 335); and one from 28 November 1941 (as of 1 December 1941) is in file 212, fol. 379; followed by one on 8 December 1941 (file 212, fol. 403), listing only Muchow, Vogel, and Wörmke. A list Muchow submitted to the MB BelgNfr, 28 December is in 3676/1/166, fol. 567.

1942: a copy of an outgoing 2 January 1942 staff list from Wörmke to the Stabsführung, Berlin, is in TsDAVO 3676/1/212, fol. 427. See also the handwritten entries on a letter from Berlin Headquarters (Die Stabsführung) to AG BelgNfr, Muchow, 22 January 1942, TsDAVO, 3676/1/212, fol. 449–49v. Additional lists sent to Berlin in the same file are dated 3 February 1942 (fol. 465), 24 February 1942 (fol. 488), 4 March 1942 (fol. 510), and 4 May (fol. 598). Monthly HAG staff lists Muchow submitted to the MB BelgNfr from February through December 1942 are in TsDAVO, 3676/1/166, fols. 582, 122, 579, 578, 575, 577, 574, 573, 572, 540, 571, 570, 568, 569, and 587.

1943: Muchow's 1943 annual report, "Arbeitsbericht der HAG BelgNfr für das Jahr 1943," 25 March 1944, TsDAVO, 3676/1/171, includes staff for the year (fol. 137). See also the general ERR staff list for March 1942 in BArch *NS 8/260, fols. 62–68 (HAG BelgNfr staff, fols. 67–68).

³⁹ **Professor Dr Rudolf Stampfuss** (b. Duisburg, 3 November 1904; d. Dinslaken, 18 December 1978) worked with the ERR in Belgium from September 1940 until November 1941, gathering materials for his Amt Vorgeschichte in Berlin. See also, for example, Vogel's report on a week research trip with Stampfuss in Northern France, including Lille, Arras, Boulogne/mer, and Calais, etc., TsDAVO, 3676/1/159, fols. 674–81, with attached lists of Masonic lodges and Jews.

focused on theories about the Germanic origin of what Julius Caesar described as the “Belgae” tribes, who inhabited the northern region of what is now Belgium, specifically Flanders. That assumption had been eagerly adopted by Nazi ideologists. Stampfuss remained with the ERR Belgian group from September 1940 until November 1941. He was mainly collecting museum materials and related documentation from Belgium and Northern France, with at least six or seven crates shipped to his Berlin office. Even after his return to Berlin, he continued ties with the ERR staff in Brussels as an occasional consultant, but was later transferred to the Eastern Front for more extensive exploits especially in Ukraine and Crimea.⁴⁰

Dr Walther Grothe, director of the Central Library of the Hohe Schule (ZBHS), still based in Berlin in 1940, temporarily worked with the Belgian Working Group during the early fall months of ERR Belgian operations. Undoubtedly, he was coveting books from some of the early library seizures for ZBHS, such as the collection of the French Pretender, duc de Guise, that he helped analyze.⁴¹

At the beginning of 1941, another recruit from the Hamburg area, **Peter Wörmke**, joined the Belgian group, remaining until September of that year, before moving to Paris with the HAG Frankreich.⁴² By August 1941, **Muchow** was serving, at least temporarily as ‘**Leiter**’ in charge of the AG BelgNfr, when Ebeling returned to the Stabsführung in Berlin, although still officially heading the Belgian group. Ebeling remained in regular correspondence with Muchow, whose formal appointment as ‘**Leiter**’ of the group came only in June 1942; yet through the end of 1941, Muchow, Wörmke, and Vogel were the main senior staff working in Belgium.⁴³ During November 1941, **Dr Karl Brethauer**, already a key ERR figure in Berlin, was on temporary assignment with the group in Brussels, and again during parts of January and February 1942, before heading the French HAG starting in July 1942.⁴⁴ Also in November and part of December 1941 **Paul**

⁴⁰ Stampfuss served with the RMbO and ERR in Ukraine and Crimea, and established a research institute in Kyiv. He led major seizures of archaeological exhibits and related materials from museums in Ukraine and Crimea, which were transported first to Kraków and later to Höchstädt an der Donau, where he had planned a research institute with accompanying Ukrainian professional archaeologists.

⁴¹ **Dr Walther Grothe** (b. Oldenburg, 1895/1896–??), 1922–1925 assistant librarian of the Rothschild Family Library in Frankfurt am Main; 1926–1930, director of the Kassel Library; and ZBHS director (April 1939–1944).

⁴² **Peter Wörmke** (b. 18 October 1894–??). Letter of confirmation concerning Wörmke from Ebeling, 5 February 1941, TsDAVO 3676/1/239, fol. 213. See Muchow to Ebeling (ERR Headquarters, Berlin), 5 September 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/212, fol. 246; and Muchow to ERR Headquarters, 2 October 1941, fol. 288. Wörmke later moved to the HAG Frankreich in Paris. Postwar, by October 1948, Wörmke headed the Kulturbehörde office of the Altona Museum, Hamburg-Sülldorf.

⁴³ Muchow’s formal appointment as Leiter of the Belgian AG/HAG came later in June 1942 (see note 46). For examples of correspondence, see Ebeling to Muchow, Berlin 5 August 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/212, fol. 225 through fol. 233, among others. Apparently Ebeling was still on the Brussels payroll, as seen in the note from Vogel to Ebeling in Berlin, 17 August 1941, fol. 237; and Muchow to Ebeling, 26 August 1941, fol. 241. See for example, the staff summary in the letter from Muchow to Ebeling, 5 September 1941, fol. 246. Ebeling still heads the AG BelgNfr staff list submitted to the MB BelgNfr for 29 October 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/166, fol. 549; but his name is not included on staff lists dated 1 and 28 November 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/212, fols. 335 and 379, or from 2 January 1942, fol. 427.

⁴⁴ **Dr Philipp Christian Karl Brethauer** (b. Kassel, 9 May 1906–d. Hann. Münden, 10 July 1992), a German philologist, with his doctoral dissertation on the Medieval German theologian Meister who became a leading ERR figure in Western Europe. Joining the ERR in March 1941, he was based in Berlin, in charge of evaluation of looted libraries for the ZBHS. Brethauer appears on the AG Belgien staff list Muchow sent to ERR Stabsführung Berlin, 1 November 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/212, fol. 335, and again in January and February 1942. In July 1942 he was transferred to Paris, and headed the HAG Frankreich until mid-February 1944. See Roderick Miller’s “Kurzbiographie: Karl Brethauer (1906–1992),” prepared for *Wikipedia* (2011), with the full text in *Academia*.

Ruhbaum, a librarian with ZBHS, joined the group on a temporary basis.⁴⁵

As of January 1942, Muchow, Vogel, and Wörmke continued to constitute the professional staff, with **Brethauer** back again from Berlin on temporary assignment. Meanwhile, **Dr Max Greinke** arrived as a fourth member of the group in early February, remaining with the Belgian group through 30 June 1942.⁴⁶

In June 1942, **Hans Muchow** took over officially as ‘Leiter’ (leader) of what then became the Main Working Group (Hauptarbeitsgruppe Belgien und Nordfrankreich, HAG BelgNfr), with Ebeling established on the Berlin DBFU roster.⁴⁷ **Muchow** and **Vogel** were joined in July 1942 by **Lothar Freund**, who continued until May 1943.⁴⁸ By that time the Möbel-Aktion had gotten underway with the increased deportations in the summer of 1942.

Ebeling, before his final official transfer to Berlin, had also recruited **Professor Dr Hermann Noack**, philosophy professor at the University of Hamburg and expert in church history, who was also starting work on the staff of the **Sonderstab Wissenschaft**, to supervise religious seizure.⁴⁹ Noack’s main work for the Belgian HAG, and simultaneously for his Sonderstab, was the analysis of the extensive library and archives of the **Jesuit Seminary in Enghien** which the ERR seized in its entirety in May 1942 (AV 133, *see below*). Noack continued that work after his transfer to Paris in August 1943. Meanwhile, in connection with the Jesuit project, the ERR also recruited Belgian citizen-collaborator **Dr Robert Baes**, trained for the priesthood, who was closely involved in analysis of the confiscated Enghien materials and a major publication under Noack.⁵⁰

By March 1943, when the HAG BelgNfr had completed the 150 named seizures, the core professional group under Muchow was reduced to **Adolf Vogel** and **Lothar Freund**, together with **Noack** (until August 1943). There were shorter visits by representatives of other Sonderstaben, according to Muchow’s annual report for 1943, while the core group always had additional assistants and office staff.⁵¹ **Muchow** continued in charge until the ERR retreat from Belgium at the end of August and early September 1944, together with Vogel. After June 1944, Muchow left Vogel in charge, while he was sent to Paris to advise closing operations in France during the final

⁴⁵ Dr **Paul Ruhbaum** (dates ??); Ruhbaum appears as a fourth ‘Mitarbeiter,’ only on the staff list of 28 November 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/212, fol. 379. On the ZBHS staff in 1943, Ruhbaum headed the Buchleitstelle in Ratibor.

⁴⁶ **Max Greinke** (b. 9 February 1915). Muchow reported Greinke’s joining the AG BelgNfr, 6 February 1942, TsDAVO, 3676/1/166, fol. 582. His name appears on monthly HAG staff lists from 3 February through 30 June 1942: TsDAVO, 3676/1/166, fols. 465, 579, 573–578 (reversed order). By the 29 July 1942 list (fol. 572), **Greinke** had been replaced by **Lothar Freund** (*see note 48*).

⁴⁷ The formal letter of appointment of Muchow to head what thereby became a ‘Hauptarbeitsgruppe’ authorized by Utikal in Berlin: Bestätigung, 11 June 1942, BA Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 8/138, fol. 161. The helpful introduction to Jana Blumberg’s BArch finding-aid for NS 30 (ERR) (Koblenz, Berlin-Lichterfelde, 2004/2008) well describes the organization of the ERR and its records, but unfortunately it is no longer online; a summary account appears in the introduction for the ERR records in NS 30, within the BArch reference system Invenio at: <https://invenio.bundesarchiv.de/basys2-invenio/direktlink/7ac6d63f-7cf5-40b2-a375-dd93c010a349/>.

⁴⁸ **Lothar Freund** (b. 8 September 1900) is listed with the HAG BelgNfr staff from July through December 1942, TsDAVO, 3676/1/166, fols. 567–74; he served until 31 May 1943.

⁴⁹ Dr **Hermann Noack** (Hamburg, 23 February 1895–19 November 1977), a philosophy professor at the University of Hamburg, specialized in church history before serving with the AG/HAG BelgNfr, as noted by Ebeling, 21 May 1942, TsDAVO, 3676/1/212, fol. 636. See more about his work on the seized Enghien materials below. See “Hermann Noack (Philosopher) – “Hermann Noack (Philosopher) https://second.wiki/wiki/hermann_noack_philosoph.

⁵⁰ Muchow, “Abschlussbericht der HAG BelgNfr für das Jahr 1943,” 25 March 1944, TsDAVO, 3676/1/162, fol. 137.

⁵¹ Muchow lists 1943 staff at the end of his annual report: “Arbeitsbericht der HAG BelgNfr für das Jahr 1943,” 25 March 1944, TsDAVO, 3676/1/171, fol. 137.

chaotic months of German occupation. While still officially in charge in Belgium, Muchow assumed more responsibility in Paris, with some supervision of ERR operations throughout occupied Western Europe.⁵²

Other ERR Special Commandos (Sonderstab) operating throughout the German-occupied territories were also at least tangentially working with the ERR AG/HAG BelgNfr. Most of the ERR art seizures in Belgium involved consultations with the ERR Sonderstab Bildende Kunst, the ERR Special Commando for Fine Arts, as will be discussed in more detail in our separate article on ERR involvement in looted art in Belgium. The Sonderstab, since October 1940, was operating the ERR processing center for major looted French Jewish art collections, based in the Jeu de Paume museum in Paris, adjacent to the Louvre. Since the ERR AG/HAG BelgNfr had no art specialist and were not processing art, they were contacting the Sonderstab when they found art of interest, usually leaving art seizures for the Brüsseler Treuhandgesellschaft (BTG).

Although six named Belgian Jewish art collections were processed in the Jeu de Paume in Paris, only two of them came from victimized owners listed among the 150 Belgian AV seizures. Additional Belgian Jeu de Paume collections lacking names of owners came from works of art seized by the Möbel-Aktion or the BTG.

The Sonderstab Bildende Kunst was first represented in Belgium by art historian **Dr Karl-Heinz Esser**,⁵³ who, while primarily based in Paris, spent the summer of 1943 in Brussels selecting paintings, antique furniture, and other works of art seized by the Möbel-Aktion and the BTG. Subsequently in April 1944, **Dr Walter Borchers**⁵⁴ came from Paris to select additional works of art for the ERR.⁵⁵ Finally in 1944, **Dr Dietrich Roskamp** came to Brussels for a week to appraise some additional paintings, which apparently were not shipped out because he considered them of little value.⁵⁶

Dr Herbert Gerigk,⁵⁷ who headed the Sonderstab Musik, sent many requests to the ERR Belgian office and also worked through Helmuth Osthoff, a musicologist on the Military Commandant staff, but receipts from Belgium were disappointing. Gerigk personally made at least one visit to Brussels in October 1943, but was displeased by the meager quantity and quality of the musical instruments seized by the M-Aktion. On the whole, musicalia receipts from Belgium were much more modest than those from France and the Netherlands, but no adequate study exists of seizures of musical instruments and music scores of Belgian provenance and their fate.⁵⁸

⁵² See Lust, “De ERR en de bibliotheekroof in België” (above note 23), partly in the Buysse Commission *Final Report* (note 22), pp. 132–46.

⁵³ **Dr Karl-Heinz Esser** (8 June 1912–1999) earlier served with the Kunstschutz and the ERR on the Eastern Front, in the Baltic and NW Russia. Later postwar, he directed the Mainz Museum (1952–1977).

⁵⁴ **Dr Walter Borchers** (1906–1980), art historian and dealer, headed the ERR Sonderstab Bildende Kunst and the ERR AG Louvre; later postwar, he directed the Osnabrück Art Museum.

⁵⁵ Jacques Lust noted these details in the Buysse Commission *Final Report* (note 22), especially pp. 136–40; see also the section on ERR acquisition of art below. In Part 2, we discuss the brief report of ORE/DER restitution specialist Marcel Amand, who met with Borchers briefly in Osnabrück, where he was a curator in the city museum: Amand to Lemaire, 7 June 1947, AGR2/ARA2, *I 21/364, digital p. 17.

⁵⁶ **Dr Dietrich Roskamp** (7 September 1907–1996). See Amand to Lemaire, 7 June 1947, AGR2/ARA2, *I 21/364, digital p. 17.

⁵⁷ **Dr Herbert Gerigk** (1905–1996).

⁵⁸ See Willem de Vries, *Sonderstab Musik: Music Confiscations by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg under the Nazi Occupation of Western Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996); the Belgian coverage (pp. 169–80), references receipts from Brussels and some from the Möbel-Aktion, but cites only scattered

Compared to German occupation government in the Netherlands, which operated under the more basically civilian rule of a Commissariat, or in France, with its hybrid government arrangements with the Vichy regime in the unoccupied South of France, Belgium remained totally under military government until July 1944 (i.e. the final months of wartime occupation), headed by the Military Commandant in Belgium and Northern France (Militärbefehlshaber in Belgien und Nordfrankreich, MB BelgNfr).⁵⁹ Accordingly, and likewise in comparison to occupied France, the ERR AG/HAG in Belgium was more directly responsible to the German military occupation authorities (Militärverwaltung) under the MB BelgNfr, headed by General Alexander von Falkenhausen, the Military Commandant/Governor in Brussels, and Eggert Reeder, who served as President of the Military Administration (Regierungspräsident) of the MB BelgNfr, and was in charge of all economic and political issues. While the ERR was ‘embedded in’ and reporting locally to the Military Administration, because it was operating as an NS Party organization, the AG (and later HAG) BelgNfr was also reporting regularly to the ERR Headquarters (Stabsführung), headed by Gerhard Utikal under the DBFU in Berlin.⁶⁰

Under the Administrative Division (Verwaltungsabteilung) of the MB BelgNfr, the AG/HAG BelgNfr was often in contact with the Archives Protection Office (Archivschutz) and the Library Protection Office (Bibliothekschutz), but as far as can be determined, these offices under the Military Commandant (MB) were not searching or seizing libraries and archives of private individuals or organizations. Their operations focused on state or other public libraries and archives and, for the most part, were limited to microfilming, especially as involved library materials.⁶¹

Advance authorization from the MB BelgNfr was required for all ERR seizures, and the ERR operation unit was expected to supplement its local daily operation reports (*Tagesberichte*) with reports of confiscations to the Military Authority.⁶² As was the usual procedure in France, the Secret Field Police (Geheime Feldpolizei, GFP), also under the MB BelgNfr, had the required role of initially securing the premises of ‘abandoned libraries’ of Nazi adversaries, often accompanying ERR inspections and arranging chosen confiscation. Subordination to the MB BelgNfr protected the ERR and thus shifted its accountability for confiscations.⁶³ By fall of 1942, the level of

documents about Belgian activities. De Vries completed research for that book before he had access to the ERR documents in Kyiv. See also BArch NS 30/64.

⁵⁹ In July 1944, Hitler ended four years of military rule in Belgium and Northern France. The Civilian Administration (Zivilverwaltung) under Reichskommissar Josef Grohé remained in office (not even two months) until the beginning of September, when the Allies liberated Brussels. See Albert De Jonghe, *Hitler En Het Politieke Lot van België 1940–1944: De Vestiging van Een Zivilverwaltung in België En Noord-Frankrijk*, Part 1: *Koningskwesie En Bezettingsregime van de Kapitulation Tot Berchtesgaden (28 Mei–19 November 1940)* (Antwerp: De Nederlandsche Boekhandel, 1972).

⁶⁰ As is apparent in the posted “**Belgian-Related ERR Documents in TsDAVO**,” considerable correspondence files with both Berlin HQ and the MB BelgNfr are preserved in the ERR Belgian office files in TsDAVO. Additional relevant files of the MB BelgNfr remain in the BArch-Militärarchiv (Freiburg) and the Archives National-Site Pierrefitte (Paris). See the German and French chapters in Grimsted’s *ERR Archival Guide* (on this website) for details.

⁶¹ See note 69 below regarding seizures of the Archivschutz in Belgium.

⁶² This regulation explains the content and scope of the extensive correspondence and reports to officers of the MB BelgNfr remaining among the ERR BelgNfr files now in Kyiv: see the posted **TsDAVO Belgian Summary Register** (note 60).

⁶³ See Lust and Vermote, “Papieren Bitte!” pp. 202–203. See also Ebeling, “Tagesbericht,” 15 August 1940, TsDAVO 3676/1/161, fols. 535–36.

confiscations sharply decreased, once the M-Aktion started emptying abandoned Jewish lodgings in the wake of deportations, and the ERR coordinated efforts for retrieving selected library materials located or seized by the M-Aktion and BTG staff.⁶⁴

Starting in mid-1943, intensified British bombing brought the order to evacuate cultural property and most ERR operations from Berlin, the DBFU/ERR Headquarters – to which the Belgian Working Group (HAG) and Working Groups in other occupied countries reported – evacuated many of its operations, although kept a nominal presence in the Berlin area. Most research and library operations were transferred to the Silesian ERR evacuation headquarters for libraries and research in remote Ratibor (*postwar Polish Racibórz*). Anti-Bolshevik research (headed by Gerd Wunder) and the Ostbücherei (Eastern Library), together with other library operations, were thenceforth centered in Ratibor and surrounding facilities, forming what Rosenberg envisaged as an Anti-Bolshevik Research Institute, parallel to IEJ.⁶⁵ Simultaneously, IEJ evacuated most of its research and library operations from Frankfurt to the remote town of Hungen about 70 km northeast (LK Hesse). Meanwhile, the Sonderstab Bildende Kunst evacuated its headquarters to Schloss Kogl (near the village of St. Georgen im Attergau, Austria); the castle served as a major ERR art repository.

The ERR had a relatively small team in Belgium given all its assigned tasks. In addition to seizing ‘enemy’ cultural property, analyzing, and arranging appropriate transport to the Reich, they also engaged in major propaganda activities – publications, training, films, and setting up exhibitions – which gained in importance starting in 1942. These included, for example, a major exhibition and film, “Deutsche Grösse” (German Greatness), produced for mass public circulation and personally visited by Alfred Rosenberg. They also included anti-Bolshevik exhibitions like “Das sind die Sowjets” (Such Are the Soviets), which followed the German defeat at Stalingrad in early 1943.⁶⁶



Figure 6. A poster from the exhibition "Deutsche Grosse," Brussels, Cinquantenaire, 16 March–30 April 1942, organized by the ERR Belgian HAG. Image courtesy CegeSoma, photo no. 275434.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 93. The ERR HAG BelgNfr had a maximum of ten employees at its disposal, of which a third were administrative clerks. Apart from the occasional use of Belgian employees (a total of four), four students of the Auslandswissenschaftliche Fakultät were recruited in the fall of 1943 to carry out “scientific research.”

⁶⁵ See Grimsted, “Roads to Ratibor: Library and Archival Plunder by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 19, no. 3 (Winter 2005), pp. 390–458; at: <https://archief.socialhistory.org/sites/default/files/docs/err-ratibor-pkg.pdf>.

⁶⁶ On the general policies and propaganda work of the ERR in Belgium, see the articles by Dirk Martin, “Vergeten ideologen De Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg in België tussen cultuurroof en cultuurpolitiek,

ERR Unique Numbered ‘Work-Project’ (AV) System for Belgian Library-Seizures

In Belgium, unlike procedures in other occupied countries, the ERR AG/HAG BelgNfr adopted a unique registration system for its seizure operations – or ‘work projects’ (*Arbeitsvorhaben*, AV) – as is apparent in the first five ERR seizure lists and many related documents. Between August 1940 and February 1943, the ERR carried out 150 sequentially-numbered work projects (AV). Data from our six posted **ERR Belgian Seizure Lists #1–#6** about these operations (AV) have been combined in our accompanying “**Charts of Belgian Library-Seizure Victims**,” with some clarification of names and addresses (following local verification). The posted charts also consolidate data the ERR recorded on the lists characterizing the 136 named victims (113 victimized individual and 32 organization/institution), with address, dates seized, the nature and the quantity of materials (when given), and crate codes assigned. To the extent indicated, shipping dates and destinations are included in separate columns. In a few cases, several lesser seizures are included in one numbered AV; in other cases, several numbered AV represent accumulated miscellaneous materials gathered and prepared for shipment from one of the ERR offices. An added column lists surviving final reports for each project (*Arbeitsberichte*), as well as some of the more detailed daily reports (*Tagesberichte*), and scattered correspondence and special reports located that provide more details for most of the numbered ‘work projects.’

The data presented in the first five ERR seizure lists provide an overview of ERR looting during German wartime occupation, involving the 150 confiscations of private non-governmental libraries (except for the Soviet and Czech Embassies), many with considerable archival materials and art, through February 1943. After that date, as Muchow explained in his annual report for 1943 (dated March 1944), for the ERR Belgian Working Group (HAG BelgNfr) “it was not possible to continue further numbered work projects, since the Dienststelle Westen [Western Office, i.e. Möbel-Aktion] evacuation of abandoned Jewish lodgings” started in mid-1942. More attention was devoted to propaganda activities, while they continued analyzing selected materials already collected. Also, he explained, “transport difficulties and...the increased danger of book transports in the Reich” prevented further shipments after “the last transport of 124 crates in freight wagons on 30 March 1943.” Although he did not give details, another important reason was that, starting later in spring 1943, the ERR was evacuating from Berlin, with their research and library operations and looted collections transferred to their new headquarters in Ratibor, Silesia (then annexed to the Reich), and the neighboring satellite facilities. Muchow also emphasized that they had no space to handle more book acquisitions, as he noted: “the sorting rooms in our rue de Livourne depots...are currently completely filled.” He specifically mentioned at that point there were “about 52,000 books in our depots, apart from the Enghien, de Sturler, and Hymans libraries.”⁶⁷

1940–1944,” and the French variant, “L’Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg en Belgique, entre pillage culturel et politique culturelle (1940–1944)” (note 11).

⁶⁷ Muchow, “Arbeitsbericht der HAG Belgien und Nordfrankreich für das Jahr 1943,” 25 March 1944, TsDAVO, 3676/1/171, fol. 129. As to Muchow’s reference to the last shipment on 30 March 1943, his date cannot be confirmed. Presumably, from reports at that time, he meant the shipment of 121 crates to Berlin on 22 March 1943 (the only 1943 shipment documented), for which the waybill (addressed to the ERR shipping/warehouse agent, Spediteur Eduard Franzkowiak) is preserved, TsDAVO, 3676/1/164, fol. 30 (Muchow’s signature is dated 11

Given the unique registration system of numbered confiscations the ERR used in Belgium, we have more assurance that these five seizure/shipping lists, together with our accompanying charts, cover all of the ERR named and numbered seizures in Belgium. There are no indications that the ERR used this registration system of numbered *Arbeitsvorhaben* (AV) in other occupied countries, and certainly not in France or the Netherlands, as is evident on the ERR Project Website. We will, nonetheless, return at the end of Part 1 to two library-seizure victims, which do suggest post-March 1943 ERR receipts from the BTG or the Möbel-Aktion, and merit further consideration.

March, but the station stamp is dated 22 March 1943, as is a typewritten crate list for the 121 crates: “Fahrtnummer 06107098,” with a list of codes for 121 crates (fol. 31); followed by Muchow’s note to ERR Stabsführung (Berlin), 25 March 1943, with additional crate lists, 3676/1/164, fols. 32–35, 43–45. See detailed documents in the posted **Supplement to ERR Belgian Lists #4 and #5**, and further discussion of the ERR shipments in the Appendix at the end of this text.

3. ERR RIVALS FOR CULTURAL SPOILS: THE RSHA

From the start of the occupation of Belgium, the ERR was not alone in its quest for ‘enemy’ libraries and archives, although other agencies had somewhat different priorities and purposes. One of the first predators, the Special Commando Künsberg (Sonderkommando Künsberg) – under the German Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt), led by SS-Sturmbannführer Eberhard Freiherr von Künsberg – was responsible for the immediate confiscation of foreign ministry records in occupied countries. But Sonderkommando Künsberg had little success in Belgium, thanks to government evacuation of major foreign office records to England, beyond the reach of Nazi vultures, and the Künsberg Commando did not pursue library confiscations in Belgium.⁶⁸

Other official government archives were targets of the Archivschutz (Archives Protection Office) – headed in Belgium by Dr Georg Sante – which, like the ERR, operated under the Military Commandant. The aim of the Archivschutz was to gain control over the archival system and to enrich the German archives with archives (or microfilms thereof) important for Germany. The Archivschutz was involved in securing the archives of the Ministries and other local archives that were vital for intelligence and military government purposes.⁶⁹ Dr Sante was also actively committed to the confiscation and transfer of archival records from the Eupen-Malmedy area, which had been transferred to Belgium after the First World War, but already annexed by Germany in May 1940.⁷⁰ The counterpart occupation agency for libraries, the Bibliothekschutz (Library Protection Office), also operating under the Military Commandant, surveyed state and public libraries within Belgium and Northern France, gathering microfilms and considerable bibliographic data, while apparently leaving confiscations of private ‘enemy’ library materials to the ERR.⁷¹

Meanwhile, special commandos of the German Military Archives (Heeresarchiv) seized vast quantities of Belgian military records that had been evacuated to France. Their well-prepared operations in Western Europe were so successful that, at the end of 1940, a special branch of the Heeresarchiv was organized for analyzing their loot in Berlin-Wannsee – the West Archival Depot (Aktensammelstelle West). Most of the captured Belgian records from that depot were captured a

⁶⁸ Belgium authorities succeeded in evacuating the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Hundreds of crates were shipped in May 1940 to the Caernarfon Castle in north Wales, and returned safely to Brussels in November 1944. Only a small part of the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs fell into German hands in 1940 at Poitiers (France). See Lust and Vermote, “Papieren bitte!” pp. 194–95; see the short summary in the Grimsted coverage of the Künsberg Sonderkommando in the same volume, with more references for the Netherlands and France, *Returned from Russia*, pp. 18–20.

⁶⁹ Tätigkeitsbericht der Militärverwaltung in BelgNfr, no. 6 (18 July 1940); no. 11 (1 December 1940); no. 14 (3 March 1941); and no. 15 (7 April 1941), CegeSoma, AA 577/7684 and 85 (copies from Paris, Archives nationales (AN) [now at Site de Pierrefitte, AJ/40/2–3]. Sante also reported on archival destruction as a result of the German invasion in May 1940: Sante to Generaldirektor der Staatsarchive Berlin und Kommissar für den Archivschutz, 13 September 1943, AN-Site Pierrefitte, AJ/40/37/3/6. Additional Archivschutz reports remain in BArch Freiburg RW 36/469 (see also notes 61 and 70.)

⁷⁰ See Els Herrebout, *De Duitse Archivschutz in België tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog* (Brussels: Algemeen Rijksarchief, 1997) on the activities of the Archivschutz.

⁷¹ A few surviving MB BelgNfr documents with the Group 6 (Kultur)/Bureau I (Libraries) reports remain in the Archives nationales–site de Pierrefitte, AJ/40/37, and others in the BArch-Militärarchiv Freiburg (see also note 60).

second time by Soviet authorities in 1945; they were not returned to Belgium until 2002. Today, the administrative records of the Berlin-Wannsee Archival Depot, still held in Moscow (RGVA), contain valuable inventories with considerable details about the captured Belgian military records processed in Wannsee during the war.⁷²

Reich Security Main Office – RSHA (Reichssicherheitshauptamt)

For Rosenberg in his several state and NSDAP offices, ideology was a top priority, namely the ideological and cultural struggle against the opponents of the Nazi regime. The most important ERR rival was the German Security Service (Sicherheitsdienst, SD), or SD-Hauptamt, which in 1939 merged with the Gestapo and other security and police agencies as numbered offices of the Reich Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt, RSHA), under the overall command of Heinrich Himmler. Like the ERR, the RSHA had a parallel aim of collecting ‘enemy’ library and archival materials, especially from Jews and Masons. But, while Rosenberg was amassing library materials for his projected Hohe Schule and its various institutes, materials collected by the Gestapo and SD tended to have more state-security or immediate practical purposes. In a Paris agreement with Rosenberg on 29 July 1940, for example, the RSHA claimed priority over the ERR for archival materials needed by the Gestapo and SD (presumably post-dating 1923) potentially relating to state security aims and immediate repression of ‘enemies’ of the regime. When Rosenberg visited the two major Masonic organizations in Brussels at the end of July 1940, he suggested that Hitler had agreed that whereby the police would be entitled to post-1933 documents, the ERR was authorized to seize all earlier library and archival materials.⁷³

Like the ERR, however, the SD also catered to Rosenberg’s proclaimed Nazi ideological goals. Hence, they also targeted personal and organizational documentation of designated ‘enemies’: Jews, Freemasons, communists, and social-democrats, along with potential resistance fighters from every possible nationality. While many of the RSHA offices (Amter) amassed library and archival materials, the Seventh Office (Amt VII) – specifically designated for “Ideological Research and Evaluation” (Weltanschauliche Forschung und Auswertung) – built up a research center, with an extensive central library and information center and various subunits for different ‘enemies’ of the Reich. With Himmler’s special interest in Freemasonry, Amt VII developed a particularly strong Masonic research and library unit (with its own museum), which explains the immediate transfer to the RSHA Berlin offices of many Masonic materials the ERR seized in Belgium, as was the case in France and other occupied countries.

⁷² See Grimsted, “Military Capture: the Heeresarchiv and Berlin-Wannsee,” in *Returned from Russia*, pp. 20–31. See also Karl Heinz Roth, “Klios rabiate Truppen, Archivare und Archivpolitik im deutschen Faschismus,” *Archivmitteilungen* 41 (1991), pp. 1–13. Soviet authorities removed 30 train wagons of military archives from Western Europe, including many from Belgium, from that the top-secret Wannsee repository. Most of the Belgian records are now returned from Moscow, but the Heeresarchiv reports from Belgium and inventories of those Belgian records remain in RGVA, fond 1256k, 2/13, 14a, 16, 27, 73, and *opis* 2/33 and 66, among others.

⁷³ An agreement to this effect, “Aktenvermerk für Herrn Reichsleiter Rosenberg,” was signed in Paris by SS-Standartenführer Dr Thomas, Commissioner of the Chief of the Security Police and the SD [Beaufragte des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD für Frankreich und Belgien], 29 July 1940, and initialled by Rosenberg, Mémorial de la Shoah, CDJC, CXLV-578. We are extremely grateful to Archivist Karen Trieb for furnishing us a scan of this document. See also reference in an ORE claim to OMGUS restitution authorities, citing an ERR report of 26 July 1940 covering Rosenberg’s visit at: <https://www.fold3.com/image/270094474>.

Initially based in Berlin, starting in mid-1943, most of the RSHA research and library functions were evacuated to Silesia and the Sudetenland.⁷⁴ The Amt VII Masonic research center was established in Himmler's favorite lakeside castle on the Schlesiersee (*postwar Polish* Sława). At the same time, Masonic archives were stored in the RSHA archival center in Wölfelsdorf (*postwar Polish* Wilkanów), further southeast, where the village castle and other buildings also housed the captured Jewish and socialist archives the RSHA had earlier brought together in Berlin, including those from Belgium. After Soviet Ukrainian archival scouts discovered the extensive Wölfelsdorf horde in the summer of 1945, NKVD chief Lavrentin Beria ordered the entire collections transported to Moscow.

Meanwhile, the RSHA evacuated close to one million books from its looted Jewish and parts of its Masonic collections, especially including literature on occult sciences, to four castles in the Sudetenland, with the Castle of Niemes (*Czech* Mimoň) as library headquarters. Major uncatalogued portions of the RSHA Jewish Library were sent for cataloguing to the concentration camp of Theresienstadt (*Czech* Terezín), where incarcerated Hebrew scholars formed the famous Talmud Brigade.⁷⁵

SD officers often assisted the ERR in Belgium, arranging access and accompanying them in many searches and confiscations. Simultaneously, though, they competed for control of specific institutional or individual holdings and their potential loot. Both rival German plundering agencies had efficient working organizations and both usually depended on the Secret Field Police (*Geheime Feldpolizei*, GFP) – also under the Military Commandant – for securing the premises and actual seizures. By manipulating substrata of Nazi ideology and carrying out their assigned functions of security and social control along with the ideological struggle against Nazi adversaries, both the SD and the ERR tried to avoid being hampered by restrictions in their operations. Their pretexts were often misused for camouflaging the plunder of valuable libraries as well as works of art. As a result of competitive battles, looting of libraries and archives did not always follow a logical path.⁷⁶ Each agency had its own patterns, content preferences, and research strengths, which determined the destination of the spoils.

Notably, as apparent in many ERR seizure operations – such as the Masonic seizures during its initial months – the ERR and the SD were involved jointly in investigations. While the two were clearly in competition, the spoils were often divided.⁷⁷ In other cases, the SD (or other German occupation agencies) first informed the ERR about seizure sites, after which the ERR investigated, looted, and then shipped the loot to its own destinations in the Reich (usually Berlin or Frankfurt until Spring 1943, and Annenheim (near Villach, Austrian Carinthia), for the ZBHS. Yet remarkably, three of the most extensive ERR confiscations in Belgium to be mentioned below – the **National Institute of Social History (NISH)** (AV 134 – 220 crates), the **École des Hautes**

⁷⁴ See Grimsted, “Archival Loot of the Security Services (RSHA),” in *Returned from Russia*, pp. 33–64, and “Twice Plundered or ‘Twice Saved’? Russia’s ‘Trophy’ Archives and the Loot of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 15(2) (Fall 2001), pp. 191–244. See also Grimsted, “L’ERR versus le RSHA: Les formes de pillage et de migration de livres et d’archives comme facteurs intervenant dans le processus de restitution,” in *Saisies, spoliations d’archives et de bibliothèques* (Rennes, 2012), pp. 37–65; <https://books.openedition.org/pur/130197>.

⁷⁵ Grimsted, “Sudeten Crossroads for Europe’s Displaced Books: The ‘Mysterious Twilight’ of the RSHA Amt VII Library and the Fate of a Million Victims of War,” in *Restitution of Confiscated Works – Wish or Reality?* (Prague, 2008), at: https://archief.socialhistory.org/sites/default/files/docs/pkg-sudeten_crossroads.pdf.

⁷⁶ On the competition among different German agencies, see Jo Gérard-Libois and José Gotovitch, *L’An 40. La Belgique occupée* (Brussels, 1971), p. 136.

⁷⁷ More detailed examples are discussed in the forthcoming expanded article on “The ERR in Action.”

Études in Ghent (139 crates: AV 34 – 83 crates, and AV 109 – 56 crates), and **the Jesuit Seminary in Enghien** (AV 133 – 196 crates) – became possible for the ERR only after the Gestapo investigated and the SD (RSHA) first took over the sites. Once the SD had analyzed the books and archival contents and seized selected materials for their own purposes, they subsequently released the sites and remaining books and archival materials to the ERR. More thorough investigation of those ERR seizure operations in which the SD was also involved would require analysis of comparable SD reports, but few of those have surfaced; presumably, others have not survived.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ See, for example, the case study on the National Institute of Social History: Lust, Maréchal, Steenhaut, and Vermote, *Een Zoektocht naar Archieven. Van NISG naar AMSAB* (above note 18).

4. PRIORITY TARGETS OF ERR LIBRARY SEIZURES IN BELGIUM

The 150 Belgian ERR confiscations during the first two and a half years of ERR activity – listed on the first five ERR lists posted – represent extensive library materials, often with personal papers and archives (and in some cases, works of art), belonging to 136 named victims, including 113 individuals and 32 non-Belgian government organizations/institutions. Many of these victims were prominent individuals, among them Jews and Masons, also including political leaders and noted professors, among others, together with Masonic, Jewish, and other religious, academic, or trade-union organizations. Examples range from a royalist Pretender to the French throne to the former head of the Second Socialist International; from Jewish émigré professors to political leaders active with the Belgian Government-in-Exile in London; and even Roman-Catholic institutions, including a Jesuit Seminary, whose French archivist/librarian published anonymous tracts against the Nazi Regime, specifically naming Alfred Rosenberg in one title (*see* **Figure 12**).

Masonic Targets

Before the ERR AG BelgNfr was fully operational in mid-August 1940, Reichsleiter Rosenberg's 25 July visit in Brussels had spotlighted the potential rich loot in Belgium's two largest Masonic organizations: the **Grand Orient de Belgique** and the **Suprême Conseil de Belgique** (Scottish Rite). During that visit, Rosenberg was quoted as specifically ordering Masonic materials as top priority for ERR seizures in Belgium. Accordingly, the extensive abandoned materials in those two Masonic organizations in Brussels (**AV 1** and **AV 2**), together with their associated lodges, were the initial and extremely productive ERR targets, starting on 17 August 1940. Masonic materials from Brussels eventually totaled close to 200 crates of rich library holdings, archives, ritual objects, and museum exhibits.⁷⁹

During the German occupation, Freemasonry was banned, and an "Anti-Masonic" Exhibition was displayed in Brussels in January 1941, and other cities in Belgium. Many leading Masons who had not fled were arrested and deported. The head of the Supreme Council, Georges Pêtre, was shot in his home in 1942, while the Grand Master of the Grand Orient, Jules Hiernaux, former Minister of Public Education, and founder of the Université du Travail in Charleroi, was assassinated in his home in July 1944.



⁷⁹ See references to Hitler's visit and Ebeling's reports dated 23 August 1940 and shipment to Berlin, 26 November 1940, along with quotes from other SD and ERR documents at: <https://www.fold3.com/ORE/image/270094447.jff>. The first AG BelgNfr extensive reports on those seizures are found in TsDAVO, 3674/1/1, fols. 1–113, 191–94 (AB), among others noted in the posted "Charts of Belgian ERR Library-Seizure Victims."



Figure 7. Entrance foyer of the Great Temple of the Suprême Conseil de Belgique, 79, rue de Persil, Brussels, where the ERR was packing the library, archives, and museum exhibits.

Image courtesy CegeSoma, photo n° 10325.

Even before they had finished packing up all the Masonic libraries and archives in Brussels, the ERR Masonic specialists proceeded to Antwerp. Starting there on 22 August, they found rich archives, libraries, and other Masonic treasures in four Antwerp lodges: “**Les Amis de Commerce et de la Persévérance Réunis**,” “**Les Élèves de Thémis**,” “**Marnix van Sint Aldegonde**,” and the “**Loge Anglo-Belge**,” as shown in their next four numbered ‘work projects’ (AV 3–AV 6).



Almost simultaneously, the ERR also visited **Liège**, where they reported another 27 crates with an estimated 1,500 volumes and historical documents from one of Belgium’s oldest Masonic lodges dating back to 1775, “**La Parfaite Intelligence et l’Étoile Réunies**” (AV 7). The Sicherheitsdienst (Security Service, SD) outpaced the ERR for Masonic materials in several other cities, including Charleroi and Namur, and only allotted the ERR three crates from the **Masonic lodge “La Fraternité” in Verviers** (AV 11).⁸⁰ Nevertheless, by the end of the month, the ERR could boast an estimated total of almost 270 crates of Masonic materials (archives, books, and art, as well as ritual items), even after the SD took part of the loot.

Initial Jewish Targets

Simultaneously, starting in August 1940, the ERR also canvassed Jewish institutions in Brussels and Antwerp, as well as individual abandoned Jewish lodgings. As they probably learned, Belgium had welcomed many Jewish émigrés between the wars, which meant that by 1939 some 93.4% of Belgian Jews were of foreign nationality – well over twice the 44% figure in France and 20% in the Netherlands. That may help explain why the much more modest ERR loot from Jewish confiscations in Belgium hardly ranked with the better established Jewish institutional collections, which produced wagonloads from France and the Netherlands that the ERR immediately rushed to Frankfurt for the IEJ.⁸¹

Already on 21 August, for example, ERR Belgian Working Group leader, Hans-Wolfgang Ebeling, and his co-worker, Dr Wilhelm-Jakob Schwartz – along with SD Hauptsturmführer Humpert and two other SD officers – conducted an inspection tour of nine Brussels Jewish organizations, following one of their many Jewish ‘hit lists.’⁸² Yet their only significant confiscation that day was 22 crates from the Brussels branch of the **Alliance israélite universelle** (AV 9), undoubtedly a big disappointment after the 50,000 volumes the ERR had seized from the

⁸⁰ See the composite list of Masonic losses in Belgium sent by Lt. R. Lemaire to U.S. Capt. Rae in Germany, 27 November 1945, on the basis of some initially retrieved ERR and SD documents including a letter from the SD in Charleroi, 31 August 1940, reporting seizure of three crates of Masonic documents from Charleroi and five crates from Namur, at <https://www.fold3.com/image/270094590.ff>. See more about postwar retrieval attempts in Part 2.

⁸¹ These comparative population statistics are quoted by Jean-Phillipe Schreiber, “La spoliation des Juifs en Belgique sous l’Occupation: un état de la question,” *Les Cahiers de la mémoire contemporaine/Bijdragen tot de Eigentijdse Herinnering*, 9 (2009–2010), pp. 37–57, which provides helpful background; but for details of cultural confiscation, Schreiber relies heavily on the Buysse Report.

⁸² Ebeling, “Tagesbericht, 21. August 1940: Rundfahrt durch Judenorganisationen,” TsDAVO 3676/1/161, fols. 514–17. Given the considerable interest in the wartime fate of Jewish libraries in Belgium, we specifically name the organizations listed. The only other one from which books were seized is added to the “Alliance Israélite” entry on our “**Charts of Belgian ERR Library-Seizure Victims**,” which is listed only by address in this report. See also the “Arbeitsbericht” for the Alliance: TsDAVO, 3674/1/2, fol. 217.

extensive world-class collections of the Alliance israélite universelle headquarters in Paris.⁸³ The day's seizure also included a few books and files from the **Foyer Israélite**, founded by **Max Gottschalk** (AV 21), a professor at the Free University in Brussels and prominent Jewish leader.⁸⁴ Gottschalk's home was also an important ERR target in October; as President of the Belgian Committee for Refugees from Nazi Germany (1933–1940), he had been instrumental in rescuing the passengers from the *Saint Louis* (Antwerp 1939), the infamous ship that had been prohibited from docking in the United States.⁸⁵

Antwerp had a much larger émigré Jewish community, with several different orientations, greatly expanded with in-migration between the wars. The first and only major Jewish organization the ERR confiscated in Antwerp, however, was the **Fédération des Zionistes Belges** (Zionist Federation of Belgium) (AV 8), which actually comprised several Belgian Zionist organizations at the same address, although the ERR working reports from Antwerp did not specify. Among the seizures were some books from two component organizations in the same



building, Agudath Zion (Zionist Union) and the “Library of the Hebrew Language,” some books from which apparently did make it to Frankfurt for the IEJ, since they were repatriated after the war from the near-by Offenbach Archival Depot (OAD), with stamps preserved in OAD albums, as will be discussed in Part 2. The Antwerp ERR raid with seizure of 10 crates (2,654 volumes)

from the building— somewhat augmenting their Jewish library materials —occurred while they were in Antwerp supervising the packing of the 67 crates with their share of the Masonic loot from four Antwerp lodges in September 1940.⁸⁶ Apparently, as Ebeling later suggested, other Jewish groups had anticipated German raids and “...had already partly cleared out.”⁸⁷



Given Rosenberg's Masonic priority in Belgium, the first ERR shipments from Brussels to Berlin, 26 and 27 November 1940 (189 crates), contained predominantly Masonic materials (122 crates), together with 32 crates of Jewish materials – 22 seized from the Alliance israélite (AIU), the Foyer israélite and other Brussels Jewish organizations, and 10 crates of Zionist materials from Antwerp. That shipment totaled 189 crates, along with 35 crates from the collections of **Jean d'Orléans**,

⁸³ Apparently, they also found some archival materials from the Brussels AIU, which were among the archives returned from Moscow to Brussels in 2002; several examples were listed by Schreiber, “Les archives de Judaïsme belge conservées à Moscou,” pp. 145–61.

⁸⁴ Archival materials from the Foyer Israélite were also listed by Schreiber among the Belgian Jewish archives found in Moscow (see notes 18 and 81).

⁸⁵ **Max Gottschalk** (1889–1976) (AV 21), attorney, prominent sociologist, and active Jewish leader, who represented Belgium in the International Labor Office (1923–1940), was a research professor at the Free University of Brussels (before and after the war), and during the war at the New School for Social Research (New York). See Schreiber, “Max GOTTSCALK,” in Schreiber, *Dictionnaire biographique des Juifs de Belgique. Figures du judaïsme belge (XIXe–XXe siècles)* (Brussels: Editions De Boeck-Université, 2002), pp. 139–40.

⁸⁶ Ebeling, “Arbeitsbericht, 28. August 1940, Fahrt nach Antwerpen,” 29 August 1940, TsDAVO, 3676/1/161, fols. 498–99; “Arbeitsbericht, 30. August 1940, Fahrt nach Antwerpen,” 31 August 1940, TsDAVO, 3676/1/161, fols. 494–95. Apparently, a few archival materials from the Federation, including editorial files from the journal *Hatikvah* (1920–1936), were included among the library loot, as well as some papers from the Antwerp committee of the Alliance israélite universelle. These examples were listed by Schreiber, “Les archives de Judaïsme belge conservées à Moscou,” pp. 145–61 (see notes 18 and 81).

⁸⁷ Ebeling to Dahlem, Reichsstatthalterei Hamburg, 3 February 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/239, fol. 219.

duc de Guise (AV 12), described below. Apparently, they kept most of the 46 crates seized from the Grand Orient de Belgique for their planned anti-Masonic exhibition in Brussels in January 1941, and those are noted as included in the January 1941 shipment.⁸⁸

While all of the Belgian shipments through March 1943 went first to Berlin, rather than Frankfurt – which had been the destination for Jewish and Masonic materials from France and the Netherlands – at least some of the Belgian materials were thence forwarded to the IEJ in Frankfurt, as will be apparent in Part 2. Initially, a Masonic department was projected for the IEJ, although that never developed before the Institute was forced to evacuate their Jewish collections to Hungen (northeast of Frankfurt) starting in the fall of 1943. At the same time, Western European Masonic receipts were evacuated to a hunting lodge in the town of Hirzenhein, not far from Hungen. Meanwhile, books allocated to the Central Library for Rosenberg's Hohe Schule (ZBHS) in Berlin, starting in 1942, were transferred to Annenheim in Austrian Carinthia; the library was operating temporarily in the lakeside Grand Hotel, until it moved in 1944 to the monastery of Tanzenberg (near Klagenfurth). Starting in summer 1943, most of the other looted books from Belgium sent to Berlin were transferred with other ERR library reserves, including unsorted crates, to the ERR research center in Ratibor (Silesia).

An Exiled French Royalist Pretender

A highlight of alternate provenance (even larger than the Jewish component) of that first ERR cultural transport to Berlin, were 35 of the 37 crates (20,000 volumes of the library and rich archives) the ERR seized from the estate of the exiled claimant to the French throne, **Jean d'Orléans, duc de Guise (AV 12)**, who had been living between the wars outside of Brussels on the Manoir d'Anjou, with his Belgian-born son and successor, **Henri, comte de Paris**.⁸⁹ The duc had perished only a few weeks earlier in Morocco, soon after reaching what had been an earlier home in North Africa. Ebeling, head of the ERR Belgian AG, together with visiting ZBHS director Walther Grothe, spent the better part of several weeks sorting library and archival materials on the de Guise estate in September 1940.⁹⁰ Grothe probably hoped that some of Jean d'Orléans' library and rich French manuscript collections would be destined eventually for the ZBHS; instead, apparently, most of that collection stayed with the ERR, at least as far as Ratibor. In **ERR Belgian List # 1 (now online)**, ERR co-worker Peter Wörmke valued the de Guise collection at 14,000

⁸⁸ See further discussion and our charts of the ERR shipments and remaining documentation in the Appendix at the end of this file, and in **ERR Belgian Lists #4 and #5**. Details about the ERR shipments of 26 and 27 November to Berlin – and the source of the crates shipped through **AV 12** – were noted on a retrospective list covering the initial 36 seizures (AV) in 1940, now held with other ERR Dutch files in the NIOD (Amsterdam), *093a/58, digital pp. 5–7, at: https://www.archieven.nl/nl/search-modonly?mivast=298&miadt=298&mizig=210&miview=inv2&milang=nl&micols=1&micode=093a&mizk_alle=58. Although only including the first shipments (26 and 27 November 1940), that document, prepared in early January 1941, lists names of victims, dates of seizure, and number of crates seized by 15 December 1940. That list (including its title) was later exactly incorporated in **ERR Belgian List #4**. The rough figures are also reflected in the figures on the posted charts of 150 victims. As noted on **ERR Belgian Lists #4 and #5**, the materials from the **Grand Orient (AV 1)** were shipped to Berlin on 17 January 1941.

⁸⁹ **Jean d'Orléans, duc de Guise** (1874–1940), descendant of Louis-Philippe I (1773–1850); Prince Henri d'Orléans, Comte de Paris (1908–1999). After fleeing from Belgium, he died in Morocco 29 August 1940, less than a week before Ebeling and Grothe's first visit to his Belgian estate.

⁹⁰ See the initial reports of the materials seized by Ebeling, Vogel, and Grothe, *Arbeitsberichte*, 19–26 September 1940, 11 March 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/1, fols. 140–88. See also Vogel's summary reports sent to Berlin, November 1940 and March 1941, in BArch *NS 30/71.

Reichsmarks, making it the third most valuable personal library seized during the first year of operations in Belgium.

A major part of that de Guise collection, as will be explained in Part 2, was subsequently captured a second time in 1945 by Soviet trophy library scouts, who found the millions of books the ERR abandoned when forced to retreat from Silesia in late Fall 1944. Some of his books and manuscripts that the ERR still had with them at their Ratibor centre in Silesia became part of a large book transport to Minsk in the fall of 1945. Later, many of the duc de Guise archival materials were transferred to Moscow in the early 1950s, but many of the books and manuscript volumes remain in Minsk even today.⁹¹ The ERR mentioned also finding works of art at Manoir d'Anjou in their reports; none were identified, however, and there is no indication that the ERR actually seized any of the art, the fate of which remains unclear.⁹²

More Prominent Jewish Targets

Despite an inauspicious start with Jewish seizures, the ERR had many more productive ones from prominent individual Jews among its early 'work projects,' starting already by the end of September 1940. One of the first important Jewish victims was Lithuanian-born **Léon Kubowitzki (AV 14)**, an influential attorney, socialist, and Zionist, active in various Belgian Zionist groups, including the **Fédération des zionistes Belges (AV 8)**. After his flight to America in 1940, he became Secretary-General of the World Jewish Congress, and later an Israeli ambassador. ERR co-worker Dr Robert Köster, together with ZBHS director Dr. Walter Grothe, first visited Kubowitzki's home 23 September. With a final visit on 1 October, they had removed "seven crates of Judaica, Jewish reference materials, and contemporary Polish literature," along with "anti-Nazi German agitational materials and important archives."⁹³

The first ERR raid of the home of **Alfred Stern (AV 15)**, a prominent Jewish philosophy professor who had fled Vienna, took place on 25 September. When they returned on 1 October, Köster and Gerhard Schilde packed up two crates of books and papers.⁹⁴ In November, two other

⁹¹ Some books and manuscripts from the duc de Guise library remaining in the Belarus National Library, along with other ERR-looted library materials from France and Belgium, are highlighted by Anatole Steburaka, "Livres français spoliés dans les collections de la Bibliothèque nationale de Bélarus," in Martine Poulain (ed.), *Où sont les bibliothèques françaises spoliées par les nazis?* (Villeurbanne: ENSSIB, 2019), pp. 81–98, at: <https://books.openedition.org/pressesenssib/7892>. See also discussion in Part 2 of the de Guise archives transferred to Moscow and details about the materials remaining in Minsk.

⁹² The BTG report by 'Verwalter' Nicolay, "Dossier relatif aux avoirs belges du Prince Henri d'Orléans, Comte de Paris [S-4019] à Bruxelles-Stockel, 1943," ARG2/ARA2, I-25/2789, does not mention any art or other cultural seizures at Manoir d'Anjou, but only possessions of the heirs of the duc de Guise (deceased in French North Africa, 1940) elsewhere, including the château d'Agimont (in the south of Belgium, closer to France), where Henri, comte de Paris, lived.

⁹³ **Aryeh Léon Kubowitzki** (b. Lithuania [*then Russian Empire*] 1896–d. Jerusalem, 1966; changed name in Israel: Aryeh Kubovy) was one of the founders (1935) and Secretary-General of the World Jewish Congress (1945–1948), and fled to the U.S. in 1940. After postwar emigration to Israel, he served as an Israeli ambassador and president of Yad Vashem. Köster, "Arbeitsbericht, Leo Kubowitzki," and "Tagesbericht über die Arbeit in der Rue de la Source im Hause des Advokaten Leo Kubowitzki," 1 October 1940, TsDAVO, 3674/1/1, fols. 122–27; see also **ERR Belgian Lists #3, #4, and #6**. Fragments of Kubowitzki's personal papers were among those discovered in Moscow and returned to Belgium in 2002, as described by Schreiber, "Les archives de Judaïsme belge conservées à Moscou" (cited in note 18). See also Jean-Philippe Schreiber, "Léon KUBOWITZKI (Aryeh Kubovy)," in Schreiber, *Dictionnaire biographique des Juifs de Belgique*, pp. 204–205.

⁹⁴ **Alfred Stern** (b. Baden/Vienna, 19 July 1899; d. San Juan, Puerto Rico, 31 January 1980). "Tagesberichte," 25 September 1940, and 1 October 1940, TsDAVO, 3676/1/161, fol. 458 and fol. 445. Vogel, Köster,

ERR staff made several visits to the home of the Secretary of the National Office of Museums of Belgium, **Georges Philippart** (AV 29), where they confiscated two crates containing Judaica and many valuable art books.⁹⁵ Other predators must have helped themselves to more, because Philippart filed a postwar claim reporting the seizure of his entire library of over 2,000 volumes.⁹⁶

In December 1940, the ERR Belgian specialists seized 16 crates of books from the Brussels mansion of **Jacques Errera** (AV 35), renowned physical chemistry professor at the Brussels Free University, from a prominent Belgian Italian-Jewish family, who fled Belgium in 1941.⁹⁷ It was one of their largest private libraries, as ERR library specialist Vogel explained in appraisal, with “books and photographs of prominent (Jewish) scientists and politicians (often with autograph dedications).”⁹⁸ The ERR sent the library to Berlin in January 1941. After return to Belgium in 1945, ORE/DER submitted **Jacques Errera**’s 200-page list of looted books to U.S. authorities in Germany, listing many choice volumes of history and literature, as well as scientific writings and Judaica, together with many music scores, but no indications have been found at this point that any of his books were retrieved.⁹⁹

One of the most prominent individual Jewish seizures in January and February 1941 was from the home of Latvian-born **Nico Gunzburg** (AV 44), a leader in the pre-war Jewish community in Antwerp, and also active in Masonic circles.¹⁰⁰ Prominent in the Belgian protest-movement against National Socialism, he fled to the United States.¹⁰¹ An extensive report on Gunzburg’s confiscated library materials and personal papers is preserved in ERR files in Berlin, one of the few such reports found from Belgium.¹⁰²

“Arbeitsbericht, Alfred Stern,” and “Tagesbericht über die Arbeit in der Wohnung des Prof. Alfred Stern,” 2 October 1940, TsDAVO, 3674/1, fols. 117–21. See also the Vermote case study, “Alfred Stern,” in *Returned from Russia*, pp. 218–19. Apparently, the SD took more when they discovered he was also active in Masonic circles.

⁹⁵ **Georges Philippart** (1897–19??). Vogel, “Arbeitsbericht,” 2 December 1940, TsDAVO, 3676/1/239, fols. 911–12.

⁹⁶ See the claim with list of many of the seized books by Georges Philippart, together with further explanation about the seizure forwarded by ORE/DER to the American restitution office in Germany, copy in MCCP records at NACP, RG 260 (OMGUS), from *NARA Microfilm Publication M1946*, roll 39, at: <https://www.fold3.com/image/269998147/>; alternate Belgian copy in AGR2/ARA2, *I 21/369, digital pp. 192–216 (ORE dossier 371.619).

⁹⁷ **Jacques Errera** (1896–1977). His home at 14, rue Royale (Hôtel Errera) is today the residence of the Flemish Minister President. See Jean-Philippe Schreiber, “Jacques Errera,” in Schreiber, *Dictionnaire biographique des Juifs de Belgique*, pp. 99–100; and Milantia Errera-Bourla, “Jacques, le savant hypnotiseur,” in *Une histoire juive Les Errera, Parcours d’une assimilation* (Brussels: Editions Racine, 2000), pp. 161–68.

⁹⁸ Vogel, “Tagesbericht,” 11 November 1940, TsDAVO, 3676/1/161, fols. 911–12.

⁹⁹ A copy of the ORE claim (Dossier 371466) for Professor **Jacques Errera** (14, rue Royale, Brussels) is online with U.S. Belgian claims at: <https://www.fold3.com/image/269996093>, with another copy in AGR2/ARA2, *I 21/369, digital pp. 254–441.

¹⁰⁰ **Nico Gunzburg** (1882–1984), born in Riga (Latvia, *then Russian Empire*), his family resettled in Antwerp in 1885; law professor at the University of Ghent, and later dean of the Law Faculty; active in the Jewish community, particularly in work with Jewish refugees and boycott of Nazism. After arrival in the U.S., he worked in the Office of War Information (OWI) and taught law at Syracuse University. He returned to Europe after the war as an officer of UNRRA. See Jean-Philippe Schreiber, “Gunzburg, Nicolas Kalman Noah, *dit* Nico,” in Schreiber, *Dictionnaire biographique des Juifs de Belgique*, pp. 146–47; Lust and Vermote, “Case Studies: ‘Niko Gunzburg,’” in *Returned from Russia*, pp. 217–18.

¹⁰¹ “Arbeitsbericht Niko Gunzburg, Schermerstrasse 40,” 1 March 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/167, fols. 21–24, includes a summary listing of the many visits and seizures by named AG BelgNfr staff.

¹⁰² “Bericht über die Auswertung der im Hause Gunzburg (Antwerpen) gefundenen Freimaurerakten” (n.d. [1941]), BArch, *NS 30/71, fols. 26–72F.

Even before the Jewish deportations and the M-Aktion got underway in August 1942, the ERR surveyed names and addresses on prepared hit-lists, searching for library collections of potential interest left behind by Jews who had fled. For example, four out of the ten Jewish lodgings Wörmke and Vogel searched on 29 May were registered as work projects: the “Dutch Jew **De Jong**” (AV 75 – “a suitcase of Jewish papers”); **Georg Van der Velde**, a judge on the Tribunal de Commerce (AV 76 – 12 crates for “a sizeable library of importance”); **Elie Nias** (AV 77 – 2 crates “with early Judaïca”); and **Paul Glansdorff** (AV 78 – 3 crates of books on military history).¹⁰³ In further efforts on 3 June 1941, however, Muchow and Vogel searched for Jewish publications in 14 named Jewish lodgings, with only a few results of interest, but none meriting AV registration. And on the following day (4 June 1941), Vogel searched 24 more Jewish residences and could report none that yielded any books of interest.¹⁰⁴ Between the fall of 1940 and November 1941, among the ERR daily reports (*Tagesberichte*) surviving in ERR files in Kyiv, over 50 examples with lists of names that were searched have been identified.¹⁰⁵ Some of these indicate the seizure of a few books from the lodgings of individuals that were not registered among the ERR 150 priority seizures.

High-Profile Political Targets

Starting in October 1940, the ERR also started operations against Belgian political leaders, including a broad range of opponents of the Nazi regime. The priority victims were those who had fled and were involved with the Belgian Government-in-Exile in London, according to an initial hit-list they submitted to the Militärverwaltung (18 October 1940). Authorization and encouragement for those seizures came on 15 January 1941, personally signed by Eggert Reeder, President of the Military Administration (Regierungspräsident).¹⁰⁶ Those targeted included former **Prime Minister Paul Van Zeeland** (AV 56), first on 11 February 1941, from whose home on 4–5 March the ERR removed 21 crates (4,200 books), together with his personal papers (some of which were among the archives returned to Belgium from Moscow 62 years later).¹⁰⁷ Among other Belgian government leaders, the ERR made several visits to the home of former **Prime Minister** and **Minister of Foreign Affairs Paul-Henri Spaak** (AV 49), also active with the Belgian

¹⁰³ Vogel and Wormke, “Tagesbericht,” 29 May 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/159, fol. 636. Vogel, “Tagesbericht,” 27 June 1941, 3676/1/159, fol. 564. Later a ‘reclamation’ filed required the ERR in Berlin to return these 3 crates of military books seized from Brussels, 6 January and 18 May 1942, 3676/1/212, fols. 372 and 448 (details not provided, but quite possibly he was able to prove he was not ‘Jewish’).

¹⁰⁴ Muchow, “Tagesbericht,” 3 June 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/159, fol. 627; Vogel, “Tagesbericht,” 4 June 1941, 3676/1/159, fols. 621–22; Vogel, “Tagesbericht,” 27 June 1941, 3676/1/159, fol. 564.

¹⁰⁵ See the chart of hit-lists found among remaining *Tagesberichte* in Appendix 2, many with notes covering Jewish lodgings inspected during the period August 1940 and November 1941.

¹⁰⁶ Ebeling to Kriegsverwaltungsrat Heym, Militärverwaltung (18 October 1940), TsDAVO, 3676/1/166, fols. 144–45. See Reeder to ERR AG Belgien, 15 January 1941, file 166, fol. 129. See also Luc Schepens, *De Belagen in Groot-Brittannië 1940–1944: feiten en getuigenissen* (Beveren, 1980).

¹⁰⁷ **Paul van Zeeland** (11 November 1893–22 September 1973), lawyer, economist, and Catholic politician; vice-governor of the National Bank of Belgium, prime minister 1935–1937. On the seizure, see Vogel, “Arbeitsbericht Paul van Zeeland, Prof., Brüssel, Av. Charles Albert J.Boitsfort,” 7 March 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/163, fols. 12–14, 16; and additional reports, 3676/1/159, fols. 808, 810; 3676/1/239, fol. 755. For his books discovered recently in Minsk, see Part 2.

Government in London, but in February 1941 raids, they found only a few manifestos and political documents.¹⁰⁸

Liberal Professors Targetted at the Free University of Brussels (ULB)

The ERR initially victimized collections of some politically active professors at the Free University of Brussels (Université Libre de Bruxelles, ULB), because of their strong anti-German commitments and activities. Some were detected as Freemasons; others were persecuted as Jews. Several liberal ULB professors, who had fled the country, also drew ERR attention. The ERR considered that distinguished university “the bastion of Belgian Jewry, Freemasonry, and liberal-socialist thinking in Belgium.”¹⁰⁹ Mention has already been made above of the confiscation from ULB chemistry professor **Jacques Errera** (AV 35), and the assault on the home of the Antwerp Jewish Community leader **Nico Gunzburg** (AV 44), who was also associated with ULB.¹¹⁰

More ULB targets would follow with confiscation of the extensive libraries of liberal Senator **Herbert Speyer** (AV 42), a Jewish attorney and law professor,¹¹¹ and **Henri Grégoire** (AV 48 and AV 112), professor of Slavonic studies who had expressed anti-Nazi views in the periodical *Flambeau* that he edited. **Grégoire**’s library contained many rare imprints and unique Byzantine publications.¹¹²

Another academic library seizure the ERR deemed particularly important involved 1,082 books from the home of historian **Jean de Sturler** (AV 113), a prominent Mason, who had been a lecturer (docent) at the Free University. The ERR prepared a detailed evaluation of 25 categories of his books focusing on French literature and history from medieval times to the present.¹¹³ The de Sturler books were considered – jointly with the libraries of **de Laveleye** and **Grégoire** – as complementary to the valuable book collection of the late minister and “leading liberal” **Paul Hymans** (AV 110).¹¹⁴ The former liberal minister Hymans had fled with his Jewish wife to France and died there in March 1941. The ERR had considered his library “extremely valuable,” containing as it did almost 4,000 titles on a wide range of subjects; with a quarter devoted to French

¹⁰⁸ **Paul-Henri Spaak** (1899–1972), socialist politician, Minister of Foreign Affairs (1936–1940), and Prime Minister (1938–1939). Regarding the seizure, see Vogel and Wormke, “Tagesbericht,” 5 and 8 February 1941, TsDAVO, 3674/1/161, fols. 150, 162; Vogel, “Tagesbericht,” 7 February 1941, 3676/1/239, fols. 769, 770, 775–76; and Wormke, “Tagesberichte,” 8 and 10 February 1941, fols. 759, 766; Arbeitsbericht “P.H. Spaak,” 27 February 1941, TsDAVO, 3674/1/163, fols. 2–3.

¹⁰⁹ Muchow, “Tagesbericht,” 6 September 1941, TsDAVO, 3674/1/162, fol. 273. Militärverwaltungschef to Professor Van den Dungen, rector ULB, 31 October 1940; “Bericht über die Tätigkeit und Arbeitsziel der Militärverwaltung in Belgien auf dem Gebiet der Kultur,” 15 November 1940, among files held by CegeSoma.

¹¹⁰ See above with notes 97–99 for Errera and notes 100 and 101 for Gunzburg.

¹¹¹ ERR AG BelNfr, “Arbeitsbericht Prof. H. Speyer, Av. Louise 93,” 30 January 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/167, fols. 31–33. See the case study by Vermote, “Herbert Speyer (1870–1942),” in *Returned from Russia*, pp. 219–20; and Jean-Philippe Schreiber, “SPEYER, Herbert Louis John,” in Schreiber, *Dictionnaire biographique des Juifs de Belgique*, pp. 322–23.

¹¹² See **ERR Belgian List #3**, 8 January 1943, TsDAVO, 3676/1/164, fol. 26. Regarding the Grégoire library see also 3676/1/169, fols. 14a–52, including lists and reports.

¹¹³ Muchow to Dr. Heym (MV), Brussel, 10 September 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/166, fols. 88–89.

¹¹⁴ Wörmke, ERR HAG BelNfr, “Übersicht in Stichworten über Arbeitsvorhaben Hymans; de Laveleye, Grégoire (de Sturler)” (4 Oct. 1941), TsDAVO, 3676/1/164, fols 3–5. The de Sturler library (AV 113) included in the title was not described in that document, a copy of which is in the same file. Muchow reported on the seizure of the **Hymans** library (AV 110) to MB BelNfr on 7 October 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/166, fol. 78, and he listed the numbers of books seized on different subjects in a later report, 25 March 1942, TsDAVO, 3676/1/166, fols. 62–63.

literature, there were also many publications on politics, world history, and art.¹¹⁵ The library of **Victor de Laveleye (AV 111)**, former MP and Minister of Justice, who had fled to London, consisted mostly of juridical and historical literature, with a “well-kept collection of documents and press cuttings,...with files of articles on various Belgian and international political issues.”¹¹⁶

Those last-named four libraries, as Wörmke explained in his memo with **ERR Belgian List #1**, and as noted in **List #2 (both now online)**, the ERR temporarily kept for local use and further study in Brussels in one of their two library depots on rue de Livourne. Among the four, Wörmke appraised the Hymans library (**AV 110**, 3,924 vols.) at 22,000 Reichsmarks, and the Grégoire library (**AV 48** and **AV 112**) at 15,000 RM.¹¹⁷

Socialist/Communist Targets

The ERR especially focused on socialist sources that were particularly important in Belgium, with, most prominently, the Labour and Socialist International (LSI) – successor to the Second International, headquartered in Brussels since 1923.¹¹⁸ As an example, in February 1941 they seized the library of former minister and Lord Mayor of Antwerp, **Camille Huysmans (AV 45)**, along with some personal papers and six paintings.¹¹⁹ Huysmans had a long-standing record as secretary of the LSI and was then LSI president, rendering him a key socialist target. Besides, he had joined the Belgian Government-in-Exile in London, where he was broadcasting on British radio. Accordingly, Alfred Rosenberg had personally instructed, “In Antwerp the house of Huismans [*sic*] must not be forgotten.”¹²⁰

Among other major socialist opponents of the Nazi regime, the ERR focused particularly on Austrian-born **Friedrich Adler (AV 52)**, Secretary of the LSI, who settled in Brussels in 1923, in connection with his role in the LSI headquarters.¹²¹ The remaining LSI records were, next to the Freemasonic organizations, a top ERR priority. Although the SD had earlier seized many of the LSI office records and rushed them to Berlin, the ERR won control of Adler’s Brussels home, where they confiscated 20 crates of his books and personal papers.¹²² These also included many files that were part of the LSI archives, some of which also ended up in Moscow. The bulk of the

¹¹⁵ Muchow to von Hahn (MV), Brussel, 25 March 1942, TsDAVO, 3676/1/166, fols. 62–63.

¹¹⁶ **ERR Belgian List #3**, 8 January 1943, TsDAVO, 3676/1/164, fol. 27.

¹¹⁷ See Wörmke’s memo accompanying **ERR Belgian Lists #1** and also a note in **List #2**. As penciled on document 3 in the **Supplement to Belgian Lists #4 and #5**, the ERR sent the Grégoire and de Laveleye libraries to Berlin in the 22 March 1943 shipment, but the de Sturler and Hymans libraries were still in the ERR depot at 146, rue de Livourne, at the end of 1943.

¹¹⁸ The Labour and Socialist International (LSI; *German*, Sozialistische Arbeiterinternationale; *historically*, Sozialistische Arbeiter-Internationale, SAI) – was organized in 1923 as a successor to the Second International (1889–1916), in opposition to the Communist International, or Comintern.

¹¹⁹ **Camille Huysmans** (1871–1968), former secretary of the Second Socialist International, member of parliament, Lord Mayor of Antwerp, and former Minister of Arts and Sciences; see: https://www.odis.be/lnk/PS_35956. See the various ERR *Tagesberichte* for their work with Huysmans’ materials in January and February 1941: TsDAVO, 3676/1/161, fols. 165, 433–44, and file 239; fols. 752, 760, 781, 792, and 863.

¹²⁰ Note from A[lfred] Rosenberg (reacting to a letter from Ebert), July 1940, CDJC, CXLIV-394.

¹²¹ **Friedrich Adler** (1879–1960), son of Austrian socialist politician Victor Adler (1852–1918). See Lust and Vermote, “Friedrich Adler and the Archives of the Socialist International,” in *Returned from Russia*, pp. 220–23; (see also additional details in Part 2).

¹²² Vogel and Wormke, “Tagesbericht,” 18 February 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/239, fol. 727; Vogel and Wormke, “Tagesbericht,” 19 February 1941, 3676/1/239, fol. 725.

LSI archives were sadly dispersed during the war, with another portion ending in Poland, while Adler himself fled to the United States. After the war, he opted in his will for all restituted materials to be consolidated in the International Institute of Social History (IISH), Amsterdam; he did not live to know, however, that a major part of the LSI archives had been captured by Soviet authorities. Since their post-Soviet discovery, most of them remain in Moscow, as Russia has refused their restitution to Amsterdam or Brussels.

The discovery of Adler's papers with some documents from the SLI archives led the ERR to the international secretary of the Socialist Women's Organization, **Alice Pels (AV 123)**. Victimized as a Jew as well as socialist, she spent several months in prison in 1940 for assisting Jewish refugees. Months later, the ERR filled some 21 crates (upwards of 4,500 titles) from her valuable library (with many rare editions), archives, and art.¹²³

Following initial unsuccessful searches for the library of the late Belgian Labour Party leader and former Prime Minister **Émile Vandervelde (AV 57)** in his home in Brussels in November 1940, the ERR finally learned that many of his books had been moved elsewhere.¹²⁴ Interrogations of his widow revealed that some books were obtained by friends (whose names she could not remember). The largest portion had been transferred to the recently established **National Institute of Social History (NISH)**, which subsequently was to become a major ERR seizure operation.¹²⁵

Upon his first visit to the Institute in January 1941 in the presence of the SD, ERR library specialist Vogel found at NISH a significant group of books with dedications to Vandervelde. This discovery led to the conclusion that the foundation of the NISH was, in fact, based on the valuable and extensive library of the former Labour Party leader and president of the LSI.¹²⁶ Thus, the search for the Vandervelde library led the ERR to one of their priority socialist targets. This specialized archive and documentation centre, **NISH (AV 134)**, was established in Brussels in 1937 after the model of the International Institute of Social History (IISH/IISG) in Amsterdam, with the prospect of keeping more Belgian socialist and labour records in the country as a research centre.¹²⁷ That was particularly appropriate, because since 1923, Belgium was hosting the Socialist and Labour International (SLI). The NISH thus became a major work project for the ERR, as well as a typical example of confrontation between the SD and the ERR. The SD had first discovered the NISH collections in October 1940 and highly evaluated their importance as a supplement to

¹²³ **Alice Pels** (1882–1963). See Jean-Philippe Schreiber, "PELS, Alice," in Schreiber, *Dictionnaire biographique des Juifs de Belgique*, p. 271.

Wörmke mentions 4,500 volumes, "Tagesbericht," 13 March 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/161, fol. 47; Vogel notes 21 crates and indication of SD involvement, "Arbeitsbericht," 27 February 1942, 3676/1/170, fols. 70–71. Correspondence between Muchow and Brethauer (ERR Berlin), 17 March, 20 and 21 May 1942, TsDAVO, 3676/1/212, fols. 623, 625, and 641; Muchow to ERR Stabsführung Berlin, 17 May 1942, notes the shipment to transport to Berlin, 3676/1/212, fol. 610. See Part 2 regarding the retrieval of a small part of Pels' collection from Tanzenberg, via Paris, and restitution.

¹²⁴ **Émile Vandervelde** (1866–1938). Vogel, "Tagesbericht," 19 and 20 November 1940, TsDAVO, 3676/1/161, fols. 304, 308–309. See the elaborated account in Maréchal, Lust, Steenhaut, and Vermote, *Van NISG naar AMSAB* (note 18), especially pp. 54–85. See Part 2 regarding Vandervelde's books with dedications recently identified in Minsk.

¹²⁵ ERR HAG BelgNfr, "Arbeitsbericht – Wohnung Vandervelde, Residence Palace" (n.d., [1941]), TsDAVO, 3676/1/163, fols. 1–1a; see also ERR Belgian List #3; and Muchow and Vogel, "Tagesbericht," 22 January 1941, 3676/1/161, fol. 206.

¹²⁶ Telegram from Bertling SD Dienststelle Brüssel (22 January 1941), CegeSoma, Inventory Boumans, A1314, file (*map*) 531, folder 5, fols. 16–18.

¹²⁷ Ebeling, "Tagesbericht," 22 January 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/161, fol. 204; Ebeling, "Tagesbericht," 25 February 1941, 3676/1/159, fol. 841. See the case study by Vermote, "The Archives of the National Institute of Social History (NISG)," in *Returned from Russia*, pp. 223–25.

those of the IISH in Amsterdam and its Paris branch.¹²⁸ They pursued analysis and selected materials for at least 25 crates shipped to the RSHA in Berlin in 1940 and 1941.¹²⁹ But following scrutiny and extraction of their most coveted materials, when confronted with ERR demands, the SD lost control over the NISH collections (similar to what happened with the IISH collections in Amsterdam).¹³⁰ Finally, in April 1942, the ERR laid their hands on the 25,000 kilograms of NISH library materials, which were shipped to Amsterdam in 220 crates in early June to be combined and processed by specialists together with the IISH collections.¹³¹ At the same time they shipped three-quarters of the NISH library shelving to Berlin.¹³²

In 1944, the Belgian NISH materials, having been combined as part of the IISH collections, were shipped from Amsterdam to the Reich.¹³³ Meanwhile, the NISH material plundered by the SD was transferred from Berlin to Silesia, presumably to the same RSHA Amt VII archival centre in Wölfelsdorf, along with the materials from the LSI. There, they all fell into the hands of Lavrentii Beria's special archival unit, sent to Wölfelsdorf to prepare the vast horde of archival loot for transfer to Moscow in September–October 1945.¹³⁴ Thus, the wartime and postwar plunder put all Belgian scientific research prospects of the NISH to an end. That fledgling institution, projected to provide Belgium with unique archival collections for social and labour history, perished after barely three years. The fate of those unique Belgian collections has been subsequently followed since removal, particularly by specialists in what is now the Amsab–Institute of Social History (Amsab–ISG/ISH), Ghent, as mentioned earlier.

Trade-union libraries were likewise targeted, including, for example, the **Diamond Workers Union (AV 126)** in Antwerp, and a series of trade-union libraries in Brussels (**AV 140**); some were raided in collaboration with the SD.¹³⁵

The day after the German invasion of the Soviet Union, on 22 June 1941, the ERR looted the **Soviet Embassy in Brussels**, removing five crates of archives (**AV 82**).¹³⁶ Continuing plunder of research resources



¹²⁸ Telegram from RSHA-Berlin to SD-Dienststelle Brüssel (4 September 1940), CegeSoma, Inventory Boumans, A1314, file (*map*) 531, folder 4, fol. 36.

¹²⁹ Note from SD Dienststelle Brüssel to RSHA Berlin (28 October 1940), CegeSoma, Inventory Boumans, A1314/531, folder 4, fol. 38. See also the RSHA notes in Berlin (15 October 1941–13 February 1942) and the letter from RSHA Berlin to Wörmke, at ERR Berlin HQ (15 October 1941), BArch Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 58/6498.

¹³⁰ Regarding the seizure and fate of the IISH collections from Amsterdam, see Karl Heinz Roth, “The International Institute of Social History as a Pawn of Nazi Social Research: New Documents on the History of the IISH during German Occupation Rule from 1940 to 1944,” *International Review of Social History* 34 (Supplement) (1989), which references related publications and sources. See also Muchow, “Auszug” and “Aktennotiz,” [n.d.], TsDAVO, 3676/1/170, fols. 8–9.

¹³¹ Copy of shipping document ([May 1943]), AGR2/ARA2, Inventory *FIC 512*, file NISG, no. 2.004.041. A French inventory of this fond: (Ministère de la Reconstruction (MR)/ “Fiches alphabétique Dommages de guerre, 1940–1960,” is available at: https://search.arch.be/ead/BE-A0545_007278_006995_FRE, although individual dossiers are not online.

¹³² Langkopf (ERR Berlin) to AG BelgNfr, Berlin, 29 April 1942, TsDAVO, 3676/1/212, fol. 592.

¹³³ Maria Hunink, *De Papieren van de Revolutie. Het Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis 1935–1947* (Amsterdam: IISH, 1986), pp. 138–39, 152, 316–17.

¹³⁴ See Grimsted, in *Returned from Russia*, especially pp. 58–60. See also the postwar Belgian claims for the seized NISH holdings in BArch Koblenz, B 323/*406 and *522.

¹³⁵ Wörmke, “Tagesbericht,” 2 October 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/162, fols. 224–25.

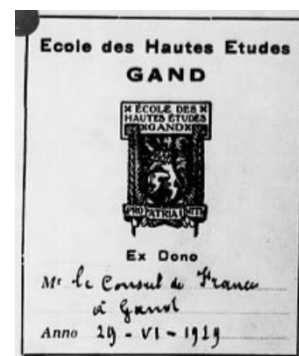
¹³⁶ **ERR Belgian List #3**, 8 January 1943, fol. 27; **ERR Belgian List #4**, fol. 63. See also ERR AG BelgNfr to SD-Belgien, 28 June 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/159, fol. 23.

for its anti-Bolshevik campaign, on 7 October 1941, the ERR confiscated 10 crates (2,654 volumes) from the Brussels **Soviet-Russian bookshop Obla** (AV 114).¹³⁷

Francophile Targets and Jesuits



Much less known or publicized among German wartime Belgian targets were two of the largest ERR private library confiscations from Francophile institutions considered major ‘enemies’ of the Reich. The Germans considered the École ‘unfriendly’ to Nazism, as an outpost of French culture on Flemish soil. During an initial work project in November 1940, the ERR seized 27 crates with the most valuable books from the **École des Hautes Études in Ghent** (AV 24), founded in 1923 as a university-level institution with instruction in French, following the introduction of exclusively Dutch-language instruction at the University of Ghent. That initial portion of books was rushed to Berlin already in January 1941. In his covering memorandum with **ERR Belgian List #1**, appraising library seizures during their first year of operation, ERR officer Peter Wörmke singled out the books from the **École des Hautes Études, Ghent** (AV 24 with 30 crates; and AV 109 with 55 crates) as the most valuable institutional library seized thus far; the total appraised value was 38,000 Reichsmarks.¹³⁸ A year later, the ERR confiscated “the remainder of the Scientific Library” with an additional 56 crates (AV 109), shipped to Berlin on 18 November 1941.¹³⁹ The extent of French government contribution to the French-language university center in Ghent is apparent in the second library book plate, filed after liberation with the hope of postwar retrieval.¹⁴⁰



The second major Francophile target involved the French Jesuits, whom the Germans accused of importing politicized Catholic culture on Flemish soil.¹⁴¹ Most seriously in 1940, the Gestapo had a death warrant for the French Jesuit historian-archivist Father Pierre Delattre (1876–1961), who since 1926 had headed the library and archives of the **Jesuit Seminary in Enghien** (AV 133).¹⁴² Imprisoned during the First World War for anti-German activities, Father Delattre rose to the top of the German hit-list for his vociferous anti-Nazi writings, especially three

¹³⁷ **ERR Belgian List #3**, 8 January 1943, TsDAVO, 3676/1/164, fol. 27.

¹³⁸ Wörmke, **ERR Belgian List #1**.

¹³⁹ Muchow, “Tagesbericht,” 8 September 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/169, fol. 97, and Muchow, “Tagesbericht,” 12 November 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/169, fol. 95. See Part 2 regarding books returned after the war.

¹⁴⁰ Copies of the book stamp and donor’s book plate from the French consul were submitted after the war by ORE/DER to U.S. Restitution authorities in Germany to identify books found in the Offenbach Archival Depot (OAD), as discussed in Part 2. Images of the stamps are in the online OAD records from *NARA Microfilm Publication M1942*, roll 6, from the originals in NACP, RG 260: <https://www.fold3.com/image/114/232161884>.

¹⁴¹ Since the reestablishment of the Jesuit Order in Belgium in 1832, Belgium had provided fertile soil for Jesuit traditions and the development of important educational institutions.

¹⁴² The French Jesuits had established a Theological Seminary in Enghien in 1887, following banishment of the Order from France in 1880. See Pierre de Lattre, “La Maison Saint-Augustin et les Jésuites français à Enghien, 1887–1953,” in *Annales du Cercle archéologique d’Enghien* IX (1954), pp. 217–52; at: <http://enghien-le-saviez-vous.eklablog.com/la-maison-saint-augustin-et-les-jesuites-francais-a-enghien-p1078264>.

offensive tracts published anonymously in Paris.¹⁴³ As with the NISH project, the Gestapo and SD came to Enghien before the ERR, in search of Delattre; they discovered he had fled to the South of France, after which they sealed the Enghien Library with its more than 90,000 volumes. Considering Enghien to be the headquarters of political Catholicism in Belgium, the Gestapo and SD were particularly anxious to find more incriminating material regarding Delattre and his writings; more arrests and incarcerations followed.¹⁴⁴ Finally, in July 1941, ERR church specialist Dr Hermann Noack was given access to evaluate the library and archives, which turned out to be one of the largest and most important ERR operations in Belgium.¹⁴⁵ Dr Heinrich Härtle, who headed the ERR Sonderstab Wissenschaft, was sent to appraise the collections in April 1942; he recommended confiscation of the entire library.¹⁴⁶

In May 1942, the ERR removed 196 crates (120 crates of archives and 76 of library books) to their Brussels library depot (125, rue de Livourne), where their specialists continued to prepare serious academic and propaganda reports until their 1944 retreat.¹⁴⁷ By coordinating Delattre's diary entries with other manuscripts found in Enghien, Noack proved definitively that Father Delattre was the author of "three books against National-Socialism published anonymously in Paris." One book specifically challenged the ERR: *Hitler et Rosenberg, ou le vrai visage du National-socialisme* (1936).¹⁴⁸ In December 1942, some materials from the library and archive

¹⁴³ Pierre Delattre, S.J. (1874–1961) was the Jesuit historian/archivist then in charge of the archive, which, as the ERR found, also held many of his unpublished anti-German writings from the interwar period. After living clandestinely in a French monastery in the Gers (Gascony) after 1942, Delattre returned to Enghien after the war, to what was then called the Institut supérieur de théologie. Among his many scholarly publications, he edited a seven-volume topo-bibliographical compendium on Jesuit establishments in France (1540–1940). See: <http://enghien-le-saviez-vous.eklablog.com/le-pere-pierre-delattre-p1114448>, and Yves Delannoy, *Le P. Pierre Delattre* (Enghien, 1962).

¹⁴⁴ See Kober, SD-Dienststelle Brüssel to RSHA-Berlin, 28 February 1941, BArch Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 58/6502. The French dissertation by Sheza Moledina, "L'histoire des bibliothèques jésuites à l'époque contemporaine, 1814–1998" (Paris: Ecole pratique des Hautes Études, 2007), provides the most extensive coverage available of the Jesuit Seminary in Enghien during German wartime occupation, its confiscation, and retrieval, and about Pierre Delattre; we are exceedingly grateful to Moledina for furnishing her relevant chapter, along with additional e-mail data, 13 and 16 May 2019. See also related documents in the file "Looted works of art" of the Service pour la Protection du Patrimoine Culturel de Belgique (n.d.), AGR2/ARA2, ORE/DER, *I-21/542. See also brief mention of seizure in the postwar SPPC card file on Enghien – with book markings on the verso (**Figure 9**), AGR2/ARA2, ORE/DER, *I-21/583, *fiche* A989; and ORE declaration forms A989–A991 in *I-21/411 and 412; cited with data from Pierre Delattre.

¹⁴⁵ Regarding Dr Hermann Noack, see note 49.

¹⁴⁶ Oberbereichsleiter Härtle and Kulp, "Bericht über die Überprüfung des Jesuiten-Kollegs in Enghien am 29. April 1942," 1 May 1942, TsDAVO, 3676/1/140, fols. 456–57. Härtle then headed the Sonderstab Wissenschaft, while Kulp was identified as *Abschnittsleiter* [Section Head]. The TsDAVO copy is in a file from the ERR unit investigating churches in Estonia. Other documents suggest the library then comprised between 80,000 and 90,000 volumes, but reportedly some had been removed earlier by the Gestapo and/or SD; Moledina reports the prewar figure at ca. 90,000.

¹⁴⁷ **ERR Belgian List #4, AV 133**, lists 120 crates of archival materials and 76 crates from the library, for a total of 196 crates from Enghien.

¹⁴⁸ Noack, "Bericht über die Arbeit an der Auswertung des Archivs des Jesuitenkollegs Enghien," 27 November 1942, BArch *NS 30/74. The report relates only to Delattre and his anti-NS writings. The three books issued anonymously by the major French Catholic publisher, Maison de la Bonne Presse, were entitled: *Ce qui se passe en Allemagne* (1933); *Hitler et Rosenberg, ou le vrai visage du National-socialisme* (1936); and *Sous le joug Hitlerien, la revolte des consciences* (1937). Quite by coincidence, Grimsted found a copy of the 1936 volume (with an IEJ Frankfurt 1944 cataloguing number, but no other source library markings) now held in the Harvard College Library. Undoubtedly found in Offenbach, Harvard received the book after the war from the Library of Congress Mission (see **Figures 12** and **13**).

were part of a special exhibit of ERR Belgian seizures prepared for Rosenberg (*see Figure 10*).¹⁴⁹ By the end of the war, under Noack's direction, the ERR completed a major monograph on "Jesuit Clericalism in Europe, 1918–1940," edited by Belgian cleric, Dr Robert Baes, with related documents and a detailed inventory of the archives.¹⁵⁰

Apparently, most of the Enghien archives, and some of the books that the ERR seized, never left Belgium before liberation. In February 1945, the Jesuits retrieved 115 crates (ca. 18 metric tons) that the ERR had left in their book depot at 125, rue de Livourne. They returned them to Enghien, although they found many of the books were missing; apparently many had been sent to Germany by the SD. When the Jesuits left Enghien in 1956, they initially transferred the library



Figure 8. A unique photo of the ERR activity in Belgium: Professor Noack inspecting the book collection of Jesuit Seminary of Enghien (1943).

Image courtesy Yad Vashem, Jerusalem (from an album documenting confiscation of cultural property by the ERR): FA1 73/6,3 item no. 74764.

and archives to their seminary near Chantilly. A large part of the library went to the Municipal

¹⁴⁹ Vogel to Stabsführung, "Ausstellung für Reichsleiter Rosenberg," 7 January 1943, TsDAVO, 3676/1/235, fol. 504 (cc 502).

¹⁵⁰ *Neue Dokumente zum Jesuitischen Klerikalismus in Europa 1918–1940, Politische Dokumente der Archivs Edingen (Belgien)/ Nouveaux Documents sur le Cléricalisme Jésuitique en Europe 1918–1940, Documents Politiques des Archives d'Enghien – Belgique*, edited by R. Baes, et al. (209 p.; 146 supplemental documents; copy in Jesuit archives: <https://www.jesuites.com/contact/bureaux-archives-jesuites/>).

Library in Lyon, while most of the archives were deposited in the Jesuit archives in Vanves (outside of Paris).¹⁵¹



Figure 9. A collection of book stamps and ex libris from the library and archives of the Jesuit Theological Seminary in Enghien, all of which were seized by the ERR (following selective seizures by the Gestapo and SD); submitted on an official ‘loss’ declaration after Liberation.

*Image from AGR2/ARA2, *I 21/542, A989 verso.*

For both those two Francophile targets discussed it should be noted that the ERR was strongly opposed ideologically to the French inroads in what they considered the more Germanic area of Flanders, and wanted to promote German rather than French influences. Hence, their opposition to the **École des Hautes Études in Ghent** (AV 24 and AV 109), rivalling the duly established Dutch-language of instruction in the state University of Ghent. They accordingly seized and sent the entire library in two batches to Berlin. Nor did the ERR and NS ideological allies have any tolerance for the French Jesuits in Enghien in French-speaking Wallonia, close to the French-Dutch language border in Belgium, particularly with their hated example of French Jesuit inroads in Alsace-Lorraine. And in the case of the Jesuit establishment in Enghien, they had a mortal enemy in the person of Father Pierre Delattre, who had authored French diatribes against Nazi ideological principles, with Alfred Rosenberg even featured in one of the titles (see **Figures 12** and **13**). After seizing the entire library and archives of the **Theological Seminary in Enghien** (AV 133), following analysis, they prepared a major monograph with published documents.

The library seizures from the **École des Hautes Études** and from the **Jesuit Seminary in Enghien** stand out as the two most extensive Francophile institutional ‘work projects’ (i.e. confiscations). They were joined by yet a third major academic institutional seizure (AV 134),

¹⁵¹ Details are found in the Moledina 2007 Paris dissertation (see above note 144), and later Moledina e-mail messages to Grimsted, 13 and 16 May 2019. On the present location and the history of the collection, see: <https://www.bm-lyon.fr/nos-blogs/la-collection-jesuite-des-fontaines/>.

namely 247 crates of the entire library and archives of the fledgling **National Institute of Social History (NISH)** in Brussels, founded in 1937. In June 1942, the ERR shipped those NISH materials in toto to Amsterdam, to be combined with the ERR prime Dutch library target, the International Institute of Social History (IISH). Later in 1944 they shipped the combined collections to the Reich, eventually planned to be rejoined with the rich evacuated materials from the IISH Paris Branch, that by that time were already in Silesia.

Perhaps ironically, those three most extensive ERR Belgian library institutional seizures during occupation actually succeeded in fulfilling some of the most important ERR NS aims for Belgium. Many of the Jesuit books and archives that had been seized and shipped out by the RSHA (Gestapo and SD) were never returned. Only fragments of the library from the French *École des Hautes Études* in Ghent were retrieved after the war. None of the books and archives came home



Figure 10. ERR HAG BelgNfr Display for Reichsleiter Rosenberg of Seized Books and other Objects from Belgian Masons, Jews, and the Jesuit Seminary, Enghien, Brussels, December 1942.

Image courtesy Yad Vashem (from an album documenting cultural property confiscated by the ERR), AR368-FA1 73/63, item 75223. HAG

to Belgium from the NISH. The distressing fact that those three victimized institutions lost so much of their library and archives during Nazi occupation that they never recovered thereafter – eventually resulting in the demise of all three institutions on Belgian soil. We will return to that postwar sequel in Part 2.

5. ERR BOOK RECEIPTS FROM THE MÖBEL-AKTION AND BTG

Rosenberg initiated the Möbel-Aktion in France, Belgium, and the Netherlands in January 1942 as a vast program to remove and salvage household furnishings (including cultural assets) from homes abandoned by Jews and others who had fled the country or were deported. The alleged purpose of this extensive plunder was to secure furnishings for the occupied Eastern territories, but most shipments reported from Belgium were destined to aid bombed-out victims in central Germany. The best account of the M-Aktion in Belgium, with good analysis of its cultural seizures, remains that of Johanna Pezechkian, first prepared for the Buysse Commission.¹⁵²

Initially, as in France and the Netherlands, the operation in Belgium was assigned to the ERR. In March 1942, in Belgium, the M-Aktion was taken over by the newly-established Western Office (Dienststelle Westen) of the Rosenberg-directed Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories (Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete, RMbO). Thus, Rosenberg was running the M-Aktion as an NS State, rather than NS Party, operation. Notwithstanding the ERR and Dienststelle Westen presence in Belgium, most of the actual M-Aktion seizures were carried out by local moving firms, as was also the case in France and the Netherlands.

Many of the local moving companies serving the M-Aktion were working under the auspices of the Brüsseler Treuhandgesellschaft (BTG) – the agency charged with the seizure, management, and disposal of ‘enemy’ (mainly Jewish) property and financial assets in Belgium. Administratively, the BTG functioned within the Economic Department (Wirtschaftsabteilung) of the Military Administration (Militärverwaltung) under the MB BelgNfr, rather than Dienststelle Westen, which was under the Rosenberg-headed Eastern Ministry, the RMbO. Hence, its own direct seizures of art and other cultural valuables were quite separate from those of the M-Aktion, although simultaneously the BTG was involved in many of the M-Aktion seizure operations. Similarly, the ERR also worked with and acquired cultural valuables from those seized by the BTG.¹⁵³

Hans Muchow, who headed the ERR HAG BelgNfr, may have claimed in a postwar report that “the ERR kept their distance from the M-Aktion,” but his words are contradicted by the

¹⁵² See Johanna Pezechkian’s helpful section on the M-Aktion included in the Buysse Commission *Final Report* (note 22), pp. 119–31; see also Pezechkian’s more detailed version, also published by the Commission: “La Möbelaktion (1940–1963)” (Brussels, 4 September 2000), at: https://www.combuysse.fgov.be/sites/default/files/paragraphs/la_mobelaktion_1940-1963.pdf; and her subsequent expanded and better-documented article, “La Möbelaktion en Belgique,” *Cahiers d’histoire du temps présent / Bijdragen tot de Eigentijdse Geschiedenis* 10 (2002), pp. 153–80; at: https://www.journalbelgianhistory.be/fr/system/files/article_pdf/chtp10_007_Dossier_Pezehkian.pdf. See the chart of occupation administrative structure in Belgium in the Buysse Commission *Final Report* (note 22), pp. 40–42.

¹⁵³ See more details in our separate forthcoming article on ERR involvement with looted art.

frequent and close cooperation evident in many of his ERR reports and correspondence. The ERR Belgian Working Group (HAG BelgNfr) clearly had considerable interaction with the M-Aktion, in terms of acquisition of seized cultural property, and were even named in directing roles in Dienststelle Westen staff lists. As in other countries where the M-Aktion operated, the ERR had its first choice of cultural property accumulated. This was made clear in a note to the AG Belgien regarding art collected 6 March 1942, when the M-Aktion was just getting organized.¹⁵⁴ Muchow, for example, also instructed Gemeinschaftsleiter Mader (in charge of the M-Aktion in Antwerp) to look out for musical instruments collected from Jewish households on behalf of the Sonderstab Musik.¹⁵⁵ The close involvement of the ERR HAG office with the M-Aktion is also shown in an August 1944 report from HAG BelgNfr with the figure of 100,000 cubic meters of Jewish furnishings that office had sent to the Reich by June 1944.¹⁵⁶

The precise number of households from which the M-Aktion removed furnishings in Belgium has still not been conclusively established. But clearly, the systematic plunder of Jewish dwellings ran parallel to Jewish deportation between 1942 and 1944.¹⁵⁷ In the 2001 Buysse Commission *Final Report*, Johanna Pezechkian cites the figure of 3,868 Belgian lodgings emptied from September 1942 to 30 August 1943, with a total of 11,173 pieces of furniture removed.¹⁵⁸ The M-Aktion intensified its seizure operations in late 1943 and 1944, and by the end of August 1944 (when the Germans were packing up in Belgium), furnishings were removed from an estimated total of 7,200 lodgings, according to a University of Louvain master's thesis in 2000.¹⁵⁹ If this figure stands up under further scrutiny, that would suggest that the number of lodgings the M-Aktion emptied estimated in the Buysse Commission *Report* should be likewise almost doubled.

ERR Component of M-Aktion and BTG Books

The Buysse Commission *Final Report* does not provide any indication of how many books the ERR obtained from the Möbel-Aktion – neither in Pezechkian's helpful analysis of the M-Aktion, nor in Jacques Lust's account of ERR cultural (especially library) seizures. No conclusive, let alone estimated, figure has yet been suggested, but given the ERR book-acquisition procedures and other available documents, an attempt to provide such a figure would still be virtually impossible, as will be clarified here. While purportedly focusing on Jewish losses, the Buysse Commission estimated an overall figure of 150,000 volumes that the ERR shipped abroad. That figure would have included the larger quantity of Masonic books and archives, as well as those

¹⁵⁴ Ingram, Stabsführung Berlin to AG Belgien, 6 March 1942, TsDAVO, 3674/1/3, fol. 347.

¹⁵⁵ Muchow to Mader, 11 June 1942, TsDAVO, 3674/1/3, fol. 345.

¹⁵⁶ Muchow to Amand, Hamburg, 10 June 1947, with attachment, AGR2/ARA2, ORE/DER, *I-21/364. See the ERR HAG report of 18 Aug. 1944, as quoted by Pezechkian, "La Möbelaktion" (2002), pp. 156–57. ERR BelgNfr to Militärverwaltung, Brussels, 22 July 1942, AGR2/ARA2, Service Archives des Victimes de la Guerre / Dienst Archief Oorlogsslachtoffers (Archives Service for War Victims), (former SVG/DOS; MSP/MV), R 123 Tr 148.282 (see the 2020 note on the archival relocation at: <http://www.arch.be/index.php?l=fr&m=en-pratique&r=nos-salles-de-lecture&d=avg>).

¹⁵⁷ For example, from the Dossin barracks in Mechelen, the central transit camp for Belgium, 25,484 Jews and 352 Gypsies were deported in that period. Related documentation since 2012 has been collected in the Archive in the Documentation Centre Kazerne Dossin in Mechelen: <https://www.kazernedossin.eu/EN/>.

¹⁵⁸ [Johanna Pezechkian], "La Möbelaktion," in the 2001 Buysse Commission *Final Report* (above note 22), p. 130.

¹⁵⁹ Kris Stabel, *De Möbelaktion. Het Duitse beheer van de in België geconfisqueerde Joodse goederen tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog* (Louvain, 2000), footnote 165, at: http://www.ethesis.net/mobelaktion/aktion_inhoud.htm; Pezechkian, "La Möbelaktion" (2002), pp. 157, 169.

from socialist, other high political, and French-oriented sources, only a very small portion of which (not easily distinguished) were Jewish.

Given additional documentation now available (notably representing *only* ERR shipments), we are suggesting the overall figure of the number of books the ERR acquired from its 150 numbered seizures (including those received via from the M-Aktion and BTG) should be raised to an estimated 240,000 volumes. But neither that additional documentation, nor the few ERR reports that Pezechkian cites (indicating that some ERR ‘work projects’ involved books from M-Aktion seizures), nor others found since, provide a basis for a reliable total estimate, either of how many books the M-Aktion acquired or how many of those were turned over to the ERR. To substantiate that point, a few words are in order describing ERR book acquisition procedures from Jewish households before and in conjunction with the M-Aktion and BTG, in light of more sources now available.

Well before the M-Aktion got underway, the ERR had clearly been systematically canvassing abandoned Jewish lodgings starting in the fall of 1940 and throughout 1941 and early 1942. Many such inspections, as noted above, resulted in only small book seizures or none at all. Yet the ERR had many successful Jewish targets among its 150 seizures, as indicated on our posted charts, and removed vast quantities of books they wanted from the lodgings of ‘fugitive Jews,’ as they called them. Accordingly, there were many fewer books left in Jewish lodgings, and even fewer major choice library collections, when the M-Aktion vans started arriving in the summer of 1942.

While the M-Aktion started in earnest that summer, many of the ERR detailed daily reports (*Tagesberichte*), along with other work-project reports, make clear that ERR library specialists were working closely with both BTG and RMbO Amt Westen officials in charge of the M-Aktion in connection with many of the final numbered work projects **AV 138** (August 1942) through **AV 150** (February 1943). Apparently the BTG, the RMbO, or other occupation agents often tipped off the ERR about significant book collections, authorizing or arranging removal, and in some cases, even providing transport for books to the ERR depots in Brussels, quite unrelated to the moving vans removing additional furnishings on behalf of the M-Aktion.¹⁶⁰ Several of those final twelve ERR work projects specifically reported books received from M-Aktion or BTG depots. In September 1942, for example, five crates of books owned by **Meier-Schwarzschild** from Hamburg (**AV 142**) were transferred to the ERR Brussels book depot (125, rue de Livourne) from an Ostministerium (RMbO) depot in Antwerp.¹⁶¹

Both ERR book confiscations from the Belgian “Jewish art dealer and forger” **Jacob Reder**, in December 1942 (**AV 145**) and February 1943 (**AV 147**), involved receipts from Amt Westen (i.e. M-Aktion), the RMbO Brussels office. The ERR initially inspected Reder’s Brussels home on 11 December 1942 (**AV 145**) together with Dr Bauer and Pg Liß, the latter identified as the head of the RMbO Brussels Special Office. Referencing the second receipt on 4 February 1943

¹⁶⁰ See the *Arbeitsberichte* or the *Tagesberichte* in TsDAVO 3676/1/217, for AV nos. 138–50, for example, on **ERR Belgian List #4**.

¹⁶¹ A list of 468 titles (many with multiple volumes) in the 5 crates is found along with the *Arbeitsbericht* (AB) for **AV 142**, with explanation that the source was the RMbO, TsDAVO, 3676/1/217, fols. 58–69; Vogel, “Arbeitsberichte: Meier-Schwarzschild aus Hamburg,” 10 September 1942, fol. 55 (cc fol. 56) (Meyer-Schwarzwald in some documents). From the RMbO in Antwerp the crates were transferred to the ERR book depot at 125, rue de Livourne.

(AV 147), ERR library specialist Dr Vogel noted that “the large suitcase of books was ready for us in the RMbO Office.”¹⁶²

In addition to receipts from the offices or depots of the RMbO (Amt Westen, i.e. M-Aktion), three ‘work-project’ transfers to the ERR among their 150 ‘work projects’ can be documented as examples, having come – at least in large part from BTG seizures; and quite possibly more that were not directly so indicated. In the case of Moorthamer Brothers Bookstore (**Moorthamers Frères, Librairie ancienne et moderne, AV 144**), the ERR instruction to confiscate the “forbidden, anti-German, and unwanted literature” came during an initial visit to the premises together with Freerk Haye Schirmann-Hamkens, who was then the Acting Administrator (Kommissarischer Verwalter) of the BTG. The BTG was then arranging liquidation of the Moorthamers firm, with a projected auction of all the remaining “rich book treasures,” according to Vogel’s work-project report (*Arbeitsbericht*).¹⁶³ As a second example, in the case of AV 146, the work-project report for the “Jewish property of the ‘Brothers Hildebrandt’ [later corrected to ‘Hildesheim’],” indicates the BTG as the “source” of the 100 books received.¹⁶⁴

Likewise, for AV 150 (the last ERR numbered seizure), dated 26 February 1943, **ERR Belgian List #4** identifies the contents only as “**nine Jewish libraries** (14 crates).” From Vogel’s March 1943 work-project report for the AV 150 seizure, however, we learn that those books were actually received from the BTG depot: he lists the family names, addresses, and nationalities of the nine Jewish victims, whose books had apparently all been seized by the BTG. Again, as Vogel explained, those books were all transferred to the ERR book depot in Brussels at 125, rue de Livourne, where they were sorted out and packed for shipment.¹⁶⁵ Thus, with these examples, the Buysse Commission figures for books seized and dispatched to Berlin from the Jewish community already clearly include many books the ERR received from the M-Aktion as well as the BTG.

Daniël Dratwa, active in the Brussels Jewish community and founding curator of the Jewish Museum in Brussels, critically suggested that the Buysse Commission had not adequately taken M-Aktion book receipts into account. True, the Buysse Commission did not – and could not have – put forward a separate M-Aktion figure for the books seized. Dratwa argues, however, that an average of 50 books per family were quite probably seized from the approximately 8,000 Jewish households victimized by the M-Aktion in Belgium, estimating that accordingly, a figure of 400,000 volumes should be considered for M-Aktion book receipts. Such a hypothesis, however, overlooks that the Buysse figures for confiscated books in fact already included many from ERR confiscations, some of which (such as the examples above) the ERR had acquired directly from RMbO or BTG sources. Pezechkian cited some of these examples in her M-Aktion section of the

¹⁶² Vogel, “Arbeitsbericht: I. Reder, Brussels, 3 Sq. Marie Louise,” 8 January 1943, TsDAVO, 3676/1/217, fol. 28 (cc fol. 29), for seizure of 11 December 1942 with crate list and list of correspondence.

¹⁶³ Vogel, “Arbeitsbericht. Antiquariat Moorthammer,” n.d. [2 September–20 October 1942], TsDAVO, 3676/1/217, fol. 37 (cc fols. 35, 360); the AB lists the five crates the ERR removed (330–334); see also the letter of receipt, fol. 33.

¹⁶⁴ Vogel, “Arbeitsbericht: Gebrüder Hildebrandt, 32 av. Mont Kemmel, Brüssel,” 26 January 1943, TsDAVO, 3676/1/217, fols. 26–27. An accompanying letter from the Belgian Jewish Property Office, 14 January 1943 (fol. 25) gives the name ‘Hildesheim,’ and the ERR typewritten list of Work Projects (*Arbeitsvorhaben* 137–150, fol. 15), has been corrected by hand accordingly.

¹⁶⁵ **ERR Belgian List #4**, TsDAVO, 3676/1/164, fol. 66; Vogel, “Sammel – Arbeitsbericht: Jüdische Bibliotheken gesammelt im Lager der BTG, Brüssel, Cinquantenaire,” 4 March 1943, TsDAVO, 3676/1/217, fol. 16 (cc fol. 17). Those victims were also identified by nationality – two of the victims were Belgian, three Polish, one French, one Romanian, and one German. More details are presented in our “ERR in Action” article, including, for example, AV 142 and AV 148, which are attributed to the Ostministerium (RMbO) depot in Antwerp, and AV 150, to the BTG depot in Brussels.

2001 Buysse *Final Report* as well as her better documented supplemental article. Yet Dratwa offers no further documentation to support his argument.¹⁶⁶

Most important, Dratwa may not have seen the specific ERR reports and hence may have overlooked the ERR book acquisition procedures for M-Aktion books, whereby the ERR staff was carefully selecting only those books they wanted from M-Aktion receipts, according to ERR criteria and specific needs. As a revealing case in point, the initial ERR report on AV 148 lists 14 crates of books (or 25 boxes, as noted below) from the RMbO depot (Lager Ostministerium) in Antwerp transferred on 5 February 1943 to the ERR Brussels book depot. Even more revealing, in his summary “Work Report” (*Arbeitsbericht*, AB) for that transfer, ERR library specialist Dr Vogel explains he had been surveying RMbO book receipts since fall 1942 and selecting appropriate titles:

After multiple examinations of the books that had accumulated [in the RMbO depot] in November and December 1942 and January and February 1943, on 5 February 1943, all books suitable for us were transported in a Wehrmacht truck to our library building at 125 rue de Livourne. Under my supervision, our Flemish workers arranged the books from the 25 boxes delivered on our book shelves according to new criteria.¹⁶⁷

Yet none of the reports, even on this one particular work project (AV 148), which clearly shows ERR receipt from the M-Aktion, give even an approximate figure for the number of books in the 14 crates (or 25 boxes). Nor have indications been found for the total Antwerp M-Aktion receipts from which Dr Vogel was selecting books for the ERR; nor whether in the subsequent ERR Brussels sorting process at their rue de Livourne book depots, all of those books acquired were selected for transport. No documents reporting aggregate figures on numbers of books acquired in any M-Aktion depots have surfaced, and no M-Aktion documentation from Belgium has surfaced to date with tallies providing the basis for a reliable estimate of how many books the M-Aktion removed from Jewish lodgings. But given the ERR selection procedure, even if we had an estimated total of M-Aktion books, that would not necessarily correspond to how many were actually selected and acquired by the ERR, or how many the ERR shipped out of Belgium.

Clearly, the ERR HAG BelgNfr did not select all of the books the M-Aktion acquired – nor has evidence been found if they received any other presumably more valuable book collections seized by the BTG. But from remaining sources available today, and especially available BTG sequestration dossiers that have been sampled, no further indication of important seized book collections has yet to emerge. Given sources available and research to date, it would currently be impossible to estimate the total number of books seized by those agencies in Belgium, how many were transferred to the ERR, or the fate of those remaining. The examples cited above from ERR sources have not been confirmed from M-Aktion or BTG documents. Besides, regrettably,

¹⁶⁶ Daniël Dratwa, “The Looted Jewish Libraries in Belgium,” Lecture, Vienna 23 April 2003, Dratwa kindly furnished a copy from his papers in the Jewish Museum in Belgium. Dratwa, “The Plunder of Jewish-Owned Books and Libraries in Belgium,” from a symposium at the Smithsonian, Washington, DC, 2004, in *Vitalizing Memory: International Perspectives on Provenance Research* (Washington, DC: American Association of Museums, 2005), pp. 143–45. Note that Dratwa’s figure of 8,000 M-Aktion Jewish households seized is considerably higher than the latest Stabel figure of 7,200 (see above note 159).

¹⁶⁷ **ERR Belgian List #4**, TsDAVO, 3676/1/164, fol. 66; Vogel, “Arbeitsbericht,” 12 February 1943, TsDAVO, 3676/1/217, fol. 20 (cc fol. 21). See also the [Pezechkian], “Möbelaktion” in the Buysse Commission *Final Report* (note 22), pp. 124–25, presumably referring to the same 25 boxes of books from the Antwerp RMbO depot transferred to the ERR, although the earlier AV 148 report lists only 14 crates.

independent ERR AG/HAG BelgNfr seizure records and book receipts from the M-Aktion and BTG extend only through February 1943.

Surviving BTG files are themselves seriously incomplete, but recently more of those preserved have become publicly available in Belgium. As yet, it has not been feasible to search all of those deemed possibly relevant. Many seizure reports remain in BTG files as well as other scattered collections from private Belgium moving companies that operated vans for the M-Aktion. Though research in these sources is tedious, combing samples of scattered remaining files may yield scattered indications of additional books removed by the M-Aktion vans, or independently by the BTG, but aggregate numbers have yet to surface, and such selective gleanings are unlikely to indicate their fate.¹⁶⁸

Research in Belgian postwar claims files may yield more indications, but is even more tedious, and most postwar claimants with sizeable book losses, especially Jewish ones, had undoubtedly fled, been deported, or were in hiding, when their libraries were seized, and had either no knowledge or scant clues of ‘who done it.’ Other witnesses to the crimes would have been few and far between. Nevertheless, with recent increased processing of the extensive reams of claims files, and relaxation of scholarly access policies, incentives for further research remain. Two decades ago, Buysse Commission researchers examined several groups of sample claims files, but we have no indication that they specifically checked for indications of M-Aktion or BTG library seizures in the thousands of sample claims they did examine – or if they found corroborating evidence or reported examples of book confiscations.¹⁶⁹

Many more postwar claims files have recently been processed and opened for public consultation in Belgium. However, many relevant Belgian claims were prepared with the aim of monetary compensation rather than indicating details of book losses with hope of retrieval. As will be analyzed in Part 2, relatively few Belgian victims of library looting submitted specific declarations of library loss, reports, or claims. As a result, Belgium lacks the wealth of open-access library claims documentation from ERR, M-Aktion, and other victims (predominantly Jewish) that is available in France, permitting the types of largescale reporting that Martine Poulain has undertaken.¹⁷⁰ Furthermore, the types of documents preserved from ERR operations in Belgium differ sharply from the more limited data preserved in ERR French reports. Yet some surviving French ERR weekly and monthly reports do provide more specific – however scattered – numbers

¹⁶⁸ See some scattered specific examples in the BTG records in the Belgian chapter of the *ERR Archival Guide*, Section 1.1.1., as well as M-Aktion reports in other Belgian repositories, including the Archives of the Service for War Victims Archives (Archives de Service des Victimes de la Guerre / Dienst Archief Oorlogsslachtoffers), recently transferred to AGR2/ARA2 (as of January 2020).

¹⁶⁹ See the Belgian Chapter of the *ERR Archival Guide*, Section 1.1.3. for the Series ‘Dossiers individuels Dommages de Guerre / Individuele oorlogsschadedossiers, 1945–1970,’ AGR 2 /ARA2, including a “Serie Commission Buysse, no. 480,” with a group of 497 cartons containing 5,210 files for Jewish M-Aktion victims from different cities in Belgium that were examined by the Commission, now available for research on special request. See also the extensive original M-Aktion files remaining in the Archives of the Service for War Victims (*see above* note 168), as more fully described in Section 1.3. (as of January 2020, under AGR2/ARA2).

¹⁷⁰ See her award-winning monograph, *Livres pillés, lectures surveillées, les bibliothèques françaises sous l’Occupation* (Paris, 2008), and her subsequent tables of almost 2,500 French individual victims and 412 institutions who filed postwar claims for books seized; few of them received only a small portion of their library returned, while others received none: http://www.memorialdelashoah.org/upload/minisites/bibliotheques_spoliees/; and http://www.cfaj.fr/publicat/livres_pilles.html.

of M-Aktion books acquired by ERR working groups and/or dispatched to the Reich from M-Aktion sources.¹⁷¹

These lacunae in Belgian sources on M-Aktion book receipts and transfers to the ERR, are indeed reflected in an initial 2007 analysis of books seized by the M-Aktion in Western Europe, set forth by University of Chicago library specialist Sem Sutter. While he was attempting to compare Belgian M-Aktion book receipts with data he found for France and the Netherlands, he could only report finding no similar documentation from Belgium.¹⁷² Although he had not seen the Buysse Commission *Final Report* with Johanna Pezechkian's analysis of the M-Aktion (based on considerable ERR documentation), he nonetheless quite accurately reported that Belgian documentation with statistics on M-Aktion book receipts, similar to those available for France and the Netherlands, have yet to surface for Belgium.¹⁷³

Destruction. Likewise, no figures have surfaced about how many books the ERR may have destroyed or sent to wastepaper facilities in Belgium, although we know in many countries the ERR and other German occupation agents had instructions to destroy 'offensive' literature. We know in some countries – in Lithuania, as a prominent example – they destroyed or sold for wastepaper many Jewish books they did not select for transport. With a load of books the ERR received from a RMbO depot in Antwerp in February 1943, for example, Vogel reported, "Care was taken to ensure proper destruction of the masses of prohibited literature by the Antwerp publisher *Volk en Staat*."¹⁷⁴ Yet from the extensive research for the present project, no other reports alluding to destruction have surfaced, which hardly means that it did not occur.

ERR Post-March 1943 M-Aktion and BTG Book Receipts

Muchow specifically noted in his annual report for 1943 (prepared in March 1944), that the ERR had no more numbered seizures or shipments after March 1943, thus suggesting the lack of further important book acquisitions. Indeed, we cannot ascertain how many books the ERR may have received from the M-Aktion or the BTG after March 1943. In that same report, Muchow

¹⁷¹ Earlier open access to French postwar claims and library restitution processing records made it possible for Martine Poulain to compile the extensive lists of French citizens claiming books at: <http://www2.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/mnr/SdL/MnR-SdL.htm>. See also Poulain's brief survey, "Bibliothèques et archives juives spoliées (1940–1944) et tentatives de restitutions à la Libération: une vue cavalière des sources présents en France," *Archives Juives*, 49, no. 1 (2016), pp. 30–35. Additional ERR French reports have been recently located in the Kyiv TsDAVO ERR Collection with scattered reports of M-Aktion books.

¹⁷² Sem Christian Sutter, "The Fate of Books Confiscated in the Möbel-Aktion," in *Restitution of Confiscated Works – Wish or Reality? Documentation, identification and restitution of cultural property of the victims of World War II. Proceedings of the international academic conference held in Liberec, 24–26 October 2007* (Prague, 2008), pp. 102–13 (also issued in Czech). In a March 2019 conversation, Sutter told Patricia Grimsted that he had not found more relevant documents, nor has he continued research on the subject.

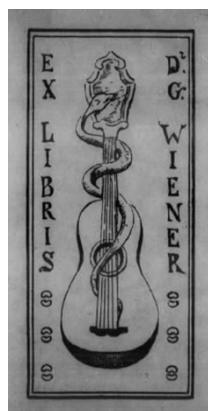
¹⁷³ See Johanna Pezechkian's helpful section on the Möbel-Aktion in the Buysse Commission *Final Report* (note 22), pp. 119–31, at https://www.combuysse.fgov.be/sites/default/files/paragraphs/la_mobelaktion_1940-1963.pdf; her more detailed version, "La Möbelaktion (1940–1963)," (2000), and her later publications (note 152). See the chart of occupation administrative structure in Belgium in the Buysse Commission *Final Report* (note 22), pp. 40–42.

¹⁷⁴ Reference is to **AV 148** on ERR Belgian List #4; Vogel, "Arbeitsbericht: Aus den Lagern des Ostministeriums in Antwerpen, Pelikaanstraat und Scheldekaai," Brussels, 12 February 1943, TsDAVO, 3676/1/217, fol. 20 (cc fol. 21). The Flemish nationalist newspaper *Volk en Staat* supported collaboration with the Nazi regime, but conducted at the same time propaganda for Flemish independence against the 'greater German' idea. See https://nevb.be/wiki/Volk_en_Staat.

specifically noted that the ERR staff was continually checking books collected in the RMbO Western Office depots in major cities. While at the same time, he also noted that the ERR had more books than they could handle in their library depots. Quite possibly, some of the 52,000 books from unnamed sources he cited at the end of 1943 (writing in March 1944), were acquired from the M-Aktion or the BTG, but many were probably those they had been keeping for analysis and utilization in Brussels until they were forced to leave.¹⁷⁵

Nor can we know the alternate fate of what may have been thousands more books that the M-Aktion undoubtedly continued to acquire from Jewish lodgings. The fact that no more ERR activity reports (such as *Tagesberichte*) or seizure reports (such as *Arbeitsberichte*) for post-March 1943 ERR operations in Belgium have surfaced may confirm Muchow's explanation, but questions still remain.

One example, nonetheless, suggesting subsequent ERR book receipts from M-Aktion raids comes from a postwar book list submitted by **Dr Georges Wiener** (not on ERR lists of seizure victims), who reported that he was notified by Belgian authorities already in October 1944 that books with his *ex libris* were found in a depot on rue de Livourne (presumably one used by the ERR); he further reported that he was unable to make personal contact with the named Belgian officials involved.¹⁷⁶ This report also serves as an example of the type of auxiliary information that can be found in postwar claims.



Unfortunately, no records have been found in Belgium about ERR or other German-looted books found locally after the war, other than the few noted in the Buysse Commission 2001 *Final Report*; nor have any ORE/DER records been found of postwar book restitution to individual owners. Wiener's 'War-Damage' claim notes that in connection with his long list of removed items during what was most probably an M-Aktion seizure, "very numerous books of art, travel, science, and novels, some with *ex-libris*... (+/- 700 volumes in deluxe editions)" were seized from his lodgings "between 3 September 1943 and 2 September 1944."¹⁷⁷ That date of seizure would mean that the ERR acquired his library (or a portion thereof) after March 1943, when they were no longer registering numbered 'work projects' (AV). Presumably, many of his books had not been shipped out, if indeed they were found in the ERR depot after 'Liberation,' as he claimed in his brief report of October 1944, submitted with his stolen book list to ORE/DER.¹⁷⁸ The outcome of this case remains in question, however, because no confirming record has been found of Wiener's claims, or the fate of his and other books found in Belgium after the war. Nor in his case, has any indication been found that he ever received back any of the promised books found bearing his *ex libris*.

¹⁷⁵ Muchow, "Arbeitsbericht der HAG Belgien und Nordfrankreich für das Jahr 1943," 25 March 1944, TsDAVO, 3676/1/171, fol. 129.

¹⁷⁶ Dr Georges Wiener and Eva Wiener, 6, av Marshall Coningham, Brussels (ORE dossier 371.630) to ORE, 10 May 1947, with explanation of individuals with whom he was in contact and cancellation of meeting in 1944, with list of books he remembered: <https://www.fold3.com/image/114/269998739>; the list was preceded by four book stamps and *ex libris*; another copy is in AGR2/ARA2, *I 21/369, digital pp. 442–44.

¹⁷⁷ "Constat de Dommage de Guerre," AGR2/ARA2, FIC 512, file Wiener, Georges Joseph (b. Antwerp, 7 May 1880), no. 2.035.770, appraisal appended to "Formulaire Général de Déclaration," p. 5.

¹⁷⁸ Wiener May 1947 book list submitted to ORE (*above* note 176).

ERR Final Book Shipment from Brussels (August 1944) and Conclusion

Although Muchow's Annual Report for 1943 (prepared in March 1944) affirms that there were no more book shipments to the Reich after March 1943, we have discovered that as the ERR was preparing for retreat from Brussels in August 1944, there was an additional 'final' transport of books. The last extant ERR Brussels report, signed by Vogel, the ERR officer then in charge of HAG BelgNfr, dated 24 August 1944, records two railroad freight cars with a total of 143 crates of books dispatched from Brussels, as the HAG Belgian office was packing for evacuation. Vogel notes 108 crates of books in one wagon addressed to ZBHS in Tanzenberg and an additional 35 crates of books in a second wagon destined for the ERR art repository in Nikolsburg, including "16 book crates (art history and art catalogues), 15 crates of Belgian libraries, 1 crate of HAG documents (especially work projects [*Arbeitsvorhaben*, AV]), and another 4 crates of books that belong to the local pro-Nazi movement 'Volksverwering'."¹⁷⁹ Lacking further activity reports, we cannot know if these books came from ERR accumulation in their Brussels depot from the 150 work projects reported by March 1943, or if more may have been received later from the M-Aktion or the BTG. No further reports on the content of the shipment has surfaced, although as will be evident in Part 2, we know the Brussels August shipment to Tanzenberg did arrive.

Quite coincidentally, as we examine newly available postwar sources and discover a few additional Belgian private victims of German book looting not named on our posted ERR lists, we find strong probability that the ERR did in fact receive books from more important private libraries during their last year in occupied Belgium. The library of **Dr Georges Wiener** mentioned above, some of whose looted books apparently the ERR did acquire after the spring of 1943 is one case in point. But that is not the only example suggesting additional ERR Belgian library acquisitions to supplement our posted lists of 150 ERR Belgian victims. The HAG BelgNfr may have turned their attention to propaganda efforts by the spring of 1943, but apparently, the M-Aktion and the BTG continued finding important books collections that were turned over to the ERR.

One of the most extensive postwar claims for books confiscated from a private Belgian citizen encountered thus far was submitted by **Professor Alfred Errera**, mathematician and professor at ULB, from a prominent Belgian Jewish family.¹⁸⁰ The ERR had already seized the valuable library of his cousin, **Jacques Errera** (AV 35) in the fall of 1940, as noted above, whose books were sent to Berlin in January 1941.¹⁸¹ **Alfred Errera's** library (with many dedications from prominent Belgians) was not seized until January 1944, which may explain why his name was not found among ERR documents. The significant extent and value of the **Alfred Errera** library would suggest BTG involvement, but as yet no seizure report or confirming BTG documentation has

¹⁷⁹ Vogel to ERR Stabsführung Berlin, 24 August 1944 (with RR wagon numbers), BArch, *NS 30/25, fol. 27; Lommatzsch to Stabsführung Berlin, 6 September 1944, *NS 30/25, fol. 25. The one crate of ERR archives are not counted here in the total of 143 crates of books shipped in August 1944. See the new **Summary Register** in the posted account of the ERR BelgNfr office files that ended up in Kyiv (TsDAVO). The Volksverwering (1937–1944) was a nationalistic (Belgian and Flemish) pro-Nazi and anti-Jewish organisation that collaborated with the German occupier during the Second World War. See *Nieuwe Encyclopedie van de Vlaamse Beweging* (Tielt, 1998), pp. 3557–59.

¹⁸⁰ **Alfred Errera** (1886–1960), during the interwar period, was involved in the boycott of German products, and was sharply opposed to German anti-Semitism. An officer in the Belgian Army in 1939, he later joined the Belgian resistance, and acted as an intelligence officer. Although 'wanted' by the Gestapo, Errera remained active clandestinely until Liberation. See Jean-Philippe Schreiber, "Alfred Errera," in *Dictionnaire biographique des juifs de Belgique*, p. 99. See also Bourla-Errera, "Alfred, le mathématicien," in *Une histoire juive, les Errera*, pp. 169–200.

¹⁸¹ See the ERR library seizure from his cousin **Jacques Errera** (AV 35) (above notes 97–99).

surfaced. Even if we still cannot know when or under what auspices the ERR acquired that library, there is no question that the ERR dispatched a portion of his books to Tanzenberg with the final August ERR shipment.

Some of Professor Alfred Errera's books were apparently found after the war in Brussels, and turned over to ORE/DER in October 1945 (before the receipt of books retrieved from abroad). ORE staff then contacted Errera, requesting a list of lost books and description of book markings, as we learn from his 'Dommages de Guerre' claim file. The lengthy 90-page book list Errera provided (dated 15 September 1947), naming some 2,200 titles, was submitted to U.S. restitution authorities in Germany, and is now online with U.S. records.¹⁸²

The fact that the British identified books from Alfred Errera's library in collections sent directly from Belgium to Tanzenberg (Austrian Carinthia) in August 1944, could only suggest that the ERR acquired at least some of the confiscated Errera books between their January 1944 seizure and packing for the 22 August shipment. Hence, most likely, some of those books were included in that final ERR shipment (described above) to Tanzenberg. As a result, and as will be further explained in Part 2, Alfred Errera was one of the very few Jewish victims to whom ORE returned any books – in his case, a total of 215 books out of the several thousand volumes in the 16 crates seized by German library predators.

These two examples of the libraries of Georges Wiener and Alfred Errera clearly demonstrate that the ERR was still receiving books during their final year in Belgium after the spring of 1943, presumably from the M-Aktion and/or the BTG, although no indication of the specific collections, quantity, or the dates of receipt have surfaced. Similarly, no documentation is available, revealing more details about M-Aktion and/or the BTG library acquisitions in that period, let alone others seized by the SD, Gestapo, and other German agencies during occupation.

Thus many crucial questions remain about the extent of wartime library plunder in Belgium, including the fate of books from those sources not transferred to the ERR; the quantity of books seized and shipped out by other German agencies, such as the Bibliothekschutz, the Gestapo, and the SD, among others; the extent to which the ERR succeeded in sending off its accumulated library loot to the Reich; and finally, the extent, nature, and fate of remaining looted books found in Belgium after liberation that the ERR had seized and left behind. If more appropriate sources surface, with names of more victims, and more references in postwar claims files, these matters deserve further clarification in future research focused on library seizures during German occupation.

¹⁸² The extensive book list with explanation from Alfred Errera (with ORE dossier no. P.371,570/19) is online with Belgian library claims to U.S. restitution authorities from the U.S. National Archives starting at <https://www.fold3.com/image/114/269995795>; another copy in AGR2/ARA2, *I 21/369, digital pp. 512–75. In his postwar book list filed with ORE/DER, Alfred Errera mentions that many of the books bore dedications to himself and his father, Léo Errera, the famous Belgian botanist, active in the Jewish community. See the reference to the return of 215 of his books from Tanzenberg in Part 2.

Figure 11. Title page of an early tract by Alfred Rosenberg [*The Crime of Freemasonry, Judaism, Jesuitism, German Christianity*] (Munich, 1922).



Figure 12. Cover of anonymous tract [by Jesuit Father Pierre Delattre] *Hitler and Rosenberg, or The True Visage of National-Socialism* (Paris: La Bonne Presse, 1935). Copy held by Harvard College Library with bar code and call number.

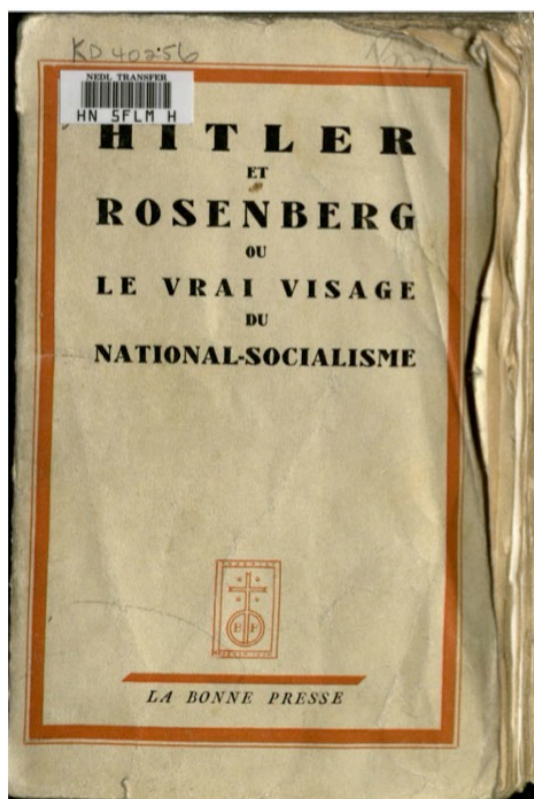
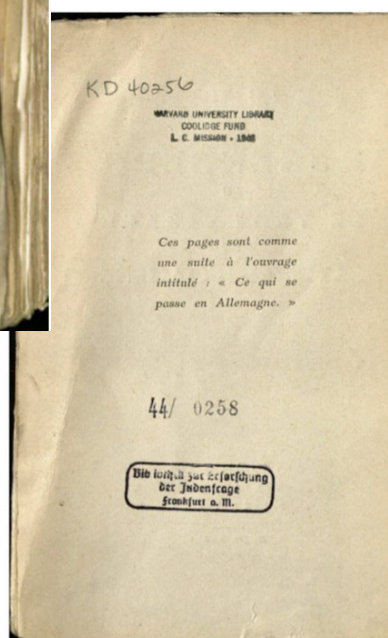


Figure 13. Verso of title page: **Top:** stamp of Harvard University Library, receipt from Library of Congress Mission, 1946. **Bottom:** 1944 catalogue number and stamp from Institute for Study of the Jewish Question (IEJ), Frankfurt.



LIBRARY SEIZURES IN BELGIUM BY THE EINSATZSTAB REICHSLEITER ROSENBERG (ERR)

APPENDIX:

VICTIMIZED OWNERS, QUANTITIES OF LOOT, AND BOOK SHIPMENTS TO THE REICH, 1940–1944

1. Victimized Owners

The ERR victims named on the six lists covering the 150 numbered library confiscation operations – or ‘work projects’ (*Arbeitsvorhaben*, AV), as the ERR called them – in occupied Belgium, were all private, non-governmental victims, except for the Soviet and Czech Embassies in Brussels. Several of the numbered seizure ‘operations’ listed comprised materials from more than one individual or institution, or an individual and institution combined. Additional related names identified have been added to the “**Charts of Belgian Victims**” and are included in our totals, as explained below.

Initial explanation is needed regarding 17 out of the 150 entries on the first five ERR lists (combined in the charts) that are not fully identified as to sources of seizure.

- Five entries on the ERR complete list of the 150 seizure operations represent second visits to the same victim (**AV 109, AV 112, AV 127, AV 147, and AV 149**) – and hence are counted only once in our statistics below.¹⁸³

The source of seizure or name(s) of victims are not identified for ten entries on the ERR lists:

- Six of those (**AV 31, 53, 83, 84, 108, and 117**) are labelled “Arbeitsgruppe Belgien, Brüssel” (32, rue du Châtelain), the main Brussels office of the AG/HAG BelgNfr, undoubtedly representing materials from smaller hitherto undetermined sources.
 - Crates coded “**Reista**” were included in **AV 31, 53, and 84**. Elsewhere, these crates were identified as materials collected by ERR prehistory specialist **Professor Stampfuss** in various Belgian and Northern French museums and other sites, which were forwarded to Berlin for the DBFU Amt Vorgeschichte (Prehistory Office), later **ERR Sonderstab Vorgeschichte**, which Stampfuss headed.¹⁸⁴ The lists do not provide any sources for the materials included in the ‘Reista’ crates, and hence, the presumably mostly institutional victims could not be named.

¹⁸³ Alfred Stern (**AV 15 and AV 149**); École des Hautes Études, Ghent (**AV 24 and AV 109**); Henri Grégoire (**AV 48 and AV 112**); Hugo Andriessse (**AV 100 and AV 127**); and Jacob Reder (**AV 145 and AV 147**).

¹⁸⁴ Regarding Stampfuss, see Part I, notes 39 and 40. Analysis of his extensive seizures on the basis of available ERR daily reports has not been attempted here (but could be an interesting graduate student research project). Many of his Belgian investigations are explained in ERR daily reports, some of which Stampfuss penned himself, but few details about the materials he removed from various museums and other institutions are given; nor are the sources and contents specifically named for any of the “Reista” crates. For example, those shipped with one transport are noted by Ebeling to Stampfuss, 2 July 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/160, fol. 186; noting 6 crates (Reista I and II, Reista P II–P V).

The other three entries (AV 83, 108, and AV 117) are not specifically identified as to source, and so could not be included in categorized totals.

- AV 96 is identified as an ‘Officers Casino’ with the address, 32a, avenue Louise. No previous owner or source is given for the ‘wooden sculpture, St. Michael,’ the only item described found there on 18 July 1941 (AB).
- AV 54 is identified (Lists #4 and #5) merely with two crates seized from “Jewish lodgings” in an apartment building (Belgiëlei 73, Antwerp), on 11 February 1941, but no seizure from a specific victim at that address is mentioned in any remaining daily reports from early February. Quite possibly there was some confusion in the building number. In fact AV 54 probably reflects the two crates the ERR removed to Brussels from Belgiëlei 93 on the 10th of February, according to the list in the *Tagesbericht* for the 10th. Köster also mentions having examined a “Bücherei Belgiëlei 93” in his “*Tagesbericht*,” 3 February 1941, but does not indicate any books were removed. Because no named owner(s) is given, we do not include this entry as either a personal or institutional victim.¹⁸⁵
- AV 102 and AV 116 are both labelled “Quartieramt Brüssel” (20, rue du Pont Neuf, Machelen), with explanation that they represented books abandoned by the previous ‘fugitive Jewish’ residents. No name or number of individuals were mentioned in the first case. In the latter case, the work report (*Arbeitsbericht*, AB) explains the books were abandoned by the “former fugitive Jewish residents Aronstein.”¹⁸⁶ Accordingly, for AV 116, we count one person (or family) and add the family name of Aronstein in the charts (although the full name has yet to be identified).¹⁸⁷
- AV 148 is labelled “Lager Ostministerium, Antwerp,” which, thanks to Vogel’s *Arbeitsbericht* (AB, work report), 12 February 1943, is identified as a RMbO Diensstelle Westen depot, where he had selected 14 crates of books (or 25 boxes) for the ERR from Möbel-Aktion seizures, with no names of victims available.¹⁸⁸
- For the final AV 150, labelled “Nine Jewish libraries,” seized 27 February 1943 (with unnamed victims); Vogel’s *Arbeitsbericht* (AB) identifies the names, addresses, and

¹⁸⁵ No further identification of the AV 54 seizure is possible from documentation examined. Muchow, Vogel, and Köster all signed a “*Tagesberichte für Montag, d. 10 Febr. 1941*,” listing the crates trucked from Antwerp to Brussels, with two crates from 93 Belgiëlei listed (but no further description) – TsDAVO, 3676/1/161, fol. 144; Muchow and Köster signed two “*Tagesberichte für Dienstag, d. 11 Februar 1941*,” when they were in Antwerp (fols. 137 and 138), but neither mention that address, which in 2020 is still an apartment building. The removal of 2 crates from Belgiëlei 93, however, is listed in Vogel’s report for 10 February, with no other details; Köster mentions a ‘Bücherei Belgiëlei 93’ he had examined in his “*Tagesbericht*,” 3 February 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/161, fol. 168.

¹⁸⁶ *Arbeitsbericht*, TsDAVO, 3676/1/169, fols. 2–3.

¹⁸⁷ The family name of ‘Aronstein’ is also listed for AV 74, specifying 2 crates of books with ‘political writings,’ seized from ‘Vve [widow] H. Aronstein’, at Hippodroomlaan 56, Sterrebeek; presumably not the same family. She filed a postwar ‘Formulaire’, registering two portraits (but no books) missing from a different address (dossier 1010), AGR2, I21/411, fol. 223

¹⁸⁸ Vogel, “*Arbeitsbericht*,” 12 Feb. 1943, TsDAVO, 3676/1/217, folio 20 (cc fol. 21). See discussion of ERR books receipts from the Möbel-Aktion in the Introduction, **Part 1**, Section 5, notes 160–63.

nationalities of the owners, noting the books were acquired from the Depot of the Brüsseler Treuhandgesellschaft (BTG) in the Cinquantenaire in Brussels; hence, all of those names are listed in the charts and counted as individual victims.¹⁸⁹

While we are unable to identify the source of all 150 numbered seizures, we are left with a total of **136 confiscation operations (AV)** for which victims are named or otherwise identified, involving **113 individuals** (or families) and **32 organizations/institutions**.

2. Quantity of Looted Books

The **quantification** of library materials the ERR confiscated or received from M-Aktion and BTG remains a purely speculative exercise, despite availability of the six original ERR seizure/shipping lists and related documents. In preparation for a 2001 report by the Belgian Study Commission on Jewish Property (Buyse Commission), one most knowledgeable government specialist, Jacques Lust (in his separate unpublished Internal Paper on ERR library looting), put forward an estimated figure of ca. 150,000 volumes seized.¹⁹⁰ That total was based on an estimated 150 volumes per crate for a total of 1,223 crates shipped to Germany (November 1940 to January 1943), as indicated in ERR documents. Lust estimated the Jewish component to be between 60,000 and 75,000.¹⁹¹

While the Commission was focused on ‘Jewish’ losses, we are now trying to estimate figures for the total of books the ERR seized from all segments of the population; but it would appear from the Buyse Commission totals, they were including the total seizures, and not subtracting Masonic or other non-Jewish crates. As apparent in Part 1, the materials seized also included a large quantity of Masonic materials, as well as two major French university-level libraries, large socialist/labor collections, as well as libraries and personal papers from Belgian political leaders, private libraries and papers of senior university professors, along with the impressive library, archives, and manuscript collections of the Pretender to the French throne, Jean d’Orléans, duc de Guise, living in exile in Belgium. Hence, only a relatively small percentage of looted books from Belgium was seized from Jewish owners. Besides, many of the crates included archival materials as well as books; some of the Masonic crates included significant lodge paraphernalia, instruments, and museum exhibits, and furnishings; others included paintings, prints, and manuscripts.

¹⁸⁹ Vogel, “Sammel – Arbeitsbericht: Jüdische Bibliotheken gesammelt im Lager der BTG, Brüssel, Cinquantenaire,” 4 March 1943, TsDAVO, 3676/1/217, fol. 16 (cc fol. 17); *see also* Part 1, note 165.

¹⁹⁰ Jacques Lust, “De Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg en de bibliotheekroof in België (1940–1943),” (Brussels: Buyse Commission, Studiecommissie joodse goederen, Internal Paper, 2000), p. 9 (**Part 1**, note 23); unfortunately, that report was never published.

¹⁹¹ In his Internal Paper (p. 8), Lust used an ERR total of 807 crates shipped out, probably as indicated on **ERR Belgian List #5** (fol. 84); when that **List #5** was compiled, however, the March 1943 shipment had not been recorded (although its contents appear to have been added to the total). **List #5** does not include materials from two major 1942 seizures, only the first of which was shipped out (**National Institute of Social History [AV 134]** – 220 crates – and the **Jesuit Seminary in Enghien [AV 133]**, 196 crates), neither of which were Jewish. To the earlier **List #3** total of 807 crates, Lust added those two and also included 29 Hartveld crates, resulting in his 1,223 total. **List #4** included ca. 350 crates for **AV 133** and **AV 134**. Lust’s estimated total was 150,000 books looted and shipped out by the ERR (as per his 2000 Internal Paper, pp. 8–10). He estimated the Jewish component of books to have been only 60,000 to 75,000 volumes.

Number of Books per Crate Estimates

When the Buysse Commission based its total on an estimate of 150 books per crate, that figure would appear to be much too low, based on ERR figures recorded for some confiscations.¹⁹² The following examples of confiscated libraries (for which the ERR gave both the number of crates and quantity of books) suggest the range of variants in numbers of books per crate:

Rothschild library – 200 vols. in 2 crates (100 vols per crate);
 de Laveleye library – 1,900 vols. in 11 crates (172 per crate);
 Alice Pels – 4,500 vols. in 21 crates (214 per crate)
 Grégoire library – 5,464 vols. in 23 crates (237 per crate);
 Obla Book Store – 2,654 vols. in 10 crates (265 per crate);
 Speyer library – 5,500 vols. in 18 crates (305 per crate).

Most of these examples, along with others, suggest an average 1 above the Buysse Commission estimate of 150 volumes per crate. Hence, we are using an average of 200 volumes per crate for our current tallies. While the Buysse Commission was focusing on Jewish losses, although many of their figures included all, our aim is indeed to include all ERR Belgian library loot.

To be sure, any estimate would be subject to question: first, because the crates used most probably varied in size; second, because the ERR did not provide a breakdown of the heterogeneous content of the confiscated material, consisting of often intermixed publications, personal papers, archival records, and museum materials (as another example, one shipment to Berlin included steel shelving.) Third, we cannot be sure in many cases the ‘seizure’ figures for numbers of crates corresponded to the number of crates shipped, because often the ERR resorted seized materials and repacked before shipment. For example, in one case of **AV 131**, it was noted that the contents of 34 crates were repacked in 11 crates (with no further explanation).

Nonetheless, given the additional data and our recalculations in the present project, we consider the Buysse estimated total of 150,000 to be too low, both for the number of volumes seized and those shipped. Instead, we would suggest a more realistic average estimate of 200 volumes per crate, which if we use the total of 1,230 crates shipped with an average of 200 volumes per crate would result in our rough estimated total of close to 250,000 volumes shipped, hence 100,000 more than the Buysse figure – here with the caveat to be sure that these figures represent only the ERR-looted books.

¹⁹² See the figures for number of crates and number of volumes in the posted **Charts of Victims**. For example, for one individual seizure: Vogel, “Arbeitsbericht. Alice Pels,” 27 February 1942, TsDAVO 3676/1/170, fol. 70.

3. ERR Library Shipments to the Reich

In their *Final Report* (2001), the Buysse Commission reduced Lust's earlier estimate (ca. 150,000) to 120,000 volumes, counting only 800 crates shipped to Berlin between 1940 and 1943, containing an average of 150 volumes per crate.¹⁹³ That Commission crate total was obviously not limited to books seized only from Jewish owners. Nor was any breakdown possible for items other than books included in many crates. The 800 figure is close to the total figure of **810** given at the end of **ERR Belgian List #5** for crates shipped, which also appears to include the 121 crates of books shipped on 22 March 1943, as well as some for which shipping data had not earlier been listed. That figure conflicts, however, with the introductory note to **ERR List #3** (8 January 1943), which gives the figure of 853 crates already shipped with **350 more crates awaiting transport**.¹⁹⁴ Those List # 4 figures would suggest a total of 1,203 crates were shipped out to the Reich, but we have been unable to document an additional 350 crates shipped after January 1943.

1940. The first freight shipments sent to Berlin on 26 and 27 November 1940 contained most of the looted materials from the initial 'Judeo-Masonic' seizures, indicated as shipped on those two dates (**189 crates**). No waybills have been found for these shipments, but the total of 189 crates given can be verified from the first extant ERR seizure/shipping list (dated January 1941) now held in the NIOD in Amsterdam, which notes more precise numbers of crates in the November shipment than the **ERR Belgian Lists #4 and #5** posted.¹⁹⁵ Since discovery of that list in the NIOD, we are using the figures there for our November 1940 total of **189 crates**. Indicative of the variance found in alternate calculation, a slightly lower figure of 185 crates sent in November 1940 would result from subtracting the subsequent cumulative yearly totals of crates shipped, as indicated on **ERR List #4**.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ See the Commission 2001 *Final Report* (**Part 1**, note 22) online in French and Dutch at <https://www.combuysse.fgov.be>; compare the chart prepared by [Lust] in the *Final Report*, Section 2.8.2.4., p. 141 giving the total figure of 800 crates sent to Berlin (similar to the total on **List #5**).

It should also be noted that many figures for individual shipments in the posted **ERR lists #1–#5** do not agree with the freight waybills found in the same file. See especially **ERR Belgian Lists #4 and #5** online (together with the **Supplement to Lists #4 and #5** with data on the 22 March 1943 shipment to Berlin). While the shipment dates given in the Commission report all coincide with those recorded on **ERR lists #4 and #5**, we have now recalculated the number of crates shipped through August 1944. While there are some discrepancies and inconsistencies in the ERR listings, in some cases, clarification comes from additional ERR documents, and especially the Tagesberichte on the days the shipments went out.

¹⁹⁴ **ERR Belgian List #3**, fol. 46

¹⁹⁵ With no waybills preserved for the November shipments, the figure of 189 comes from adding the number of crates indicated on an initial January 1941 list in the NIOD (Amsterdam), NIOD, Archief ERR *093a/58, fols. 5–7: https://www.archieven.nl/nl/search-modonly?mivast=298&miadt=298&mizig=210&miview=inv2&milang=nl&micols=1&micode=093a&mizk_alle=58. As also explained in the introduction to **ERR List #4** (note 12): that list (including its title) was later incorporated as the initial three pages of **ERR Belgian List #4**. That earlier NIOD list also notes that only 25 crates from the Belgian Supreme Council were included in the November shipments and only 35 or the 37 crates from Jean, duc de Guise (lacking in ERR Lists #4 and #5). Regarding the contents of those November 1940 shipments, *see also above*, note 88.

The ERR daily reports do not provide the total number of crates included: Ebeling, "Tagesbericht" (26 November 1940), TsDAVO, 3676/1/161, fol. 282; "Tagesbericht" (27 November 1940), TsDAVO, 3676/1/161, fols. 282–83, mention 87 crates from one location for shipment, but not the total crates sent. Two transports on 26 and 27 November are noted by Ebeling to Bauer (ERR Berlin), 6 December 1940, but no details on number of crates or contents, TsDAVO, 3676/1/212, fol. 18.

¹⁹⁶ Because we can confirm figures for the four 1941 shipments (453 crates), we subtract that total on **List #4** from the total of 638 crates indicated as sent in 1940–1941 (see: **ERR List #4** [March 1943], fol. 63); that would leave 185 crates in the 1940 shipments (26/27 November).

1941. More confirming documentation has been found for the subsequent shipments of **107 crates** dispatched to Berlin on **17–20 January 1941**,¹⁹⁷ and **110 crates** on **28 February 1941**,¹⁹⁸ those contained the loot from seizures through AV 54. Most of the crates from AV 55–86 were shipped to Berlin **30 June/2 July 1941**, as part of a shipment of **102 crates**.¹⁹⁹ The loot from most of the entries, AV 87 through AV 117 (AV 117 = 4 crates seized from unnamed owners), totaling **131 crates** were shipped on **18 November 1941**.²⁰⁰

1942. Many of the crates added in pencil on **ERR List #4**, and typed on **ERR List #5**, were included among the 77 crates dispatched on **17 May 1942**, which comprised books from AV 118–124 and AV 130–131).²⁰¹

March 1942 also saw an ERR shipment of art to Paris for the Sonderstab Bildende Kunst, but we are not including that shipment in our calculation of books dispatched. In terms of art shipments, only two of the six Belgian named art collections the ERR sent to Paris for processing with the French Jewish collections in the Jeu de Paume are recorded on **ERR Lists #4** and **#5**, namely the major collections of **Hugo [and Elisabeth] Andriesse** (AV 100 and AV 127) and **Eric-Émil Lyndhurst** (AV 128). Details of these and other art shipments will be discussed and more fully documented in our forthcoming separate analysis of ERR art looting in Belgium.²⁰² Those two Belgian collections were processed with French collections in the Jeu de Paume, together with four other ERR named Belgium collections, but seizure and shipment of the others, and additional M-Aktion and BTG collections sent from Belgium to the Jeu de Paume, are not indicated on **ERR Lists #4** and **#5** (presumably they were sent later in 1943). The fate of many of the additional works of art the ERR seized in other named 150 AV operations, including the 123 paintings (noted only by number) on **ERR List #1**, and others noted on our “**Charts of ERR Belgian Victims**” have yet to be determined.

¹⁹⁷ Muchow, Vogel and Ebeling, “Tagesbericht,” 17 February 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/161, fols. 214, 215; Muchow and Vögel, “Tagesbericht für Freitag, den 17.1.41,” 3676/1/239, fols. 825, 827; Ebeling to Berlin ERR HQ, 27 January 1941, dates dispatch of the 107 crates as 20 January 1941, 3676/1/239, fol. 241, as does a letter of 27 January 1941, TsDAVO, 3674/1/2, fol. 111, which also notes a [Stampfuss] crate marked ‘REISTA’ for Amt Vorgeschichte.

¹⁹⁸ Vogel, “Tagesbericht,” 28 February 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/161, fol. 80; also 3676/1/159, fol. 819; Ebeling to Berlin HQ, 28 February 1941, TsDAVO, 3676/1/239, fol. 92 (110 crates destined for Aussenpolitische Amt). A separate note of 28 February 1941 mentions 4 crates for Utikal in that shipment, TsDAVO, 3674/1/2, fol. 53.

¹⁹⁹ The waybill for the shipment of 105 crates (28 June 1941; stamped as dispatched on the 30th) addressed to the firm Eduard Franzkowiak is in TsDAVO, 3676/1/164, fol. 1, with note by Vogel (6 July 1941), clarifying crate codes.

²⁰⁰ The shipment waybill (13 Nov. 1941; dispatched on the 18th), TsDAVO, 3676/1/164, fol. 3.

²⁰¹ The shipment waybill (11 May 1942; dispatched on the 17th), TsDAVO, 3676/1/164, fols. 18–21. The 77 crates as noted on the waybill (folio 20) had the codes R 86–113, VAR 1–2, Y, JB 1–8, EB 1–11, Tsch 1–2, DH 1–8, and 17 crates without code. Those figures, however, do not entirely correspond to those in the letter from Muchow to ERR HQ (Berlin, Bismarckstr. 1), 17 May 1942, announcing shipment of one wagon with NISH shelving (not counted in our total) plus 77 crates of books, sent to Franzkowiak (transfer firm) for delivery to ERR at Margaretenstrasse 18, TsDAVO, 3676/1/172, fol. 264–264v (cc 3676/1/212, fol. 610–610v), also names crate numbers 92–112, and additional materials. See the numbers for the 17 May 1942 shipment added on the “**Charts of ERR Belgian Victims**.”

²⁰² Our forthcoming article on the ERR role in art looting in Belgium (on this website) will discuss more details about ERR art shipments from Belgium.

The chart below lists all the documented ERR shipments to the Reich, with our calculation of the quantity of crates in each shipment, to the extent the figures could be verified. **ERR Belgian Lists #4 and #5** posted indicate most of the ERR rail shipments to Berlin through May 1942.²⁰³ We have documented two additional shipments to the Reich since the Buysse Commission *Final Report* (2001), as well as a third shipment of books and archives of the **National Institute of Social History (AV 134)** to Amsterdam (later sent to the Reich).

1942. We now include the 247 crates books and archives of the **National Institute of Social History (NISH, AV 134)**, initially shipped by rail to Amsterdam in 4 June 1942.²⁰⁴ Later in 1944, those materials were shipped to the Reich together with materials from the Amsterdam International Institute of Social History (IISH).

1943. Not included on **ERR Lists #4 or #5** are the 121 crates that were dispatched by rail to Berlin on 22 March 1943, now documented in the posted **Supplement to ERR Belgian Lists #4 and #5**, now posted.²⁰⁵ Presumably that was the same transport that Muchow mentioned in his 1943 Annual Report as the “last transport of 124 crates in freight wagons on 30 March 1943.” His 30 March date is otherwise undocumented, but the 22 March date appears on both an extant waybill and Muchow’s separate letter to Berlin, both included in that posted **Supplement List**.²⁰⁶

We do not include the 196 crates of the books and archives seized by the ERR from the **Jesuit Seminary in Enghien (AV 133)**, because we now know that at least 115 crates of Jesuit books and archives never left Belgium, which the Jesuits recovered in 1946 from the abandoned ERR book depot at 125, rue de Livourne. After recovery, the Jesuits reported “many of the books” missing (with no estimated quantity), but no documentation is available as to how many books from Enghien the ERR shipped out, or how many were shipped by the SD or Gestapo.²⁰⁷

1944. Finally, we can also now document a total of 143 crates of books shipped to the Reich on 24 August 1944 in two freight cars, as reported by Vogel (then the acting officer in charge of HAG BelgNfr), when the HAG BelgNfr was preparing for retreat from Brussels. As explained in the concluding section of **Part 1**, the first wagon in that final book shipment contained 108 crates of books destined for ZBHS in Tanzenberg (near Klagenfurt, Austria, *then part of the Reich*). The second wagon contained 35 crates of books, including “16 book crates (art history and catalogues), 15 crates of Belgian libraries,” and an additional “4 crates of Nazi interest,” [from a local Nazi sympathetic source], all destined for the ERR art repository in Nikolsburg” (*Czech, Mikulov; then*

²⁰³ See also the Introduction to **ERR Belgian List #4** and the figures given on that list.

²⁰⁴ A [1946] copy of the waybill (n.d.) from the archive of the Ziegler transport firm in ARA2/AGR2, Inventory *FIC 512*, file NISG, no. 2.004.041, dossier ‘NISG,’ no. 2.004.041, annex 12 to the NISH ‘Domage de Guerre claim. The total number of 247 crates sent to Amsterdam on 4 June 1942 is confirmed in “Aktennotitz. Verpacken der soz. wissenschaftl. Bibliothek” (n.d.), TsDAVO, 3676/1/170, fol. 9, with an interim total of 220 crates (to which were added the important newspaper collections of *Le temps* and *Journal de Bruxelles* and other periodicals). Earlier, a shipment of NISH shelves was sent to Berlin – Muchow to ERR HQ (Berlin, Bismarckstr. 1), 17 May 1942, TsDAVO, 3676/1/172, fol. 264–264v.

²⁰⁵ Muchow, “Arbeitsbericht der HAG Belgien und Nordfrankreich für das Jahr 1943,” 25 March 1944, TsDAVO, 3676/1/171, fol. 129. See the freight waybill in the posted **Supplement to ERR Belgian Lists #4 and #5** (see also **Part 1**, note 131).

²⁰⁶ Muchow, “Arbeitsbericht der HAG BelgNf für das Jahr 1943,” TsDAVO, 3676/1/171, fol. 129; besides, he does not mention another late March shipment the week before.

²⁰⁷ See **Part 1**, notes 147–151.

annexed to Austria). Arrival at those destinations is documented in both cases, although no crate lists of contents have surfaced.²⁰⁸

Thus, to the Buysse Commission totals we add the 121 crates dispatched 22 March 1943, the 247 NISH crates June 1942, and the 143 crates of books sent on 24 August 1944. That subtotal would be 511 crates, bringing the approximate current **total to 1,230 crates**. Alternatively, if we do not include the 121 from March 1943 (already included in the **List #5** final total of 810 crates), there would be an additional 390 crates, bringing that total to **1,200 crates**.

Even with the variant possibilities, we now posit an approximate total of 1,230 crates of library materials shipped from Belgium by the ERR, including the newly verified ERR shipments (as summarized in the chart below).²⁰⁹ The figures recorded here for ERR shipments of library materials (books and archives) are drawn from original ERR documents, with freight waybills preserved for many shipments. Although often verified from multiple sources, not all of those sources coincide, nor do all the figures on **ERR Belgian Lists #3, #4, and #5**. Noticeably, besides, details cannot be determined regarding many specific collections included in some shipments. **Accordingly, a conclusive total is impossible given the contradictory figures available.**

Besides, the ERR may well have dispatched additional books by courier or by post, or individual staff officers may have taken some with them when travelling to Berlin, Frankfurt, Paris, or other cities. To be sure, the ERR probably also acquired more books from M-Aktion or BTG seizures between March 1943 and August 1944. We know for certain that many additional crates of books were shipped out by the SD or Gestapo, while other German agencies under the German Military Commandant, and possibly individual German soldiers may well have been involved with more, but shipping documentation or reported figures have not survived or have yet to surface. Accordingly, these ERR figures remain incomplete in terms of the total picture of library plunder in Belgium during wartime German occupation.

²⁰⁸ See details **Part 1** (note 179) about contents and the fate of the August 1944 shipment reported by Vogel to ERR Stabsführung Berlin, 24 Aug. 1944, BArch, *NS 30/25, fols. 25, 27; we are not counting the crate of AG/HAG BelgNfr office records and the 16 crates of art in that August shipment to Nikolsburg.

²⁰⁹ No documentation has yet surfaced to suggest the ERR shipped any of the missing books from the Jesuit Seminary in Enghien (possibly as many as 81 crates), and hence those are not included in our total.

FROM BELGIUM TO THE REICH, 1940–1944 WITH ERR-SEIZED LIBRARY MATERIALS

1940	189 crates (26 and 27 November)	total = 189 crates
1941	107 crates (17–20 January) 110 crates (28 February) 105 crates (30 June/2 July) 131 crates (18 November)	total = 453 crates
1942	77 crates (17/18 May) to Berlin 247 crates of NISH books and archives to Amsterdam (4 June)	total = 324 crates
1943	121 crates (22 March)	total = 121 crates
1944	143 crates (24 August): 108 crates to Tanzenberg; 35 crates to Nikolsburg	total = 143 crates
		<u>Total = 1,230 crates</u>

ERR Library Loot Abandoned in Belgium – No Available Estimates Possible

No figures have surfaced for that portion of the ERR library booty that was never dispatched to the Reich. As reported by Muchow at the end of 1943, another 52,000 books (some undoubtedly selected from M-Aktion receipts) were stored in the two ERR book depots at 125 and 143, rue de Livourne, while the Ostministerium continuously forwarded more confiscated books to the ERR (through ERR staff member Engelbach). Also still remaining in the ERR depots, he named the confiscated libraries of **Hymans** (AV 110 – 3,924 vols.), **de Sturler** (AV 113 – 1,082 vols.) and **Enghien** (AV 133 – ca. 50–60,000 vols.), which would have brought the total to well over 100,000 books remaining in Brussels by the final ERR book transport of **143 crates** to the Reich (approximately 28,600 volumes) on 22 August 1944.²¹⁰ Detailed contents of that shipment have not surfaced. Possibly some of the Hymans and de Sturler libraries were in the freight wagon shipped to Nikolsburg, but those names do not appear among books the British identified in Tanzenberg.




Thus a considerable amount of looted books would have remained in September 1944, but no Belgian government reports have surfaced about books found after Liberation, except for a few references in the Buysse *Final Report*. As noted in the conclusion of Part 1 above with the examples of books from the confiscated libraries of George Wiener and Alfred Errera that surfaced in Brussels after the war, the ERR was still receiving books after the spring of 1943. With the 115 crates of books and archives from Enghien reported by the Jesuits as received in Brussels in 1946, we know those had not been shipped out. Regrettably, however, no other details have surfaced about additional ERR Belgian acquisitions that would supplement our posted lists of 150 ERR Belgian library-seizure victims.



²¹⁰ Muchow, “Arbeitsbericht der HAG Belgien und Nordfrankreich für das Jahr 1943,” 25 March 1944, TsDAVO, 3676/1/171, fol. 129.

SAMPLE BOOK STAMPS FROM BELGIUM: ERR-SEIZED INSTITUTIONAL LIBRARIES

(from ERR Project Website: *Belgian Looted Libraries*)

(ERR AV numbers correspond to numbered ERR seizure operations,
as listed on the chart of wartime ERR victims of library seizure)

Book Stamp	Institutional Information (Masonic organizations and lodges)
1 	<p>Name: Grand Orient de Belgique (ERR AV 1) (Masonic Organization)</p> <p>Address: Brussels, 6–8 rue du Persil</p> <p>Source: OAD “Library Markings... Vol. II: Western,” Belgium, p. 1 Pomrenze Papers, Ser. II, Box 23, American Jewish Historical Society, at https://archives.cjh.org/repositories/3/archival_objects/995780.</p>
2 	<p>Name: Suprême Conseil de Belgique (ERR AV 2) (Masonic Organization, Scottish Rite)</p> <p>Address: Brussels, 79 rue de Laeken</p> <p>Source: Postwar Claim SPPC card, Belgian National Archives, AGR2/ARA2/ I-21, Dossier 581, A935verso (available online with registration).</p>
3 	<p>Name: Loge Marnix van Sint-Aldegonde (ERR AV 5)</p> <p>Address: Antwerp, Van Maerlantstraat 3a</p> <p>Source: Offenbach Administrative Records, NACP, RG 260 (OMGUS) at https://www.fold3.com/image/114/232161897 (dig. p. 69), from <i>NARA Microfilm Publication M1942</i>, roll 6.</p>

Book Stamp	Institutional Information
<p>4</p> 	<p>Name: Agudath Zion, Antwerp <i>[library probably seized with</i> Fédération des Zionistes Belges (ERR AV 8)]</p> <p>Address: Antwerp, Grétrystraat 12</p> <p>Source: “OAD Library Markings... Vol. II: Western,” Belgium, p. 1, Pomrenze Papers, Ser. II, Box 23, American Jewish Historical Society, at https://archives.cjh.org/repositories/3/archival_objects/995780.</p>
<p>5</p> 	<p>Name: <i>original Hebrew</i> [Hebrew Language Library], Antwerp</p> <p>Address: <i>[no indication of where seized: possibly seized with</i> Fédération des Zionistes Belges (ERR AV 8)]</p> <p>Source: “OAD Library Markings, Vol. II-Western,” at https://www.fold3.com/image/114/292845860 (dig. p. 16), Records of MFA&A, OMGUS Property Division, from NACP, RG 260, <i>NARA Microfilm Publication M1949</i>, roll 30.</p>
<p>6</p> 	<p>Name: Commission syndicale du Parti Ouvrier de Belgique (ERR AV 140-2)</p> <p>Address: Brussels, 8 rue Joseph Stevens</p> <p>Source: “OAD Library Markings, Vol. II-Western,” at https://www.fold3.com/image/114/292845860 (dig. p. 16), Records of MFA&A, OMGUS Property Division, from NACP, RG 260, <i>NARA Microfilm Publication M1949</i>, roll 30.</p>
<p>7</p> 	<p>Name: École des Hautes Études, Ghent (ERR AV 24; AV 109)</p> <p>Address: <i>(no separate library since WW2; few books recovered now in Library of [State] University of Ghent)</i></p> <p>Source: Offenbach Administrative Records, NACP, RG 260 (OMGUS) at https://www.fold3.com/image/114/232161884 (dig. p. 63), from <i>NARA Microfilm Publication M1942</i>, roll 6.</p>
<p>8</p> 	<p>Name: Enghien Jesuit Theological Seminary (AV133) (Collegium Angiense Societatis Jesu) (IHS)</p> <p>Address: Enghien, former St Augustine Monastery</p> <p>Source: Postwar Claim SPPC card, Belgian National Archives, AGR2/ARA2/ I-21, Dossier 542, A989verso (<i>available online with registration</i>).</p>