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Deliverable
D5.1

Programme summer course and training material on EHRI website

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SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

Document Information

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Abstract (for dissemination)	Programme summer course and training material on EHRI website: Based on the results of the survey undertaken as to both training needs and existing training programmes, the programme of the summer course is determined, developed and prepared as well as the training material to be published on the website. Also the selection procedure will be in place and the selection of trainees for the first two summer courses will be finished.
Management Summary (required if the deliverable exceeds more than 25 pages)	Not applicable

Programme summer course and training material on EHRI website

The goal of EHRI's WP5 training efforts is to encourage scholars of diverse backgrounds to engage in Holocaust research – historians, archivists sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists and others interested in the Holocaust. In order to achieve this, they will be provided with an up-to-date overview on methods, sources and research on Holocaust history research, including an introduction into how to use metadata, integrated data collections and collaboration opportunities in such research on the EHRI portal. One of the main concerns in this regard is to provide opportunities to Holocaust researchers who are not attached to major research networks, esp. to those from Eastern Europe.

Training needs for these highly diverse target groups demand a high level of methodological and content-related sophistication. A survey of existing online courses and summer school programmes (see appendix 1) has revealed that, while there are some summer school programmes (e.g. at Yad Vashem or the USHMM) aiming at providing such knowledge to such target groups, no course aimed at the graduate level and with the envisaged scope exists as an online course, particularly when it comes to the new opportunities offered by e-science.

Following the survey of existing Holocaust-related online courses, the YV online courses were identified as the closest adaptable model – however, the EHRI Training Course will have to work without feedback as there is no EHRI staff available to assess work by students. Also, the target audience is different, requiring a different approach.

Since it is not possible to cover all the manifold topics encompassed by modern historical Holocaust research in and taking the results of the survey into account, the WP decided to develop a course that teaches general issues by using selected representative examples: The WP agreed to develop five overarching topics of general importance to Holocaust research for the online course, which simultaneously will serve as the core of the curriculum for the summer schools, which will still have enough time available to cater for special local emphasis and excursions. Each of these topics is used to focus on a critical appraisal of sources, within the context of the current state and methods of Holocaust research. Since EHRI is very much focussing on sources, collections and archives and because of the particular needs of the target audience to make considerate use of sources, it was decided to focus on this issue.

The present deliverable contains the texts of two units: “History of the Ghettos under Nazi Rule” (developed by IfZ) and “The Nazi Camps and the Persecution and Murder of the Jews” (developed by YV), published on the EHRI website (http://www.ehri-project.eu/online-course-holocaust-studies). These will be joined in the coming months by a third unit: “The Holocaust in Ukraine” (NIOD). Further material from lecturers of the summer courses will be added to the online presentation after the summer schools, which will also serve the purpose of testing and adapting the online course material. Especially, two units being prepared by the WP will be published after test-runs of part of the material during the first two summer schools: A unit on “The Germans and the Holocaust” (IfZ) and “Persecution and Deportation in Western Europe” (MS).

Each unit will include a general introduction as well as a discussion of the historiography of the subject at hand and an appraisal of the pertinent source types (each of no more than 15 pages). Subsequently, approx. five chapters will offer perspectives on chosen central issues of the topic. Each of these chapters will consist of an introduction to the specific issue as well as approx. ten sources (including texts, photographs, sound and video sources). Sources will be presented first in facsimile wherever possible, followed by a transcription in the original language where legibility is an issue. This is to ensure that students appreciate the linguistic dimensions of Holocaust research as well as the often challenging layout and appearance of original documents. In the coming months, translations of the text documents will be added. The WP will take care that the translations are carefully considered, so that these translations may be of use to students and researchers in as definitive a way as possible.

As planned in the DoW, there will be four EHRI Summer Schools, two in 2013 (in Paris and Munich) and two in 2014 (in Jerusalem and Amsterdam). The trainees/ participants of the first two summer schools were selected after a widely disseminated call for applications. Careful attention was paid to putting together a good mix of participants from different regions and fields of research in order to facilitate networking. The participants in the two EHRI Summer Schools in 2014 will be selected after a call for applications in 2013.

Appendix 1: Survey of existing online courses and summer school programmes in Holocaust studies

Appendix 2: Detailed summer school programmes for the Paris and Munich summer schools

Appendix 3: Participants of the Paris and Munich summer schools

Appendix 4: Text of online course units

Appendix 5: Training manual

Appendix 1: Survey of existing online courses and summer school programmes in Holocaust studies

Survey of existing online Holocaust course material
(note: all links were last checked in February 2012)

I. Yad Vashem

Only the English courses were checked. They are listed at
http://www1.yadvashem.org/yv/en/education/courses/index.asp
For the purpose of this survey, one course was used as an example, with findings checked in other related (historiographical) courses.
Prewar Jewish Life: "At the Edge of the Abyss: The Holocaust of European Jewry"

> Summary description on YV site:
> "It is necessary to learn about what was lost in the Holocaust in order to fully understand its implications. This course examines the vibrant mosaic of Jewish life throughout Europe leading up to the Second World War. Covering representative communities from eastern and western Europe, we focus on central trends within early 20th century Jewry – internal politics, representation vis-a-vis the local authorities, dilemmas of assimilation, the rise of modern antisemitism, Zionism, and more."
> Modality: "As with all our Online Courses, assignments may be submitted at your own pace. Participation is open for a period of 6 months from the moment of approval onto the course system. We recommend reading the material and submitting the assignments at a rate of one lesson or more every two weeks."

Course structure: Contents: Ten lessons, mostly focussing on Jewish life in one to two cities in a region of pre-War Europe (Paris, Berlin, Vilna and Odessa, ...). Each lesson (approx. 10 pages) is supplemented by reading (on average 10 pages, provided on site, mostly of published papers, chapters, and interviews) and further reading suggestions (about 10 pages on average, sometimes longer, only citations provided).

Regions covered: 1) Paris (incl. Dreyfus), 2) Berlin (1812-1930), 3) Salonika and Corfu (Romaniotes, Ashkenazi, Sephardi) as an example of the Balkans, 4) Polish politics between the Wars (also: Jewish History in Poland since the 16th century up to WWII), 5) Vilna and Odessa (two texts each, reaching back to Early Modern Era), 6) Budapest and Munkacs (Bourgeoisie and pre-1918 are topics in texts),
Topics: 7) Modern Antisemitism 1870-1933, 8) Jewish Immigration (countries touched upon include Spain, Russia and the Ukraine, Great Britain, Argentina, and the United States), 9) Socialism and Jews in Russia (special attention to Trotsky and Dubnow, one text from an online source), 10) Zionism (focussing on individuals such as Theodor Herzl, Leon Pinsker, Dov Ber Borochov, and Ahad Ha'am and examining their differing opinions)

After log-in (access provided by Yad Vashem), the course mentor is listed (who also assesses assignments). Assignments to be written in Word or plain text, no more than 20 lines per question (1/2 page), the file is then uploaded, and evaluation and comments are to follow within 10 days.

There is also a forum for course participants and there are links to YV resource centre.

Lesson 1: The prehistory is seen as essential for YV. The lesson consists of text, with quotes, biographical sketches one paragraph in length in texts, as well as some rare links to related sites such as http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/Ottoman.html / YV research centre / Wikipedia); reading material is digitalised in pdf-documents (transcribed, not as a scan), but there are no further reading suggestions; three more titles are listed under

Selected Bibliography (sometimes these are general reference works); mostly there is narrative text with topics and headlines:

Introduction to the Course
The Jews of Paris – Introduction
The Public Debate 1789-1791: Should Jews be considered equal and free in France?
The Napoleonic Period
Jewish Organizations in Paris
The Tide Changes: 1870-1914
The Dreyfus Affair
Alfred Dreyfus on Trial
Public Opinion, Antisemitism, and the Dreyfus Affair
Parisian Jews in the Interwar Period
(Total: approx. 9 A4 pages)

Related assignment: "In what ways does the Dreyfus Affair shed light on central developments and issues in modern Jewish history?"

General files structure: Lesson text (html), reading (pdf), assignment (doc / pdf)

Lesson 2: The Jews of Berlin – Representing the History of Jews in Germany
Introduction
The Jewish Community of Berlin in the 19th Century – A Look from Within
The Other Side of the Coin: Antisemitism in Germany
1914 – World War I and its Aftermath
Jews in Politics in the Weimar Republic: The Stories of Rosa Luxemburg and Walther Rathenau
A New Political Party Emerges
Conclusion
Leitfrage "What are the characteristics of the history of the Berlin Jews in the modern era?"
Reading: Interviews with three Jewish historians, same questions, highly diverging answers about whether a "German-Jewish symbiosis" ever existed.
Assessment questions Lesson 2: "1) Describe the changes within German Jewry in light of the evolving German political and social climate.
2) Did Walther Rathenau and Rosa Luxemburg see themselves as representatives of Jewish issues in Germany? Did German society see them as such?
3) What can be learned from these stories about the status of Jews in Germany in the period between World War I and World War II?"

Personalisation is used as a pedagogic technique ("chapters" on individuals, pictures: Berlin e.g. Einstein, Max Liebermann self portrait, Luxemburg, Rathenau)

There are very few footnotes, and a few cross references, "see lesson 8" etc.

Lesson 3 (Greece): Quotes from sources and books in lesson text (with citation);

Lesson 4 (Poland): Warsaw and Stanislawow; positions of the non-Zionist, then the Zionist parties
Assignment has a table to be filled in about the positions of the Jewish political parties:
"1) What were the claims of the different parties? What did they represent? What should the future of Polish Jewry have been, from their point of view? Fill in the tables, limiting each

answer to no more than two sentences. Ignore the grayed-out cells."

	Position on Eretz Yisrael	Position on Poland	Position on Socialism	Language
Bund				
Agudat Yisrael				
Mizrachi				
General Zionists				
Poalei Zion Right				
Poalei Zion Left				
Revisionists				

Follow-up question: "2) What are the pros and cons about each solution offered by the different parties regarding the Jews of Poland?"

<u>Lesson 7</u>: Antisemitism; has hyperlink to biograms and glossary entries.

Units also integrate videos from the testimonies and video lectures of historians on the YV website (e.g. course: The "Final Solution of the Jewish Problem", Lesson 3 and 4).

Other language courses were not checked within the context of this overview. Most of these seem to be either variants of the English courses with more emphasis on local matters (e.g. the Hungarian and Russian courses) or cover pedagogical and remembrance matters not central to the prospective EHRI course material.

Cooperation with http://www.mofet.macam.ac.il/english/about/Pages/default.aspx (teacher training is main concern)

II. USHMM

The USHMM has no online courses aimed at the university level. It has extensive material for teachers and pupils.

For teachers, the USHMM offers a lot of supporting material. This includes an "online workshop" (http://www.ushmm.org/education/foreducators/workshop/) designed to help educators learn how to teach the Holocaust, which consists of the video recordings and slides of an actual workshop held in Baltimore, which is linked to the extensive resources on the USHMM website (esp. lesson plans for teachers http://www.ushmm.org/education/foreducators/lesson/). Together, these materials provide educators with an understanding of the problems specific to teaching the Holocaust as well as a solid "how-to" framework of how to teach the central concepts.

III. Summer courses at YV and USHMM

Yad Vashem offers seminars for educators (http://www1.yadvashem.org/yv/en/education/seminars/index.asp) as well as workshops for usually quite established researchers since 2008 (http://www1.yadvashem.org/yv/en/about/institute/workshops.asp).

The USHMM offers a number of yearly one to two week courses for mostly North American faculty (http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/seminars/ and http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/workshops/) on specialised Holocaust subjects (e.g. plans for 2012 include "Exploring the Plight and Path of Jewish Refugees, Survivors, and Displaced Persons" for the two-week workshop).

The following link provides short summaries of the topics of past workshops: http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/workshops/workshop/; short summaries of past seminars: http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/seminars/seminars.php?content=hess
http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/seminars/seminars.php?content=silberman
http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/seminars/seminars.php?content=religion

Consequences for EHRI: For the dissemination of the call to applicants, the application procedures and the selection of applicants, WP5 can rely on the experience of WP4. Work package members will be asked for existing documentation on material support, available information structures and procedures of training, and existing user evaluations of past courses.

IV. Other online courses (selection)

General overviews:
http://openlearn.open.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=2091 LearningSpace ► All Units ► Arts and Humanities ► AA312_1 ► The Holocaust, Time: 12 hours, Level: Advanced [Overview of Holocaust in general]
http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/history/21h-447-nazi-germany-and-the-holocaust-fall-2004/ Nazi Germany and the Holocaust, Fall 2004 [reused 2007], Prof. David Ciarlo, Undergraduate course, License: Creative Commons BY-NC-SA
http://www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/classes/133d/index.html The Holocaust in European History (UCSB Hist 133D) by Professor Harold Marcuse [includes other genocides]
http://faculty.valenciacollege.edu/rgair/ Professor Richard A. Gair, MA Valencia College, Orlando Florida (videos of lectures and excursions), LIT 2174 "Literature & Multimedia of the Holocaust" Assorted Course Handouts:
http://faculty.valenciacollege.edu/rgair/holocaust_sites.htm

Visual testimony collections
http://dornsife.usc.edu/vhi/education/livinghistories/ Seven Multimedia Lessons for the Classroom For Grades 9-12 (each includes extensive class material in pdf-form)

Lecture series with videos online:
https://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=E162D5967A29AA3B and
http://old.oid.ucla.edu/webcasts/courses/2009-2010/2010winter/germ59-1 Holocaust in Film and Literature. UCLA Online Course, Prof. Todd Presner (18 units) [course material not found]
http://tc.usc.edu/vhiechoes/menu.aspx Echoes and Reflections: A Multimedia Curriculum on the Holocaust, Shoah Foundation Institute, University of Southern California (links do not seem to work – only in intranet?)

Online semi-closed courses:
http://www.gratz.edu/default.aspx?p=11414 Graduate Certificate in Holocaust and Genocide Studies (commercial, full degree program)
http://agi.seaford.k12.de.us/sites/LFSdigital/units/ELA%20Unit%20Topics/Research%20Holocaust.aspx LFS-DIGITAL K-U-D for Unit: Research: The Holocaust (one unit, general introduction)
http://www2.facinghistory.org/campus/events.nsf/HTMLProfessionalDevelopment/EE9DDD7948BEE9E8852578D40052BAF4?Opendocument Holocaust and Human Behavior Online (curriculum visible in online description of course book:
http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/hhb); more resource books and units at
http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/collections/holocaust
http://pl.auschwitz.org/m/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1398&Itemid=10
bzw. http://en.auschwitz.org/m/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=852&Itemid=8
Online Education about Auschwitz, two courses: “The History of Auschwitz” and “The Road to Genocide: Indirect Causes of the Holocaust.” (Only open at select times for a small fee, most information in Polish only)
http://mofetinternational.macam.ac.il/jtec/academy/ActivePrograms/TheHolocaust/courses/Pages/default.aspx (aimed at educators, not all courses are listed online in detail), e.g. Teaching the Holocaust through Narrative - Part I (7 units)

Appendix 2: Detailed summer school programmes for the Paris and Munich summer schools
NOTE: Lecturer names, lecture titles and exact dates may still be subject to change

Draft Programme EHRI Summer School
IfZ, Munich, 22 July to 9 August 2013

Main Venues:
Politische Akademie Tutzing (Monday 22 July – Sunday 4 August)
IfZ Munich (Sunday 4 August – Friday 9 August)

Monday, 22 July

- Morning: Arrival in Tutzing, Lunch
- Introductions
- Holocaust Research in German Historiography (Andreas Wirsching)
- The Germans and the Holocaust (Dieter Pohl)

Tuesday, 23 July

- The “Old Elites” and the Bureaucracy (Magnus Brechtken)
- The Wehrmacht and the Holocaust (Johannes Hürter)

Wednesday, 24 July

- The Terror Apparatus: The SS and Police (N.N.)
- The Scientific Elites (Susanne Heim)

Thursday, 25 July

- The November Pogrom 1938 (Alan Steinweis)
- Digital Humanities and Holocaust Research (Eva Pfanzelter)
- How Can EHRI E-Science Aid Holocaust Research? The Example of the Theresienstadt Guide (Michal Frankl)

Friday 26 July

- Time for study: Ghetto sources
- The Ghettos: Contemporary Jewish Sources on the Struggle for Survival (Andrea Löw)

Saturday, 27 July
Free

Sunday, 28 July

- **Excursion: Dachau** Concentration Camp Memorial Site: General tour, Tour of the Archive (Albert Knoll)

Monday, 29 July

- The Holocaust in the Occupied Soviet Union (Dieter Pohl)
- The Holocaust in Ukraine (Karel Berkhoff)

Tuesday, 30 July

- Jews in the Concentration Camps (Jürgen Zarusky)
- Project presentations by the trainees

Wednesday, 31 July

- Persecution in France (Michael Mayer)
- The Example of the Netherlands (Katja Happe)

Thursday, 1 August

- An Introduction to the VEJ Source Edition (Katja Happe & Andrea Löw)
- Project presentations by the trainees

Friday, 2 August

- Post War Trials (Edith Raim)
- Project presentations by the trainees
- Barbeque at Wendy Lower´s house

Saturday, 3 August

- **New quarters in Munich** together with Ludwig Maximilians Universität MISU summer school on the Holocaust

Sunday, 4 August

- **Excursion to Obersalzberg**
- Informal get-together

Monday, 5 August

- The Holocaust in Modern German History: The Sources Behind the Debates (**Panel discussion** with lecturers of the summer schools)
- **The Holocaust in Munich**: Researching and Writing an Urban History (Max Strnad)
- **Welcome Reception** LMU, Main University Building
- **Evening: Historical City Walking Tour in Munich**

Tuesday, 6 August

- **Tour of the IfZ: Library, Archives**
- Free Time for research in the IfZ

Wednesday, 7 August

- **Parallel Tours in small groups** of the City Archive, the Main State Archive, Archive of the Deutsches Museum, Siemensarchive, Industrie- und Handelsarchiv
- Reports by the trainees to each other about the archives

Thursday, 8 August

- An Important Institutions in Germany for Holocaust Research: **The ZStL in Ludwigsburg** (N.N.)
- **Session** on Orpo 101 Photographs

Friday, 9 August

- Sum-up, Feedback
- Departure

Draft Programme EHRI Summer School
Mémorial de la Shoah, Paris
<u>July, 15 – August, 2 2013</u>

Venue: Mémorial de la Shoah, 17, Rue Geoffroy-l'Asnier, 75004 Paris
Accommodation: Maison Heinrich Heine, Cité internationale universitaire, 27 Boulevard Jourdan, 75014 Paris (RER B : Cité Universitaire, Métro : Porte d'Orléans)
Language: English, French

Sunday, 14 July – *Arrival to Paris*, accommodation

Monday, 15 July – Welcome of the participants and general introduction
<u>Morning</u>
Welcome and Introduction to the Shoah Memorial –

Peurs archaïques, biopouvoir et regard zoologique sur l'humanité : les chemins tortueux d'Auschwitz *(Ancient fears, biopower and a zoological view of mankind: the twisted paths of Auschwitz)* **Georges Bensoussan**, historian, Editor in chief of *Revue d'Histoire de la Shoah* Mémorial de la Shoah (lecture 1h + Q&A 30 min)

Guided tour of the Mémorial de la Shoah (the Wall of Names, the permanent exhibition, tour of the library, the phototheque, the archives) **Claude Singer**, Head of the Pedagogical Department, Mémorial de la Shoah

<u>Afternoon</u>: **Confiscation of Jewish Property in Europe, 1933–1945. New Sources and Perspectives**
The Spoliation of Jews a state policy (1940-1944) **Tal Bruttman**, historian**,** City of Grenoble, France,
The neglected persecution. The economic aspects of the fascist anti-Jewish laws 1938–1945
Focus on Fascist Italy **Ilaria Pavan**, historian, Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Italy
(3h including a break and a 30 minute debate)

Guided tour of the exposition ***La spoliation des Juifs: une politique d'Etat (1940-1944)*** by **Tal Bruttmann**

Tuesday, 16 July – General introduction – The Nazi *Weltanschauung*

<u>Morning</u>
Les fondements de l'idéologie nazie *(The Roots of Nazism*), **Georges Bensoussan**, Paris, Mémorial de la Shoah (lecture 1h + Q&A 30 min)
La langue nazie *(Nazi language policy),* **Laura Fontana**, Mémorial de la Shoah, Paris (lecture 1h + Q&A 30 min)
<u>Afternoon</u>
Presentations and discussion of the research projects of the twelve participants
15 min each presentation = 3h + a break

Wednesday, 17 July – New approaches to Nazi ideology
<u>Morning</u>
Le nazisme (I) Une vision de l'histoire, **Johann Chapoutot**, Université de Grenoble (lecture 1h + Q&A 30 min)
Networks of Nazi Persecution: Bureaucrats, Business, and the Organization of the Holocaust, **Wolfgang Seibel**, University of Konstanz

Afternoon
Le nazisme (II) Y-a-t-il une 'culture' nazie ?, **Johann Chapoutot**, Université de Grenoble (lecture 1h + Q&A 30 min)
Roots and specificities of Nazi anti-Semitism: the historiographical debate
(Racines et spécificités de l'antisémitisme nazi: le débat historiographique) **Joël Kotek**, Université libre de Bruxelles (lecture 1h + Q&A 30 min)

Thursday, 18 July – Persecution and deportation in Western Europe – general introduction and comparative approach
Morning:
The Holocaust in Western Europe, **Wolfgang Seibel**, University of Konstanz (1 H lecture + 30 min. Q&A, coffee-break + 1,5 h seminar discussion ~ 3 hours)
Afternoon:
Anti-Jewish Measures in France from the Adoption of Racial Legislation to the Deportation of the Jews 1940 – 1942: **Tal Bruttman**, historian**,** City of Grenoble, France, (1 H lecture + 30 min. Q&A)

The emergence of Jewish Ghettos during the Holocaust – new perspectives"
Dan Michman, *Yad Vashem/Bar-Ilan University, Israel (1 H lecture + 30 min. Q&A)*

Friday, 19 July – Persecution and deportation in Western Europe
Morning:
Persecution and Deportation of the Jews in the Netherlands, France and Belgium – methodology and structure of the comparative research,
Pim Griffioen**/Ron Zeller**, University of Konstanz (1 H lecture + 30 min. Q&A, coffee-break + 1,5 h seminar discussion ~ 3 hours)
Afternoon:
The role of the Jewish Councils in Western Europe, **Dan Michman**, Yad Vashem/Bar-Ilan University, Israel (1 H lecture + 30 min. Q&A, coffee-break + 1,5 h seminar discussion ~ 3 hours)

Saturday, 20 July - Free

Sunday, 21 July – Excursion in the morning
Visit and guided tour of the collection of the **Musée d'art et d'histoire juif** (MAHJ) and the **Marais**, the Jewish quarter of Paris, by **Philippe Boukara**, Mémorial de la Shoah.
-
Afternoon:
Table ronde on Auschwitz

Monday, 22 July – Persecution and deportation in Western Europe: Focus on the sources
Morning:

How to find and interpret documents on the Holocaust in Western Europe - The document collection on "The Persecution and Extermination of the European Jews by Nazi Germany 1933–1945, **Katja Happe**, University Freiburg (1 H lecture + 30 min. Q&A, coffee-break + 1,5 h seminar discussion ~ 3 hours)
Afternoon
La pérsecution et déportation des juifs en Italie 1943-1945 (*The Persecution and the Deportation of the Italian Jews, 1943-1945)*
Lutz Klinkhammer, historian, German Historical Institute, Rome

Persecution and Deportation of the Jews from Luxembourg, **Paul Dostert**, Centre de Documentation et de Recherche sur la Résistance, Luxembourg (lecture 1h + Q&A 30 min)

Tuesday, 23 July – The Drancy internment camp / camps in France
Morning
Visit of the **Drancy internment camp**, Paris, and guided tour in the **new museum**, the **Mémorial de la Shoah Drancy** (lecture 1h + Q&A 30 min)

Afternoon
The French Internment Camps 1938-1946, **Denis Peschanski**, CNRS, Paris (lecture 1h + Q&A 30 min)

Wednesday, 24 July – The Holocaust in Eastern Europe

Morning:
The Shoah in Ukraine, **Karel Berkhoff**, NIOD (1 H lecture + 30 min. Q&A, coffee-break + 1,5 h seminar discussion ~ 3 hours)

Thursday, 25 July – Visit to archives in Paris

Morning:

Visit and guided tour of the *Archives Nationales*, address: *59 Rue Guynemer, 93383 Pierrefitte-sur-Seine*, phone +33 (1) 75 47 20 00.

Afternoon:
-New interpretations of the Holocaust, **Dieter Pohl*,*** Universität Klagenfurt
(3h session?)

Friday, 26 July – Focus on new media and Holocaust research
Morning:
Digital Humanities and Holocaust research: N.N., (1,5h + Q&A 30 min)
How can EHRI E-Science Aid Holocaust Research? The Example of Theresienstadt
Michal Frankl, Jewish Museum Prague (1,5h + Q&A 30 min)

Afternoon:
Visit and guided tour of **La Maison de la culture Yiddish** and the **MEDEM library**, the largest Yiddish language library in Europe

Saturday, 27 July – Free

Sunday, 28 July - Free time for own research in the archives of the Mémorial de la Shoah

Monday, 29 July – Focus on Eastern Europe: Ghettos
Morning:

Life and Death in the Ghettos, **Andrea Löw**, Institut für Zeitgeschichte (1 H lecture + 30 min. Q&A, coffee-break + 1,5 h seminar discussion ~ 3 hours)
Afternoon:

In the Ghetto 1939 – new sources on the environment and the daily life, **Christoph Dieckmann**, Fritz-Bauer-Institute, Frankfurt (1 H lecture + 30 min. Q&A, coffee-break + 1,5 h seminar discussion ~ 3 hours)

Tuesday, 30 July – Focus on Eastern Europe: the Warsaw Ghetto
Morning :

Jewish Resistances and the Jews in the Resistance – Comparing the Sources, **Philippe Boukara**, Mémorial de la Shoah (1 H lecture + 30 min. Q&A, **coffee-break + 1,5 h seminar discussion ~ 3 hours)**

Wednesday, 31 July – Visit to archives in Paris
Morning:

Visit and guided tour of the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Archives des Affaires étrangères*, 3, rue Suzanne Masson, 93126 La Courneuve)
Afternoon:

Free time for own research in the archives of the Mémorial de la Shoah

Thursday, 1 August – Individual work on the research projects
Morning + afternoon:

Free time for own research in the archives of the Mémorial de la Shoah

Friday, 2 August
Morning:

Feedback presentations of the participants, time for networking, closing remarks

Afternoon:
Departure

Appendix 3: Participants of the Paris and Munich summer schools

Out of a total of 48 applicants, the following participants were chosen by the host institutions after consultation with the rest of the WP.

EHRI Summer School in Paris:

Istvan Pal Adam (Hungary), PhD candidate, University of Bristol, topic: “Bystanders” to Genocide?: The Role of Building Managers in the Hungarian Holocaust (recommended by Dr Tim Cole , Prof. of History, Univ of Bristol) - EHRI Fellow at Yad Vashem 2012
Elisabeth Büttner (Germany), PhD candidate, University of Kraków, topic: German Prisoners in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp (recommended by Dr. Jolanta Ambrosewicz-Jacobs, Director of the Centre for Holocaust Studies at Jagiellonian University Kraków) - EHRI Fellow at IfZ 2013
Alexandru Iulian Muraru (Romania), Associate Lecturer in Political Science, University of Iasi, has published a number of papers on the Holocaust and Romania (recommended by Radu Ioanid, Director of the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at USHMM)
Anna Susak (Ukraine), PhD candidate in Sociology, Polish Academy of the Sciences, PhD topic: Regions of the great (non)memory: the discourse of multicultural Galicia and Bukovyna in the perception of their contemporary inhabitants (recommended by Albert Stankowski, Head of the Current Programs Department at the Museum of the History of Polish Jews)
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Martina Ravagnan (Italy), applying for a PhD at London University College, MA topic: Displaced Persons camps for Jewish Refugees in Italy (1945-1950) (recommended by Antonella Salomoni, Professor of Holocaust Studies, Bologna University)
Tanja Vaitulevich (Belarus), PhD Fellow, University of Göttingen, PhD topic: Coming to Terms with the Past. The Return of Former Forced Labourers to their Home Countries (the cases of the Netherlands and Belarus) (recommended by Prof. Dr Dirk Schumann, Historisches Seminar, Univ. Göttingen)
Adriana Markantonatos (Germany), Research assistant at Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, PhD topic: “‘Denken in Bildern‘. Nach-denken über die Bildarbeit Reinhart Kosellecks (1923-2006)” (recommended by Prof. Dr. Hubert Locher, Director of Bildarchiv Foto Marburg)
Ingrid Lewis (Romania), PhD candidate, Dublin City University, PhD topic: The Representation of Women in European Holocaust Film (recommended by Dr. Debbie Ging, Chairperson, MA in Film and Television Studies, Dublin City University)
Alessandro Matta (Italy), Scientific Director of the Associazione "Memoriale Sardo Della Shoah", PhD topic: Racial Fascists in Italy (2012) (recommended by Gianluca Cardinaletti, vice-director of Memoriale Sardo della Shoah)
Anna Jamie Scanlon (USA), PhD candidate, University of Leicester, PhD topic: Post-War Holocaust Theatre in English Speaking Countries (recommended by Dr. Olaf Jensen, Director of the Stanley Burton Centre for Holocaust Studies, University of Leicester)
Ildikó Laszák (Hungary), Anne Frank Exhibition Coordinator and Museum Educator in Hungary, Anne Frank House, Amsterdam, (recommended by Dr. habil. Judit Molnár, Associate Professor, Univ. of Szeged)

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Olof Bortz (Sweden), Graduate student, Stockholm University, PhD topic: Raul Hilberg and the Historical Memory of the Holocaust (recommended by Dr. Paul A. Levine, Assoc. Prof. of Holocaust History, Univ. Uppsala)
Ionela Ana Dascultu (Romania), Graduate student in Jewish Culture and Civilization, Faculty of Letters, University of Bucharest (recommended by Prof. Dr. Felicia Waldman, The Goldstein Goren Center for Hebrew Studies, Univ. Bukarest)
Anna Duensing (USA), Graduate Student, New York University (recommended by Assoc. Prof. Karen Hornick, Gallatin School, New York University)
Borbála Klacsmann (Hungary), Research assistant, Central European University Budapest, researching in the topic of gendered memory of Holocaust survivors (recommended by Andrea Pető, Associate Professor at the Department of Gender Studies, Central European University Budapest)
Katarzyna Kocik (Poland), PhD student, Jagiellonian University Kraków, PhD topic: The Central Welfare Council and its relation to the extermination of the Polish Jews (recommended by Prof. Adam Kazmierczyk, Judaistic Institute, Jagiellonian Univ. Kraków)
Daan de Leeuw (the Netherlands), MA research student, University of Amsterdam, working on Nazi doctors who were involved with the medical experiments on humans in the concentration camps (recommended by Prof. J.Th.M. Houwink ten Cate, Professor Holocaust and Genocide Studies, University of Amsterdam)
Oleg Romanko (Ukraine), Associate professor , Head of Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences, Crimean State Medical University, has e.g. published widely on collaboration with the Germans in Belarus (recommended by Jochen Böhler, Jena)
Dana Smith (USA), PhD candidate & teaching assistant, Queen Mary, University of London, PhD topic: Jüdischer Kulturbund in Bayern (1934-1938) (recommended by Dr. Daniel Wildmann, Deputy Director, Leo Baeck Institute)
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EHRI WP5 Online Course, Unit: "History of the Ghettos under Nazi Rule" (IfZ)

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General introduction: Ghettos in German Occupied Eastern Europe

The majority of Jews persecuted by the Nazis shared the experience of being forced to live in a ghetto for a certain period of time. Some of these ghettos existed for several years, others only for a few weeks or even days. While several ghettos were hermetically sealed and surrounded by a wall or a fence, others remained open and were only defined by designating certain streets. According to recent research conducted by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), there were more than 1100 ghettos in occupied Eastern Europe, among them about 600 on former Polish territory, 130 in the Baltic States and about 250 in the pre-war territories of the Soviet Union. To these numbers one can add the ghettos in Romanian controlled Transnistria and those established in Hungary in 1944. The latter two categories will not be covered in this online panel, as it focuses on ghettos in German occupied Eastern Europe. We will also concentrate on the ghettos in occupied Poland, as many of them existed long enough to allow for the development of social structures and the creation of a plethora of documents. However this does not mean that the other regions will be left out of consideration completely.

As there was no centralized German policy of ghettoisation, there was no consistent typology of the ghetto. Instead there were significant local differences and also – even more importantly – differences concerning the aims and means of ghettoisation throughout the years of the war. Where and when a ghetto was established had great influence on living conditions therein, the duration of its existence and ultimately the fate of its inmates. Two important periods can be differentiated: between September 1939 and summer 1941 ghettos were set up in German-occupied Poland at different times and for different reasons. They were intended as a means to temporarily concentrate Jews before their ultimate displacement. However, many of these ghettos existed longer than expected by the occupiers. The second period started with the German attack on the Soviet Union in summer 1941. Ghettos which were established after this time in the newly occupied territories were immediately connected with the implementation of the “Final Solution”.

There were closed ghettos which were sealed off, so called open ghettos without borders, which were clearly marked by a wall or fence, as well as work ghettos and destruction ghettos, where Jews were only concentrated for a short period of time before they were killed. Since there was and is no clear definition of what constituted a ghetto, it is sometimes not easy to define whether there was a ghetto or not in a particular location, particularly if the situation in question only lasted for a short time. Some ghettos were huge like the ones in Warsaw or Lodz, but there were also small ghettos with only a few dozen inhabitants. Living conditions differed extremely between these ghettos. In some cities more than one ghetto was established, sometimes due to lack of space in one designated area, sometimes in order to separate the workers from those unfit to work and sometimes in order to separate the local inhabitants from Jews deported from Germany as was the case in Riga and Minsk.

The official contemporary terminology also differed, with terms such as “Wohngebiet der Juden”, “Jüdisches Wohnviertel” or “Jüdischer Wohnbezirk” as well as “Ghetto” being used. There was no precise definition of the term “ghetto” by central German authorities. There was no overarching order from Berlin for the creation of ghettos, rather the emergence of ghettos instead depended on local initiatives and developments. As Dan Michman puts it: “What we do have is a welter of explanations and interpretations produced by Nazi bureaucrats while the Holocaust was raging – suggesting that the Germans themselves were certain neither about the ghetto´s origins nor its rationale.” (Michman, p. XII) The different approaches by various German local administrations are portrayed in chapter A of this panel.

In the larger ghettos which existed for a longer period of time, social structures developed and many Jews tried to organize their lives under these completely new circumstances. On the one hand there were the Jewish Councils or Councils of Elders, established on German orders to organize Jewish life under occupation and – above all – to fulfil German commands. On the other hand there were many initiatives from within the community to organise life under these terrible new conditions and to resist physical and psychological destruction. People tried to live a life as normal as they could under these abnormal circumstances. In some ghettos a rich cultural and social life developed, with schools, concerts and theatres. In contrast to concentration camps, families continued to live together in the ghettos, even if they now existed under totally changed circumstances than they had known before. Thus family and private life still existed there, which is – with all the changes that took place over time – quite well documented for some of the ghettos. The sources we can use to analyse internal ghetto life and structures are presented in some detail in the introduction on “Sources”.

Ghettos in occupied Poland 1939-1941

About 2 million Polish Jews came under German rule when World War II started. Whereas in 1933, the Nazi government counted about 500.000 German Jews, it was now faced with a much larger Jewish population under its control. There were no plans for ghettoisation, as the occupiers on the contrary hoped to get rid of all the Jews in their sphere of control. They hoped to accomplish this by provoking their mass escape to the Soviet territories and by deporting the rest to reservation territories, either in the Eastern part of the Polish territories or on the French colonial island of Madagascar. Due to the impossibility of implementing these grandiose schemes, the plans changed: Heydrich´s infamous Schnellbrief of 21 September 1939 (see Document A 1), complemented by the minutes of the actual meeting of this day, show that he did not intend stable ghettoisation. His goal was only to ensure the concentration of Jewish communities in well-connected cities to control them and to make their future deportation easier. Heydrich also ordered the establishment of Jewish Councils as the central organ designated to fulfil German orders and organize Jewish life. The establishment of the Jewish Councils was not necessarily linked to the emergence of ghettos in their respective towns: There were many places in occupied Poland where a Jewish Council was established, but the Jewish population continued to live in their homes and no ghetto was created at all. This was above all often the case in smaller communities. The history of Jewish Councils and Councils of Jewish Elders is analysed in chapter B of this panel.

It depended on the local administration as to whether, when and under what circumstances ghettos were established. In the Radom District of the General Government in Poland orders to separate the Jewish population were issued soon after occupation started. The Landräte had been assigned to regulate local conditions, which they did by ordering the establishment of special Jewish quarters in Petrikau/Piotrkow Trybunalski (October 1939) and Radomsko (December 1939). Similar orders in Pulawy in the Lublin District (even though this ghetto was dissolved again by the end of the year) and in Petrikau led to the establishment of ghettos at this early stage.

The two largest ghettos in occupied Eastern Europe were the ones in Warsaw (in the so called General Government) and Lodz (the city, which was annexed to the German Reich, was renamed Litzmannstadt in 1940 and was part of the Reichsgau Wartheland). They were closed ghettos: the one in Lodz was sealed off with a fence, the one in Warsaw with a wall.

Preparations for the Lodz ghetto already started in late 1939. In this case, the ghetto was clearly meant as a transitory means of concentration until it was possible to expel all Jews from the city, which was supposed to be “germanized”. By confining all Jews in a closed district, officials also wanted to extort all valuables from them in exchange for food. In February 1940 the Chief of Police ordered all the Jews in Lodz to move to run-down areas in the northern part of town: the Old City, Baluty and Marysin. On 30 April the ghetto was closed. After a while it became clear that the Jews would not be expelled in the near future and local officials had to accept the ghetto´s long-term existence. It then became the first ghetto where Jewish labour was exploited on a large scale: The Wehrmacht, but also many German companies benefited from cheap Jewish labour. In the end the ghetto in Lodz turned out to be the ghetto in occupied Poland which existed for the longest period of time. Throughout 1940 and 1941 most of the smaller communities in the Reichsgau Wartheland were ghettoised as well – most of these were in the Eastern part of the Reichsgau, as Jews in the western part had been expelled further east in the first months of the occupation.

The ghetto in Warsaw was not established before November 1940 (even though this ghettoisation was preceded by several earlier plans which did not work out). In Lodz and Warsaw just as in many other places, the act of moving the Jews to the designated area was quite complicated as far too many people had to find housing in an area that was almost always much too small. The Jewish Councils had to organize this complicated task. Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski in Lodz and Adam Czerniaków in Warsaw were the most well-known chairmen of such Councils. During the war and subsequently their behaviour and enforced cooperation with the German administration have been the subject of many, sometimes heated discussions (see B. Jewish Administrations).

A new wave of ghettoisation which occurred in spring 1941 can partly be explained by the preparations for the attack on the Soviet Union: Already earlier, lack of housing had been one possible reason for the establishment of ghettos; now German soldiers were supposed to be accommodated in apartments or houses formerly owned by Jews. In March, ghettos were established in Krakow and Lublin, one month later in Kielce, Radom and Czestochowa; ghettoisation was ordered throughout many communities in the Krakow and Radom Districts. In the smaller towns there, this tended to result in open ghettos. Sometimes ghettoisation there was limited to the order to the Jews not to leave the limits of their villages.

But even after this period, ghettos had not yet been established throughout the General Government. By the end of 1941 in the Lublin district, for example, neither did “most of the Jews nor most of the communities live in ghettos in the full sense of the term ‘ghetto'; the conditions in most communities in no way resembled those that prevailed in Warsaw and Lodz and caused so many deaths” (David Silberklang, in Michman, XXVIf). The most important ghettos were those in Lublin, Opole, Piaski and Zamosc. In the Krakow district, most ghettos were also not established before 1941 and 1942.

The motives for ghettoisation varied during this first period: Jews were supposed to be isolated from the rest of the population and concentrated to make their future resettlement easier. A reason frequently cited by German officials was the alleged danger of diseases spread by Jews. The fear of typhus caused a more systematic wave of ghettoisation in the fall of 1941. Ghettoisation also was a comfortable means of enrichment: Jews were forced to leave many of their belongings behind when they had to move to the designated area within a very short time frame and had to sell everything they could beneath its actual value. In occupied Poland some ghettos were only established much later, in 1942, when deportations to the annihilation centres had already started, in order to serve as assembly points of the future victims.

There were also differences concerning the policy towards the Jews within the ghettos: There were German officials who wanted to take advantage of the available cheap manpower for German production, while others in contrast to this policy sought to annihilate the Jewish population by letting them starve to death or die of epidemic diseases, something scholars have called “indirect annihilation”. Work in the ghettos, a central factor both to occupational agencies as well as one of the few sources of sustenance for the inmates, is dealt with in D. Work.

Ghettos and mass murder

In spite of all these differences the ghettos established in occupied Poland before the summer of 1941 were quite distinct in character from those installed after 22 June 1941. As of this time, ghettos were clearly connected to mass murder. From the very beginning, Einsatzgruppen and police forces shot Jewish men; in August 1941 they started shooting women and children, while as of September they wiped out entire Jewish communities.

In the occupied Soviet territories there was even less of a uniform policy of ghettoisation than in occupied Poland. It strongly depended on the timing and logistics of the mass murder of the Jews. In many cases conflicts arouse between the SS and police forces and the newly installed civil administration, which sought to use Jewish labour for their purposes. Sometimes there were mass shootings resulting in the annihilation of whole Jewish communities without the setting up of any ghettos at all, as was the case in the Babi Yar shooting in Kiev (for the development in Ukraine see <UKRAINE UNIT SECTION B>). Sometimes Jews were concentrated for a very short period of time before first shootings were conducted. Often there were mass killings before the rest of the Jewish population was concentrated in a ghetto. The survivors in many cases were workers with their families. For them, the ghetto was a place where they had a chance of survival by working for the Germans. But even these survivors of the first massacres were by no means safe: there were selections and further “reductions” of the population, so that they were all living in constant fear.

In Wilno (Vilnius) mass murder in nearby Ponary started already in July 1941, when about 5000 Jews were killed; another 14.000 were murdered during the first days of September, before two ghettos were established for the remaining approximately 40.000 Jews. There were more selections and shootings of those unfit to work in November and December. Afterwards the situation stabilized, as most of the ghetto inhabitants were workers for the German war economy. Before the ghetto was liquidated in September 1943, about half of the remaining Jews were taken to labour camps. A similar development occurred in other large cities in the region, such as in nearby Kaunas.

Ghettos were also set up in the areas the Einsatzgruppen carried out the first mass shootings in summer 1941, but then moved on further east, such as in the Bialystok District and Generalkommissariat Wolhynien und Podolien. Here the ghettos which were established after the first wave of killings existed for quite a while afterwards, for instance the Bialystok ghetto, where structures developed which were similar to those in the ghettos in the areas of Poland that had been under German occupation since September 1939. Some of these ghettos were not established until 1942, so that these regions also exhibited notable differences concerning the particular time when ghettos emerged.

Eastern Galicia was incorporated into the General Government. After a first wave of killings in summer 1941, two ghettos were established in Tarnopol and Stanislawow in the autumn; in Stanislawow, about 10.000 Jews were killed in October as the area designated for the ghetto was considered too small to hold them all. In Lemberg (Lwów) Jews were ordered to move to a designated area within the period of one month in November 1941, but this was interrupted since epidemics spread in the city.

During 1942 the majority of Jews in Eastern Galicia was killed, mainly in the Belzec extermination camp (see <CAMPS, SECTION EXTERMINATION CAMPS>). Most of the ghettos in this region were also only established in 1942, shortly before the local population was transported to Belzec. Mass deportations from Lwow were conducted in August 1942. Only afterwards was a ghetto established and sealed off by a fence. Before the perimeter was completed, the chairman of the Jewish Council as well as members of the Jewish Order Service was hanged in public in early September 1942. Jews still alive in Eastern Galicia by the end of 1942 were forced to live either in labour camps or in one of the “work ghettos”.

The ghettos in Minsk (Belarus) and Riga (Latvia) were specials cases, as German Jews were deported there in late 1941 and at the beginning of 1942. For a while they lived in special parts of the ghettos. Thousands of local Jews were killed by SS and Police because they wanted to make space for the new arrivals. The ghetto in Minsk had already been established in July 1941 under military administration. At its peak about 80.000 Jews were held here. After several mass murder operations, thousands of Jews lived in this ghetto, working for the German war effort until October 1943.

Relatively few ghettos in the occupied Soviet territories (whether in those areas annexed by the USSR between 1939 and 1941 or on old Soviet territory) existed long enough to develop the community and social structures exhibited by the larger Polish ghettos. Wilno, Kaunas, Riga and Bialystok could be mentioned as examples, as they lasted until 1943. Yet in general, ghettos established in the occupied Soviet Union differed a lot from those in occupied Poland.

Deportations and the liquidation of the ghettos

The escalation of anti-Jewish violence developed into genocidal killings during the attack on the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941. This was accompanied by a process of decision-making in the German leadership which eventually led to the inclusion of all Jews in the German sphere of influence into a program of total extermination. The large Jewish population in the ghettos in occupied Poland would soon become the target of mass murder by gassing.

The Lodz ghetto was the first major ghetto from which Jews were selected to be deported en masse to their deaths. Mass murder by gassing in the Chelmno (Kulmhof) extermination centre had started in December 1941. At the same time Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski was ordered to choose 20.000 Jews to be deported – supposedly to villages and small towns to improve the overcrowded situation in the ghetto. In January 1942 deportations from Lodz to Chelmno started. Until end of May, more than 55.000 Jews were deported, while in September more than 15.000 sick persons, children under 10 and people older than 65 years were selected for death. Just under 90.000 Jews remained in the Lodz ghetto, which by then was the only ghetto that remained in the Reichsgau Wartheland. Almost all of those whose deportation had been postponed worked in the factories. The ghetto had turned into a working ghetto and existed until summer 1944, making it both the first large ghetto to be subject to mass deportations to an extermination camp and the ghetto which existed for the longest period of time.

Most Jews in the ghettos in the General Government were murdered in the camps of the “Aktion Reinhardt” (see <CAMPS, EXTERMINATION CAMPS>). Here there were no long pauses in the annihilation process as had been the case in Lodz. Starting in March 1942, Jews from the Lublin and Galicia Districts were murdered in Belzec. To make the mass murder more efficient, two more killing centres with gas chambers were constructed in Sobibor and Treblinka (see <CAMPS, EXTERMINATION CAMPS>). At the latter the majority of the inhabitants of the biggest Jewish community in Europe were murdered right after arrival: On 22 July 1942, Adam Czerniaków, the chairman of the Warsaw Jewish Council, was ordered to organize the deportation of 5000 persons a day – the following night he committed suicide. More than 260.000 Jews were murdered in Treblinka until the 22 September, while several thousand were shot in the ghetto during the raids.

Only some ghettos remained in the General Government after the mass murder campaign of 1942. Examples of these ghettos are Warsaw, where the deportations to Treblinka stopped in September 1942, Radom, Kielce, Częstochowa and Krakow. They were all liquidated during the course of 1943 together with the last remaining ghettos in the Galicia District. The dissolution of the ghettos and also attempts at armed resistance are presented and documented in Chapter E.

Ghettos outside Eastern Europe?

No ghettos were established in occupied Western or Northern Europe. In Greece a ghetto existed for a short period of time in Salonika. As mentioned above, Romania and Hungarian authorities under German occupation also established ghettos in some territories under their control. There were discussions about the setting up of a ghetto in Amsterdam, but these ended by the end of November 1941.

There is one notable geographic exception: In the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia in the German-occupied Czech Lands, a ghetto was established in Theresienstadt by the end of 1941. During a secret meeting on 10 October 1941, convened by the newly arrived deputy “Reichsprotektor” Reinhard Heydrich, the “Jewish Question” in Bohemia and Moravia was discussed. To clear the Protectorate of Jews, a ghetto seemed to be the appropriate interim solution. Later on Theresienstadt was chosen as the location of the ghetto. There has been a scholarly debate about the question whether Theresienstadt was a ghetto or rather a concentration camp as German sources refer to Theresienstadt both as to a “ghetto” and a “camp”. There is good reason to define it as a ghetto, however: Some aspects to be mentioned in this regard are the Jewish administration (Council of Elders) and the social and cultural life that was still possible here. Also important is the fact that family members, even after separate housing for women and men was introduced, were still able to meet freely after work hours (see document A 10). In particular, Czech, Austrian and German Jews were sent to and concentrated in Theresienstadt. For many Jews, it was only a stopover on their way to the sites of mass murder further East. The Germans also used it as a ghetto for elderly and privileged Jews and as a “model ghetto” for propaganda purposes such as a visit by the Red Cross in June 1944. Theresienstadt was also the last ghetto: It was liberated by the Red Army in May 1945.

This short overview cannot aim at any kind of completeness. It is designed to shed light on several different types of ghettos, established during different periods of the German occupation in different areas for different reasons: There was no consistent policy of ghettoisation. The questions of when and where a ghetto was established is of the highest importance when analysing the history of a ghetto and the fate of its inhabitants. There were ghettos that existed for quite a long period of time. In these cases one can analyse the daily life, social patterns, behaviours and views of the inhabitants. The Jews in the ghettos had different experiences and reacted differently, even if many of them ultimately shared the same fate.

Andrea Löw

Historiography

The German text will be translated, abbreviated and adapted

Sources

Sources central to research on the ghettos in Eastern Europe are spread almost all over the world: They are mainly to be found in those countries where ghettos were set up during the German occupation, but also in Germany, the UK, France, Israel, the USA and many more. The opening of archives in Eastern Europe after 1990 made many especially valuable documents openly available to scholarship for the first time. Many personal sources such as diaries or letters have been found in private households over the years – nobody knows how many more could still be uncovered. Detailed references to sources relevant for specific ghettos can now be found in the new Encyclopaedia of the Camps and Ghettos published by USHMM; for an earlier Polish take, one may also refer to the "Obozy hitlerowskie" encyclopaedia. For the Holocaust in Poland, an important guide to sources has been published by Alina Skibińska.

This online panel seeks to present an array of different sources from different regions to give the user an idea of the sheer variety of sources connected with the history of ghettos in Eastern Europe during the Second World War. These sources come to us in a number of different languages, which few researchers have mastered equally in their entirety: Polish, Yiddish, Hebrew, Russian, etc. Many of the sources presented here have not been previously accessible in English.

German Sources

While German institutions often managed to destroy most of their documentation relating to Jewish matters or the respective files were destroyed at the end of the war, the surviving German documents can shed light on the decision-making processes, the inner conflicts and the struggle for precedence among the various administrative bodies. Understanding these processes is essential to understand a ghetto, as the establishment of ghettos was not necessarily a part of Nazi anti-Jewish measures and their aim could be subject to changes during the course of their existence. To understand the perpetrator perspective, these documents are essential, but due to their use of camouflage language and other lacunae regarding topics such as direct murder, it can be useful to supplement one's selection of sources with those (relatively few) Jewish and bystander sources which offer some look into the inner workings of the German institutions (for instance, testimonies from persons who through their work in various organisations came into contact with German officials). In this way, the sources coming from different perspectives can help in the understanding of each other.

Unfortunately, very little of the local files of the SS and police apparatus on Jewish matters survives – more can be found at the central level in Berlin, available at the Bundesarchiv or in microfilm copy in many institutions in the world. Regarding the Wehrmacht, many local commandos dealt with ghettos to some extent, whereas the Rüstungskommandos coordinated war production by ghetto labourers, so that their files shed light on this central aspect. Files of the regional and superregional administrative bodies, as much as they survive, can also reflect on trends in ghetto policy – often, reports by departments, but also general reports on the local, District or superregional level contain section on “Jewish Policy”. The official diary of General Governor Hans Frank is particularly interesting in this regard, as it preserves the record of the meetings in which decisions were made at the top level which subsequently affected ghettos throughout the General Government. Official gazettes and the like contain the legal pronouncements upon which the implementation of the occupation and ghetto life were based. Posters were similarly used to transmit the orders and the news of the German authorities, the local non-Jewish municipal administrations, but also the official Jewish administrations to the ghetto population, as well as telling the local non-Jewish population how they were supposed to behave towards the Jews.

Some information on ghettos can also be found in files of central German institutions in Berlin – even if some of these documents can be something of a needle in a haystack (such as one sheet in a pile of bills). They show how developments in the centre could affect the periphery and vice versa. The former Berlin Document Center collections and similar compilations of personnel files held elsewhere (for instance at the Polish Institute of National Remembrance, IPN) as well as telephone directories and organisational charts can help in the identification of German and auxiliary personnel and the establishment of their background.

A rare example of a well-preserved perpetrator collection lies in the States Archives of Lodz: the extensive documentation of the German *Gettoverwaltung,* which has been preserved not least due to the fortunate course of the war which spared Lodz from large-scale destruction. Lodz is a special case in any case, as the rich documentation of the Jewish administration also survives, making an integrated approach particularly feasible.

Trials, bystander-sources, visual media and the contemporary press

Post War judicial investigations and trials – at the supranational level such as the Nuremberg trials, but especially local trials in the areas affected by Soviet and Polish courts as well as in Germany – can contain a plethora of information, as they include contemporary documents, victim and witness testimonies as well as (unfortunately often dilatory) perpetrator testimonies. Similarly, very few in post-war Germany spoke or wrote frankly about their time in the East during the war – there are however, some interesting, if partial exceptions, for instance documented in personal collections or in certain trials. A category mostly limited to the – generally not up to standards of due process – Soviet and – mostly thorough – Polish trials is the trials of collaborators, including some trials of Jews accused of collaboration.

Another important group of sources relate to the non-Jewish majority populations in the areas where ghettos were set up – a group of sources usually referred to under the term “bystander sources”. The term bystander is now considered to have a far too passive connotation by many, but since it has been introduced into the scholarly literature and no easy replacement is in sight, it is still in use. Next to the documents connected with institutions which were allowed to exist under German supervision, such as municipal administrations or lower level courts such as in the General Government, underground documents, whether produced by Soviet partisans or the Polish underground, can offer insights that can be found nowhere else. The relationship between the local Jewish and non-Jewish population under German occupation could of course be central to Jewish survival in the short, medium and long term. The Polish underground was particularly well developed: Next to local transmissions of documents in regional archives, the central collections in the Archiwum Akt Nowych in Warsaw and at the Polish Underground Movement Study Trust in London, where the Polish Government in Exile received reports from inside and sent orders into the country, stand out in their importance, also to Holocaust research.

A type of source that can come from each of these perspectives – perpetrator, Jewish or “bystander” – is visual media. A rare few original films from the period are preserved in various scattered archives, while photographs are much more common. Their interpretation can sometimes be particularly difficult, e.g. if context information is lacking or if the arrangement in the picture is particularly propagandistic. The perspective of the photographer can also be defining for the events, situations, places and persons depicted, resulting in highly different results even when taken in the same basic environment (see documents A6 and C1).

Contemporary newspapers and journals have been preserved, too. Official German publications were published in the occupied areas, both in German as well as in local languages. Simultaneously there was an active underground press, especially in occupied Poland, where the entire political spectrum was represented. In the General Government, there was even an official newspaper for Jews under German auspices, the *Gazeta Zydowska* (Jewish Newspaper), with information about Jewish communities and therefore many ghettos in occupied Poland. The fact that this was a censored newspaper, however, somewhat limits its value. Many documents stemming from the Jewish underground press, which did not suffer from these deficiencies, survive in the Ringelblum Archive described below.

Jewish sources

To analyse the inner life of the ghettos and Jewish reactions to persecution, different categories of documents are useful: For some ghettos – unfortunately not for many of them – documents of the Jewish administration are preserved, sometimes at least small parts of them (for example, Warsaw, Czestochowa, Bialystok, Lublin). For the General Government the documents of Jewish Self-Help (see B: Jewish Administrations) and related institutions are of great value: In these reports on the use of financial aid, one can often find information about even the smallest communities. Additionally, this collection also contains correspondence between local JSS employees and the head office in Kraków, but also between the JSS and the Jewish Councils as well as the German authorities. Another source of information are letters written by individuals in the ghettos who desperately asked for support from the JSS. As much of this was financed by international Jewish aid organisations, first and foremost by the American Joint Distribution Committee, documents from this provenance also offer insights into these topics. As these Jewish aid organisations also operated outside the occupied territories, they also collected information in order to put together detailed reports on the threats Jews faced in the various countries.

The large archives of Yad Vashem, the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw and the USHMM in Washington hold dozens of diaries, thousands of (often self-written) memoirs and testimonies (recorded by others) written by Holocaust survivors. Many sources related to the Warsaw ghetto can be searched in the database http://www.getto.pl/.

Numerous memoirs have been published in memorial books (Yizkor book) of the communities (http://legacy.www.nypl.org/research/chss/jws/yizkorbooks_intro.cfm) – for a bibliography on Poland, see Adamczyk-Garbowska). Besides that hundreds of memoirs of survivors have been published, providing intense insights into the inner life of the ghettos. Both video and oral testimonies have been collected (among the most important depositories: Yad Vashem, Yale University http://www.library.yale.edu/testimonies/, the USC Shoah Foundation Institute (http://dornsife.usc.edu/vhi/) – a.k.a. the Spielberg Foundation – and USHMM; for Polish projects, see the entry in the guide by Alina Skibinska) and interviews with non-Jewish local inhabitants have been conducted (see e.g. http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/presentations/discussions/details/2007-10-01/USHMM-Yahad-In-Relationship.pdf). Material on the Theresienstadt Ghetto will be / is covered within the context of EHRI in a research guide (LINK).

Above all, Jewish contemporary diaries and other written documents – supplemented by secretly taken photographs or paintings – from the ghettos which are of the greatest value for any researcher analysing the inner history of the ghettos. They contain no changes due to post-war hindsight or the effects on memory of the ghettos by later experiences of different forms of persecution experienced by the survivors. At the time of the events, many Jews felt the strong need to create documentation of the crimes of the Germans and the Jewish reactions. Two amazing examples of organised attempts of documentation will be presented in the following. As Jakub Poznanski put it in his diary written in the Lodz ghetto in July 1943: “Hauptsächlich schreibe ich, damit ein zukünftiger Chronist nicht nur aus offiziellen Quellen wird schöpfen können, sondern auch aus privaten Quellen.” (Poznanski 2011, p. 130).

It is mostly because of the documentary efforts of the Jewish ghetto inhabitants that it is possible for us today to write the history of the ghettos and the people who had to live in them for a time. Thanks to these efforts, we have access to a large part of the central documents, which will be explored in more detail in the following.

The Example of Lodz

In Litzmannstadt, the name assigned to Łódź or Lodz by the Germans in April 1940, an archive was set up within the Jewish administration for the sole purpose of preserving a record for posterity. In November 1940 the “Eldest of the Jews in Litzmannstadt Getto”, Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski, who had been appointed by the Germans, ordered the establishment of an archive in order to create a record of the history of the ghetto and, most importantly, his own achievements. The employees began collecting announcements and other documents from the ghetto. Soon they started going beyond this by creating sources themselves: Jozef Zelkowicz, for instance, wrote a number of reports on various aspects of ghetto life. A number of texts about factories and workshops survive (Trunk 1962, Trunk 2006, Zelkowicz 2002).

The central work of the archive was its daily chronicle, which was kept between 12 January 1941 and mid-1944. Each day the employees would note down the daily life in the ghetto in detail without any knowledge of what the next day would bring. Unlike private records, however, these notes were created in the offices of the Jewish administration, so that the chroniclers always had to expect that it could be discovered, perhaps even by the Germans. Therefore the tone of these texts is usually very careful. It seems, however, that the archivists wrote the more about the people in the ghetto, the less they were able to report on those committing the crimes. It is precisely this detailed account of those locked up inside the ghetto which makes the daily chronicle such a unique source (http://www.getto-chronik.de/).

Between January 1941 and September 1942, the chronicle was written in Polish, in an intermediary phase in both Polish and German and afterwards until July 1944 in German. These linguistic changes came about because of the deportation of almost 20.000 German-speaking Jews from various cities in the German Reich, from Prague, Vienna and Luxembourg to the Lodz Getto in autumn 1941. This led to an expansion of the group of archival employees. In February 1942, Dr. Oskar Singer and Dr. Bernard Heilig were added, with Dr. Oskar Rosenfeld joining in June.

The authors used the daily chronicle to record various aspects of ghetto life, starting with the weather and daily temperature, the level of the ghetto population, and the number of births and deaths. They also recorded any shootings at the fence as well as suicide attempts at the beginning of the entry. Afterwards the authors entered various events or news items. The delivery of food stocks and black market prices were noted down just as figures on the productivity of the factories and about the medical supply of the ghetto. This chronicle is an essential source for the investigation of the inner life of the Lodz ghetto.

This is supplemented by the ghetto encyclopaedia, which was begun by the ghetto archivists in spring 1944. Using filing cards, they created a dictionary, introducing important personalities and institutions as well as explaining terms, which had either arisen anew or had gained a new meaning under the specific conditions of the ghetto. Unlike the chronicle, where the entries arose out of the immediate events of the respective day and which thus serves as a record of the course of events, the authors of the encyclopaedia attempted a first taking of stock. In the entries they analysed the inner life of the ghetto.

Most of the texts from the Litzmannstadt Getto archive were saved. Nachman Zonabend was a postman in the ghetto. He knew about the archive as the post office and the archive were housed in the same building. Zonabend was among the small group of Jews who remained in the ghetto area after the dissolution of the ghetto in the summer of 1944 to facilitate the clean up of the area. This last group of Jews, who were permitted to live a little bit longer, were supposed to sort all objects from the ghetto and prepare them for shipping to Germany. It was also their duty to remove the traces of the existence of the ghetto. Zonabend however did the opposite: He sneaked into the building and found almost the entire archive collection packed up mostly in suitcases, some of it in bundles. He hid the documents in the courtyard of the building in a disused well and was able to recover them after the liberation. Most of the sources are kept in the Lodz State Archive and in YIVO in New York, some are available in copy in Yad Vashem and at USHMM.

The Example of Warsaw

Also in November 1940, the underground archive of the recently sealed off Warsaw ghetto was founded in Emanuel Ringelblum's flat. This group (known in Hebrew as Oneg Shabbat - “Joy of the Sabbath” – in Yiddish Oyneg Shabes, due to its regular meetings on the onset of the Sabbath on Friday night) aimed at recording and researching all aspects of the history of the Polish Jews during the Second World War. As Ringelblum wrote himself, work was shaped by two principles: “Universality” and “Objectivity”. The contributors collected documents from highly divergent origins, filing everything that was in some way connected to life in the ghetto: Posters, invitations to cultural events, ration cards, passes to temporarily leave the ghetto, work permits, invoices, documents relating to religious and cultural topics as well as underground newspapers. They were especially interested in sources which elucidated the individual life of persons living in the ghetto: Diaries, reports and letters. They conducted interviews in order to record the problems and the life of those who did not write themselves. They themselves wrote reports and studies about various aspects of ghetto life. Many writers who were locked up in the Warsaw ghetto handed over their works, while others entrusted their family photographs or diaries to the underground archive. Refugees and forcibly resettled persons wrote accounts about the fate of the Jewish population in their home towns. The contributors also collected reports about various work camps.

In early 1942 Ringelblum and his friends began a large new project: A scientific study about “Two and a Half Years at War”. They were planning for a comprehensive treatment of the fate of Polish Jewry during the war with a total length of approx. 1600 pages. The project was not finished due to the deportations of the Jews of Warsaw to Treblinka beginning in July 1942, but a number of texts survive at least in fragmentary form, allowing for detailed insights into the society of the ghetto and its social stratification.

Most of the contributors both in Warsaw and in Lodz did not survive the Holocaust. The sources, however, did also survive in Warsaw. The documents of the Warsaw underground archive were hidden in three instalments in different locations: The first in August 1942 in ten metal boxes, the second in February 1943 in two large milk cans and the third in April 1943. After the war they were found in the ruins of the Warsaw ghetto, the first part of the archive in September 1946, the second in December 1950 during earthworks. Only fragments of a diary were found of the third part. Today, the Ringelblum Archive is kept at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw (with copies available at USHMM and Yad Vashem) and is included in the UNESCO Memory of the World register. Before the war, this building used to contain the Main Judaic Library; between 1940 and 1942, it was also one of the venues used by the Oneg Shabbat group.

Conclusion

A great variety of sources is available to researchers of the history of the ghettos in occupied Eastern Europe. Depending on the questions under consideration, the size of the community under consideration and the duration of its existence, contemporary sources from different perspectives may even be available in abundance. While access restrictions do not generally constitute a hindrance to such research, linguistic hurdles often need to be overcome not least due to the multi-lingual environment documented in these sources. Yet once these – as well as the various forms of handwriting employed during the period – are overcome, it is possible to approach the primary sources related to this core area of Holocaust research.

Andrea Löw / Giles Bennett

A. The German Administration

In some ways, the German institutions who were involved in ghetto matters deliver a contradictory picture: On the one hand an overwhelmingly large percentage of the leading protagonists displayed strong to excessive antisemitic tendencies and there was a large degree of agreement that the Jews were to leave German dominated Europe in some way (even if the exact means to achieve this remained undetermined until 1941/42). On the other hand there were simultaneous struggles for supremacy between the different institutions and leading personalities, which were sometimes conducted on the field of Jewish matters. Disagreements also arose on how the Jews should be dealt with until a “Final Solution” could be found, a concept which was not yet clearly pictured in 1941. Even the squalid conditions in the ghettos in Poland between 1939 and 1941/42 had to be financed somehow. Christopher Browning has identified two schools of thought among the occupiers regarding these questions: While the “Attritionists” aimed at starving the Jews in the ghettos to death, only delivering food in exchange for any hidden valuables the inhabitants would produce, the “Economizers” thought that Jewish labour should be mobilised for the German war economy with the added advantage of having the working Jews pay for the cost of keeping the ghettos on starvation rations.

The following is a brief introduction to the main institutions which could be involved with German ghetto policy on the local and regional level. Others, such as the Organisation Todt, charged with construction work, the Reichsbahn and (in the General Government) Ostbahn as well as German (and local) companies also employed Jewish workers and thus the ghetto inhabitants, particularly when the deportations began.

The Wehrmacht

The first German organisation to enter the Central and Eastern European areas where most ghettos were set up under German occupation during the Second World War was the German Military, the Wehrmacht. Only its advanced and continued presence in the region made the implementation of Nazi anti-Jewish policy possible. In the Polish areas occupied in 1939, the setting up of Jewish councils and first anti-Jewish measures began under the authority of the military occupation administration, which ended on 25 October 1939, while the Wehrmacht played little part in the subsequent setting up of the ghettos under German civilian rule in both the Incorporated Areas and the General Government.

In 1941 and 1942, the role of the Wehrmacht in the affairs of the ghettos was mostly related to its supervision of the war economy through the Rüstungskommandos. Thus it took an interest in Jewish labour, e.g. in the textile or armaments industries, securing additional foodstuffs for labourers "necessary for the war effort". During the ghetto liquidations, the intervention of Wehrmacht officials sometimes temporarily saved a small number of Jewish workers considered indispensable to the war economy.

While its units implemented many anti-Jewish measures throughout the occupied Soviet Union, the Wehrmacht rules allowed for the setting up of ghettos, but this remained a discretionary matter, in which local initiative was supreme (see document A 9). The easternmost areas of the Soviet Union occupied by German troops (the eastern regions of Belarus and Ukraine as well as western areas of Russia) remained under military administration, so that any ghettos established there fell under the rule of the Wehrmacht.

The German Civilian Administration

In the Incorporated Areas (e.g. the Reichsgau Wartheland, Eastern Upper Silesia, Bialystok region), the General Government as well as the Reichskommissariate Ostland and Ukraine, much of the matters relating to the ghettos was carried out by the German civilian administration. Each of these territorial organisations possessed a central administration with departments akin to ministries, in these cases on the level of the Reichsgau, the General Government or the Reichskommissariat, mid-level administrations with departments called Regierungsbezirke, Districts or Generalbezirke and on the local Kreis or Gebietskommissariat level. Following the "Führer Principle", each of these administrative levels was headed by a presiding official, whose ambition, ideological zeal and connections could determine the fate of his subjects. As the leading German local officials, the Kreishauptmänner in the General Government were often responsible for issuing orders to set up a ghetto and determine various aspects in local anti-Jewish policy.

At the same time, central departments, e.g. on the level of the whole General Government or on the District level, could also issue general orders affecting all the ghettos in their area of jurisdiction. Of special importance to ghetto policy in the General Government were the departments of Labour (see D: Work), Health and "Bevölkerungswesen und Fürsorge" (Population Matters and Welfare), which for instance was charged with the supervision of the

JSS (Jüdische Soziale Selbsthilfe/Jewish Self-Help) (see B: Jewish Administrations). The implementation of their orders depended on the cooperation of lower level bureaucrats, however. The paranoid concerns of health officials about the supposed transmitter status of the Eastern Jews resulted in the closing off of many overcrowded Jewish quarters, the sanitary conditions in which subsequently resulted in a self-fulfilling prophecy regarding the outbreaks of epidemics. The subsequent terrible conditions in the ghettos could then also self-enforce preconceptions and prejudices, leading to a further radicalisation of visiting Nazi officials (see document A 7). One of the main problems for the civilian administration in the General Government was the fact that the SS and Police apparatus did not accept the right of the Kreishauptmann or Governor in a Distrikt to give direct orders to the respective police commanders in their area of jurisdiction. To work around this problem, the administration set up an administrative police unit composed of local “Volksdeutsche” (ethnic Germans), the Sonderdienst. Other local uniformed units – Polish Police, Ukrainian Trawniki Men and even Polish firemen – were sometimes also drawn upon in ghetto matters.

Some special administrative units dealing solely with Jewish matters were also set up: In Warsaw, the Resettlement Department of the Warsaw District under Waldemar Schön planned and implemented ghettoisation in October and November 1940, ending a period of municipal responsibility. Schön also set up the Transferstelle under Alexander Palfinger, who had recently left Litzmannstadt after losing a power struggle there. He brought with him his “Attritionist” policy. This consisted of closing off the ghetto and generating sufficient revenue through the handing over of hidden Jewish assets as well as Jewish production and work, which was directed centrally by his office. When his policy failed to reduce the need for subsidies from the general German occupation budget and an audit by the Reichskuratorium für Wirtschaftlichkeit, an economic efficiency think tank, laid open the inefficiencies at the Transferstelle, the authorities in Krakow, spearheaded by the Economic Department, pressed for a change of leadership in Warsaw in May 1941 (see document A 2). The newly set up Commissar for the Jewish Quarter was not only responsible for all matters in the Warsaw Ghetto, which he headed like a Kreishauptmann, but also for all Jewish matters throughout the Distrikt. Commissioner Heinz Auerswald thus also signed execution orders for Jews convicted of leaving the “Jewish Quarter” illegally or threatened terrible sanctions in order to gather up all Jewish fur coats for the German Eastern Front in the winter of 1941/42 (see documents B 1 and A 5). The Transferstelle, now under the leadership of the Austrian Banker Max Bischof, shifted emphasis to economic oversight and stimulation of private

German, Polish and even Jewish enterprise in the ghetto, while continuing to handle the official food and supplies shipments to the ghetto in exchange for Jewish produce and wages (see also D: Work). In Upper Silesia, the Organisation Schmelt under the eponymous policeman organised work, but also affected other Jewish matters. In Litzmannstadt Getto, the Gettoverwaltung under Hans Biebow was a municipal body, which for a long time managed to monopolise Jewish matters and Jewish labour not only in Litzmannstadt, but even influence communities in the rest of the Eastern Wartheland (see document D 5).

In the Reichskommissariate, the administrative bodies were sometimes overtaken by measures by the SS and Police units, who had already begun to implement a total “Final Solution” (see document A 8). Economic concerns were even less effective here, even in the case of desperately needed Jewish specialists. Jewish labour soon became the province of the police and SS, who were aiming at increasing their general economic influence by utilising the few remaining Jews, who increasingly ended up in camps rather than ghettos.

The SS and Police

From the beginning, Himmler's SS and police apparatus sought to dominate “Jewish matters” throughout the occupied areas. The actions of the Einsatzgruppen during the Polish campaign also targeted Jews: Heydrich ordered the establishment of Jewish Councils (see document A 1), which the Einsatzgruppen sometimes implemented upon arriving on the heels of the occupying troops, but did not implement ghettoisation per se – Heydrich only aimed at the concentration of Jews from the countryside in towns with good train connections as a preparation for deportation within the context of a territorial “Final Solution”. Such plans seemed within reach at this time, but the potential logistics involved were grossly underestimated – in addition to the fact that no suitable territorial destination was to be found.

After the setting up of civilian administrations in occupied Poland, the first few months saw setbacks for the far-reaching plans of the SS and police: Their aim at controlling central matters within the new territories were thwarted by the general civilian administrations. General Governor Frank successfully resolved a number of conflicts in his favour, including the issue of Jewish forced labour in the summer of 1940 (see D: Work), while some matters, particularly in the Lublin District with its ambitious SS- and Police Leader Odilo Globocnik, remained unresolved. In 1942, corruption charges against Frank led to a strong tipping of the scales, resulting in an almost total preponderance of the SS and Police in Jewish matters. In the Wartheland, the good contacts of Gauleiter Greiser to both Hitler and Himmler as well as his sharp antisemitic ideological and practical disposition aided cooperation between the SS and police apparatus and the civilian German administration to a much more substantial degree.

In the two years following the summer of 1940, the Security Police (composed of the Political Police, the infamous Gestapo, and the Criminal Police, the Kripo) set up a network of Jewish informers. In Warsaw, information on these informers is particularly detailed: Next to individuals, the police even had a whole Jewish organisation set up as its agency in the ghetto, the "Thirteen", which was named after the address of its official office on 13 Leszno street, which sent regular reports (link YVS article , GFH photos 164-167). For a while it seemed as if the Gestapo was hardly interfering in internal ghetto matters, but in June 1942 the Gestapo shot many of the leaders of the clandestine Jewish political parties in the ghetto, probably in order to soften organised resistance against the mass deportation starting the following month.

The Order Police, which was assigned more routine police functions in Germany, was divided between the city Schutzpolizei and the countryside Gendarmerie. In the cities, police guards watched the ghetto borders, and after the implementation of a "shoot to kill" policy against Jews leaving a "Jewish quarter" without a permit in the General Government in autumn 1941 (see document A 4), some of them developed great zeal in murdering as many delinquents as possible. In the case of the Lodz Getto, isolation was completed even earlier, in spring 1940; by the summer, the German guards were regularly shooting people deep within the ghetto far away from the fence. In the countryside of the General Government after autumn 1941, the Gendarmerie hunted for Jews moving around in the villages. Police station reports often just listed the number of Jews shot during a daily shift without any further elaborations.

In the summer of 1942, control of Jewish matters in the General Government passed to the SS and police apparatus – only concerns for the war economy could now delay the total extermination of the inhabitants of the ghettos as the order from above to annihilate Polish Jewry was carried out with zeal by the Aktion Reinhardt special commandos in conjunction with local Security Police units. In the Wartheland, overall civilian control of the extermination process in the Kulmhof/Chełmno extermination camp was maintained to a much greater degree than in the General Government due to Greiser's stronger position and energy in murdering the Jews under his control, while the actual tasks were carried out by Security Police units.

Recently it has been argued by Peter Klein that the special case of the ghetto in Theresienstadt may have been the ideal arrangement of a ghetto in the eyes of the SS as no other agencies interfered in their handling of matters there (see document A 10).

Giles Bennett

1) **General** Heydrich's Schnellbrief of 21 September 1939 gives orders on the treatment of the Jews including ghettoisation
2) **Warsaw** The German Administration of the General Government on 19 April 1941 ratifies the change of the economic direction of the Warsaw Ghetto
3) **Warsaw** In a semi-public report on the German administration of Warsaw published in 1942, ghetto commissar Auerswald presents the results of his “Jewish policy”
4) **Warsaw** A poster signed by Governor Fischer proclaims the death penalty for Jews leaving the ghetto on 10 November 1941
5) **Warsaw** In a post-war letter (16 January 1963) about the Pelzaktion, Auerswald states that he “can hardly remember” it
6) **Litzmannstadt** Photos by Walter Genewein, German accountant of the Ghetto, reveal his perspective
7) **Wilno** Propaganda Minister Goebbels writes about his impressions of the “dirty” Wilno ghetto, 2 November 1941
8) **Ostland** 27 August 1942 Reichskommissar für das Ostland Lohse regulates the ghettos and exploitation of Jews in the Baltics
9) **Minsk** The Military Commandant of Minsk sets up a ghetto, 19 July 1941
10) **Theresienstadt** Two Tagesbefehle (Nr. 27, 16 Jan 1942 and Tagesbefehl Nr. 33, 23 Jan 1942) casually suggest that the SS saw Theresienstadt as a ghetto and not as a camp

B. Jewish Administrations

The question of the Jewish Councils is one of the most controversial ones in the history of ghettoisation. Disputes about how the Jewish officials reacted to persecution and then to annihilation started in the ghettos. The discussion of the limits of their responsibilities continued after the war and has never really stopped to this day.

The Jewish Councils

In his Schnellbrief of 21 September 1939 (see document A 1), Reinhard Heydrich ordered the establishment of Jewish Councils of Elders ("Ältestenräte") or Jewish Councils ("Judenräte") as a central organ to disseminate and fulfil German orders and organize Jewish life. They were supposed to have up to 24 members, depending on the size of the respective Jewish community. In many cases the pre-war leaders of the communities had fled eastwards and German officials appointed the chairmen of the new Councils. Some Councils were already established under military administration, but General Governor Hans Frank issued a central decree by the end of November 1939. About 400 Jewish Councils were established in occupied Poland, representing Jewish communities of various sizes (from 500 to almost 500.000). A variety of chairmen represented these Councils and there were also huge differences concerning their way of dealing with the situation. The attitude the average Jewish population exhibited towards their officials also differed, ranging from respect to hatred and contempt.

The idea of having a Jewish institution organizing life and being responsible for the implementation of the anti-Jewish measures was not new. A similar model had already been used in the cases of the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde in Vienna and the Reichsvereinigung in Germany. In Vienna, Eichmann and his colleagues had successfully tested this system. It made everything much easier for the German administration if Jewish officials were responsible. They were the targets for all Jewish anger; there were even ghettos where Jews hardly ever saw any Germans but thought of the Jewish leadership as the persons responsible for their misery.

In the larger ghettos such as Lodz, Warsaw, Krakow or Lwów, a large and sophisticated Jewish administration was created. These Councils organized the food supply, work, medical care, culture, education and more aspects of life in the ghettos. To maintain order and to fight smuggling there was also a Jewish police, the so called Order Service (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst). Most of the time, the Jewish administration´s situation was desperate: with only few resources at their disposal, they tried to take care of the ghetto population. At the same time they had to engage in their permanent struggle with the German authorities, whom they were responsible to and who had to approve almost everything the Jewish Councils wanted to organise. Many of the chairmen saw work for the German economy as the only way of saving the Jewish population; they thus created factories and workshops in the ghettos. Well known examples for this strategy are Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski in Lodz or Ephraim Barasz in Bialystok (see D: Work).

Whereas in occupied Poland there was a period until the end of 1941 in which life could be organized without the permanent threat of deportations, ghettos in the occupied Soviet territories from the very beginning had to deal with the problem of maintaining life in the ghettos in the face of mass murder.

Many conflicts between these officials and the “normal” Jewish population arose. In order to prevent further exasperating the situation, many Jewish functionaries advocated that cooperation was necessary. Rumkowski, for instance, even argued that he had to choose those marked for deportation himself together with his administration, in order to limit the losses – the transports went to the Kulmhof (Chelmno) extermination camp, where the victims were killed upon arrival.

The capabilities of the Judenräte to exert influence were extremely limited, as some more wellknown examples can demonstrate. Upon his nomination to head the Jewish Council by the Polish major of Warsaw, the engineer Adam Czerniakow had still written in his diary: “A historic role in a besieged city. I will try to live up to it.” Yet circumstances after the Germans entered the city never permitted him to live up to this role. Until the summer of 1942 he tried to organise life in the largest ghetto set up by the Nazis. When they called on him to organise the deportation of the Jews of Warsaw to the Treblinka extermination camp on 22 July 1942, he took his own life. This did not, however, change the fact that the population was sent to their deaths.

In Krakow, the capital of the General Government, which was formed in October 1939, the first head of the Judenrat, Marek Bieberstein, a respected personality, tried to intervene in favour of the Jewish population, which resulted in his arrest in the summer of 1940. The Stadthauptmann of Krakow selected his successor, the lawyer Artur Rosenzweig, in autumn 1940. As he was not sufficiently cooperative during the deportations to the Belzec extermination camp, he was himself deported and murdered in June 1942. His successor Dawid Gutter obviously implemented German orders satisfactorily. According to the investigations of Aharon Weiss, this was a typical pattern: He distinguishes first, second and third Judenräte. The latter are almost universally rated negatively by the survivors. Yehuda Bauer emphasises “the irresolvable dilemmas these Judenräte were faced with”. Lawrence Langer calls it the “choiceless choice”. Ultimately they had to fail as survival was not intended within the system they were forced to act in. It was thus almost never possible to act “correctly”.

Jewish Self-Help

The Jewish Councils were not the only official body trying to organise life under German occupation. Already during the beginning of the German occupation various attempts at organising social aid began. Existing and newly formed organisations became active. The most important social aid institution in occupied Poland was Jewish Self-Help (German: Jüdische Soziale Selbsthilfe / JSS, Polish: Żydowska Samopomoc Społeczna / ŻSS) with its main office in Krakow. Unlike the Judenräte, the foundation of this institution occurred due to Jewish initiatives. Many ghetto inhabitants viewed Self-Help as the organisation which cared about the poorest of the poor; in their view, this was less true of the Jewish Councils.

Shortly after the start of the war, the existing Jewish aid organisations had joined up in a coordinating commission. This commission was in turn included in Warsaw's Committee of Social Self-Help for the Capital (Stołeczny Komitet Samopomocy Społecznej). Since February 1940 the commission in charge of Jewish social aid called itself Jewish Self-Help and in May the German authorities officially recognised the organisation. Together with a Polish and a Ukrainian Committee, the JSS was subordinate to the Main Aid Committee for the Occupied Polish Areas (Haupthilfsausschuss für die besetzten polnischen Gebiete). In July 1940 all Jewish aid organisations were forcibly dissolved and subordinated to the control of the JSS. Jewish Self-Help was responsible to the Home Affairs Department (Hauptabteilung Innere Verwaltung) of the Government of the Government General and was subject to regular reporting.

In the county towns there were county committees of the JSS, while branches providing local social aid were set up in most larger localities. They set up communal kitchens and hospitals, engaged in aid for children and the elderly as well as supporting those in particular need with financial aid. One of the central duties was usually support for refugees who were often bereft of any property or contacts. They required clothing and food as well as housing.

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (Joint) was the most important supporter of the JSS, aiding it both financially and with food shipments; the declaration of war against the USA in December 1941 reduced this assistance considerably. In Warsaw the importance of the Joint was enormous, as the aid organisation not only handed out financial support payments, but also ran its own kitchens and refugee houses. Additionally, the German administration assigned a fixed 18 percent of the payments given to the Haupthilfsausschuss of the entire Jewish, Polish and Ukrainian population to the JSS. The JSS president, Michael Weichert, reported that the JSS had a budget of one million Zloty per month at its disposal. Additionally various foreign aid organisations such as the International Red Cross sent aid shipments.

Many Jewish aid institutions from the pre-war period were also active within the ghettos; they were increasingly incorporated either into the Jewish Councils or the JSS.

During the summer of 1942 the occupier formally dissolved the JSS; attempts at continuing its activities led to the setting up of the Jüdische Unterstützungsstelle (JUS) on 16 October 1942; this was, however, once again dissolved in December 1942.
The house committees were peculiar to the Warsaw ghetto: These dealt with the supply of individual blocks of houses. For a time there were more than 2000 such committees; in January 1942, there were 1108 house committees in which thousands of people volunteered. Partially these committees were financed with lotteries, theatre or other performances, which were delivered in the courtyards after the curfew came into effect. Additionally the inhabitants of a house were supposed to support the local committee with payments and goods, such as food and clothing. Many members of Social Self-Help in Warsaw were also members of the Underground Archive „Oyneg Shabes“ (see also under Sources).

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1) **Warsaw** Diary of Adam Czerniaków, head of the Judenrat; Czerniakow struggles but ultimately succeeds in buying free Jewish prisoners in exchange for the delivery of fur coats for the Germans, 24 December 1941 – 9 January
2) **Warsaw** Joseph Jaszunski, member of the Judenrat, reports on the development of the Warsaw ghetto since its closing off, summer 1942 (http://www.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/Files/Idea/%D7%90%D7%95%D7%A1%20000198.pdf)
3) **Warsaw** Rules of the Jewish police, June 1942
4) **Warsaw** Ringelblum Archive, A Conversation with a Member of the Jewish Police, May 1942
5) **Litzmannstadt** Chairman Rumkowski, 21 June 1941, about the inability of the ghetto to absorb more inhabitants (http://www.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/Files/Idea/%D7%90%D7%95%D7%A1%20000357.pdf)
6) **Litzmannstadt** A sample entry in the Gettochronik (http://www.getto-chronik.de/de/tageschronik/tagesbericht-freitag-16-juni-1944)
7) **Siauliai** The Judenrat discusses forced abortions after the Germans had forbidden Jewish births from occurring, March 1943
8) **Krakow** During a meeting between the board of Jewish Self-Help and the GG government, the activities of the JSS are discussed 15 July 1941
9) **Warsaw** Emanuel Ringelblum explains the purpose of “Oyneg Shabes”
10) **Zamość** An excerpt from the post-war memoir of Mieczysław Garfinkiel, for a time head of the Judenrat in Zamość

C. Daily life

It is not possible to give a single framework of daily life in the ghettos that would describe the experience of every ghetto inhabitant. There were great differences depending on how large a ghetto was, how long it existed, where it was established, whether it was a closed or an open ghetto and so on. The circumstances described in this chapter applied to many ghettos, especially the larger and closed ones, but not necessarily to all ghettos. The sources presented will demonstrate the variety of experiences.

The Living Conditions: Lack of Space, Disease, Hunger

Constant problems in many ghettos were the massive overcrowding as well as the lack of food resulting in constant hunger and epidemic diseases. Ghettos normally were established in torn down and neglected areas without sufficient space, into which thousands of people were now concentrated. For many Jews the first huge problem was to find housing. Strangers, often refugees with hardly any belongings, had to move in together, rooms with six, eight or even more inhabitants were not infrequent. German authorities even downsized some of the ghettos as time went on. Connected to the overcrowding was the problem of diseases. Typhus and typhoid fever were rampant, and death rates were extremely high independently of the deportations to the annihilation centres starting in 1942: In Lodz and Warsaw, almost one fourth of the total population died in the ghetto due to illnesses, weakness and malnutrition. After mass murder and the deportations started, daily life in the ghettos was also to a large extent influenced by the constant fear of deportation and of the next round up; the majority of the inhabitants' time was spent by trying to avoid this by having a work pass. In those ghettos that were established after the attack on the Soviet Union this fear dominated life from the very beginning, As ghettoisation after summer 1941 was closely connected to mass murder. Many of the aspects of daily life in the ghettos described here do not apply to those ghettos in the Soviet territory that existed only for a very short period of time.

When reading diaries and memoirs it becomes clear that the worst problem of all for most people in the ghettos was constant hunger. In April 1941 Dawid Sierakowiak, a teenager forced to live in the Lodz ghetto, wrote in a pessimistic but realistic manner in his diary: “The inevitability of death by starvation grows more evident.” (Sierakowiak 1996, p. 82). There are hardly any documents that neglect mentioning the constant hunger and the permanent lack of food (document C4 especially). Gustavo Corni has characterised this very accurately, based on the examination of personal documents from many ghettos: “Hunger became the leitmotif of the ghetto existence, accompanying it minute by minute, day after day” (Corni 2003, p. 155). Jews were at the lowest level of the hierarchical racist pyramid, which meant that they got the lowest food rations of any group living under German occupation. Official food rations sometimes were no more than 300 calories per day. Supply was organised in different ways, but in many ghettos so called ration cards were handed out which authorized the purchase of various goods at regulated prices.

It was necessary for people in the ghettos to find work to be able to buy food, but also because the factories or other working places provided them with a bowl of soup (see D: Work). A necessary condition to survive, however, was the ability to supplement the official starvation rations by buying extra food on the black market, where the prices were many times higher than the official ones. Those not able to do so were sentenced to death by starvation. Beggars populated the ghetto streets, trying to get some food in order to be saved for one more day. Little children with rags instead of clothes cried for a piece of bread. The streets were crowded with all these poor people running around or selling their last belongings, almost all their household items and clothes. Diaries and memoirs testify to the smell and the noise in the courtyards and the streets, the narrowness and the tight crowds. Especially for the Warsaw ghetto, documents show that after a while people got used to dead corpses covered with newspapers lying on the street. There were periods with 5000 deaths a month. Conditions tended to be better in the smaller ghettos and in those closer to the countryside.

As the official rations never were sufficient, smuggling became an important means of survival in many ghettos. Under the constant threat of death, ghetto inhabitants brought food and medicine into the ghetto. Smuggling could take place on an individual scale with persons, mainly children, trying to provide for their own families. Yet there were also large scale, profit-oriented contraband trade networks (see document B 4). Whereas in the Warsaw ghetto smuggling reached huge dimensions, there were also places where this was hardly possible at all: In Lodz the ghetto was hermetically sealed off; there was hardly any contact with the outside world. The ghetto also had its own currency which made trade with the outside world almost impossible.

Social Stratification

For most Jews ghettoisation meant radical impoverishment and social downgrading. The longer the occupation continued, the more Jews were living in extreme poverty. Yet the situation was not equally bad for everybody. A complex social hierarchy developed in the ghettos. For a minority in the larger ghettos, it was possible to make a limited fortune by smuggling on a large and organised scale or by becoming an informer of German officials, especially the Gestapo. A new elite emerged under these new circumstances. There were rich people who could buy almost everything (by ghetto standards), and in some cases even went to restaurants and cafes where they celebrated while outside on the pavement a beggar was dying. Even if these are extreme cases, many conflicts arouse under the conditions in the ghettos about how to react to persecution and how to behave in this extreme situation. Corruption played an important role in the ghettos, too: Knowing the right persons in the Jewish administration could help in finding a better job or get more and better provisions. Ghetto inhabitants even found a new language and created new words for these problems.

There were also far-reaching changes in family life and structures as well as regarding gender roles in the ghettos. There was hardly any privacy, a phenomenon which had a huge impact on family life and sexuality. Women who never had to work before started to do so; in many families the children as those who were able to cross the borders of the ghetto more easily became engaged in smuggling, often becoming the main bread-earners. Husbands often lost their source of income, whereas many men had even fled eastwards at the beginning of the occupation or had been sent to a labour camp. In the ghettos established in the area of the former Soviet Union, the situation was even worse, as in many cases mass killings were conducted before ghettos were established, so that most families had already experienced the loss of family members, for example in the cases of Kaunas or Wilno. Some families broke apart under these extreme conditions, while others drew closer together.

The arrival of refugees and deportees into some of the already overcrowded ghettos brought new problems; housing and supplies had to be guaranteed for new ghetto inhabitants, who did not have any connections, had no work and in many cases hardly any belongings (see document C 10). They were dependent on public-aid by the Jewish Councils and/or the Self-Help Organisations (see B: Jewish Administrations). Especially when German Jews came to the Eastern European ghettos, such as Lodz and Warsaw, groups that hardly had anything in common except for falling under the Nazi definition of being a “Jew” were forced to live together under terrible circumstances. In Minsk and Riga the situation was different, as large parts of the local population were shot in order to make space for the arrival of the transports from the Reich. For these German or Austrian Jews daily life in the ghettos was an absolute shock, no matter how bad their situation back home had been. They were in no way prepared for the reality of the ghettos and many of them did not live long enough to get used to the situation.

Organising life and culture

It was not just the newcomers who found themselves thrust into a new reality: When the ghettos were established, the local population also had to get used to radical new conditions. Ripped out of their former normal lives, bereft of almost everything they had owned, in many cases unemployed, the new ghetto inhabitants had to organise their lives anew. They had to find a way to maintain their physical and mental health. At least in the larger ghettos where these structures could develop, both the official Jewish administrations and general members of society (see B: Jewish Administrations) started organising help for the poor and the ill, but also an educational and cultural life. Many men, women and young people tried not to resign to their fate, but instead attempted to remain active and build up a society in which people cared for and helped each other. These activities were an important means of self-assertion. Many sources document the strong will of ghetto inhabitants to retain some sort of “normal” daily routine that was connected with their lives before the war – be it a normal family life, normal surroundings for children in an orphanage or school or a normal evening in a theatre.

Public kitchens were set up so that poor people were able to get a bowl of soup for a few pennies or even without paying – this often constituted their only meal each day. Doctors and nurses tried to help the sick in the hospitals as well as it was possible under these dire circumstances: In some cases hospitals had to move into the new ghetto borders where their new premises were unsuitable to the needs of a hospital. Medical drugs were missing and the constant lack of food made the patients even weaker. Due to the general conditions, the hospitals were also overcrowded. Often two or even more patients had to share a bed.

Diaries and memoirs testify how shocking the sight of hungry, sick and suffering children, wrapped in rags, was for the ghetto inhabitants and how important they all thought it was to help these youngest victims of ghettoisation. Many orphanages moved to the ghettos or were founded there to help children. The most famous was the one conducted by the author and educator Janusz Korczak in Warsaw, but there were many more. (See document C 3).

The youth was perceived as the future of the Jewish community. It also seemed important for people in the ghettos not only to feed, but also to educate their children, to ensure that they learnt about other realities than just the one in the ghetto, the reality of hunger, suffering and death. There were both clandestine and official schools where children and youngsters were taught and prepared for a life after the war. In schools and orphanages children also staged plays or sang in a chorus, sometimes even performing in public.

While some Jews lost their faith in the face of these terrible developments, others gained succour from religion in this situation. Rabbis were asked to rule on extreme questions that would have been unthinkable before (see B 7). In some ghettos, like in Warsaw, Lodz or Wilno, there were cultural performances on a very high level as many actors and musicians were locked up inside the ghettos. Professional theatres and symphony orchestras were founded. There were also many groups of amateur actors or musicians who got together to play on a semi-professional basis. Often these performances were accompanied by social commitments as parts of the revenue was used to support orphanages, hospitals or soup kitchens, as all public welfare activities increasingly suffered from lack of funding. In cafes and restaurants, concerts or cabaret were performed as well.

In Wilno, where several thousand Jews were shot even before the ghetto was established in September 1941, a rich cultural life developed, too. There were intense discussions, however, as to whether it was appropriate to dance and sing when so many Jews had been killed. Slogans like “It is forbidden to sing in cemeteries” were written by passers-by on posters announcing the first concerts. Despite this the performances in Wilno were also successful and attracted many visitors.

Many of these cultural activities were most likely only to be found in larger ghettos. We do not know enough about the situation in small ghettos, but surely there were at least similar activities on a less extensive level, like private readings or music circles. For many Jews who were forced to live in a ghetto for a certain period of time, it was a necessity to create an intellectual “Gegenwelt” to the destructive reality of the ghetto where they had to confront hunger, pain and death every day.

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1) **Litzmannstadt** Clandestine photos by Mendel Grossman, a Jewish worker in the statistical department
2) **Krakow** Interview with Dr. Maximilian Lipschitz about living conditions in the Krakow Ghetto, August 1946 (http://voices.iit.edu/interviewee?doc=lipschitzM)
3) **Warsaw** A child (Cyrla Zajfer) describes the changes in her life since the start of the war, September 1941
4) **Warsaw** The writer Lejb Goldin describes a single day in the ghetto and his hunger
5) **Warsaw** A report on conflicts due to refugees being sent to well-to-do flats in the ghetto
6) **Warsaw** Scenes from a children's hospital, March 1941
7) **Warsaw** The youngster Chaim Gluzsztejn recounts a meeting to celebrate the Yiddish poet Perets, May 1941
8) **Radomsko** The young girl Miriam Chaszczewacka describes her life, 21 April – 12 June 1941
9) **Wilno** Herman Kruk describes life in the Wilno ghetto, 29 April 1942
10) **Warsaw** Perec Opoczyński reports on smuggling in the Ghetto, October 1941

D. Work

The following text will focus on an aspect of Jewish labour in ghettos under German occupation which only recently has become the focus of research: the fact that work for limited wages was the norm for most ghetto inhabitants for long periods of time. Once again as in other chapters of this unit, the General Government will serve as the main example – many of the conditions there were also true for other regions (e.g. the types of work and production, the long working hours, the fact that social security contributions were deducted from Jewish wages).

For many years, forced labour has dominated the discourse about Jewish work in the ghettos. Recently, stimulated by legal developments in Germany regarding cases brought by Holocaust survivors against the German pension system, historians served as expert witnesses. They have brought to light that Jewish work during the first years of the German occupation took various forms and that work taken up voluntarily against remuneration was the norm for much longer periods in the existence of many ghettos than previously generally understood. The labour market such as it existed under these extreme conditions was heavily tilted against Jews in every important way (e.g. quality and number of available positions, the certainty of receiving remuneration in full or even at all, the amounts paid out, work conditions and hours). The fact that ghetto inhabitants nevertheless engaged in it is yet another example of their strong will to survive.

There are many reasons for this lacuna: Many Holocaust survivors who had spent time in a ghetto only survived subsequently as forced labourers in camps, so that later even worse experiences often predominated and were superimposed over previous experiences. Even more importantly in the legal sphere, official German restitution questionnaires issued during the 1950s and 1960s in their short section on the biography of the submitter did not address the issue of voluntary work in the ghettos, as they were targeted at measures of persecution.

Forced Labour under the SS and Police Administration (Autumn 1939 to Summer 1940)

When the German Wehrmacht occupied Western and Central Poland in September and October 1939, the first form of work experienced by Jews under the new regime was forced labour. Jews were seized in their homes or on the street by German soldiers, were subsequently often kept incommunicado for days, sometimes without access to food, while usually having to clear streets and buildings from rubble and the detritus of war. Soon, they were also used to clear the streets or undertake other auxiliary duties by various German agencies, businesses or even civilians.

Particularly in large cities such as Warsaw this proved to be so disruptive that the Jewish Council under Adam Czerniakow organised a standing Jewish labour battalion of approx. 5.000 workers. The selection of the workers was also left to the Jewish councils. Supervision by Jews promised better work conditions, as it removed the corporal abuse dealt out by many German supervisors. Jews who were still relatively well-to-do were officially able to buy the right to skip their days on duty on the forced labour battalion. For some of the poor, duty in the battalion offered a meal at noon and, inasmuch as the local Jewish council was capable of offering it, a modest salary, so that there were some volunteers (in Warsaw, the number of volunteers was sufficient to suspend forced conscription between autumn 1940 and 1941). Nevertheless, “wild recruitment” by the various German agencies which were establishing themselves did however continue into 1940. Even individuals who had received passes because of their work in the Jewish Councils, the JSS or other necessary positions, were sometimes seized.

At the same time, German anti-Jewish policies as they had been developed over the last six years of Nazi rule in the Reich were being implemented and expanded at an accelerated rate: Jewish property was stolen, bank accounts were frozen, Jewish businesses were expropriated. Among these measures was the expulsion of Jews from their previous employment positions. Simultaneously and in a contradictory manner, the obligation to work for Poles and the compulsion to work for Jews was introduced on 26 October 1939 (the date of the setting up of the German civilian administration for central occupied Poland, the General Government for the occupied Polish territories, see document D 1). This meant that Jewish men, e.g. between the ages of 12 and 60, had to be in employment, just as many in the Jewish middle classes were expelled from their white-collar jobs. While many Jews were in theory subject to this compulsion to work, there was not enough work to go round in any case. This vicious cycle for the Jews was intentional: They were removed from the general economy, separated from the rest of the population, and forced by unemployment to accept unattractive positions to the benefit of the German war economy.

While the obligation to work for ethnic Poles was fully administered by the Department of Labour and its Labour Offices from the start, the compulsion to work for Jews was also supposed to be administered by the Higher SS- and Police Leader (HSSPF). The Jewish Councils were ordered to have the male Jewish population of working age (12 to 60) to fill in labour registration cards indicating their profession in order to prepare a card index for the administration of Jewish labour. The degree of coverage remained very low in practice, however, despite continuous efforts to get Jewish Council to improve it until 1942.

By the summer of 1940 it had become clear that the HSSPF and his police units were proving ineffective at organising Jewish labour in the General Government. At the same time, the SS and police was generally experiencing losses in a general struggle for power with the civilian administration of the General Government (a situation which would reverse itself two years later). The result was a shift in responsibility for Jewish labour to the Department of Labour (see document D 2). The German administration realised that “voluntary” work – even under the conditions in the ghettos – was more effective than forced labour.

At the same time, a system of forced labour camps for unskilled workers set up in mid-1940 still remained in operation. Most of these camps were located in the Lublin District, where SS- and Police Leader Odilo Globocnik used the 8.000 Jewish workers to build a “moat” along the border with the Soviet Union. Another 10.000 Jews had been sent to 34 camps for land improvement in swampy regions. Initially there were quite a few volunteers, but the generally bad conditions, even in the camps under Jewish administration, led to a steep decline. As these camps were rated to be of little economic use during control visits (see document D 3), the Labour Offices mostly stopped sending people there in autumn 1941. Overall there were almost 500 (often short-lived) forced labour camps for Jews throughout the General Government with about 50.000-70.000 inmates, mostly working in terrible conditions. While this was a considerable number, this also means that 80-90% of Jewish labour between the summers of 1940 and 1942 took place on the free market such as it could exist under the conditions of the occupation, with often similarly squalid conditions as in the camps.

The Period of the Predominance of the Department of Labour (Summer 1940 – Summer 1942)

Since the summer of 1940, it was in the interest of the German Labour Offices to preserve the Jewish workforce. The only way the workers could get food was by receiving remuneration, so the Labour Department introduced wages (either in cash or in vitals) for Jewish employees (otherwise the starvation rations would have fallen under the administration's budgets). Officially, Jews were supposed to earn 20% less than Poles employed in the same position. This led to complaints by employers, who had so far had access to Jewish labour for free. Paying out wages in vitals was not necessarily unattractive to workers, as prices for food on the black market could vary considerably. However, often payments went en bloc through the Jewish councils who financed their budgets by taxes on these wages. Sometimes this meant that the workers would not procure their wage in full or at all, receiving only their rations.

As Poles increasingly became subject to deportations for forced labour in the Reich, Jewish workers were supposed to replace them on the local labour market. There was even pressure on German and Polish businesses to employ Jews in order to free up Poles for deportation in order to meet deportation quotas particularly after mid-1941. Social insurance payments were deducted from every Jewish wage, even though they were barred from accessing any of the benefits. The Jewish Councils were ordered to supply benefits, but without receiving any budget for it. The JSS unsuccessfully lobbied for the cessation of payments to the general social security system, but to no avail – the German administration was not ready to forgo Jewish payments to fill the holes in their budgets.

The development of a specific ghetto economy was particularly felt in Warsaw, even as there were similar developments in other cities and towns on a smaller scale (see document D 9): After the closing of the Warsaw ghetto in November 1940, a new office, the Transferstelle, was charged with exchanging Jewish produce for food shipments. The management of its first director, Alexander Palfinger, was considered quite ineffective by the spring of 1941 – also, the fact that he ran a centralised economy like at his former position at Litzmannstadt Getto displeased economic officials in Krakow. He was promptly fired and replaced with the Austrian banker Max Bischof, who implemented the encouragement of private enterprise. He engaged in a publicity campaign in German newspapers and with the chambers of commerce in the Reich, pointing towards the scarcity of workers in Germany, the high degree of skill among the Jewish craftsmen and Warsaw's relative safety from the Allied bombing campaign (see document D 4). German companies set up so-called "shops /

szops", often resorting to Jewish businesses as subcontractors. As much of the production went to the Wehrmacht, particularly in the field of textiles, the Rüstungskommando's importance grew in the procurement of raw materials. These developments led to an improvement of the lot of the workers in the "shops" and their families, since they received a large part of the rations assigned to the ghetto as they were considered the "productive" part of the ghetto population.

Many Jews were, however, not employed officially by anyone. Next to the many jobless, particularly among deportees and refugees, many worked in service industries, in cottage industries, or got involved in street peddling – often selling off their last possessions. Much better established were those who were employed by the bureaucracies of the Jewish Councils, in the Jewish Order Service or the JSS. Of course, many also engage in the risky, if rewarding "illegal" work of smuggling (see document C 10).

In June 1942 there was a takeover of all Jewish affairs by the SS and police. Labour assignments of Jews were now only permitted under orders of the local police commander. The Labour Offices, German businesses and the Rüstungskommando only preserved the most necessary workers from annihilation to keep the most urgent war production going. There was a special role of work during the liquidation of the ghettos – it was the only official grounds for survival.

Ghetto Work in Other Territories

Here it is only possible to give some brief indications about the other regions with ghettos under German occupation (not to mention detailed coverage of Romanian occupied Transnistria, see document D 8). In the Wartheland, Jews were sent to a large number of forced labour camps, including some located along the construction sites of the Autobahn on old Reich territory. The ghetto in Litzmannstadt was transformed into a working ghetto early on by the efforts of the Judenälteste Chaim Rumkowski and, for quite different reasons, Hans Biebow, head of the German Gettoverwaltung – here, production under a centralised economy run by the city administration (Gettoverwaltung) prevailed (see document D 5). Early on, this administrative body successfully displaced competing private businesses. As mentioned in other chapters, Getto Litzmannstadt was not only one of the earliest, but also the longest lasting ghetto until 1944. In Upper Silesia the so-called Organisation Schmelt under the eponymous police official regulated Jewish labour since September 1940. About half of the total of 17.000 labourers in autumn 1941 had to work in camps along the Autobahn under bad conditions, while the factories in Bedzin and Sosnowiec were more favourable (workers could stay with their families in their flats). Work conditions in territories occupied after the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 were quite different, as they were preceded by waves of mass killings (see document D 7). But even here, Jews thrust into leadership positions in ghettos pursued a “work to live” strategy, as Jacob Gens did in Wilno. In some areas, only highly skilled Jews (doctors, highly specialised craftsmen), sometimes with their families, were left alive.

Giles Bennett

1) **General Government** GG Frank declares that Jews are subject to forced labour, October 1939
2) **General Government** The organisation of Jewish labour passes from the HSSPF to the Abteilung Arbeit, June 1940
3) **Warsaw** A report from a labour camp, summer 1940
4) **Warsaw** The Transferstelle advertises in the Völkischer Beobachter that Jewish labourers are available to German companies in Warsaw, August 1941
5) **Litzmannstadt** Rumkowski praises his own successes in economic policy, November 1941 (http://www.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/Files/Idea/%D7%90%D7%95%D7%A1%20000359.pdf)
6) **Warsaw** Jakub Zilbersztajn, a Jewish entrepreneur, describes the more favourable economic climate between May 1941 and the summer 1942
7) **Kaunas** The Judenrat threatens to hand over persons who refuse to work to the Germans, November 1941
8) **Transnistria** The Romanian military occupation authorities in Krivoe Ozero describe the employment of the Jews in the local ghetto, March 1943
9) **Tomaszow Maz.** The local JSS recounts the local production capacities, December 1941
10) **Litzmannstadt** Reportage by Oskar Singer “Beim ersten Millionär” on private entrepreneurial initiative

E. Dissolution and Resistance

The setting up of ghettos in the various regions of Central and Eastern Europe occupied by Nazi Germany took a different course in each of them – in the same way, the destruction of the ghetto populations took divergent routes in each of them: While the following text once again focuses on the General Government, the first region to experience mass extermination by gassing was the Wartheland, where Jews “unfit for work” from smaller ghettos were murdered in gas vans in the Chelmno/Kulmhof extermination centre since December 1941. As of January 1942, a number of waves of deportations from Litzmannstadt ensued, but “productive” Jews were allowed to remain there until 1944.

After the completion of “Aktion Reinhardt” in the General Government, the Jews in the neighbouring region of Upper Silesia experienced similar decimation by deportations to Auschwitz in 1943, whereas the Bialystok region was reached in late 1942. In the occupied Soviet territories, most of the still existing ghettos were either completely dissolved in 1942, usually by mass shootings (Ukraine, Weißruthenien; see also document E 5) with some major exceptions in 1943 (Minsk, Vilnius, Kaunas, Siauliai), or transformed into labour camps after those “unfit for work” had been murdered as in the Baltics.

“Aktion Reinhardt” in the General Government

In autumn 1941, anti-Jewish policy in the GG escalated. On the one hand, an envisaged deportation to the newly occupied territories in Belarus or the Ukraine could not be realized, on the other hand German bureaucrats and medical administrators considered the ghettos a danger for German health and security. In the General Government a general order was issued to kill all Jews who were apprehended outside the ghettos, while in Galicia, the new fifth district of the General Government, tens of thousands of Jews were shot in order to keep the ghetto territories as small as possible before the establishment of ghettos in Stanislawow and Lwow. At the end of 1941, there was a broad consensus among the occupiers that it was necessary to get rid of the ghettos by any means. The ghettos, which they had created, were now considered dangerous, as well as a shame for their respective cities.

In September/October 1941, the SS and Police leadership in Berlin and in the General Government decided to start the systematic killing of Jews. In March 1942, construction of the first extermination camp in the village of Belzec between the Lublin and Galicia districts was completed; at the same time work began in Sobibor on the eastern border of the General Government. Since early 1942 preparations for the deportations were on the way. All instances of the civilian administration, and especially its labour departments, issued new labour cards for those who would be temporarily spared. Some officials even divided the ghetto territories they were responsible for according to the economic value of the Jewish population.

During the first four months of the program later named “Aktion Reinhardt”, from mid-March 1942 until mid-July, this distinction – being considered fit or unfit for work - was the central criterion for selecting the victims. The main targets for deportation were elderly people without relatives, Jews who were forced to rely on Jewish Social welfare, and refugees who had been forcibly moved from other towns. Systematic mass murder started in the Lublin and Galicia districts on 17 March 1942. The organizers of the whole murder program, SS and Police Leader Odilo Globocnik and his staff resided in the Lublin district, and this was also the location of the first extermination camps. Another distinguishing feature of the Lublin area was the fact that deportation transports of Jews from other countries (Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia) were being sent there since spring 1942. Thus the civilian administrative bodies urged the police to deport as many local Jews as possible in order to make room for the deportees from Central Europe. The same dynamic had also come into effect further East: As German Jewish deportees began arriving in Riga and Minsk in late 1941, the majority of the local Jews were killed.

Approximately in mid-April 1942 the deportations to Belzec stopped in order to set up a larger building with gas chambers there. In early May the extermination centre in Sobibor became operational, leading to another wave of deportations from the Lublin district. When the new gas chambers at Belzec had been set up, a third district was included in the program: On 30 May 1942, thousands of Jews from Krakow were forced into freight trains, sent to Belzec and killed there. The same happened to Jewish communities in other towns of the Krakow district. Finally by mid-June 1942 all transports had to be stopped, since all non-military traffic was interrupted in order to prioritize the German military offensive in the Soviet Union towards Stalingrad and the Caucasus. Nevertheless, the civilian administration and police forced hundreds of Jews to walk to the extermination camps or deported them by trucks. After three or four months of continuous mass murder, almost 100,000 Jews had been put to death.

In June 1942, however, the SS and Police took full control over all “Jewish matters”, and in a secret speech SS chief Himmler declared that there would no longer be any Jews under German rule within the time span of a year, that is by mid-1943. On the 22nd of July 1942, Gestapo officers ordered the chairman of the Warsaw Judenrat, Adam Czerniakow, to prepare 5,000 persons a day for deportation. Czerniakow committed suicide the following night, but the Germans took over and began deporting Warsaw Jews the same day. By that time, a third extermination centre had been established in Treblinka, in the Eastern part of Warsaw district.

The “Great Action” in Warsaw, as it was called, developed in three stages: During the first days the inmates were called up to show up for resettlement by using posters. They were promised a handout of bread for the journey. After some days, rumours spread about the fate of the deportees and nobody appeared voluntarily. Now German units combed the ghetto area, even the so-called shops or ghetto enterprises for victims, and brought them to an area on the northern edge of the ghetto, the so-called Umschlagplatz. There they were crammed into freight trains and sent to Treblinka. During the last days of the “Great Action” the occupiers reversed their strategy. They forced all ghetto inhabitants to gather at one junction on Mila street, which then was blocked from all sides. Here German employers could look for their workers and send them back to their ghetto flats. All others were deported. On 12 September, after almost eight weeks, between 254,000 and 300,000 persons had been sent to death, among them nearly all the elderly and children.

In parallel to the Great Action in Warsaw, the deportations also started in the Warsaw region and the Radom district, and were also taken up again in the Krakow, Galicia and Lublin districts. Almost every day in August and September 1942, more than twenty thousand human beings were being murdered in the General Government, and not only there. Simultaneously the occupiers committed giant massacres in Volhynia and Western Belarus, and transports from Western Europe arrived at Auschwitz. One can even claim that these were the worst weeks in history.

It is obvious that the SS and Police, but also parts of the civilian administration wanted to get rid of all ghettos. But already by September debates about the ghetto liquidations started, since the police not only deported those considered unfit for work or those who were unemployed, but also persons with work permits, sometimes even raiding ghetto enterprises. At this time, the Wehrmacht in particular protested, that Jewish armament workers should not be deported. Finally, Himmler prevailed in this debate. He continued the deportations but promised the Wehrmacht and armaments industries, that they could keep some of the Jewish workforce, which had to be put into camps under SS surveillance.

In October/November 1942 SS and Police forces repeatedly raided the ghettos in order to find Jews in hiding or those who had escaped to the woods in August/September. By the end of the year, ghettos were only allowed to officially exist in 52 locations, and they were subsequently transformed into working ghettos or camps. Only the workers themselves were allowed to stay, while most of their families were killed. In January 1943, only some 500,000 of formerly 2 mio. Jews in the General Government were still alive. Until June 1943, all of the ghettos, including Warsaw and Lwow, were dissolved in violent killing raids; all of the camps were similarly shut down in killing sprees by November, except for the camps in the Radom region which were working for the armaments industry.

Most of the ghettos in the Reichskommissariat Ukraine were liquidated in the second half of 1942 by mass shootings. Conversely, some ghettos in Reichskommissariat Ostland were allowed to exist a little longer until the summer of 1943, when only some labourers were transferred to forced labour and concentration camps. The Lodz Getto was allowed to continue to exist until the summer of 1944, but had suffered waves of deportations to excise “unprofitable” parts of the population before.

The Events During the Liquidations

This short overview can of course does not show the actual reality of the ghetto clearings or ghetto liquidations. In most cases, these were violent manhunts within densely populated cities and towns. Only during the first months of 1942, and sometimes at the beginning of major deportations, did German functionaries try to force the Jewish Councils to organize the arrest of the victims themselves, by means of the Jewish Ghetto Police. Already during the March Action in Lublin, extreme force was applied. The ghetto raids were organized according to plans, which had been set up by the police, the civilian administration and the Reichsbahn, the German railways. Police units from the district capitals arrived a day before the deportations started, and coordinated the planning with the local administration and police. The next day the territory of the ghetto was surrounded by SS and Police forces, often police battalions, but also local Schutzpolizei, the Municipal Police, and Gendarmerie, the Rural Police. In Lublin a unit had been set up for specific tasks composed of recruited former Soviet POWs, who had been trained at the Trawniki camp. These men not only guarded the extermination camps, but were also deployed in battalions or companies during ghetto liquidations predominately in Lublin district, but also in other cases such as Warsaw. Finally, the Polish Police and, in Eastern Galicia, the Ukrainian police served as auxiliaries.

After the ghetto was surrounded, small units composed of German and non-German policemen, sometimes accompanied by members of the Jewish Order Service, went through the ghetto streets, entered the houses and forced the inhabitants to come outside. Then the victims were herded to a central place where the selection of the people with permits began. German employers could pick out their workers and send them back. All others were convoyed either to the trains to be sent to the death camps or to nearby execution sites.

Jewish Reactions: Despair, “Salvation through Work”, Going into Hiding, Armed Resistance

Jews responded in many different ways to the liquidations of the ghettos: Many reacted with despair and apathy to the terrible circumstances and the loss of friends and family members. Others, particularly those whose skills were yet in demand for German war production, hoped that these needs would ensure their survival (individually or even for their core families). These workers thus went on working in the remnants of the ghettos or were sent to camps (see <UNIT ON CAMPS>). As these harsh to murderous locations were the only places where Jews were allowed to exist legally, many Jews who tried to escape eventually returned there to leave behind the even more dire circumstances they found themselves in.

Preconditions for escape were manifold: It almost always required help from the non-Jewish local population, which was threatened with collective capital punishment for hiding and aiding Jews. As locals were rewarded by the Germans for providing information on hidden Jews, those who were ready to help Jews escape death were under grave threat themselves. Also, it was very hard to procure additional rations for those in hiding under war-time conditions imposed by the occupier. Jews who wished to move over to “di arishe zayt” (the “Aryan” side) usually required established contacts to non-Jews, which tended to favour Jews who had socialised with non-Jews before the war, particularly those of the more assimilated middle class. Acquiring a second identity in the form of “arishe papirn” [Aryan papers] could be very costly. Many parents also handed over their children to sympathetic non-Jews for safekeeping.

In rural areas, particularly in Eastern Poland, forested areas could offer refuge to those escaping from the ghettos. While some Jews were absorbed into non-Jewish, often leftist or communist partisan units, only few purely Jewish partisan units were able to persist there. Most of the “family camps”, which included non-combatant women and children, fell victim to the Germans or inimical non-Jewish underground units. Rural settings with their face-to-face society could make hiding Jews quite difficult; here, German Gendarmerie would execute any Jews found in the countryside almost on the spot and exact vengeance on their helpers. Conversely, large and relatively anonymous cities such as Warsaw served as hiding locations for thousands of escaped Jews, at least for a time. In Warsaw, many who had successfully hidden were subsequently killed in the Warsaw Rising of the summer of 1944. Here as in other environments, not all non-Jewish supporters were completely benevolent, as some only provided assistance as long as their protégées could pay for their services. Others, so-called “szmalcownicy”, identified undercover Jews in order to blackmail them, reporting those who could not pay them off to the German police in order to collect a reward. This was made easier by the fact that many Jews only spoke the local vernacular (e.g. Polish) with a discernible Jewish accent.

Actual organised armed resistance against the Germans was rare. It seems to have required the realisation that mass killings were not just a local phenomenon but that a total destruction of the Jewish population was occurring. Coming to this conclusion was difficult during the German occupation when Jews were often not in a position to get information from other towns and cities. A first underground organisation, the Fareynigte Partisaner Organisatsie (FPO) was formed in Vilna in January 1942. During the wave of ghetto liquidations in September 1942, much of Eastern Poland followed suit, with desperate attacks against the troops charged with the ghetto clearances.

An important factor for Jewish armed resistance and particularly Jewish partisan groups was the local environment: Often the local Non-Jewish underground factions were hostile or indifferent to the fate of the Jews. Mostly it was leftist groups who were supportive and also accepted Jewish members. Forested areas offered shelter, which explains why Jewish partisans were most common in Lithuania, western Belarus and in some regions of Poland (the Lublin and Galicia Districts). Many groups of “forest Jews” were mostly concerned with their own survival and often included families. Systematic hunts by the occupying forces and hostile actions of other partisan groups mostly led to the discovery and destruction of these groups. Many even went back into the still existing ghettos and camps as their situation was too difficult in the forests.

During the deportation “action” in Warsaw in January 1943, German forces met with organised and armed resistance for the first time. When the Warsaw Ghetto was supposed to be cleared completely in April 1943, armed Jewish resistance groups fought a desperate and ultimately hopeless battle with German and auxiliary forces. It was to remain the only Jewish uprising of this scale. While the workers from the ghetto shops were transferred to labour camps near Lublin, SS troops mercilessly levelled the ghetto and killed all Jews found inside. Similar uprisings, albeit at a smaller scale, followed in other locations.

Armed resistance was only one of the patterns of behaviour exhibited by Jews towards the dissolution of the ghettos: Many despaired, while some tried to hide, escaped to the “Aryan” part of town or fled to the woods (see document E 9). Resistance was mostly chosen by those who wished to actively oppose their murderers, even at the cost of their own survival. Resistance as a choice of action was mostly adopted by Jewish youth movements. Most of its proponents were quite clear that armed action would most likely result in the deaths of those taking part – but they nevertheless advocated choosing this end instead of embarking on the strategy of alleviation pursued by most Jewish Councils. Armed resistance faced many problems: It was difficult to get weapons and means of gathering information such as couriers had to be organised (see document E 10). Additionally, the political parties in Warsaw had a hard time agreeing with each other, whereas a united front was achieved in Wilno (see document E 8).

Dieter Pohl / Giles Bennett

1) **Hrubieszow** A woman hiding on the “Aryan side” describes round-ups in ghettos in the Hrubieszow region, June 1942
2) **Tomaszow Maz.** The German administration mentions the deportation of the Jews in passing in internal correspondence, Summer 1941

3) **Wilno** Grigorij Sur describes the discussions in the Wilno ghetto, whether it is permitted to flee en masse
4) **Wilno** Ruth Lejmenson remembers the dissolution of the Wilno Ghetto in September 1943 and the role of the Jewish police (http://www.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/Files/Idea/%D7%90%D7%95%D7%A1%20002119%201.pdf)
5) **Druskininkai** In his post-war testimony, Berl Pikovsky describes the destruction of the Druskininkai ghetto, one of the last provincial ghettos in Lithuania, in November 1942
6) **Warsaw** Izrael Lichtensztajn describes the first phase of the "Große Aktion" in Warsaw, July 1942
7) **Warsaw** Emanuel Ringelblum looks back at the terrible events of the preceding months, 15 October 1942 (www.archive.org/details/nybc210147)
8) **Wilno** The Fareynikte Partizaner Organizatsie calls for resistance, January 1942
9) **Warsaw** In her post-war memoirs, Hella Rufeisen-Schüpper describes the last phase in the command bunker of the ZOB during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in April/May 1943
1) **Kraków:** While in prison in 1943, the Jewish underground activist "Justyna" (Gusta Dawidson-Draenger) clandestinely writes about the difficulties of operating a resistance group (http://www.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/Files/Idea/%D7%A0%D7%9B%D7%A0%D7%A1%20001708%20%D7%91.pdf)

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EHRI WP5 Online Course, Unit: "The Nazi Camps and the Persecution and Murder of the Jews"

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- C. Transit Camps in Western Europe During the Holocaust
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A. Labor Camps

1. Letter by SSPF Odilo Globocnik to Brandt about using Jews for Slave Labor, 21 June 1943
2. One of the first testimonies given to the Department for War Criminals of the Central Committee of Liberated Jews focuses on forced labor camps in the Tarnopol region in 1942/43, Leipheim 22 January 1948
3. Diary from a camp in Neustadt bei Coburg, January 1945
4. A post-war report on the Heinkel-Werke labor camp in Budzyn http://www.ifz-muenchen.de/archiv/zsa/ZS_A_0012.pdf
5. Hunswinkel, Germany, forced labor near the labor camp http://collections.yadvashem.org/photosarchive/en-us/98134.html
6. Czech Jews work in the yard of the Lipa farm labor camp http://digitalassets.ushmm.org/photoarchives/detail.aspx?id=1176219&search=labor+camp&index=5
7. Jewish prisoners from the Stupki labor camp at forced labor in a quarry http://digitalassets.ushmm.org/photoarchives/detail.aspx?id=1042552&search=labor+camp&index=78
8. Interrogation of the Judenältester Karl Demmerer of the Blechhammer camp (first a labor camp, then a concentration camp sub-camp in 1957 http://www.ifz-muenchen.de/archiv/zs/zs-1750.pdf
9. David P. Boder Interviews Ludwig Hamburger; August 26, 1946; Genève, Switzerland http://voices.iit.edu/interview?doc=hamburgerL&display=hamburgerL_de

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1. The Camp Calendar of Buchenwald: Jewish calendar with parallel Gregorian dates, handwritten in the Buchenwald Camp by Rabbi Avigdor
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4. Report and charts on the exploitation of female Jewish labor from Camp Headquarters, Auschwitz 31 December 1944
5. Dachau: Prisoners (probably Jews) standing to attention, 1938 http://www.bild.bundesarchiv.de/cross-search/search/_1360934631/?search[view]=detail&search[focus]=1
6. The memoirs of Peter Sturm, describing his life in the Blechhammer camp, a sub-camp of the Auschwitz extermination camp; evacuation from Blechhammer and a death march to the Buchenwald camp. (http://www.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/Files/Idea/%D7%90%D7%95%D7%A1%20000135.pdf#search=%27extermination%27)
7. A report describes the treatment of Jews at Buchenwald after the 1938 November Pogrom

See also documents A4, A8 and A9

C. Transit Camps

1. A postcard from the Stuivenberg family, Mechelen, Postcard thrown from a deportation train on 10.11.1942 (2 docs).
2. Personal letters exchanged through the Red Cross between Philipp Werner Ahlfeld and his wife Ella Ahlfeld-Cahan from 1943 (2 docs)

3. A series of photos by Dr. Robert Hadad depicts life in Drancy
http://collections.yadvashem.org/photosarchive/en-us/search.html#q=Dr.%20Robert%20Hadad
4. Aizik - Adolphe Feder: Boy with a Yellow Badge, Seated at a Laid Table Painting made in the Drancy camp, Dec. 24, 1942
http://www.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/GFH/0000017496/0000017496_1_web.jpg
5. Jacques Gotko: Kitchen No. 4 in the Drancy Camp 1943
http://www.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/Art/1703.jpg

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1. Instruction of Reichsführer SS Himmler to HSSPF Ost Krüger regarding the completion of the "Final Solution" in the General Government by the end of 1942, 19 July 1942
2. Testimony to the deportation of Jews from the Hrubieszow Ghetto to Belzec, Sobibor, Majdanek, and Wieliczka. Death March to Flossenbürg, Waldstadt bei Pöcking 8 July 1946
3. Letter by Krüger to the Director of the SS-Personalhauptamt in Berlin about hiring Armon Goeth for the deportation and killing of Jews, 12 June 1942
4. A Last Will and Testament by 12 Jewish prisoners who worked in Chelmno prior to being sent to extermination themselves
5. Excavating Sobibor – A Test Case: Photo Documentation – Sobibor Map

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2. Architecture of Murder
http://www1.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/auschwitz_architecture/index.asp
3. A detailed report on Auschwitz, given by Rudolf Vrba (Walter Rosenberg) and Alfred Wetzler, who managed to escape from the camp
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6.The Auschwitz Album
http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/album_auschwitz/index.asp

7. A punishment report for Marie Tajfelbaum. It wanted 5 nights in standing cell for picking an apple
http://en.auschwitz.org/m/index.php?option=com_ponygallery&func=detail&id=772&Itemid=3
8. Auschwitz, Poland, A Jewish woman, Auschwitz prisoner number 1474
http://collections.yadvashem.org/photosarchive/en-us/82985.html
9. An interrogation of Otto Ambros, April 1947 (http://www.ifz-muenchen.de/archiv/zs/zs-0810.pdf)
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Bobruysk

1. Map – the Jewish camp within the Military camp near Bobruysk (1 doc)
2. Testimony of Shraga Zisholtz, YVA, O. 3/3757 ;
3. Testimony of Avraham Fabishevitz, O. 3/3641;

General Introduction

The camps, more than any other phenomenon created by the Nazi regime, became the utmost symbol of the inexplicable cruelty and the highhanded waste of human lives that characterized this regime during the Second World War and the Holocaust. Since their inception, in the early 1930s, the mere knowledge that camps existed sent a shiver down people's spine – they were a closed secret world shut away from the normal one, and each of them was a closed world of its own, living by its own rules. Life in the camps, if one may call this type of existence "life" at all, had no connection or resemblance whatsoever to the world the prisoners knew before they were caged in there.

Survivors of camps sometimes doubt their own memory: "Did what happened, indeed happen?" asked the poet Abba Kovner decades after the Holocaust. Memoirs of survivors who tried to describe and analyze the world of the camps are among the best literary works of modern time: Primo Levi, Jean Amery, Viktor Frankl, Eli Wiesel, Jorge Semprun. There were and are poets, playwrights, film directors, artists, hosts of historians, sociologists and psychologists who tried and still try to decipher the inner rules of the camps universe – many of them are survivors: "the other planet", as defined by author Yechiel Dinur, was an experience only survivors could attempt to convey. Dinur wrote under his pen name Kazetnik – the man of the "kazet," the abbreviation of the words "concentration camp" in German. Giving testimony at the Adolf Eichmann's trial in Jerusalem, he fainted while trying to describe Auschwitz.

Indeed, camps, as designed and established by the high echelons of the SS, are not easy to define. Firstly, because of the variety of types; hard labor camps, concentration camps, POW camps, transit camps, womens' camps, sub-camps for certain nationalities or types of population, and – finally – extermination camps. The lines between the different types were often blurred, according to changing needs. There were a few dozen main concentration camps, which together featured hundreds of sub-camps. Some of the camps existed for the entire 12 years of Nazi rule, while others were closed down, or removed to another location after a short while. American post-war committees estimated the number of all camps as amounting to close to 2,000.

From 1933 onwards, but especially from 1939 to the end of the war in 1945, the camps, which were scattered almost all over Europe, included populations composed of all the continent's nationalities, professions, and political inclinations – yet they held very few children or elderly persons. In early 1945 there were about 714,000 prisoners locked up in camps, the highest number at a given point in time. The overall number of slaves that had to undergo this nightmare is estimated at between 2 to 2.5 million, and there are even higher estimations. According to the surviving fragmentary documentation about 450,000 of them perished, yet the current assumption is that 700,000 – 800,000 victims is closer to reality. Death rate rose gradually, from comparatively low in the 1930s to the highest during the last phases of the war. These numbers do not include the about 3.5 million Jews murdered in the six extermination camps, which were either designed for this purpose only, or were tightly closed areas within existing camps.

There is one more major obstacle that hinders a definition of the camps, and this is the lack of sufficient sources: there is a vast discrepancy between the number of camps, their geographic and human scope, their centrality in the Nazi system, the symbol they turned to be, and the available sources. Some German documentation has been preserved, but its coverage is far from comprehensive in covering the enormity of the phenomenon. Much of it was destroyed, for obvious reasons, when camps were closed down or moved, especially so towards the end of the war, during the chaos that accompanied the evacuation of camps when the German defeat drew closer. The inmates were hardly ever able to record or write anything, and the cases in which they managed to do so, and material has been found, are rare. The high death rate and the constant moving of inmates from one place to another do not allow for a full description of reality. Therefore research is still far from complete, as even some main camps have not yet been thoroughly examined. Writing about the camps, either by way of analytic writing such as historiography, or through sociological and psychological findings, is very difficult to complete, to say nothing of the emotional difficulty that faces one who dares delve into the abyss.

All the above mentioned notwithstanding, let us try and find some common basis for a definition. Firstly, despite the many types, the physical structure of the camps was almost identical: almost all were surrounded by barbed wire fences, sometimes electrically charged, guarded by machine guns mounted on towers, and featured barracks lacking even basic amenities. Secondly, the staff was trained to treat all prisoners, not just Jews, Roma and Slavs, as subhuman, and it used all possible methods of torture, starvation, overwork and degradation, since the camps served as tools in the hands of the regime. They were built and run on purpose, to mercilessly subdue and get rid of political opponents, members of underground movements, “racially unwanted” groups, socially out-of-liners and the “aberrant”. The layout, the staff and the goals were what made for a Nazi camp.

And finally, there is the case of the extermination camps, which were all of the above, and yet profoundly different and unique: they were an industry of death that turned millions into ashes in the name of a hallucinatory ideology. The largest of the six, Auschwitz, turned into the ultimate symbol of inhumanity.

Historiography/Sources

The text will be published after all adaptations are included

Labor Camps

The huge expansion of slave labor and the labor camp network in the Third Reich was based on two main preconditions: first, the rapid expansion of the SS and its business enterprises; and second, some unique elements in Germany's economy, and particularly, in its wartime economy.

Early Forced Labor in Nazi Concentration Camps

The early concentration camps used compulsory labor in the spirit of the so-called "productive penal system," used previously by the Weimar judicial system as a corrective measure in its prisons. The Nazi regime introduced a specific twist into this system, by using manual forced labor to degrade and humiliate its political and ideological opponents. Sometimes, the work performed by the inmates was pointless, but in most cases it served local construction projects. The inmates of the 15 Emsland Camps were used, for example, in large drainage projects aimed at cultivating large parts of the Emsland wetlands. Some of these camps were established already in 1933 and were operated by the Reich's Ministry of Justice. It was, however, the SS that systematized the economic exploitation of camp inmates after taking over most of the camp system from 1934.

The SS initiated business activities as a way to encourage German unity and Nazi values by starting to use inmates in its business enterprises soon after taking over the camps. Parts of one of the early camps, Dachau, were used for growing medicinal herbs, with inmates working in the fields. The use of camp inmates in camp-based enterprises intensified as the SS expanded its businesses and entered industrial production. In January 1936, SS chief Heinrich Himmler acquired the *Allach Porcelain Manufacturing* firm. Soon afterwards, the SS opened branch workshops of this factory inside nearby Dachau.

Forced Labor as Part of the Expansion of the SS Empire

When in 1936 Hitler announced his comprehensive *Führerbauten* plan, the goal of which was to rebuild Germany's main cities, a huge business and political opportunity opened for the SS. Consequently, Himmler started to convert parts of his camp-based operations to the production of construction materials. Among other initiatives, he expanded the production of bricks in several camps. On 29 April 1938, the SS established the *Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke* firm (DESt). Himmler nominated Oswald Pohl, a former Navy paymaster, to be the firm's general director. Pohl simultaneously worked as the head of the businesses of the SS, thereby becoming a central figure in the development of the Nazi slave labor system. Pohl's new earthwork and stone-cutting enterprise based its entire business plan on the massive use of slave labor in several concentration camps or near them. Camps like Flossenbürg, Mauthausen and Natzweiler were established with the specific goal of using their inmates in stone quarries and brick factories run for DESt.

While Himmler sought to expand his modern industrial businesses, he also expanded enormously his low-tech enterprises. The most important common feature of this two-pronged organizational and economical expansion was the increased use of camp inmates. It must be stressed though, that using slave labor in these camps served two conflicting goals. While the SS sought to gain profit through the use of inmates, in most cases brutal methods and ill treatment for the sake of Nazi ideology was, in fact, counter-productive. In Mauthausen, for example, the *"Wiener Graben"* stone quarry was used to torture inmates and to execute them. It was a normal practice to force inmates, carrying heavy stones, to climb up and down the 186 steps leading to the quarry until they died.

Labor Camps and Germany's War Economy

As World War II broke out, an acute labor shortage became apparent. The main causes of this shortage were: 1) the massive military draft; 2) the large-scale reduction of unemployment throughout the 1930s; 3) the failure to mobilize women efficiently; and 4) the expansion of industrial branches related to the armament industry.

Part of the solution to the problem came in 1939-1940, when POWs were allocated to different economy-related operations. Initially, most POWs were used for agricultural work, but in 1940 the Germans started to divert an increased number of POWs to industrial work. From 1939 on a series of new labor camps appeared in occupied Poland and later in the occupied Soviet territories. These camps housed inmates of foreign nationality and of diverse ethnic backgrounds and were in many cases run by civilian authorities or by the Wehrmacht.

The SS ran one of the largest networks of such camps in eastern Upper Silesia under the title *Organisation Schmelt*. After its establishment in October 1940, this organization developed outside the existing camp system and controlled, at the height of its operation, some 177 sub-camps. Most of the inmates in these camps were Polish Jews who were forced to produce different war-related low-tech products. Some of the first Jews killed in Auschwitz came from the *Schmelt* camps after they were screened out as unfit for work.

Multiple labor camps were also constructed along *Durchgangsstraße IV*, a new highway that was supposed to connect Berlin with the Caucasus. This construction project represented, perhaps, the epitome of the annihilation-through-labor concept. It is estimated that around 25,000 Jewish slave workers died while working on this project in 1941-1942.

While the SS increased the employment of inmates in its own enterprises, it also provided inmates from its camp reservoir to outside firms. Statistics offer a glimpse into the economic potential of the camp system. In March 1942, between 70,000 and 80,000 inmates were locked up in the SS' main camps and in their sub-camps. One year later, this figure had increased to 224,000 inmates. By mid-January 1945, the number of inmates in SS custody rose to around 714,000 inmates of which around 203,000 were women.

Initially, the SS refrained from allocating large numbers of inmates to work outside its camp system. However, in cases of extremely lucrative contracts, the SS was more lenient. In early 1941, the SS signed a groundbreaking contract with the directorate of the *IG Farben*. This company used prisoners in the construction of its new large factory near the Auschwitz concentration camp. The SS intended to use more than 100,000 Soviet POWs in this project. The employment of the early POW detachments that came from the East was typical of the evolving German system of annihilation-through-labor. Few, if any, of the 12,000 POWs that arrived at Auschwitz in late 1941 were still alive by the spring of 1942. In March 1942, local SS officers started to construct a new labor camp near the main factory of the Austrian armament manufacturer *Steyr-Daimler-Puch*. It was the first camp of its kind, and it signaled a change of policy that soon multiplied the number of labor camps.

Total War and the Expansion of the Labor Camp Network

The turn of events in December 1941 forced the Germans to reconsider the employment of slave labor as part of the massive expansion of war production. On February 1, 1942, the SS established the Economics and Administration Main Office (WVHA) under Pohl, and in April the Inspectorate of the Concentration Camps (IKL) was incorporated into it. This move created a unified supreme organization within the SS to control its economic and industrial enterprises, as well as their workforce. Pohl tended more and more towards partnerships with the Armaments Ministry under new minister Albert Speer. This relationship allowed German military-related companies to use inmates outside of the main camp system.

As part of the preparations for increased use of camp inmates, Pohl ordered the intensification of the training of inmates for industrial work. Although throughout 1942 many firms as well as some officials working with Speer were reluctant to do business with the SS, others were happy to cooperate. Among them was aircraft manufacturer *Heinkel*, which had used inmates since the spring of 1942 as part of the firm's expansion strategy. *Heinkel* employed inmates from Sachsenhausen in its main Oranienburg plant, and local Poles and Jews in its new factories in the *Generalgouvernment*. The main labor camp that served these factories was constructed in 1942 near its Mielec factory.

Heinkel's early involvement in the use of slave labor paved the way for more cooperation of this kind between the SS and private companies. This relationship also demonstrated that inmates could be used in the production of complicated hardware. In September 1942, Speer signed an agreement with Pohl regarding the employment of inmates in armament production. Although the SS intended originally to use inmates only in special "concentration camp works," throughout 1943 the SS constructed new labor camps next to factories all over the Reich in order to accommodate the inmates allocated to them. Some camps were constructed next to several automobile and aero-engine factories operated by BMW, which had shown interest in using slave labor as early as 1941.

In most of the new camps, SS personnel supervised the inmates both in their living quarters and in the workplace. However, supervision at work tended to be more lax due to the presence of civilian foremen and workers. Preservation of an experienced, and in some cases trained workforce, also became a priority in some of the new camps. Especially for Jews, allocation to a war production related camp improved their chance of survival significantly.

1944: The Climax of Forced Labor

In 1944, following several military setbacks, the proliferation of labor camps intensified. The SS converted *DESt* and its other camp-based enterprises to war production. All the main camps, including Auschwitz, became hubs for the distribution of slave workers.

Heavy air raids on the German aviation industry in February resulted in the establishment of the "Fighter Staff" and the allocation of around 100,000 inmates for its reconstruction and expanded production programs. Following more air raids on the oil industry in the spring, the *Geilenberg Program* was established to restore oil production. These two organizations supervised hundreds of labor camps. Among them were seven sub-camps that were constructed in southwestern Germany as part of the *Operation Wüste*, which sought to solve the bottleneck in oil production through extraction of oil from oil shale. Around 10,000 inmates worked in this project and it is estimated that some 3,480 of them died there.

As the Allies advanced into Germany, labor camps were evacuated and abandoned one after the other. In most cases, the Germans sought to transfer inmates for use elsewhere, but in other cases the inmates were either executed on the spot or sent on death marches. Many of the prisoners who survived the war were liberated in labor camps.

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The Nazi Concentration Camps

The Nazi concentration camps were a key element of the terror apparatus in Germany from 1933 through 1945 and in countries occupied by Germany during World War II. Nazi concentration camps (*Konzentrationslager,* abbreviated both *KL, KZ*) were unique as they combined political "re-education" and industrial slave labor with racially/biologically motivated extermination of human beings in factory-like forms. Nazi concentration camps differ from other camps for the detainment or just concentration of larger groups of people in as much as these were institutions whose characteristics differ in various regimes of the 20th century. Nazi concentration camps, although partly contradictory, always maintained the three aforementioned main purposes. These determined the twisted development of the Nazi concentration camp system, which (cf. Karin Orth) can be divided into five stages.

Stage 1

1933-34: To crush the political opposition

The first concentration camps in Germany were installed during the Nazi takeover of power in early 1933 for the purpose of repressing political, primarily left wing opponents of Nazism such as communists, social democrats and labor union activists. These camps were organized through local initiative by the SA storm troopers or German police. According to a decree about "protective custody" *(Schutzhaft*), any person who was suspected of being an enemy of the state could arbitrarily be detained by the police for an unlimited period without being tried in court. Also, the police could overrule court decisions by transferring convicts to a concentration camp after they had served their prison term.

During 1933-34 some 100 concentration camps existed throughout Germany, and more than 100,000 detainees went through them. The purpose of the camps was correctional because detainees of "Aryan blood" were to be "re-educated" by means of violence and hard discipline, slave labor and propaganda in order to make them give up earlier ideas and beliefs and merge into the conformist “Volksgemeinschaft” or "people's community," which the Nazis proclaimed.

Stage 2

1934-39: To clean the "folk body"

After Hitler had consolidated his power, it was decided to maintain the concentration camps as a tool of Nazi terror. The camp system was centralized and placed under the authority of the SS (*Schutzstaffel*). The many improvised camps of this early period were replaced by a few permanent camps. Dachau, near Munich, was the first camp to be constructed specifically as a concentration camp. Dachau, as a model camp, provided regulations that were developed by its camp commandant Theodor Eicke, who later served as the inspector for all camps. Dachau originated the *Häftlingsselbstverwaltung,* a Nazi-selected delegation of inmates who were set against the ordinary inmates by means of privileges that were small but often crucial to survival. This delegation was used for inside surveillance and to administer a penal system by and for inmates. Because camp rules were so rigorous and it was quite impossible for the inmates to avoid breaking them, they provided a form of legitimacy for a completely arbitrary regime of violence that made uncertainty, stress and fear of death a constant feature of the inmates' lives. The Nazi guards, on their part, organized in special *SS-Totenkopf* (death’s head) units, were subject to strongly authoritarian training, and took humiliations out on the inmates. By 1935, only persons who were considered "unimprovable" political opponents to the Nazis remained in the six remaining concentration camps. The system contained a total of no more than 5,000 inmates (*Häftlinge*).

By June 1936, when *SS-Reichsführer* Heinrich Himmler was also appointed chief of the German police, the concentration camps were increasingly being used as a means of a proactive crime prevention scheme based on racial theory. Individuals whom the Nazis deemed "asocial" or "career criminals" (*Berufsverbrecher*) as well as others who deviated from the increasingly rigid social norms like the Roma and the Sinti (gypsies) as well as male homosexuals were isolated in the concentration camps. The Nazis considered such behavior as having racial-biological roots, and wished to protect the German "folk body" (Volkskörper) against the "deviants'" allegedly defective genes. Each concentration camp inmate was given a number instead of his name, and marked by a colored triangle stating the reason for his arrest. This identification system was designed to dehumanize the inmates and to set them against each other. By 1936, the black "asocials" and green "criminals" had outnumbered the red "political" inmates.

Permanent concentration camps were erected close to quarries or brickyards, where inmates had to perform hard and dangerous slave labor in order to provide cheap building materials for prestigious Nazi building projects. Because the SS guards primarily considered work a means of torture, labor productivity was low in the Nazi concentration camps. With the growth of the number of inmates, new camps were established which soon gained notoriety: 1) Sachsenhausen near Berlin (1936) was founded as a "model camp" and additional training center for guards; 2) Buchenwald near Weimar (1937); 3) Mauthausen near Linz (1938) after the annexation of Austria; 4) Flossenbürg between Nuremberg and Prague (1938), and 5) Ravensbrück (1939) as a special concentration camp for women. By 1939, the number of concentration camp inmates had risen to 25,000. In September, with the German attack on Poland and the unleashing of World War II, political prisoners in concentration camps increased markedly, as waves of arrests brought thousands of German dissidents into the camps as well as foreigners from the occupied territories who were rightly or wrongly accused of resisting Nazi rule or were brought into camps as hostages.

Jews in the concentration camps during the early stages were detained in concentration camps as political prisoners, "asocials" etc., for the same reasons as non-Jews. Yet once in the camps, Jews were treated with extra brutality. Right after the November pogrom of 1938 (*Kristallnacht*), Jews for a short period became the majority of the inmate population, as some 30,000 were interned and subjected to severe maltreatment and a number of violent deaths. The purpose of such brutality was to force the Jews to hand over their property to the German state and to permanently leave the country with their families. The many Jews who agreed to this condition were released within a few months. Thus, from early 1939 Jews were again a small, but significant minority among concentration camp inmates, and remained so.

Stage 3

1939-42: To fight resistance in the occupied countries

As Germany imposed its rule of terror on a number of European countries, the concentration camps turned into an important tool of maintaining Nazi control and to combat resistance in the occupied territories. Soon, the vast majority of the growing number of concentration camp inmates were foreigners, mainly from Poland and the Soviet Union. Most German inmates rose to the status of foremen, specialists and orderlies (*Kapo*, pl. *Kapos*). Being a "camp functionary" offered the inmate a somewhat higher chance of survival in an environment marked by extreme violence and the ever present threat of death.

At this time, 12,000 German criminals were transferred from the prisons to increase the population of "camp functionaries." It was this particular group of prisoners that Himmler ordered to be subjected to "extermination through work" (*Vernichtung durch Arbeit*), a term which many authors have applied to the entire concentration camp system. The infusion of more prisoners added to the complexity of the concentration camp system and dynamically changed its objectives. One example of this was the introduction of mass physical annihilation of Jews, ordered by Himmler.

The concentration camp system continued to expand. New camps were erected in Germany and in some occupied territories. The administration of the concentration camp system moved from Dachau to Sachsenhausen in 1938. Within the administration of the German police, the concentration camps enjoyed a high level of autonomy. This and the extremity of the norms that guided their organization have given rise to images of the concentration camps as "a state within the state" (Eugen Kogon) or "an alien planet" (Yves Béon). Recent interpretations, in contrast, see the concentration camp universe as a microcosm of Nazism, and emphasize the many and close comparisons between the camps and German society at large, which was often viewed as indifferent to or often approving of Nazi crimes. Knowledge of Nazi activity became commonplace as the concentration camp system expanded explosively from 1942 onward.

Stage 4

1942-44: To profit from slave labor

In early 1942, the German "lightning war" against the Soviet Union failed, and the concentration camp system, the German war industry and labor allocation in general were reorganized and refocused. Still more new camps had been added: 1) Neuengamme near Hamburg (1940); 2) Auschwitz near Krakow (1940), soon to become the largest by far; 3) Natzweiler-Struthof near Strasbourg (1941), and 4) Gross-Rosen in the Lower Silesia coal mining district (1941) with 5) Stutthof, formerly run by the Danzig police, being transferred into the status of a main camp or *Stammlager* (1942). The total number of inmates reached 80,000 by April 1942 and continued to soar, causing severe problems with overcrowding, food scarcity and inhumane hygienic conditions causing the 1942 death rate to peak at an annual average of 25-50%.

At this time, the SS decided to profit from the inmates' slave labor by hiring them out to private business and public projects for use mainly at construction sites and in the armament industry. The airplane industry and projects to create bomb-safe underground factories were large-scale exploiters of concentrations camp slaves. From 1942 on, a large number of smaller camps were founded, located near the worksites or often on the very premises of private companies. Thus, concentration camps emerged all over Germany, even in city centers where concentration camp inmates were also brought to perform clean-up jobs after

Allied air raids such as the removal of unexploded bombs. Eight mobile concentration camps (*SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigaden*) with guards and inmates accommodated in trains were employed to repair bridges and other parts of the railway infrastructure.

In the course of 1943, every main camp became the administrative center of what eventually became a large network of sub-camps. In January 1945 there were 22 main concentration camps with close to 700 sub-camps, which held a total of more than 700,000 inmates. With starvation-size food rations, long work hours and primitive accommodation, inmates were worked to an early death by exhaustion. Even if work was now to have priority over annihilation, the average life expectancy of a concentration camp inmate would be no longer than a few months. Inmates who were deemed unfit for work were killed or left to die in special camps (*Sterbelager*) like Bergen-Belsen.

Stage 4

1942-45: To annihilate the Jews of Europe

In 1942, the concentration camp system also became the site of mass killing of Jews. With the attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941, Germany started its systematic attempt to annihilate the Jews, first by means of mass shootings, and then from early 1942 by poison gas. Six special annihilation camps were erected for that purpose located on occupied Polish territory close to where most European Jews were living. Two of these annihilation camps were constructed as annexes to existing concentration camps: Auschwitz and Lublin-Majdanek. Out of six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust, three million were murdered in Nazi gas chambers in a factory-like process that involved the burning of the victims' bodies on pyres or in specially erected crematoria, and the recycling of their belongings including dental gold. One million Jews perished in Auschwitz, 59,000 in Majdanek.

Stage 5

1944-45: From industrial slave labor to death marches

Even while Germany seriously lacked manpower to replace the increasing losses at the front and to expand armament production, annihilation of the Jews remained a major ideological objective to the Nazis, and was given absolute priority over economic needs. In 1942, the Nazi regime imagined that millions of laborers could be drawn in from Eastern Europe to cover the needs of German industry, but due to brutal recruitment methods and the miserable living conditions that were offered to the "foreign workers" in Germany, the flow of laborers from the occupied areas dried up in spite of the widespread use of force. So in the summer of 1944, Hitler consented to 100,000 of the 430,000 Hungarian Jews who at that time were being transported to Auschwitz for annihilation be "selected" and redirected to slave labor in German industry.

Soon after the evacuation of concentration camps located close to the approaching Allied forces started, two conflicting objectives determined the fate of concentration camp inmates during the final months of the war: 1) inmates were to continue working for the German war effort for as long as there was any strength left in them; and 2) they should be prevented from falling into Allied hands and testifying to the crimes they had witnessed.

During the winter of 1944-45, evacuation transports were sent out in truly horrible conditions, sometimes in open railway cars, often on foot (death marches) through frost and snow. Many inmates died of exhaustion or were shot as stragglers by the guards. Thus, during the final months of the war, the concentration camp system entered a state of "decentralization." Still, the crumbling of regular command structures rarely caused guards to refrain from their extremely violent treatment of the inmates. On the contrary, the Gestapo continued to use the concentration camps as execution sites, to which they, on a regular basis, sent new prisoners who were primarily from amongst Germany's millions of foreign laborers and prisoners of war. The desolate living conditions made the inmate population drop drastically during the last four months of the war. When the "Third Reich" capitulated on May 9, 1945, only 350,000 concentration camp inmates were still alive, many of them just barely.

Numbers

From 1934 on, the concentration camps were administered by a department of the Gestapo called the Inspection of the Concentration Camps (*Inspektion der Konzentrationslager, IKL*). Apart from 22 main camps located in Germany, Poland, France, Holland and the Baltic countries, historian Gudrun Schwarz has documented the existence of at least 1,202 sub-camps. It is estimated that the cumulative number of concentration camp inmates exceed 2.5 million. Apart from more than one million Jews who were murdered in the extermination camps of Auschwitz and Majdanek, more than 800,000 inmates lost their lives due to violence and executions as well as to exhaustion and disease caused by the desolate living conditions in the Nazi concentration camps or on transports between camps.

The German military, police and the SS also operated a far larger number of other camps in the German Reich area and the occupied territories, where living conditions and mortality rates were comparable or even worse. This is also the case for many forced labor camps and ghettos where Jews were confined in Eastern Europe from 1939 on.

Conclusion

During the 12 years of Nazi rule, the German concentration camps passed through five stages. While basic features like their central role in Nazi terror and the "culture of extreme violence" administered by the guards and partly delegated to privileged inmate functionaries, remained unchanged, each stage had distinctive features and displayed a specific combination of overall objectives. Subject to rapid changes and built-in conflicts between the various groups that comprised the camp as a social structure, guards, *Kapos* and ordinary inmates, as well as the various categories and nationalities of inmates that were deliberately set against each other, the Nazi concentration camp constituted an extremely contradictory, diverse and dynamic phenomenon. The existing photographs, mostly from the final stage of the war, have during the period of growing Holocaust-awareness of recent years become familiar all over the world. Even though well known today, these images only partly cover the complex reality of the Nazi concentration camps. However, it is exactly the contradictions, diversity and dynamism – as well as the deep human implications of the concentration camp experience, and the philosophical challenge it poses to modern man that make the Nazi concentration camps a particularly rewarding, if not also an extremely demanding field for research.

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Transit Camps in Western Europe During the Holocaust

Drancy (France), *Malines/Mechelen* (Belgium), *Westerbork* and *Vught* (The Netherlands): *Antechambers of the Extermination Camps*

The previous history of the camps mentioned in the title of this article was very different from when they became transit camps for the systematic deportation to Auschwitz and other extermination camps.

Westerbork was the oldest camp for Jews and the largest. In February 1939 the Dutch government decided to construct one ‘Central Refugee Camp’ for Jews and on October 9, the first 22 German refugees arrived at the new small wooden houses. The Committee for Special Jewish Affairs, established by the Dutch Jewish community organizations in 1933, had financed the construction. It was located in a remote heath area in the northeast of the Netherlands, near the village of Westerbork. The internal affairs of the camp were run by the refugees themselves, in cooperation with the Committee. In May 1940, at the beginning of the German occupation, there were about 750 refugees living in the camp. It remained under the administration of the regular Dutch authorities during the first two years of the occupation. From December 1941 onward, on German orders, more Jewish refugees were sent to Westerbork and the camp was expanded with large wooden shacks. On July 1, 1942, when there were about 1,500 Jews in the camp, it was taken over by German Security Police, and an SS-commander and staff were appointed. The camp’s name was changed to *Polizeiliches Durchgangslager [Police Transit Camp]* and it was surrounded with barbed wire and seven watch towers.

Drancy is named after the northeastern suburb of Paris in which it was located. It was set up by French authorities as an internment center for militant communists in October 1939. In June 1940, it became a camp for prisoners of war and then an internment center for foreign nationals. From August 1941 onward, it served as an internment center for Jews, and in June 1942 it was converted into a transit camp. Regular French police remained in charge until the end of June 1943 after which German police took over command.

Malines (Flemish: Mechelen) in Belgium and Vught in the Netherlands were the only German-established camps. Malines was set up by German Security Police as the transit camp for Jews in July 1942. The Jewish transit camp at Vught was a section within the

Concentration Camp *Herzogenbusch* near the provincial capital Hertogenbosch in the south of the Netherlands. It was constructed in late 1942 and was the only official *Konzentrationslager* (KL) outside the borders of Greater Germany under the authority of the SS Economics and Administration Main Office (WVHA) in Berlin.

Drancy (Paris, France)

The direct cause for setting up Drancy as an internment center for Jews were the roundups carried out by French police in Paris on 20-23 August 1941, in which 4,232 mainly foreign or stateless Jews were arrested. A large, five-story, U-shaped apartment building, not far from two railway stations, was now used for their detention. It was built in the 1930s for residential purposes, and was originally intended to serve as a small model town, called Cité la Muette, a modern example of "*urbanisme social*." But in 1940, it was surrounded by barbed wire and watch towers were built at its four corners. In the middle was a courtyard, about 200 meters long and some 40 meters wide. From the outset, the administration, staffing and guarding lay in the responsibility of the French authorities and regular French police (the Paris Police Prefect). The sanitary and health conditions in Drancy were very bad. Between August and November 1941 twelve Jewish internees died of starvation. In November about 800 internees, who were seriously ill and emaciated, were released from Drancy. On December 14, 1941, 47 Jewish internees from Drancy, together with other hostages (communists) were executed in Fort Mont-Valérien in retaliation for a French attack on German officers.

In the first transport from Drancy, which departed on June 22, 1942, 1,000 Jews were sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Altogether, between that first transport and the last, on 31 July, 1944, 64,759 Jews were deported from Drancy in 64 rail transports. At the height of the deportations, two to three trains, with about 1,000 prisoners each, left Drancy per week. The capacity of the camp was about 5,000 prisoners, but at times it held more than 7,000. Most Jews in the internment camps of the Unoccupied Zone were first taken by French trains to Drancy before being deported to Auschwitz in August and September 1942. Five sub-camps of Drancy were located throughout Paris (three of which were the Austerlitz, Lévithan and Bassano camps). The precise role of French police authorities and personnel in Drancy between August 1941 and July 1943 requires further investigation. On 2 July 1943, Adolf Eichmann's special representative, Alois Brunner, took over command of Drancy. The camp was spruced up as prisoners were ordered to do the cleaning and painting. Brunner simultaneously enforced reorganization, introducing divide and rule tactics, new categories of prisoners, using individual interrogations to turn them into each other's enemy in an atmosphere of constant fear and envy. There were beatings and other maltreatments.

Prisoners were used to serve as a camp police (*Membres du Service d'Ordre*). Other internment centers in France were also sporadically used as transit camps for direct deportation, such as Pithiviers (six trains), Beaune-la-Rolande (two trains) and the Royallieu camp near Compiègne (two trains). The latter was the *only* internment camp in France which had been, from its beginning, administered by the German occupiers.

About one-third of the Jews deported from Drancy were French citizens. The others were foreign-born Jews who had immigrated to France during the 1920s and 1930s, primarily from Poland, Germany and Austria. On August 15-16, 1944, as Allied forces approached Paris, the German police in Drancy fled after burning the camp documents. The Swedish Consul-General Raoul Nordling, took over the camp on August 17, and asked the French Red Cross to care for the 1,467 remaining prisoners. For more information about Drancy, the reader is commended to the following internet links: http://www.camp-de-drancy.asso.fr/ and http://www.cyberspecialistes.com/index.php/Camp_de_Drancy.

Malines/Mechelen (Belgium)

The Belgian army barracks named Dossin de Saint-Georges, built in the town of Malines in 1756, were transformed into a *Sammellager* (Assembly Camp) on July 25, 1942. The first Jews who had received call-up orders arrived two days later, and the first train to Auschwitz left on August 4. This building was chosen for two reasons. It was right next to a railroad and Malines is located between Brussels and Antwerp, where 90% of the Jews in Belgium lived. After the roundups started, the Jews were taken by trucks to the inner square inside the barracks where armed SS were awaiting them. After being registered and stripped of their identity papers and last personal possessions, the prisoners had to wear a card around their neck with their number for the next deportation train. There were various categories of prisoners, the biggest of which were those marked for direct deportation. The barracks could house 1,000 persons, but at times more than 1,700 were crammed into them, with about 100 people on bunk beds in dormitories only about 21 to 7 meters wide. Later, they had to sleep on straw bags on the floor. The guard duty on the perimeter was done by Flemish SS members, supervised by German Security Police. In addition to the Dossin barracks in Malines there was also the general police detention camp (*Polizeihaftlager*) at the fortress of Breendonk, which was also used to imprison Jews before their deportation, especially individual "punitive cases." Of the about 3,600 prisoners who passed through Breendonk, some 400 were Jews. Both camps were commanded by the SS officer Philipp Johann Adolf Schmitt, but they remained formally under the authority of the Military Administration. Schmitt behaved like a brute, letting his dog bite prisoners at random. Maltreatment and the beating of prisoners were not uncommon, but in Malines they were not tortured in order to extract information. The food and health situation was bad. Only when the Germans feared that a scabies epidemic might spread to town was the care of the prisoners improved. From early November 1942, when the deportations were interrupted, Malines became a temporary *Arbeitslager* (work camp). The prisoners had to work in leather and clothing workshops. The products were sold by Schmitt partly on the black market, with some of the proceeds going in his own pocket. Because of fraud charges, he was succeeded as commander by Hans J.G. Frank in March 1943. Compared to his predecessor, he behaved more or less 'correctly' but, as before, everything in the camp was geared up for the next deportation train. A total of 25,484 Jews passed through this camp, of which 24,390 were deported in 27 trains to Auschwitz. Other prisoners were deported to other camps. At least 52 Jews died en route to or while imprisoned in Malines or Breendonk. On September 4, 1944, Brussels and Malines were liberated, allowing the remaining 527 prisoners to leave the Dossin barracks. For further information on Malines/Mechelen, see: http://www.kazernedossin.eu/en/content/dossin-barracks-1942-44.

Westerbork (The Netherlands)

During the first 32 deportation transports from Westerbork, from July 15 to the end of October 1942, there was not yet a railroad in the camp, so inmates had to walk with their luggage partly on carts between the camp and the nearest station at Hooghalen, almost five kilometers away. A railroad extension to the camp was constructed by the Dutch Railways and came into operation on November 2, 1942. The first SS commander was Erich Deppner, who was succeeded after two months by Josef Hugo Dischner. The latter behaved like a brute, which was not in line with the policy of his superiors in The Hague. In contrast with Drancy and Malines, daily life in the Westerbork camp had to appear as normal as possible. Therefore, from October 12, 1942 until the end of the occupation, Albert Konrad Gemmeker served as the SS commander. Under his regime there were no shouting SS men, there was no maltreatment and no hunger. People could keep their identity papers and wear their own clothes. He presented himself as a decent gentleman who treated the Jews correctly and left the internal running of the camp to the German-Jewish camp staff, which, since February 1942, was headed by the almost all powerful Kurt Schlesinger. Many had experienced German concentration camps or prisons in the 1930s and knew that, to avoid worse, it would be better to keep matters in their own hands as much as possible, instead of leaving them to the Nazis. The German-Jewish camp staff lived in small wooden houses and had a degree of privacy. From their midst came the department heads (*Dienstleiter*) and other functionaries,

whose duties ranged from the registration of new arrivals to the compiling of lists of those to be deported, on orders of the SS commander and within the number fixed by him. Sanitary conditions in the camp were not good but somewhat manageable. There was an excellent hospital that, at one time, had more than 1,700 beds with 1,000 personnel, among whom there were 120 doctors. Religious services were held for both Jews and Christians of Jewish descent. In Westerbork, children's education was taken care of, people could take part in sport, and there were even regular cabaret shows accompanied by live music of high quality. Among the camp inmates there was a huge distance between the 'camp aristocracy' made up mainly of German Jews, and the '*transportfreien*,*'* mainly Dutch Jews who were eligible for immediate deportation. The latter slept on three-decker metal bunks in large wooden shacks, without any privacy. Often, they were in the camp for only a very short while. The inmates had to work in the kitchen, the hospital and workshops for mending clothes. They also were involved in the demolition of crashed aircraft, the dismounting of batteries and, under supervision, agricultural work in the surrounding area. The camp was about 500 meters long and 500 meters wide. At first, the external guard duty was undertaken by members of an SS *Wachbataillon* assisted by Dutch police, but later, after about six months, solely by Dutch police. In early June 1944, they were replaced by members of a newly trained, pro-German police unit. Internal order was maintained by Dutch police (*marechaussee*) and the Jewish Order Service (*Ordedienst* – OD). The highest number of inmates ever crammed into the camp shacks was in early October 1942, after the evacuation of the Jewish men from Dutch work camps and the rounding up of their families. Thus, in one action, more than 12,000 people arrived at the camp where 2,000 already were encamped. This created a lot of chaos; people had to sleep on the floors and in corridors. The chaos was only "solved" by stepping up the deportations in October to almost 12,000, the highest monthly number ever reached in the Netherlands. From July 1942 up to September 1944, a total of 65 trains with 58,549 Jews left Westerbork for Auschwitz and 19 trains with 34,313 Jews for Sobibor. Other trains left for Theresienstadt (nine) and Bergen-Belsen (seven), carrying a total of 8,645 Jews. 210 Jews, however, successfully escaped from Westerbork. The precise functioning and interactions between the German staff, Dutch civil servants (population records, food distribution) working in Westerbork and the Jewish camp staff need further archival research. When the camp was liberated by Canadian military on April 12, 1945, there were 876 inmates left. For information about Westerbork see also: http://www.kampwesterbork.nl/welcome/;
http://www.kampwesterbork.nl/geschiedenis/doorgangskamp/;
http://www.joodsewerkkampen.nl/.

Vught (The Netherlands)

On January 13, 1943, the first 250 male, non-Jewish prisoners were sent to Vught and, three days later, the first 450 Jews, men, women and children, arrived from Amsterdam. However, the new camp, commanded by SS officer Karl Walter Chmielewski, was far from finished and lacked basic facilities. In the midst of a severe winter with frost conditions, the inmates were forced to help with the completion of the wooden shacks and kitchen. As a consequence, almost 200 non-Jewish prisoners died during the first months. The very poor living conditions also cost the lives of over 100 Jewish children and elderly people. In late March and April, conditions improved. From the outset, the Jewish section in the camp was presented as a "reception camp" (*Auffangslager*), not a transit camp like Westerbork. The German police created the impression that Vught was a labor camp, and that the Jews would be allowed to remain in the Netherlands as long as they worked hard in the various industries established in the camp. One of the industries was set up by the Philips Company. From late March to October 1943, a group of about 500 Jewish men were put to work in an *Aussenkommando* of Vught near the village of Moerdijk, some 40 kilometers west of the main camp. Furthermore, up to a certain extent, the Jewish inmates were allowed to manage their own sub-camp with their own Jewish council. They were allowed to wear their own clothes and keep their personal belongings, all this in order to prevent unrest. The Jewish self-administration was headed by Richard Süsskind and, later, by Dr. Arthur Lehmann, both German Jews. At its population maximum, on May 8, 1943, there were 10,400 Jews in Vught. However, during that month it became more and more clear that the German police had no intention of keeping their promise to keep the prisoners in the Netherlands. An increasing number of Jews were transported to Westerbork and from there deported to the East. By that time the name *Auffangslager* changed to *Durchgangslager* and the Jewish "inmates" (*Lagerinsassen*) became "prisoners" (*Häftlinge*). They had to hand in their luggage and by the end of July they had to wear prison clothes, just like the rest of the prisoners. When, at the beginning of June 1943, all children up to age 16, 1,296 in all, were deported from Vught – most of these were deported with only one parent, making it was clear to all others that deportation was inevitable. With the deportation of 1,149 Jews on November 15, 1943, now for the first time directly to Auschwitz, the transit camp was further reduced. In total, about 12,000 Jews passed through this camp between January 1943 and June 1944. The last group of 496 privileged workers for Philips was deported straight to Auschwitz, after which the Jewish transit camp in Vught ceased to exist. For information about Vught see also: http://www.nmkampvught.nl.

Pim Griffioen

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Operation Reinhard
Dr. Yitzhak Arad

The text will soon be published after final approval by the author

Auschwitz – The Similar and the Unique Characteristic Aspects of the Largest German-Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp

The text will soon be published after final approval by the author

The Example of Bobruysk

The majority of camps were small and sometimes are almost unknown. These included camps belonging to sub-camps of larger camps, camps run by the Waffen-SS and the SS, camps attached to factories or municipalities, etc. As Holocaust historiography has often dealt with the larger and more known camps such as Dachau, Ravensbrück, and Auschwitz, the historiography of small camps has remained in the shadows. Yet, investigation of these camps is very important allowing for the general research on camps to be more balanced and the variegated aspects of Nazi policy to be seen within the different camps as well as in the life of the inmates. Such research on the smaller camps is needed for both the eastern countries, particularly those which were located in the former USSR, and in western countries, such as for the Gurs and Pithiviers in France. One of the major methodological difficulties in conducting research on small camps is the scarcity of sources, whether German, local, and Jewish. The following is an example of research conducted on one small camp.

At the beginning of the 1970s, in order to collect testimony about crimes committed in a forest camp (*Waldlager*), the prosecutor from the city of Hamburg appealed for help to the Israeli police unit responsible for the investigation of Nazi crimes. The Nazis had established this camp near the city of Bobruysk in Belarus. This appeal by the prosecutor was related to an investigation that was underway in regard to SS *Obersturmbannführer* Rudolf Pannier, who had been commandant of the Waldlager from June 1943. The investigation had already revealed that a *Judenlager*, a camp for Jews, had been set up in this location which served as the main supply base for the *Russland-Mitte* front under the command of the *Waffen* SS. In the process of the investigation, the Israeli police drew the attention of staff members of the Yad Vashem Archives Division to the fact that a number of Jewish youths had been transported from the Warsaw ghetto to the camp at Bobruysk.

Until the investigation, the staff at Yad Vashem's Archives had not encountered a single survivor of the camp at Bobruysk, nor did the Archives hold any single testimony about the camp. Moreover, there was no reference to the camp in the International Tracing Service (ITS) files in Bad Arolsen, Germany in 1949, or in Yad Vashem's catalogue of concentration and labor camps in Nazi-occupied territories. The 1969 International Red Cross Yearbook[1]had only a few references to the Jewish youth camp at Bobruysk. In view of this

[1]Miriam Peleg who worked in the Yad Vashem Archives and collected testimony from prisoners in this camp wrote in December 1974 in an introduction to these testimonies:

background, one may ask what we do know today about this camp. What was its function? What was the period of its existence? To which institution was it subordinated and what do we know about the Jews who were sent there and about their fates?

A Military Base and a Judenlager

Because of their occupation of territories in the USSR, the German army needed to establish a central supply base for the *Waffen* SS in central and southern Russia. For this purpose they set up a central supply base in the forest camp close to the village (in Russian the *sovkhoz*, or state farm) of Kissyelevichi, eight kilometers southeast of the city of Bobruysk, in an area under military administration, in early 1942.

The first commander of the camp, in charge of its construction and operation, was SS *Standartenführer* Georg Martin. Martin required manpower for the construction of the camp and for its continuing operation. This necessary manpower was, however, not available to him from the German military forces serving in this location. Therefore, he decided to use Jewish laborers under the authority of the Main Office of Security of the Reich (RSHA), with the head of which he had close relations. Before the Jewish laborers arrived, a unit of 60 SS men who had been tried by SS courts and punished for various infractions were sent from the SS camp at Dębica in Poland to the forest camp in Bobruysk. The assignment of this SS unit was to prepare the camp for the arrival of Jews and to guard them afterwards.

The Jews arrived at the camp in two separate transports. The first group was made up of approximately 1,000 Jewish males from the Warsaw ghetto, including about 150 youth between the ages of 13 and 16 who had been held in the ghetto jail on Gęsia Street. They had been apprehended by the Jewish Order Police on orders of the German authorities and held in one of the ghetto's police stations. From here, they were transported on 28-29 May 1942 to the camp in Bobruysk (for an overview of these deportations, see Prais, Chronicle). This, in fact, was the first mass deportation from the Warsaw ghetto.

"During all the years of my work in collecting testimony from survivors of various camps, we have no [sic] come across a single survivor of the camp in Bobruisk [sic], nor did we find any interview information on this camp in the Yad Vashem Archive in Jerusalem. Also in the two volumes of the major catalogue on concentration and labor camps on the German occupied territories that was published in Arolsen in 1949 there is no mention at all of the camp in Bobryusk and only in the 1969 Yearbook of the International Red Cross on p. 466 can one find the most brief information" (See: Yad Vashem Archive {YVA] 03/3757).

The second transport left the Warsaw ghetto at the end of July 1942, during the first week of the "great transport" of the Jews of this ghetto to the death camp of Treblinka. Most of the hundreds of young men in the second transport had been apprehended on the street or taken from their homes. Once arrested, they were sent to labor camps, where they were promised decent conditions and good food. According to a July 1942 report of the *Judenrat* of Warsaw, 1,413 workers were sent from the ghetto: 413 to a work camp in the Lublin District and 1,000 to *Luftgaukommando Moskau* (headquartered in Smolensk), and to Minsk (see the Report of the Warsaw Judenrat, July 1942). It turns out, in fact, that the latter group was not sent to Minsk but to Bobruysk. Thus, two transports of approximately 1,400 Jews were sent to Bobruysk from the Warsaw ghetto.

The Jewish camp was surrounded by a fence that enclosed an area of 150 sq. meters with four stables and a number of barracks, including ones for prisoners who were forced to clean, build, dig, load wood and coal, work as assistants in the supply depot, tend to pigs, tailor, make shoes, cook and assist other Jews with special skills. Their numbers declined daily. The vast majority of them were killed in two murder pits that had been dug in the neighboring forest.

In mid-September 1943 the Jewish camp was liquidated, although the military camp continued to function, mainly as a base for actions against the local partisan fighters. At that time, about 90 Jewish prisoners remained alive. They were transferred first to Minsk and then, about a week later, to the Lublin District, where they were dispersed among several concentration camps.

The Sources

Of the comprehensive research conducted on various types of camps, one can point to the research on forced labor camps by Wolf Gruner (Gruner, Labor) and Bella Gutterman (Gutterman, Bridge) as well as the more recent work, mainly on survivor testimonies, written by Christopher Browning on the Starachowice camp (Browning, Survival).

It should be stressed that information about the Jewish camp in Bobruysk derives only from survivor testimonies. There are no other sources. However, in contrast to research on

Starachowice, which was based on a critical mass of 292 testimonies and a considerable number of eyewitness reports, the amount of testimony regarding the Jewish camp is small. It is, however, proportionate to the contemporary testimony from the survivors of the Soviet Union in general. Most of the testimonies relating to the Jewish camp were created by the objects of the post-war criminal investigation themselves, a small group of low-ranking SS men who tried to conceal the roles they had played - either by assumed amnesia or by denial of responsibility. Under interrogation, they tended to reply, "I didn't know, I didn't see, I had no connection with this matter." Nevertheless, much of the information about what took place in the camp comes from them (for file numbers, please refer to the list of sources under Zentrale Stelle below).

An additional potential source of information about the *Judenlager* in Bobruysk is the protocol of the war crimes trial of Johannes Loyen, a Dutch member of the *Waffen* SS. The protocol is located in the NIOD Archive in Amsterdam, but at present it is not available to researchers abroad on the grounds of protecting the privacy of individuals.

An issue concerning the testimony of Jewish survivors is that, while they too were often hesitant to share testimony, it was for an entirely different reason than for the previously mentioned SS members. Rather than to remain silent to protect themselves, the Jews were slow to share detailed testimony in an attempt to avoid re-experiencing the pain of the past. In the course of his legal investigation, the German prosecutor succeeded in finding 26 Jewish survivors around the world, specifically in Europe, Israel, and South and North America. The majority of them replied directly to the questions that were posed, but did not add any further information. Only seven provided information to various institutions concerned with documentation (see the testimonies by Zisholtz, Lublinitzki, Wachsman, Fabishevitz, Mane), while two witnesses offered information to historical commissions (Wasserstein, Leizerowicz) immediately after the war. One of these two testimonies amounted to just three lines. Other testimonies were later received at Yad Vashem, after the formal investigation by the German prosecutor had concluded.

By its very nature, testimony was not uniform among those who gave accounts. Three of the testimonies deserve particular attention: those of a gravedigger, a cook, and a youth or rather a boy, because Avraham Fabishevich was only 13 when he was deported to Bobruysk.

Previously, Fabishevich had arrived in Warsaw with his parents and his brothers as refugees from the town of Pruszków. In Warsaw the family fell apart because of the desperate situation and the impossibility to fulfill their basic needs. In order to eat, Fabishevich used to sneak out of the ghetto, and on one occasion he was caught and sent to jail on Gęsia Street, where he was given a sentence of two years imprisonment. In his testimony, he recalled how he had wept when he heard the verdict. Afterwards, he was deported to Bobruysk in the first transport. Fabishevich's recollections of his life in the camp were partial. He mainly remembered the first selection, during which the Germans ostensibly offered the young men the chance to return to Warsaw, but actually intended to kill those who volunteered for this "opportunity." As he reported, in a fraction of a second he decided to join the group of potato peelers and, therefore, saved himself from being murdered right then and there.

By contrast, the cook, Yitzhak Wasserstein was the only survivor to provide several detailed accounts of the time he spent as a prisoner in the camp. In comparison to contemporary documents written in Warsaw, Wasserstein's account was quite precise and in agreement with that of the Huberband chronicle referred to above. Wasserstein, a young man from Warsaw was quite fortunate. He became a cook in the camp, and there is no doubt that this contributed to his survival. In addition to the comprehensive testimony he provided, he wrote memoirs about his experiences during the Holocaust (Wasserstein, O.33/5272 and O.93/20149; Wasserstein, Rampe).

Shraga Zisholts was 18 years old when he was deported in the second transport to Bobruysk. The SS forced him and another prisoner, who did not survive, to dig graves in the forest. They were kept extremely busy at that task. Zisholtz provided testimony twice, in 1972 and in 1994.

On her own initiative Miriam Peleg, who worked in the Testimonies Department in Yad Vashem's Archives Division, collected testimonies about what took place in the Jewish camp. She wrote as follows in her introduction to this material:

> "The witnesses were questioned by the police before they gave their testimony to Yad Vashem and they were not able to repeat [for us] the terrible experiences they had undergone. In a particular way one felt a lack of emotion in the testimony of the camp gravedigger Shraga Zisholtz, who had much to relate. However, after he was questioned by the police, horrible memories returned to him and he was not able to sleep at night or to recount again in detail what he himself had seen in the Bobruysk camp, that was essentially an extermination camp even though this function was camouflaged by its being referred to as a labor camp."

Although Zisholtz's second testimony was more detailed than his first, it reflected an attempt to distance himself emotionally from the events, as was evident in the expression on his face.

Many questions remain about what took place at Bobruysk because most of the testimonies, including that of Wasserstein, are rather one-dimensional. That is to say, most testimonies focus on the atrocities themselves perpetrated against the survivors and those who did not survive. The perpetrators, however, whose names were never known or forgotten, were not mentioned in the testimonies.

Only to a small extent, if at all, do the sources tell us about the daily life of the many hundreds of young men in the camp and the ways they attempted to cope. There is little testimony about the types of bonds that were created between the prisoners in the conditions they suffered together: hunger, humiliation and murder during the period of over one year.

Returning to one of the problems noted at the outset, one of the reasons for the lack of mention of this Jewish camp in the list of camps is the fact that this camp near Bobruysk was not subordinated to the administration of the concentration camps of the SS Economic and Administrative Department (SS-*Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt- WVHA),* headed by Oswald Pohl and Theodor Eicke. Further, Bobruysk was not connected to camps that were associated with factories, nor was it subordinate or connected to the Schmeldt or Todt labor organizations. Emmanuel Ringelblum, the Polish Jewish historian who is well-known for his notes from the Warsaw ghetto, had erroneously believed that the Jewish camp near Bobruysk was a work camp affiliated to the Todt organization. However, according to the Hamburg persecutor's investigation, as it was affiliated with a military base of the *Waffen* SS, it would therefore have been subordinate to the SS Leadership Main Office (*Fuhrungshauptamt*), headed by Hans Juttner.

Finally, one would like to know how many camps for Jews were established on German military bases of the *Waffen* SS and how many of them there were on Nazi-occupied territory in the USSR. As yet, there are no answers to these questions. However, the fate of the Jews sent to these camps is not difficult to surmise. The German wartime need for manpower did not prevent their murder, whether by execution or by being worked to death.

One may add that, in addition to the deportation to Bobruysk in July 1942 and its rapidly fatal results, 500 Jews from the Warsaw ghetto were deported to the headquarters of the *Luftwaffe* in Smolensk. The details of the fate of the latter group of Jews are not well known, since only three survivor testimonies have been found.

Dr. Lea Prais

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Testimony of Yitzhak Wasserstein, YVA, M.1.E/232;
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Various Articles on Camps may be found on the Internet Site of Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research.

http://www1.yadvashem.org/yv/en/about/institute/articles_camps.asp

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The Yad Vashem Library is the world's most comprehensive collection of published material about the Holocaust. It contains over 125,000 titles in 54 languages and seeks to collect all material published about the Holocaust, making it available to the reading public and safeguarding it for future generations. Not only does the material lining the shelves of the library contain a wealth of information about the Holocaust, it represents mankind's attempt to grapple with one of the most traumatic events in human history.

Searching for Yad Vashem Library for Items about Camps

http://db.yadvashem.org/library/search.html?language=en

The Yad Vashem Library contains over 15,000 items about camps. The accompanying list shows how the library has classified material about camps and the subject headings used. It is possible to search for specific camps or camps by country. The terms in bold letters are the main subject headings and the terms in regular letters are the references for the main subject headings. To search for a specific camp or camp by country, look for the main subject heading on the list and then copy/paste it into the "subject" field. You can use any combination of the other fields for searching to qualify your search. You can also use Boolean operators within a given field. If you press on '?" next to the field, a window with an explanation about the field opens up. Search results are limited to 1,000 items. If you reach that number, you may want to limit your search. If you click on a given item in a search result, you can open up the full bibliographic entry for that item. If you want to compile a personal list from the results, click on the "+" under the column "my list."

It may be also worthwhile using RAMBI at the Israel National Library for article searches. http://jnul.huji.ac.il/rambi/. Just follow the instructions on the site to find relevant material.

Yad Vashem Library Subject Headings for Camps

CAMPS
01008
CONCENTRATION CAMPS
EXTERMINATION CAMPS
KONZENTRATIONSLAGER
KZ
LABOR CAMPS
CAMPS - LIBERATION OF
EXTERMINATION - JEWS
CAMPS: AHRENSBOEK
AHRENSBOEK, CAMP
CAMPS: AMERSFOORT
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AMERSFOORT, CAMP
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BOIZENBURG, CAMP
CAMPS: BOIZENBURG
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CAMPS: BUCHENWALD: NIEDERHAGEN
CAMPS: SACHSENHAUSEN: NIEDERHAGEN
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NORWAY - CAMPS
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CAMPS: PLASZOW
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CAMPS -- POLAND
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SACHSENBURG, CAMP
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CAMPS: SAN SABBA
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LA RISIERA DI SAN SABBA
SAN SABBA, CAMP
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ROTENFELS, CAMP
SCHIRMECK-VORBRUCK, CAMP
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CAMPS: DACHAU: SCHLOSS LIND
CAMPS: MAUTHAUSEN: SCHLOSS LIND
SCHLOSS LIND, CAMP
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SEMLIN, CAMP
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HASAG SKARZYSKO-KAMIENNA, CAMP
SKARZYSKO-KAMIENNA, CAMP
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REVOLT - SOBIBOR
SOBIBOR, CAMP
REINHARD, OPERATION
STANGL, FRANZ
CAMPS - SOCIOLOGY
01012
SOCIOLOGY OF CAMPS
CAMPS: SONNENBURG
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CAMPS: SLONSK
SLONSK, CAMP
SONNENBURG, CAMP
CAMPS -- SOVIET UNION
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POLES IN CAMPS -- SOVIET UNION
SOVIET UNION - CAMPS
SHOW-TRIALS AND ARRESTS --
SOVIET UNION

CAMPS -- SOVIET UNION (LITERATURE)
SOVIET UNION - CAMPS (LITERATURE)
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ST. DENIS, CAMP
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CAMPS: DACHAU: ST. LAMBRECHT
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CAMPS: TEREZIN (LITERATURE)
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TORMERSDORF, CAMP
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TRAWNIKI, CAMP
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TREBLINKA, CAMP
REINHARD, OPERATION
STANGL, FRANZ
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CAMPS: MALYJ TROSTENEC
MALYJ TROSTENEC, CAMP
TROSTENEC, CAMP
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CAMPS: ULM-KUHBERG
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VAPNYARKA, CAMP
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CAMPS: VUGHT
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VUGHT, CAMP
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CAMPS: WARWAROWKA

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CAMPS -- YUGOSLAVIA
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CAMPS: DAKOVO
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Appendix 5:
Training Manual

Since it is not possible to cover all the manifold topics encompassed by modern historical Holocaust research, and taking the results of the survey into account, EHRI has decided to develop a course that teaches by using selected representative examples: Five overarching topics of general importance to Holocaust research have been developed for the online course. Each of these topics is used to focus on a critical analysis of sources within the context of the current state and methods of Holocaust research. Due to the particular importance of Eastern Europe to Holocaust research, this region is given special emphasis.

The following topics have been chosen:
"History of the Ghettos under Nazi Rule" (developed by IfZ)
"The Nazi Camps and the Persecution and Murder of the Jews" (developed by YV)
These will soon be joined by:
"The Holocaust in Ukraine" (developed by NIOD)
"Persecution and Deportation in Western Europe" (developed by MS)
"The Germans and the Holocaust" (developed by IfZ)

Further material from lecturers of the summer courses will be added to the online presentation after the summer schools, which will also serve the purpose of testing and adapting the online course material.

Each unit will include a general introduction as well as a discussion of the historiography of the subject at hand and an appraisal of the pertinent source types (each of no more than approx 15 pages). Subsequently, approx. five chapters will offer perspectives on chosen central issues of the topic. Each of these chapters will consist of an introduction to the specific issue as well as approx. ten sources (including texts, photographs, sound and video sources). Sources will be presented first in facsimile wherever possible, followed by a transcription in the original language where legibility is an issue. This is to ensure that students appreciate the linguistic dimensions of Holocaust research as well as the often challenging layout and appearance of original documents. In the coming months, translations of the text documents will be added. The WP will take care that the translations are carefully considered, so that these translations may be of use to students and researchers in as definitive a way as possible.

The units or chapters can be used for teaching as a whole or in part. Questions for self-study and for use in a seminary context can include topics such as the following:

- What differences of daily life can be discerned in comparing ghettos and camps? What light is shed by the differences in perspective and experience?
- How do perpetrator and Jewish sources differ in the description of similar phenomena? How can they supplement each other? What areas do they leave untouched?
- What are the differences in persecution and the experience of persecution in East and West?
- What differences and commonalities can be discerned in the reaction of the non-Jewish local population in Western Europe and in Ukraine?
- What information can be obtained from propaganda / highly antisemitic sources?
- How do post-war sources differ in perspective to more contemporary sources (both perpetrator and Jewish sources)? How does hindsight affect them?
- Discuss the issue of translated sources – to what extent does a researcher have to be careful in avoiding interpretation errors when using translations of original documents?
- Discuss the different approaches needed to gain insight through photographs and pictures vs. text sources. What types of source criticism are more particular to audio and video sources?

- How do public and non-public perpetrator documents differ?
- How are moral dilemmas dealt with in the sources – in Jewish, perpetrator (esp. Post-war) and “bystander” sources?
- What approaches are necessary when dealing with ego-documents? What thinking stood behind Jewish attempts at self-documentation?
- What role did labour play in different contexts of Nazi anti-Jewish persecution?
- Discuss the difficulties encountered by Jewish resistance groups as reflected in the selected sources.
- How did pre-war antisemitic predispositions influence behaviour during the Holocaust?
- What linguistic dimensions colour sources of an administrative nature as opposed to more individual documents?
- How do post-war interviews and judicial interrogations differ in their interest and structure?
- What role did Jewish property play during different stages and in different regions of the Holocaust?