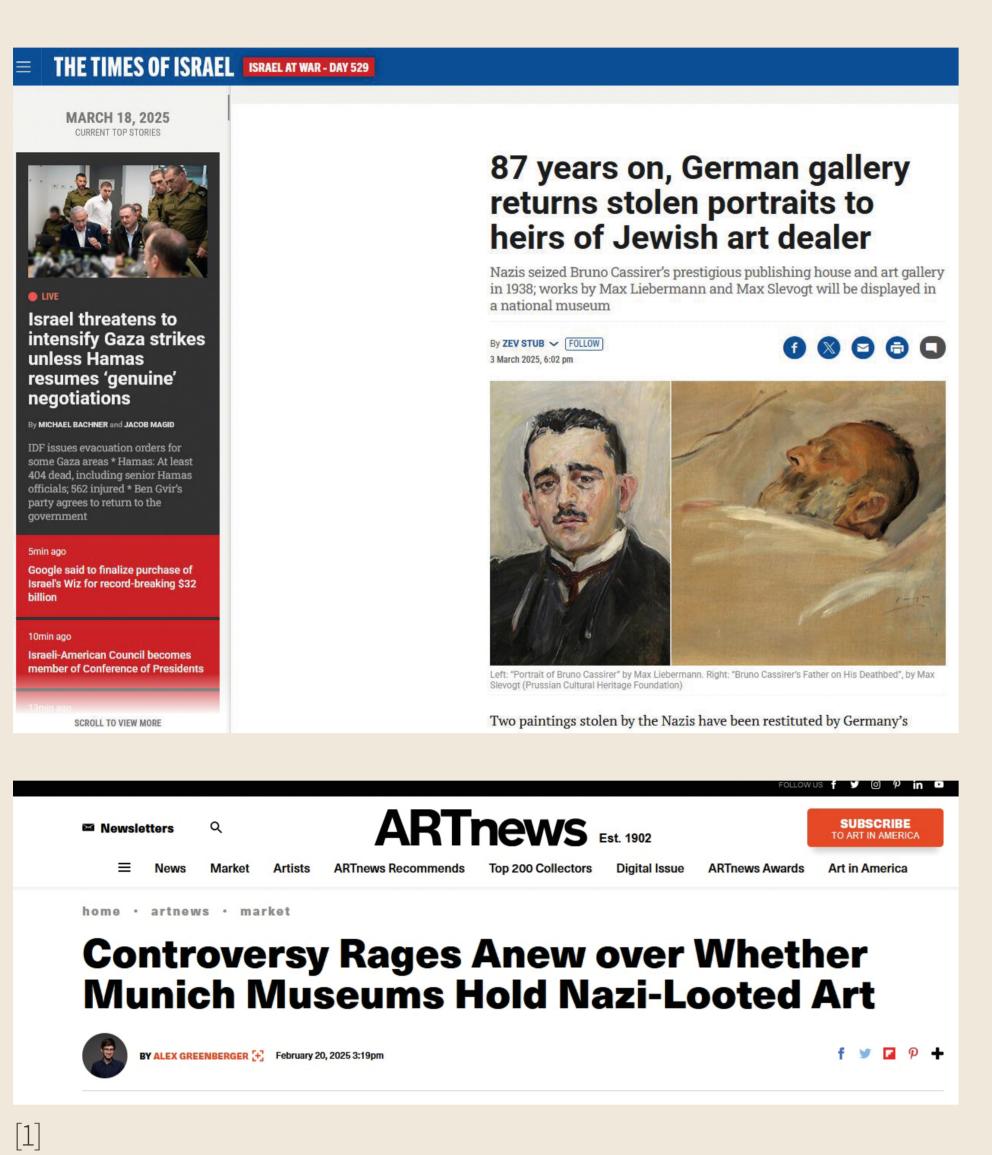
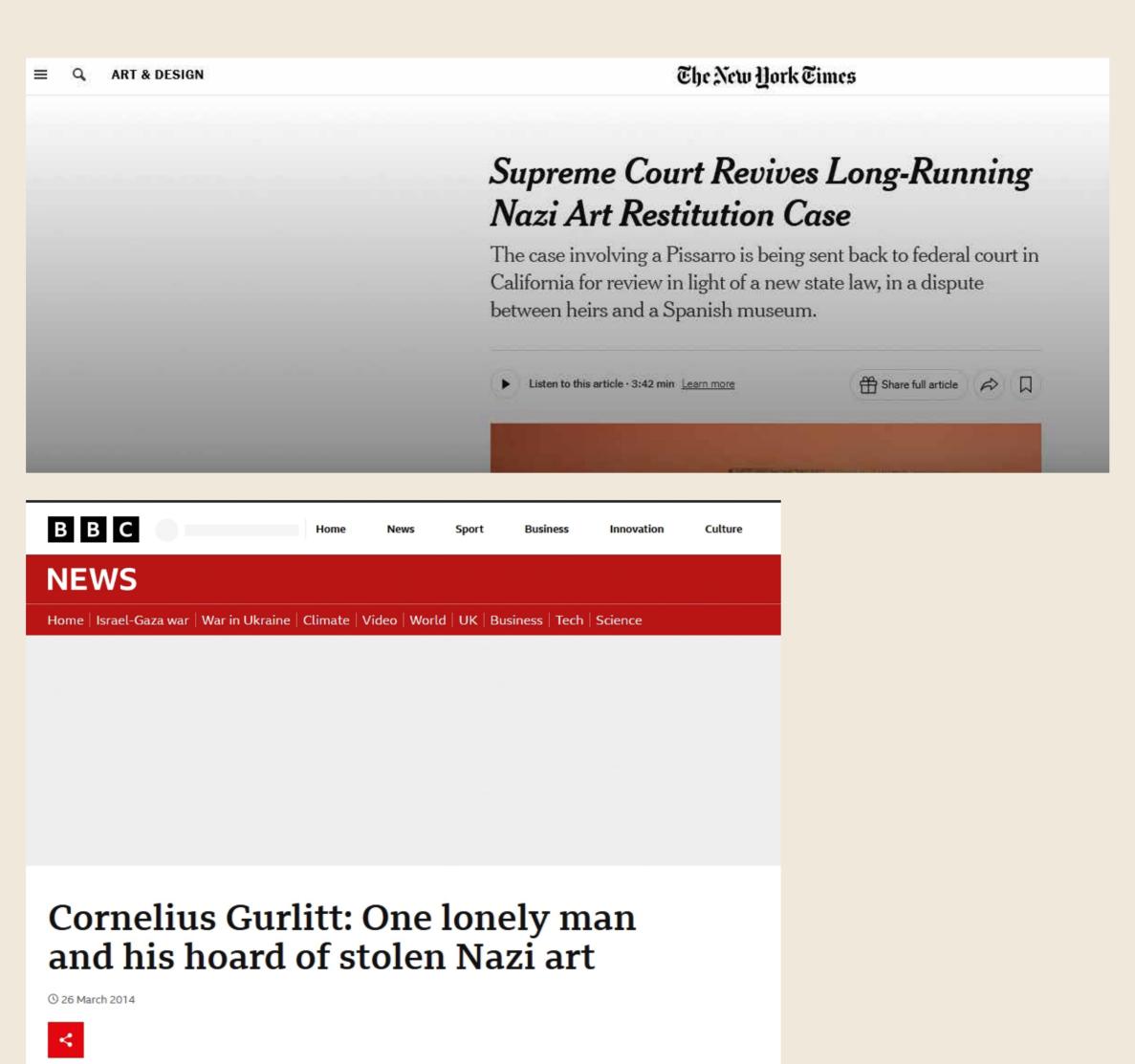
The Gamechanger:

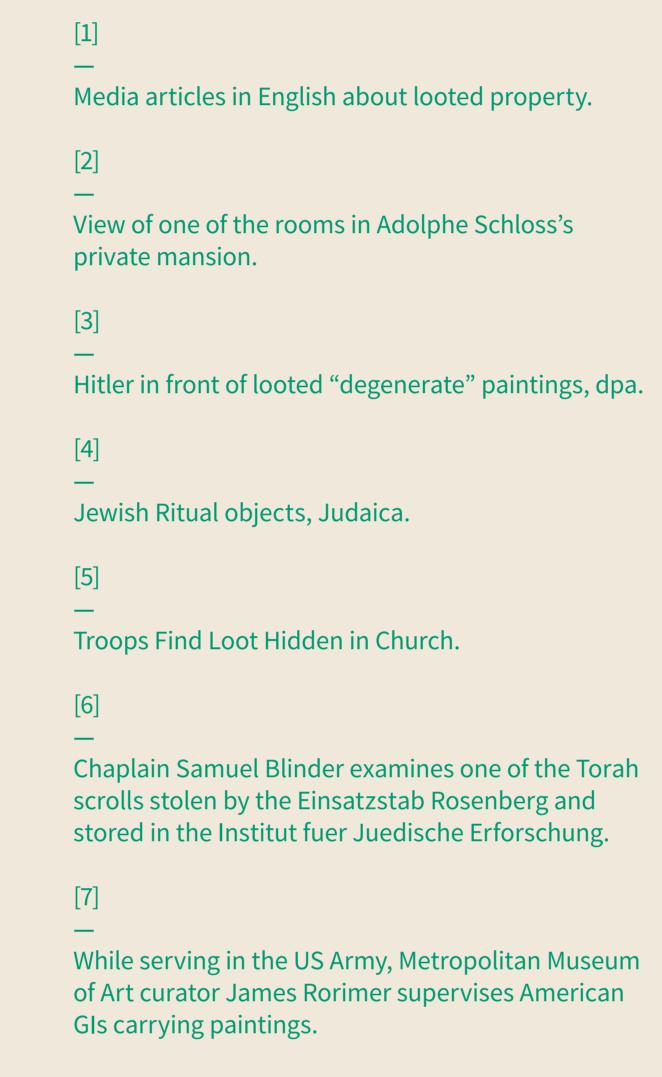
Impact of a Global Archival Platform







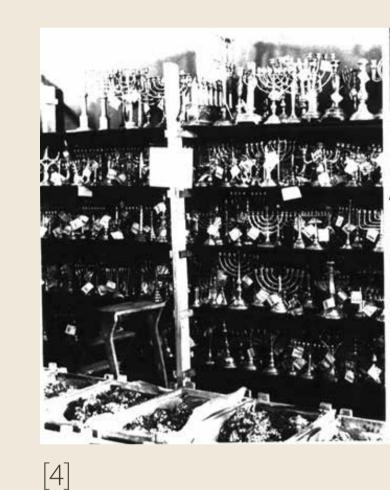




Sgt. Harold Maus of Scranton, PA examines an album

of engravings by Albrecht Dürer that was looted by

the Nazi regime.











The theft of Jewish cultural property and identity by the Nazis, their allies and collaborators has been a long-disregarded chapter of the Holocaust. Most countries lack comprehensive restitution legislation, with legal obstacles for victims' claims. Only recently has Nazi-era looted art attracted wider public attention, nearly a century after the Nazi government began the systematic plunder of European Jewish cultural property.

The widescale Nazi-era looting of Jewish cultural property is rarely included in Holocaust education programs. Even at this late date, it has become increasingly apparent that more comprehensive documentation, research and education on the looting is urgently needed to fill the vacuum of knowledge. While some archival documentation has survived, records are often in deteriorating condition, difficult to access, and located worldwide in hundreds, perhaps thousands of archives.

Fortunately, artificial intelligence is helping with the transcription of records, proving to be an essential tool in exposing untold historical truths about the Nazi looting campaign. By revealing more details of the vast scope of the crime, the records can provide incontrovertible evidence of the Shoah and help combat Holocaust distortion.

As intergenerational trauma of the Holocaust continues into third and fourth generations, the JDCRP archival platform can help survivors and descendants reconstruct some of the missing information on the fate of family members and their stolen property.

Knowledge about the circumstances of the theft and the fate of family heirlooms reconnects stolen property to family heritage, offering a measure of moral justice.

Greater examination of the archival documentation can also change our understanding of Jewish contributions to European cultural heritage. By tracing the lives of collectors, artists, and others active in the cultural sphere, it can fill gaping holes in our understanding of the prewar Jewish presence in arts and culture.

The more we learn about this largely untold Jewish legacy, the more urgent it becomes to acknowledge the role of cultural plunder as an integral part of the Shoah.

The Nazi-era plunder of culture and identity was part of the dehumanization, discrimination and marginalization of Jews that enabled acceptance of genocide. The JDCRP's international digital archival platform will link and make accessible archival documentation of the crime, which can be a gamechanger in our understanding of the Holocaust: By revealing the vast scope of the crime, the platform can rectify the undeserved lack of attention given to the theft.

Once the physically scattered documents are assembled in a central online platform, the weight of evidence they provide can act as an important counterweight to Holocaust revisionism. By acknowledging the crime at a societal level, we can reclaim European cultural heritage and help survivors and descendants reconnect to vanished property and to their family cultural legacies, contributing greatly to the restitution of history.



