

**RAZDOWITZ AND LEHR FAMILIES PAPERS, circa 1900-2001
2023.31.1**

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: Razdowitz and Lehr families papers

Dates: circa 1900-2001 (bulk 1934-1949)

Accession number: 2023.31.1

Creator: Razdowitz family.

Additional Creator: Lehr family.

Extent: 1 box, 2 oversize folders (.40 linear feet)

Repository: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW, Washington, DC 20024-2126

Abstract: The Razdowitz and Lehr families papers document the prewar, wartime, and postwar lives of the extended Razdowitz and Lehr families, including their survival of the Holocaust in France and Switzerland, and immigration to the United States in 1946. The collection primarily consists of biographical materials and photographs.

Languages: German, English, French, Yiddish

Administrative Information

Access: There are no known restrictions on access to this material.

Physical access: Diary translation is digital only.

Reproduction and use: The Museum has made reasonable efforts but is not able to determine the copyright status of some or all of the material(s) in this collection, or identify and/or locate the potential copyright owner(s). The Museum therefore places no restrictions on use of this material, but it cannot provide any information to the user about the status of the copyright(s). The user is solely responsible for making a determination as to if and how the material may be used.

Preferred citation: (Identification of item), Razdowitz and Lehr families papers (2023.31.1), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: The collection was donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum by Eva Kessner, Hannah Simon and Allen Razdow in 2023.

Related archival materials: 2023.31.2 Drawing, 2023.31.3 Broadside; My war memoirs / by Meta Lehr-Rabinowicz ; translated from the French by Marie-Josée de Saint Robert (online resource, USHMM library)

Accruals: Accruals may have been received since this collection was first processed, see archives catalog at collections.ushmm.org for further information.

Processing history: Adam Fielding, June 2023; updated July 2023; Updated December 2023

Biographical note

Adolf Razdowitz (later Adolph Razdow, sometimes referred to as Adel, 1907-1985) was born on June 16, 1907 in Vienna, Austria to Arnold Razdowitz (1875?-1910) and Antonia Razdowitz (née Sonnenschein, b. 1875). He had one brother, Walter Razdowitz (b. 1908, later Walter Randon). He received a master's degree in electrical engineering and a Ph.D in physics, and moved from Vienna to Paris in 1933 for employment. He met Gisa Lehr in Paris and they married in September 1934.

Gisa Lehr (later Gisa Razdow, 1909-2007) was born Gisela Lehr on April 29, 1909 in Sadagura (Romania), Austria-Hungary to Solomon Lehr (1881-1967) and Esther Lehr (née Buck, 1889-1984). She had two brothers, Hans Lehr (1908-2003) and David Lehr (1910-2011), and one sister, Meta Lehr (later Meta Rabinowicz, 1913-2002?). Gisa received her Ph.D. in physics in 1934.

Adolf and Gisa had three children, Hannah Razdowitz (later Hannah Simon, b. 1936), Eva Razdowitz (later Eva Kessner, b. 1939), and Allen Razdow (b. 1946). The family lived in Paris, and were joined by several relatives prior to Kristallnacht (November 1938), including Gisa's parents, her sister Meta and brother Hans, and Adolf's mother Antonia. Gisa's brother David immigrated to the United States in October 1939.

During the summer of 1939, the extended family vacationed in Brittany, and decided to remain there rather than return to Paris out of fear that war would soon break out, and Paris would be a target. After the war began in September 1939, Adolf, Solomon, and Hans were arrested and sent to a detention center. The family was forced to relocate to Châteaubriant. Solomon was released from the detention center, but Adolf and Hans had further detentions in Langlade labor camp and Camp Viscose respectively.

Beginning on June 17, 1940, Solomon, his daughter Meta, and her boyfriend Maurice Rabinowicz (nicknamed Mischa) fled the German invasion of France by car from Châteaubriant to Toulouse via Nantes, Libourne, Langon, Villeneuve, and Biarritz. They arrived in Toulouse on June 25 and drove to Marseille on July 23. Between June and October 1940 the family had all reunited in Marseille. By December 1942 the extended family had fled France for Switzerland. They were interned in a refugee camp in Saint Cergue from spring 1943-spring 1944. After they were released from the camp they moved to Geneva in early 1944.

In June 1946 the majority of the extended Razdowitz family immigrated to the United States, settling first in New York, and later in Montclair, New Jersey. Gisa's sister Meta, now married to Maurice Rabinowicz, remained in Europe after the war in Sèvres, France. Adolf's mother Antonia lived in Paris after the war with his brother Walter's family.

Scope and content of collection

The Razdowitz and Lehr families papers document the prewar, wartime, and postwar lives of the extended Razdowitz and Lehr families, including their survival of the Holocaust in France and Switzerland, and immigration to the United States in 1946. The collection primarily consists of biographical materials and photographs.

Biographical materials include birth and marriage certificates, identification papers, report cards, immigration records, children's drawings, a small amount of correspondence, and a diary. The diary was written in Judisch-Deutsch (German written in the Yiddish alphabet) and belonged to Solomon Lehr. It covers June-September 1940 and describes family movement between several French cities shortly before and after France signed the armistice with Germany in June 1940. There is an accompanying English translation of the diary prepared by Roberta Newman.

Photographs primarily document the extended Razdowitz and Lehr families, which also includes the Rabinowicz family. Prewar photographs include depictions of the family in Vienna and Paris. Wartime photographs depict the family in Marseille, France, and Saint Cergue and Geneva, Switzerland. Postwar photographs document the family in Geneva and in the United States. The majority of the photographs are portraits or candids of daily life, and many contain annotations on the verso.

System of arrangement

The collection is arranged as two series.

Series 1. Biographical material, 1912-2001

Series 2. Photographs, circa 1900-1949

Indexing terms

Topical Subject:

Jews--Austria--Vienna.

Holocaust survivors.

Refugees, Jewish--Switzerland--Geneva.

Geography:

Vienna (Austria)

Paris (France)

Genre/Form:

Photographs.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1. Biographical material, 1912-2001

Box/Folder	Title
1.1	Lehr, Solomon: Diary with enclosures, 1938-1940
	Lehr, Solomon: Diary, English translation
1.2, OS 2	Rabinowicz, Maurice, 1922-1966
1.3, OS 1	Rabinowicz, Meta: Education, 1919-1939
1.4	Rabinowicz, Meta: Identification, 1935-2001
1.5	Razdowitz, Adolf: Education, 1919-1932
1.6	Razdowitz, Adolf: Identification and immigration, 1912-1952
1.7	Razdowitz, Eva, 1943-1977
1.8	Razdowitz, Gisa, 1918-1946
1.9	Razdowitz, Hannah, circa 1941-1948
1.10	Correspondence, 1945-1946
1.11	Miscellaneous, circa 1941, undated

Series 2. Photographs, circa 1900-1949

Box/Folder	Title
1.12	Lehr family, circa 1900-circa 1935
1.13	Rabinowicz family, 1939-1947
1.14	Razdowitz family, 1910-1936
1.15-1.16	France, 1934-1942
1.17	Switzerland, circa 1942-1936
1.18	United States, 1946-1949