

# Timeline Jenő Vida



Jenő Vida

## Holocaust History

*The emancipation of Hungarian Jews is progressing rapidly, which is intensifying the immigration of Eastern Jews*

*After Hungarian Jewry is legally declared a religious denomination, many Jewish schools open their doors. First Zionist World Congress*

*Hungarian Jews are largely integrated into Hungarian society with the spread of the Neolog religious movement. Many Jews play a key role in Hungary's culture and economy*

*The importance of the orphanage's elementary school is enhanced by the fact that it is attended not only by orphaned children*

*With regard to the Jewish question, historians consider the Horthy era (1919–1944) to be controversial*

*Despite rising antisemitism, several Jewish industrialists are elected to the Upper House of Parliament and to various committees*

*Before the introduction of the anti-Jewish Laws, the affluent Jewish members of Hungarian society still boldly embark on construction projects and investments*

*Under Nazi Germany's increasing influence, Hungary regains territory it has previously lost due to the Trianon Treaty of 1920. According to the 1941 population census, 725,000 residents are considered Jewish*

*The adoption of the first and second anti-Jewish laws restricts Jewish economic and intellectual life*

*Hungary declares war on the Soviet Union. Under law, Jews can be called up for unarmed labor service. The adoption of the third anti-Jewish Law invalidates previous exemptions*

*March 19: Wehrmacht occupies Hungary*

*In the fall, Hungary's industrial and cultural assets are relocated to the Reich*

*Between 1941 and 1945, more than 400,000 Hungarian Jews—200,000 of them from the territory of present-day Hungary—are murdered in the Holocaust*

*Budapest is in ruins; the Danube bridge is destroyed*

*Summer: Before the signing of the Paris Peace Treaty, the American authorities invite the Hungarian restitution committees to the Western occupied zones. Despite the fact that Hungary is considered an "ex-enemy" state, restitution begins*

*The Hungarian Restitution Mission, is led by László Varvasovszky who handles the repatriation of assets that were relocated to Austria*

*There are no exact figures on how many Hungarian Jews leave Hungary before the establishment of the State of Israel, nor is it known how many Hungarian Jewish displaced persons are not returning*

*Jewish survivors or their heirs can only reclaim their belongings if they pay the transportation costs, customs clearance, and valuation. The procedures for taking possession is strictly regulated*

*Hungarian law states that émigrées are deprived of their citizenship and their entire assets. This process coincides with the nationalization program*

*Hungarian museums hold the restituted works of former Jewish collectors in a "legal deposit" status. The Vida paintings displayed in 1952 were classified differently*

*The Hungarian secret service launches historical research into Hungarian-German cooperation. These investigations are conducted in part within the framework of the so-called anti-Zionist campaign*

*As is customary at the time, restitution courts question eyewitnesses, including ex colonel-general Otto Winkelmann. No information is obtained from Hungary as there is no mutual agreement until 1973 between the Federal Republic of Germany and Hungary's People's Republic*

*There is no data on how many paintings from former Jewish collectors are held in Hungarian museums. If a museum considers these works to be in lawful deposit, it is not obliged to restitute them to the heirs. The situation does not change with the signing of the Washington Principles*

1872

30 August:  
Born as Jenő Weil in Budapest

1897

After completing his studies, Jenő Vida starts to work at the Hungarian General Coalmine Company (MÁK Rt.)

1914

Vida becomes the company's CEO

1922

Vida is elected chairman of the orphanage of the Pest Jewish Community

1922

Regent Miklós Horthy awards Vida the title of Royal Chief Economic Adviser

1928

Vida is appointed a permanent member of the Upper House of Parliament

1928

Vida and his family build a villa at 13–15 Bérc Street in Budapest, on the Buda side

1930

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1930

A vocational school is established at the boys' orphanage and is named after Vida

1938

1939:  
Vida resigns from the orphanage's leadership

1939

1941

Vida resigns from his position as CEO of the Coalmine Company

1944

Jenő Vida is deported and his family expelled from the villa on Bérc Street. German SS and police forces in Hungary relocate to Vida's villa on Bérc Street. The unit is led by Otto Winkelmann

1945

Jenő Vida perishes in Auschwitz

The surviving family members return and find the villa damaged and looted

1946

Vida's son-in-law submits a claim to the postwar Hungarian authorities and tries to trace the paintings that went missing from the villa

1947

Hungarian News Agency (MTI) announces that valuable Hungarian art treasures looted by SS troops have been recovered in Vienna. Among the artworks are Vida's paintings

Vida's surviving relatives leave Hungary for Latin America

1948

The art objects of Jenő Vida arrive in Budapest. The returned crates are opened at the Museum of Fine Arts

1948

Solicitor László Czeyda-Pommersheim acts on behalf of the Vida family. Despite persistent efforts, the legal representative is unable to recover the restituted artworks

1952

Exhibition of works of great Hungarian masters, Mihály Munkácsy in the Múcsarnok Hall of Art. Four paintings from Jenő Vida's collection, which were on temporary loan which were on a temporary loan for a Munkácsy exhibiton in February 1944, weeks before the German occupation, are on display. The canvases remain in Hungary

1952

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1955

The Hungarian Ministry of Interior Affairs launches an investigation into the Gestapo's "former connections" and investigates the basement of Vida's former villa

1959

The Vida Family submits a claim from Brazil pursuant to the Restitution Law (BRÜG) enacted in Germany. This claim is premised on the assumption that the artworks had been transferred to the territory of the former Third Reich

2002

Hungarian Treasury's Directorate of Property Rights (KVI) decides that the four Munkácsy canvases, lent by Jenő Vida to the Museum of Fine Arts for a temporary exhibition in early 1944, should be handed over to members of the Vida family, who had travelled to Budapest from South America