

UNPACKING THE SUITCASE

German-Jewish Refugees in New Zealand and the Afterlives of their Displaced Objects 1933-2015

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A thesis submitted to Victoria University of Wellington in fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in History

Victoria University of Wellington
2016

For Stephen and Sabine, with love

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Abstract

When German-Jewish refugees arrived in New Zealand in the 1930s fleeing Hitler's Europe, they brought with them everything they could from their former homes: furniture, luggage, personal documents, musical instruments, artwork, books, silverware, linen, a typewriter. These humble and remarkable domestic objects survive today, a few in public heritage collections, but most in the private family homes of descendants. But while the Jewish refugee migration story is well known in public and academic circles, less so is the story of those objects. This thesis explores the relationship between refugee families, their descendants, and the material objects they have inherited.

To what extent do refugee objects embody the memory of the prewar, European past? And how do the objects' meanings change for refugees and their descendants, over time and in different custodial contexts? A major part of this thesis involved oral history interviews with refugee survivor families (mainly second-generation participants), and studying the interviews, letters, memoirs, and reminiscences of the first generation. Material culture objects were also analysed, and curated in an electronic archive (available for review).

This thesis charts the slowly evolving significances of the objects throughout the various stages of the object migration journey. It examines themes of cultural identity, intergenerational memory, collection practices, and the private-public tensions inherent in the institutional custody of family objects. These themes are explored in three chapters, the first of which defines the German-Jewish refugee archive in New Zealand against the existing literature on displaced Jewish objects, by contextualising the New Zealand objects within the specific historical circumstances determining their owners' migration journeys. The final two chapters analyse the usage and meanings of the objects in the 'private archive' of the family, and the 'public archive' of local and international collecting institutions.

Drawing on insights from migration, material culture, Holocaust, and memory studies, this thesis is premised on the widely accepted argument that such mementoes function as mobile depositories of cultural identity and knowledge to ensure continuity between generations. Considering objects as nodes of memory for remembering a German-Jewish past (between Europe and New Zealand) characterised by the traumatic rupture of first generation silence, brings my research into conversation with the work of second-generation scholar Marianne Hirsch and Nina Fischer. But by addressing the role of collective memory and cultural identity in determining the future location and preservation of such artefacts, this thesis significantly extends the findings of Hirsch and Fischer beyond the private sphere to interrogate the perspectives of both families and collecting institutions. In doing so, it argues that New Zealand's German-Jewish refugee objects bear multiple identities and meanings as a result of their dispersed, transnational history. In light of current international repatriation movements to return such artefacts to Germany, the provenance and significance of these objects is particularly pertinent today, as the first person authenticity of survivors rapidly fades, and the memorial sphere transforms to accommodate this change.

Acknowledgements

A project of this kind calls for a long acknowledgment of the many kind and generous people who so willingly agreed to take part in my research. First and foremost, my gratitude goes to the families who agreed to participate in my thesis project. Without them, this project could not exist, and I hope that my work has represented and served them well. And to my supervisor Dr Simone Gigliotti, without whom I would not have had the courage, or the networks available to undertake a project of this kind. Thank you for ‘nudging’ me out of my comfort zone, for supporting me in this thesis topic, and enabling me to see that it could be done.

This thesis would never have eventuated were it not for the support of three key heritage institutions, and the assistance of extremely passionate and dedicated curators at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and the Alexander Turnbull Library. Thank you to Stephanie Gibson and Michael Fitzgerald, and to John Sullivan, for your spirited discussion and interest in my work. At the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand, where I have been privileged to volunteer, my research was greatly aided by Steven Sedley; thanks also to Eileen at the *Temple Sinai Bulletin*. I would also like to thank museum consultant Ken Gorbey, whose unique insights and extensive experience gave me a privileged view into the world of museums in general, and into the early development of Te Papa, the Jewish Museum Berlin, and the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand. Thanks also to Inge Woolf, Ann Beaglehole, and Dr Susi Williams for giving me invaluable advice at the outset of my project. *All* my research participants and advisors provided me with as much relevant information as they could, and for that I am extremely grateful.

To the donors of the Jack Pearce Postgraduate Scholarship in New Zealand or English History 2015 – thank you for your financial support and genuine interest in my research. The financial security of the scholarship enabled me to undertake this qualification without needing to work outside of my studies, which in turn allowed me to fully dedicate my time to my participants’ schedules, and to my research.

Presenters and attendees at the New Historians’ Conference (VUW), Memory Studies in Aotearoa Symposium (Massey), and History Programme Postgraduate Seminar contributed to this thesis by offering feedback and encouragement. Thank you also to Grace Millar for your advice on Ethics Committee applications, and to Dr Cybèle Locke, for ensuring free access to professional sound recorders. Thank you to my Master’s room colleagues and friends Julia, Evgeniya, Hannah and Mark (Class of 2016), for our countless ‘tea times’, extracurricular activities, and shared laughter. I will miss sharing the office with you all.

Finally, to my parents Sabine (especially for helping with translations) and Stephen Hormann, my sister Kristina, Bella, and to my partner Jared Bridgland – thank you for your continued love and support.

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List of abbreviations

ERR	<i>Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg</i> (Reichsleiter Rosenberg Taskforce)
HCNZ	Holocaust Centre of New Zealand
JMB	Jewish Museum Berlin
JOM	Jewish Online Museum (New Zealand)
USHMM	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
WJRO	World Jewish Restitution Organisation
WWI	World War One
WWII	World War Two



Figure 1.1 Tablecloth hand embroidered by Anna Vandewart (machine and hand embroidered), circa early 1900s/pre-World War Two. Private collection. Photograph by author



Figure 1.2 Vandewart Album. The bottom-right photograph depicts the same tablecloth as in Figure 1.1, with pencil drawing. Private collection. Photograph by author

Introduction

When Marie Blaschke (née Vandewart) immigrated to New Zealand as a refugee in June 1939, she brought with her a blue and white embroidered tablecloth from her family home in Berlin, Germany. [Figure 1.1] The borders are machine-made, but Marie's mother Anna, who 'wasn't really a needlewoman,' embroidered the decorative panels by hand, which Marie thought 'must have been a big project.'¹ The object reappears in a family photo album compiled by Marie's parents in Berlin. [Figure 1.2] One photograph shows a close up shot of the tablecloth, upon which a small graphite drawing of an infant's head is displayed. According to Marie's own annotations of the album, the drawing was sketched by her father Eugen while holidaying at the Baltic island of Hiddensee when she was a baby; 'I find it now most touching that Father should have taken a shot of it and stuck it in this album...'² Although Marie came from a secular German-Jewish family, today in New Zealand her son Paul and his wife use the tablecloth to cover the *challah* bread (two braided loaves) at the beginning of Shabbat and Yom Tov Jewish holiday meals.³

Paul's tablecloth, handmade by his grandmother who perished in the Holocaust, and saved by his mother who survived in refuge, represents the extended family to which he belongs, and the cultural heritage he has inherited. But the reversal of cultural significance assigned to the object – that by fulfilling a Jewish ritual function, the tablecloth became 'more Jewish' once in the New Zealand context than in Germany – indicates the unpredictable ways in which the meanings of refugee objects can change over time and in different custodial contexts. From a decorative, handmade tablecloth in Germany, to domestic Jewish ritual object in New Zealand, the Vandewart tablecloth complicates the presumed roles of objects in particular cultural contexts. But it also shows that objects, taken as mementoes from ones homeland, are capable of enabling the transfer of aspects of cultural identity to successive generations born in the country of refuge.

¹ Marie Blaschke (née Vandewart), "Postcard Note on Anna Vandewart's Tablecloth, Undated," (Private collection).

² Vandewart Album, (Private collection, c.1939-1941).

³ Serving both a decorative and religious-ceremonial purpose as a *challah* cover, the tablecloth is used before the *Kiddush* (Jewish prayer hymn of praises to God) is performed, to indicate the meal is being served in honour of the Shabbat (Jewish day of rest).

Topic and justification

When German-Jewish refugees arrived in New Zealand in the 1930s fleeing Hitler's Europe, they brought with them everything they could from their former homes: furniture, luggage, personal documents, musical instruments, artwork, books, silverware, linen, a typewriter. Many of these humble and remarkable domestic objects survive today, a few in public heritage collections, but most in the private family homes of descendants, like Paul Blaschke's tablecloth. But despite the Jewish refugee migration story having been acknowledged in public and academic circles, most notably through the foundational work of New Zealand historian Ann Beaglehole, and more recently by German journalist Freya Klier, the material culture of Jewish refugee migration to New Zealand has not yet been documented.⁴ This thesis explores the relationship between refugee families, their descendants, and the material objects they have inherited. It charts the slowly evolving significances of the objects throughout the various stages of the object migration journey, and the decisions of refugee families to bequeath exilic objects, as artefacts, to descendants, local repositories, or to international institutions.

As has long been established by Holocaust scholars, the first generation (survivors of ghettos and camps, in hiding and as refugees) rarely spoke of their experiences, either within or outside of the family.⁵ As a consequence of this 'silence', both their descendants and historians must rely on a combination of fragmentary recollections and the physical objects that remain to form a picture of the European world of the pre-Holocaust family, and in the case of refugees, their migration experience. However, such material objects currently occupy a vulnerable position within the broader scheme of displaced Jewish cultural artefacts of World War Two. Confiscated artwork and Judaica (objects used by Jews for ritual purposes), as designated *cultural properties*, are prioritised in both the literature and in public heritage

⁴ See Ann Beaglehole, *A Small Price to Pay: Refugees from Hitler in New Zealand 1936-46* (Wellington, New Zealand: Allen & Unwin New Zealand Limited, 1988); Beaglehole, *Facing the Past: Looking Back at Refugee Childhood in New Zealand 1940s-1960s* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1990); Freya Klier, *Promised New Zealand: Fleeing Nazi Persecution [Gelobtes Neuuseeland]*, translated by Jenny Rawlings (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2009).

⁵ 'Survivor silence' is a persistent theme in the literature. See Helen Epstein, *Children of the Holocaust: Conversations with Sons and Daughters of Survivors* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1979); see also Ruth Wajnryb, *The Silence: How Tragedy Shapes Talk* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2001), Carol A. Kidron, "Breaching the Wall of Traumatic Silence: Holocaust Survivor and Descendant Person-Object Relations and the Material Transmission of the Genocidal Past," *Journal of Material Culture* 17, no. 1 (2012), Sharon Kangisser Cohen, "'Remembering for Us': The Transgenerational Transmission of Holocaust Memory and Commemoration," in *The Memory of the Holocaust in Australia*, ed. Tom Lawson, and James Jordan (London and Portland, Oregon: Vallentine Mitchell, 2008).

practice (provenance research and restitution), leaving the everyday objects taken into refuge outside the dominant discourse on the Holocaust.

In contrast, my research focuses on those everyday objects smuggled out by refugees as the restrictions on the movement of Jewish property were increasingly enforced. Crucially, my scope is not limited to Judaica, but also explores other personal items significant to German-Jewish refugees.⁶ However, while a select few studies of the current discourse do consider the meaning and afterlives of such everyday, personal household objects *retained* by refugee survivors, they are yet to also consider the ‘inverse repatriation’ of their return to European archival institutions. By considering the debates of archival return among the second generation, I hope to extend the understanding of exilic objects beyond their immediate significance in New Zealand, their country of rest.

Material culture and migration rarely intersect in Holocaust studies. The two clear dichotomies in the literature on Holocaust material culture reveal why *migration* is so often left out of the conversation on displaced Holocaust objects. The first is the ‘hierarchy of objects’, the aforementioned European academic and professional obsession with the looting of art and Judaica, a topic that will be further discussed in chapter one. The second is the overwhelming emphasis on objects of death – of the railways, death camps, piles of shoes, glasses, suitcases – not the diaspora, migration, and survival of those living in exile, and their descendants. Carol Kidron’s 2012 anthropological research into Holocaust survivor person-object relations illustrates this preoccupation, as does Bożena Shallcross’ 2011 study of the literary representation of ‘Holocaust objects’ in Polish and Polish-Jewish texts written during or shortly following WWII.⁷

While relevant to my own consideration of person-object relations where the historical trauma of the Holocaust is a central theme, Kidron’s limited focus on concentration camp survivors highlights the issue of terminology inherent to the subject

⁶ Or objects brought into exile for reasons other than their religious affiliation: Auslander notes importantly that many “German-Jews” did not identify themselves as Jewish, and the identification was a label of the state; Leora Auslander, “Jewish Taste?” Jews and the Aesthetics of Everyday Life in Paris and Berlin, 1920-1942,” in *Histories of Leisure*, ed. Rudy Koshar, Leisure, Consumption and Culture (New York and Oxford: Berg, 2002), p.306.

⁷ Kidron includes embodied traces such as tattooed Auschwitz numbers and wartime scars in her consideration of ‘surviving artifacts of the deathworld’, and these are the focus for her interviews with Holocaust survivors. Carol A. Kidron, “Breaching the Wall of Traumatic Silence: Holocaust Survivor and Descendant Person-Object Relations and the Material Transmission of the Genocidal Past,” *Journal of Material Culture* 17, no. 1 (2012): p.7; Bożena Shallcross, *The Holocaust Object in Polish and Polish-Jewish Culture* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2011).

matter. Both Marianne Hirsch and Atina Grossmann's comments on the 'postgeneration' or second generation reveal the tension felt within Holocaust studies, and within the survivor community, of who constitutes a 'survivor'.⁸ This has translated into a lack of focus on other aspects of the Holocaust and those affected by its transnational and intergenerational consequences.⁹ Martin Dean explicitly highlights this tension of terminology in regards to pre-war Jewish refugees. Even the 'lucky ones', he argues, having steered 'their way through a capricious and hostile bureaucracy and the loss of their homes, livelihoods, and often family as well – should be seen in certain respects as "survivors" of the Holocaust.'¹⁰ This thesis draws attention to these refugee survivors, and their lesser-regarded, everyday items of the pre-war migration as artefacts, refocusing the discussion to narratives of *exilic* survival, so commonly left out of Holocaust histories.

This thesis has three main objectives: 1) to extend existing histories of German Jews in Nazi Europe, and as refugees in New Zealand, and their intergenerational legacies; 2) to investigate how the memory of pre-Holocaust refugee migration was passed down to succeeding generations, specifically through material objects; and 3) to evaluate the options available to refugee families to preserve their artefacts, critically assessing the private-individual and public-collective memory practices within which decisions on the fate of such objects are made. From these objectives, two central research questions emerge. To what extent do refugee objects embody the memory of the prewar, European past? And how do the objects' meanings change for refugees and their descendants, over time and in different custodial contexts? Such questions open up issues of cultural identity, intergenerational memory, collection practices, and the private-public tensions inherent in the institutional custody of family objects – all themes that are examined in the chapters of this thesis.

⁸ Marianne Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), pp.19-20; see also Atina Grossmann, "Versions of Home: German Jewish Refugee Papers out of the Closet and into the Archives," *New German Critique* Taboo, Trauma, Holocaust, no. 90 (Autumn, 2003): p.100.

⁹ This societal and scholarly tension regarding the definition of a Holocaust 'survivor' significantly impacts on research seeking to challenge and expand the status quo. Consequently, I found 'exile objects', rather than 'Holocaust refugee objects', more fruitful and relevant search terms, in my initial research on existing literature on the topic.

¹⁰ Martin Dean, *Robbing the Jews: The Confiscation of Jewish Property in the Holocaust, 1933-1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2008), pp.82-83.

Historiography

This thesis engages with an interdisciplinary historiography, drawing on insights from migration, material culture, Holocaust, and memory studies. Despite growth in scholarly recognition of forced migration as a legitimate academic field for multi-disciplinary research since the 1980s, the material culture of migration generally has not yet come into itself as an established field of research.¹¹ Anthropologists Paul Basu and Simon Coleman observed that while there are many discourses on both topics, there is ‘remarkably little literature explicitly concerned with how these areas of study converge, or how a focus on such convergences enables a rethinking of both material culture and migration.’¹² And while recent museological literature does consider the material culture of migration, these tend to focus on migration more generally, rather than the specific circumstance of forced displacement, which is my concern here. These studies commonly address how museums of immigration collect life stories and represent immigrants and emigrants in the respective countries of arrival and departure.¹³

The material culture of *forced* migration is however, of particular interest to anthropologists. David Parkin’s seminal article “Mementoes as Transitional Objects in Human Displacement” (1999) specifically focuses on person-object relations in a refugee or forced displacement context. Parkin’s study suggests ‘transitional objects’ carried by people in crisis are taken as ‘mementoes of sentiment and cultural knowledge and yet also as bases of future re-settlement’.¹⁴ Beside practical reasons, refugees carry

¹¹ The small-form monographs produced on the subject (journal articles, book chapters, conference papers, as opposed to extensive edited publications) indicate just how new and cutting-edge this area of research is. Often involving social memory, this area of research is usually interdisciplinary, collaborative research, with a focus on refugee or immigrant communities – communal networks and the social group itself. Recent examples are the German Historical Institute and Kings College London’s “Things We Keep” project, and the Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society’s symposium “People, Things on the Move” held in early 2015. Publications include *Moving Subjects, Moving Objects: Transnationalism, Cultural Production and Emotions*, ed. Maruška Svašek. Material Mediations: People and Things in a World of Movement (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012).

¹² Paul Basu, and Simon Coleman, "Introduction: Migrant Worlds, Material Cultures," *Mobilities* 3, no. 3 (November 2008): p.313.

¹³ A useful example is Andrea Witcomb’s study of the role of ‘the souvenir’ in museum and personal narrative making in Australia. Witcomb suggests the souvenirs bought by Portuguese-Australians immigrants on visits back to their ancestral homeland, carry fundamentally different meanings than those bought by standard tourists, or brought out during the emigration journey itself. Despite focusing on objects only tangentially related to my research topic – the ‘authentic’ item from the pre-migration past – Witcomb’s conceptual and structural framework for her analysis is a useful model for studying ‘the migratory object’ in the public archive. Andrea Witcomb, "Using Souvenirs to Rethink How We Tell Histories of Migration: Some Thoughts," in *Narrating Objects, Collecting Stories*, ed. Sandra H. Dudley, et al. (USA and Canada: Routledge, June 2012), p.37.

¹⁴ Citing ethnographic literature on objects as gifts, commodities, and reciprocity, Parkin indicates the shift in anthropology that now considers ‘the social space and socio-geographical movements occupied by

items of ‘sentimental value which both inscribe and are inscribed by their own memories of self and personhood...items taken under pressure and in crisis set up contexts less of use and more of selective remembering, forgetting and envisioning.’¹⁵

By concentrating on the processes of individual and cultural continuity, Parkin argues that under such conditions as rapid, violent, forced displacement, personal keepsakes may ‘take the place of interpersonal relations as a depository of sentiment and cultural knowledge’, functioning like ‘ancestral memorials encoding continuity between and across the generations’, though unlike traditional memorials, not relying on territorial location for their significance.¹⁶ My research responds directly to Parkin’s proposition that we can enhance our understanding of these social processes by knowing *what* people chose to take with them upon departure, in relation to what options they had at the time, and ‘to what extent these include non-utilitarian items alongside practically useful ones.’¹⁷

While Parkin’s discussion is limited to the immediate migration experience, my research is conducted at a greater temporal and spatial remove – eighty years after the initial flight, and in the country of refuge. I seek to extend the established theoretical model that such mementoes from the homeland function as mobile depositories of cultural identity and knowledge to ensure continuity between generations. By questioning the influence of cultural identity and collective memory on the future use and preservation of refugee diaspora artefacts, my research attempts to locate German-Jewish refugee objects within both their past *and* present social worlds, as well as within broader discussions of memory – specifically, of Holocaust remembrance and exile – in a transnational and post-memorial context.

Despite some scholars now applying a transnational approach to the Holocaust’s multinational landscape, and focusing evermore on the second generation of survivors, the Holocaust experience and memories of *refugee survivors* of the Holocaust is largely missing from this turn in Holocaust studies.¹⁸ Holocaust-era refugee migration and exile barely features in any of the numerous studies of post-Holocaust memory, which

the person and their ‘attached’ material-object imprints’. David J Parkin, "Mementoes as Transitional Objects in Human Displacement," *Journal of Material Culture* 4, no. 3 (1999): pp.303-04.

¹⁵ Parkin, "Mementoes as Transitional Objects in Human Displacement," p.304.

¹⁶ Ibid., pp.317-18.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.317.

¹⁸ While exile studies exists as an established field of research, with many studies written on the Jewish diaspora of the Holocaust, the discipline remains separated from Holocaust studies, and has not traditionally been included within the Holocaust studies discipline.

continues to be a popular theme among scholars engaged with the current interest in memory – the so-called ‘memory boom.’¹⁹ As the Holocaust shifts out of ‘lived memory’ and into ‘historical memory’, as we lose the irreplaceable firsthand testimony of survivors, Holocaust remembrance and representations of that memory are themes to which scholars constantly return, all the while emphasising that cultural memory links the past to the present and the future.²⁰ Michael Rothberg’s ‘multidirectional memory’ and Marianne Hirsch’s ‘postmemory’ theories have become some of the most prominent and influential interventions in Holocaust studies in relation to memory in our post-Holocaust world.

Rothberg rejects the notion that a straight line connects memory to identity; collective Holocaust memory is instead *shared* memory: memory initiated by individuals but ‘mediated through networks of communication, institutions of the state, and the social groupings of civil society.’²¹ Rothberg advocates ‘...the need for a form of comparative thinking that, like memory itself, is not afraid to traverse sacrosanct borders of ethnicity and era.’²² By situating my research between 1930s migration, today’s articulation of memory, and decision-making on future repatriation of artefacts, my methodological approach is driven by interdisciplinary perspectives and employs a broad temporal and spatial framework. In explicitly considering diaspora, the first and second generation, and material culture dimension – the vestiges of this past and debates on their future – my research expands and tests such existing theoretical paradigms within the inclusive context of transnational refugee memory.

Hirsch foregrounds her concept of ‘postmemory’ by describing ‘the ruptures introduced by collective historical trauma, by war, Holocaust, exile, and refugeehood.’²³

¹⁹ The late twentieth century preoccupation with memory in the humanities and social sciences continues today. In the discipline of history, this has resulted in the overshadowing of traditional themes of analysis (class, race, and gender) by the historical study of ‘memory’. Jay Winter, “The Memory Boom in Contemporary Historical Studies,” *Raritan: A Quarterly Review* 21, no. 1 (Summer 2001): pp.52-3

²⁰ Oren Stier’s analysis of the material icons of the Holocaust in *Committed to Memory* (2003) and Levy and Sznajder’s *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age* (2006), consider how contemporary public consciousness of the Holocaust is shaped and transmitted. Levy and Sznajder especially emphasise the global, transnational nature of Holocaust memory today. Citing the example of international condemnation of ethnic cleansing and forced migration, Levy and Sznajder suggest that the ‘de-territorialization of Holocaust memories opens up to an abstract and hence universally accessible terrain on which cosmopolitan memories can form.’ Daniel Levy, and Natan Sznajder, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*, ed. John C. Torpey, trans. Assenka Oksiloff, Politics, History, and Social Change (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), p.183.

²¹ Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* ed. Mieke Bal, and Hent de Vries Cultural Memory in the Present (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009), p.15.

²² *Ibid.*, p.17.

²³ Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* p.33.

This is especially pertinent to the case of the many European Jewish refugees whose personal possessions, cultural archives, and communal records were lost during the course of the Holocaust. These ruptures, Hirsch suggests, severely impair both communicative memory and institutionalised cultural memory (memories linked between individuals and groups).²⁴ This is because such ruptures disrupt the assumed lines of memory transmission via embodied practice and symbolic systems ‘connecting individual to family, to social group, to institutionalized historical archive.’²⁵ ‘Histories’, she says, are ‘suppressed and eradicated’, and I would add *dispersed*.²⁶ She argues the concept of ‘postmemory’ acts as bridging, reparative mode, by which these ruptures can be counteracted.²⁷

Postmemory, in Hirsch’s own words, ‘describes the relationship of the second generation to powerful, often traumatic, experiences that preceded their births but that were nevertheless transmitted to them so deeply as to seem to constitute memories in their own right.’²⁸ Memory here is not distinctly recall, rather postmemory’s connection to the past is mediated ‘by imaginative investment, projection and creation... These events happened in the past, but their effects continue into the present.’²⁹ Furthermore, Hirsch’s distinction between ‘familial’ and ‘affiliative’ postmemory shows that the transmission of traumatic experiences occurs across a wider social field than just within the family: ‘*Familial* structures of mediation and representation facilitate the *affiliative* acts of the postgeneration.’³⁰ Significantly, Hirsch emphasises the role of material

²⁴ As second-generation survivors and scholars, comparative literature professor Marianne Hirsch and her husband historian Leo Spitzer focus their collaborative and individual research on the articulation and effect of memory, particularly in relation to trauma and exile, and where possible, using material objects as ‘testimonial’ sources. See also Leo Spitzer, “Invisible Baggage in a Refuge from Nazism.” *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 2, no. 3 (Winter 1993): pp.305-36; Leo Spitzer, “Back through the Future: Nostalgic Memory and Critical Memory in a Refuge from Nazism,” in *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present*, ed. Mieke Bal, Jonathan Crewe, and Leo Spitzer (Hanover and London: Dartmouth College, University Press of New England, 1999).

²⁵ Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* p.33.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ First proposed by Hirsch in her 1992-1993 article, “Family Pictures: *Maus*, Mourning and Post-Memory”, the concept of postmemory was further developed in Hirsch’s subsequent works, particularly in her 2008 essay “The Generation of Postmemory.” Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), p.33. See also Hirsch, “Past Lives: Postmemories in Exile.” *Poetics Today* 17, no. 4, Creativity and Exile: European/American Perspectives II (Winter 1996): pp.659-86; Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (USA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

²⁸ Hirsch, “The Generation of Postmemory,” *Poetics Today* 29, no. 1 (2008): 103.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 107.

³⁰ Familial postmemory describes the transmission of traumatic events directly from first generation survivors and witnesses to their descendants. Affiliative postmemory is the lateral transmission from the descendants to those of their generation seeking connection to past events. Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust*, p.39.

culture in these processes, arguing that ‘testimonial objects’ – objects, images and stories bequeathed to the second generation – ‘carry memory traces from the past...but they also embody the very process of its transmission’, from one generation to the next.³¹

The most recent study drawing upon postmemory theory and the role of family objects in the context of second-generation inheritance of the Holocaust past is Nina Fischer’s 2015 book *Memory Work: The Second Generation*. Fischer observes how the second generation engages with the pre-Holocaust family and their parents’ survival, through a comparative analysis of the English-language literary texts written by second-generation authors in countries of post-war Jewish diasporas. But she departs from the dominant trauma studies approaches, to instead argue that dependent on the subject, possibilities for accessing the past, and the individual’s conscious decision to engage in memory work, members of the second generation are able to reconnect with their families’ past, in spite of catastrophic loss.³²

In *Memory Work*’s chapter ‘Objects’, Fischer describes the moment of coming into possession of a family heirloom, as a point of memory transmission, which emphasises continuity and connectivity, and at times, the significant lack thereof, as first generation silence limits the ability of objects to carry a usable past.³³ Fischer argues that compared to families of camp survivors, ‘for children of refugees, there are more possibilities to connect to a usable past of family and origins through physical objects rather than associating their absence with negativity and loss.’³⁴ She notes that ‘in most cases – unless the parents escaped – internment and displacement made it impossible to maintain a tradition of inheritance in (former) European Jewish families.’³⁵ My study on pre-war refugee migration shows that even when the parents did escape, this could still in some cases result in a comparable loss of objects, due to belongings left behind, sold to raise funds for emigration, or lost or destroyed en route to New Zealand, as in the case of the Simon family.

Fischer’s work on pre-Holocaust family objects importantly recognises the individual agency of refugees and their descendants in determining their ability to use

³¹ Ibid., p.178.

³² Fischer notes that memory work is not solely concerned with the Holocaust, as ‘its interest also predates the genocide.’ Her approach therefore challenges a trauma studies reading of the literature, typically focused on the pathology of the children of traumatised victims. Fischer, *Memory Work: The Second Generation*, p.4.

³³ Ibid., pp.44, 65.

³⁴ Ibid., p.26.

³⁵ Ibid., p.31.

objects in second-generation memory work, but fails to consider the movement of migratory objects out of private families and into public heritage institutions. My work extends Fischer's thesis beyond the private sphere, to interrogate the perspectives of both families and collecting institutions, and the active role of collective memory in the decision-making process of second-generation families. My thesis argues that New Zealand's German-Jewish refugee objects bear multiple identities and meanings as a result of their dispersed, transnational history. As the refugee objects moved out of different cultural and custodial contexts, they acquired new significances in relation to their condition of inheritance, use in the custodial environment, and role in shaping cultural identity and collective memory – both in the second-generation family, and in the public archive. The resulting fragmentation of the German-Jewish archive contributes to the collective memory of this legacy of exile, as it raises complex questions regarding the rightful place of these humble, domestic objects in the transnational public archive. The transnational, shared heritage of these refugee objects, tempered by the legacy of conflict represented by Germany as the perpetrator nation, hereby heightens the public-private tension inherent in the proposed movement of these private, family artefacts into a public repository.

Contribution

In light of current international repatriation movements to return refugee families' artefacts to Germany, such as the return of the Stahl family papers to the Jewish Museum Berlin (JMB) in late 2014, the provenance and significance of refugee survivor objects is particularly pertinent today, as the first person authenticity of survivors rapidly fades, and the Holocaust memorial sphere transforms to accommodate this change. This thesis explores the extent to which the material objects left behind by first generation survivors can fulfill testimonial roles as affective objects – can surviving objects 'speak' in lieu of first-person-eyewitness oral testimony? Conversely, are there ways in which European museums lacking in Jewish diaspora artefacts could tell the story of Jewish exile without material objects?

By examining material objects as they have been passed from first generation refugees to their children, and into the public archive, my research introduces a new approach to thinking about the experience of migration as an intergenerational legacy of

the Holocaust, and of exilic material culture as a metaphor and vehicle for memory. Used as historical sources, mere things become signifiers of a past world otherwise distant, and fractured by Holocaust and exile. This approach allows me to focus on life rather than death, and as Leora Auslander describes her own work on the aesthetic tastes of Parisian and Berliner Jews in the period 1920-1942, it is 'the story of how people gave meaning to their lives, communicated their values and sense of self to others, and remembered their pasts...' through the banal furnishings of their private homes.³⁶

More recently, Auslander has emphasised the importance of domestic material culture to historians of migration, arguing that '...the risks that refugees took to carry "mere" things with them would be more accurately interpreted if historians took the psychological meanings of objects and homes more seriously.'³⁷ Using Auslander's commentary as a starting point, in considering the migration and afterlives of objects brought to New Zealand by German-Jewish refugees, this thesis offers unique insight into the emotional and memorial meanings of such objects for first and second generation refugee families. Its chapters examine how the families curate that memory for themselves (in their private homes), and for the public (in selecting which items to entrust to public heritage institutions), revealing privately held collections of objects, never studied until now.

This thesis, and its findings, also introduces a new topic to New Zealand material culture historiography. As Bronwyn Labrum has observed, the 'material turn' in Australasian historiography is more 'object-centred' rather than 'object-driven', and 'the huge popular interest in how people lived and their material worlds is not matched by scholarly interest.'³⁸ The 2015 edited collection *The Lives of Colonial Objects* is at the forefront of a shift to, in Labrum's words, bring 'together the material and the social',

³⁶ Although Auslander does not specifically study the exilic objects of refugee migration, her comparative study considers material objects and their significance for Jews before, during, and after the Holocaust. Using the memoirs and records relating to claims made by returning Jewish survivors post-1945, Auslander pieces together an image of material life for the Jewish inhabitants of Paris and Berlin. Through her study, the multiple identities of these modern individuals are revealed, and furthermore, negotiated through the ways their private homes were furnished. Auslander, "'Jewish Taste?' Jews and the Aesthetics of Everyday Life in Paris and Berlin, 1920-1942," p.307. See also Auslander, "'National Taste?' Citizenship Law, State Form, and Everyday Aesthetics in Modern France and Germany, 1920-1940," in *The Politics of Consumption: Material Culture and Citizenship in Europe and America*, ed. Martin Daunt, and Matthew Hilton (New York and Oxford: Berg, 2001), pp.109-28.

³⁷ Leora Auslander, "Beyond Words," *The American Historical Review* 110, no. 4 (October 2005): p.1021.

³⁸ Labrum challenges Australasian historians to take advantage of this wider interest in materiality, and argues that by 'examining how things are done, as well as how things are possessed and consumed, fresh perspectives and innovative histories will be created that uncover and explain past worlds and quotidian experiences.' Bronwyn Labrum, "Material Histories in Australia and New Zealand: Interweaving Distinct Material and Social Domains," *History Compass* 8, no. 8 (2010): pp.811-12.

urging a balanced negotiation between objects, their context, and surrounding social relations so to consider, in this case, how objects could be used to construct colonial history.³⁹ *Colonial Objects* of course however, exemplifies the New Zealand historiography's focus on the nineteenth century, and the little researched about New Zealand's material culture in the more recent past.⁴⁰ My research adds to a broader history of object bringing in the New Zealand context, by focusing on the twentieth century interwar and post-WWII period, and in its encapsulation of a diverse range of objects from just one small case study, indicates the rich potential of using such an approach.

Methodology and scope

Situated at the intersection of history and material culture studies, this thesis takes the unconventional approach of presenting a historical narrative that goes beyond the historical event itself, to explore how the emotional and memorial legacies of the Holocaust play out in a transnational and familial post-Holocaust setting. Marek Tamm recently argued that the traditional relationship between categories of past, present, and future in Western societies has changed – no longer future-oriented interpretations of the past, but a new 'presentism' has enabled historians to consider the past as no longer 'something final and irreversible but persists in many ways in the present.'⁴¹ According to Tamm, this shift in perspective 'allows us to broaden historiography's range from a study of the events of the past to that of their later impact and meaning.'⁴² This turn has seen the rise of an innovative approach in historical research termed 'mnemohistory' by Jan Assmann (*Gedächtnisgeschichte* in German).⁴³ This approach, which is 'concerned not with the past as such, but only with the past as it is remembered' – what is known of

³⁹ Labrum, "Material Histories in Australia and New Zealand: Interweaving Distinct Material and Social Domains," p.812, in Conal McCarthy, and Jonathan Mané-Wheoki, "Afterword: The Wharenui Mataatua, and Some Thoughts on Things," in *The Lives of Colonial Objects*, ed. Annabel Cooper, Lachy Paterson, and Angela Wanhalla (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2015), pp.316-18.

⁴⁰ Labrum, "Material Histories in Australia and New Zealand: Interweaving Distinct Material and Social Domains," p.811.

⁴¹ Marek Tamm, "Introduction: Afterlife of Events: Perspectives on Mnemohistory," in *Afterlife of Events: Perspectives on Mnemohistory*, ed. Marek Tamm, Palgrave Macmillan Memory Studies (United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p.1.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.2.

⁴³ It should be noted that while the approach is innovative, it is not altogether new, with mnemohistorical studies published since the 1970s. Tamm, "Introduction: Afterlife of Events: Perspectives on Mnemohistory," pp.3-5.

the past in the present, and how that past may shape the present or the future – bears particular relevance for Holocaust-era exile, as the second generation consider the fate of objects from their families' pre-war European past.⁴⁴

Concerned with the recent trend by oral historians and cultural theorists to minimise or discard the value of individual memory, Anna Green urges both scholarly fields engaged in memory work to 'remain open to the richness and variety of individual consciousness', and to its expressive possibilities.⁴⁵ To do so, she argues, is to better 'investigate ways in which individuals negotiate competing ideas or beliefs, or find spaces within or between dominant discourses.'⁴⁶ My use of the mnemohistorical approach extends the focus on cultural memory to a more inclusive consideration of individual memory and human agency. Asking how individuals remember the past, *and* how their descendants come to 'remember' those experiences for themselves, can offer insight into how individual decision-making around inherited artefacts is or is not situated within an intergenerational framework.

This thesis employs two main qualitative research approaches: oral history interviews with refugee survivor families and industry interviews with professionals in the New Zealand heritage sector (both semi-structured), and the examination of material objects.⁴⁷ I use three testimony sources: my own oral history interviews recorded with the second generation (and one with a first generation refugee), existing pre-recorded oral history interviews with first-generation refugees, and the original letters, memoirs, and reminiscences of the first generation. It has been important for my research to find alternative ways of 'accessing' the first generation of refugees as most died before I began my research. My methodology highlights the importance of family memory in the

⁴⁴ Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 1997), p.9, in Tamm, "Introduction: Afterlife of Events: Perspectives on Mnemohistory," p.3.

⁴⁵ As a consequence of historians' increasing focus on how individual recollections fit cultural scripts or templates, oral history and collective memory studies are converging, and 'individual memory is either subsumed under 'collective memory', or assigned to the realm of the passive unconscious.' Anna Green, "Individual Remembering and 'Collective Memory': Theoretical Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates," *Oral History* 32, no. 2, Memory and Society (Autumn, 2004): pp.36, 43.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.43.

⁴⁷ My interviews with refugee family participants and examination of their artefacts were undertaken as ethnographic encounters, mostly taking place behind the closed doors of domestic homes (although the Hager interview was conducted at Victoria University of Wellington's Kelburn campus). Interviews with heritage sector participants were held onsite at their respective institutions (except the Gorbey interview, again held at Kelburn campus). Interviews ranged from 1-2.5 hour duration with breaks, the interview schedules for which can be found in Appendix 2. There are variations in referencing oral history interviews, but in this thesis I followed the referencing standard in the *Guide to Style* produced by the History Group of Manatū Taonga, Ministry for Culture and Heritage, which does not require time codes. All interviews were produced with the intention to place the recordings in the Alexander Turnbull Library's oral history archive, except for those conducted with heritage sector participants.

recording of diaspora and exile histories, and by extension, the importance of oral history as a research method, at a time when the world is quickly losing Holocaust survivors.

But moreover, when using such sources it is important to acknowledge the different forms of memory accounts, and to apply a nuanced interpretative approach in relation to whether the source is recorded in written or oral form.⁴⁸ For example, there is a fluid, interactive aspect to the oral history interview not present in written memoirs and reminiscences.⁴⁹ Yet reminiscences are often fragmented in nature and are usually undated, so while they provide detailed insight into what is remembered by the first generation, they should not be considered in isolation, as one could miss important context provided in another account. Likewise, the lack of depth and detail in a first generation oral history interview can be strengthened by the detail and perspectives provided by other testimonial sources, such as letters written by the interviewee at the time of migration.⁵⁰ I have utilised as wide a range of testimonial accounts as possible, in order to consider the remembered past from a range of moments in the lived memory of first-generation refugees.

The material objects brought by refugee families to New Zealand are also 'testimonial' – witness and subject to historical change. Disciplines such as sociology, archaeology, and anthropology have long included the study of material artefacts as part of standard research practice, having 'developed flexible methodologies of analysis of material artefacts by stating their heuristic independence.'⁵¹ As historians begin to take material culture more seriously as historical sources, Giorgio Riello observes the conscious attempt to more carefully balance the agency of people and things; to be sensitive to the ways in which the interactions between person, object, and language constructs historical meaning.⁵²

⁴⁸ Green, "Individual Remembering and 'Collective Memory'", p.40.

⁴⁹ See Green, "Individual Remembering and 'Collective Memory': Theoretical Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates" article for further examples.

⁵⁰ One must be careful to differentiate sources written at the time of the event, from those aforementioned forms of life narrative, written or recorded at a temporal distance from the events described. While this can and does present certain challenges to the historian, from the mnemohistorical perspective, temporal distance from the event itself is considered an advantage, as it helps us to more clearly identify and 'understand the event's various layers of meaning and impact on the present.' Tamm, "Introduction: Afterlife of Events: Perspectives on Mnemohistory," p.2.

⁵¹ Giorgio Riello, "Things That Shape History: Material Culture and Historical Narratives," in *History and Material Culture: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources*, ed. Karen Harvey (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), p.26.

⁵² Ibid., pp.25-7.

Bernard Herman makes the distinction between ‘object-centred’ studies of material culture, and those that are ‘object-driven’. This thesis falls under the latter category, studies which typically regard ‘objects as evidence of other complex relationships’.⁵³ Based on her analysis of the writings of second-generation survivors, Nina Fischer has argued that objects are ‘a particularly evocative node of Second Generation memory work’, because ‘our connection to things is both physical and emotional.’⁵⁴ Although Fischer makes a distinct difference between reading ‘Holocaust mementoes’ and ‘other objects’ (the latter referring to objects of non-concentration camp survivors), she recognises that throughout the entire process of memory work, memory traces and transmission are discussed by the second generation, ‘not only when it comes to objects connected to the Holocaust past: indeed, mementos also embody connective moments.’⁵⁵ For scholars working in this particular area of history, both kinds of Holocaust-era artefacts enable researchers (and descendants) to seek answers to questions beyond what would typically arise through the use of documentary sources alone.

My inclusive approach to the definition of material culture includes both inscribed objects/textual documents, and uninscribed objects such as domestic or ornamental objects. But while these particular privately held objects are as yet untapped historical sources, they are also partial sources. The information gained from the objects themselves is limited without examining the associated family papers for context.⁵⁶ Most of the documents that were made available to me for study required transcribing and translation from printed or handwritten German to English.⁵⁷ I also photographed the objects described in the oral history interviews, building a visual collection of images from which to curate an electronic archive of refugee artefacts held in private family collections, using the online collection management system ‘eHive’. The creation of this

⁵³ The ‘object-centred’ approach tends to focus on technological developments, classification, and aesthetic qualities. Bernard L. Herman, *The Stolen House* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1992), pp.11, 4, in Karen Harvey, "Introduction: Practical Matters," in *History and Material Culture: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources*, p.2.

⁵⁴ Fischer defines memory work as ‘an individual’s conscious, voluntary, and methodical interrogation of the past within collective frameworks, predominantly the familial one.’ Nina Fischer, *Memory Work: The Second Generation*, ed. Andrew Hoskins, and John Sutton, Palgrave Macmillan Memory Studies (United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 30, 2.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.31-32.

⁵⁶ Some participants were initially reluctant to share these family papers with me for this study, as they themselves had not yet looked at the materials, or knew what they contained.

⁵⁷ My mother Sabine Hormann, a native-German speaker, helped me translate some of the documentary objects (with the written permission of the participating families). However, due to time restraints, I was unable to complete translation of the entire written works. Complicating factors included the use of two script styles – ‘Südderlin’ and ‘Kurrent’ – no longer taught or used in Germany.

object database is not absolutely complete or definitive, but allows me to visualise and draw comparisons of experience between my participant families, and so forms part of the methodology to help achieve the aforementioned objectives of this study.⁵⁸

Participants for this project were first identified through the networks of the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand, and previous research projects undertaken on the subject of pre-WWII Jewish refugee migration to New Zealand. The subject group includes four German-Jewish families (Vandewart/Blaschke, Gerson, Fuchs, and Simon/Baer) and one family originating from Vienna, Austria (Hager). I included the Austrian example to illustrate the similarities of experience of Austrian Jews who were part of the same cosmopolitan culture and social class as those German Jews who had the ability to emigrate, and, after the Anschluss, were subject to the same anti-Jewish laws and regulations. With regard to my subject group, I am however only scraping the surface of the enormity and diversity of the objects that exist in private collections, and of second-generation experiences. For comparative purposes, I approached a limited number of families sharing similar experience, and so significantly narrowed my case study – but what more stories are out there? The selection and offer of participation to families was an ‘opening of the door’ for some, to the materials they had so long kept aside. Second-generation survivors are, after all, agents of the production of memory, after an entire generation of survivor silence.⁵⁹

It was also necessary to limit the scope of my enquiry temporally to the pre-war migration of refugees.⁶⁰ The pre-war period was when most refugees were able to escape Europe successfully, or attempted to leave and bring extended family with them, as all borders were effectively closed with the outbreak of war on 1 September 1939. Although most refugees arrived in New Zealand before the outbreak of war, others, like the Simon/Baer family, arrived shortly *after* the war had begun. For the purposes of this

⁵⁸ Due to the overwhelming amount of refugee materials in some family homes, I decided to use the interview itself as the main guide as to decide which items I would photograph and catalogue, as these were given significance in the interviewee’s and the family’s narrative.

⁵⁹ The other side of this argument, of course, is that when families are exceedingly protective of their family materials and past is to result in a closure of that memory. Participant response in larger studies on this subject may offer further indication of whether the second generation is (or is not) a more open and receptive culture now. Certainly in the Australian case in Sydney, Sharon Kangisser Cohen has observed that ‘time, distance, aging survivors, and a greater preparedness to hear about the events of the *Shoah*, have helped survivors to overcome their silence and pushed commemoration to the fore of Jewish public life.’ Sharon Kangisser Cohen, “Remembering for Us: The Transgenerational Transmission of Holocaust Memory and Commemoration,” in *The Memory of the Holocaust in Australia*, ed. Tom Lawson, and James Jordan (London and Portland, Oregon: Vallentine Mitchell, 2008), p.96.

⁶⁰ The term ‘refugee’ existed prior to WWII, and was used in newspaper reports and media to describe the Jewish European exodus; but refugee status, as an official identity, did not exist until after WWII.

project, ‘pre-war’ means that the families considered as case studies must have *left* Germany by 1939 to fit the parameters of this study. This is an important distinction to note, as the timing of when families were able to emigrate, and how they did so, determined which possessions could be taken with them into refuge. In order to examine what individuals decided to take with them in the heightened migration context of forced displacement, my study specifically focuses on the pre-war movement of people leaving of Europe.

Chapter outlines

The structure of this thesis follows the journey of the objects taken by German-Jewish refugees into exile – their provenance in Europe before the war, the migration journey, their significance in New Zealand, and their afterlives in the private or public archive, in New Zealand or overseas. Chapter one surveys the historiography of archives of exile/exilic objects, and explains the position of global importance assumed by displaced WWII European Jewish objects in the restitution debates surrounding these diverse and controversial artefacts. Furthermore, it defines the German-Jewish refugee archive in New Zealand against the existing literature, by contextualising the New Zealand objects within the specific historical context of their migration to New Zealand in the 1930s. The first chapter also introduces the individual journeys of the family case studies, highlighting the distinction between objects brought to New Zealand at the time of migration, and objects shipped out later.

Chapter two examines the usage and meanings of objects in the ‘private archive’ of the refugee survivor family. It considers the objects as they were used in the homes of the first generation upon settling into life in New Zealand, and once inherited by the second generation. The case study details three families who left Germany in 1939: the Fuchs, Vandewart, and Simon families. The chapter explores what objects can reveal of the pre-Holocaust family (music and religion), the transmission of memory and transnational identity from the first generation to the next, and the decision of families to bequeath certain objects to the third generation.

The third and final chapter examines the discourse surrounding entrusting objects to the ‘public archive’ – both locally and internationally. Refugee artefacts are a source of tension in the public archive. They are both transnational and cross boundaries of the

private, personal, domestic into the public, collective. But they are also historical, and bound up in the histories and collective memory of a defined, but by no means unique, social group. This chapter advocates the importance of considering the role of the family in the public archive, by examining the relationship between the bequeathing parties and receiving organisations, *alongside* the role of migration objects in public, collective forms of post-Holocaust refugee survivor memory. Such a multilateral approach clarifies the true value of these objects, as they relate to both donating and collecting parties, and to their historical contexts. Moreover, this analysis reveals the lack of adequate artefact preservation options for the second generation in New Zealand.

Chapter 1: Displaced Objects in an Archive of Exile: The German-Jewish Refugee Artefact in New Zealand

The German-Jewish refugee artefact in New Zealand is but one example of displaced objects in a global archive of exile. This chapter first explores the concept of ‘archives of exile’ and in particular, the historiography of the Holocaust’s archive of exile. It considers the internationalism of such an archive, the nature of the objects, and associated archival practices, including debates surrounding their institutional fate. The final section defines the German-Jewish refugee archive in New Zealand against the existing exclusive literature defining the Holocaust archive of exile, and provides historical context to the New Zealand case study. German-Jewish refugee objects in New Zealand *are* displaced, transnational Jewish artefacts. But unlike the high culture artefacts prioritised in the literature, the New Zealand archive of exile is diverse and domestic in nature: everyday items that acquired affective significance for descendants as exilic remnants of their familial and cultural heritage. The closing section introduces the first generation families and transit experiences of this study, and investigates the historical factors determining the formation and dispersal of the German-New Zealand archive of exile.

Archives of exile, archives in exile: repositories and restitution

The title of Andrew Prescott’s chapter ‘Archives of Exile: Exile of Archives’ neatly summarises an important argument concerning how to define archives of exile: the concept can refer to both the archived artefacts of the displaced, or the archive can itself be *in* exile.¹ The particular archive of exile to which this thesis relates is both constituted by exilic objects, and is dispersed and in exile itself – spread throughout the world as a result of the Holocaust. The contemporary singularity of the 1930s period of persecution and the Holocaust itself, motivated the initial migration of these refugee objects, but also engendered the peculiar logic of their circulation and present-day locations across the

¹ Andrew Prescott, "Archives of Exile: Exile of Archives," in *What Are Archives? Cultural and Theoretical Perspectives: A Reader*, ed. Louise Craven (Hampshire, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2008).

globe. The groups and individuals persecuted by the Nazi regime from 1933 onwards literally sought refuge wherever they could find a permit, resulting in the dispersal of continental European Jewish refugees around the world, and I would add, the material records of their migration.²

In a special edition of the *Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* entitled *Refugee Archives: Theory and Practice*, Edward Timms reminds us that for the persecuted, the 'impulse to save family possessions was not simply a personal matter...courageous individuals saw the preservation of personal papers and historical records as a political imperative.'³ The collection and preservation of such records was an act of defiance Jewish communities could undertake against the National Socialist regime, which sought to physically destroy them *and* rewrite the historical record, documenting their destruction. This is only one answer to Prescott's general question of how 'the exile' is expressed in the archive.⁴ Prescott argues archivists should engage more with theory, and offers the theme of exile as a specific example where a thematic analysis of the archive 'can disrupt and challenge our understanding of and engagement with archives.'⁵

While to archivists the value of Prescott's argument may lie in its self-reflexivity, his acknowledgement of material culture objects is critical for a specific study of Holocaust-era displaced objects. Archives of exile are comprised of mainly 'informal materials', including official and personal papers, and family photographs. But in referencing how, for example, Chilean exiles in South Yorkshire recorded their exile experience by creating patchwork *arpilleras*, Prescott underlines that in forming a truly inclusive archive of exile 'we move quickly beyond the purely textual and encompass material objects.'⁶ This thesis advances the inclusion of material objects as primary source evidence, for a meaningful understanding of the German-Jewish refugee artefact

² Beaglehole, *A Small Price to Pay: Refugees from Hitler in New Zealand 1936-46* (Wellington, New Zealand: Allen & Unwin New Zealand Limited, 1988), p.23.

³ Edward Timms, "Preface," in *Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies, Volume 9: Refugee Archives: Theory and Practice*, ed. Andrea Hammel, Anthony Grenville, and Sharon Krummel (Netherlands: Editions Rodopi, 2007), pp.ix-x.

⁴ Prescott, "Archives of Exile: Exile of Archives," p.131.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.141.

⁶ Furthermore, the use of the immaterial or intangible record is increasingly important when representing the exile in the archive. Artworks (including sound and visual text), personal narrative, testimony, song, and music, are all put to use in modern museum exhibits; see chapter three for further discussion on the topic of refugee representation in the public archive. Prescott, "Archives of Exile: Exile of Archives," p.140.

in exile, and by extension, the exiled individual. For as Prescott powerfully demonstrates, 'To invite the exile into the archive, we need to widen our concept of the archive.'⁷

Archival material is crucial to exile studies, which traditionally relies heavily on documentary objects, often very difficult to locate and access.⁸ This concern explains the contemporary scholarly preoccupation with collections of papers – traditional archival materials as historical records. According to Andrea Hammel and contributing authors to the volume *Refugee Archives: Theory and Practice*, improvements are needed, in the efforts required to both locate and to preserve refugee archival material.⁹ Yet although preservation and access are being prioritised (coinciding with technological developments providing global access via the internet), researchers of refugee archives still observe issues concerning access and ensuring private collections are recorded and preserved.

Susan Cohen has described the difficulties donors faced when choosing a repository, and the transiency and lack of access resulting from the financial constraints universally faced by archival institutions.¹⁰ Anna Nyburg highlights the need to ensure that *privately* held collections be recorded to ensure their preservation, and emphasises the great many insights the researcher gains from a close reading of such a collection – in Nyburg's case, the personal and professional correspondence of Viennese refugee art historians, Otto and Hilde Kurz.¹¹ The nature of the subject material dictates that archives of exile are archives of private lives made available for public memory, their existence reliant on the decisions of private individuals to bequeath such collections to a public repository.¹²

⁷ Ibid., p.139.

⁸ Andrea Hammel, "Introduction," in *Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies, Volume 9: Refugee Archives: Theory and Practice*, ed. Andrea Hammel, Anthony Grenville, and Sharon Krummel (Netherlands: Editions Rodopi, 2007), p.xi.

⁹ Ibid., p.xiv.

¹⁰ According to Cohen, these factors can affect collections even in the public/private domain so that they are inaccessible to researchers; Susan Cohen, "'Now You See Them, Now You Don't.' The Archives of the Refugee Committee of the British Federation of University Women," *Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies, Volume 9: Refugee Archives: Theory and Practice*.

¹¹ Anna Nyburg, "'Dein Grosser Brief War Ein Ereignis': The Private and Professional Correspondence of the Refugee Art Historians Hilde and Otto Kurz," *Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies, Volume 9: Refugee Archives: Theory and Practice*.

¹² As Peter Fritzsche observes: 'Archives are not comprehensive collections of things, the effects left behind by the dead, nor are they arbitrary accumulations of remnants and leftovers. The archive is the

The private-public dynamic of artefact donation and preservation is raised by historian Atina Grossmann's 2003 article, 'Versions of Home: German Jewish Refugee Papers out of the Closet and into the Archives', which was spurred by her own familial connection to this refugee past.¹³ Enacting a privileged position as a second-generation scholar, Grossmann explores the personal and public heritage significance of her family's own German-Jewish refugee papers and debates their place in the greater transnational Holocaust archive, questioning whether the archival location of Holocaust survivor papers could affect how the items are to be addressed and represented.¹⁴ What kinds of stories will the artefacts (or the interpreters of them) tell in the context of a German museum, instead of – in Grossmann's case – the New York archives?

Whereas Grossmann raised important questions of archival place at a personal level, fellow historian Peter Fritzsche's study of the German public archive and national memory, highlights the transnational nature of the Holocaust archive of exile and its impact on the German nation. According to Fritzsche, Nazism's forced dispersal of European Jews before, during, and after the Holocaust created an 'archive of exile', which in addition to official and personal papers, includes oral interviews and memoirs of refugees and survivors.¹⁵ He argues that this latest archive is 'plural, rather than authoritative; manifestly incomplete, rather than comprehensive; global, rather than local', subverting the 'state-centred authority of the conventional archive.'¹⁶ But despite their importance to Holocaust-related research in general, beyond these commentaries, few historians have addressed the significance of contemporary Holocaust archives in this private-public, transnational context. Such concerns are heightened in the ongoing debate regarding *institutional archival place*, a debate which, because of their connection to the Holocaust, affects both personal and public collections of more traditional archival records (the 'refugee papers'), *and* the Jewish cultural property looted and repossessed during WWII.

production of their heirs, who must work to find connections from one generation to the next and thereby acknowledge the ongoing disintegration of the past.' Peter Fritzsche, "The Archive," *History & Memory* 17, no. 1/2 (2005): p.16.

¹³ Grossmann's article was published shortly after the opening of the Jewish Museum in Berlin (JMB) and the Museum's distinctly "German-Jewish" Leo Baeck Institute Archive, a branch of the Leo Baeck Institute in New York.

¹⁴ Atina Grossmann, "Versions of Home: German Jewish Refugee Papers out of the Closet and into the Archives," *New German Critique* Taboo, Trauma, Holocaust, no. 90 (Autumn, 2003): pp.102-08.

¹⁵ Fritzsche, "The Archive," p.39.

¹⁶ Ibid.

As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, the objects brought into refuge by Jewish refugees are precariously situated in the broader scheme of displaced Jewish cultural artefacts of WWII. The international restitution cases and consequent provenance research regarding artwork and Judaica stolen by the Nazis dominate the literature on Holocaust archives of exile, leaving the everyday objects taken by families into refuge outside the dominant discourse on the Holocaust. This Eurocentric conceptualisation of archives of exile and displaced Jewish objects of the period, places global importance on confiscated Jewish cultural artefacts, and not the Jewish cultural artefacts brought into exile by the forced displacement of European Jews.

Restitution, the restoration of something lost or stolen to its proper owner, and/or recompense for injury or loss, is a major cause of debate within the field of archives of exile. If we take the inclusive approach to define how that Holocaust-era archive of exile is constituted, then the artefacts looted during WWII are an obvious case study of exilic objects respectively sought, found, and sometimes returned. Paintings, *objets d'art* and Jewish cultural and religious objects or Judaica were looted between 1933 and 1945, by agencies within the Reich (including annexed territories: Austria, Poland, Silesia, and former Czechoslovakia), and those operating outside of Nazi-occupied territories.¹⁷ This organised 'theft of cultural items, objects of historical and artistic value rather than everyday objects...' was conducted by the Nazi Party organisation Reichsleiter Rosenberg Taskforce *Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg* (ERR), tasked specifically with appropriating Jewish cultural property between 1940 and 1945.¹⁸

The abundant literature on this subject is largely the product of international agreements to investigate restitution claims, but is also a consequence of an emerging 'hierarchy of objects' regarding displaced Holocaust-era objects. Fine artworks, such as Gustav Klimt's *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I* of the 2004 Republic of Austria vs. Altmann case fame, receive international critical attention by virtue of their aesthetic

¹⁷ World Jewish Restitution Organisation/Claims Conference WJRO, "Part A. Ii. Historical Overview, Descriptive Catalogue of Looted Judaica," ed. Claims Conference/WJRO: Looted Art and Cultural Property Initiative (New York 2009, partially updated second edition, 2014), p.10, <http://art.claimscon.org/our-work/judaica/descriptive-catalogue-of-looted-judaica/>; accessed 20 June 2015.

¹⁸ The ERR was established by the Nazi Party's chief ideologue, Alfred Rosenberg. Its primary task was 'to collect, register and supervise so-called degenerate art, archives and libraries.' Julie-Marthe Cohen, "Theft and Restitution of Judaica in the Netherlands During and after the Second World War," in *Neglected Witnesses: The Fate of Jewish Ceremonial Objects During the Second World War and After*, ed. Julie-Marthe Cohen, and Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek (London: Institute of Art and Law, 2011), p.200.

value and acquired object-status as national treasures in their post-war residences.¹⁹ The ERR's own archival documents show that even during WWII Judaica had a low priority, which Julia-Marthe Cohen suggests could indicate a 'general disdain' for Jewish artefacts: 'There was a common belief that, unlike fine art, Judaica were not materially or financially valuable. The objects were primarily viewed as ceremonial items serving a practical purpose.'²⁰ Judaica objects have only been viewed as '*objets d'art* of intrinsic beauty and cultural and historical significance' since the latter half of the nineteenth century, and by a small group of mainly Jewish observers.²¹ Even after the post-war discovery of successfully hidden Judaica objects, some survivor communities chose to conserve particular objects over others, further dispersing the artefacts.²²

Building on the very large literature in French and German on the specific issue of looted Jewish property, major edited collections *Robbery and Restitution: The Conflict over Jewish Property in Europe* (2007) and *Neglected Witnesses: The Fate of Jewish Ceremonial Objects During the Second World War and After* (2011), have brought the European subject to a broader, international English-speaking audience.²³ However while *Neglected Witnesses* only addresses those religious items stolen during wartime and their dispersion after, *Robbery and Restitution* examines the debates on restitution as enacted within different national contexts, and as they applied to objects and entities beyond Judaica. Besides cultural objects, businesses, homes, properties, and

¹⁹ Nonetheless, worldwide discussions around 'looted art' only began as belatedly as the late 1990s, and many archives were inaccessible until the opening of the Soviet archives in 1992. Ines Rotermund-Reynard, "Preface," in *Echoes of Exile: Moscow Archives and the Arts in Paris 1933-1945*, ed. Ines Rotermund-Reynard, Contact Zones (Berlin, Munich, Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), p.viii.

²⁰ Cohen, "Theft and Restitution of Judaica in the Netherlands During and after the Second World War," p.201.

²¹ Ibid.

²² An illustrative example is that of the Mannheim synagogue's religious, revered objects. Crafted silver objects, Torah and textiles, including two Torah curtains, were eventually recovered from the Synagogue Kottbusser Ufer, where they had been hidden by the local Jewish community before the war. Most were put back into use among Jewish communities in Israel and the United States. But according to curator Dr Vera Bendt, 'the textiles were not so valued and these objects were stored in the attic of Fränkelufer Synagogue and forgotten', until the fifty-two individual pieces were rediscovered in the mid-1980s, and accessioned by the Jewish Museum Berlin. Ken Gorbey, "The Gallery of the Missing," (Wellington: Draft chapter for upcoming publication, April 2015), p.3.

²³ Since the establishment of commissions on Holocaust-era assets since the late 1990s (most famously, the United States' Presidential Commission on Holocaust Assets), Western countries involved in WWII outside of Europe, like the US, are seeking the return of victims' assets to their original owners. See Martin Dean, Constantin Gosciler and Phillip Ther, ed. *Robbery and Restitution: The Conflict over Jewish Property in Europe* (United States: Berghahn Books in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2007), and Julie-Marthe Cohen and Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek, ed. *Neglected Witnesses: The Fate of Jewish Ceremonial Objects During the Second World War and After* (London: Institute of Art and Law, 2011).

personal items – aspects of the culture, contribution, and life in Europe that would be destroyed – were targeted by the Nazi regime.²⁴ In practice, the restitution of Jewish assets has offered a path of reconciliation between former Nazi nation states and the victims of the Holocaust. However, the decision to repatriate *cultural* property to the original owners or country of origin has historically been a contentious one.²⁵

Controversially, some commentators have suggested the case of ‘heirless’ Judaica in particular, is different to other instances of displaced cultural property, and argue against their imminent return to the respective country of origin.²⁶ According to Rena Lipman, ‘these items are not necessarily associated with the governments or states of the geo-political areas in which they were created.’²⁷ Because “‘Jewish cultural property’” is identified with a nationhood of people who are linked more by religion and ethnicity, than by country of origin’, Lipman argues such items should remain in communities where they best serve the cultural life of that particular people.²⁸

The argument that some objects should be archived within the communities where they can be most beneficially utilised, is one of the major reasons given by those European Jewish museums seeking donations of artefacts from former refugee families now living in diasporic countries of refuge, or new homelands.²⁹ Yet at the same time,

²⁴ The significant impact these anti-Jewish policies had on the German-Jewish population trying to leave Germany will be discussed in the second half of this chapter. See also Martin Dean, *Robbing the Jews: The Confiscation of Jewish Property in the Holocaust, 1933-1945*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2008).

²⁵ The aforementioned 2004 Republic of Austria vs. Altmann case drew enormous international media attention, and most recently inspired the British drama film, *Woman in Gold* (2015), directed by Simon Curtis, and starring Helen Mirren and Ryan Reynolds. The case resulted in the Austrian government returning five-family owned paintings by Klimt to Altmann, now living in the United States. But other examples of cultural property repatriation, resulted in the return of objects to their native home. See the return of historic Auschwitz-Birkenau barracks to Poland, after being on loan to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in December 2013. Associated Press Warsaw, "Historic Auschwitz Barracks Returned to Poland after Two Decades in U.S.," *The Guardian*, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/29/auschwitz-barracks-returned-to-poland-by-us?>; accessed 24 June 2015.

²⁶ Besides the matter of geographical location and national custodial ownership, whether an object is best held in a museum at all (or is better used in the actual community itself) is a tension museums struggle with around the world, and is an issue returned to in more detail in chapter three.

²⁷ Rena Lipman, "Jewish Cultural Reconstruction Reconsidered - Should the Jewish Religious Objects Distributed around the World after WWII Be Returned to Europe?," *KUR - Kunst und Recht* 8, no. 4 (2006): p.89.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ The chief archivist of the Jewish Museum Berlin, Aubrey Pomerance, cited utilisation and function when he visited the Wellington Jewish community in December 2014. He particularly emphasised the need to educate young Germans about the Jewish exile through using physical historical artefacts. Aubrey

such European Jewish museum collections are severely lacking in artefacts – their collections having been confiscated by the Nazis, or lost and scattered during post-war occupation. Bernhard Purin has noted the extreme paucity of materials illustrating Jewish experiences and personal stories in German Jewish museums in particular, but describes ways in which various regional and municipal museums have dealt with this challenge.³⁰ Moreover, Purin addresses the perspective held by many German museums, namely that the problem of looted art and Holocaust-related objects is a purely legal issue, but contends that the matter has a historical basis, and therefore has museological potential: ‘Jewish museums can set an example by developing new ways to display these objects’, ways that call attention to Nazi expropriation of Jewish assets during the Holocaust through the objects’ very provenance history.³¹

But Lipman’s argument also contradicts the emerging cultural trend to identify and return cultural property to the original owners, as has been well exemplified in both European examples of stolen Jewish property returning to the original owners or descendants, and, for example, indigenous ancestral remains and artefacts returning to New Zealand.³² Despite significant historical differences, a parallel can be drawn between the indigenous objects appropriated in the colonial period, and the theft of Jewish cultural objects during the 1930s and WWII, as both were subjected to imperial and National Socialist ‘cultures of collecting’, to borrow Elsner and Cardinal’s phrase.³³ Paradoxically, the Jews were unwanted but their cultural objects were romanticised and ‘collected’ for preservation by the Nazi regime, as evidence of a race of people they sought to eradicate.³⁴ Aaron Glass’s comparison of indigenous peoples’ claims for repatriation and those of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust argues that by fighting for the return of their cultural property, these communities are simultaneously ‘fighting to

Pomerance, "Teaching the Holocaust at the Jewish Museum Berlin," (Myers Hall, Wellington Jewish Community Centre, Wellington, 14 December 2014).

³⁰ A discussion of the ‘narrative’ and ‘identity museum’ approaches currently used by museums in Germany in particular will be detailed in chapter three. Bernhard Purin, "Building a Jewish Museum in Germany in the Twenty-First Century," in *(Re)Visualizing National History: Museums and National Identities in Europe in the New Millennium*, ed. Robin Ostow (Canada: University of Toronto Press, March 2008), pp.142-45.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp.149-51.

³² See Conal McCarthy, *Museums and Māori: Heritage Professionals, Indigenous Collections, Current Practice* (Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2011).

³³ John Elsner, and Roger Cardinal, "Introduction," in *The Cultures of Collecting: From Elvis to Antiques - Why Do We Collect Things?*, ed. John Elsner, and Roger Cardinal (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 1994).

³⁴ Alon Confino, *A World Without Jews: The Nazi Imagination from Persecution to Genocide* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), pp.209-11.

remember histories, remember their societies, and retain the essential properties of their cultures.’³⁵

Regardless of whether contested cultural property artefacts are restituted or not, the fact of their transnational entanglement remains to be grappled with. As Bénédicte Savoy has expressed, ‘...in the course of their eventful lives, the objects have acquired a double identity: that of their place of origin and that of their adopted land.’³⁶ The same is the case with the much humbler objects of German-Jewish refugee migration to New Zealand. The historical journeys of these displaced objects, their roles and significances for refugee families in New Zealand, and the deliberations of the second generation over their institutional fate, validates their interconnectedness. For such domestic and otherwise unassuming objects, their cultural significances and inherent double identity lay within the objects’ provenance. The historical context of their journey to and arrival in New Zealand reveals how the New Zealand German-Jewish refugee archive came to be, and provides background to developing and understanding how everyday objects came to bear such irreplaceable cultural value for a whole community.

German-Jewish exilic objects: the formation and dispersal of the German-New Zealand archive of exile

In contrast to the high culture Jewish objects detailed in the literature on Holocaust-era displaced Jewish artefacts, the objects brought to New Zealand by German-Jewish refugee families were incredibly diverse – domestic, occupational, middle class, cultured, and surprisingly voluminous, in most cases. The objects considered in this study are a mixture of the practical and ornamental, the domestic and religious, and reflect the parallel and divergent material lives of refugees in Germany, in transit migration, and in refuge New Zealand. This concluding section presents the circumstantial factors influencing the materiality of immigrating to New Zealand, including cultural identification, social class, and time of departure and arrival. This

³⁵ Aaron Glass, "Return to Sender: On the Politics of Cultural Property and the Proper Address of Art," *Journal of Material Culture* 9, no. 2 (2004): p.136.

³⁶ Bénédicte Savoy, "Plunder, Restitution, Emotion and the Weight of Archives: A Historical Approach," in *Echoes of Exile: Moscow Archives and the Arts in Paris 1933-1945*, ed. Ines Rotermond-Reynard, Contact Zones (Berlin, Munich, Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), p.43.

historical context is important to consider as it allows us to understand the centrality of material objects to the migration and resettlement experience in New Zealand. For as Paul Basu and Simon Coleman argue, while the possessions of migrants are contingent upon their individual experiences, equally, ‘the nature of their migration is also shaped by its materiality.’³⁷

German-Jewish refugees in New Zealand – who were they?

The German-Jewish refugees who gained entry to New Zealand in the pre-war period came mainly from the assimilated, middle-class and liberal tradition in Germany – although the Austrian example bears many of the same characteristics as the main group of my case study.³⁸ Most families were non-religious, but identified culturally with being Jewish.³⁹ The Simon family from Hamburg was the only practising religious Jewish family of this study; Kurt Hager had Jewish grandparents but was brought up Catholic, but other families like the Fuchs family followed traditions like the Jewish fast days and holidays to please their elderly and more orthodox family members.⁴⁰ In an interview recorded in January 1997, Marie Blaschke (née Vandewart) described her childhood family visits to her religious maternal grandparents in Ansbach, Bavaria as ‘a sort of tribute.’⁴¹ Her parents both came from a Jewish background, but her mother Anna Vandewart (née Marcus) had very religiously observant parents, and Anna’s parents

³⁷ Paul Basu, and Simon Coleman, "Introduction: Migrant Worlds, Material Cultures," *Mobilities* 3, no. 3 (November 2008): p.317.

³⁸ New Zealand’s Jewish population continued to increase after WWII; according to census figures 3,661 Jews were living in New Zealand by 1951, following 1,100 (mostly Jewish) refugees arriving before and at the beginning of the war. However, official figures are unreliable as many still chose to keep a low profile to ward of persecution and discrimination, and this was especially the case with those who arrived as refugees from Nazism in the 1930s and 1940s. Leonard Bell, “Introduction,” in *Jewish Lives in New Zealand: A History*, ed. Leonard Bell and Diana Morrow (Auckland: Random House New Zealand, 2012), pp.16, 19, 22.

³⁹ Ann Beaglehole, "Refugees from Nazi Germany and Austria 1933-45," in *Out of the Shadow of War: The German Connection with New Zealand in the Twentieth Century*, ed. James N. Bade (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.26.

⁴⁰ Soni Mulheron, née Fuchs, was eleven years old when she immigrated with her parents and older sister to New Zealand. Her father Richard Fuchs was non-religious, but her paternal grandmother was orthodox. Describing her father’s relationship with Judaism, Soni explains: ‘But for her [his mother’s] sake he sort of kept up the...fast days and the holidays, but after she died, no.’ Sonia (Soni) Mulheron (née Fuchs), interview by Louisa Hormann, 11 August, 2015, Wellington, interview 03/10. Track file 1 of 2: TASCAM_0081.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁴¹ Maja Beutler, and Kathryn Smits, "Marie Vandewart Blaschke," in *Out of the Shadow of War: The German Connection with New Zealand in the Twentieth Century*, ed. James N. Bade (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.119.

initially disapproved of their daughter's marriage to the secular Eugen Vandewart.⁴² This generational shift from religious observance to assimilation was commonplace in Germany following the long struggle for Jewish political and social emancipation, granted to Jews in Germany in 1871.⁴³

With social integration and broader access to education under full citizenship, the professional lives of German Jews diversified, and were well established in Germany's workforce prior to the Nazi regime's ascension to power. Emigrants were commonly members of the German professional classes, as they were (albeit scarcely) able to afford to leave Germany in the 1930s. But because Jewish refugees were mostly of the professional or business classes, their skills as workers were not considered valuable by most countries of refuge at the time: 'in the world-wide economic depression, no country was willing to risk the importation of potential or actual paupers...'⁴⁴ This prejudice, alongside existing anti-Semitism and racial preference for 'Britishers' and northern Europeans, meant that Jewish refugees from Europe were considered undesirable immigrants by the New Zealand authorities.⁴⁵ Yet despite an unwelcoming administration, and the challenges of being deemed an 'enemy alien' during wartime, many of the refugees involved in the arts in Germany contributed greatly to the development of the creative arts and architectural modernism in New Zealand from the 1940s onwards.⁴⁶ As James N. Bade states, 'Germany's loss was New Zealand's immeasurable gain.'⁴⁷

Careers in music and architecture in particular were the dominant professional practices among refugees of this case study. Music as a recreational pastime was an

⁴² Paul Blaschke, interview by Louisa Hormann, 4 August, 2015, Wellington, interview 02/10. Track file 1 of 3: TASCAM_0077.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁴³ Not only a generational shift regarding religion, the emancipation of the Jewish people resulted in an ethnic and political separation, as assimilated and liberal Jews living in Germany 'vocally distanced themselves from the Orthodox eastern European Jews and...were highly skeptical of Zionist demands to create and immigrate to a Jewish state in Palestine.' Furthermore, 'they saw themselves as Germans first and only then – if at all – as members of the Jewish people or of the Jewish religious community.' Margarete Limberg, and Hubert Rübsaat, ed. *Germans No More: Accounts of Jewish Everyday Life, 1933-1938* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2006), pp.1-2.

⁴⁴ A. J. Sherman, *Island Refuge: Britain and Refugees from the Third Reich 1933-1939* (Great Britain: Elek Books Limited, 1973), pp.23-4.

⁴⁵ Beaglehole, "Refugees from Nazi Germany and Austria 1933-45," p.25.

⁴⁶ Compared to the active cultural life of Germany, not only in cities but also in provincial towns, the arts and cultural activities available in New Zealand cities in the 1930s were few. But as Ann Beaglehole importantly notes, such losses were tempered by the persecution refugees had escaped. *Ibid.*, p.27.

⁴⁷ James N. Bade, ed. *Out of the Shadow of War: The German Connection with New Zealand in the Twentieth Century* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.60.

important theme across all the families studied, but especially for Berliner Marie Vandewart, a music student and cellist, and Richard Fuchs, a composer *and* architect. Fuchs and Ernst Gerson practiced architecture in Karlsruhe, Baden, and Klein Flottbek, Hamburg, respectively. Gerson came from a family of architects; his two older brothers Hans and Oskar Gerson's architectural achievements in Hamburg and in California, United States, to where the Oskar emigrated, have been extensively recorded.⁴⁸ Ernst and his brother Oskar lost their jobs in 1933, receiving notification from the *Bund Deutscher Architekten* (Association of German Architects) that they could no longer be members and could only accept contracts from Jewish customers.⁴⁹ Architectural training was a fortunate skill to have for refugees coming to New Zealand in the 1930s, as the Labour government launched its first major state housing scheme in 1936; both Fuchs and Gerson found employment with the New Zealand government upon immigrating.⁵⁰ But while professional employment was attained relatively easily for Fuchs and Gerson, this was not the case for all refugees.

Emigration to New Zealand posed significant economic constraints on refugees, and all family groups and individuals, including Fuchs and Gerson, had to adjust to a much lower standard of living once in New Zealand.⁵¹ The change from the bourgeois households of Central Europe to the housing shortage and small homes of New Zealand was radical, and arguably, felt the most by mothers and young children. In German middle-class families, mothers had a hands-off role in the early lives of their children, as they were traditionally raised by nannies. Ernst Gerson's youngest child, Eva, eleven years old when she arrived in New Zealand, was raised by the family's maid Alma: 'I called her Alla and spent more time with her as a small child than any other adult.'⁵² In her memoir, Eva described the impact emigrating had on her relationship with Alma:

⁴⁸ Hans and Oskar Gerson owned their own architecture firm in Hamburg. Ernst also worked for the firm. Hans died prior to WWII, on 14 October 1931. See Wolfgang Voigt, *Hans Und Oskar Gerson: Hanseatistisch Modern Bauten in Hamburg Und Im Kalifornischen* (Hamburg: Dolling und Galitz, 2000). Extracts on Gerson family history translated by Thomas Gerson, June 2001.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.14.

⁵⁰ Fuchs first worked for Wellington architecture firm Natusch and Sons, and later the New Zealand Housing Corporation. Steven Sedley, "Richard Fuchs Biography," Richard Fuchs Archive, 2006, p.12, <http://www.richardfuchs.org.nz/Fuchsbiography.pdf>

⁵¹ See Ann Beaglehole's chapter in *Out of the Shadow of War: The German Connection with New Zealand in the Twentieth Century*, James N. Bade ed. (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998), for further detail on the impact migration had on the living standards of refugees in New Zealand during WWII. Beaglehole, "Refugees from Nazi Germany and Austria 1933-45," p.27.

⁵² Eva Rawnsley (née Gerson), *Eva's Memoir* (Wellington: Open Polytechnic (self published), 2009, 2nd edition 2010), p.6.

...After we left Hamburg I felt homesick for her. She left a gap in my life. The fact that for years of my childhood I spent more time with our servants and knew more about them than my mother is a comment on the social ways of those times and also an insight on how the middle classes brought up their children.⁵³

Once in New Zealand, the Gersons, like many other families, could no longer afford to keep a live-in servant.⁵⁴ This change in circumstance had a significant impact on domestic roles within the family, and on the material objects brought to their new homes in refuge. Many of the domestic items brought to New Zealand, including damask linen tablecloths, dinner sets, and porcelain tea sets, reflected the families' bourgeois European lifestyle. However, as the families had no household help in New Zealand (in fact, many wives and daughters worked as house helps themselves to earn a living in refuge), many of these objects were either discarded over time, or not used again by the family except for decoration.⁵⁵ Object usage was thus determined by the families' living conditions in refuge. But as the following discussion demonstrates, the material possessions brought to New Zealand were determined by conditions at the moment of departure.

The material culture of German-Jewish refugees' migration to New Zealand largely depended on when in the 1930s they were able to leave Germany, and when they arrived in New Zealand. The earlier refugees left Germany, the more likely they were to have brought their entire household with them into exile. The closer to the outbreak of war that refugees left Germany, the less they were able to bring with them to their country of refuge. Gradually mounting restrictions on the ownership and movement of private assets and harsh penalties made it increasingly difficult for refugees to bring all their wealth and property with them into exile. The obvious irony was that while the Nazi government wished its territories to be rid of Jews, they desired that their money and

⁵³ Ibid., pp.6-7.

⁵⁴ According to Eva's second-generation daughter Sally, the family was 'terribly poor'. Sally's grandmother had never done anything before, not even kept house: 'Even once they left Germany and went to Yugoslavia and then Bulgaria, they were – they were middle class people and they had servants and cooks. So she had to learn to do everything from scratch.' Sally Rawnsley, interview by Louisa Hormann, 30 July, 2015, Wellington, interview 01/10. Track file 1 of 2: TASCAM_0073.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁵⁵ Further discussion of how the original function and usage of particular household objects changed once in New Zealand appears in chapter two.

property should remain in Germany, which in turn made emigrating unmanageable, and for many German-Jews, completely impossible.⁵⁶

The *Reichsfluchtsteuer* (Reich flight tax) was first introduced to prevent the flight of capital out of Germany during the economic crisis of 1931.⁵⁷ Although initially not meant as an anti-Jewish scheme, 'it soon became a severe obstacle to the transfer of Jewish-owned capital out of Germany after the large-scale emigration of Jews began in 1933', as its strict requirements entailed the confiscation of 25 percent of all domestic wealth.⁵⁸ The Decree on the Registration of Jewish Property, which passed on 26 April 1938 following the Anschluss with Austria in March 1938, while excluding household effects and personal belongings, ordered that property had to be detailed on lengthy questionnaires, and any undeclared property was subject to seizure.⁵⁹ It was not until the issuing of the Eleventh Decree to the Reich Citizenship Law on 25 November 1941 that the regime authorised the seizure of *all* Jewish property, as Jews were simultaneously deported from the Reich.⁶⁰

The families studied in this thesis escaped Germany and Austria before the Eleventh Decree of 1941, and so were able to retain most of their household effects and personal belongings, and bring these possessions to New Zealand. Some families however, still lost property in the process of their flight from Germany. The high cost of emigrating meant that refugees often had to sell some of their possessions in order to raise funds for emigration.⁶¹ But by 1938, they were unable to gain virtually any value

⁵⁶ Dean, *Robbing the Jews: The Confiscation of Jewish Property in the Holocaust, 1933-1945* pp.54-55.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.56.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Legislation such as the Law on the Seizure of Assets of Enemies of the People and the State, in conjunction with the Law on the Revocation of Naturalisation (14 July 1933), served as the legal basis for the seizure of assets of emigrants. The government used such legislation to confiscate not only Jewish assets, but also Communists and other identified enemies of the regime, including the 'property of disfavored persons who were out of the country.' Diemut Majer, *"Non-Germans" under the Third Reich: The Nazi Judicial and Administrative System in Germany and Occupied Eastern Europe, with Special Regard to Occupied Poland, 1939-1945*, English-Language ed. (United States: The John Hopkins University Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1981, 2003), pp.158, 161.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.160-61.

⁶¹ German-Jewish refugees were struck twice with massive costs when emigrating from Germany to New Zealand. As immigrants classed under the New Zealand Immigration Restriction Act 1931 as aliens (including non-British Europeans), German-Jewish refugees had to fulfill certain occupational categories listed by immigration authorities, or prove they could afford both their passage and any ongoing living costs (through capital or more commonly, with sponsorship by a guarantor). Joanna Malcolm-Black, "'Suitable' for New Zealand: The Impact of Inter-War Migration on an Emergent Nationalism, 1919-39" (A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in History, University of Canterbury, 1997), p.15.

from the sale of their property, and were also prohibited in many cases, from exporting goods such as merchandise, furniture, professional trade tools, furs, or jewellery, particularly after 1938.⁶² The Anschluss of Austria and the Kristallnacht pogrom in 1938 had 'radically accelerated the Nazi expropriation of Jewish property', as well as triggering the dramatic increase in refugees trying to leave Austria and Germany from 1938 until the outbreak of war in 1939.⁶³

The family papers of the Austrian family draw attention to these later developments. Originating from Vienna, Alfred and Emilie Hager escaped in early 1939, having sent their sixteen year-old son Kurt ahead to England on 1 August 1938, before reuniting in London and boarding the ship for New Zealand on 12 February 1939.⁶⁴ Documents held by the family indicate Vienna's major auction house the Dorotheum Schätzungsstelle valued Emmy Hager's Persian lamb coat with fox fur collar and a silver fox fur collar at a total of RM 600.⁶⁵ However it is unclear if these items were valued in order to then sell and raise funds for the family's emigration, or for declaring the goods upon emigrating. The items are not listed in the Schenker & Co. A.G. transport authorisation papers for the family, but the items could have been brought to New Zealand on the passenger ship, and not the cargo ship.⁶⁶

The Fuchs family was equally fortunate to have their possessions brought to New Zealand in 1939. Richard Fuchs was imprisoned in Dachau concentration camp during Kristallnacht, but if the family could prove they would emigrate before 1 January 1939, he would be released.⁶⁷ His wife Dorothea (Dora) organised everything concerning the

⁶² Sherman, *Island Refuge: Britain and Refugees from the Third Reich 1933-1939* pp.24-5.

⁶³ Dean, *Robbing the Jews: The Confiscation of Jewish Property in the Holocaust, 1933-1945* p.84.

⁶⁴ Kurt Hager, interview by Ann Beaglehole, 26 February, 1987, Levin, interview OHInt-0009/03, Tape 1 of 2 (OHC-003807). Published recording.

⁶⁵ Dorotheum Schätzungsstelle, "Auszug Aus Dem Schätzungsprotokolle," (Private collection, 20. Feb 1939).

⁶⁶ This extensive document authorised the family to leave Vienna with all ninety-nine listed items declared under the name Alfred Hager, and provides the most complete record of the scale and range of material objects brought by Jewish refugees to New Zealand in the pre-war period. Besides Marie Vandewart Blaschke's handwritten journal, no other documents among the private collections studied in this project explicitly list possessions taken (or planned for transportation) to New Zealand. Schenker & Co. A.G. Internationale Transporte, "Umzugsattest," (Private collection, 1939).

⁶⁷ Kristallnacht, or the 'Night of Broken Glass' was the coordinated attack on Jewish communities throughout the German Reich from 9-10 November 1938. For many families, including those studied in this thesis, it was their exilic moment, the catalyst for their efforts to escape Germany and its expanding territories.

family's migration while her husband was imprisoned.⁶⁸ Their daughter Soni recalls the great responsibility undertaken by her mother:

My mother was very clever. She couldn't pack any money; they could only take a certain amount of money. I don't think it was much. Oh, I think it was a hundred pounds or something – it wasn't much. And she bought everything: shoes that were too big for me! [Laughs] And to make sure that they weren't new, she made me walk round in, in the snow with shoes that were too big! And clothes and... everything!⁶⁹

Dora Fuchs organised for the German transport company Steffelin to send their belongings to New Zealand in containers. But because the family left Germany before this was done, they could only hope that the company would follow through with their commission, as war had broken out and it became 'legal' to confiscate the possessions of emigrating Jews in German territories.⁷⁰

Possessions were usually brought to New Zealand in two groups. Household items were packed into 'lifts' (shipping containers) and transported out to New Zealand by private companies, as in the case of the Fuchs, Hager, and Gerson families, but refugees on the passenger ships also carried smaller personal items on their person. Because refugees travelled to New Zealand in different family groupings (some alone, some with networks of family), not all the families studied in this thesis could send additional luggage by cargo ship. The Gerson and Fuchs families travelled as typical family groups (each had two children), and had household furniture and other voluminous items transported to New Zealand separately. Soni Mulheron (née Fuchs) described the later arrival of two containers of property in New Zealand: 'I remember they couldn't get through the tunnel in, in Karori, because they were too big... And everything was wrapped up very carefully and nothing had been pinched.'⁷¹ Unpacking was hard work, Soni explains, as 'it all had to be fitted in to the house in Karori, and it didn't all fit. So they had to sell some of it, yes.'⁷²

⁶⁸ Mulheron, "Interview with S. Mulheron." Track file 1 of 2: TASCAM_0081.wav.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Daniel (Danny) Mulheron, and Sara Stretton, interview by Louisa Hormann, 15 August, 2015, Wellington, interview 05/10. Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0086.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁷¹ Mulheron, "Interview with S. Mulheron." Track file 1 of 2: TASCAM_0081.wav.

⁷² Ibid.

Marie Vandewart initially left Berlin with her two sisters and fiancé bound for London, but continued on alone to New Zealand, where she had gained entry by domestic permit in early 1939. Her fiancé Alfons Blaschke, a non-Jewish pacifist, hoped to follow Marie, but the outbreak of war prevented him from travelling, and the couple remained separated for the duration of the war.⁷³ Immigrating to New Zealand as a single woman, Marie's journal from 1924-1939 indicates she planned to pack at least seven cases of possessions, though it is unclear whether everything was brought out on the passenger ship, or separately via cargo transport.⁷⁴ [Figure 4.4]

The experience of transit migration also influenced what objects were brought to New Zealand. Having emigrated from Germany comparatively early in 1933, Ernst Gerson's young family spent their first year in exile in Zagreb in the former Yugoslavia, where Ernst first found employment. The family then spent the next six years in Sofia, Bulgaria, before finally immigrating to New Zealand in 1939.⁷⁵ During this period of transit migration, the Gersons maintained postal contact with non-Jewish friends who remained in Germany, such as the artist Hedwig Jarke, who visited the family in Bulgaria in 1936.⁷⁶ Precious hand crafted objects, hand drawn sketchbook albums, and painted artworks were kept by the family from this time, and brought to New Zealand along with the original household items from Germany.

In contrast to the other families of this study, the Simon family brought only what they could carry in their personal luggage on the passenger ship to New Zealand. Liesl Simon, aged fourteen, and her sixteen year-old brother Eric left Hamburg,

⁷³ The Vandewart-Blaschke objects can be tentatively divided into two groups: those associated with Marie's first pre-war migration, and her second post-war migration with her pacifist husband Alfons Blaschke (who had found refuge in England during the war), together with their firstborn Anthony to New Zealand in 1951. Their second son Paul was born in New Zealand in 1952.

⁷⁴ Marie Blaschke (née Vandewart), "Journal," (Private collection, 1924-1939).

⁷⁵ In 1939 Ernst could see war was inevitable, and decided to leave Europe altogether. He applied for visas to America, Australia, and New Zealand. The New Zealand visa was the first to arrive, and after travelling by ship via Genoa, Italy, South Africa, and Australia, arrived about four days before the outbreak of WWII. Rawnsley, "Interview with S. Rawnsley." Track file 1 of 2: TASCAM_0073.wav.

⁷⁶ The German artist Hedwig Jarke and personal friend of the Gerson family, was relatively well known in her time as an artist of the Jugendstil and Expressionist movements in Germany. She studied at the private art school of the Swiss Hans-Eduard von Berlepsch in Planegg. Under the tuition of Emil Orlik she was inspired to create graphic works, especially woodcuts and was exposed to East Asian art. Besides woodcuts Jarke also produced paintings, watercolours, and drawings, her favoured subjects being animals, landscapes, plants and portraits. She died in 1949. Herbert Eichhorn, and Jacqueline Koller, *Wege zu Gabriele Münter und Käthe Kollwitz: Holzschnitte von Künstlerinnen des Jugendstils und des Expressionismus* (Germany: Michael Imhof Verlag, in association with Städtisches Kunstmuseum Spendhaus Reutlingen, 2013), p.148 (translated with help from Sabine Hormann, March 2015).

Germany on the Kindertransport in 1939. Liesl recalls what little they could travel with on the train to England:

We were allowed to take one suitcase we could carry, and I remember I just had few bits and pieces in it. Nothing really very personal. And I had a blanket strapped onto it, which I still have, which was my grandfather's. That was all – I had one little suitcase. But I didn't – I wasn't actively engaged in the preparations.⁷⁷ [Figure 5.5]

The children were later reunited with their mother Wally Simon (née Rosenbaum) in England, where they lived until they were accepted for immigration to New Zealand in late 1939. In England, Wally Simon, a widow, became engaged to Walter Baer, a fellow refugee from Berlin. Baer was bound for New Zealand, and as Liesl explains, 'mother eventually got a permit to join him if she married him within six weeks.'⁷⁸ Wally received the permit for New Zealand only a few months after arriving in England. Eric travelled with his mother to New Zealand in late 1939; Liesl, who was still in England, was eventually granted permission to immigrate, and arrived in New Zealand in 1940.⁷⁹

Upon escaping Germany, Wally organised to 'have virtually the entire house and contents – grand pianos and everything, all the furniture – loaded onto a ship to sail for England.'⁸⁰ However, the German merchant ship reached Portugal as war was declared. Liesl's son Phillip Green explains that the ship's captain worried his ship would fall into Allied possession once it left port, and so 'he sailed the ship out of the harbour and scuttled it'; the ship sunk, and with it its cargo, '...including all of Oma's belongings, apart from the tiny few pieces that she brought out with her.'⁸¹ Emigrating as war broke out in Europe, the Simon family's household possessions were lost, and very few items from Germany ended up in New Zealand after their extended migration journey.

Material possessions have a central historical role in the events of the Holocaust. Yet the historical significance of refugee possessions brought into exile has been overlooked in

⁷⁷ Liesl Green (née Simon), interview by Carol Klooger, 7 December, 1997, interview 38700 (Disc 1 of 1), Code: 38700-40 Tape 2 of 4. Published recording.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Phillip Green, interview by Louisa Hormann, 22 September, 2015, Wellington, interview 07/10. Track file 2 of 3: TASCAM_0091.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁸¹ Ibid.

the scholarship. Except for the work by scholars on refugee papers and documentary objects brought into exile by German-Jewish refugees in the prewar period, historical studies on the material objects of this period focus nearly entirely on possessions confiscated and stolen by the Nazis, and those claimed during the post-war occupation of German territories. Martin Dean has very consciously highlighted the importance of property seizure as both propelling the regime's momentum towards genocide *and* constituting an attack on personal property and personhood. Moreover, Dean recognises that a Jew's fate may have depended on having money or not, a factor often overlooked by scholars when discussing prospects for survival. He argues that due to the severity of personal loss (of assets, homeland and family), for emigrants '...those few items that were packed up and sent abroad often became a most invaluable link with a world that was lost'.⁸²

Although Holocaust scholars commonly ignore refugee objects, Dean's statement alerts historians to the potential significance and meaning of such belongings to refugees. So while German-Jewish refugee artefacts in New Zealand are displaced objects in a *global* archive of exile, they exist precariously in the realm of survival overshadowed so frequently by studies on the victims of the Holocaust who died. But for those descendants of refugee survivors in New Zealand, whose very existence today depended on the successful migrations of their parents and grandparents, the objects are artefacts of a time and a place separated from them by a generation of exile and reintegration into the refuge society. Furthermore, they are highly diverse and domestic objects, ordinary but for the extraordinary history they carry for those surviving descendants.

⁸² Dean, *Robbing the Jews: The Confiscation of Jewish Property in the Holocaust, 1933-1945* p.83.

Chapter 2: Refugee Artefacts in the Private Archive: Tracing the Familial Postmemory of German-Jewish Migration through Material Objects

Hidden away in ‘Ben’s Room’ (a side-room off the Hager family’s garage where the family dog Ben slept), sat two old leather suitcases. Growing up north of Wellington in the inland town of Levin, Kurt Hager’s children had no knowledge of what the suitcases contained, but Kurt’s son Nicky remembered ‘they had this kind of slight power and do not go near zone.’¹ They contained the Hager papers and photographs of the Austrian extended family that perished in the Holocaust. Although he cannot recall any explicit instructions not to touch the suitcases, Nicky explains, ‘I don’t think we *ever* looked in them while my father was alive... It was just too sensitive and emanated this, this feeling. Because I can’t remember the words that were ever said, it was just a feeling...’²

Hager’s personal experience and reflections are typical of the refugee families interviewed for this project, and in the secondary literature on Holocaust-era family papers. The three families focused on in this chapter all, to varying extents, bear such burdened relationships with their inheritances, both tangible and intangible. In taking a material culture approach to memory work, I ask how does a German-Jewish archive of exile in New Zealand facilitate the *transgenerational transmission of family memory* of the refugee migration experience? More specifically, how can the physical objects communicate the refugee experience to the second generation, far removed by time and space from the experience itself, but indelibly affected by it? The Fuchs, Vandewart, and Simon case studies are used throughout this chapter to exemplify the intimate and complex relationship between personal objects of migration, and refugee migrants and their children, as a fraught site of both Holocaust remembrance and of its ‘forgetting’.

The first section examines the different ways in which objects signify knowledge about the pre-Holocaust family. What can the objects themselves tell us about the lives of the Fuchs, Vandewart, and Simon families in Germany and their emigration to New Zealand? A close analysis of some of the surviving objects from these three refugee journeys that began in 1939 includes both inscribed and uninscribed objects, recognising

¹ Nicky Hager, interview by Louisa Hormann, 12 August, 2015, Wellington, interview 04/10. Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0084.wav. Unpublished recording.

² Ibid.

the historical relevance of both archival and material culture sources to formulating a narrative of experience in the forced migration context. Comparing the oral and written record of the first and second generations' remembering of the Holocaust alongside the objects themselves, will allow me to ascertain at what moment within the life story the family objects became meaningful.

The second section considers family possessions in the second generation, and the transmission of memory and transnational identities from the first generation to the next. In the context of the Holocaust's traumatic rupture Marianne Hirsch speaks of, what are the possibilities and challenges of transgenerational transmissions of this past? Are the objects reparative, in the way Hirsch suggests they can be, or is their relationship to the second, third generations more tenuous? The discussion will focus on the moment an object is inherited by the second generation, and its subsequent use in the domestic space – in the homes of the second generation, but also in comparison with how these same objects were positioned in their original homes in Germany, and in their new homes in New Zealand. This approach gives important insight into the material culture of German-Jewish life in Germany and in New Zealand, but also illuminates Caroline Attan's argument that migrants and their children 'layer' thoughts and memories by where they choose to place their objects, postponing the confrontation of complex emotions by hiding objects which evoke such feelings.³

The final section situates these discussions on intergenerational memory in the context of what my second-generation interviewees have referred to as 'the burning question': what is to become of the objects? Many, but not all, of these objects are in transition, as the second generation decides whether to bequeath exilic objects as artefacts to descendants, local repositories or to international institutions. The closing discussion on the second generation's decision to pass objects down to the third generation, and the responsibility for family memory, is thus limited to objects kept within the private family archive, albeit one that is becoming increasingly fragmented. This analysis further deconstructs the layers of meaning attached to refugee objects, demonstrating that bequeathing such artefacts is part of a larger mnemonic process, which actively facilitates the postmemory of Nazi-era refugee migration.

³ Caroline Attan, "Hidden Objects in the World of Cultural Migrants: Significant Objects Used by European Migrants to Layer Thoughts and Memories," in *Histories and Memories: Migrants and Their History in Britain*, ed. Kathy Burrell, and Panikos Panayi (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2006), p.175.

Understanding the pre-Holocaust family: music and religion in the refugee archive

Using the anthropological metaphor of translation, Paul Basu and Simon Coleman argue that amid obvious practical or 'secular' reasons for emigrating with possessions from one's homeland, migration also involves both 'literal and material translations as the part comes to represent a whole...a treasured object from home pointing to a whole way of life, and thus being invested with new significance in the process.'⁴ This section concentrates on only a selection of the surviving objects taken out of Germany in 1939 by members of the Fuchs, Vandewart, and Simon families. How these material objects were utilised and featured in central aspects of the families' social experience – specifically music and religion – suggests that in this heightened migration context, these objects became especially meaningful following persecution and in the event of emigration itself, as they came to stand in for a life and culture from which the objects and their original owners were now so far removed.

The musical objects brought to New Zealand by the Fuchs family and Marie Blaschke (née Vandewart) underscores the great importance of music in the lives of the highly cultured German-Jewish middle class of the interwar period, both in Germany and in refuge New Zealand. For two refugees in particular, music was integral to their wellbeing and to their sense of belonging in New Zealand society. Between them, architect Richard Fuchs, a gifted pianist and composer, and Marie Vandewart, a cellist and music student at the *Berlin Hochschule für Musik* (Berlin Music Academy), brought musical instruments, a metronome, a piano stool [Figure 3.3], sheet music, and a collection of concert programmes to Wellington in 1939.⁵ Although some of the original instruments no longer survive in the families, having been sold or lost, the significance

⁴ Translation as a metaphor, deriving from the Latin 'transfere' meaning, to bring across, is an important concept in anthropology, referring to both the literal moving of objects and linguistic interpretation and expression of meaning. In this context, Basu and Coleman use it to encourage the consideration of what is 'carried over' by migrants 'as they form their new/old worlds in novel territories and contexts.' Paul Basu, and Simon Coleman, "Introduction: Migrant Worlds, Material Cultures," *Mobilities* 3, no. 3 (November 2008): pp.326-28.

⁵ It should be noted that for Fuchs and Vandewart, their experience and sense of belonging in New Zealand differed greatly. Richard's very romantic, Germanic compositions, unpopular in Nazi Germany for being written by a Jew, continued to be rejected in New Zealand, this time for being written by a German-Jewish immigrant, and not a New Zealander. Marie's experience was much more positive. As a cellist, she found company with Dorothy Davies and Erika Schorss, forming the Dorothy Davies Trio in the early 1940s, very soon after arriving in New Zealand, and continued to perform and teach music throughout her life.

of musical objects to Richard and Marie is still discernible in the oral and written record, and by those objects remaining today.

Music was a compulsive part of Richard Fuchs's daily life, so vital that he needed to have instruments and music near him constantly. The Fuchs family's Karlsruhe apartment building in of the state Baden-Württemberg in southwest Germany, had two pianos: one in Richard's sitting room on the third floor where the family lived, and another one in his architect's office on the ground floor.⁶ Richard's daughter Soni recalls he had the second piano in his office 'because every now and again he had to stop and play the piano.'⁷ When the family immigrated to New Zealand, they could only take essential luggage with them onboard the ship, while the rest of the household possessions were transported separately in two shipping containers.⁸ According to Richard's grandson Danny Mulheron, there was no guarantee at the time that the containers would arrive safely, as it was very close to the outbreak of war, and many Aryan companies took advantage of Nazi regulations regarding Jewish property.⁹ Richard's music scores were among his most precious portable possessions, which he carried on his person; his refugee's briefcase also contained the family papers, passports, and money.¹⁰

Marie Vandewart's collection of concert programmes, and especially her notice of expulsion from the Berlin Hochschule in 1935, charts the steady progression of Nazi persecution against the Jews in Germany, and of their exclusion from cultural life.¹¹ The programmes include both the concerts Marie attended and those she performed in herself; in 1933 alone, she performed in at least twenty-four public concerts. Her performance in the Christmas Eve vespers service at Berlin's Hohenzollernplatz church in 1934 illustrates her assimilated identity through her musical involvement in Christian

⁶ In New Zealand the Fuchs family eventually sold the original pianos and used the money for a newer model replacement.

⁷ Sonia (Soni) Mulheron (née Fuchs), interview by Louisa Hormann, 11 August, 2015, Wellington, interview 03/10. Track file 2 of 2: TASCAM_0082.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁸ Ibid., Track file 1 of 2: TASCAM_0081.wav.

⁹ Daniel (Danny) Mulheron, and Sara Stretton, interview by Louisa Hormann, 15 August, 2015, Wellington, interview 05/10. Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0086.wav. Unpublished recording.

¹⁰ Danny Mulheron, and Sara Stretton, *The Third Richard* (New Zealand: Rollover Productions, 2008). See also Mulheron, "Interview with S. Mulheron." Track file 1 of 2: TASCAM_0081.wav.

¹¹ Although eventually donated to the Alexander Turnbull Library upon Marie's death in 2006, the concert programme collection was kept inside the private archive of Marie and Alfons Blaschke's family home, and Marie's expulsion notice remains in the family's possession today, along with the family papers, which are discussed later in this chapter.

services, despite being Jewish.¹² Marie received her expulsion letter from the president of the *Reichsmusikkammer* (Nazi State Music Institute) Dr Peter Raabe, on 22 August 1935.¹³ However, this did not stop her from practicing and performing music.¹⁴ She joined the *Jüdischer Kulturbund* (Jewish Cultural Association), which allowed her to perform at various house concerts, the programmes of which record her playing at private apartments during 1936 and 1937.¹⁵ The concert programmes thus reveal both the discrimination experienced by Jewish musicians in this period, but also the determination and agency of the artistic and cultural Jewish community in Berlin at this time.

While Marie's journal appears to have been used intermittently as a diary during her teenage years between 1924 and 1927, she used the back pages to list the things she planned on taking to New Zealand. The luggage lists are divided into cases, with her treasured cello listed under 'Case 5.'¹⁶ In fact, Marie carried her cello onboard throughout the month-long voyage journey to New Zealand.¹⁷ One of the letters she wrote to her family en route to her new home describes (in German) the comfort she felt at being able to play her cello onboard the ship. The translation reads: 'It is so good for my wellbeing that I have unpacked and can play my cello every morning for 2-3 hours upstairs in the music saloon...'¹⁸ Although the cello itself is no longer in the family's possession, the journal and letters that remain reveal the continuing importance of her instrument and music for her at that time of upheaval, even though Marie herself hardly ever spoke about this experience.¹⁹

¹² The Vandewart family did not follow any religious traditions in Germany. Marie's son Paul explained in his interview that his mother remembered no religious upbringing at all. "Christveßper 1934 in Der Kirche Am Hohenzollernplatz," in *Vandewart, Marie, 1911-2006: Music programmes* (Ref: 2006-266. Donation, Estate of M Vandewart, 2006. Archive of New Zealand Music, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington). See also Paul Blaschke, interview by Louisa Hormann, 4 August, 2015, Wellington, interview 02/10. Track file 1 of 3: TASCAM_0077.wav. Unpublished recording.

¹³ Dr Peter Raabe, 22 August 1935. Private collection.

¹⁴ Marie's younger sister Gertrud, a violinist, also continued playing, performing in 1937 with the Jewish Symphonic Society and, interestingly, attended the Berlin Hochschule in 1938, until Kristallnacht when she was also expelled with the last of the Jewish students. Blaschke, "Interview with P. Blaschke." Track file 3 of 3: TASCAM_0079.wav.

¹⁵ "Hauskonzert Programme, Freitag, Den 27. März 1936" and "Hauskonzert Programme, Am 19. November 1937," in *Vandewart, Marie, 1911-2006: Music programmes* (Ref: 2006-266. Donation, Estate of M Vandewart, 2006. Archive of New Zealand Music, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington).

¹⁶ Marie Blaschke (née Vandewart), "Journal."

¹⁷ Marie Blaschke (née Vandewart), "Reminiscences, 20 January 1987," (Private collection).

¹⁸ Marie Blaschke, letter translated from the original German by Sabine Hormann [September 2015], 25 May 1939. Private collection.

¹⁹ Blaschke, "Interview with P. Blaschke." Track file 3 of 3: TASCAM_0079.wav.

Religion was also an important part of German-Jewish life, but not necessarily for all refugee families, either in Germany or once resettled in New Zealand.²⁰ Of the five Jewish families included in this study, only three brought what could be considered religious items to New Zealand, and of these three instances, two collections concerned objects of *Christian* origin and influence. These objects – a carved wooden altarpiece [Figure 2.1], the Hedwig Jarke paintings of St Christopher [Figure 2.2] and St Francis [Figure 2.3], a hand painted earthenware jug [Figure 2.4], and a carved wooden angel ornament [Figure 2.5], are illustrative of an aesthetic movement popular among the German middle classes in the interwar period. According to research by Leora Auslander into the aesthetic world of Berlin Jews between 1920 and 1942, many Berliners classed as ‘non-Aryans’ decorated their homes with Christian religious icons.²¹ Both Soni Mulheron and Sally Rawnsley’s commentary on these objects suggests that to their families in Germany, the objects did not bear religious meaning, but were representative of European culture, to which the families belonged, and were simply beautiful objects.²²

²⁰ Of the five refugee families included in this project, only one – the Simon family from Hamburg – was a practicing religious family. The family continued practicing their religion once in New Zealand.

²¹ Leora Auslander, "'Jewish Taste?'" Jews and the Aesthetics of Everyday Life in Paris and Berlin, 1920-1942," in *Histories of Leisure*, ed. Rudy Koshar, Leisure, Consumption and Culture (New York and Oxford: Berg, 2002), p.313.

²² Sally Rawnsley, interview by Louisa Hormann, 30 July, 2015, Wellington, interview 01/10. Track file 2 of 2: TASCAM_0074.wav. Unpublished recording; and Mulheron, "Interview with S. Mulheron." Track file 1 of 2: TASCAM_0081.wav.



Figure 2.1 According to Soni Mulheron, the wooden carving brought to New Zealand by her parents is ‘a little piece of Baroque’ originally placed above a German church altar: ‘Most Germans collected bits of Baroque and had them all over the place.’²³ Private collection. Photograph courtesy of S. Stretton



Figure 2.2 ‘St Christopher’ by Hedwig Jarke, circa early 1900s/pre-WWII. Private collection. Photograph by author



Figure 2.3 ‘St Francis’ by Hedwig Jarke, circa early 1900s/pre-WWII. Private collection. Photograph by author

²³ Mulheron, “Interview with S. Mulheron.” Track file 1 of 2: TASCAM_0081.wav.



Figure 2.4 Handmade pottery mug, possibly purchased by the Gerson family while holidaying in Italy (circa 1920s). Private collection. Photograph by author



Figure 2.5 This carved wooden angel ornament, originally from a church, was already an old object in the Gerson's home in Germany. Private collection. Photograph by author

In contrast, the religious items brought out by the Simon family were Jewish ritual objects, used by the religiously observant family in Germany, in England, and in New Zealand. As described in the previous chapter, the Simons lost all their household possessions when they immigrated to New Zealand, except for the objects Wally Simon (née Rosenbaum) and her children, Liesl and Eric, packed into their train and shipboard luggage. The *mezuzah* (parchment scroll affixed to doorposts) and *siddur* (daily prayer book) are considered sacred objects within Judaism, but these particular objects acquired further significance for the Simon family, as surviving symbols of their faith, and moreover, their own personal survival through enduring danger in Germany and en route to New Zealand during wartime. [Figure 5.3; Figure 5.4]

In both cases, Wally and Liesl took special care to ensure the safety of the objects. Traditionally, *mezuzot* (pl.) are fixed to the right side of doorframes, marking the entrance to Jewish homes or rooms. The miniature *mezuzah* scroll is inscribed with the Shema prayer declaring the monotheism of Judaism's God, and is contained within a decorative outer case; the Simon family had a *mezuzah* on the front door, and one for

each of the bedrooms of their Hamburg apartment.²⁴ When Wally fled Germany, having already sent her two children ahead on the Kindertransport to England, she endeavoured to preserve the *mezuzot* for the family's new home in exile. According to Liesl's son Phillip, 'one of her [Wally] amazingly brave things that she did was take the *mezuzot* down, wrap them up in a grease-proof type paper... And it ended up in the bottom of a face cream jar... and she smuggled them out.'²⁵ Wally's actions were perhaps not uncommon. To explain the absence of Jewish ritual objects from the households of Berliner Jews, Auslander has suggested such objects were 'sufficiently precious to their owners that they were given into safe-keeping, buried, smuggled out, or possibly destroyed rather than sold.'²⁶ Wally's deliberate actions and the continued survival of the *mezuzot* attest to their perceived importance in the establishment of the family's new life in New Zealand.

The *siddur* originally belonged to Liesl's grandmother, and was one of only two things saved from the family's local synagogue when it was destroyed during Kristallnacht. Liesl's grandson translated the flyleaf inscription, written by either Liesl's mother Wally, or her grandmother.²⁷ It reads: 'This book should be a true guide for you in all situations you might encounter. May God protect you and watch over and keep you from danger, such as the destruction and the plundering of the temples, on the night of 10 November 1938. Deine Mutti.' Below this is written: 'Before my journey to New Zealand in November 1939, Hitchin, D. 12 November 1939.'²⁸ One might argue the prayer for protection inscribed in the *siddur* was fulfilled. Almost two years after she first travelled to Hitchin, England on the Kindertransport, Liesl boarded a ship to New Zealand. The passenger and cargo liner was intended to travel in a convoy from Newcastle, England, but at the last minute the captain decided to go alone: 'And two

²⁴ Phillip Green, interview by Louisa Hormann, 22 September, 2015, Wellington, interview 07/10. Track file 1 of 3: TASCAM_0090.wav. Unpublished recording.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Auslander's study addressed households defined as 'non-Aryan' in auctions held from 1935-1942. Auslander, "'Jewish Taste?'" Jews and the Aesthetics of Everyday Life in Paris and Berlin, 1920-1942," p.314.

²⁷ It is unclear whether the first inscription was penned by Liesl's mother Wally, or by her grandmother, as to whom the note is addressed is not written, and Liesl also states in her 1997 interview that the *siddur* was her grandmother's, 'and she gave it to my mother and me when we left Germany.' Green (née Simon), "Interview by Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation," Tape 1 of 4: 38700-40.

²⁸ Corroborating this date with Liesl's testimony suggests that this second inscription was actually written by Liesl's mother Wally. This would align with the theory that the first inscription was written by Wally's mother, Alice Rosenbaum. Wally and Eric attained an entry permit and left England for New Zealand in November 1939, but Liesl had to wait for her permit, and travelled to New Zealand some time later. Green, "Interview with P. Green." Track file 2 of 3: TASCAM_0091.wav.

days out we had to pass the convoy in flames, they'd been struck by an U-boat.'²⁹ Liesl describes the event in her testimony, seeing the people in the water but not being allowed to help: 'And we couldn't go near them, it was really quite a nightmare.'³⁰

Liesl's son Phillip explains the *siddur*'s significance to Liesl in the context of her fortunate survival: '*Mutti* [mother] had this book with her in England, and she read from it every day. It was of great comfort to her, and it travelled with her from England – Germany, England, New Zealand...'³¹ Although Liesl, like Marie, refused to speak about her migration and wartime experience and blocked it from her memory, she remained closely connected to the few objects she brought with her, especially the *siddur*.

This limited selection of the objects brought to New Zealand by the Fuchs, Vandewart, and Simon families allows for an extended understanding of the pre-Holocaust lives of these three families in Germany, and of their materialised experience as refugees. Contextualising the artefacts using the oral and written record reveals both how these objects were utilised and featured in central aspects of the families' social experience, and when the objects acquired their unique significance for the families. Persecution and emigration itself were pivotal points in the refugees' personal life narratives that gave the objects meaning beyond their everyday, practical or aesthetic significance, as they moved with their owners into a new cultural context. And even though refugees often did not and could not speak about their experiences, the survival of the objects themselves, as kept preserved by the first generation and later passed down to the second generation, speaks to the emotional and memorial significance carried within these objects.

Family possessions in the second generation: the transmission of memory and transnational identities through inheritance

The transnational identities symbolised by these objects is not only of academic and historical significance, but is also of vital importance to families, and to the wider second-generation community. As Nina Fischer has argued, the mnemonic value of such

²⁹ Green (née Simon), "Interview by Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation," Tape 2 of 4: 38700-40.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Green, "Interview with P. Green." Track file 2 of 3: TASCAM_0091.wav.

objects, as physically representing the survival of the past, gives the second generation the opportunity to 'locate themselves within a multigenerational family and its continuity.'³² Such relational potential is especially powerful in the context of the silence that pervades the families of Holocaust survivors; to borrow Fischer's phrase, the objects from the period of persecution are 'guarded in parental silence'.³³

Though often late in their elderly years, most first generation refugees eventually do acknowledge their past experiences and endeavour to record these for posterity.³⁴ But for most of their lives and the lives of their children, a wide void exists between the lived experiences of the refugee generation and the second-generation's own knowledge and understanding of these experiences. By focusing on the moment migration objects are inherited by the second generation, and their uses in the varied domestic spaces of which they have been a part, I will examine the extent to which the memory and transnational identities of refugee families are articulated through the inherited material culture of their migration.

The condition or context in which objects are inherited can be conceptually separated into two categories: purposeful and unexpected. Objects that have been intentionally set-aside for the second generation to inherit are 'purposeful' inheritances. According to David Unruh, the bequeathing of objects to the next generation is one social strategy of identity preservation for the deceased; the dying deliberately use objects to shape how their survivors (and others) will remember them.³⁵ Similarly, Alan Radley has argued that those approaching death 'use material objects to create in their survivors the kind of memory of themselves which they desire. This can be done through passing on treasured possessions known to be of significance by the recipient.'³⁶

Objects inherited by default, accumulated, or lost and found after the owner's death, not explicitly gifted to the next generation but instead left behind with no explanation, is often an 'unexpected' inheritance. Despite this, these objects can also

³² Nina Fischer, *Memory Work: The Second Generation*, ed. Andrew Hoskins, and John Sutton, Palgrave Macmillan Memory Studies (United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p.32.

³³ *Ibid.*, p.26.

³⁴ As Unruh has also indicated, the phenomenon of recording one's own personal history for the next generation as one nears death extends beyond Holocaust survivors. David R. Unruh, "Death and Personal History: Strategies of Identity Preservation," *Social Problems* 30, no. 3, Thematic Issue: Technique and the Conduct of Life (1983): p.342.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Alan Radley, "Artefacts, Memory and a Sense of the Past," in *Collective Remembering*, ed. David Middleton, and Derek Edwards, *Inquiries in Social Construction* (London: Sage Publications, 1990), p.54.

acquire significance for the second generation, without the intention of the deceased. In this way, the silent objects of the first generation come to 'speak' with the second generation.³⁷ But it is unlikely that the new owner of any inherited object will feel the same way about the object as the original owner. This is, Unruh argues, because the transmission of memory and meaning is never complete, 'However, if survivors know the "stories" behind an acquired object and the meaning it once had for the deceased, reminiscences will be formed and organized around that knowledge.'³⁸ For Australian second-generation survivor Ruth Wajnryb, who was raised, like the families of this study, in a void of parental silence, the private discovery of her mother's false identity papers from wartime Lublin, Poland, elicited 'memories of events never personally experienced but many times imagined.'³⁹ So while the conditions under which an object is inherited can vary greatly, material objects in both instances of inheritance can still convey memory of the past and associated transnational identities to the surviving generation. And in the case of objects inherited unexpectedly, the abrupt circumstance of the second generation's contact with the object in question forces that confrontation with the past.

In adjusting to a new cultural context and way of life in New Zealand, the refugees also maintained certain aspects of their old lives and bourgeois traditions from European culture, a cultural transfer enabled by the objects they brought with them when they emigrated. As the first generation aged, they acknowledged that their family histories in Germany, their emigration journeys, and settlement in New Zealand were notable, and relevant to the next generation. All the families of this study deliberately gifted precious objects to the next generation, archived family papers, both privately and publically, and some even wrote personal reminiscences. The first generation's German-Jewish and refugee heritage was, citing Unruh and Radley's argument, fundamental to the identity-

³⁷ This is part of a broader second generation experience, widely recorded by second-generation scholars and writers. The literature on refugee memory cultures in Australia note that the Australian experience was not unique, and that the reluctance of the first generation to speak of their experiences to their children or to outsiders, was shared by survivors around the world in the postwar period. For a personal account and in depth study, see Ruth Wajnryb's *The Silence: How Tragedy Shapes Talk* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2001). See also Suzanne Rutland and Sharon Kangisser Cohen's essays in *The Memory of the Holocaust in Australia*, ed. Tom Lawson, and James Jordan (London and Portland, Oregon: Vallentine Mitchell, 2008). For a New Zealand perspective, see Ann Beaglehole's *Facing the Past: Looking Back at Refugee Childhood in New Zealand 1940s-1960s* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1990).

³⁸ Unruh, "Death and Personal History: Strategies of Identity Preservation," p.342.

³⁹ Ruth Wajnryb, *The Silence: How Tragedy Shapes Talk* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2001), pp.2-3.

image they wished to preserve of themselves for the second generation – how they wished to be remembered.

Prior to emigration, some objects, like Richard Fuchs' and Marie Vandewart Blaschke's instruments, Liesl Simon's prayer book and her family home's *mezuzot*, were already objects of significance to the families. Others were objects of everyday experience, transformed into special representatives of a past life in Germany. Objects like Phillip Green's grandfather's German typewriter – 'They [his grandparents] wrote a lot of letters' – and cigar cutter, which Phillip remembers his Opa using every day when he returned home for lunch, continued to be used on a regular basis.⁴⁰ Marie's son Paul recalls his mother's metronome: 'I remember it my whole life, her using this old wooden metronome. But the books I can never, ever remember her looking at the old books that she had, the old German books.'⁴¹ [Figure 4.5] German language texts, although brought to New Zealand, were often left on the shelf, as speaking German was gradually rejected in favour of English. While the Fuchs household used a mixture of German and English, so that Richard and Dora's grandchildren obtained an informal understanding of the German language, Marie Vandewart Blaschke and husband Alfons Blaschke raised their two sons mainly in English. But according to their son Paul, they did not reject German culture: 'They weren't one of those refugee families that sort of rejected everything of Germany; they rejected the political dogma, they didn't reject the culture...or the language totally.'⁴² Phillip Green's Oma Wally and Mutti (Liesl) always spoke German at home until:

When Mutti realised that I was not just understanding German, but starting to speak it, she immediately imposed a rule that no German was to be spoken in front of Valerie or me...She was determined that we be, as it were, submerged into kiwi society, and that we become just kiwis.⁴³

Some objects fell out of use for more immediate practical reasons. Linen, large tablecloths, silver tableware, and porcelain sets became special occasion items or purely objects for display, as due to their reduced living standard as refugees in New Zealand, the families could no longer afford the household staff to launder and clean the

⁴⁰ Green, "Interview with P. Green." Track file 2 of 3: TASCAM_0091.wav.

⁴¹ Blaschke, "Interview with P. Blaschke." Track file 3 of 3: TASCAM_0079.wav.

⁴² Ibid., Track file 2 of 3: TASCAM_0078.wav.

⁴³ Green, "Interview with P. Green." Track file 1 of 3: TASCAM_0090.wav.

individual articles, or had large enough houses for the furniture required.⁴⁴ In contrast, similar objects were disused because they were deemed too precious. Although intended and utilised for daily use in Hamburg, the single Rosenthal china plate Liesl brought with her to New Zealand was stored away during its life in her New Zealand home. Phillip explains his mother always meant for it to be passed down to the next generation: ‘...it was given to me as a treasured object many, many decades later, when I was married with children and...it was certainly given with the intention that Veronica [Phillip’s daughter] have it.’⁴⁵

When these everyday domestic objects were passed down to the second generation, yet another layer of meaning was attached to them – the value of an heirloom. According to Nina Fischer, ‘The materiality of objects encodes their collective and connective traits in particular when they are viewed as family heirlooms’, so that they are ‘meaningful beyond their legibility as carriers of memory, almost as though by association they have soaked up traces of the former owners’ being.’⁴⁶ Danny Mulheron’s comments about the ‘unexpected’ inheritance left by his grandmother Dora Fuchs reflect this notion. After Dora’s unexpected death Danny discovered a lot of objects in his grandmother’s back shed, never unpacked since the day they arrived in their containers from Germany. These objects became much more important to Danny after Dora died: ‘They were imbued with her...so once she – we lost her, they *were* her.’⁴⁷

Phillip Green’s inheritances were more direct. His grandmother Wally Simon and mother Liesl, both during old age, directly gifted particular objects to the next generation. When she died, Wally gave a *mezuzah* to each of her four grandchildren, including Phillip.⁴⁸ And about eighteen months before she died, Liesl gave Phillip a grey woollen blanket: ‘When Mutti left on the Kindertransport, she was allowed to carry one small suitcase and a blanket. And this is the blanket that she took with her from Hamburg...’⁴⁹ Originally belonging to Liesl’s grandfather, the blanket is still in beautiful condition today, thanks to Liesl and Phillip’s care; as Phillip explains, ‘it was

⁴⁴ This was a common theme among interviewees. Soni Mulheron described having used the silver, but that she doesn’t anymore because you have to polish it. Mulheron, “Interview with S. Mulheron.” Track file 1 of 2: TASCAM_0081.wav; Rawnsley, “Interview with S. Rawnsley.” Track file 2 of 2: TASCAM_0074.wav.

⁴⁵ Green, “Interview with P. Green.” Track file 2 of 3: TASCAM_0091.wav.

⁴⁶ Fischer, *Memory Work: The Second Generation*, p.30.

⁴⁷ Mulheron, “Interview with D. Mulheron and S. Stretton.” Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0086.wav.

⁴⁸ Green, “Interview with P. Green.” Track file 1 of 3: TASCAM_0090.wav.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

of great comfort to her and she never let it out of her, you know, her possession.’⁵⁰ As with the *siddur*, Liesl remained connected to this object of her Kindertransport and greater migration journey, even though she could never verbalise her memories of this experience.⁵¹ The blanket represents Liesl’s fortuitous journey and survival. Travelling on the Kindertransport, Liesl was given the option to disembark with her cousin in Holland or carry on alone to England. Phillip, echoing his mother’s interview testimony, explains that Liesl chose England because she had an English governess in the past: ‘Her cousin died in a concentration camp, and she [Liesl] lived. Such are the fortunes of refugees in wartime.’⁵²

For Danny Mulheron, his grandparents’ objects and the objects of other German-Jewish refugee families are about survival, but specifically the survival of Jewish life and tradition around the world; collective identity as sustained through objects of memory. According to Danny, ‘These objects, whatever they are, and traditions, are what they [European Jews] feel has helped them survive. Reliance on that extended thing... There’s a kind of shared thing, and these objects are about survival.’⁵³ Danny highlights the survival of traditions as fundamental to the continued endurance of Jewish culture in diaspora. His wife Sara, herself a researcher of the Fuchs family history, suggests that bringing all their household possessions to New Zealand was a way of reconstructing and retaining their identity, but that this was tempered by an uncertainty over how their identity would be received in wartime New Zealand’s anti-German climate.⁵⁴ Referring to his grandfather Richard’s letters, Danny describes the family’s experience as a ‘tragedy’: ‘he never recovered; from being so far away and being treated like an alien here, not welcomed.’⁵⁵ But despite the wartime enemy alien status of his family, Danny clarifies they were certainly proud of their German-Jewish identity, and growing up he ‘was glad our family was different, and louder and just more expressive.’⁵⁶

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ According to Phillip, his mother never spoke about any part of her refugee experience: ‘The first time Valerie and I ever got into any of the detail about it was through the Spielberg interviews and until then, she just didn’t want to talk about it.’ Even in her Survivors of the Shoah interview, Liesl could not describe leaving on the Kindertransport, beyond a brief statement on what she brought with her and the children she travelled with. Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Mulheron, “Interview with D. Mulheron, and S. Stretton.” Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0086.wav.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Danny recalls his grandmother Dora Fuchs' sitting room in Karori as an explicit and conscious expression of their family's cultural identity as bourgeois German Jews. 'The front room was like a museum,' he begins; 'It was full of almost all the objects, and rugs on the wall and... It was like a Turkish, you know, bazaar. It was full of wonderful furniture...' ⁵⁷ Danny would show his friends the room and the objects it contained because the collection was 'exotic and different' at a time when most New Zealand homes did not have such things. ⁵⁸ Growing up, the European objects were so pervasive that Danny describes it as 'almost an environment which we took for granted, rather than took an interest in. All the furniture and rugs and paintings.' ⁵⁹

The exotica of the German stuff was kind of – I loved because it was like luxury. It was like what rich people had. You know, so the fancy silver cutlery that Mutti had – which she didn't use. It was all wrapped up. But, I thought was just wow! ... I loved that. And I still like it, and it wasn't that it was beautiful necessarily, that's up to do with taste, but the *idea* of it. The fact that it was there, and there was only one of it was what was important. ⁶⁰

Caroline Attan argues that the physical arrangement and display of objects and furniture are used to articulate migrants' domestic and personal worlds. According to Attan, 'home' is both a mental and physical concept, and 'memories of the past find expression in objects and are used to recreate the past in the present as they are both literally and metaphorically taken from one cultural environment to another.' ⁶¹ Based on this anthropological argument, Attan contends that the observed qualities of the object and its placement by the owner are instrumental 'in the historical layering of experience and the reintegration of the self across major life transitions.' ⁶² For Danny Mulheron, his memories of his grandmother's sitting room, and the objects that survive, have come to represent his family's prewar German-Jewish life that was bourgeois, and are for him a continuing source for self-identity. Furthermore, Richard's music, the 'most valuable and important' objects to Danny, continue to be played by the composer's grandson, as 'something I do every day, or when I'm home I tend to flick through it, and try and play

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Attan, "Hidden Objects in the World of Cultural Migrants: Significant Objects Used by European Migrants to Layer Thoughts and Memories," p.172.

⁶² Ibid., pp.175, 171.

stuff.’⁶³ Richard’s compositions (and music in a more general sense) are a shared interest and continue to have a purpose in the lives of the second generation.

But for Danny’s mother Soni, her ‘relations of personal significance’ with the objects of her parents’ household are more ambiguous.⁶⁴ It was Danny’s father Jack Mulheron who put aside objects for Danny and his siblings when he and Soni sold their Karori house to downsize.⁶⁵ According to Danny, his mother had an odd relationship with the furniture and belongings ‘because it was a remnant of something she didn’t want to remember, and didn’t give a fuck about either.’⁶⁶ The family home was burgled during Dora’s funeral, and soon after Soni sold and gave away most of the remaining furniture. Soni gave no consideration that the second generation had any sentimental attachment to the possessions. On reflection, Danny thinks perhaps now she would care:

But then – she thought it was the past, gone. I’m not a German; I’m not interested in that stuff. I don’t want it around. I’ve got too much stuff... Yes it was painful, but I think she was bored with it, and not really interested in it... I don’t know if it was painful.⁶⁷

Soni’s active distancing and disassociation from the material objects of hers and her parents’ migration journey is characteristic of the first generation’s response to their personal experiences and collective histories.

The majority of objects kept for posterity are documentary, traditional archival materials. The Fuchs and Vandewart archives are examples of a mixed public/private approach, and a private collection approach to family papers. In both cases, the papers were deliberately kept and organised by members of the first generation for posterity – the Richard Fuchs papers and music collection by Richard’s wife Dora, and the Vandewart papers first by Marie, and later by her husband Alfons Blaschke. However these are the objects most often kept hidden away and undisturbed by the second generation. In most cases, these were ‘unexpected’ inheritances, with the children of refugee parents unaware the piles of personal papers, photos, and other documentary materials existed until the death of a parent.

⁶³ Mulheron, "Interview with D. Mulheron, and S. Stretton." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0086.wav.

⁶⁴ Attan, "Hidden Objects in the World of Cultural Migrants: Significant Objects Used by European Migrants to Layer Thoughts and Memories," p.171.

⁶⁵ Mulheron, "Interview with S. Mulheron." Track file 1 of 2: TASCAM_0081.wav.

⁶⁶ Mulheron, "Interview with D. Mulheron, and S. Stretton." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0086.wav.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

The always abrupt, often unwanted nature of the second generation's contact with the papers especially, forces their confrontation with their parents' past, triggering a delayed relationship with the objects *and* memories of the past. Attan highlights the connection between physical emplacement of migrants' objects and the first and second generations' emotional processing of such memories. She argues that the perceived qualities of an object and its placement in the domestic space is used to layer memories, and that 'the significance of those memories is defined by hiding or postponing interaction with objects that evoke complex emotions.'⁶⁸ The process of hiding objects then, according to Attan, 'enables the individual to refer to the object at a chosen, often private moment, and it serves as the catalyst for poignant memories.'⁶⁹

These hidden objects can become meaningful and treasured sometimes many years later, but unfortunately when much of the knowledge about their provenance has been lost. The Vandewart photo album elucidates this delayed acknowledgement, as even affecting the memory of the immediate first generation. It is unclear where Marie kept the Vandewart album, and even more uncertain when she acquired it, and how. She reflected on this enigma on 27 August 1985, writing:

It wasn't until yesterday that I became aware what a treasure this album is. It must have been with me for years; the *fotos* [photos] were all familiar, and some of them I have in other copies; I can't remember how it came to me. I have a vague recollection that Eva and Gertrude have seen the album; but, I can't remember if it was sent to me to keep; and I don't know now how it came out of Germany and when. But, it seems obvious that the *fotos* [photos] were assembled by Father for us children after we left Berlin. And it also seems obvious that these *fotos* [photos] were taken before things really became grim for the parents in Berlin. I feel ashamed that I hadn't appreciated until now what a token of love this collection is.⁷⁰

Paul's refugee parents had always differed regarding their willingness to talk about the past. Alfons spoke more readily about his wartime experiences, but Marie was

⁶⁸ Attan, "Hidden Objects in the World of Cultural Migrants: Significant Objects Used by European Migrants to Layer Thoughts and Memories," p.175.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ The album is a mixture of pre-migration photographs and photographs taken, as Marie writes, after the children left Germany. It appears to be ordered in loose chronological order, with the photos of the family and Marie's objects in their original home in the first half of the album. See Marie's annotation, 27 August 1985 in the Vandewart Album, (Private collection, c.1939-1941).

more reserved. Paul explains:

My mother hardly talked about what happened to her parents...She did talk about her parents, and her childhood. And we knew from a fairly early age that my, my grandparents had died in the Holocaust, in Berlin and then we found out, that they committed suicide. And it was, but that was I'm pretty sure that was from Dad, and not from Mum.⁷¹

Marie reflected on the apparent consequence of her silence in 1994: 'I must have succeeded so well that I have actually forgotten a great deal of the events of those years. It is mostly incidents [sic] I remember now. And, [sic] of course, the general and all pervading atmosphere [sic] of fear and worry.'⁷²

As if to piece together the gaps in her memory, Marie, with the help of her sisters living abroad, annotated the entire album. The explanatory notes and musings inserted between the album's pages add another dimension to the multiple layers of meaning it's acquired since its later rediscovery by Paul. The materiality of the Vandewart family home in Berlin is a major theme in the album. Multiple snapshots of the apartment interior, together with Marie's annotations reveal how the rooms were used, and the familial provenance of some of the items housed within those walls, and brought to New Zealand by Marie. [Figure 4.6] While photos of their domestic life and of Berlin's lakes and gardens reflect the family's local pride and identity as Berliners, the historical context of the album, as an apparent gift from the dead, shades it with parental love and loss.

Today the album is kept secure in a fireproof chest in Paul's basement, along with his mother's journal, reminiscences, family letters, and official documents. Their location preserves them, but Paul's initial reluctance to allow the Marie's album, reminiscences, and letters to be included in this thesis, and his own hesitance to investigate them himself, suggests that these objects remain, to some extent, hidden.⁷³ Paul Blaschke and Danny Mulheron both highlighted in their interviews the enabling role of researcher or 'outsider' to bring this history to light. Both second generation men had prior involvement with independent researchers interested in their family histories,

⁷¹ Blaschke, "Interview with P. Blaschke." Track file 3 of 3: TASCAM_0079.wav.

⁷² Marie Blaschke (née Vandewart), "Reminiscences, 21 July 1994," (Private collection).

⁷³ Although these papers would not usually be displayed in the home the same way an ornamental art piece would be, the fact that the papers and family album had not really been read and studied by the family, suggests their deliberate hiddenness within the home. However, after having spoken with his wife and brother, Paul eventually decided to allow these documentary objects to be photographed and studied for inclusion in this thesis.

who they credit with providing the impetus to go back to the objects, the stories, the memories, and make sense of their heritage and the experiences of their parents and extended family. Danny believes, 'It often takes an outside eye to see the value of things... And Sara [his wife] was really instrumental in that happening. I wouldn't have done it if I'd been by myself.'⁷⁴

These objects, over time and across generations, can transition out of hiding and into prominent position in the lived domestic space, as the objects acquire new meanings for the second-generation owner, alternative to those held by the first generation. Phillip Green's childhood memories of some of the objects now in his possession are scattered and ambiguous: 'various items were brought out of Germany, but there was a disconnect for many years about them and their significance.'⁷⁵ As a child growing up in Wellington, forbidden from speaking German, Phillip explains that many of the objects 'were often hidden, often hidden and not available. In fact, much of what we are talking about, although not all, were not used.'⁷⁶

Growing up in New Zealand, Phillip recalls both a general silence around the past, and what he describes as a distinct 'effort to have us submerged into New Zealand society.'⁷⁷ 'All of the dots did not get joined for me until decades later', Phillip explains, when he was asked to give the keynote address for the 70th anniversary of the arrival of German Jewish refugees in Wellington.⁷⁸ After conducting research and producing a paper using Wellington newspapers of the period 1936-46, Phillip experienced the 'utterly revelatory...realisation of and appreciation about why we were brought up the way we were brought up. And only then did a whole lot of things make sense.'⁷⁹ Researching the general historical context of his family's migration to New Zealand gave Phillip insight into the situation his family faced upon arrival, that of the need to assimilate in the face of anti-Semitism and anti-foreign sentiment common in New Zealand society during this time.⁸⁰ Similarly, hearing his mother's experiences through her recorded interview testimony shed light on his own childhood, as an upbringing

⁷⁴ Mulheron, "Interview with D. Mulheron and S. Stretton." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0086.wav.

⁷⁵ Green, "Interview with P. Green." Track file 2 of 3: TASCAM_0091.wav.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Green, "Interview with P. Green." Track file 1 of 3: TASCAM_0090.wav.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Phillip Green, "L'Chaim – A Night to Remember 1935-2005," (Wellington Jewish Community Centre, Wellington, 2 April 2005).

affected by the Holocaust:

Mutti was extraordinarily protective of us children, and did not like us making any decisions for ourselves... And partly that was going back to her moment of life and death-making decision to go to England, and her belief that she could make safe decisions, that other people would make bad decisions, which might cause them harm, or worse, death.⁸¹

In contrast to the hiddenness and silence of the Simon family's migration past, today three objects of Phillip's family's migration from Germany are displayed in pride of place on the living room mantelpiece, displayed for visitors to see.⁸² One is a little mustard pot with glass inner lining, and very finely tooled silver outer pierced casing, which was used by his Oma and Opa in New Zealand. 'I've never used it, but we now have it out decoratively on our mantelpiece here.'⁸³ [Figure 5.6] Two other pieces also serve a decorative role on Phillip's mantelpiece: a silver bread container shaped like a basket and inscribed with his grandfather's initials 'W.B' (Walter Baer); 'and Opa brought that out from Berlin, and it is something I have from Opa.'⁸⁴ [Figure 5.7] From his grandmother Wally's side of the family is a silver bowl with a glass lining, '...which I understand was Oma's mother, Alice Rosenbaum, that it was hers, and Oma brought that out.'⁸⁵ [Figure 5.8]

In the refugee migrant experience of losing and reestablishing their cultural home in a new country, heirloom value was commonly attributed even to everyday objects, as they became representatives of a comfortable European life simultaneously taken away and left behind. These refugee objects therefore acquired new, fluid meanings in the New Zealand setting. For the first generation, rebuilding their lives and raising children to be New Zealanders, the general reaction was to ignore the past, verbally and mentally, including hiding away certain objects of their German past that might evoke unwanted emotion and memories. This meant that the transmission of memory was limited. However this did not hinder the communication of transnational German-Jewish

⁸¹ Green, "Interview with P. Green." Track file 2 of 3: TASCAM_0091.wav.

⁸² According to Attan, the arrangement of objects in prominent positions in the domestic space 'emphasise their importance to both the individual and a visitor, and... often conform to accepted social codes.' Attan, "Hidden Objects in the World of Cultural Migrants: Significant Objects Used by European Migrants to Layer Thoughts and Memories," p.175.

⁸³ Green, "Interview with P. Green." Track file 2 of 3: TASCAM_0091.wav.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

identities to the second generation, as domestic spaces in New Zealand were recreated in the image of the original family home in Germany, or cultural and religious objects continued to be utilised in the home.

Late in life, first generation refugee survivors began to archive their records and bequeath their precious heirloom objects to the next generation. In other cases, the second generation ‘unexpectedly’ inherited material or documentary objects they had not even known existed. The Fuchs, Vandewart, and Simon case studies show that material objects are instrumental in the transmission of family memories and transnational identities to the succeeding generations, but that this process is tempered by the often-tenuous relationships held between the first and second generations, and their objects of inheritance. These objects can be reparative, as Hirsch has argued, but this depends on whether the second-generation recipient knows the ‘stories’ behind the object and the meaning it held for the first generation.⁸⁶ Without such knowledge, object memory is less meaningful, for both inheriting generations and the general public, as will be argued in chapter three.

Objects in transition: the second generation bequeathing objects as artefacts

As the second generation decides whether to bequeath their inherited refugee objects to family members or to public archive repositories, they face their own specific challenges in choosing the most appropriate home for such ubiquitous yet treasured items. Many of these artefacts are in a state of transition, as they hover uncertainly between generations, between private and public archives, and in some cases, between continents. By focusing on those objects remaining within the private archive of familial custody, this concluding section examines how the second generation’s responsibility for family memory, and the prospect of institutional custody (for documentary objects in particular), fragments the private archive further, so that the responsibility for family memory is no longer necessarily private, but community based, in and beyond the Jewish community.

⁸⁶ Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), p.33.

The responsibility for family memory is traditionally pronounced in Jewish homes, where the custom of passing down memory as a source of knowledge to the next generation situates the family within the extended Jewish family, and moreover, within its shared history. According to Marlene Warshawski, the practice of documentation and oral history in general (not only regarding Holocaust records) are fundamentally linked to Jewish scholarly tradition.⁸⁷ She argues that, like the Passover commemoration of the Jewish Exodus from Egypt, Jewish remembrance of the Holocaust places all Jews within the events of the Holocaust; adding that the Haggadah' (Jewish text setting forth the order of the Passover Seder) explicitly commands, 'and you shall tell your children.'⁸⁸ Correspondingly, Fischer demonstrates how the micro histories of individual families become part of the broader cultural memory when succeeding generations actively engage with their pasts.⁸⁹ The bestowing and inheritance of memory are thus intrinsically connected to Jewish religion and culture, and the formation of Jewish collective memory. This cultural connection is expressed in the commemorative practices the second and third generations choose to undertake.⁹⁰

Second and third generation return journeys to Europe are a common way in which families mark the Holocaust pasts of their forebears, and there is a large literature on the subject. Destinations include significant sites – meaningful both to the collective Jewish people (such as concentration camps), and individual families (such as graves, cemeteries, former homes or local synagogues). Some even retrace the journeys their families made to their deaths or into refuge.⁹¹ Paul Blaschke's family erected a memorial to the Vandewart sisters who emigrated, beneath the tombstones of their parents who took their lives in Berlin. In Jewish tradition, Paul and visiting third generation family

⁸⁷ Marlene Ruth Warshawski, "The Role of Archives in Remembering the Holocaust" (PhD thesis, Columbia University, 1996), p.21.

⁸⁸ Ibid., pp.21-22.

⁸⁹ Fischer, *Memory Work: The Second Generation*, p.26.

⁹⁰ However, this does not mean that the second and third generations share the same motivation to remember, and some advocate emphasising the religious aspect to remembrance further. Sharon Kangisser Cohen's research of Holocaust survivors in Australia shows that these survivors 'feel that memory and commemoration of the Holocaust needs to go beyond individual or collective will, and rather be institutionalised and codified as religious ritual' as they do not believe the next generation to be willing or able to confront the Holocaust, and preserve the memories of the first generation. Sharon Kangisser Cohen, "Remembering for Us: The Transgenerational Transmission of Holocaust Memory and Commemoration," in *The Memory of the Holocaust in Australia*, ed. Tom Lawson, and James Jordan (London and Portland, Oregon: Vallentine Mitchell, 2008), pp.104-05.

⁹¹ Studies on second-generation return journeys mostly focus on the families' agency and identity, and the reclaiming of that identity in that foreign space, and incorporating those spaces into their own life narratives. See Nina Fischer, "Searching for a Lost Place: European Returns in Jewish Australian Second Generation Memoirs," *Crossings: Journal of Migration & Culture* 4, no. 1 (2013): pp.31-50; Marianne Hirsch, and Leo Spitzer. "The Tile Stove." *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (2008): pp.141-50.

members have in recent years laid stones from Owhiro Bay, Wellington, at Weissensee, the old Jewish cemetery in Berlin where Anna and Eugen Vandewart are buried.⁹² And on a school visit to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp memorial, Paul's wife's nephew laid a stone from New Zealand and spoke about his uncle's grandfather to his fellow students; Paul felt this to be 'very moving to find out that...which we hadn't asked him specifically to do, but had actually talked about that with his group of friends.'⁹³

These commemorative practices enacted upon return journeys to Europe could not have occurred without the knowledge gained by the second generation engaging with and researching the family documents. Paul believes he and his generation are establishing a narrative of the past for succeeding generations:

We're helping to, you know, give their lives [the first generation] meaning by making sure that, or making the attempt that, succeeding generations, mainly of our family but possibly of others as well...are aware of their story. But it's also a, fulfills a personal need too.⁹⁴

Soni Mulheron's own return journey features prominently in her son Danny Mulheron's documentary film about Soni's father and his grandfather, Richard Fuchs, *The Third Richard* (2008).⁹⁵ While he had retained an interest in his grandfather's music, Danny's own interest in the history 'took off' with the documentary, which is the first exposition of Dora Fuchs' collected papers. For Danny, the film itself is an artefact – an object of historical importance and family importance: 'it's become [the story] to affect me very strongly, and the older you get the more you think about it, 'cause you think about what they went through.'⁹⁶ Filming 'on location' in Germany had a sensory influence on Soni's memories as she was interviewed about her family's experiences in the 1930s. According to Danny, 'the environment piqued her memory. Sitting on the stairs of the school, or going to the tram that they provided. You know, it created...a memory.'⁹⁷

⁹² Blaschke, "Interview with P. Blaschke." Track file 3 of 3: TASCAM_0079.wav.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Mulheron, *The Third Richard*.

⁹⁶ Mulheron, "Interview with D. Mulheron and S. Stretton." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0086.wav.

⁹⁷ Danny had heard most of the stories in the documentary on other occasions, but it was 'the first time they were expressed very clearly.' Danny interviewed Soni before shooting the sequences. However some new material did come up during the filming of the documentary, from Soni and friends of the family in Germany. Ibid.

In the context of a shared history characterised by persecution, separation, and destruction, Fischer maintains that ‘family possessions provide evidence of a family network of memory, despite the traumatic breach’ created by the Holocaust.⁹⁸ The unique ability of family possessions to provide the second generation with such rare insights into their families’ pasts is often a reason for keeping the objects within the family for as long as possible, and is central to the inherent tension between the family ownership and institutional custody of family objects. Families want to ensure the stories have been adequately communicated to the family foremost, before entrusting the object to the public archive.

For Phillip Green, the objects will have a need for an institutional home when they require conservation and can no longer be used in the family. He highlights the personal importance for his generation, of following the traditional matriarchal line of inheritance regarding the religious Jewish objects. The *siddur* is now with Phillip’s sister Valerie, who will pass it down to her daughter; and the *mezuzah*: ‘I’ve given mine to my daughter...because it seems to me it should follow a matriarchal line given its history. And she holds ours.’⁹⁹ The documentary objects inherited by Phillip – family papers, German books, and personal letters between family members from the prewar period – have been given to his son who is German-speaking, and he has started translating some of them. As part of the German-language collection, Phillip has also given his grandfather’s German typewriter to his son.¹⁰⁰ But he is concerned that if he keeps ‘dispersing these things, the likelihood is that they will get lost or sold or be treated as bits of junk and tossed out, because... I suppose, stories around them will be lost.’¹⁰¹

In contrast, Paul Blaschke strongly believes such *inscribed* artefacts – the family papers – will eventually need a public institutional home, especially the official documents relating to his family’s history. He distinguishes these from the personal letters and photographs, which he feels to be a slightly different category; ‘more personal’ and, states: ‘I probably want to know a little bit more about what’s in them... And when it comes to the family documents, I’ve also got to consider then the next generation.’¹⁰² These family papers pose a difficult problem for Paul, because like other first generation survivors, Marie and Alfons had never mentioned what should happen to

⁹⁸ Fischer, *Memory Work: The Second Generation*, p.65.

⁹⁹ Green, "Interview with P. Green." Track file 1 of 3: TASCAM_0090.wav.

¹⁰⁰ Green, "Interview with P. Green." Track file 2 of 3: TASCAM_0091.wav.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Blaschke, "Interview with P. Blaschke." Track file 3 of 3: TASCAM_0079.wav.

the documents.

What becomes apparent is that not all objects are considered to be of public historical relevance by the second generation. The objects are commonly conceptualised as belonging in two groups: the *documentary* objects (official documents, personal papers and memoirs) are for public holdings, while the photographs and *material* objects are to be kept private, within the family. According to Paul, his inherited material objects are ‘the most obvious objects to keep within the family,’ but he admits for conservation purposes they could arguably go into a New Zealand museum collection, as representative of ‘an immigrant family and their roots going back into, into European history.’¹⁰³ The photographs, while so personal to the family, ‘probably only make sense within a context of the documents and the family history and so on.’¹⁰⁴ Here lies the inherent tension in the movement of family objects into the public archive: as descendants decide which objects will go into public care, and to which institution, family collections are inevitably broken up, fragmented across private and public archives.

Digitisation is an emerging option for families, opening up new possibilities for the materials to gain new significances and to be used in more forums for research. The Mulheron family decided to digitise a selection of significant archival materials of Richard Fuchs (including his music scores), and uploaded them to the Richard Fuchs Archive website, under the auspices of the Richard Fuchs Archive Trust, managed by Danny and Sara. However, digitisation remains a problematic way in which families can move forward and deal with this private-public tension. Using this approach, the original, physical objects are still at risk of damage, destruction, or loss occurring in the private home. Yet through a digital, online presence, the objects are made available to be shared with the public, arguably reaching a much wider audience than just those who visit heritage institutions. Even using this approach, collections are fragmented across the physical and digital, fragmenting the object itself.

The differing approaches taken by the second generation, for the responsibility of family memory and the institutional fate of family objects, fragment the private archive beyond the familial unit. The material world is commonly used by the second generation in

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

commemorative practices, and particularly in return journeys made by refugee families to Europe. Such activity relies on second-generation engagement with the family materials of this pre-migration past, which is in itself a commemorative action. Filmmaking and interviewing, German-language learning and translation of family papers, and the contemplation of where to bequeath family artefacts, are all ways in which the second generation members of this study are engaging with their families' pasts, in the hope of consolidating this past for the future. In doing so, the second generation fulfill their own post-memorial yearnings to learn of their Holocaust past, while taking responsibility for their respective family memories by forming a narrative of the past for the third generation.

These commemorative practices, and especially the prospect of public, institutional custody for the family artefacts, fragment the private archive. As the second generation plans for the future of their family objects, the collections are split between the private homes of family members and public heritage institutions, the physical object and its digital presence online, and as will be seen in the following chapter, between local (New Zealand) and international (particularly German) heritage institutions. The responsibility for family memory is thus no longer private, but community based, in and beyond the Jewish community.

Fuchs Family Objects



Figure 3.1 Assorted photographs of the Fuchs family in Germany: Richard and Dora Fuchs, with elder daughter Eva and younger daughter Soni. 11 July 1933. Private collection. Reproduced with permission of S. Stretton



Figure 3.2 The Fuchs family pictured outside their home in Karori, Wellington, after arriving in New Zealand. Date unknown. Private collection. Reproduced with permission of S. Stretton



Figure 3.3 Richard Fuchs piano stool. Private collection. Photograph by author



Figure 3.4 Hatbox and scarf, which belonged to Richard Fuchs. The box, along with a briefcase, were the only items besides clothing that Richard carried on his person when he emigrated. Collection of Fuchs Archive. Display at Wellington Museum, 2015. Photograph by author, with permission of Wellington Museum and S. Stretton

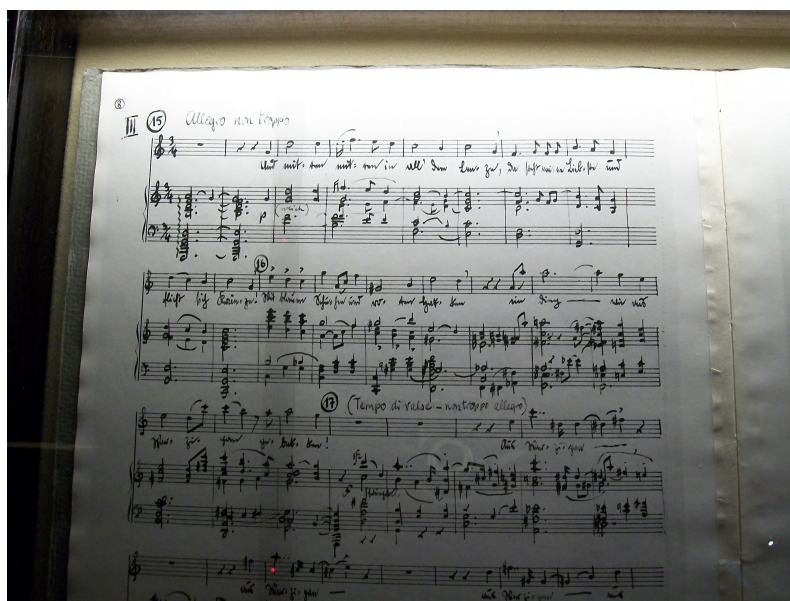


Figure 3.5 Richard Fuchs music sheets. Collection of Fuchs Archive. Display at Wellington Museum, 2015. Photograph by author, with permission of Wellington Museum and S. Stretton

Vandewart Family Objects



Figure 4.1 Eugen Vandewart and Anna Vandewart (née Marcus), parents of Marie Blaschke (née Vandewart). All three of their daughters escaped Berlin, but unable to escape themselves, the couple took their own lives in their Berlin apartment in late 1941. Date unknown. Private collection. Reproduced with permission of P. Blaschke



Figure 4.2 A young Marie Vandewart playing the cello, possibly taken before her immigration to New Zealand. Date unknown. Private collection. Reproduced with permission of P. Blaschke



Figure 4.3 Marie Blaschke (née Vandewart) in New Zealand. Date unknown. Private collection. Reproduced with permission of P. Blaschke



Figure 4.4 Marie's journal used from 1924-1939, lists the items she intended in packing for her migration to New Zealand in 1939. Private collection. Photograph by author

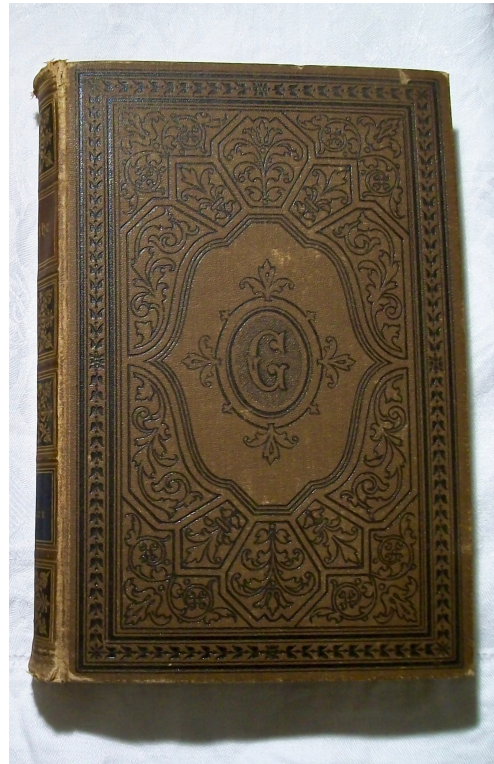


Figure 4.5 Collected works of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Private collection. Photograph by author



Figure 4.6 Photographs of Eugen and Anna Vandewart in front of the *Bücherschrank* (bookshelf) in the sitting room of the family's Berlin apartment. The Biedermeier chair in the corner was inherited from Anna's family home in Ansbach. Vandewart Album. Private collection. Photograph by author

Simon Family Objects



Figure 5.1 Liesl Green (née Simon) and Israel (Issie) Green photographed on their wedding day in New Zealand, 21 March 1946. Private collection. Reproduced with permission of P. Green



Figure 5.2 Wally Baer (previously Wally Simon, née Rosenbaum,) pictured with her great-granddaughter Veronica circa 1975-6. Private collection. Reproduced with permission of P. Green



Figure 5.3 Pressed-metal mezuzah painted white and decorated with the Hebrew letter Shin. Private collection. Photograph courtesy of P. Green. Reproduced with permission of V. Levy



Figure 5.4 Siddur (Jewish prayer book) saved from Hamburg synagogue in Kristallnacht. Private collection. Photograph courtesy of P. Green. Reproduced with permission of V. Levy



Figure 5.5 Wool blanket taken by Liesl Green (née Simon) on the Kinderstransport to England, and later New Zealand. Private collection. Photograph by author



Figure 5.6 Silver and glass-lined mustard pot with spoon, made in Posen. Private collection. Photograph by author



Figure 5.7 Silver bread container, inscribed with Walter Baer's initials on either side (W.B.), brought by Baer from Berlin to Wellington, New Zealand. Private collection. Photograph by author



Figure 5.8 Silver bowl with embossed botanical design. Originally belonged to Wally Baer's mother, Alice Rosenbaum. Private collection. Photograph by author

Chapter 3: Refugee Artefacts in the Public Archive: Holocaust Collective Memory and the 'Repatriation' of German-Jewish Refugee Objects to Germany

Only the perception that the object can transfer the memories to future generations enables the survivor to part with such a precious item. It is as if he projects his life story onto the object and passes it on to us. Often we find that the survivor expresses relief after giving us the object as if he is saying: until now I was responsible for transferring the story to the next generations, now that the object is in your hands, you are taking on the responsibility of telling the story with the object helping you in your mission.¹

Haviva Peled-Carmeli, senior curator of artefacts and director of the artefacts department at Yad Vashem

As exilic objects age and become increasingly fragile, the families of Holocaust refugee survivors are faced with a choice: to keep their objects within the family by passing them on to successive generations, or to entrust them to a public institution.² The latter option presents further concerns: should the chosen repository identify with the Jewish community or be a secular entity? A national government-funded institution or small, community-directed organisation? And when presented with the opportunity to return the materials to their original homeland, is a German archive or museum a more fitting home for such transnational artefacts? Collecting heritage institutions themselves further complicate matters, as their independent collecting strategies and acquisition policies do not always fully align with the intentions of donating families.

The first section overviews the different collection and heritage objectives of the world's major collecting Holocaust memorial and Jewish history museums, (Yad Vashem, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum/USHMM, and the Jewish Museum Berlin/JMB), and highlights the absence of artefacts in these international institutions

¹ Haviva Peled-Carmeli, "Bearing Witness: Stories Behind the Artifacts in the Yad Vashem Museum Collection," Yad Vashem The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/bearing_witness/homepage.asp; 29 January 2016.

² It is particularly important to note that some of the objects of this study are already older than 1930, dating back to the mid-late 1800s (originally belonging to the great-grandparents of refugees) and in the case of church carvings, to the Baroque era.

due to the Holocaust's wide scale destruction, plundering, and displacement of people and their life objects. The main methods used to offset this deficiency (emphasising this absence through employing narrative, and creating collections by seeking object donations from international sources) raise critical museological questions for the representation and 'repatriation' of Holocaust-era exile objects. But not only do Jewish refugee objects rarely inhabit international museums, they also rarely inhabit New Zealand's own cultural heritage collections.

The second section explores the position of New Zealand's national heritage collecting institutions to collect Jewish refugee objects, and their use of such artefacts. The significant lack of a dedicated, permanent collection space capable of accepting the many existing privately held refugee materials, constrains the choices and actions of the second generation regarding the future preservation of their collections. Consequently, some members of the second-generation have developed their own views on the prospect of returning their families' refugee artefacts and personal papers to Germany. Their varied and often emotionally charged responses to the concept itself, or to having been recently asked to donate items to the Jewish Museum Berlin (JMB), reveal the familial complexities of postmemory as the second generation feels they must find and secure an appropriate destination for their survivor parents' possessions. I conclude with the recent case study of the Stahl family archives, a collection of papers that was entrusted to the JMB in late 2014 in accordance with the Stahl family's wishes. The potential issues faced by New Zealand's refugee survivor community are exemplified in this case study, and the collection's return journey to Germany demonstrates the refugee artefact's unique position as part of a net of transnational displacements and entanglements caused by the Holocaust.

Jewish refugee objects: international approaches to a transnational phenomenon

The most common location of Jewish refugee objects in the public archive is in dedicated Holocaust memorial centres (encompassing museums and archives) or Jewish history museums. While most of these institutions began and operate at an official, national level, receiving a mixture of state and private funding, Holocaust survivor groups around the world have also established small, volunteer-managed and self-

funded museums within their local communities.³ According to Amy Sodaro, the establishment of Holocaust centres and other memorial museums around the world is 'one of the most prominent and striking international museological trends.'⁴ In the specific case of *Holocaust* memorial museums and Jewish history museums, Hirsch ascribes their proliferation directly to the devastation of the Holocaust, as it 'immediately spurred the urge not just to document the destruction, but to collect and reassemble any possible aspect of the world that was lost.'⁵ Today, as the world gradually loses its older generation of Holocaust survivors and other eyewitnesses, the international desire to record and preserve through the public archive, in order to remember, appears to strengthen.⁶

Conversely, according to museum consultant and former project director of the JMB Ken Gorbey, German-Jewish refugee archives in most parts of the world 'were not well organised' when he first entered the profession in the early 1960s, and describes the concept itself as a 'comparatively recent development.'⁷ As Gorbey explains, the idea for refugees to set up an archive is usually far removed from the first generation, as they have far more pressing issues to deal with, such as coming to terms with their past, a new country, and establishing a new life for themselves in refuge.⁸ However, this was not always the case outside New Zealand, as some of the world's first Holocaust centres and refugee archives were those initiated by survivors, such as the Leo Baeck Institute,

³ The Holocaust Centre of New Zealand (HCNZ), established 2012 in Wellington, is New Zealand's national example. Other notable international examples include: Jewish Museum Holocaust and Research Centre (JHC), established in 1984 (Melbourne, Australia); Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre (MHMC), established in 1979 (Montreal, Canada); Simon Wiesenthal Center's Museum of Tolerance, established in 1993 (Los Angeles, USA); Center of Contemporary Jewish Documentation, established in 1943 (Paris, France); and the Wiener Library for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide, established in 1933, opened 1939 (London, England).

⁴ It is important to note that many of these 'memorial' museums have gone beyond the Holocaust to observe genocide and human rights issues in their exhibitions and public programmes. Amy Sodaro, "Memory, History, and Nostalgia in Berlin's Jewish Museum," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 26, no. 1 (March 2013): p.77.

⁵ Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* p.228.

⁶ For example, the University of Southern California (USC) Shoah Foundation was founded by filmmaker Steven Spielberg in 1994. The organisation has collected 53,000 audiovisual testimonies of survivors and witnesses of the Holocaust and other genocides. Its broader testimony mandate has resulted in interviews conducted in 63 countries and in 39 languages. 3,000 of these interviews include testimonies from the Rwandan Tutsi genocide, the Nanjing Massacre, and Armenian Genocide. The USC online portal provides access to the interviews, which are catalogued and indexed at the Institute. USC Shoah Foundation, "About the Visual History Archive," USC Shoah Foundation: The Institute for Visual History and Education, <https://sfi.usc.edu/vha/about>; accessed 5 February 2016.

⁷ Ken Gorbey, interview by Louisa Hormann, 5 October, 2015, Wellington, interview 08/10. Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0094.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁸ Ibid.

established as early as 1955 by German Jews living in the United States, the majority of whom had arrived in the 1930s as refugees.⁹

Israel's official memorial to the victims of the Holocaust, Yad Vashem, was first established in 1953 and opened to the public four years later. Echoing the importance placed on memory in Jewish tradition, the museum's website states that it 'safeguards the memory of the past and imparts its meaning for future generations' through its commitment to four pillars of remembrance: commemoration, documentation, research, and education.¹⁰ Artefacts were initially considered of secondary importance to the documents and photographs.¹¹ However since the 1990s and the planned establishment of the new Holocaust History Museum at Yad Vashem that opened in 2005, the organisation initiated an active retrieval programme: a call for survivors to donate personal belongings to Yad Vashem.¹² The museum's ongoing 'Gathering the Fragments' national campaign 'to rescue personal items from the Holocaust period', includes memoirs, testimonies, names, film and video footage, artworks, letters, documents, artefacts, diaries, photographs.¹³

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) was established decades later in 1993, but like Israel's Yad Vashem complex, it is the United States' official memorial to the Holocaust. Support from the federal government ensures its permanent location on the National Mall, Washington D.C.'s park of national memorials to freedom, but the museum is also supported by private donations.¹⁴ According to the USHMM website, the museum 'teaches millions of people each year about the dangers

⁹ The Leo Baeck Institute (LBI) is today an international research institute, with branches in New York, Berlin, London, and Jerusalem. The archive is dedicated to the study of the history and culture of German-speaking Jewry (initially spanning just from the Enlightenment to the Nazi seizure of power). See also the Wiener Library and major publishing houses established by German and Austrian refugees; Weidenfeld & Nicholson, Schocken, and others. These publishers were instrumental in supporting the writing and publication of refugee memoirs – the creation of literary refugee objects, itself a huge field of academic interest; see listed works by Fischer.

¹⁰ Yad Vashem, "About Yad Vashem," Yad Vashem The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, <http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/about/index.asp>; accessed 29 January 2016.

¹¹ "The Artifacts Collection: Artifact Collection," Yad Vashem The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/museum/artifacts/collecting.asp; accessed 13 January 2016.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ At present Yad Vashem's website does not have the function to search the artefact collection online, however a selection of donated objects are 'featured artefacts' on the museum website. "Gathering the Fragments: The Faces Behind the Documents, Artifacts and Photographs," Yad Vashem The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/gathering_fragments/index.asp; accessed 14 January 2016.

¹⁴ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "About the Museum," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, <http://www.ushmm.org/information/about-the-museum>; accessed 29 January 2016.

of unchecked hatred and the need to prevent genocide.’¹⁵ Furthermore, the museum’s mission also encourages visitors ‘to act, cultivating a sense of moral responsibility among our [United States] citizens so that they will respond to the monumental challenges that confront our world.’¹⁶ In keeping with its goal to provide ‘comprehensive, effective, and convenient access’ to the USHMM collection catalogues, an overwhelming 252,228 records are available online through its Collections Search website.¹⁷

In contrast to the explicit Holocaust memorial function served by Yad Vashem and the USHMM, the Jewish Museum Berlin (JMB), which opened 9 September 2001, is a national history museum, encompassing the 2,000 years of German-Jewish history in Berlin.¹⁸ The JMB’s beginning dates back to 1971 in West Berlin, when the board of Berlin’s Jewish Community, management of the Berlin Museum, and the Berlin Senate set out to create a ‘Jewish Museum’ that would ‘integrate Jewish history into general city history, but still keep it separate’, as an add-on to the existing Berlin Museum.¹⁹ After a long development process characterised by debate, the eventual transfer of the JMB from local government to state control in 2001 initiated a shift in focus from Jewish history in Berlin, to *German-Jewish history* more generally, a development which ‘helped to make it the most important national site of Jewish history and memory’ in Germany.²⁰

Although not intended as a Holocaust memorial museum, the JMB echoes approaches taken by many other dedicated Holocaust museums around the world, (such as personalising historical trauma and experience by emphasising the lives of individuals), and has become ‘Germany’s de facto national Holocaust memorial museum.’²¹ Much of this ‘memorial effect’ is due to the main museum building’s symbolic architectural design, heavy with references to Judaism and the Holocaust.²²

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Collections Search," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, <http://collections.ushmm.org/search/>; accessed 30 January 2016.

¹⁸ Like the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, which opened 19 April 2013, following the opening of another major Jewish history museum in Moscow, the JMB is one of many European state-owned and operated Jewish museums that have opened since 2000.

¹⁹ Significantly, at the time there was no museum in Germany devoted solely to German-Jewish history. Jewish Museum Berlin, "The History of the Origins of the Jewish Museum Berlin," (Stiftung Jüdisches Museum Berlin, 2013), p.1, http://www.jmberlin.de/main/EN/Pdfs-en/About-the-Museum/History_Museum/Museumsgeschichte_EN.pdf

²⁰ Sodaro, "Memory, History, and Nostalgia in Berlin's Jewish Museum," p.83.

²¹ Ibid., pp.78, 86.

²² Ibid.

This clash of aesthetic and purpose first arose when Libeskind's design was selected for the Jewish Museum in 1989, while at the same time the Berlin Senate decided to retain the 'integrative concept' for the museum, namely to unite the Berlin Museum and the rebuilt Jewish Museum, proposing an independent status for the Jewish Museum within the Berlin Museum.²³ Moreover, the museum's permanent exhibition, *Two Millennia of German Jewish History*, 'countered the voices that had declared the Libeskind Building a Holocaust memorial' by striving to present a typical history exhibit about Jewish life and culture in Germany.²⁴ Sodaro has thus called the JMB a 'countermemorial museum' as the museum rejects memorial categorisation, and instead focuses on a celebration of German-Jewish culture and history (and not just the Holocaust tragedy).²⁵

Libeskind's building draws attention to a paradox: to the absence present in Berlin's relationship with its history. According to Libeskind himself, the void motif represents the 'space of Berlin, because it refers to that which can never be exhibited when it comes to Jewish Berlin history. It has been reduced to ashes.'²⁶ This absence is materially reflected in the JMB collections themselves, and those of other European Jewish museums, which due to historical circumstances, contain hardly any Jewish material artefacts from the prewar and WWII period. Gorbey contextualised the phenomenon neatly: that in the face of Hitler's regime to destroy an entire people, 'at the same time, of course, with those people went their memories, and so often their artefacts.'²⁷ Whether taken into exile, or displaced at the moment of death, the belongings of Holocaust victims and survivors alike were repeatedly stolen, lost, or destroyed – dispossessed and separated from their original owners.

Equally, some museums benefited from the persecution and plundering of the Europe's Jewish populations, such as the Märkisches Museum, founded in Berlin in 1874, whose collection included both purchases and donations of Jewish citizens prior to 1933, and artefacts acquired during the Nazi era and under force.²⁸ Its exhibition displays are based entirely on their collections, having assumed the philosophical stance that museums are about collections, and the stories their collections tell. However,

²³ Berlin, "The History of the Origins of the Jewish Museum Berlin," pp.2-4.

²⁴ Ibid., p.8.

²⁵ Sodaro, "Memory, History, and Nostalgia in Berlin's Jewish Museum," p.77.

²⁶ Daniel Libeskind, *Jewish Museum Berlin* (Ruksaldruck: G+B Arts International, 1999), p.30, in Sodaro, "Memory, History, and Nostalgia in Berlin's Jewish Museum," p.84.

²⁷ Gorbey, "Interview with K. Gorbey." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0094.wav.

²⁸ Berlin, "The History of the Origins of the Jewish Museum Berlin," p.6.

because no one collected resistance material in the Nazi era, the Märkisches Museum collection only contains the objects and associated ephemera produced during that period, resulting in ‘an incredibly incomplete and politically attuned record’ reflected in its collections.²⁹ The museum’s ‘difficult history’ of its Jewish patrons taken to camps and the director collecting the confiscated Jewish silver, were absent from the museum’s narrative of Berlin history it supposedly told.³⁰ The Nazi era was instead represented by the propaganda of nationalism, and not the remnants of war and Holocaust.³¹

In the absence of a rich collection of objects to display, the JMB’s approach began and continues to be driven by a broad narrative of 2,000 years of German-Jewish history. Despite the museum profession’s strong institutional drive to preserve objects and always use them as the starting point for exhibition concept development, Gorbey and his colleague Dr Vera Bendt at the JMB, increasingly found themselves inverting this approach, using instead the very *absence* of artefacts as a starting point for a narrative approach that would represent that past history evident in the immaterial.³² As Gorbey explains, ‘the importance of the lack of the collection objects was part of the stuff of our museums. We recognise a collection-less state and we gave it a name – the Gallery of the Missing.’³³

‘The Gallery of the Missing’, as the JMB staff called it, became a contemporary art exhibition at the museum, displaying examples of the Nazi regime’s attempt to eliminate the Jewish people and their culture, hereby emphasising physical absence and cultural loss.³⁴ One example chosen for the exhibition was the old Jewish cemetery at Weissensee in northeast Berlin – the same cemetery where Marie Vandewart Blaschke’s

²⁹ Life in Berlin in the DDR was similarly reflected through top-down material records. Over successive decades, the museum’s curators had ‘worked within the dictates of successive regimes to build collections that reflected the political ideologies of the day.’ Gorbey, "Interview with K. Gorbey." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0094.wav. See also Ken Gorbey, "The Gallery of the Missing," (Wellington: Draft chapter for upcoming publication, April 2015), p.7.

³⁰ Gorbey, "Interview with K. Gorbey." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0094.wav.

³¹ Gorbey, "The Gallery of the Missing," p.7.

³² According to Avril Alba, Holocaust memorial museums were not the first institutions to use the narrative approach, citing Tel Aviv’s Beth Hatefutsoth (The Nahum Goldman Museum of the Jewish Diaspora), opened in 1978, as the first history museum to use a predominantly narrative historical approach. Alba’s useful summary of the narrative approach in Holocaust museums, explains that when the process is inverted, the object no longer tells its own story, and instead, ‘becomes subject to and acts to support the overarching storyline of the exhibition.’ Avril Alba, *The Holocaust Memorial Museum: Sacred Secular Space* (United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p.32.

³³ Ken Gorbey’s chapter draft records his professional experiences at the JMB. The title alludes to the ‘small’ humble, domestic objects (not Judaica or high art), and the ‘missing’ objects, lost and stolen during the Holocaust. Gorbey, "The Gallery of the Missing," p.9.

³⁴ Ibid., pp.10-11.

parents, Eugen and Anna Vandewart, were buried in 1941.³⁵ According to Gorbey, the cemetery 'was marked not so much by what existed as by what was denied and missing' – namely the Jewish families who would no longer be buried there as tradition dictated, but had fled overseas or were murdered, their bodies sacrilegiously burned in extermination camps.³⁶ Although a material edifice, the Weissensee Cemetery was of course an abstract 'artefact' in the museum context, as were many of the other examples selected for inclusion in the exhibition. The *Gallery of the Missing* took physical form as a contemporary artwork by Via Lewandowsky, 'an enigmatic glistening dark glass stele, a sound sculpture that quietly told stories of the Missing.'³⁷

The primacy afforded to the physical collection object is a central debate in the contemporary museum profession, and Gorbey, an advocate for the narrative approach, believes it is the stories instead, that really matter: 'Collections are wonderful things to illustrate, to bring life, dimension, authenticity – a sense of authenticity to a story that you're telling. But they are not the story...'³⁸ Furthermore, he describes museums' focus on the tangible as 'at once wondrously illuminating and evocative, and also limiting', as in the extreme case of the Märkisches Museum.³⁹ As museums face ever tighter financial and spatial constraints, such an anti-collection approach would appear to have credibility, and to even offer something of a solution to these modern challenges. However, material objects remain crucial to the truly authentic display of social history in museums more generally; the 'lack of relevant or authentic objects in collections' is in fact cited as a major hindrance.⁴⁰ Curator Kirstie Ross' article on how this central issue was confronted during the development of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa community exhibition, *The Scots in New Zealand*, concludes that 'lateral thinking around social history and material culture generates interest in the intangible, the complex and the contradictions within any community and is critical for convincing social history exhibitions.'⁴¹

The JMB and other European museums also deal with the challenge of artefactual absence by operating a global collection mandate, effectively adding to their

³⁵ Paul Blaschke, interview by Louisa Hormann, 4 August, 2015, Wellington, interview 02/10. Track file 1 of 3: TASCAM_0077.wav. Unpublished recording.

³⁶ Gorbey, "The Gallery of the Missing," pp.10-11.

³⁷ Ibid., p.12.

³⁸ Gorbey, "Interview with K. Gorbey." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0094.wav.

³⁹ Gorbey, "The Gallery of the Missing," p.12.

⁴⁰ Kirstie Ross, "Materialising Social History in Museums," *Te Ara Journal of Museums Aotearoa* 32, no. 1-2 (December 2007): p.2.

⁴¹ Ibid., p.3.

collections by overseas donation, much like the aforementioned ‘Gathering the Fragments’ campaign (although Yad Vashem’s search is domestic only). In this context, these object donations usually come from immigrant families who fled Germany as refugees in the prewar period, during WWII, or were displaced survivors in the post-war period. In the case of the JMB, the collecting is both passive and proactive. In the lead up to the JMB’s official opening in 2001, Gorbey writes, German Jews who had escaped Nazi Germany ‘started sending their memories, and accompanying items, back to Berlin’, those who had carried ‘virtually nothing’ out of Germany – ‘It was that “virtually nothing” that were now returning to Berlin in slight packages.’⁴² More recently, the chief archivist of the JMB, Aubrey Pomerance, toured New Zealand and Australian centres in December 2014, speaking with families about entrusting their artefacts to the JMB, and presenting at community events about the educational uses of such materials in the JMB’s archive.⁴³

While the collection-museum paradigm can be considered a central motivation behind the current worldwide search of European Jewish history museums for Jewish refugee objects, the story-museum paradigm offers a popular alternative solution, a way in which European museums can and are dealing with the ‘problem’ of having deficient collections. But the authenticity and emotional power of the donation of actual material objects from this historical period cannot be denied, and casts doubt as to whether the narrative approach is adequate when we face the loss of more direct linkages to the first generation – as living memory becomes history. If objects have the potential to embody and represent the individual life stories of both Holocaust victims and survivors – as ‘repurposed survivors’ perhaps – are museums in fact missing a unique and fleeting opportunity to preserve a tangible connection to those survivors, and the memories they carry?

⁴² Gorbey, "The Gallery of the Missing," p.5.

⁴³ Pomerance, "Teaching the Holocaust at the Jewish Museum Berlin."

An uncertain future: New Zealand's cultural heritage collections and the 'return' of artefacts to Germany

In New Zealand, Jewish refugee artefacts are rare and scattered across its national cultural heritage collections. The history of 'regular' migration to New Zealand is a dominant theme within its national collecting institutions, but refugee objects and experiences have only recently appeared in the public heritage discourse. However, while refugee objects are increasingly sought after by curators, New Zealand's heritage institutions have limited capacity to collect large collections of refugee objects, due to resourcing constraints. New Zealand's national documentary heritage collection, the Alexander Turnbull Library, and the national museum, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, both have collection mandates to reflect the diversity of past and present New Zealand society, and so must maximise their collections by acquiring artefacts representing as many ethnic groups and immigrant groupings as possible.⁴⁴

The establishment of Te Papa in 1992 brought refugee objects into the spotlight, but also exposed some of the challenges inherent to housing and displaying such transnational artefacts. The museum currently presents two permanent exhibitions, *Passports* and *The Mixing Room*, which examine migration and the refugee youth experience respectively. The *Passports* exhibition was part of the so-called 'Day One' exhibitions, the permanent exhibitions displayed when Te Papa first opened to the public. *Passports* tells the social history of migration to New Zealand by non-Māori from the early nineteenth century to the present day. Its main focus was '...the diverse experiences of various groups of migrants as they responded to and coped with social processes extending far beyond them.'⁴⁵ The exhibition strategy for reflecting diverse migration experiences used criteria such as: numerous categories for time of arrival; gender; class; country of origin; religion; age; motivation; and type (eg: chain, circular, *refugee*).⁴⁶

The mainly textile objects belonging to Augusta Bohmer, a Jewish refugee from Moravia, former Czechoslovakia, who arrived in New Zealand in 1939, were actively

⁴⁴ According to Andrew Flinn, archivists have the responsibility of 'ensuring that their collections more fully represent all in society, including those from the periphery and the margins and those with alternative or unorthodox opinions...' Andrew Flinn, "Other Ways of Thinking, Other Ways of Being. Documenting the Margins and the Transitory: What to Preserve, How to Collect," in *What Are Archives? Cultural and Theoretical Perspectives: A Reader*, ed. Louise Craven (Hampshire, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2008), p.110.

⁴⁵ Exhibition Team (History) Te Papa, "'The Peopling of New Zealand' Concept Development Report," (Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, February 1994), p.5.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.6.

sought out and acquired by the curatorial team for the *Passports* exhibition in the mid-1990s. However, Bohmer's objects were rejected for display in favour of Jewish synagogue objects – a Prayer Curtain from Wellington's first synagogue on the Terrace and a Jewish Presentation Tray, sourced by the local Jewish community.⁴⁷ These nineteenth century objects were about migrant culture (namely, Jewish faith) in New Zealand, rather than the decision to emigrate, or being a refugee and a migrant.⁴⁸ Te Papa history curator Stephanie Gibson called it a 'really odd decision' but should be read in the context of a very 'fraught long [concept development] process with lots of debate...so much was at stake.'⁴⁹ It is also possible that the Bohmer textiles were rejected because they were highly domestic objects, and therefore appeared ubiquitous and meaningless, in contrast to the strong symbolic statement made by the religious artefacts. Usually domestic in nature, refugee objects do not tend to speak for themselves: 'If you didn't know their provenance you probably wouldn't collect them,' Gibson explains: 'their survival is actually quite tenuous.'⁵⁰

The ability of the objects to speak to the migration experience of dislocation therefore depends greatly on how curators and archivists choose to *record* and *use* the artefacts. Refugee objects often come as part of complex acquisitions, and if accessioned incompletely, could be misrepresented in the institutional record. This is especially problematic when dealing with collections consisting of objects both made in New Zealand, and originating from an ancestral homeland, such as the textiles collection donated by the Hager family to Te Papa in 2007.⁵¹ While the majority of the acquisition represented Kurt Hager's New Zealand clothing manufacturing business, it also included a drawstring purse of knitted beads from Vienna. Dated between 1860 and 1880, the purse originally belonged to Kurt's mother, Nicky's Oma, and was brought out to New Zealand when the family fled Austria.⁵² Gibson explained the collection was accepted 'as the Hager family, in terms of manufacturing, but also because they had a migrant – a

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp.33, 38.

⁴⁸ Stephanie Gibson, interview by Louisa Hormann, 17 September, 2015, Wellington, interview 06/10. Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0088.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁴⁹ The Day One exhibitions were curated before Stephanie Gibson began working at Te Papa (employed at Te Papa since 2000). Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ After Nicky's mother died the family offered her clothing, mostly 1970s high fashion produced by her husband Kurt Hager's textile manufacturing business, to Te Papa's textiles collection. A selection of items was accepted. Nicky Hager, interview by Louisa Hormann, 12 August, 2015, Wellington, interview 04/10. Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0084.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁵² The purse features in a story written by Kurt Hager's daughter, and Nicky's sister, Mandy Hager, in Adrienne Jansen, ed. *The Curiozeum: Collected Stories of the Odd and Marvellous* (Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2014). Ibid.

refugee migrant history. But that doesn't really surface in the cataloguing very well. So I've tried to improve that.'⁵³

Regarding its potential display, there is a risk of the Hager purse being displayed as a 'pretty purse.'⁵⁴ As Gibson explains, aesthetic objects in particular 'might be used for a different purpose, and its refugee storyline will get suppressed... So there is a danger around how we use objects.'⁵⁵ To counter this risk, Te Papa ensures their collection objects are as 'useful' as possible; that they have multiple significances and can tell many stories. For instance, Helmut Herbert Hermann Rex's minister's gown, brought out of Germany when Rex and his wife fled as religious refugees, was displayed in an exhibition on uniformity, as an example of religious dress. Even though the exhibition concept did not require it, the curators decided to include Rex's refugee story as part of the exhibition label accompanying the gown, 'because the story's so great and it's respectful, we did two jobs – we used it as a religious dress and as a refugee story.'⁵⁶ But of course this approach is only effective if all those historical significances are noted in the object record. Issues of representation, such as exhibition concept development, acquisition cataloguing, and exhibition labels – have a direct impact on the 'refugee presence' in institutional memory.

Since the Bohmer acquisition, Te Papa has been offered relatively few artefacts from refugee donors.⁵⁷ Contemporary refugees especially often arrive with very few objects, so personally significant that they wish not to part with them; it is usually later generations who then consider museums.⁵⁸ So when developing *The Mixing Room: Stories from Young Refugees in New Zealand*, which opened in 2010, Gibson and her team decided to take an artefact-free approach. The exhibit instead uses oral testimony,

⁵³ Cataloguing is always a work-in-progress, and records can be amended to incorporate new layers of meaning as new relevant information comes to light; since this project, Gibson has added the 'refugee' association to the Hager Purse object record. Now the object will appear in collection search results for 'refugee'. Gibson, "Interview with S. Gibson." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0088.wav.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Acquisitions include the minister's gown (2006), the Hager purse (2007), Estonian objects donated by the Reissar family, who came to New Zealand as displaced postwar migrants (2008), the cheongsam garments of WWII refugee from Hong Kong, Mayme Chanwai, and a collection of Somali artefacts donated by Mohamed Abdulaziz Mohamed (2014). Note the minister's gown worn by Helmut Herbert Hermann Rex was not donated by the family, it was instead a gift of Rex's friend, Reverend Denzil J Brown, on behalf of the Presbyterian Church in New Zealand.

⁵⁸ Gibson, "Interview with S. Gibson." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0088.wav.

sharing their stories ‘almost as if that’s an object, and their images, and their creative works, which are all digital.’⁵⁹

The objects most frequently entrusted by refugee families to public archives are more traditional archival objects: personal papers. Both Marie Vandewart Blaschke and Soni Mulheron have donated papers to the Alexander Turnbull Library. Prior to her death in 2006, Marie (under her maiden name Vandewart) bequeathed her extensive collection of concert and performance programmes, including concerts she had attended and those related to her musical career in pre-WWII Germany, post-war England, wartime New Zealand and thereafter. Soni gifted her father Richard Fuchs’ music scores and parts, sound recordings, news clippings, photographs, and correspondence to the Turnbull in August 1999. The library’s refugee materials span a wide range of records types, including oral history interviews; both Marie Vandewart Blaschke and Kurt Hager’s oral history interviews are held in the national Oral History and Sound collection, housed in the Turnbull collections.

The Turnbull Library’s selection policy dictates its collection materials ‘must support research into New Zealand and New Zealanders,’ be of national ‘documentary significance,’ and accessible to the public.⁶⁰ Refugee materials are given high collection priority by the Turnbull Library, which has been highly conscious of the great movement of refugees and displaced people from Europe between the late 1930s and the early 1950s. According to curatorial services leader John Sullivan, the library considered the Jewish refugee movement a significant part of that phenomenon and ‘have always been ‘on the look out’...for material that would sort of enhance that part of our history.’⁶¹ Sullivan highlights the Irene Koppel photography collection as one such example of an important collection depicting people and events important to New Zealand history.⁶² ‘But it also documented something of the journey, which she had

⁵⁹ Although established a long time after *Passports*, *Mixing Room* is located in the community gallery, which is a segment of *Passports*. According to Gibson, ‘The idea was that *Passports* was the long-term exhibition, and within it, you could change a module every two years – you could radically change it to profile a specific community...and give that community a chance to really express themselves on the national stage.’ Ibid.

⁶⁰ John Sullivan, interview by Louisa Hormann, 8 December, 2015, Wellington, interview 10/10. Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0099.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Koppel was a Jewish refugee, who left Germany in the late 1930s, first to England, then on to New Zealand in 1939-40. She established a career with a Wellington photographer, and then launched her own successful photographic career.

brought here and ...the artistic currents in Germany at the time.’⁶³ The collection is also easy to digitise, a factor Sullivan notes is important when considering alternative approaches to repatriating private refugee collections to Europe.

As New Zealanders documenting the history of New Zealand, Sullivan believes ‘we should be interested in collecting such material ourselves,’ but cautions our public heritage institutions cannot collect everything.⁶⁴ Such refugee objects have a shared heritage now, and we therefore require ‘a more flexible solution for satisfying all those needs.’⁶⁵ While he suggests collaborative digitisation projects could offer a way forward between international collecting institutions, it is vital that the originals are preserved and remain accessible; if necessary they can then be safely lent for exhibition (temporary repatriation approach).⁶⁶ Moreover, original documents have their own emotional significance for people, and to have them accepted for preservation by a national institution gives refugee families a sense of validation: it ‘indicates that they actually matter...that they’re actually part of our history, and aren’t being written out of it in any way.’⁶⁷ Equally, donors are ‘lifeblood’ for the repository, part of ‘a circular relationship between researchers, the institution, and donors’ strengthening each other.⁶⁸ This relationship is vital, as families have to make difficult choices between the private preservation of family memory, or dispersing collections into public archives, either voluntarily or by request.

For the second generation of German-Jewish refugee families seeking a public home for their parents’ artefacts in New Zealand, the option of a centralised collection space capable of accepting both material *and* documentary objects does not exist. New Zealand’s own Holocaust education and remembrance centre, the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand (HCNZ) is not currently a collecting museum.⁶⁹ When it opened as the Wellington Holocaust Research and Education Centre in 2007, the self-contained permanent exhibition included few selected artefacts, but as a small volunteer managed and operated community museum with limited funding, the HCNZ is not adequately

⁶³ Sullivan, “Interview with J. Sullivan.” Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0099.wav.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Steven Sedley, interview by Louisa Hormann, 13 October, 2015, Wellington, interview 09/10. Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0096.wav. Unpublished recording.

resourced to collect and preserve artefacts.⁷⁰ During Phillip Green's term as co-chair of the HCNZ Board, a first generation friend contacted him, wondering what to do with her family things:

I pointed out to her that one of the objects of the Centre was to receive and preserve objects from families brought in through the Holocaust, brought to New Zealand. And I also had to say the Centre was in no fit position to receive them, yet. But if she could only wait, the day would come.⁷¹

Instances of object misplacement by New Zealand museums, where donated artefacts were 'lost in transit' before they could be accessioned, has resulted in their absence from the institutional record.⁷² Such an experience can act as a disincentive to the second generation choosing to entrust their objects to local collections. Having been so discouraged, Green's friend ultimately decided the best option was to send everything back to Germany with the JMB's chief archivist, Aubrey Pomerance, in 2014. 'She knew that I felt deeply saddened, indeed, very strongly about her doing that, but she felt she had no choice.'⁷³ The evident lack of a centralised, permanent home for Holocaust-era exilic artefacts in New Zealand, and the current opportunity to send objects to the JMB, has created tension and internal debate among the survivor community about where the objects can and should belong.

Aubrey Pomerance's visit to New Zealand in December 2014 prompted many discussions among families, the HCNZ community, and the second-generation group.⁷⁴ Some in the community, like first generation member Dr Susi Williams, advocate strongly for the return of family artefacts to Germany, particularly to the JMB archives. Dr Williams first met Pomerance in 2007, when he spoke to a group of visiting first

⁷⁰ Some in New Zealand's Jewish community (mainly based in Auckland) have sought alternative digital options for preserving their heritage. Established in December 2011, the Jewish Online Museum (JOM), founded by David J Ross, is a digital archive option for recording the stories and objects of New Zealand's Jewish community in general. According to its website, it is New Zealand's first Jewish museum, and the first online Jewish museum in the world, 'one that seeks to preserve memory and fragile histories, and to attribute provenance and value to the objects, experiences and culture of the Jewish people...' A virtual venue was chosen as the most practical option to provide a 'locally based, globally informed cultural and educational resource', accessible to an international public audience. Jewish Online Museum, "A Behind the Scenes Introduction to JOM," Jewish Online Museum, <http://jewishonlinemuseum.org/behind-scenes-introduction-jom>; accessed 27 March 2016.

⁷¹ Phillip Green, interview by Louisa Hormann, 22 September, 2015, Wellington, interview 07/10. Track file 3 of 3: TASCAM_0092.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁷² I have maintained the privacy of the individuals and institutions involved, as this was the wish of the interviewee. Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Dr Susanna (Susi) Williams, "The Visit of Aubrey Pomerance - a Personal View," *Temple Sinai Bulletin* no. 608 (March 2015): p.10.

generation survivors at the JMB about ‘the importance of Archives and the hope that some of us would entrust materials to the Jewish Museum.’⁷⁵ Although she recognises that some inherited material should remain in families, and some should stay in New Zealand ‘if we ever find the right way of doing that’, Dr Williams firmly believes that some items should go to the JMB ‘where it can be looked after, used to teach, understood (particularly some of the old scripts), and be a part of the history of Germany.’⁷⁶

Some in the survivor community feel it is important that the objects have a permanent *Jewish* home. For first generation member Soni Mulheron, the Jewish identity of Yad Vashem was important in her decision-making, and was the reason why she chose to send some objects to the international museum. Although she cannot remember what objects were entrusted to Yad Vashem, she stresses, ‘Well I know it’s a Jewish archive.’⁷⁷ Second generation member Paul Blaschke is yet to place any further objects into the public archive, and prefers a Jewish archive for the family papers and photographs, if he were to do so.⁷⁸ Having always hoped that if his family papers went into a New Zealand collection they would go to the HCNZ, Paul has had to look further afield for options. He now believes the JMB is the obvious candidate, having been approached by the museum about entrusting his mother’s Berlin papers: ‘Although of course now having found out that there are also family documents in the Stadt Archives of Berlin...that I guess opens it up a little bit more.’⁷⁹ So while preferring a Jewish repository for the papers, Paul is keeping his options open, deciding to first research the papers further before making a final decision on their institutional fate.

⁷⁵ Williams was invited to Berlin in 2007, as part of the Berlin Senate’s invitation to first generation survivors born in Berlin to make a return visit to the city. This event included a visit to the JMB. Williams made two later visits to Berlin, fostering the JMB’s interest in the New Zealand connection and the papers relating to refugee families’ past history in Germany. This, Williams says, helped to encourage Pomerance’s subsequent visit to New Zealand and Australia. Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Sonia (Soni) Mulheron (née Fuchs), interview by Louisa Hormann, 11 August, 2015, Wellington, interview 03/10. Track file 2 of 2: TASCAM_0082.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁷⁸ Paul has a different view when it comes to the material objects, and is considering New Zealand museums: ‘It doesn’t need to be anything Jewish, connected with Jewish history, but just sort of an immigrant family and their roots going back into, into European history.’ Paul Blaschke, interview by Louisa Hormann, 4 August, 2015, Wellington, interview 02/10. Track file 3 of 3: TASCAM_0079.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁷⁹ Paul was recently contacted by two postgraduate students at Berlin’s Humboldt University conducting research at the Berlin Stadt Archives into the Berliner Jewish victims of the Nazi regime. They had found the death records and official police certification recording the suicide of his grandparents, Anna and Eugen Vandewart in late 1941. The papers included a kind of suicide note, a farewell note to the children. Ibid.

For Soni Mulheron's son Danny however, the Jewish identity of the custodian organisation is not as important as what they decide to do with the collection. When approached by Pomerance, the second-generation family was concerned that the objects might never be displayed in the museum, or only occasionally. Danny was happy to have objects put on display at the JMB, or in Germany, but did not want them to be stored away. His wife Sara explains:

We kind of thought, well you know, the reality is that our objects that sort of mean something to us sentimentally, will probably just be in some back room, and they might just come out sort of occasionally for an exhibition, if at all. They may never come out! They might just be archived and labeled and stored away...and they would just join the millions and millions of other objects out there from Jewish families.⁸⁰

The family's apprehension that their objects and stories would become ubiquitous in a German context, losing what significances they had acquired representing a distinctive cultural experience in the New Zealand refuge setting, is underpinned by the perception that there are countless other Jewish families 'telling the same story as us'.⁸¹

Ultimately, the Mulheron family decided to keep the objects in their own homes (divided between Danny, his sister, and mother Soni), under the auspices of the Richard Fuchs Archive Trust. A selection of Richard Fuchs objects are currently on temporary loan to the Wellington Museum (formerly the Wellington Museum of City and Sea) and displayed in the 2015 *The Attic* exhibition. These include Richard's music scores, a hat and scarf, a hatbox and shaving kit, wax seals, a pocket 'fob' watch, his architecture office sign in German 'Dr. Ing. Richard Fuchs Architekturbüro', and Dora's German passport; and some further objects from the collection of the Wellington Museum, including Richard's 1914 Iron Cross medal Second Class medal and 1914-18 German Cross of Honour medal (Hindenberg Cross), and WWI artwork produced by Richard Fuchs as a war artist, dated 1916-1918.⁸² The exhibit also includes two interactive audio

⁸⁰ Daniel (Danny) Mulheron, and Sara Stretton, interview by Louisa Hormann, 15 August, 2015, Wellington, interview 05/10. Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0086.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Other Richard Fuchs objects in the Wellington Museum's collection were donated by Soni Mulheron in 2006 and 2008. These include: Richard's German army paybook (1902-1917), his luggage tag from Dachau concentration camp (1 November 1938), his certificate for the award of the Iron Cross (30 January 1935), and a black and white photograph of Richard Fuchs on horseback, with barracks in the background (date unknown). Wellington Museum, "Richard Fuchs Accession Records," (Wellington: Wellington Museum, 25 November 2015).

features allowing the visitor to listen to Richard's musical compositions, and to an excerpt from *The Third Richard* documentary film.

According to Danny, the hatbox is especially significant to visually representing the family's refugee story. [Figure 3.4] The hatbox and a briefcase filled with personal papers and music scores were the only items besides clothing that Richard carried on his person when he immigrated to New Zealand in 1939. [Figure 3.5] 'The satchel was basically his life,' Danny explains, but it was an attachment born out of practical necessity, not sentimentality, as Richard had to carry the correct documentation to emigrate.⁸³ The satchel was so important to him that 'he would hold onto it, sleep with it, everything. And it's – that's why that's important. 'Cause that was them surviving in another country, and escaping an old one.'⁸⁴ The hatbox, on the other hand, Danny felt was interesting because it is such a personal item; the small hat even reveals the physicality of the individual himself: 'It gives you a real perspective of even how tall he was. There's something about putting on a hat... You realise gosh, this person was a little, small-boned individual who had all this life.'⁸⁵

Danny's strong desire to have the objects curated is rooted in the belief that the family's story is illustrative of a fundamental period in New Zealand's history:

The story of them [Fuchs family and German-Jewish refugees in general] in New Zealand, and the way they were treated in here, which was not – it's benign but also ignorant, and slightly selfish and uncaring – is a really good story to tell. And so that aspect of things is something New Zealanders should face up to, in the same way Germany has faced up to its past.⁸⁶

However his mother Soni's reasoning for the objects staying in New Zealand is based on the fact that her whole family is in New Zealand.⁸⁷ However, she also shares the view that the objects equally belong to German history, and so believed some refugee artefacts should be entrusted to European museums, arguing 'well they ought to be, I mean they were part of it weren't they?'⁸⁸

That the objects have a shared heritage, and a New Zealand identity, is a pivotal consideration of second-generation decisions to bequeath the artefacts to local or

⁸³ Mulheron, "Interview with D. Mulheron and S. Stretton." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0086.wav.

⁸⁴ The satchel remains held within the private collection of the family. Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Mulheron, "Interview with S. Mulheron." Track file 2 of 2: TASCAM_0082.wav.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

international repositories. Paul Blaschke was initially ‘quite shocked’ at Pomerance’s proposition of housing German-Jewish refugee collections at the JMB: ‘that would be unthinkable...the one thing that my parents wanted was that they [the German artworks] stayed in New Zealand.’⁸⁹ Paul believes his parents’ rationale for demanding the artworks remain in New Zealand was that ‘they had made their home here, and this was their home.’⁹⁰ His father Alfons had been active on the gallery scene and a patron of the arts in New Zealand, and Paul explains:

I think he probably did feel part of sort of fostering the growth of, of visual arts in post-war New Zealand... I suspect that’s why they wanted it to stay in New Zealand; they could see no reason why it should go back to Germany, where there are, there will be many more of these kinds of works.⁹¹

His perception of their stance suggests his parents’ sense of themselves as New Zealanders played an important part in their decision, and continues to bear influence on the second generation’s actions.⁹²

Complete opposition to the notion of returning family objects to Germany is often an emotive reaction; the second generation’s validation is an emotional proclamation, a testimony characterised by a collective memory of trauma. Ken Gorbey describes the decision to send family materials back to Germany as ‘a big emotional leap’ that not all families can make.⁹³ While some are able to accommodate going back to Germany, for

⁸⁹ The German collection of over 150 graphic artworks (lithographs, etchings, woodcuts) was originally started by Marie’s father (Paul’s grandfather) Eugen Vandewart, added to by his son-in-law Alfons Blaschke, and is now in the care of a family trust. The collection is of the period of German Expressionism, beginning just before the turn of the century and extending into the first twenty-five years of the 20th century, including artworks by Lieberman, Leifolt, Corinth, and Käthe Kollwitz. The collection however, was brought out to New Zealand after the war in 1954, having been placed in the care of a family in America. During Marie and Alfons’ lifetime, the selected works were only shown privately to family and friends, but in 2014 a selection had their first public showing at the Auckland Art Gallery, in a World War One centenary exhibition called *Age of Turmoil*, displaying German art produced in the first quarter of the 20th century, as social commentary on post-WWI and interwar German society. The trust has plans to make the collection available online. Blaschke, “Interview with P. Blaschke.” Track file 3 of 3: TASCAM_0079.wav.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Second generation member Sally Rawnsley also notes the importance of identity and the first generation’s sense of belonging to New Zealand associated with having the objects remain in New Zealand (even if, as in her family’s case, the objects remain in their private collection): ‘in a way, their lives, they became New Zealanders. And the stuff has, in my view, as much, belongs as much here now because it’s part of who we are as New Zealanders of German-Jewish extraction...’ Sally Rawnsley, interview by Louisa Hormann, 30 July, 2015, Wellington, interview 01/10. Track file 2 of 2: TASCAM_0074.wav. Unpublished recording.

⁹³ Gorbey, “Interview with K. Gorbey.” Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0094.wav.

others the memories represented by the perpetrator nation will always be negated: ‘So some people are going to say well it’s never going to go back to Germany – it’s an emotional statement.’⁹⁴ One of the second generation, Sally Rawnsley, said that despite having travelled to her mother and grandparents’ country of birth, and having German friends, she would ‘not feel well disposed’ to return her family objects to Germany:

Because I feel they’re more connected to New Zealand, but...I sort of feel, well, you know, they chased them out! Germany chased them out. After my Grandfather went through hell to fight for them in particular. So, why would we want to?⁹⁵

This position appears to be strongest among families where the first generation completely denied their German heritage upon emigrating. Phillip Green’s family considered New Zealand as their home, ‘certainly Mutti, Erich and Oma completely disavowed Germany. Would have nothing to do with it, would not buy a single German product or have it in the house.’⁹⁶ Phillip’s perspective of the JMB collection strategy is resolute: ‘frankly I see that as being raped and plundered all over again.’⁹⁷ When asked if his perspective, shared also by his sister, is influenced by the way in which he and his sister understood their mother and family’s own experience of the Holocaust, and held in honour of their explicit rejection of their German identity, Phillip replied:

It’s deeper than that. It’s because although we weren’t told the detail of what happened, (although I did learn directly from Oma some things in her later life), what we lived and breathed...without recognising it at first, was the impact the Holocaust had on those people, on my grandmother, on her children, and the damage that it did to them. And also a recognition of how they treasured and cherished the memories that wrapped around the objects they’d brought out. [Pause] And so, to me it’s an affront to those memories and those people that these items should go back to Germany.⁹⁸

But aside from his personal connection, Phillip Green emphasises that the particular historical circumstances surrounding the parting of a cultural artefact from its native origins to be brought to foreign lands, need to be taken into account when

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Rawnsley, “Interview with S. Rawnsley.” Track file 2 of 2: TASCAM_0074.wav.

⁹⁶ Green, “Interview with P. Green.” Track file 3 of 3: TASCAM_0092.wav.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

considering their rightful home.⁹⁹ According to Phillip, there is a great difference between objects which have been stolen by another (such as the theft of indigenous artefacts during the colonial period by Western museums and individuals), and when the owners of the objects themselves take their possessions to another country (as in the German-Jewish refugee case). The colonial example and the Nazi plundering of Jewish properties, Phillip argues are ‘in sharp contrast with the situation where Jews, being forced out of their own country, took things, which usually held important sentimental value to them...’¹⁰⁰ Such considerations are essential to determining ‘the appropriateness or otherwise of there being any right of return, including even a right to ask for the return of objects.’¹⁰¹ The case of Jewish refugees fleeing Europe and bringing their personal possessions with them to new lands in exile is thus distinctive from other examples of repatriated cultural artefacts. It is nonetheless crucial however, to recognise the undeniable ‘double identity’ (that of their place of origin and of their adopted land) these objects acquired over the course of their dramatic journeys to New Zealand, and in some cases, their return to Germany.¹⁰²

The Stahl Family Papers and the Jewish Museum Berlin

The return of the Stahl family archives to the JMB in late 2014 exemplifies the practical and legal issues surrounding the export of cultural artefacts from New Zealand. However, as a point of difference from most exchanges, the donor was museum consultant Ken Gorbey, whose wife’s aunt Eleanor Stahl had inherited the family refugee papers when her husband died in 1987. When Eleanor moved into elderly care accommodation, Gorbey’s wife Susan Foster inherited the materials. A New Zealand war nurse in WWII, Eleanor Foster married German Jewish refugee Rudolph ‘Rudi’

⁹⁹ Cultural artefacts, or even an everyday object, which through its provenance and historical context can *become* a cultural artefact, as was the case with the majority of the objects considered in this thesis – see chapter two.

¹⁰⁰ Having represented Māori interests for many decades during his career as a lawyer, Phillip notes his familiarity with how some Māori feel about the plundering and repatriation of their cultural property: ‘So I understand very much how hurtful that type of taking can be, and the strong desire to repatriate.’ Green is also on the United Nations panel for conciliation and mediation over the repatriation of cultural objects taken by countries and held away from their native lands. Green, “Interview with P. Green.” Track file 3 of 3: TASCAM_0092.wav.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Bénédicte Savoy, “Plunder, Restitution, Emotion and the Weight of Archives: A Historical Approach,” in *Echoes of Exile: Moscow Archives and the Arts in Paris 1933-1945*, ed. Ines Rotermond-Reynard, Contact Zones (Berlin, Munich, Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), p.43.

Stahl in 1961. Rudi had been sent ahead of his family in 1939 and established himself in New Zealand. The rest of the family escaped Europe in 1940 by travelling through Russia, and were in the last 8,000 Jews to leave Germany. Gorbey describes the archive as disjointed, the content beginning when in 1938 the family realised they needed to flee: 'Rudi was a young man, doing things like taking photographs of the apartment, taking photographs of father's trade certificates...and bringing them out with him.'¹⁰³ Upon receiving the collection, Gorbey began cataloguing the Stahl papers.

Through his work at the HCNZ, Gorbey was aware that some German-Jewish families were already shipping materials back to Berlin through Aubrey Pomerance.

They were just shipping stuff back, taking it back personally in some cases; many of them knew Aubrey, and knew him very well. And Aubrey was accepting this because this was the normal thing to do; our Antiquities Act is quite different from those that apply in Israel and the States and Canada, which puts [sic] personal papers to one side. Personal papers are different from other archives [in those countries].¹⁰⁴

In contrast, the New Zealand Protected Objects Act 1975 (formerly known as the Antiquities Act) encompasses all personal papers, under the 'Documentary heritage objects' category.¹⁰⁵ An object is included in this category if it is not represented by at least two comparable examples permanently held in New Zealand public collections, and is over fifty years old, or is a unique document (or collection of documents) over fifty years old, or is a protected public record.¹⁰⁶ So while in most other countries personal papers are not covered by any legislation, in New Zealand, personal papers, of the kind sought by the JMB are in fact covered by the 1975 Act. Gorbey insisted on going through the full permissions process with the Ministry for Culture and Heritage

¹⁰³ Gorbey, "Interview with K. Gorbey." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0094.wav.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ The Act regulates the export from New Zealand of 'protected New Zealand objects', and is administered by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. Schedule 4 was added by section 32 of the New Zealand Protected Objects Amendment Act 2006. An object is included in this category if it is not represented by at least two comparable examples permanently held in New Zealand public collections, and is over fifty years old, or is a unique document (or collection of documents) over fifty years old, or is a protected public record. The category also does not include any document owned by its living creator who was born in or is related to New Zealand. The first two clauses also apply to the Social history objects, and Art objects categories within Schedule 4. *Protected Objects Act 1975*, Schedule 4 Categories of protected New Zealand objects, Public Act 1975 No 41.

¹⁰⁶ Similar clauses also apply to the Social history objects, and Art objects categories within Schedule 4. Interestingly, the Documentary heritage objects category excludes any document owned by its living creator who was born in or is related to New Zealand.

due to his professional position in the sector.¹⁰⁷ His application for permission to export the archive was made so to assure the JMB's chief archivist that all processes had been completed and all official agreements were in place before his arrival in New Zealand in December 2014, and with the express intention to use the Stahl application as a template for other families' applications.¹⁰⁸

Gorbey believes that 'the only place for these heavily German-oriented archives was an active German-speaking archive' – namely the Leo Baeck Institute Archive at the JMB.¹⁰⁹ Pomerance himself used this same rationale at his public presentation to the Wellington Jewish community during his visit to New Zealand.¹¹⁰ In Germany, the language can be understood, interpreted, and used; furthermore the Berlin archive also has the resources to digitise its collections. For countries of refuge, such as New Zealand, the language barrier to the archival use of documentary artefacts poses a problem, as these countries often do not have the necessary expertise to work with such artefacts; this was a concern also shared by most in the second-generation group.

Reflecting on the Stahl papers, Gorbey notes that an artefact's institutional fate is 'a tension that...we are destined to discuss time and time and time again over each individual object or archive.'¹¹¹ At a personal level, he always regards museums as 'a repository of last resort'; the ideal circumstance is that families should hold onto their objects, 'because it's got more life within a family. It resonates more with people, it causes the next generation perhaps to get interested.'¹¹² Gorbey's concern about institutional archives arises from the potential disconnect which occurs when objects start to move out of families and into the public archive, regardless of where that public collection might be.

The crucial step for both private and public parties is to ensure that the stories attached to the object or collection, including an object's own migration story, are recorded as part of the provenance of the artefact.¹¹³ As Gorbey explains, 'each time that object has made a shift...its meaning is thickened up a bit. And the Stahl archives go back to Berlin, but what's not lost is the story,' because Eleanor Stahl had recorded the

¹⁰⁷ Gorbey, "Interview with K. Gorbey." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0094.wav.

¹⁰⁸ Gorbey, Letter accompanying Application for Export of Eleanor Stahl Family Archives, 3 July 2014. Private collection.

¹⁰⁹ Gorbey, "Interview with K. Gorbey." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0094.wav.

¹¹⁰ Aubrey Pomerance, "Teaching the Holocaust at the Jewish Museum Berlin," (Myers Hall, Wellington Jewish Community Centre, Wellington, 14 December 2014).

¹¹¹ Gorbey, "Interview with K. Gorbey." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0094.wav.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid., and Sullivan, "Interview with J. Sullivan." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0099.wav.

written history of her husband's family's exile.¹¹⁴ Without the provenance of refugee artefacts, as Gibson has also argued, the full meaning and true historical significance of such objects is lost.¹¹⁵ The relationship between the object and its narrative is thus essential to conveying a comprehensive representation of refugee objects in public collections, especially if they have been returned to their country of origin.

The lack of dedicated, permanent collection spaces capable of accepting privately held refugee materials, limits the options available to the second generation regarding the future preservation of their families' collections. The proposition of the JMB to collect the artefacts of German-Jewish refugee families in New Zealand has met a variety of responses: a wide range of viewpoints, emotions, and an all-encompassing uncertainty among the second generation. These shared but often conflicting perspectives are related to questions of identity (Jewish, German, New Zealand) for German-Jewish refugee families, but also the legacy of conflict – of trauma and tentative reconciliation. The connection between individual and collective memories (across time and between cultures) in relation to objects in the public archive, and especially the 'repatriation' of objects to Germany, is an intimate one. Second generation testimony of this kind reveals their constant acknowledgement of the collective memory at stake when deciding the fate of such artefacts, which is all the more at risk when *both* refugee memory and the refugee archive itself represent a shared heritage.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Gibson, "Interview with S. Gibson." Track file 1 of 1: TASCAM_0088.wav.

Conclusion

This thesis has explored the material objects brought to New Zealand by German-Jewish refugees in the 1930s, and examined the decisions of refugee families to bequeath exilic objects, as artefacts, to descendants, local repositories, and to international memory institutions. It queried the extent to which refugee objects embody the memory of the prewar European past, and, for the second generation, how the objects' meanings have changed over time and in different custodial contexts. The chapters charted the shifting significances of the objects throughout the object migration journey: from country of origin, the passage to refuge, the private archive of the family and domestic environment, the public archive of museum and archival heritage institutions, and, in the case of the Stahl papers (and others), the final *return* journey to the country of origin.

Chapter one: 'Displaced Objects in an Archive of Exile' introduced the overarching concept of the 'archive of exile' and the current state of the Holocaust displaced objects in the historiography. It defined the German-Jewish refugee archive in New Zealand against the dominant area of focus on Judaica and fine art artefacts displaced during and after WWII due to Nazi confiscation and theft, and the subsequent restitution debates concerning their return to the original owners. The New Zealand case study was further contextualised within the specific historical factors influencing what possessions were actually brought to New Zealand prior to 1941. The chapter concluded that while the documentary objects (family papers and official documents) brought into exile by refugees in the prewar period has drawn scholarly attention, the everyday, domestic objects brought by refugees to their new homes in refuge have largely been ignored, and to the detriment of historical study of Holocaust exile in this period.

Chapter two: 'Refugee Artefacts in the Private Archive' considered the capacity for transgenerational transmission of family memory and cultural identity through material objects, amidst a post-memorial context of the first-generation survivor silence in which second-generation descendants were raised. It specifically examined how objects were used in the first-generation home, inherited by the second generation, and subsequently used by descendants. Focusing on three families who emigrated in 1939 (Fuchs, Vandewart, and Simon), the chapter demonstrated how such objects acquired various new significances as they were passed from one custodial context to the next – as heirlooms representing an exotic European world, as an unexpected inheritance too

upsetting to acknowledge, or as cultural artefacts to be entrusted to public collections. In all three scenarios, the reading, using, receiving, and bequeathing of refugee objects is a mnemonic practice of memorial transfer, dependent on the active engagement of the generations involved, and the narratives attached to the objects.

Chapter three: 'Refugee Artefacts in the Public Archive' placed the German-Jewish refugee objects in the context of the public archive, conceived of as a transnational landscape of collecting institutions and memorial centres. Exploring how refugee objects are represented (or not) in the public archive, it discussed the absence of Jewish artefacts in German Jewish museums as both a direct consequence of the Holocaust, and as rationale for seeking object donations from refugee families living abroad. The limited capacity of New Zealand's national heritage collecting institutions and the lack of a local Jewish repository, or dedicated, permanent collection space for collecting such artefacts has hindered the second generation from entrusting family objects to local institutions, even though it is the common desire of those interviewed. As some families look abroad for options, New Zealand could indeed lose these artefacts. But the second-generation community is conflicted by the notion of 'repatriating' refugee materials to German heritage institutions.

Some families have already sent objects back to Germany to be housed at the JMB, believing that their family papers especially can be better utilised for research in the German institutional context, and as part of Germany's Nazi-era history. However, others feel that as unique heritage objects in the New Zealand context, the objects are in fact more relevant to New Zealand's history, and can remain accessible to succeeding generations, but also reach a more general audience in the New Zealand public. Families wishing to bequeath their family objects to a Jewish repository must look to international alternatives. The most opposed to object return to Germany, were those second generation members raised in families who upon arrival in New Zealand rejected their German identity. The second generation's engagement with the objects and stories of their families' pasts, and the piecing together of the familial narrative has revealed to them the true impact and damage caused by the Holocaust experience. The transnational, shared heritage of these refugee objects, tempered by the legacy of conflict Germany represents as the perpetrator nation, heightens the public-private tension inherent in any proposed donation of private artefacts to a public repository. Yet regardless of the final institutional emplacement of such artefacts, the importance of provenance – including

the object's migrations – is shown to be essential to maintaining the authentic historical significance of the refugee object, wherever it resides.

This research sought to extend Nina Fischer's very recently published work examining second-generation memory work – including object inheritance – through the memoirs and other writing of the second generation. It does so by utilising first *and* second-generation testimony, and refugee objects themselves as historical sources for analysing how first-generation memory can be contained and transmitted by the material objects inherited by the second generation. Furthermore, this thesis examines the role of collective memory in the decision-making process of second-generation families to bequeath objects to descendants, local, or international memory institutions. In this way, I was able to consider how the objects' meanings change for refugees and their descendants, over time and in different custodial contexts, spanning both private *and* public spheres of artefact collection. Considering the movement of refugee objects out of private families and into public heritage institutions takes the analysis of second-generation memory and object inheritance beyond the private sphere, and in dialogue with both families and public collecting institutions. And by further developing the work of historian Ann Beaglehole and more recently, Freya Klier, this thesis also localises the international trend in postmemory and testimonial object studies of the Holocaust, drawing attention to the local nuances of transnational historical experience.

I have argued that New Zealand's German-Jewish refugee objects bear multiple identities and meanings as a result of their dispersed, transnational history. As the refugee objects moved out of different cultural and custodial contexts, they acquired new significances in relation to their condition of inheritance, use in the custodial environment, and role in shaping cultural identity and collective memory – both in the second-generation family, and in the public archive. This double identity and shared heritage has resulted in a diffusion of ownership, and further, perhaps inevitable, fragmentation of the German-Jewish archive. When institutional custody and the question of an objects' rightful place in the transnational public archive is introduced, these humble, domestic objects are shown to be just as controversial as the highly-valued, confiscated Jewish artefacts which dominate the current discourse on Holocaust archives of exile.

It can be argued that the findings of this thesis are indicative of the general experience of the second generation – whether they be born to refugee survivors or survivors of ghettos and the Nazi camps. There are certainly similarities forming a

shared experience among second generation survivors, most notably growing up in the silence of the first generation, and the subsequent desire to reconstruct their histories, and to carry their memory through to succeeding generations, and beyond to a general public audience. What is significant in the case of refugee survivors and their descendants is their transnational identity, and deep-rootedness in lands so distant from Germany. In the case of those German-Jewish refugees who fled to places like the Americas, Australia, and New Zealand, the distance was so great as to preclude them from returning for good, and the majority resettled in their countries of refuge. The objects then, despite the first generational silences surrounding them, have affective value added to them over time by the meanings families placed on them.

In approaching such an undocumented research topic and fragmented sources, it was therefore necessary to customise the methodology to suit the case study. I created a visual archive of objects which does not exist physically, but was used to illustrate, assess, and to understand the objects and their journeys in the context of an otherwise undocumented object history. The ‘digital archive’ form is an increasingly popular and effective way of public institutions (see the digitised object collections of Yad Vashem, to an extent, the JOM), and private families (see the Richard Fuchs Archive) curating and displaying their collections. But while this thesis examines German-Jewish refugee artefacts in the New Zealand context, future directions for research in this area could examine how such returned objects are used in the ‘public archive’, *after* having been ‘returned’ to their country of origin. An analysis of the acquisition, collection practices, and display of refugee artefacts in German memory institutions – such as the JMB – would prove a fruitful point of comparison, and significantly add to the emerging discourse on the transnational nature of the Holocaust archive of exile.

Appendix 1



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MEMORANDUM

TO	Louisa Hormann
COPY TO	Simone Gigliotti
FROM	Dr Stephen Marshall, Acting Convener, Human Ethics Committee
DATE	8 July 2015
PAGES	1
SUBJECT	Ethics Approval: 21955 Displaced People, Displaced Objects of the Holocaust: The 1930s Migration of German-Jewish Refugees to New Zealand and the Repatriation of Cultural Property as Artefacts

Thank you for your application for ethical approval, which has now been considered by the Standing Committee of the Human Ethics Committee.

Your application has been approved from the above date and this approval continues until 31 March 2016. If your data collection is not completed by this date you should apply to the Human Ethics Committee for an extension to this approval.

Best wishes with the research.

Stephen Marshall
Acting Convener, Victoria University Human Ethics Committee

Appendix 2

Interview questions for former refugees and their descendants:

These broad questions will be asked of former refugees themselves, and of their descendants, respectively. Areas of interest include:

- Biographical information
- The relationships between refugees and second generation with this material culture
 - What items refugees brought with them to New Zealand and why
 - Which objects remain in family homes
 - Views on donating these artefacts to repositories – local and international

Biographical information:

1. Where did you grow up and what was it like growing up there?
2. How did the rise of Nazism in Germany affect you and your family?
3. What was the turning point for your family – what made you decide to leave Germany?
4. What was it like for you/your family upon first arriving in New Zealand?

What items refugees brought to New Zealand and why:

1. What things did you bring with you to New Zealand? Why did you choose these particular things?
2. Were there any things you wanted to take with you when you left Germany, but could not? What prevented you from taking them with you?
3. How did you/your family acquire the object (in question)?
4. What purpose did this object serve? Who used it? How was it used? When was it used – is it still being used now?

Objects remaining in family homes:

1. What objects have your family decided to hold on to?
2. Why did you choose to keep this object in the family home?
3. What is the significance of this object for you/and your family?
4. What does this object mean to you?
5. Is there a long-term plan for this object? Do you think it will keep being passed down the generations or will it be entrusted to the custodianship of a repository?

Views on entrusting these artefacts to archival and memorial repositories – local and international:

1. Would you donate this object to a museum or archive? What arrangements have you made for the future safe custody of your objects? Is your wider family very much involved or interested in the preservation of your objects?
2. What are your views on such objects being entrusted to European museums, such as to the Jewish Museum Berlin (JMB) in Germany or to local museums and/or archives in New Zealand? Does the geographical location of the repository itself influence your decision-making? Does the “Jewish” identity of a museum influence your decision-making?

Interview questions for cultural heritage professionals:

These broad questions will be asked of industry professionals working in the cultural heritage and public history sector. Please note: Some interviewees will be better placed to answer questions specifically centred on Germany, than others. Areas of interest include:

- Biographical information
- Refugee archives
 - Representational issues
 - Practicalities
 - Centrality to the national archive/national history
- The “repatriation” of refugee artefacts from refuge countries (like New Zealand) to Europe (especially Germany)
 - Arguments for and against
 - Legal issues and considerations
 - Representational issues
 - Educational arguments

Biographical information:

5. What is your role?
6. Where did you train?
7. Where have you worked during your career and at what institutions?

Refugee archives:

1. How are refugee archives represented in practice? How can they be utilised in the museum context?
2. What are the practicalities of collecting and preserving refugee archives?
3. How central to the national archive/national history are refugee archives?

“Repatriating” refugee artefacts from refuge countries to Europe (especially Germany):

5. From an industry perspective, what are the arguments *for* returning refugee artefacts to the country of origin?
6. Likewise, what are the arguments *against* returning refugee artefacts to the country of origin?
7. In practice, what legal issues are associated with donating such objects to international institutions?
8. What representational issues are associated with the display of such objects in international institutions?
9. In your experience, have refugee archives been used for specific educational purposes (i.e. used in school visits)?

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