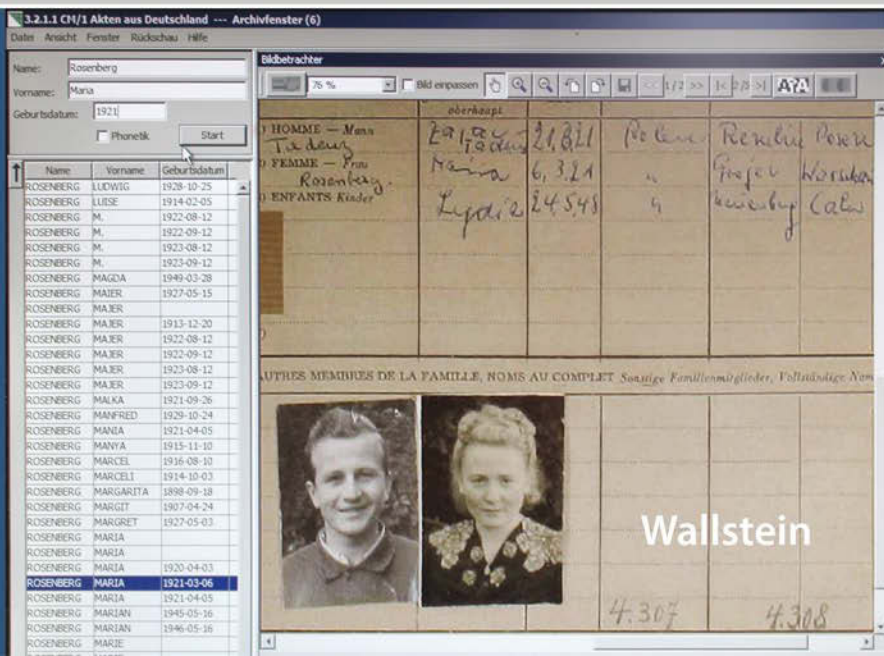


Herausgegeben von
Rebecca Boehling, Susanne Urban,
Elizabeth Anthony
und Suzanne Brown-Fleming

Jahrbuch des International Tracing Service



Freilegungen

JAHRBUCH DES INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE

Band 4

Herausgegeben i. A.
des ITS Bad Arolsen

Freilegungen

Spiegelungen der NS-Verfolgung und ihrer Konsequenzen

Herausgegeben von
Rebecca Boehling, Susanne Urban, Elizabeth Anthony
und Suzanne Brown-Fleming

Unter Mitarbeit von
Henning Borggräfe



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Grußwort

Als Direktorin des International Tracing Service (seit Anfang 2013) und als Historikerin der europäischen Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts und insbesondere des Holocaust und der deutschen Zeitgeschichte, ist es für mich ein Anliegen und zugleich eine gute Gelegenheit, ein Grußwort für das ITS-Jahrbuch 2015 zu schreiben. Während die ersten drei ITS Jahrbücher Aufsätze zu den Themen *Todesmärsche* (2012), *Frühe Zeugnisse Überlebender* (2013) und *Displaced Persons* (2014) versammelten, befasst sich dieser Band neben seinem stärker pädagogisch ausgerichteten Teil (*Erkenntnisse*) mit ausgewählten wissenschaftlichen Ergebnissen der Recherchen, die im ITS-Archiv durchgeführt werden. Alle Wissenschaftler und Wissenschaftlerinnen, die Beiträge zu dem Kapitel *Freilegungen* in diesem Band beigetragen haben, formulierten ihre Forschungsergebnisse auf der Grundlage von Beständen aus dem ITS-Archiv. Auch künftig wird dieser eher forschungsorientierte Teil der kommenden Jahrbücher immer solche Beiträge beinhalten, die sich Themen widmen und diese analysieren, die zum signifikanten Teil auf Dokumenten aus dem ITS-Archiv basieren.

Die Digitalisierung der ITS-Dokumente begann bereits im Jahre 1998, um eine schnellere und bessere Suche nach personenbezogenen Unterlagen für die Suchdiensttätigkeiten des ITS zu ermöglichen. Als die Entscheidung 2007 fiel, das Archiv für die Öffentlichkeit zugänglich zu machen, mussten neue Methoden der Erschließung und Indizierung entwickelt werden, auch um themenbezogene Recherchen zu erleichtern. Der ITS, mit Unterstützung seiner Partnerinstitutionen, die eine Kopie des digitalen ITS-Archivs besitzen, insbesondere das *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum* (USHMM), *Yad Vashem* und die *Wiener Library* in London, sind dabei, gemeinsam verbesserte Zugangs- und Suchmöglichkeiten zu entwickeln, damit Forscher es leichter haben, Recherchen in den oftmals nach Personennamen organisierten Beständen durchzuführen.

Nachdem das ITS-Archiv nun über ein halbes Jahrzehnt offiziell für die Forschung zugänglich ist, stellte sich uns die Frage, was bis jetzt an neuen Forschungsergebnissen auf der Basis der Dokumente des ITS-Archivs zum Thema Holocaust, Nazi-Verfolgung und der Zeit nach 1945 entstanden ist. Das *Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies* des USHMM und der ITS Bad Arolsen veranstalteten im Mai 2014 gemeinsam eine Konferenz in Washington, D. C., zu diesem Thema. Wir freuen uns, dass wir in diesem Band zwölf Beiträge, überarbeitete Versionen ausgewählter Vorträge, die in Washington gehalten wurden, präsentieren können.

Auch dieses Jahrbuch beschäftigt sich wieder mit Themen, in denen die Identitäten der einzelnen Verfolgten des Nazi-Regimes durch die Dokumente im ITS-Archiv zum Vorschein kommen, und die dadurch pädagogischen Zwecken dienen können. Der Leser erhält auch neue Einblicke in das Archiv. Wir freuen uns, wenn unsere Leserschaft, ob Forscher, Archivare, Schüler, Lehrer, Journalisten oder sonstige Interessierte, neue Informationen zum Thema der NS-Zeit und ihren Folgen, zu Opfern und Überlebenden durch die Lektüre unserer Jahrbücher erhalten.

Wir würden uns auch freuen, wenn Sie mehr über unser Archiv, unsere Forschungs- und Bildungsarbeit und über unseren Suchdienst, der Tausende von Anfragen von Verfolgten und ihren Familienmitgliedern zu ihren Schicksalen jedes Jahr beantwortet, erfahren wollen. Bitte besuchen Sie unsere Website www.its-arolsen.org, oder kommen Sie, wenn Sie Gelegenheit dazu haben, nach Bad Arolsen in Nordhessen. Kontaktieren Sie uns bitte vorher, um möglicherweise einen Besuch zu arrangieren. Meine Kolleginnen und Kollegen im ITS und ich würden uns freuen, mit Ihnen über unsere außerordentlichen Bestände, die im Juni 2013 als UNESCO-Weltdokumentenerbe anerkannt wurden, in Austausch zu treten.

Prof. Dr. Rebecca Boehling
Direktorin des International Tracing Service
Januar 2015

Freilegungen

A Sampling of Early Research Results
from ITS Archival Holdings Mirroring
NS-Persecution and its Consequences

Introduction

From 12 to 13 May 2014 the *International Tracing Service* (ITS) and the *Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum* (USHMM) co-sponsored a conference with the theme of »The International Tracing Service Collections and Holocaust Scholarship« at the USHMM in Washington, D.C.¹ A Call for Papers in the winter had solicited research projects that had made significant use of the ITS archive, whether at the ITS itself in Bad Arolsen or through the use of a digital copy either at the USHMM or at other institutions in Europe and in Israel. Ultimately 26 participants from Australia, Germany, Austria, the UK, France, Israel, Spain and the USA were selected on the basis of how their research displayed the value of ITS archival documents for Holocaust scholarship today and the potential they offer for future research. Samples from the work of half of these participants appear here in the 2015 ITS *Jahrbuch* in order to provide a glimpse into the potential of the ITS archive for research into victims of concentration camps, forced and slave labor, as well as into Displaced Persons and emigration immediately following the war.

The Allies created the ITS at the close of World War II to trace the whereabouts and fate of victims of Nazism. The ITS's predecessor organizations, the *United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* (UNRRA) and the *International Refugee Organization* (IRO), were founded by the Western Allies to provide relief services for refugees persecuted by the Nazis and displaced by the effects of this persecution. The ITS in (Bad) Arolsen was filled with the documentation of this persecution as found by the Allies in concentration camps and related sites, after Nazi authorities and their collaborators had fled. Also housed in Bad Arolsen are the postwar records of the UNRRA and the IRO, accretions to the collections deposited at the ITS by governments and organizations on different occasions and for various purposes, as well as the correspondence with survivors and the families of victims and various governmental agencies during the past seven decades, especially regarding restitution and legal-juridical matters. After the end of the Allied occupation of (West) Germany in 1955, the Western Allies turned over the management of the ITS to the *International Committee of the Red Cross* (ICRC) in Geneva, although the ITS's supreme governing body

1 The conference was made possible by generous support from Betty-Jean and David Bavar, K. Peter and Yvonne R. Wagner, the Harris Family Foundation and the *Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany* (Claims Conference).

was an *International Commission* (IC), composed of delegations from initially eight and then later eleven member states. According to this 1955 Bonn Agreement the West German government provided the funding for the ITS.

The ICRC ran the ITS until the end of 2012, primarily as a traditional tracing service, continuing the emphasis of the UNRRA and the IRO on individual victims and organizing most of the records according to individual names. Intermittently the ICRC management allowed some scholarly researchers into those records, but from the 1980s onward this was rarely the case. Under pressure from the International Commission, in particular the American delegation following a campaign led by the USHMM, the ICRC management was compelled in 2007 to open the ITS archives in Bad Arolsen for research. Because the ITS staff had begun in 1998 to digitize the millions of ITS records in order to expedite internal tracing searches, the IC also agreed that as part of this opening of the ITS archives, digital copies of the ITS collections should be made available to each of the member states of the IC. To date *USHMM*; *Yad Vashem*; the National Archives of Belgium, Luxembourg and of France; the *Wiener Library in London* and the *Polish Institute of National Remembrance* each possess a copy of the ITS Digital Archive. Although the ITS Digital Archive was originally organized primarily for name searches, it is possible to conduct keyword searches; and as archival description and indexing progresses, thematic, quantitative and even mapping research is practicable for topics such as death marches, comparative studies of local and regional forced labor, sites of Nazi persecution, postwar emigration of survivors of Nazi persecution, Displaced Persons and the Cold War.

As of 1 January 2013 a new international agreement signed in Berlin by members of the *International Commission* is in effect for the ITS. Under this Berlin Agreement the ITS continues to be funded by the German government and remains under the control of the International Commission but is no longer managed by the ICRC and instead is directed by an individual recruited by and accountable directly to the IC. The ITS is now officially recognized as a center for documentation, information and research on the victims of Nazi persecution and Displaced Persons as a result of this persecution. The ITS mission, as defined by the International Commission, is:

»to preserve, conserve and open up the ITS archives to public access; to modernise and make more effective its services to Nazi victims and Holocaust survivors and those who seek to trace the fate of family members persecuted by the Nazis and their allies; and to integrate the ITS into the European and international network of research and educational institutions focused on Nazi persecution, the Holocaust, forced labor and displaced persons.«

The papers presented at the May 2014 conference reflect some of the early results of the new, more open access to the ITS collections by scholars of the Holocaust as well as the integration of the ITS into the international research and educational network on Nazi persecution, the Holocaust, forced labor and Displaced Persons. This scholarly essay collection begins with Jennifer Rodgers's piece on the history of the ITS itself by tracing the changing roles of the ITS in Cold War Europe and, in particular, Germany. Of the dozen essays presented here half deal with issues of forced and slave labor, especially in the last months of the war, in particular those by Idit Gil, Christine Schmidt and Dan Stone, including one with a local or regional focus on foreign labor by Alexandra Lohse and Suzanne Brown-Fleming, with another half of these focused on women's labor with a gendered lens, namely those by Elizabeth Anthony, Christine Schmidt van den Zanden, and Dan Stone. Alexandre Doulut examines the late 1942 practice of withdrawing Jews, especially Dutch, French and German Jews, from transports headed to Auschwitz to stock labor camps for munitions production in the so-called *Organization Schmelt* labor camps. Michael McConnell uses the Gestapo prison system in the Rhineland to explore the use of violence during the last months of the war and to challenge the argument that the decentralization of the final phase of the war encouraged acts of individual fanaticism toward prisoners. Akim Jah examines Jewish life in Berlin prior to deportation with the use of various original card files at the ITS of the *Reichsvereinigung of Jews in Germany*, including those for Jewish schoolchildren and those for foreign Jews living in Berlin. Marta Simó Sánchez challenges various myths about officially neutral countries, in this case Franco's Spain, and their role in the Holocaust as well as the fate of Spanish victims of the Nazis. Two essays by Ruth Balint and Laura Hilton conclude this section of the *Jahrbuch* by focusing on DPs with an emphasis on their agency and a problematization of how DPS identified themselves and how IRO officials treated them based on how the IRO evaluated their applications for care and maintenance and emigration.

Does this new research into ITS documents fundamentally shift our understanding of the Third Reich and its persecution of Jews and other victims? It is too early to make sweeping assertions, and of course it is rare for any scholarly topic to rely exclusively on research in one single archive. The ITS collections were certainly not initially gathered to provide the basis for telling an exhaustive history of any single aspect of Nazi persecution across geographic lines or across the 12-year history of the regime, although its postwar collections and its Tracing and Documentation (T/D) files of ITS correspondence with survivors and the families of Nazi victims go a long way toward making possible a deep and a broad exploration of the postwar legacy of persecution, mass murder and population displacement. Documentation in the ITS archive ranges from the time of

the late Weimar Republic with prisoner cards from the early Nazi concentration camps that incorporated political police files from the late 1920s up until correspondence and accompanying documentation from victims' families up through the present (although here a 25-year rule applies for access). Thus it is possible to explore multiple political, social and economic aspects of the Nazi regime and persecution before and during the war as well as issues of family reunification, rehabilitation, restitution, memory and emigration following the war. These essays provide only a small glimpse into the potential of the holdings of the ITS archive, but they are intended to attract more scholars of the Holocaust and Nazi persecution and its aftermath to explore this potential for themselves.

January 2015

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Archive of Horrors, Archive of Hope

The ITS in the Postwar Era¹

Dieser Artikel untersucht, wie Regierungen des Westens und das *Internationale Komitee vom Roten Kreuz* die Archive des International Tracing Service in der Nachkriegszeit dazu instrumentalisierten, um Politik zu betreiben. Es wird gezeigt, wie der Wunsch, die Bewegungen von Flüchtlingen bzw. staatenlosen Menschen zu kontrollieren sowie Westeuropa vor kommunistischen Einflüssen zu schützen, die Verwendung der Dokumente des ITS maßgeblich bestimmt hat, selbst nach der offiziellen Beendigung seines ursprünglichen Suchmandates. Des Weiteren wird untersucht, wie sehr die Sorge um das Eigentumsrecht und der Zugang zu den Unterlagen des ITS von den Interessen der internationalen Gemeinschaft beeinflusst, ja geprägt waren. Regierungen westlicher Staaten und Nichtregierungsorganisationen maßen dem ITS, auch »Archiv des Grauens« oder »Archiv der Hoffnung« genannt, eine große Bedeutung bei. Diese Dynamiken haben in der Nachkriegszeit nicht nur zu einem neuen Verständnis von »Humanitarismus« geführt, sondern auch zu tiefgreifenden politischen Spannungen, die eng mit dem Erbe des Zweiten Weltkrieges, der deutschen NS-Vergangenheit, dem Kalten Krieg sowie der Holocaust-Erinnerung verbunden sind.

In June of 2013, the Council of the *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*, commonly known as UNESCO, announced the new additions to its Memory of the World sites.² A coveted distinction since 1992 that brings awareness to, and even helps to secure the documentary heritage of the world, it can translate into increased revenue through tourism or preservation initiatives for the respective regions and institutions holding the recognized collection.³ Selection for the Memory of the World distinction, like its UNESCO World Heritage Site counterpart, is an inherently political and often contested

1 I would like to thank current ITS director Rebecca Boehling for her helpful thoughts, insights and edits on this article.

2 www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-projectactivities/memory-of-the-world/register/access-by-year/2013/news (Last accessed December 20, 2014).

3 www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-project-activities/memory-of-the-world/about-the-programme/ (Last accessed December 20, 2014).

and protracted process.⁴ Yet, nestled between the names of other new sites including the Nebra Sky Disk and Karl Marx's personal, annotated copy of *The Communist Manifesto*, was an archival collection nominated one year earlier: the International Tracing Service.⁵

Originally established by the Allies in 1943 in conjunction with their humanitarian efforts to aid and control millions of Europeans displaced by World War II, the International Tracing Service, or ITS, is at first glance perhaps a peculiar choice for a World Memory Site. This is particularly true when one considers that in the last decade, the ITS became known more commonly as »Hitler's Secret Archive.« This sensational misnomer began with a segment of the same title on the U. S. network CBS's news program *60 Minutes*.⁶ It gained such traction that even in the summer of 2013, a conference moderator introduced Professor Rebecca Boehling, current director of the ITS, as the head of »Hitler's Secret Archive.«⁷

How did a humanitarian agency once called »humanity's ancestral inheritance« transform into something as odious as »Hitler's Secret Archive« and subsequently into a UNESCO World Memory site?⁸ What factors contributed to the continued existence of the ITS long after its original mandate expired? Finally, to quote the *New York Post*, which ran a series of stories on the ITS in 1954, »what makes these documents so important besides their historical value?«⁹

The complex answers to how one place can be construed as »Hitler's Secret Archive« and a UNESCO World Memory Site lay in the value of the ITS as the

4 See Lynn Meskell: UNESCO's World Heritage Convention at 40: Challenging the Economic and Political Order of International Heritage Conservation, *Current Anthropology* vol. 54, number 4 (August 2013), pp. 483-494.

5 [www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-project-activities/memory-of-the-world/register/access-by-year/2013/News clippings, etc.](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-project-activities/memory-of-the-world/register/access-by-year/2013/News%20clippings,%20etc.;); and www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-project-activities/memory-of-the-world/register/full-list-of-registered-heritage/registered-heritage-page-1/archives-of-the-international-tracing-service/ (Last accessed December 20, 2014).

6 www.cbsnews.com/videos/hitlers-secret-archive/; also see the related article by Daniel Schorn, »Revisiting the Horrors of the Holocaust,« www.cbsnews.com/news/revisiting-the-horrors-of-the-holocaust/ (Last accessed December 20, 2014).

7 The European Holocaust Research Infrastructure, a project funded by the European Union, hosted the conference »Public History and the Holocaust: Historical Research in the Digital Age« in Berlin on July 9, 2013. www.ehri-project.eu/public-history-holocaust/program (Last accessed October 1, 2014).

8 Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (PA-AA), B85/1552, Minutes of the annual meeting of the International Commission of the ITS, dated 2 April 1980. See also Jennifer Rodgers: »Das Erbe der Menschheit,« in *International Tracing Service: Empfang zum Abschied des IKRK*, 29. November 2012, p. 24 f.

9 Seymour Friedin and William Richardson: Dachau's Bitter Memories Live – Shall We Give Up the Proofs? *New York Post*, 18 April 1954.

site of a major historical records collection. Its importance accumulated over eight decades, from Adolf Hitler's seizure of power in 1933, through the Cold War, to the fall of the Berlin Wall, and finally to the recent programs for restitution to and memorialization of Nazi, in particular Holocaust, victims. The most effective way to comprehend these fragments and uncover why the International Tracing Service has gained such significance is, in literal and metaphoric terms, by tracing its historical trajectory. Locating the missing and displaced pieces of the organization's history beginning with its origins in Allied plans for post-World War II Europe slowly reveals the landscape of the International Tracing Service and its impact on the postwar world.

This essay briefly examines why the governments of the West – the United States, West Germany, France, and the United Kingdom – and the *International Committee of the Red Cross* (ICRC) mobilized the records of the International Tracing Service to promote and legitimize their respective post-World War II political agendas. It explores how the desire to control refugees, stateless persons, and displaced populations; secure Cold War Europe; and rehabilitate Germany fueled the continual repurposing of the ITS files, even after the termination in 1949 of not only active field tracing but also its original mandate to trace all missing United Nations civilians.¹⁰ Building on arguments by historians Mark Mazower and Daniel Cohen, it further explores the ways in which participating states and institutions invoked and reframed international humanitarian norms and conventions to impede public access to the ITS while publically proclaiming the activities of the institution as humanitarian, universal, and neutral.¹¹ It thus also exposes how political anxieties concerning the availability and dissemination of information defined and were influenced by

10 History of the International Tracing Service pp. 69-71/General Records/Alliierte Ordner 1/ITS Archive, Bad Arolsen. Field tracing refers to the active search in West European localities and displaced persons camps for missing civilians by officers of the Allied armies, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), and the International Refugee Organization (IRO) on behalf of the ITS. Mass tracing included radio broadcasts of the names of individuals being sought as well as the projection of names lists before films. They discontinued mass and active field tracing in 1949 to conserve funds: 26 September 1949 from Headquarters European Command regarding the handling of ITS material pertaining to certain countries in: General Records/Ablage Direktion B 5/2 an IKRK o.I., Note 33/ITS Archive, Bad Arolsen. It is important to note that although the institutional files of the ITS were digitized and available in 2008, I was only given access to the paper files during my research trips in 2008 and early 2009. The citations in this article thus refer to paper copies of documents that are now accessible digitally.

11 Mark Mazower: *The Strange Triumph of Human Rights*, *The Historical Journal*, vol. 47 no. 2 (2004): pp. 386-88. See also G. Daniel Cohen, *In War's Wake: Europe's Displaced Persons in the Postwar Order*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

international involvement in the ITS. The significance ascribed by states and non-governmental organizations to the ITS – from the »archive of horror« perpetrated by the Nazis in the 1940s, to the »shop window of democracy« in the 1950s, and the »Bermuda Triangle of the archival world,« in the 1980s and beyond not only reframed the practice of humanitarianism but also revealed deeper political tensions that were connected intimately to the legacy of World War II, Germany's Nazi past, the struggle for hegemony in Europe, and the Cold War. But first, exactly what is in this archive that has garnered such divergent attention?

The archive of the International Tracing Service is, at twenty-six running kilometers, the world's largest centralized repository of records on the victims of National Socialism and the Holocaust. It consists of biographical information often in the form of lists of names generated by Nazi persecution authorities and incarceration sites and by the postwar Western Allies, and spans the period 1933-1955. It is also important to note, however, that a considerable number of files involve victims of Stalinist communism in Eastern Bloc states who American officials subsumed under the President's Escapee Program, one of the U. S. instruments of soft power exercised against the Soviet Union during the first decade of the Cold War.¹²

The ITS holds four general collections in original and photostatic format, and beginning in 1998 also in digitized format.¹³ Although the institution's records originate from a wide array of international sources, the United States has *de jure* ownership of a considerable portion of the documents, which were captured by American forces and thus fall under international legal provisions

- 12 The Truman Administration began the President's Escapee Program (PEP) in 1952 to provide relief and resettlement assistance to escapees from Stalinist Communism in Western Europe. The PEP later gave those escapees who had crossed German borders after January 1, 1948, preferential status to immigrate to the United States. Beyond its public face, however, the U. S. State Department clearly spelled out the project's true objective: to support »U. S. political, psychological warfare, and intelligence objectives with respect to the USSR and Soviet orbit.« National Archives and Records Administration (NARA): Record Group (RG) 59 Central Records of State Department: Records of the Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs Lot File 62-D-146, Decimal Files, 1953-60 Files 1-D/2.1 to 1-D/3 Box 10 Secret Non-Regional Program U. S. Escapee Program, General Narrative Statement, undated. See also: 01 October 1953 Swope to Elbot on U. S. Interest in the ITS in General Records/ Alliierte Ordner 52/ ITS Archive, Bad Arolsen. Journalists Arthur Max and Randy Herschaft first reported on the PEP in their article »Archive catalogs use of Cold War refugees,« *San Francisco Gate*, January 4, 2009.
- 13 In addition to digital files at the International Tracing Service in Bad Arolsen, researchers may also access copies of the files at several other organizations who are members of the International Commission of the ITS. These repositories include, among others, Yad Vashem in Jerusalem; the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D. C.; and the Wiener Library in London.

pertaining to war booty.¹⁴ American dominion was consistently reinforced by the reluctance of the International Commission of the ITS, the institution's governing body as of 1955, to render a final decision on the archive's ownership due to political considerations.¹⁵ Not only does this suggest the continued relevance of the ITS but also the influential role of archives and information control in the post-World War II era. The documents were originally organized into categories for tracing purposes as: incarceration files, including material from sites of Nazi persecution, imprisonment, and extermination; so-called wartime documents, from civil registry records on mostly forced laborers residing and laboring in German localities from 1933 to 1945; postwar documents, mostly of so-called Displaced Persons (DPs), created by Allied relief and rehabilitation programs; and »topical documents,« that include *Lebensborn* program files, maps of death marches, and general Nazi policy documents. There are two additional important collections at the ITS, which were created by its staff or that of its predecessor organizations. First, the *Central Names Index* (CNI) is a card catalog of ca. 50 million entries with information on more than 17.5 million people. The CNI serves as a key to locate documents held in the ITS archives on specific individuals. In addition, the *Tracing and Documentation* files (T/D) include the correspondence between the ITS and those survivors or family members of victims, for the most part, placing inquiries about Nazi victims and the ITS answers they received. Finally, the institutional archive holds material on the history of the ITS and serves as the starting point for this study, which has only been possible since the official opening of the ITS to the public in 2007.

Spurred by German debates on the *Berlin Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* as well as diplomatic and public efforts to reopen the ITS's archive after three decades, the institution has received significant media attention in the past decade.¹⁶ Yet, virtually no scholarly literature on the International Tracing

14 For more on archives as war booty, see Ernst Posner: Effects of Changes of Sovereignty on Archives, *The American Archivist* v.5 no.3 July 1941, pp. 141-155; and Linda Tashbook: Releasing Captured Documents, *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting (American Society of International Law)*, v. 1 (March 24-27, 2010), pp. 584-587.

15 The unwillingness of the International Commission members to render a final decision on the question of final ownership of ITS archives is evident in the archival sources from the United States, Great Britain, and Germany beginning in the mid-1950s (*the IC was not created until 1955, although the Western Allies and the West German government discussed a similar oversight body already in 1952*) until at least the late 1970s. See, for example: United Kingdom National Archives (PRO): FO 371/101560, Scopes to Logan-Grey, February 1952; and Bundesarchiv Koblenz (BAK): B106/24446 (Microfilm (MF) 1) from Werner, West German Foreign Office to Burckhardt, ITS, 30 May 1964.

16 On the Berlin Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, see James Young, *The Texture of Memory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 27-49.

Service exists beyond the local historian Bernd Joachim Zimmer's chronicle of the first decade of operations and Jean Marc Dreyfus's brief essay on the institution that focuses primarily on the ITS's role in German compensation programs for victims of Nazism and the Holocaust.¹⁷ The extended inaccessibility to its files provoked considerable speculation about this international institution. As a result, historical and popular perceptions usually situate the tracing service within the context of the Holocaust and Holocaust memory. However, these incomplete snapshots obfuscate how the ITS developed historically and fail to explain the ITS's enduring significance. When one adjusts the contemporary lenses to a panoramic exposure that begins in 1943, a very different image develops.

The allegedly »unwanted child« of the Allies, as Bernd Joachim Zimmer has called the ITS, was in fact a much coveted – and contested – *Wunschkind* from its birth until the present.¹⁸ Looking at the institution over the *longue durée* from its conception 1943 until 2013 allows us, on the one hand, to engage with broader themes including refugees, humanitarianism, the legacy of World War II, the Cold War, and, finally, archives. In some cases, it challenges long held theories about postwar history including unsuccessful American Cold War refugee and propaganda programs and purported German attempts to come to terms with the Nazi past. On the other, it is the most legitimate way in which to investigate the question of why this institution and its documents have remained important to the public and governments alike.

Drawing upon the »new international history,« this overview of the ITS incorporates institutional and governmental files, media coverage of the ITS, and records from other organizations.¹⁹ Looking at these various sources shows the triangular interdependence between countries, the ITS and its directors, and the individuals the institution served, namely victims of Nazism and World War II as well as their family members. This further shines a light on the ways in which they mutually influenced and complicated one another, thus highlighting what was at stake for each in the ITS beginning in the 1940s.

17 See Bernd Joachim Zimmer, *International Tracing Service Arolsen. Von der Vermissten-suche zur Haftbescheinigung. Die Organisationsgeschichte eines »ungewollten Kindes« während der Besatzungszeit*, Bad Arolsen: Waldeckischer Geschichtsverein, 2011; and Jean Marc Dreyfus, »À Bad Arolsen dans le forêt des archives nazies,« *La Vie des Idées*, (2008), (Last accessed 30 November 2013). www.laviedesidees.fr/IMG/pdf/20080911_badarolsen.pdf.

18 See Zimmer, *International Tracing Service Arolsen*, p. 1.

19 See, among others, Akira Iriye: *Cultural Internationalism and World Order*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000, pp. 1-4; Jeremy Suri: Conflict and Cooperation in the Cold War: New Directions in Contemporary Historical Research, in *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 46 (1), 2011, pp. 5-9.

As the European refugee crisis escalated in the wake of Nazi racial policies during the 1930s, there was no organization, including the *League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*, that had the infrastructure to locate missing and displaced civilian populations.²⁰ But by early 1939, with war imminent and the population of stateless and displaced persons and refugees swelling to the point that there was »no parallel for the magnitude and complexity« of it, the ICRC and its national societies began preparing for civilian tracing operations based on the work of their *Central Registry on Prisoners of War*.²¹ This decision began not only as part of a longer pattern by the ICRC of expanding its areas of operations in response to the fundamental shift in the proscribed rules of war governing civilians, but also hinted at its attempts to maintain its foothold in humanitarian relief and rehabilitation project as traditionally non-governmental humanitarian operations gave way to state-sponsored relief agencies.²²

Postwar planning, which included tracing efforts, accelerated among humanitarian organizations throughout the war and Allied governments eventually, if slowly, followed suit. Most relief efforts and planning centered in London, but as early as 1942, American officials addressed the question of missing civilians. Acknowledging an expected rush of requests to locate missing persons, U. S. Assistant Secretary of State Adolf Berle recommended capturing German records to assist efforts to trace individuals. One additional aspect of Berle's proposal concerned whether to assign the task of tracing to a separate governmental entity or to place it under the jurisdiction of the supra-national relief organization proposed by the Allied states, the *United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* (UNRRA).²³ The four Allied powers ultimately realized these suggestions when they created what was initially called the *Central Tracing Bureau* in 1945, and later reestablished it as the ITS.²⁴

20 Malcolm Proudfoot: *European Refugees, 1939-52: A Study in Forced Population Movement*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1956, p. 30. Also Michael Marrus: *The Unwanted: European Refugees from the First World War through the Cold War*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002, p. 51 f.

21 International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), »History of the Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC,« www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/57jq7j?opendocument (Last accessed December 20, 2014). See also Proudfoot, *European Refugees*, p. 21.

22 See Jessica Reinisch: »Relief in the Aftermath of War,« *Journal of Contemporary History* vol. 43, no. 3 (July 2008), pp. 371-404; G. Daniel Cohen: Between Relief and Politics: Refugee Humanitarianism in Occupied Germany, 1945-1946, *Journal of Contemporary History* vol. 43, no. 3 (July 2008), pp. 437-449.

23 On UNRRA, see Jessica Reinisch: Internationalism in Relief: The Birth (and Death) of UNRRA, *Past and Present* 210, suppl. 6 (2011): pp. 258-289.

24 National Archives and Records Administration (NARA): Records of Harley A. Notter, 1939-45, Records of the Advisory Committee on Post-War Foreign Policy, 1942-45, Lot 60D-224, Box No. 80.

The U. S. and U. K. governments initially considered tracing part and parcel of postwar repatriation plans. They eventually extended their agenda to include relief and rehabilitation efforts, one component of reconstructing (western) Europe. But early tracing efforts, which relied on and repurposed captured German documents to locate missing individuals, had two additional goals: to control and secure the millions of displaced persons, refugees, and stateless persons scattered across Europe. Furthermore, the Americans and British believed the Central Tracing Bureau to be a sufficient mechanism through which to spread their »Christian, democratic and humanitarian« traditions, thus staving off Communist influence in Western Europe. Not only did this discount the participation of the Soviet Union in the bureau's affairs, but also the fact that the Allies had placed the daily operations under this broader UNRRA management.²⁵ This Western Allied consideration about the political capital of the ITS significantly impacted how the institution served its mandated constituencies in subsequent decades.

As the geopolitical landscape shifted after the war's end and the Soviet Union waived in its participation in the Central Tracing Bureau, however, the Western Allies planned to modify the organization's caritative mandate to trace and locate missing civilians.²⁶ The Western Allies reestablished the institution as the International Tracing Service in 1948 under the management of the *International Refugee Organization* (IRO), the successor of the UNRRA. Notably, in contrast to the UNRRA, the Soviet Union did not recognize the IRO, and the creation of the ITS under this organization simply accomplished the *de facto* operational reality of the ITS: it was an institution driven by the West with »heavy political influence against the East.«²⁷

The creation of the International Tracing Service under the Western Allies and IRO led to the repurposing of the institution's so-called »archive of horrors« to gradually rehabilitate and normalize West Germany's institutions and foreign relations, justifying this as needed to secure Western Europe against Soviet Communism.²⁸ This complicated and created significant tension between the

25 20 April 1945 letter from Roswell McClelland, American Legation Bern to Patrick Malin, SHAEF, in General Records/Alliierte, Ordner 13/ITS Archives, Bad Arolsen.

26 History of the International Tracing Service, p. 1/General Records/Alliierte, Ordner 13/ITS Archives, Bad Arolsen. Also see Zimmer, *International Tracing Service*, p. 266.

27 PA-AA, B2/ 1902, Trützschler to Lehr, 12 May 1951; and Aufzeichnung, 30 July 1951.

28 »Archive of Horrors« was a name used in the 1950s in the German and American press for the International Tracing Service. Carl Guggomos »Die Kartei des Grauens: Bericht aus der Schreckenskammer des IRK in Arolsen,« *Vorwärts*, 17 October 1958; Jack Raymond: Horror Archives get German Home, *New York Times*, 21 August 1952; Ruf an alle Völker: Nie wieder! Jubiläum im Arolser ITS Gebäude, *Eder-Diemel-Post*, 6 October 1953.

institution's activities and its humanitarian mandate to trace and clarify the fate of missing persons. It further established a longtime operational pattern of expanding the boundaries of what constituted humanitarianism for political expediency, while simultaneously limiting the institution's universal principles, which was ultimately detrimental to millions of individual Nazi victims and their family members, especially in the Eastern Bloc.

When relief agencies, such as the IRO, began to terminate their operations as the number of refugees and displaced persons in Western Europe declined and Cold War borders calcified in the late 1940s, the future of the ITS remained unclear. Yet, the Western Allies and the IRO agreed upon the continued necessity of tracing and clarifying paths of persecution and fates for victims and their family members.²⁹ They thus decided to continue the ITS's operations under the administration of the *High Commission for Germany* (HICOG), with the American representative acting as permanent director.³⁰

What HICOG's administration of the ITS meant, however, was that the institution became an instrumental, if ultimately ineffective, extension of American intelligence and psychological warfare programs in Europe during the early 1950s, Washington's so-called »shop window of democracy.«³¹ The ITS gave inquiries from American agencies precedence over other request for information, exposing Washington's Janus-faced position of promoting humanitarian principles for the purposes of furthering domestic and foreign policy concerns.³² American officials believed that the control of information on displaced persons, refugees, and stateless persons in the ITS, and access to these individuals, through programs such as the President's Escapee Program, gave the United States an advantage over the Soviet Union, showing that the use of refugees by the United States was more extensive than previously thought.³³ While there

29 12 July 1949 »Future of the ITS« in General Records/Alliierte, Ordner 60B/ITS Archive, Bad Arolsen.

30 History of the International Tracing Service pp. 69-71 in General Records/Alliierte, Ordner 1/ITS Archive, Bad Arolsen.

31 20 August 1952 speech by Hugh Elbot, General Records/Alliierte, Ordner 52/ITS Archive, Bad Arolsen and 01 October 1953 from Swope to Elbot U. S. Interest in ITS, General Records/ Alliierte, Ordner 52/ IST Archive, Bad Arolsen. Also, NARA RG 59 Central Records of State Department: Records of the Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs Lot File 62-D-146, Decimal Files, 1953-60 Files 1-D/2.1 to 1-D/3 Box 10 Secret Non-Regional Program U. S. Escapee Program, General Narrative Statement, undated.

32 1 October 1953 from Swope to Elbot U. S. Interest in ITS, General Records/Alliierte, Ordner 52/ITS Archive, Bad Arolsen.

33 House Report 1507: Displaced Persons in Europe and their Resettlement in the U. S. Extract of a Report of a Special Subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives in General Records/Alliierte, Ordner 64/ITS Archive, Bad Arolsen. Also, NARA RG 59 Central Records of State Department: Records of the Bureau of

was certainly a humanitarian impulse in American motives with the institution, the ITS at the height of the Cold War was primarily an extension of American foreign policy in Europe.³⁴ One of the U.S. strategies with the ITS was supporting the Federal Republic of Germany's (FRG) extensive involvement in and takeover of the institution to assure that Bonn remained aligned with the West.³⁵

West German officials considered participation in international organizations such as the ITS a viable vehicle to the rehabilitation and normalization of the Federal Republic in the West. The tracing service played an important role in the FRG's attempts to »pull the carpet out from lingering mistrust [of Germany] abroad.«³⁶ Bonn's participation in and plans to take over the tracing service in the 1950s demonstrated a calculated, explicit and active attempt to demonstrate political and moral atonement for the crimes of Nazism, albeit in pursuit of the »main goal« of integration in the West and regaining full sovereignty. West Germany's activities vis-à-vis the ITS nevertheless challenge contemporary scholarship on West German silence surrounding the Nazi past in the 1950s.³⁷

Security and Consular Affairs Lot File 62-D-146, Decimal Files, 1953-60 Files 1-D/2.1 to 1-D/3 Box 10 Secret Non-Regional Program U.S. Escapee Program, General Narrative Statement, undated. For more on how the United States used refugees toward its political goals, see Gil Loescher: *Calculated Kindness: Refugees and America's Half-Open Door, 1945-Present*, New York: The Free Press, pp. 25-48. Also, Peter Grose: *Operation Rollback: America's Secret War behind the Iron Curtain*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000, and Gregory Mitrovich: *Undermining the Kremlin: American Strategy to Subvert the Soviet Bloc, 1947-1956*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000.

34 Historian Julia Irwin recently examined the use of humanitarianism as an American foreign policy agenda for the First World War. Julia F. Irwin: *Making the World Safe: The American Red Cross and a Nation's Humanitarian Awakening*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

35 The British also supported West German participation in the ITS. For an overview of the American and British positions, see PRO, FO 371 101560: USR 18212/1, Minutes dated 30 January 1952. On West Germany's role in the West, see Anselm Döring-Manthey: *Wie westlich sind die Deutschen? Amerikanisierung und Westernisierung im 20. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999; and Rainer Zitelmann/Karlheinz Weissmann/Michael Grossheim, eds., *Westbindung: Chancen und Risiken für Deutschland*, Frankfurt: Propyläen, 1994.

36 Bundesarchiv Koblenz (BAK), B106/4376, 6 January 1953, Kabinettsvorlage.

37 BAK B106/ 4376, Trützschler to the Ministers of the Interior, Finance, Justice and Ex-pellees, 19 September 1952; and Kabinettsvorlage, 6 January 1953. Michael Wolffsohn: *Eternal Guilt? Forty Years of German-Jewish-Israeli Relations*, translated by Douglas Bokovoy, New York: Columbia University Press, 1993, p. 692. See also Robert Moeller: *War Stories: The Search for a Useable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany*, Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2001, pp. 12-16 and p. 173 f. and Norbert Frei: *Vergangenheitspolitik: Die Anfänge der Bundesrepublik und der NS-Vergangenheit*, Munich: C. H. Beck, 2011.

Yet there is one additional consideration in West Germany's protracted participation in the ITS beyond the political capital gained and the ability to »have influence over future developments« in the institution.³⁸ The ITS factored considerably into West Germany's *Wiedergutmachung* programs, which it considered one path toward rehabilitating the FRG. Centrally processing compensation claims using the institution's archive prevented redundant payments, which were financially advantageous to the strapped West German budget.³⁹ Scholarly literature has begun to scratch the surface of this topic, which warrants extensive examination because of the role of the ITS in certifying – at least some – claims to German reparations programs.⁴⁰ Ultimately, however, a complex nexus of European and Israeli motives that included opposition to West German rearmament, the struggle for intra-European hegemony, and public political pressure determined the Federal Republic's early relationship to the ITS.

Under the Bonn Accords of 1955, the newly sovereign West Germany agreed to the transfer of Western Allied control of the ITS to administrative management by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) under an eight-Western nation International Commission. In addition, the Federal Republic conceded to pay for the ITS in order to diffuse increasingly strained international proceedings over control over the institution. Thus began the ICRC's complicated official involvement in the ITS, which was spurred by an »internal crisis« over its role in the post-World War II world and, perhaps, by its desire to make up for its inactivity on behalf of Nazi victims during the war.⁴¹ Indeed,

38 PA-AA 2/ 1902, Aufzeichnung, 20 March 1952.

39 BAK B106/ 4376, Kaminski to Referat I, 28 September 1951; B106/4376, Aufzeichnung über eine Besprechung mit den Sachverständigen der Alliierten Hohen Kommission, 13 October 1950; B106/4376, Trützschler to Interior Minister Lehr, 12 May 1951; Freiherr von Wolff (BMI) to Lehr, 30 July 1951; B106/4376 Vialon to the Interior Ministry, 3 August 1951. Also, PA-AA B2/ 1902, Trützschler to Lehr, 12 May 1951; and Aufzeichnung, 30 July 1951. Also, No author, »Future of the International Tracing Service« dated 12 October 1951, General Records/Alliierte, Ordner 52/ITS Archives, Bad Arolsen. United Kingdom National Archives (PRO): FO 371/ 101560, 14 April 1952, Logan Grey to United Nations Department, Foreign Office.

40 For more on the ITS and *Wiedergutmachung*, see Constantin Goschler: *Wiedergutmachung: Westdeutschland und die Verfolgten des NS, 1945-54*, Munich, Oldenbourg Verlag 1992, p. 12; Ludolf Herbst/Constantin Goschler, eds.: *Wiedergutmachung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1989, p. 8. Hans Günter Hockerts, ed: *Grenzen der Wiedergutmachung: Die Entschädigung für NS-Verfolgte in West- und Osteuropa 1945-2000*, Göttingen, Wallstein Verlag, 2006; and Hockerts: *Wiedergutmachung: Ein umstrittener Begriff und ein weites Feld in Nach der Verfolgung. Wiedergutmachung nationalsozialistischen Unrechts in Deutschland?* eds. Hans Günter Hockerts and Christiane Kuller, Göttingen 2003, pp. 7-33.

41 NARA RG 466 HICOG Bonn Classified General Records, Formerly RG 84 Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, Office of the U.S. High Commissioner for