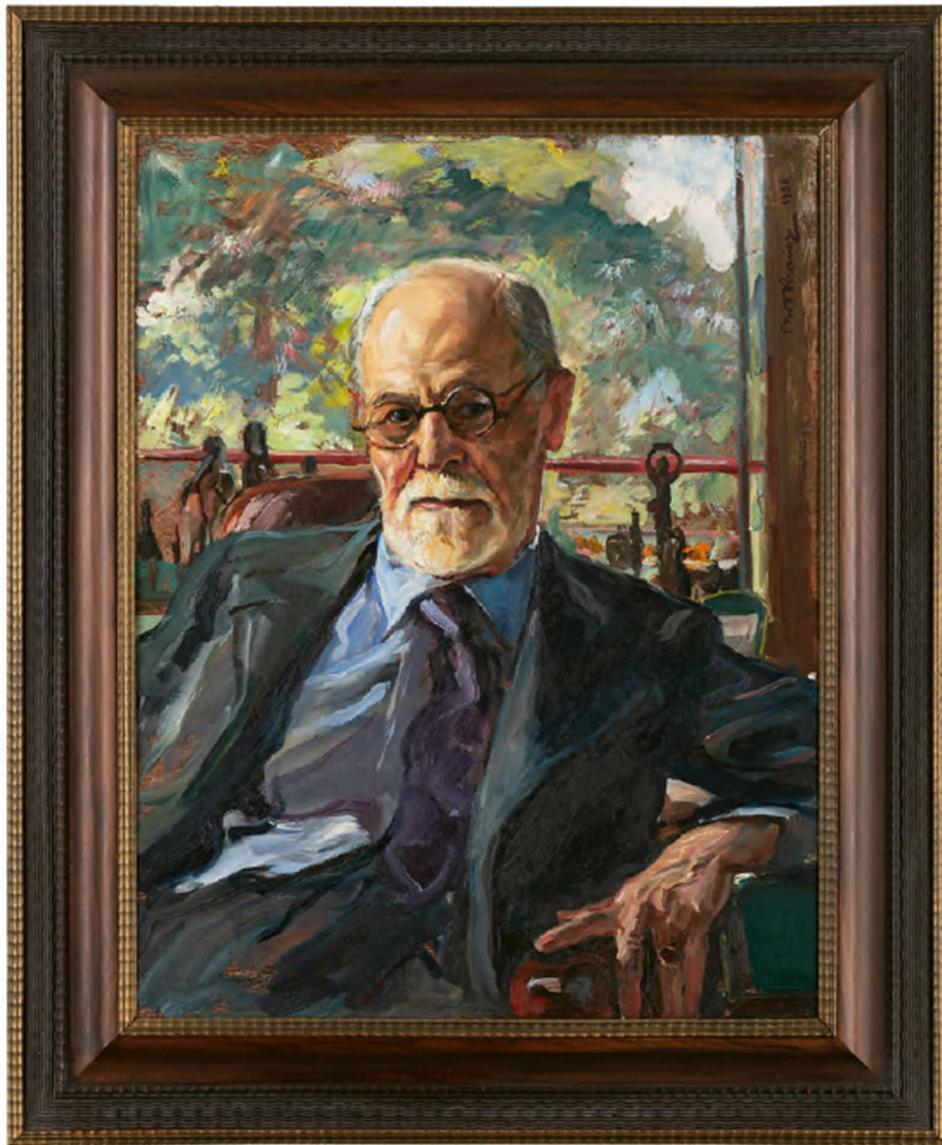


# THE LOOTING OF THE FREUD FAMILY'S CULTURAL PROPERTY

*By Ruth Jolanda Weinberger*



Wilhelm Victor Krausz, *Sigmund Freud*, 1936

*Image:* Wilhelm Victor Krausz, *Portrait of Sigmund Freud* (1936),  
<https://freunde-jmw.at/project/victor-krausz-bildnis-sigmund-freud-1936/>, accessed December 19, 2025

January 23, 2026

# THE LOOTING OF THE FREUD FAMILY'S CULTURAL PROPERTY<sup>1</sup>

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*Image:* Alexander and Sigmund Freud in Grinzing, 1937, <https://www.freud-museum.at/en/exhibitions-program/exhibition-details/articles/documents-of-injustice-the-case-of-freud>



*Image:* Sigmund Freud's home and office in Berggasse 19, 1090 Vienna, <https://www.visitingvienna.com/sights/museums/sigmund-freud/>

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Almost immediately after the *Anschluss*—the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany in March 1938— the personal and institutional lives of the Freud family were irrevocably shattered. What followed for the extended Freud family—Sigmund; his brother Alexander; their four sisters Rosa, Maria (Mitzi), Adolfine (Dolfi), and Pauline (Pauli), and Alexander's son, Harry— constituted a textbook example of the Nazi system of persecution and property expropriation, including the systematic looting of cultural property.

By the end of World War II, all four sisters had been murdered, while Sigmund and Alexander Freud had died of natural causes in exile. In response, Harry Freud, Alexander's son, assumed responsibility for pursuing justice for the expropriation of the family's property, including his father's art collection. Despite decades of restitution efforts, Harry never received monetary compensation or physical restitution during his lifetime.

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<sup>1</sup> This report is in part due to the generous assistance of the Sigmund Freud Museum in Vienna. More information on the archival collection of the Vienna based Sigmund Freud Museum and its recent acquisition of archival material can be found on the website of the Sigmund Freud Museum. (Sigmund [Freud Museum](https://www.freud-museum.at)). Information on the Freud Museum's special exhibition entitled "Documents of Injustice. The Case of Freud" can be found on the Museum's website at <https://www.freud-museum.at/en/exhibitions-program/exhibition-details/articles/documents-of-injustice-the-case-of-freud>, accessed January 21, 2026

## I. SIGMUND FREUD (1856-1939)

Sigmund Freud was born on May 6, 1856, in Freiberg in Moravia (now Příbor, Czech Republic). In 1859, at the age of three, he and his family relocated to Vienna due to economic hardship and rising antisemitism in Moravia. In Vienna, Freud studied medicine and established his private practice in 1886. He is widely recognized as the founder of psychoanalysis, a discipline centered on exploring the unconscious mind and treating psychological disorders through dialogue between patient and analyst.<sup>2</sup>

In the same year, 1886, Sigmund married Martha Bernays. Together they had six children, including Anna Freud (born on December 3, 1895), who would later become a leading psychoanalyst in her own right.<sup>3</sup>

Although Freud became international renowned—often gaining recognition abroad earlier than in Austria—his work in Vienna remained both influential and contested, particularly among conservative medical and academic circles. Following the *Anschluss* in March 1938, the National Socialist regime forcibly dismantled psychoanalytic institutions in Austria and effectively prohibited the practice of psychoanalysis.



Image: Sigmund und Anna Freud; AT-SFP/D/68B-3143-G/32/1

The April 1938 ordinance requiring Jews to register their property (*Verordnung über die Anmeldung des Vermögens von Juden*)<sup>4</sup> constituted the legal cornerstone enabling seizure, forced sales, and so-called “Aryanization.” Within this framework, the International Psychoanalytical Publishing House (co-owned by Sigmund and Anna Freud) was placed under a *kommisarischer Verwalter* (“provisional administrator”). Anton Sauerwald, who was appointed to this role, became responsible for the

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<sup>2</sup> For more information, see for example: <https://www.freud.org.uk/schools/resources/who-was-sigmund-freud/>

<sup>3</sup> The majority of Sigmund Freud’s immediate family, particularly his children, survived the Holocaust. Ernst Halberstadt, one of the sons of Sophie Freud (born April 12, 1893, in Vienna, died in January 1920 during the influenza pandemic) escaped to London. The other son, Heinz Halberstadt, died of natural causes in 1923. Anna Freud, another daughter of Sigmund Freud, escaped with her parents to London, where she continued her significant psychoanalytic work. The eldest child, Mathilde Freud, born on October 16, 1887, in Vienna, left before the *Anschluss* and settled in the United States. Freud’s son, Jean-Martin (Martin), born on April 6, 1889, in Vienna, was briefly interrogated by the Gestapo in 1938 but was released and obtained permission to leave. He fled to London. His two children survived the war in emigration as well.

For more information on Sigmund Freud’s life, see for example: Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Time*, New York: W.W. Norton, 1988.

<sup>4</sup> The property census was ordered on April 26, 1938. Every Jew within the meaning of the First Ordinance to the Reich Citizenship Law, as well as non-Jewish spouse of a Jew, had to declare their domestic and foreign assets if the assets exceeded RM 5,000, regardless of liabilities. For more information, see: [http://ns-quellen.at/gesetz\\_anzeigen\\_detail.php?gesetz\\_id=29310&action=B\\_Read](http://ns-quellen.at/gesetz_anzeigen_detail.php?gesetz_id=29310&action=B_Read), accessed December 19, 2025.

expropriation of Sigmund and Anna Freud’s property, with the exception of those assets they were able to save through their escape to London.<sup>5</sup>

Pressure mounted almost immediately after the *Anschluss* within Berggasse 19, Freud’s home and office. On March 15, 1938, three days after German troops entered Austria, an SA unit searched Freud’s home at Berggasse 19. Two days later, Princess Marie Bonaparte arrived from Paris to provide organizational, diplomatic, and financial assistance to the Freud family.<sup>6</sup>

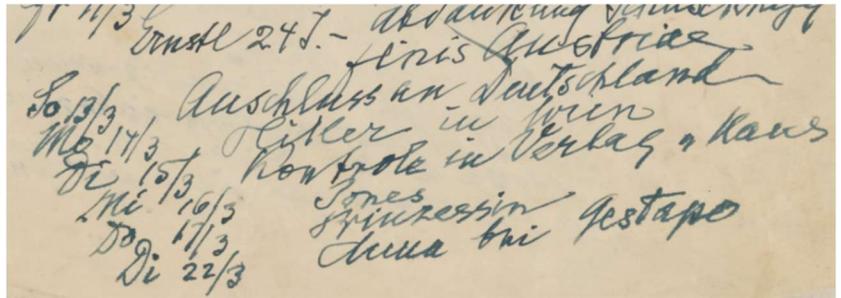
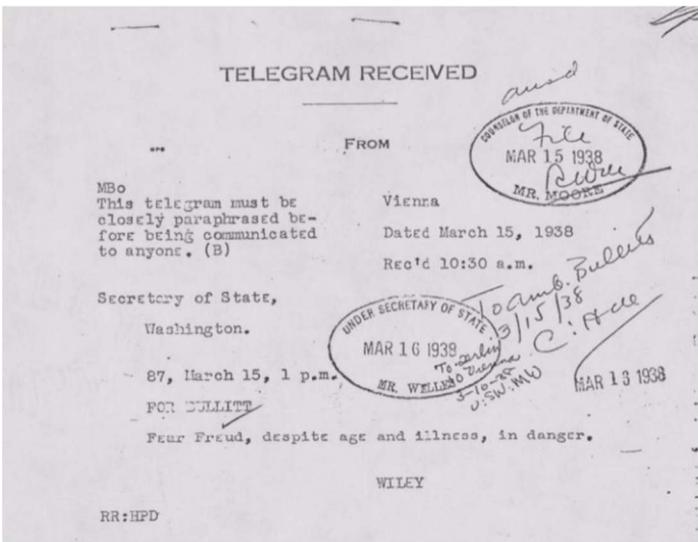


Image: <https://blogs.loc.gov/loc/2019/09/freuds-last-days-in-vienna-as-nazis-approached>

On March 22, 1938—just ten days after the *Anschluss*—Anna Freud was arrested and interrogated by the Gestapo at their headquarters at the former Hotel Metropol. She was released that same evening after hours of interrogation. Sigmund Freud recorded the episode tersely in his diary: “Anna at Gestapo,” and John Cooper Wiley, an American diplomat in Vienna, warned in a cable: “Fear Freud, despite age and illness, in danger.”<sup>7</sup>



In the wake of these events, Freud recognized the necessity of fleeing Austria and seeking refuge in England. Despite his international stature, it was far from certain that the Nazis would permit the family to depart—and they nearly did not. Only after intense diplomatic intervention and international pressure was permission granted, allowing Freud, his wife Martha, his daughter Anna, his housekeeper Paula Fichtl, and a young physician, Josephine Stross, to leave Vienna on June 4, 1938. Stross joined the group at the last moment after Freud’s longtime physician, Max Schur, developed appendicitis.<sup>8</sup>

Image: Sigmund Freud. Sigmund Freud Papers: Subject File, -1988; Immigration to London, England; United States State Department cables, 1938. 1938. Manuscript/Mixed Material. <https://www.loc.gov/item/mss3999001361/>

For the most part, Freud’s household cultural property was not looted, as his study, library, furniture, and antiquities were evacuated and

<sup>5</sup> Daniela Finzi, Monika Pessler(ed.), *The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice Catalog*, Vienna: Sigmund Freud Gmbh, 2025, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.freud-museum.at/en/subsites-gallery/articles/raids-in-berggasse>, accessed January 21, 2026.

<sup>7</sup> <https://blogs.loc.gov/loc/2019/09/freuds-last-days-in-vienna-as-nazis-approached/>, accessed December 16, 2025.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

exported to London in 1938.<sup>9</sup> On August 8, 1939, Freud’s furniture, books, household goods, and antiquities—7,730 kilograms packed into three freight cars—arrived in London. The inventory of antiquities was prepared by Dr. Hans Deml, then director of the Egyptian and Near Eastern Collection at the *Kunsthistorisches Museum*, who also authorized their export on May 21, 1938.<sup>10</sup>

Freud’s new residence at Maresfield Gardens in Hampstead was furnished over the course of September 1938. So closely did it resemble the Vienna apartment that it was commonly referred to as “Berggasse,” even among non-family members.<sup>11</sup>

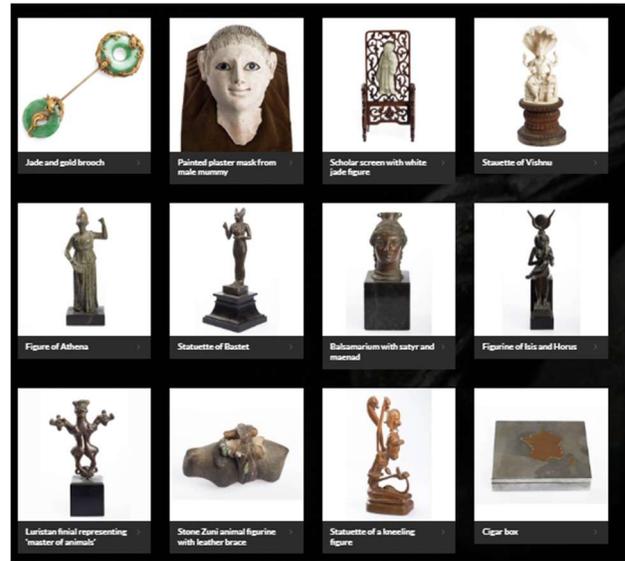
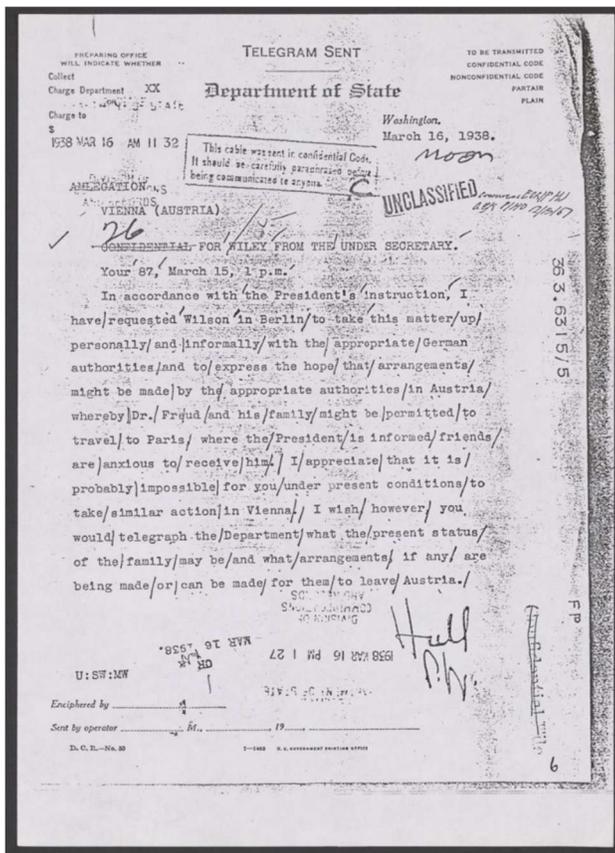


Image: Objects from Sigmund Freud’s antiquity collection; <https://www.freud.org.uk/collections/objects/>



Despite this success, other cultural assets were expropriated behind the scenes. Erich Führer—an “illegal” Nazi who had joined the Party prior to the

Image: Sigmund Freud. Sigmund Freud Papers: Subject File, -1988; Immigration to London, England; United States State Department cables, 1938. 1938. Manuscript/Mixed Material. <https://www.loc.gov/item/mss3999001361/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.freud-museum.at/en/subsites-gallery/articles/everyday-life-in-exile>, accessed December 17, 2025.

<sup>10</sup> *The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice Catalog*, p. 23.

<sup>11</sup> An inventory of Freud’s antiquities can be found in the online Freud Archive: “Inventar der Wohnung Sigmund Freuds Berggasse 19 von Spedition E. Bäuml zum Transport nach London,” AT-SFP/D/83/5.

*Anschluss*<sup>12</sup>,—and Anton Sauerwald played instrumental roles in the broader dispossession of the Freud family, including Sigmund’s brother Alexander and their sisters.<sup>13</sup> Führer’s role was particularly striking given that he served as Alexander Freud’s family’s lawyer and maintained offices only steps away from Alexander Freud’s residence on Biberstrasse.

Although surviving evidence indicates that objects were looted, the full extent of Sigmund Freud’s losses cannot be reconstructed. Recent estimates suggest losses in the range of two million U.S. dollars, excluding the vast book holdings of the International Psychoanalytical Publishing House.<sup>14</sup> In a report by Anton Sauerwald, the provisional administrator of the publishing house, submitted to the Foreign Exchange Office in early fall 1938, he noted that “*the rich inventory of books (approx. fifteen railcars) was [...] confiscated and destroyed. This stock was primarily the property of Prof. Freud and his daughter Anna and represented the assets of the publishing house. The estimated value of this item was approx. 2–3 million reichsmarks. These material assets were completely destroyed.*”<sup>15</sup>

Paradoxically, Sauerwald is also credited with facilitating Freud’s escape by withholding incriminating information regarding foreign assets—details that could have prevented the family’s departure.<sup>16</sup>

Sigmund Freud died in London on September 23, 1939, from oral cancer, first diagnosed in 1923.

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<sup>12</sup> Erich Führer was a member of the Nazi party since 1932. After the *Anschluss*, he specialized in Aryanizations and was heavily involved in a number of prominent cases, including of the Freud family as well as of the Bloch-Bauer family. Führer handled the Bloch-Bauer emigration, however not without reaping his own personal profit in the form of keeping some 14 paintings from the Bloch-Bauer vast art collection for himself. In 1948, he was sentenced to three years in prison for his Nazi activities. For more information, see: The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice Catalog, p. 103; as well as: [https://agso.uni-graz.at/archive/sozio/biografien/f/fuehrer\\_erich.htm](https://agso.uni-graz.at/archive/sozio/biografien/f/fuehrer_erich.htm), accessed December 18, 2025; and: Gespräch mit Erich Führer, AT-OeStA/AVA Nachlässe NN WIKO 56.3, 1971-1975; and: 2.7.1.12.A1.1.Führer Erich - Führer Erich, ca. 1938-1945, Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv.

<sup>13</sup> *The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice Catalog*, p. 10.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p. 15.

<sup>15</sup> Anton Sauerwald to the Foreign Exchange Office in early fall 1938, AT-SFP/D/83/8.

<sup>16</sup> For more information on Anton Sauerwald’s role, see for example: Rosemary Dinnage, “Freud’s Escape from Vienna,” *History Today*, 38. 6 (1988), online at: <https://www.thejc.com/life/how-a-nazi-saved-sigmund-freud-slhfwyyd>, accessed December 16, 2025; David Cohen, *The Escape of Sigmund Freud*. New York, N.Y.: The Overlook Press, 2009.

Grosses Wohnzimmer:

- 1 Sitzbank
- 1 rundes Tischlerl
- 1 Radiocapparat
- 1 runder Tisch
- 2 Sesslerl
- 1 Ofengarnitur
- 1 sechsflammiger Luster
- 1 Stehlampe
- 1 Schreibtischlampe
- 1 Spiegel
- 1 Kiste mit diversen Nippessachen
- 4 Kisten Bücher
- 2 Teppiche
- 3 Reproduktionen
- 1 Oelbild , 9 teilig
- 1 Federzeichnung

Vorzimmer:

- 1 Stahlrohrsessel
- 1 Tischlerl m. Marmorplatte
- 1 zerlegbarer Garderobeschrank
- 1 Schirmständer
- 1 Laufer
- 1 Nähmaschine

kleines Vorzimmer:

- 1 Ordinationssessel
- 1 Ordinationstisch
- 1 Stockerl ( Eisen)

Ordinationszimmer:

- 1 Spieltisch
- 1 Stahlrohrstockerl
- 1 Stehlampe (Messing)
- 1 Fauteuil
- 1 Holzsäule
- 1 Ottomane
- 1 Ueberwurf
- 1 Wandteppich
- 1 Ofenschirm
- 1 Armsessel
- 1 Fauteuil
- 1 kleiner Bücher-Regal
- 3 Vitrinen
- 1 Deckenbeleuchtung
- 1 grosser Teppich
- 1 Brücke
- 1 sechseckiges Tischlerl

**Speditions-Bureau**  
**E. Bäuml, Wien**  
**I. Kantgasse 2.**

Image: Page 3 of the inventory of Sigmund Freud's apartments, Berggasse 19, which lists among other objects also Freud's ottoman couch used in his office, AT-SFP/D/83/5

## II. ALEXANDER GOTTHOLD EFRAIM FREUD (1866-1943)



Image: Alexander Freud's car in front of his residence.

<https://www.freud-museum.at/en/exhibitions-program/exhibition-details/articles/documents-of-injustice-the-case-of-freud>

Alexander Freud was the younger brother of Sigmund Freud. He was born in Vienna on April 19, 1866, and married Sophie Sabine Schreiber (1895-1970). Together they had one son, Harry (1909-1968).<sup>17</sup> Prior to his forced emigration, Alexander lived with his wife at Biberstrasse 14 in Vienna's first district.

Alexander was internationally recognized as the owner of the publishing house *Allgemeiner Tarif-Anzeiger A. Freud Zentralverkaufsstelle für Tarife* (General Tariff Gazette) and as a freight and transport expert, having accumulated considerable wealth—surpassing even that of his more famous brother.

The publishing house, founded in 1882 and located in Biberstrasse 16, was a Vienna-based specialist journal covering tariffs, freight, and transport law. Alexander Freud joined its editorial staff in 1889 and soon became an internationally respected authority on railway and freight tariffs. By 1904, he assumed the role as sole proprietor. Under his leadership, the journal became an important reference within Austrian transport and commercial circles, even issuing a 50-year anniversary edition in 1931. His son, Harry, later joined the firm and acquired 20 percent ownership stake. Alexander Freud's proprietorship would later figure prominently in the documentation of his persecution and dispossession following the *Anschluss* in 1938.

With the Nazi seizure of power in Austria in March 1938, Alexander Freud's career came to an abrupt end. Like his brother Sigmund, Alexander and his family were targeted almost overnight by Nazi authorities, who combined pressure on wealthy Jewish families to emigrate with the systematic expropriation of their property. Only days after the *Anschluss*, the Gestapo searched for Harry Freud, who was in Switzerland at the time for health reasons.

Anmeldeblatt (Zählung)		Meldezettel		Drittliche Schrift mit Titel (Bertrag aus dem Meldewahlzettel und dem Meldungsantrags)	
- 4. NOV. 1938		für Haupt(Jahres- und Monats)wohnparteien.			
1	Wohnung: Postplatz 14, 1. Stock	1	Bez. Biberstrasse	gasse Nr. 14.	Stiege/ Stock, Tür Nr. 7
2	Nr. und Name:	Alexander Freud			
3	Beruf:	Leitungsbüro			
4	Geburtsort, -bezirk, -land:	Wien			
5	Heimats(Siedlungs-)ort, -bezirk, -land:	Wien			
6	Staatsbürgerchaft:	Österreich			
7	Heiratungsdatum (Jahr, Monat, Tag, Vorname, Nachname):	19. April 1866 Mrs. verheiratet			
8	Gattin, auch Mädchenname:	Sophie geb. Schreiber 31.8.90			
9	Kinder unter 18 Jahren:				
10	Frühere Wohnung in Wien:	N. Unt. Wiedenthal gasse Nr. 5 bis 1037			
11	Ordentlicher Wohnort:				
12	Letzter Aufenthaltsort:				
13	Derzeitige Aufenthaltsort:	der Heilanstalt			
14	Ort, Datum, Uhrzeit, Monat, Tag, Jahr, Vorname, Nachname:	Wien, am 4. November 1938			
15	Unterschrift des Hausbesizers (Stellvertreter):	Wies Raffale			

Image:

<https://www.wien.gv.at/actaproweb2/benutzung/image.xhtml?id=c63759e72636debb44c3b02a291fcb83>

<sup>17</sup> Additional biographical information available at: <https://www.geschichtewiki.wien.gv.at/index.php?curid=26614&utm>, accessed December 27, 2025; Alexander Freud papers at the Library of Congress, [https://findingaids.loc.gov/exist\\_collections/ead3pdf/mss/2010/ms010189.pdf](https://findingaids.loc.gov/exist_collections/ead3pdf/mss/2010/ms010189.pdf), accessed December 27, 2025.

Recognizing the danger, Alexander and Sophie applied for a temporary exit visa on March 26, 1938. Anticipating difficulties, Alexander transferred his entire estate into the “fiduciary custody” of the lawyer and Nazi Party member Erich Führer. The application was approved on May 11, allowing the couple to leave for Switzerland on May 17. Alexander initially hoped to establish a Swiss branch of the *Allgemeiner Tarif-Anzeiger*, but this plan never materialized.

On March 21, 1938, the publishing house was placed under provisional administration, with Major Fritz Lahr—appointed Deputy Mayor of Vienna in 1934—named provisional administrator.<sup>18</sup>

From Switzerland, Alexander and Sophie continued their journey to London in the fall of 1938, and from there, emigrated onward to Canada in 1941.<sup>19</sup>

Unlike Sigmund Freud, the couple was unable to safeguard their belongings because they had departed under the pretense of a temporary business trip. Their escape was made possible only after they were forced to surrender nearly all of their property, including their cultural possessions, such as their furniture, paintings, books, and other household goods.<sup>20</sup> A letter dated August 30, 1938, preserved at the Freud House in Vienna, reveals that Alexander, Sophie, and Harry still hoped to save at least part of their furniture<sup>21</sup> by transporting their property to their new residence. Their continued struggle to retain physical possession of their property is similarly evident in a letter Harry Freud wrote to Erich Führer on September 29, 1938.<sup>22</sup>

In August 1938, Alexander’s sister Rosa Freud moved into his now vacant apartment after being expelled from her own residence. Her sisters, Adolfine Freud, Pauline Winternitz and Maria Freud, followed Rosa Freud into Alexander’s apartment a year later, in August 1939.

In October 1938, Alexander engaged the haulage firm *Bäuml* to arrange the transport of his cultural property—particularly of his furniture and paintings—abroad. To facilitate this, he asked Rosa to compile a detailed

Embarked 17.9.40. C.R.

MALE ENEMY ALIEN - EXEMPTION FROM INTERNMENT - REFUGEE

(1) Surname (block capitals) FREUD  
Forenames Alexander  
Alias \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Date and place of birth 19. 4. 1866 in Vienna

(3) Nationality Austrian

(4) Police Regn. Cert. No. 677552 Home Office reference if known \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Procedure Card Number if known \_\_\_\_\_

(5) Address prior to Internment 21, Wick Hall, Hove.

(6) Normal occupation Retired.

(7) Present Occupation Refugee

(8) Name and address of employer \_\_\_\_\_

(9) Decision of Tribunal Exempt from internment and Date 23rd Oct. 1939  
Special restrictions. Yes.

(10) Whether exempted from Article 6(A) (Yes or No) Yes.

(11) Whether desires to be repatriated (Yes or No) No.

[7035] 2817,835 25aa 9.39 G & S 704 10788

Image: UK, World War II Alien Internees, 1939-1945 for Alexander Freud, available in <https://www.ancestry.com>

<sup>18</sup> *The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice Catalog*, p.77.

<sup>19</sup> Alexander Freud in the U.S., Index to Alien Arrivals at Canadian Atlantic and Pacific Seaports, 1904-1944, <https://www.ancestry.com>, accessed December 18, 2025.

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.freud-museum.at/en/exhibitions-program/exhibition-details/articles/documents-of-injustice-the-case-of-freud>, accessed December 27, 2025.

<sup>21</sup> Transcript of the registered letter, Foreign Exchange Investigation Office to Erich Führer, August 30, 1938: AT-SFP/D/39/120/2.

<sup>22</sup> *The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice Catalog*, p. 102.

inventory of the contents of his apartment. The handwritten inventory listed 35 paintings, noted a book collection, as well as furniture, carpets, and decorative objects. By March 1939, she had completed a meticulous twenty-page handwritten list<sup>23</sup> and oversaw the packing and removal of furniture, paintings, and other objects, which were transported to *Bäuml's* warehouse for eventual shipment abroad.<sup>24</sup> As soon as the property was at the company's warehouse, it received explicit instruction to forward the objects once all bureaucratic requirements had been fulfilled. These requirements, however, proved insurmountable. Export licenses from the Federal Monuments Office (*Bundesdenkmalamt*) were a prerequisite, and approval was granted only on June 7, 1939. However, the permit was only valid for just three months, after which a new application would have been required. Additional approvals from the foreign exchange and customs authorities were also necessary.

Aside from the discriminatory bureaucratic obstacles placed by Nazi authorities on Jewish emigres attempting to ship their property, shipping firms had a financial incentive to prolong storage, as extended warehouse storage generated additional fees. Notwithstanding Alexander Freud's successful gathering of permits and payments, the outbreak of World War II on September 1, 1939, made exports impossible. His belongings consequently remained in the *Bäuml* warehouse.<sup>25</sup> In September 1939, Alexander's furnishings were moved to a storage unit in Zieglergasse.<sup>26</sup>

Approximately a year later, in 1940, the entirety of Alexander and Sophie Freud's cultural property—including furniture and paintings—was seized by the *Vugesta* (Gestapo Office for the Disposal of the Property of Jewish Emigrants), which was established in September 1940.<sup>27</sup> On October 30, 1940, the *Bäuml* moving company was officially informed by the *Vugesta* of the seizure of his stored belongings, citing *Vugesta* order Nr. 210/5.<sup>28</sup>

Erich Führer, in his role as the Freud's supposed legal representative, filed a formal objection, though his argument focused primarily on unpaid legal fees rather than the injustice of the seizure itself. Unable to “reverse” the confiscation, Führer delivered Sophie Freud's jewelry to the Dorotheum auction house himself.<sup>29</sup> Alexander Freud passed away on April 22, 1943, in Toronto.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> “Inventarverzeichnis der Wohnung Alexander Freuds II, handschriftlich,” 1939, AT-SFP/D/39/236a.

<sup>24</sup> *The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice Catalog*, p. 103.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>26</sup> Stock list Zieglergasse, AT-SFP/D/39/362a.

<sup>27</sup> The VUGESTA was founded on September 7, 1940, with the intention of repurposing confiscated, mostly Jewish property, for the benefit of the so-called *Volksgenossen*. See for example: <https://www.kunstdatenbank.at/the-vugesta-the-gestapo-office-for-the-disposal-of-the-property-of-jewish-emigrants>, accessed December 19, 2025; and: <https://www.kunstdatenbank.at/the-vugesta-the-gestapo-office-for-the-disposal-of-the-property-of-jewish-emigrants>; accessed December 19, 2025.

<sup>28</sup> *The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice Catalog*, p. 27.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80; see also: “Entwurf eines Briefes von Sophie Freud an Erich Führer betreffend den Allgemeinen Tarifanzeiger, Harry Freud und die Mitnahme des Schmucks,” 1938, AT-SFP/D/39/100.

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.geschichtewiki.wien.gv.at/index.php?curid=26614&utm>, accessed December 27, 2025.

AT-SFP/D/39/41

Abgabefrist: 10. 12. 38. C/2

Vor Ausfüllung des Vermögensverzeichnisses ist die beigefügte Anleitung genau durchzulesen!

**Zur Beachtung!**

- Die Zusendung dieses Vordrucks gilt als Aufforderung zur Abgabe des Vermögensverzeichnisses.
- Wie ist das Vermögensverzeichnis auszufüllen?  
Es müssen sämtliche Fragen beantwortet werden. Nichtzutreffendes ist zu durchstreichen! Reicht der in dem Vermögensverzeichnis für die Ausfüllung vorgegebene Raum nicht aus, so sind die geforderten Angaben auf einer Anlage zu machen.

**Finanzamt**  
für den I. Bezirk Wien  
Reichsfluchtsteuerstelle  
für das Land Österreich

*Janin Wilmesberger*

**Bermögensverzeichnis samt Anlage**  
nach dem Stand des Vermögens vom 1. Januar 1938

des *Alexander Freud*, *Lehrer*  
der *Wiener* (Ort und Gewerbe)  
in *Wien* (Wohnort oder gewöhnlicher Aufenthaltsort) Straße, Platz Nr.  
und seiner Ehefrau *Sigfrida*, geborenen *Schreiber*

**Angaben zur Person und zum Familienstand**

Zu meinem Haushalt gehörten am 1. Januar 1938 meine Ehefrau und meine nachstehend genannten Kinder, einschließlich Stief-, Adoptiv- und Pflegekinder und deren Abkömmlinge, mit denen ich zur Einkommensteuer zusammen veranlagt worden bin:

<i>Stefan Freud</i> geb. am <i>21/12</i> 1909	4	geb. am	19
2	19	5	19
3	19	6	19

Die Fragen, die nachstehend gestellt werden, beziehen sich sowohl auf Ihr Vermögen als auch auf das Vermögen Ihrer Ehefrau und das Vermögen Ihrer vorstehend angegebenen Kinder. Das Vermögensverzeichnis muß also auch das Vermögen der Ehefrau und der vorstehend angegebenen Kinder enthalten

**Angaben über das Vermögen**

**I. Land- und forstwirtschaftliches Vermögen** (vgl. Anleitung Ziffer 5 und 6):

Wenn Sie am 1. Januar 1938 land- und forstwirtschaftliches Vermögen besaßen (gepachtete Ländereien u. dgl. sind nur aufzuführen, wenn das der Bewirtschaftung dienende Inventar Ihnen gehörte):

1	2	3	4	5
Lage des eigenen oder gepachteten Betriebs und seine Größe in Hektar? (Gemeinde - Ortsbezirk - und Katastralgemeinde, auch grundbuch- und katastermäßige Bezeichnung)	Art des eigenen oder gepachteten Betriebs? (z. B. landwirtschaftlicher, forstwirtschaftlicher, gärtnerischer Betrieb, Weinbau, Betrieb, Fischereibetrieb)	Handelte es sich um einen eigenen Betrieb oder um eine Pachtung?	Wert des Betriebs	Bei eigenem Betrieb: Wenn der Betrieb noch an anderen gehörte: Wie hoch war Ihr Anteil? (z. B. 1/3)

**II. Grundvermögen (Grund und Boden, Gebäude)** (vgl. Anleitung Ziffer 7):

Wenn Sie am 1. Januar 1938 Grundvermögen besaßen (Grundstücke, die nicht zu dem vorstehend unter I und nachstehend unter III bezeichneten Vermögen gehörten):

1	2	3	4
Lage des Grundstücks? (Gemeinde, Straße und Hausnummer, bei Vorhandensein grundbuch- und katastermäßige Bezeichnung)	Art des Grundstücks? (z. B. Einfamilienhaus, Mietwohngrundstück, Baugrund)	Wert des Grundstücks	Wenn das Grundstück noch anderen gehörte: Wie hoch war Ihr Anteil? (z. B. 1/3)

Kufter KSt 1 (1938)  
Vermögensverzeichnis für reichsfluchtsteuerliche Personen

Österreichische Staatsdruckerei 325738

Image: Alexander Freud's Vermögenserklärung (property declaration), 1938, Emigrationsakt Alexander Freud AT-SFP/D/39-41

### III. THE SISTERS: DISPLACEMENT, DEPORTATION, AND CONFISCATION



Image: The Sisters, <https://www.freud-museum.at/en/subsites-gallery/articles/the-murder-of-the-sisters>

Sigmund and Alexander were able to escape, but their elderly sisters—Rosa (Regina) Graf (née Freud), Maria (Mitzi) Freud, Adolfine (Dolfi), and Pauline (Pauli) Winternitz (née Freud),—remained trapped in Vienna and were thus fully exposed to the Nazi taxation and discriminatory fees, which rapidly exhausted the family support available to them. Over time, Freud’s sisters were forced from their homes into so-called *Sammelwohnungen* (forcibly shared apartments), then concentrated in a Jewish retirement home, and finally deported in the summer and autumn of 1942.<sup>31</sup>

For all four sisters, the final Vienna address prior to deportation is documented as Seegasse 9, the Jewish hospital and old-age complex.<sup>32</sup> Already prior to their relocation to Seegasse 9, the forced moves from their original apartments entailed significant property seizures, including household goods, family books, and religious objects. Upon confiscation, these objects were inventoried, blocked from export, and ultimately liquidated under the Nazi regime’s asset regulations. Although object-by-object inventories of the sisters’ apartments are no longer extant, they were subject to confiscation and expropriation practices similar to those imposed on their brothers.<sup>33</sup>

The sisters’ persecution histories differ in detail, yet all ultimately met the same fate: murder at the hands of the Nazi regime.

#### **Rosa Regina Graf (née Freud) (1860-1942)**

Rosa Freud, the oldest of the sisters, was born on March 21, 1860. Rosa was deported to the Theresienstadt concentration camp in late August 1942. On September 29 of that same year, she was

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.freud-museum.at/en/subsites-gallery/articles/the-murder-of-the-sisters>, accessed December 27, 2025.

<sup>32</sup> The Jewish Hospital, located in Vienna’s 9th district, Seegasse 9-11, was founded in 1698 by banker Samuel Oppenheimer and built not far from the old Jewish cemetery. The hospital was maintained until the end of the 19th century by donations from the Jewish community and only then replaced by a new building (Hospital of the Jewish Community). From 1938 to 1940, it was used as an SS military hospital. After that, the hospital and old age home functioned as a collecting point for the elderly deemed as not transportable. This, however, changed, and by 1942 full scale deportations from Seegasse took place, lasting to about May 1943. The majority of inmates were transported to Theresienstadt, similar to the Freud sisters. For more information, see: Elizabeth Anthony, “Wien IX, Seegasse 9: Ein Österreichisch-Jüdischer Geschichtsort,” *Nurinst - Jahrbuch 2010: Beiträge Zur Deutschen Und Jüdischen Geschichte Schwerpunktthema: Leben Danach – Jüdischer Neubeginn Im Land Der Täter* (2010); Michaela Raggam-Blesch, “Seegasse and Malzgasse – Two streets in Vienna as Focal Point of Jewish Care for the Elderly between Dissolution, Concentration and Deportation,” *Yad Vashem Studies*, 50.2 (2022): 113-139.

<sup>33</sup> [https://www.freud-museum.at/de/ausstellungen\\_detail/articles/der-fall-freud-dokumente-des-unrechts](https://www.freud-museum.at/de/ausstellungen_detail/articles/der-fall-freud-dokumente-des-unrechts), last accessed December 19, 2025.

taken from there to the Treblinka death camp, where she was probably murdered just a few hours after her arrival.<sup>34</sup>

### **Maria (Mitzi) Freud (1861-1942)**

Marie Freud, Sigmund and Alexander's second eldest sister, was born on March 22, 1861. On June 28, 1942, she was deported from Vienna to the Theresienstadt ghetto with Transport no. 29. Nearly three months later, on September 23, 1942, she was transported to the Treblinka extermination camp, where she was murdered shortly after arrival.<sup>35</sup>

### **Adolfine (Dolfi) Freud (1862-1942)**

Adolfine Freud, the second youngest sister, was born on July 23, 1862. Like her sister, she was deported to Theresienstadt on June 28, 1942, with Transport nr. 29 from Vienna. Unlike her sister, Adolfine died in Theresienstadt on September 29, 1942.<sup>36</sup>

### **Pauline Regine Winternitz (née Freud) (1864-1942)**

Paulina Winternitz, nee Freud, born on May 3, 1864, was Sigmund and Alexander's youngest sister. Like her sisters Adolfine and Marie, she too was transported with Transport no. 29 to Theresienstadt. Together with her sister Maria, she was deported on September 23, 1942, from Theresienstadt to Treblinka, where she was murdered soon after arrival.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> <https://www.freud-museum.at/en/subsites-gallery/articles/the-murder-of-the-sisters>, last accessed December 27, 2025.

<sup>35</sup> <https://collections.yadvashem.org/en/names/4760033>, accessed December 27, 2025.

<sup>36</sup> Namentliche Erfassung der österreichischen Holocaustopfer, entry for Adolfine Freud, <https://www.doew.at/erforschen/projekte/datenbankprojekte>, accessed January 24, 2026.

<https://collections.yadvashem.org/en/names/4760402>, accessed December 27, 2025.

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.doew.at/erforschen/projekte/datenbankprojekte/namentliche-erfassung-der-oesterreichischen-holocaustopfer>, accessed December 27, 2025; <https://www.holocaust.cz/en/database-of-victims/victim/60817-pauline-regine-winternitz/>, accessed December 27, 2025.



*Image:* The Freud sisters, <https://www.freud-museum.at/en/exhibitions-program/exhibition-details/articles/documents-of-injustice-the-case-of-freud>.

Maria's daughter, Margarethe, along with the rest of the family, only found out about their fate through a letter sent by the American Joint Distribution Committee in 1946.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> <https://www.freud-museum.at/en/subsites-gallery/articles/the-murder-of-the-sisters>, accessed December 27, 2025.

#### IV. HARRY HEINRICH FREUD

Harry Freud (also known as Otto Heinrich “Harry” Freud) was a nephew of Sigmund Freud and the only son of Alexander and Sophie Freud. He was born on February 7, 1909, in Vienna.<sup>39</sup> Prior to the *Anschluss* of Austria by Nazi Germany in 1938, he earned a law degree from the University of Vienna in 1933. From 1936 to 1938, he served as a partner and manager at his father’s publishing firm *Allgemeiner Tarif-Anzeiger* (General Tariff Gazette).

At the time of the *Anschluss*, Harry Freud was in Davos, Switzerland due to poor health. He later emigrated to the United States, where he was drafted into the Army and served as an officer.

During the war, Harry remained in contact with his four elderly aunts still in Vienna – a fifth aunt emigrated prior to the war - and played a significant role in managing their financial and legal affairs, as well as attempting to organize their emigration, albeit unsuccessfully. All four of his aunts



Image: Harry Freud with his dog Astor in Toronto 1949, AT-SFP/D/68B-3143-G/11/5

in Vienna were eventually murdered by the Nazi regime.<sup>40</sup>

In 1943, Harry received U.S. citizenship and resided on the Upper West Side in Manhattan.<sup>41</sup> In 1947, he returned to Austria for one year as a member of the Allied administration. Upon his return to the United States, he pursued a career in international logistics and transport: by the 1950s and '60s he was an executive with Container Transport International.

In 1948, Harry married Leli Margaret Horn. He died in 1968 in New York.<sup>42</sup>

SERIAL NUMBER 3244	1. NAME (Print) HARRY FREUD		ORDER NUMBER 1275
2. ADDRESS (Print) 322 West 125 Street NY NY			
3. TELEPHONE END. 2456	4. AGE IN YEARS 30	5. PLACE OF BIRTH Vienna, Austria	6. COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP Austria
7. NAME OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS EDWARD L. BERNAYS		8. RELATIONSHIP OF THAT PERSON	
9. ADDRESS OF THAT PERSON 420 Lexington Ave NY NY			
10. EMPLOYER'S NAME ERIL Sportswear Co. Inc.			
11. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OF BUSINESS 110 West 40 Street NY NY			
I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE			
REGISTRATION CARD D. S. S. FORM 1	(over) 16-17105		(Registrant's Signature) Harry Freud

Image: Harry Freud’s draft registration card,

<https://www.fold3.com/image/698135316/freud-harry-page-1-us-wwii-draft-registration-cards-1940>

<sup>39</sup> For more information, see Harry Freud Papers at the Library of Congress, <https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/mss/eadxmlmss/eadpdfmss/2008/ms008077.pdf>, accessed December 27, 2025.

<sup>40</sup> Teilnachlass Harry Freud AT-SFP/D/68, Sigmund Freud Haus, Vienna.

<sup>41</sup> DN 1929 -- US, USACA - Property Control Branch, 1945-1950, PC/V/I/28 Harry And Sophie Freud -Cases and Reports Pertaining to Property Administered by the Vienna Area Command (VAC), online at: <https://www.fold3.com/image/306814222/p-388-harry-freud-page-2-us-usaca-property-control-branch-1945-1950>, accessed December 27, 2025.

<sup>42</sup> Harry Freud Papers at the Library of Congress, <https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/mss/eadxmlmss/eadpdfmss/2008/ms008077.pdf>, accessed December 27, 2025.

## V. THE LOOTING OF ALEXANDER'S CULTURAL PROPERTY AND POST-WAR RESTITUTION EFFORTS

After the war, Harry Freud initiated postwar restitution proceedings that extended over nearly two decades and involved restitution offices administered by the American Allies, as well as authorities in Austria and Germany. Throughout his efforts to obtain either restitution or monetary compensation, Harry expressed deep frustration with the complexity and protracted nature of restitution procedures, particularly in Austria. During his lifetime, he did not receive any restitution or compensation payments, including for the looted cultural property or for the Aryanization of the *Allgemeiner Tarif-Anzeiger*, which had been expropriated in 1938.<sup>43</sup>

As the only surviving immediate family member after the war, aside from his mother, Harry filed his first restitution dossier with the American authorities as early as in 1945.<sup>44</sup> Several years later, in 1959, he approached the German authorities to claim jewelry, securities, furniture, and artworks that had been looted from his parents' apartment.<sup>45</sup>

Regardless of the jurisdiction to which he appealed, restitution efforts remained fragmentary, with limited success.

Surviving postwar records illustrate a typical pattern of delayed restitution, with monetary compensation granted only for select categories (such as securities and jewelry) and no object-level

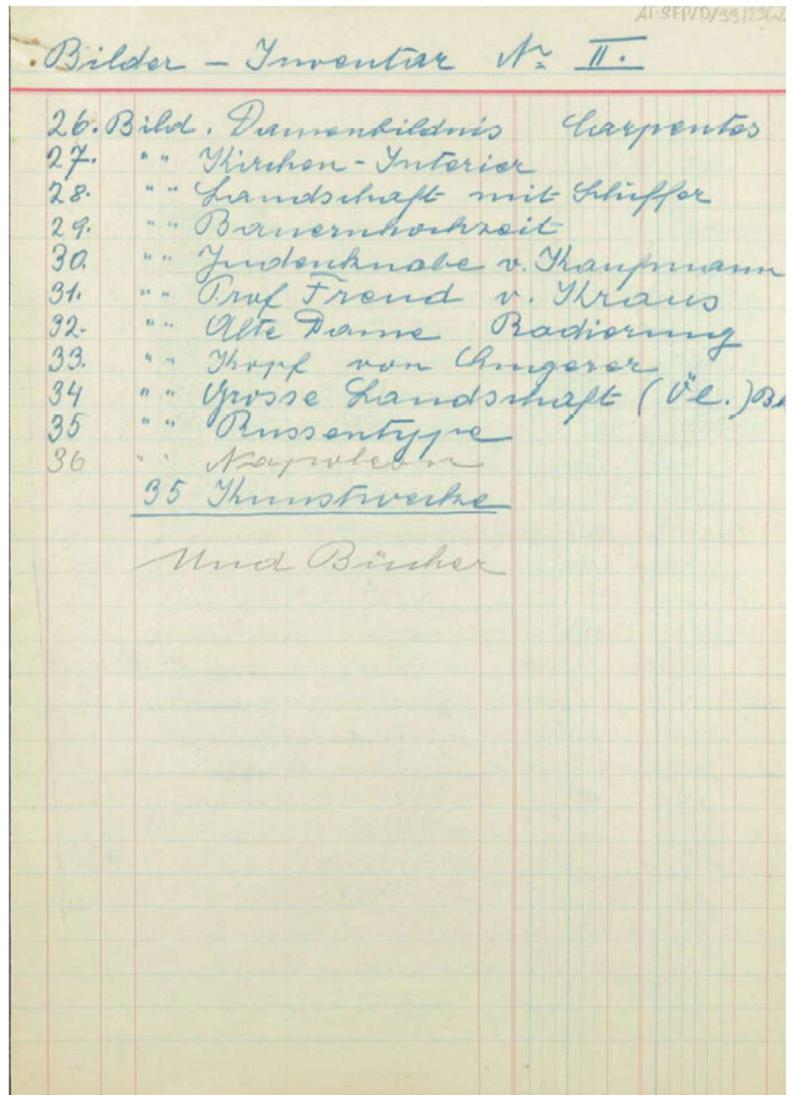


Image: Inventory of Alexander Freud's apartment, Emigrationsakt Alexander Freud AT-SFP/D/39-41

<sup>43</sup> The loss of his bank accounts and insurances was only compensated in the 2000s, see: [https://crt-ii.org/awards/apdfs/Freud\\_Alexander&Harry.pdf](https://crt-ii.org/awards/apdfs/Freud_Alexander&Harry.pdf), accessed December 19, 2025.

<sup>44</sup> DN 1929 -- US, USACA - Property Control Branch, 1945-1950, PC/V/I/28 Harry And Sophie Freud -Cases and Reports Pertaining to Property Administered by the Vienna Area Command (VAC), online at: <https://www.fold3.com/image/306500855/pcvi28-harry-and-sophie-freud-page-1-us-usaca-property-control-branch-1945-1950> (ff).

<sup>45</sup> Verfahren Dr. Harry Freud, Yonkers 5, 157 Alta Avenue, New York/USA, gegen das Deutsche Reich, B Rep. 025-06 Nr. 63 WGA 6076/59; see also: Eidesstattliche Erklärung von Harry Freud über entzogenen Schmuck und Hausrat AT-SFP/D/71/13/14; and: AT-SFP/D/71/17/41.

restitution of the cultural and religious objects looted from his parents', uncles', or aunts' apartments.<sup>46</sup>

Following Harry's death in 1968, and that of his mother two years later, his widow Leli Freud received a partial settlement on November 8, 1972, which covered some of the securities that had been aryanized and compensation for looted jewelry. The settlement did not include compensation for any of the furniture and paintings that had been looted as well.

The story of Alexander Freud's cultural property loss is closely connected to the role of Dr. Erich Führer, previously discussed. Führer's law office, located at Seilerstätte 20 in Vienna's first district, was only a few minutes' walk from Alexander Freud's apartment on Biberstrasse. Führer played a central role in the dispossession of Alexander Freud's property, including financial assets such as bank accounts and securities. Harry Freud also accused Führer of being responsible for the confiscation of his father's Hudson automobile (Model 1938), which he had only purchased in December 1937.<sup>47</sup>

Moreover, Sophie and Harry Freud alleged that Führer was involved in the confiscation of a stamp collection, which he reportedly valued at RM 30,000, as well as the seizure of the family's silver, either for delivery to the state or for private appropriation, or both.<sup>48</sup>

After the war, the law office formerly headed by Dr. Erich Führer was successively administered by Dr. Otto Löb<sup>49</sup>, whom Harry Freud retained as legal counsel to represent his interests in reparations proceedings and compensation claims. Löb repeatedly emphasized that Alexander Freud had attempted to safeguard his valuables, including furniture, silver, and artworks, by depositing them with the *Bäuml* logistics company for transport abroad. Instead, these belongings were seized by the Vugesta.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Restitution proceedings, except for those preserved in the National Archives and Records Administration, as well as in Berlin's Landesarchiv, are preserved under signature 71 of the online available Freud archive: Restitutionsakt Alexander Freud AT-SFP/D/71.

See also: <https://www.freud-museum.at/en/exhibitions-program/exhibition-details/articles/documents-of-injustice-the-case-of-freud>, accessed December 17, 2025.

<sup>47</sup> Brief von Alexander Freud an Erich Führer betreffend Ausfuhr des Hudson Wagens, AT-SFP/D/39/302; Brief von Erich Führer an den Allgemeinen Tarifeinnehmer betreffend Ausfuhr des Hudson Wagens, AT-SFP/D/39/306; Brief von Erich Führer an Alexander Freud betreffend Möbeltransport; Hudson Wagen, AT-SFP/D/39/311.

<sup>48</sup> DN 1929 -- US, USACA - Property Control Branch, 1945-1950, PC/V/I/28 Harry And Sophie Freud -Cases and Reports Pertaining to Property Administered by the Vienna Area Command (VAC), online at: <https://www.fold3.com/image/306500855/pcvi28-harry-and-sophie-freud-page-9-us-usaca-property-control-branch-1945-1950>, accessed December 27, 2025; and: <https://www.fold3.com/image/306500855/pcvi28-harry-and-sophie-freud-page-10-us-usaca-property-control-branch-1945-1950>, accessed December 27, 2025; see also: Eidesstattliche Erklärung von Sophie Freud betreffend Schmuck, Möbel, Silber, Wagen und Briefmarkensammlung, AT-SFP/D/71/25.

<sup>49</sup> Otto Löb (Loeb), born on March 17, 1882, was a Jewish lawyer in Vienna since 1913. During the Holocaust he was barred from working but protected due his "privileged mixed marriage." In 1945, he was reinstated as a lawyer. He died in 1969. *Österreichisches Anwaltsblatt*, 09 (2012): 431, online at: [https://www.riel.at/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Riel-AnwBl\\_2012-09.pdf](https://www.riel.at/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Riel-AnwBl_2012-09.pdf), accessed December 19, 2025.

<sup>50</sup> DN1929-US, USACA-Property Control Branch, 1945-1950. Cases and Reports Pertaining to Property Administered by the Vienna Area Command (VAC). PC/V/I/28 Harry And Sophie Freud (1945-1950), online at: <https://www.fold3.com/image/306500855/pcvi28-harry-and-sophie-freud-page-10-us-usaca-property-control-branch-1945-1950>, accessed December 19, 2025.

On May 9, 1946, Otto Löb submitted a fifteen-page report to the American Property Control Office, located at Porzellangasse 51 in Vienna, detailing the looting of Alexander Freud's property and summarizing information provided by Harry Freud. On page 10, the report addressed the property stored with the *Bäuml* company, which had been intended for shipment abroad but was confiscated by the Vugesta and transported to the Rotunde, a Gestapo-run depot for seized objects located in Vienna's Prater district.<sup>51</sup>

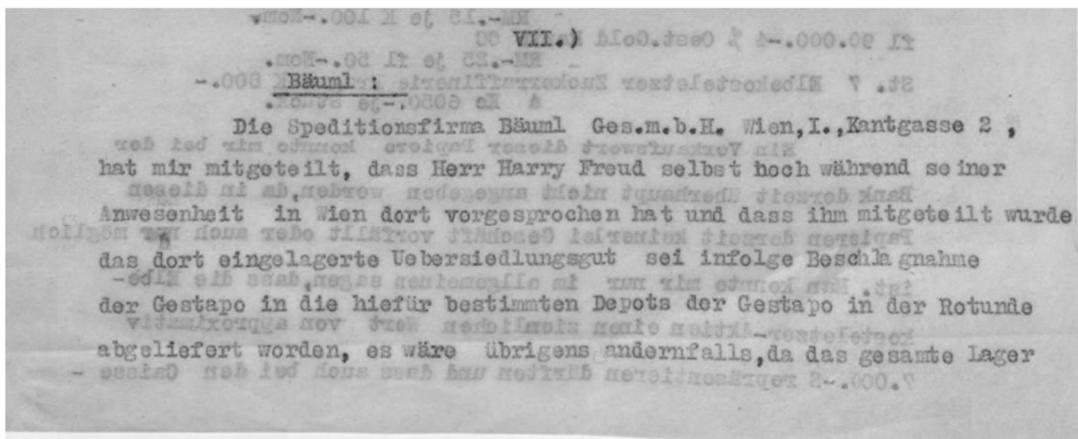


Image: Selection of page 10 from Otto Löb's letter; <https://www.fold3.com/image/306501124/pcvi28-harry-and-sophie-freud-page-25-us-usaca-property-control-branch-1945-1950>

On page 11, Löb further noted that the *Bäuml* company's warehouse was hit by Allied bombing in the final phase of the war, resulting in the destruction of most of its remaining inventory. He also noted that Alexander Freud's entire silver collection had been looted.<sup>52</sup>

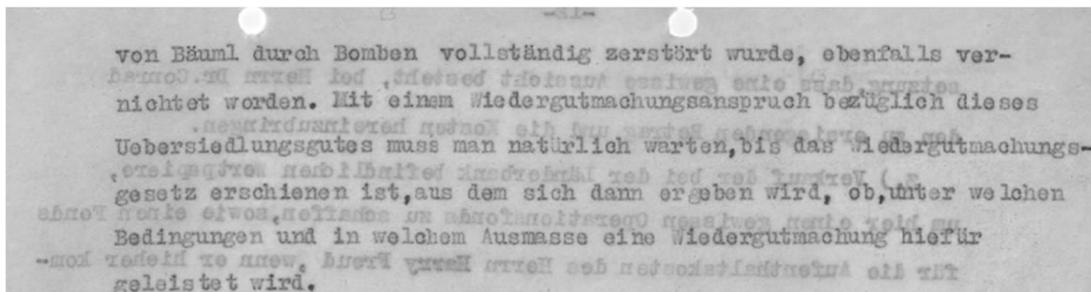


Image: Selection of page 11 from Otto Löb's letter; <https://www.fold3.com/image/306501141/pcvi28-harry-and-sophie-freud-page-26-us-usaca-property-control-branch-1945-1950>

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<sup>51</sup> DN 1929 -- US, USACA - Property Control Branch, 1945-1950, PC/V/I/28 Harry And Sophie Freud -Cases and Reports Pertaining to Property Administered by the Vienna Area Command (VAC), online at: <https://www.fold3.com/image/306501124/pcvi28-harry-and-sophie-freud-page-25-us-usaca-property-control-branch-1945-1950>, accessed December 27, 2025.

<sup>52</sup> DN 1929 -- US, USACA - Property Control Branch, 1945-1950, PC/V/I/28 Harry And Sophie Freud -Cases and Reports Pertaining to Property Administered by the Vienna Area Command (VAC), online at: <https://www.fold3.com/image/306501141/pcvi28-harry-and-sophie-freud-page-26-us-usaca-property-control-branch-1945-1950>, accessed December 27, 2025.

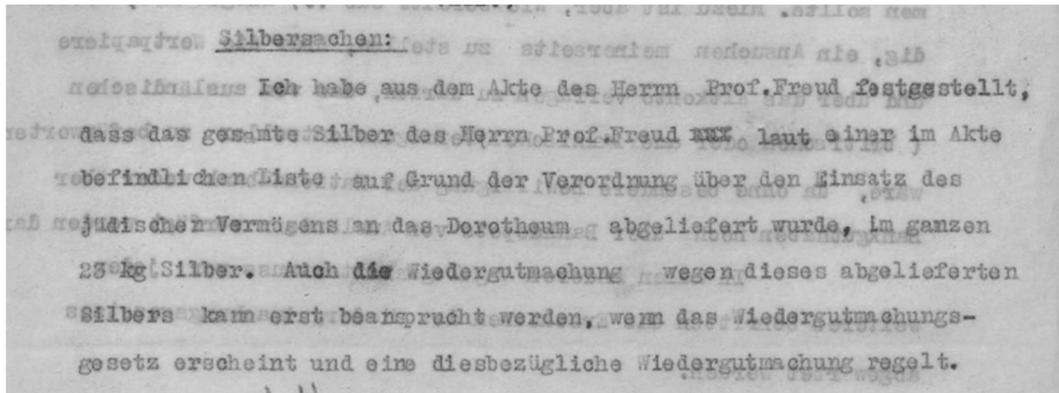


Image: Selection of page 11 from Otto Löb's letter; <https://www.fold3.com/image/306501141/pcvi28-harry-and-sophie-freud-page-26-us-usaca-property-control-branch-1945-1950>

A few weeks later, on May 24, 1946, the *Bäuml* shipping company—by then operating under the name A. Bartz Ges., Vienna—responded to an inquiry from the Headquarters Vienna Area Command, Military Government Section, Property Control, confirming that the Vugesta had seized its premises in 1940 under Order No. 210/5.

Frustrated by the lack of progress, Harry Freud wrote to the U.S. Forces, Vienna Area Command, Property Control Subsection, on January 18, 1947, requesting an update on his case. He noted in the letter that for many months he received no requests from the U.S. forces other than a demand for proof of his American citizenship, and even that was never acknowledged.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> DN 1929 -- US, USACA - Property Control Branch, 1945-1950, PC/V/I/28 Harry And Sophie Freud -Cases and Reports Pertaining to Property Administered by the Vienna Area Command (VAC), online at: <https://www.fold3.com/image/306501825/pcvi28-harry-and-sophie-freud-page-63-us-usaca-property-control-branch-1945-1950>, accessed December 27, 2025.

Harr: [redacted]  
Property Control  
7753 MG Det  
APO 541, U.S. Army

18 January 1947

answered 30/1/47

A 27255

U.S. Forces, Austria  
Vienna Area Command  
Property Control Sub-Section  
APO 57, U.S. Army

Gentlemen:

While in Vienna as a soldier in October 1945 I filed a claim with you concerning confiscated property in Vienna.

For many months now I did not get any more reports from you whether some of my property has been found or whether any new developments have taken place. I did receive a request from you, however, to send proof of my American citizenship, which I did, but I never heard whether you have received it.

Recently I came again to Austria as a civilian employee of the War Department and am Chief of the Real Estate Sub-Section, Property Control, Land Salzburg. I would appreciate if you kindly would send me to the above address a notification about any new developments in the matter of my claim.

Thanking you, I remain

Very truly yours,

*Harry Freud*  
HARRY FREUD

*Mit Nachb. 1. 4. 1947  
Telefonat 30/1/47  
Wander Bank Bank  
Masha Munkin*

Image: <https://www.fold3.com/image/306501825/pvvi28-harry-and-sophie-freud-page-63-us-usaca-property-control-branch-1945-1950>

Despite Harry Freud's persistent efforts, no restitution or compensation was achieved in the late 1940s. In 1959, he filed a restitution application in the Federal Republic of Germany under the *Bundesrückerstattungsgesetz* (BRüG), seeking compensation for securities, insurance policies, and other

assets, including claims for his father's art and jewelry collection.<sup>54</sup> For this purpose, Harry Freud repeatedly contacted the Austrian Consulate General to document and register his losses.

In a 1961 document titled "Minutes of the Interrogation of Harry Freud at the Consulate General in New York" (*Protokoll der Einvernahme Harry Freuds im Generalkonsulat in New York*), he provided a detailed account of his confiscated property. This was preceded by a three-page affidavit from 1959, also recorded at the Austrian Consulate General, in which Harry Freud meticulously listed looted jewelry, silver, and household goods.<sup>55</sup>

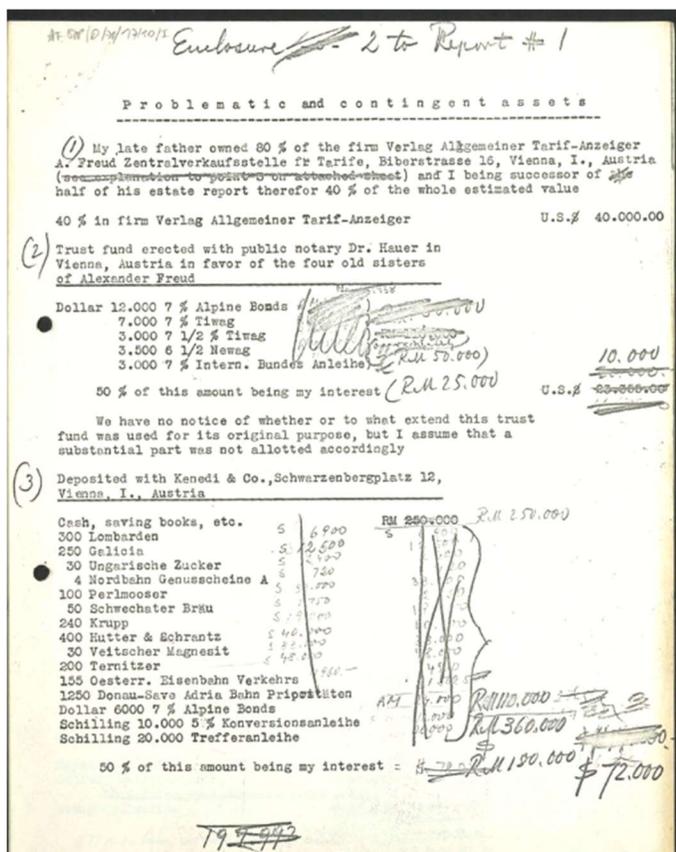


Image: Minutes of the interrogation of Harry Freud at the Consulate General in New York, 1961, AT-SFP/D/71/17/10

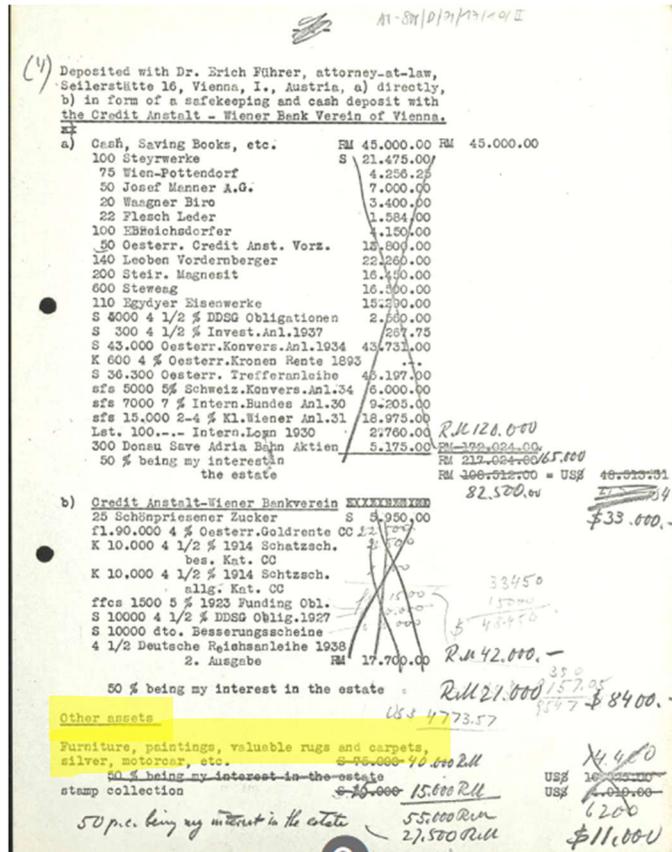


Image: Minutes of the interrogation of Harry Freud at the Consulate General in New York, 1961, AT-SFP/D/71/17/10

With the assistance of his lawyer Alfred Inda<sup>56</sup>, who had previously served as Sigmund Freud's, trusted legal representative, Harry also attempted to pursue restitution claims against the Austrian state. Most of his efforts proved to be unsuccessful, both with respect to monetary assets and to the

<sup>54</sup> B Rep. 025-06 Nr. 6076/59; B Rep. 025-06 Nr. 6074/59; B Rep. 025-06 Nr. 6075/59, Landesarchiv Berlin.

<sup>55</sup> Eidesstattliche Erklärung von Harry Freud über entzogenen Schmuck und Hausrat, 1959, AT-SFP/D/71/17/41.

<sup>56</sup> "The Writing of Dr. Indra," Sigmund Freud Museum Blog, <https://www.freud-museum.at/en/blog-posts-details/articles/the-writing-of-dr-indra>, accessed December 19, 2025.

Aryanized household goods.<sup>57</sup> In the 1950s, however, Harry Freud reached settlements with the *Tiroler Wasserkraftwerke AG* (TIWAG) and the *Österreichisch-Alpinen Montangesellschaft*.<sup>58</sup>

In March 1961, the Fund for the Compensation of Losses of Assets of Political Persecutees (Compensation Fund) was established with the *Abgeltungsfondsgesetz* (“Compensation Fund Act”), which was charged with paying compensation to Nazi victims and who had suffered losses of assets as a result was initiated in Austria.<sup>59</sup> Harry initially pursued restitution through the *Abgeltungsfonds* but soon considered withdrawing his claim so as not to jeopardize his pending restitution proceedings in Germany.<sup>60</sup> At the same time, he had to weigh not only whether to withdraw proceedings in Austria in favor of those in Germany, but also the reverse. Overall, Harry Freud pursued proceedings wherever there was a reasonable prospect of success and, in cases of conflict between Austrian and German law, favored proceedings under German law, as German restitution legislation was more advantageous at the time. Ultimately, payment from the *Abgeltungsfonds* was received only by Sophie Freud, with the assistance of her Viennese lawyer, Hedda (Hedwig) Bauersax.<sup>61</sup>

From the early 1960s onwards, Harry shifted his claims to Germany, as his lawyer Alfred Indra believed that the prospects of success were better in Germany than pursuing (partial) restitution in Austria. In Germany, Harry Freud conducted his proceedings primarily under the already mentioned Federal Restitution Act (BRüG).

Only after Harry’s death, in 1972, and again in 1975, his widow, Leli Freud, received partial compensation, following legal proceedings and the intervention of her new Viennese lawyer, Martin Binder, before the Chamber of Reparations in Berlin.<sup>62</sup> Nonetheless, approximately one third of the compensation award was deducted to cover accumulated legal fees, as well as a prior down payment of 10,000 schillings made by Harry Freud.<sup>63</sup> Three years later, in 1975, a second partial payment was issued. Overall, these payments compensated only part of the losses relating to Alexander Freud’s securities portfolio and jewelry,<sup>64</sup> and did not address his art collection or seized furniture.

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<sup>57</sup> See for example: Brief von Harry Freud an Alfred Indra betreffend Führungszeugnis und Antrag beim Abgeltungsfonds durch Sophie Freud, AT-SFP/D/71/85/1.

<sup>58</sup> Ausfertigung des Vergleichs zwischen Harry Freud und der Österreichisch-Alpinen Montangesellschaft vom 28.04.1960, AT-SFP/D/71/70/2 and Verhandlungsprotokoll zum am 19.04.1960 beschlossenen Vergleich zwischen Harry Freud und Alfred Indra einerseits, Martin Binder und Tiroler Wasserkraftwerke AG andererseits, AT-SFP/D/71/69.

<sup>59</sup> Compensation was provided in the following categories of losses: bank accounts, cash, mortgage claims, discriminating taxes and charges. These were originally intended to cover the *Reichsfluchtsteuer* (“Reich Flight Tax”) and the *Judenvermögensabgabe* (“Jewish Capital Levy”). In subsequent years, this was extended to include further types of discriminating payments and fees. In total, six million US Dollar in Schilling was provided for the “allocations”. For more information, see: <https://www.findbuch.at/files-of-the-compensation-fund-165>, accessed December 30, 2025. Brief von Harry Freud an Alfred Indra betreffend Rückziehung bestimmter Anträge in Deutschland zugunsten des Antrags beim Abgeltungsfonds, AT-SFP/D/71/107/2.

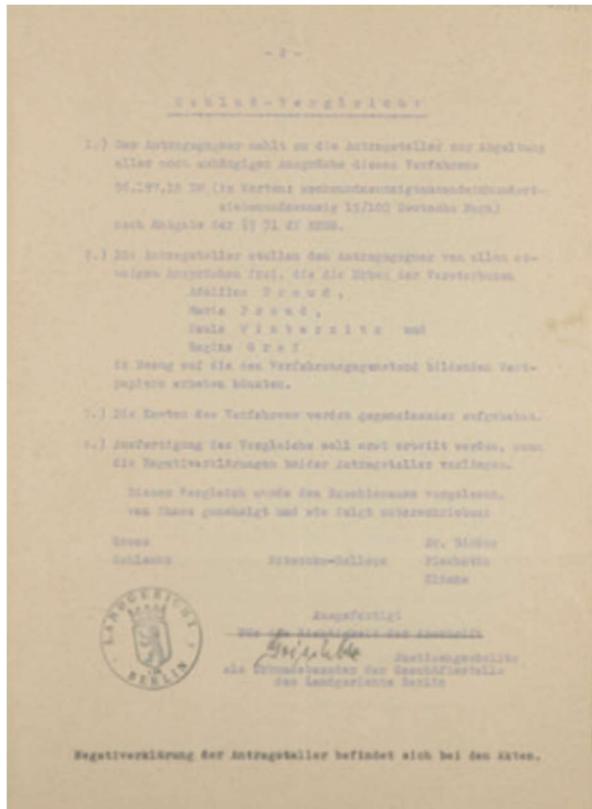
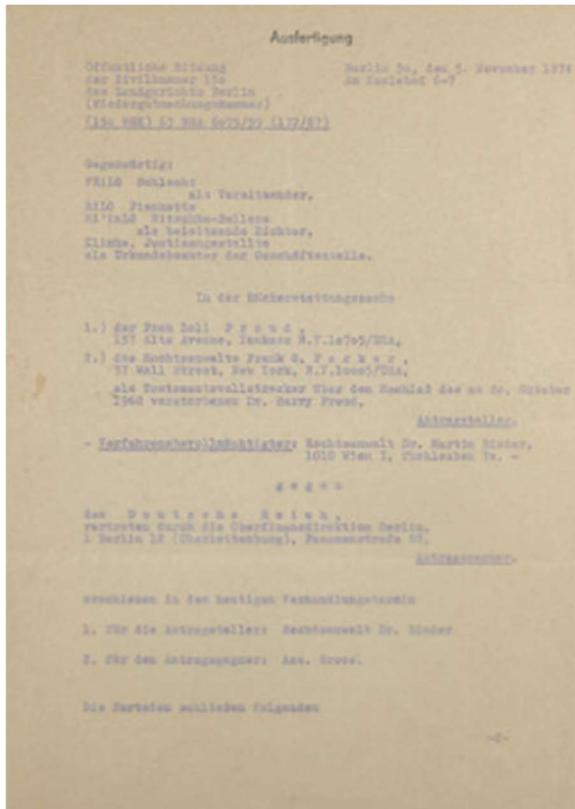
<sup>61</sup> Information provided by Loic Kurzweil, Library, Freud Museum, December 30, 2025.

<sup>62</sup> Frank G. Parker to Martin Binder, March 23, 1977, AT-SFP/D 68/297; Schlussvergleich des Rückstellungsverfahrens vom Landesgericht Berlin nach Erben Adolfine Freud, Maria Freud, Paula Winternitz und Regina Graf und Aktenvermerk Kanzlei Binder mit Leli Freud, AT-SFP/D/68/297/1.

<sup>63</sup> *The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice Catalog*, p. 95.

<sup>64</sup> Frank G. Parker to Martin Binder, March 23, 1977, AT-SFP/D 68/297.

In the end, no compensation was ever paid for Alexander Freud's looted cultural property, including his painting collection. The only additional compensation to the two partial payments in the 1970s occurred in the 2000s through the Claims Resolution Tribunal (CRT).<sup>65</sup>



Images: Schlussvergleich des Rückstellungsverfahrens vom Landgericht Berlin nach Erben Adolfine Freud, Maria Freud, Paula Winternitz und Regina Graf und Aktenvermerk Kanzlei Binder mit Leli Freud, AT-SFP/D/68/297/1

<sup>65</sup> [https://crt-ii.org/awards/apdfs/Freud\\_Alexander&Harry.pdf](https://crt-ii.org/awards/apdfs/Freud_Alexander&Harry.pdf), accessed December 19, 2025.

## The Wilhelm Viktor Krausz painting of Sigmund Freud

Among Alexander Freud's looted cultural property was his painting collection, which included, among other works, Wilhelm Viktor Krausz's 1936 oil portrait of Sigmund Freud. Alexander acquired the painting in 1936 and was forced to leave it behind in Vienna in 1938.



Image: Picture album 1937/1938, Sigmund Freud's painting by W.V. Krausz in April 1937, Photo Nr. 12/22-23, AT-SFP/D/68B-3153-G/13

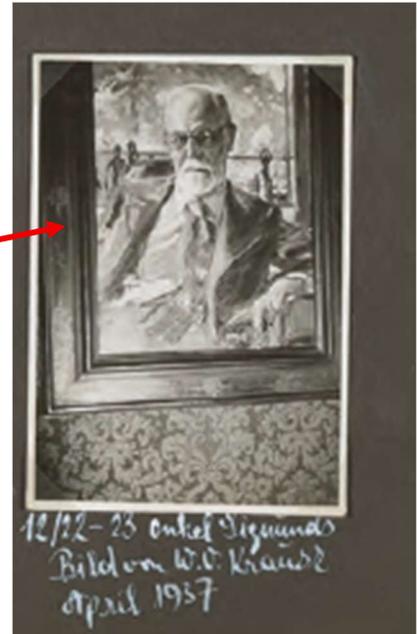


Image: Picture of a portrait of Sigmund Freud by Wilhelm Viktor Krausz, AT-SFP/D/50/26

For decades, the painting was believed to be lost, and only Krausz's studio copies were thought to have survived. More recent research by the team of the Sigmund Freud Museum Vienna, however, has identified a painting acquired by the Jewish Museum Vienna in 2019—long believed to be a studio copy—as the original work. The painting entered the collection through an acquisition made possible by the Friends of the Jewish Museum Vienna and is currently on loan to the Sigmund Freud Museum. Renewed provenance research has been initiated to fully clarify the painting's ownership history<sup>66</sup>

The oil portrait of Sigmund Freud was painted by the Viennese Jewish artist Wilhelm Viktor Krausz in the summer of 1936. Alexander Freud purchased the portrait and displayed it prominently in his salon, as documented in family photographs.<sup>67</sup> The painting's significance for Alexander's son Harry, who had emigrated to the United States, is evidenced both by his repeated—though ultimately

<sup>66</sup> <https://freunde-jmw.at/project/victor-krausz-bildnis-sigmund-freud-1936/>, accessed December 27, 2025; and: <https://www.vienna.at/believed-lost-freud-portrait-in-vienna-is-likely-original-from/9702707>, accessed December 27, 2025.

<sup>67</sup> *The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice Catalog*, p. 5; see also Freud Archive: AT-SFP/D/68B-3153-G/13, and: AT-SFP/D/50/26/a.

unsuccessful—postwar restitution efforts and by his purchase of a studio copy of the portrait in 1949.

The studio copy itself had been restituted to Krausz by the Vienna Municipal Collections (today's Wien Museum) in 1948.<sup>68</sup> Krausz, like Harry Freud, had fled Vienna and settled in New York, and wrote to Harry on October 5, 1949, after Harry purchased the painting, stating: “*I hope that the portrait I painted of your world-famous uncle, Professor SIEGMUND [sic] FREUD, which you recently purchased in my studio, will fill your soul with the same contentment and satisfaction as that which was lost to you in Vienna.*”<sup>69</sup>



*Image:* Wilhelm Victor Krausz [photograph] / (photographed by Peter A. Juley & Son), <https://learninglab.si.edu/resources/view/870973>

### ***Excuse – Wilhelm Victor Krausz***

Wilhelm Viktor Krausz, like the Freud family, was persecuted as a Jew and fled Vienna for New York in 1939. He was forced to leave behind his material possessions, including works from his studio as well as his personal art collection. According to a restitution claim filed in 1947 via the American Property Control Branch with Austria's Federal Monuments Office (*Bundesdenkmalamt*), Krausz was compelled to abandon approximately 250 oil paintings, most of them his own, from his studio in Wohllebengasse in Vienna's fourth district. These holdings included the so-called “studio copy” of the Freud portrait.

According to the same claim, Krausz's collection also comprised fifteen works by other artists, including paintings attributed to Rubens, David Teniers, Ochtervelt, Van Goyen, and Dürer.<sup>70</sup> As in the case of the Freud family, Krausz's works

were confiscated in 1941 by the Vugesta and transported to one of its depots, the so-called Rotunde in Vienna's Prater.

At the Rotunde—and later at Vienna's Exhibition Center (*Messegelände*) and the Sophiensäle—the Vugesta organized private sales of confiscated Jewish property, preceded by expert appraisals.<sup>71</sup> In Krausz's case, the appraisal was conducted by Julius Fargel, who worked both as a restorer for the Vienna Municipal Collections (today's Wien Museum) and as an appraiser for the Rotunde.

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<sup>68</sup> Johanna Frei, “Provenance: “Austrian Private Ownership” The Disappearance and Reappearance of an Original,” *The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice Catalog*, p.111; [https://www.wienmuseum.at/items/uploads/items/Restitutionsbericht\\_2003\\_bf.pdf](https://www.wienmuseum.at/items/uploads/items/Restitutionsbericht_2003_bf.pdf), accessed December 19, 2025.

<sup>69</sup> *The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice Catalog*, p. 5.

<sup>70</sup> DN1929, US, USACA - Property Control Branch, 1945-1950, A-128 William Viktor Krausz, 1945 - 1950, <https://www.fold3.com/image/306827386/a-128-william-viktor-krausz-page-5-us-usaca-property-control-branch-1945-1950>, accessed December 27, 2025.

<sup>71</sup> <https://www.lexikon-provenienzforschung.org/en/vugesta>, accessed December 17, 2025.

Three years after the war, in 1948, Fargel claimed that he had saved Krausz's paintings from destruction by transferring them to the Municipal Collections, allegedly acting against instructions. Following the appraisal, the City of Vienna purchased the Freud portrait, along with thirty-eight additional paintings. Fargel himself retained three of Krausz's paintings, which he later "donated" to the City of Vienna.<sup>72</sup>

After the *Bundesdenkmalamt* received Krausz's restitution claim, it responded that the whereabouts of the paintings—with seven exceptions—were unknown. Shortly thereafter, however, in the autumn of 1948, the Vienna Municipal Collections mounted an exhibition that included Krausz's portrait of Freud. The New York-based exile newspaper *Der Aufbau* reported on the "rediscovery" of the portrait.<sup>73</sup>

This development did not escape Harry Freud's attention, who hoped that the painting was the original seized from his family's apartment. He informed Krausz of the painting's reappearance, prompting initial inquiries. Based on archival files and identifiable differences from a 1937 photograph, it was determined that the exhibited work was not the original from Alexander Freud's collection, but rather the studio copy.<sup>74</sup> The studio copy was restituted to Krausz by the City of Vienna, on the condition that the artist produce a replacement for the Municipal Collections. Krausz agreed and painted the Freud portrait for the fifth time in 1949.<sup>75</sup>

After the restituted studio copy arrived in New York, it was purchased by Harry Freud, who informed his cousin Anna Freud in London: "*You will be interested to hear that yesterday, working closely with the painter Prof. Krausz, I received Uncle Sigmund's painting. It is not the original that Father acquired from Krausz in Vienna, but a completely identical studio copy produced by Krausz while still in Vienna. Like everything else, our painting is untraceable [...] I was very pleased that this transaction was successful and that at least one memory of the good old days hangs in our living room.*"<sup>76</sup>

The replica painted by Krausz in 1949 as a replacement for the restituted studio copy was returned to Krausz's heirs in 2011 and subsequently acquired, ensuring that it remains part of the Wien Museum's collection today.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> City of Vienna, *Restitution Report*, 2005, pp. 181–183.

<sup>73</sup> *Aufbau*, 14.36 (1948), online at: <https://archive.org/details/aufbau>, accessed December 17, 2025.

<sup>74</sup> *The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice Catalog*, p.112.

<sup>75</sup> [https://www.wienmuseum.at/items/uploads/items/Restitutionsbericht\\_2003\\_bf.pdf](https://www.wienmuseum.at/items/uploads/items/Restitutionsbericht_2003_bf.pdf), accessed December 19, 2025.

<sup>76</sup> *The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice Catalog*, p.113.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid*, p.113.

## CONCLUSION

The trajectory of Alexander Freud's cultural property exemplifies the systematic, multi-stage process through which the Nazi regime dispossessed Jewish families of their material, cultural, and intellectual assets. Beginning with the *Anschluss* in March 1938, the Freud family was subjected to escalating legal, administrative, and coercive measures that transformed private property into assets deemed available for confiscation, forced sale, or destruction.

In Alexander Freud's case, dispossession unfolded incrementally. After applying for a temporary exit visa on March 26, 1938, and leaving Vienna for Switzerland on May 17, his ability to safeguard property was severely constrained by the tale of a provisional departure. Unlike his brother Sigmund, who was able to export his household effects and antiquities, Alexander was compelled to leave behind nearly all of his belongings. His furniture, artworks, books, silver, and other cultural objects—painstakingly inventoried by his sister Rosa in early 1939—were placed in storage with the *Bäuml* hauling company, pending export approval. Although an export permit from the Federal Monuments Office was granted on June 7, 1939, bureaucratic delays, financial obstacles, and ultimately the outbreak of World War II on September 1, 1939, rendered the transport impossible. In 1940, these stored objects were seized by the *Vogesen* under Order No. 210/5, marking the definitive loss of Alexander Freud's cultural property.

The fate of Alexander's belongings was neither exceptional nor isolated. It was part of a broader pattern of cultural loss that affected multiple members of the Freud family. Sigmund Freud, though able to rescue his study, library, furniture, and antiquities, nonetheless suffered substantial cultural losses through the destruction of the International Psychoanalytical Publishing House's inventory—estimated at fifteen railcars of books confiscated and destroyed in 1938. His sisters, who were unable to escape Vienna, endured successive waves of dispossession: first through forced relocations, then through the confiscation and liquidation of household goods, books, and religious objects, and finally through deportation and murder in 1942. Their material worlds vanished alongside their lives, leaving little documentary trace beyond administrative records of seizure.

Postwar restitution efforts underscore the enduring consequences of these losses. Beginning in 1945, Harry Freud pursued restitution through American, Austrian, and German authorities, filing claims that spanned more than two decades. Despite extensive documentation, affidavits, and legal advocacy—most notably through attorneys Otto Löb, Alfred Indra, and Martin Binder—restitution remained partial and fragmentary. No object-level restitution of Alexander Freud's cultural property ever occurred. Compensation was limited largely to certain categories of financial assets and jewelry and was granted only after Harry's death, with partial payments made to his widow in 1972 and 1975. Neither Alexander's publishing house nor his art collection, including the lost 1936 portrait of Sigmund Freud by Wilhelm Viktor Krausz, was ever restituted.

Taken together, the experiences of Alexander Freud and his relatives illuminate the broader historical reality of Nazi cultural plunder: a process characterized not only by the physical seizure of objects, but also by the bureaucratic erosion of ownership, the fragmentation of restitution, and the near-impossibility of recovery after the war. The journey of Alexander Freud's cultural property—

from private possession to forced storage, confiscation by the Vugesta, and ultimate disappearance—mirrors the fate of countless Jewish families whose cultural legacies were systematically dismantled. At the same time, the survival, rediscovery, and ongoing provenance research surrounding works such as Krausz’s portrait of Sigmund Freud demonstrate both the persistence of these histories and the continuing responsibility to document, contextualize, and, where possible, restore them.