

## INTRODUCTION

### *A Hidden Holocaust in Trains*

“Move over. Make room for the others!” We squeezed and crushed in as if we were animals. A man with only one leg cried out in agony and his horrified wife pleaded with us not to press against him. We traveled in the dark crush for a long, long time. No air. No food. People urinating continuously in the latrines. Then the shriek. Over the moans and helpless little cries, there rose a piercing scream I shall never forget. From a woman on the floor beneath the small, barred window came the horrifying scream. She held her head in both her hands and then we who were close by saw the words scratched in tiny letters: “last transport went to Auschwitz.”<sup>1</sup>

When we were marched out to the cattle trains, you have a cattle train in the Washington museum, I never really knew what the dimensions were, nobody could tell me, it’s about three quarters the size of a regular tour bus ... there were about 170 people packed into this cattle car. At first some people wanted to prevent the panic, to tell people, “look people, organize, stand up, there is no room for everyone to sit” ... but it didn’t work, people were in a panic, the young and strong were standing at the windows, blocking whatever air there was.<sup>2</sup>

Even today freight cars give me bad vibes. It is customary to call them cattle cars, as if the proper way to transport animals is by terrorizing and overcrowding them. Of course that happens, but we shouldn’t talk as if it is the norm, as if abuse were the only option in treating animals. In any case, the problem with the transport from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz wasn’t that cattle or freight cars are not meant for transporting people; the problem was not the type of car or wagon, but that it was so overcrowded ... On the road to Auschwitz, we were trapped like rats.<sup>3</sup>

Kay Gundel, Anna Heilman, and Ruth Klüger—three women, three journeys, and indelible memories of captivity. There are countless stories about the horrors of deportation trains that were critical in the Final Solution, the Nazi euphemism for the mass murder of European Jewry during World War II. Irrespective of their origin of deportation, whether from

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Warsaw, Drancy, Salonica, or Westerbork, former deportees recall resoundingly similar experiences. Deceived into believing that deportation promised survival, seduced by the tantalizing lure of food, violently grabbed and beaten in houses and on streets, intimidated by death threats, volunteering to prevent the break up of their families, desperate to leave the ghetto—an estimated three million Jewish deportees were forced into conditions that Gundel, Heilman, and Klüger describe so vividly. They were transported in freight cars to the camps in the “East”: Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, Auschwitz, and Majdanek. Only thousands survived the destinations of those deportation trains, and fewer still to tell their stories.

Deportation transports by train were experiential breaks from the ghettos and camps, which scholars have studied as the principal locations of victims’ suffering and memory.<sup>4</sup> The conditions in trains inflicted one of the most intense bodily assaults for Jewish victims under the Nazi regime that survivors have commonly described as a “cattle car” experience.<sup>5</sup> Their debilitating effects were concealed behind the Nazi propaganda image of trains in constant and circuitous motion to different wartime destinations. Deliberately omitted from this vision was the hidden struggle of deportees. This struggle placed them between life and death moments: overcrowding, unwanted touch, unexpectedly erotic moments, shame, nakedness, starvation, insanity, death, and affirmations of human will. Despite the surfeit of references to deportation train journeys in testimonies and postwar culture, scholars have made little effort to, figuratively speaking, enter the cattle cars, sit with the stories, and find a place for them in the history of victims’ suffering during the Holocaust. This book seeks to be a corrective of this oversight.

The book’s main argument is that survivor testimonies of this experience provide a portal to a hidden Holocaust inside trains. They are the victims’ history of Nazi deportation policy, which represented the political immobilization of personal mobility. This policy and project of forced relocations identified Jews as deportable, administered them as “travelers,” and transported them as freight. The victims’ history of deportation can also be interpreted in its comparative and conceptual potential. I read deportation’s trauma as a sensory and embodied history of train experiences that radicalizes nineteenth-century responses to train transit. These responses were grounded in spatial and somatic trauma. They included changes to perception, distancing from the natural world, and sensorial disconnection from landscapes because of mechanized transit. In their political impact, deportation train journeys during the Holocaust are a grim testament to modern state-sponsored practices of isolation, exclusion, and ethnic cleansing. Deportations during the Holocaust can also be interpreted as a critical part of Jewish histories of transit and immobility.

My analysis of the three stages of deportation—departure, the train journey, and arrival at the camps—aspires to other interventions. I argue for renewed attention to the visual and embodied dimensions of survivor experiences, what I have termed “sensory witnessing.” Sensory witnessing was foregrounded in Terrence Des Pres’s 1976 classic study *The Survivor: An Anatomy of Life in the Death Camps*. However, with the exception of one chapter on “excremental assault,” little critical attention has been paid to the sensory dimensions of experience and memory during the Holocaust. Des Pres confined his analysis of sensory trauma to the concentration camps, although he acknowledged excremental assault’s preparatory work of defilement in the “locked boxcars, crossing Europe to the camps in Poland.”<sup>6</sup> He argued that in the camps, the smell of and closeness to excrement shifted from an imaginary metaphor of symbolic stain to a persistently inhaled evil: “When civilisation breaks down, as it did in the concentration camps, the ‘symbolic stain’ becomes a condition of literal defilement; and evil becomes that which causes real ‘loss of the personal core of one’s being.’ In extremity, man is stripped of his expanded spiritual identity.”<sup>7</sup> Des Pres’s argument has an equally valid predecessor in the experience of deportation trains, where the unmaking of bodies, particularly through excremental assault, exposed a profound crisis of witnessing.

An interpretation of immobilized bodies in trains also opens up discussion about the sensory foundations of witnessing in confined space, and the utility of emotion in writing intimate histories of experience. I examine the foundations of objective and subjective positions in relation to historical representation as categorized by Robert Eaglestone, who offered a binary view of truth claims. He argued that one understanding of truth is comprehensive and positivist, establishing a link to factual, empirical events, while the other is existential, concerned with ethics, and “how the world is for us.”<sup>8</sup> My reading of deportation as a victims’ history intends to reveal an existential truth that is a counternarrative to historical works, which have examined deportation from the perpetrators’ perspective. Entering the deportation trains challenges the long-standing scholarly preoccupation with deportation as a narrative of clinical actions—a bureaucratic inventory of timetables, deliveries, procedures, and traffic management. This scholarly approach has examined European-wide policies of deportation, the timing of its implementation as a product of Nazi decision making for the Final Solution, and the men responsible for deportation’s administration and implementation, such as Adolf Eichmann. But to what extent do experiential and empirical truths converge? What deportation meant to the Nazis who conceived it, to the bureaucrats and officials who administered it, and to its immobile victims cannot be reconciled, yet the relationship of cause and effect is not exclusive or isolated as a study of perpetrator-victim

relations. Testimonies of deportation transit reveal an intimate, disturbing, and taboo-breaking episode in the history of victims' suffering during the Holocaust. The terrorizing impact on deportees of compressed space and indeterminate journeying was not unknown to the bureaucrats. Their job was to actively and knowingly collude in the production of false truths and destinations, and to present these transports in records and to the victims as resettlement.

Resettlement—the ruse for the mass deportation of Jews from ghettos and transit camps—was crucial in the commission of the Final Solution. Deportations represented a critical application of resources and transport to the murderous intention already in practice in Nazi policy. Deportations intensified the experience of immobility that was initiated when the Nazi regime came to power in January 1933, and introduced laws and measures that moved progressively from social to physical attacks: segregation, expulsion, relocation, and murder. Deportation was the critical transition from relocation to murder. Between October 1941 and October 1944, an estimated three million Jews were deported from ghettos and transit camps across Europe to the extermination camps at Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, Auschwitz and Majdanek.<sup>9</sup> These numbers represent half of the total number of Jewish deaths under the Nazi regime.<sup>10</sup>

An interpretation of victims' responses to deportation is critical in understanding the direct impacts of Nazi policy as it was formulated by bureaucrats in Berlin and implemented in ghettos, towns, and locations far removed from the administrative center. I examine perpetrator-victim relations through deportation policy's sustained effects on the body, self-image, and witnessing capacities of deportees. A close reading of testimonies reveals the factors that shaped victims' representations of their persecutors during this forced relocation. The interpretive possibilities of a sensory history of deportation, however, are not limited to the victims. As deportees commonly reported, roundups for deportation, surveillance of deportees in transit, and unloading at the camps, were accompanied by deliberate and random acts of perpetrator violence, abuse, and killing. This behavior is frequently repressed in euphemistic language or deliberately unrecorded in bureaucratic documentation.

Deportation testimonies are rebuttals to the image of resettlement. The initial push into the carriage, the rush for sitting and standing space, the train's unconfirmed destination, the compression of bodies, and the violation of social boundaries were nothing compared to the overpowering assault of excrement, urine, and vomit, and the dearth of water and food. I provide a close reading of deportees' testimonies by using Clifford Geertz's method of "thick description." Espousing the virtues of a semiotic approach, Geertz commented that "to look at the symbolic dimensions of social action ... is

not to turn away from the existential dilemmas of life for some empyrean realm of de-emotionalized forms; it is to plunge into the midst of them.”<sup>11</sup> A study of deportation transit telescopes the dimensions of violence and violating actions that are allowed and disallowed when civilization breaks down. But to which history or literature of witness do testimonies of deportation belong, given that transit has no particular or constant place, but is rather a cumulative itinerary of landscapes and traumatic geographies?

Testimonies of deportation have not been extensively utilized by historians, and they have also been overlooked by scholars seemingly committed to interpreting victims’ experiences. This neglect is in contrast to the scholarly investigation of ghettoization and camp experiences. Despite the enormity of the task, and the incompleteness of remaining archival records, historians have produced comprehensive inventories and histories of deported national communities. Alongside historical narratives about the administration of deportation, the victims have been recorded or profiled in terms of origin, the date of deportation, convoy number, and destination. Institutional research into deported individuals and communities and their fates is ongoing,<sup>12</sup> with published works including Serge Klarsfeld’s *Mémorial de la déportation des juifs de France* and *Mémorial de la déportation des juifs de Belgique*, Michael Molho’s chronicle of the persecution of Greek Jewry, *In memoriam: hommage aux victimes juives des Nazis En Grèce*, and Alfred Gottwaldt and Diana Schulle’s *Die “Judendeportationen” aus dem Deutschen Reich 1941–1945: Ein kommentierte Chronologie*.<sup>13</sup>

Historians’ attention to deportations of persecuted groups under the Nazi regime has not produced equivalent focus on its explicitly direct impact: a focus on deportation as a victims’ history.<sup>14</sup> The data of this history are available in the form of wartime letters, reports, postwar oral and video testimonies, unpublished and published memoirs, and war crimes trials. When Holocaust survivors have been asked to testify about their experiences, particularly in war crimes trials, considerable tensions have emerged between the empirical truths historians are seeking to validate and the truths witnesses are able to tell. For example, in the 1961 trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem, prosecutors attempted to link victims’ trauma to perpetrator documents, including those relating to timetabling, competing traffic, provisions for the journey, and euphemistic language about resettlement that, for the most part, were seen to typify bureaucratic communications on deportation. Yet, survivor testimony often failed to meet the evidentiary standards of a legal, documentary truth.<sup>15</sup> This clash of truths is evident in the following exchange between the Attorney General and Israel Gutman—eminent historian, participant, and chronicler of the Warsaw Ghetto resistance—who testified about his deportation to Majdanek:<sup>16</sup>

Attorney General: How many people were there in that transport?

Gutman: I cannot state numbers. I can only say it was actually impossible to stand up in the freight car ... [t]he congestion was so great. It was one block of human beings. And when members of families lost contact with one another in this dense crowd, they were unable to find one another again.

Numbers were not Gutman's concern. It was the crowd, the memory of suffering deportees.

Experiences of deportation, such as Gutman's, have received passing attention in postwar culture. References to deportation often ignored the inside-the-train experience, and instead suggested its trauma through references to the physical infrastructure of railway travel, such as departure platforms, train stations, and train tracks, with arrival at camps as the fatal and geographical core of the Holocaust. The connotation of finality in these references is hardly surprising given the historical and cultural ubiquity of the camps as the murderous center of the Nazi regime. The objectification of trains as vehicles to the camps in these references appears to validate Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi's description of the Holocaust trains as an icon for "post-Holocaust metonymy of collective doom and traumatic identification."<sup>17</sup> This feeling of doom is recalled by Primo Levi: "almost always, at the beginning of the memory sequence, stands the train which marked the departure towards the unknown not only for chronological reasons but also for the gratuitous cruelty with which those (otherwise innocuous) convoys of ordinary freight cars were employed for extraordinary purposes."<sup>18</sup> The Holocaust train resonates in testimonies, literature, and visual culture as the vehicle to a fatal destination, rather than mobile residence to a life-threatening compression that both prepared deportees for, and disconnected them, from the camp world.

The experiential trauma of deportation train journeys has crossed genres, languages, and generations. The best-known accounts that were translated into English include Elie Wiesel's journeys in *Night*, Primo Levi's journey from Italy to Auschwitz in *If This Is a Man*, Charlotte Delbo's "Arrivals, Departures," which depicts the station as a theatre for abandoned travelers, and her *Convoy to Auschwitz*—the journey of the women of the French Resistance.<sup>19</sup> Historical novels that focus on transports of Jews and non-Jews include Jorge Semprun's *Le Grand Voyage* (The Long Voyage), and Christian Bernadac's multivolume *Déportation, 1933–1945*.<sup>20</sup>

In poetry, Dan Pagis's "Written in Pencil in a Sealed Railway Car," is perhaps one of the most discussed and reproduced poems about the traces of the Holocaust trains,<sup>21</sup> and Władysław Szlengel's "A Little Station Called Treblinka" inserts a Polish dimension to destination-themed literature, as have music and songs of the wartime period. For example, "Treblinka Dorte" (There Lies Treblinka) is a Yiddish song sung by women kitchen

workers who witnessed deportations of Jews outside the Warsaw Ghetto area.<sup>22</sup> Steve Reich's "Different Trains" and Herbert Distel's "Die Reise" (The Journey) also provide evocative soundscapes of deportation trains.<sup>23</sup> In visual art, Ziva Amishai-Maisels has analyzed how train scenes were a popular leitmotif for inmate artists with images of luggage, ghetto crowds, journey confinement, and arrival commonly depicted.<sup>24</sup> Some of these transit motifs have been used in installations, such as Arie Galles's *Fourteen Stations*, his Kaddish for Nazi victims, Andrew Rodgers's "Pillars of Witness" bronze castings at the Melbourne Holocaust Research Center in Australia, and in Judy Chicago's art tourism, expressed in her kitsch-like "Wall of Indifference."<sup>25</sup> In contrast, the artifacts of deportation's personal yet nameless biography are stunningly evoked with second-hand clothing in French artist Christian Boltanski's *Canada* installation.<sup>26</sup>

These literary and artistic outputs also have a strong visual foundation in the form of wartime photography, which portrayed various deportation scenes of order, forward motion and, occasionally, suffering and separation. Photography by German, Jewish, and clandestine witnesses, depicted columns of moving crowds in streets after roundups, panoramic landscapes with masses of deportees boarding trains, and less commonly, of the unloading of deportees and their belongings at camps. The graphic photographs of the Iasi "death train," which depicted survivors of the June 1941 pogrom in Romania promised safety through transport to a new location but those who died in the trains from heat exhaustion, dehydration, and suicide became an early case of death in transit.<sup>27</sup> Although the full extent to which German and Nazi photographers documented violent deportation scenes or encounters is not known, the available visual archive of deportation does not depict suffering bodies or corpses. Rather, the visual archive is highly sanitized and subjective. Deportation is portrayed as a banal bureaucratic practice, a compliant procedure without violence, impact, or suffering. This compliance is most evident in depictions of group togetherness, with people walking in columns or waiting crowds as signature motifs. The prevalence of the crowd in motion or assembly in Nazi and German photography conveyed a misleading impression of passivity that has arguably influenced historians' interpretations of Jewish behavior.

"To the Umschlagplatz" (see Figure 1.1) comes from the Stroop report about the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto following the 1943 uprising. It depicts the march of remaining ghetto residents with their knapsacks to the train terminal. Verifying the photographer's identity and/or affiliation allows room for interpretation about the evidentiary intentions of documentation and how these factors shaped the inclusion and exclusion of scenes and actions. The intention of the photograph seems clear enough: to record the successful suppression of any remaining insurgent tendencies. But what

remains outside the scene is the undocumented and suppressed truth of the violent liquidation. There are other crowd scenes of motion and stillness in the visual archive of deportation. The column of people in Figure 1.2, for example, depicts moving from the Warsaw Ghetto although the photo's uncertain provenance has limited its utility as historical evidence. Interpreted from the victims' perspective, this photo visualizes the itinerant life of ghetto residents, who are weighed down by luggage, walking in what appears to be ostensible compliance with orders, and without extensive reinforcement by police or guards. Again, the selective framing of order and compliance compels thought about what was undocumented during these relocations. The photo by Walter Genewein, an accountant in the Lodz Ghetto, portrays Jews with layers of clothing and luggage, boarding trains (see Figure 1.3). The photo is part of a large collection of some four hundred images from the Lodz Ghetto, which includes depictions of Jewish councils, Jewish communal life, funerals and cemeteries, labor and industry, "gypsy" areas, and the nearby work camp of Pabianice.<sup>28</sup> The boarding of Jews appears as just another transit event in Genewein's visual chronicle of the ghetto's mobile population, although it quite possibly depicts the resettlement to Chelmno in April 1942.<sup>29</sup> Genewein's presentation of deportation as a bureaucratic activity visualized the Nazis' recording of deportation as benign: the very deliberate intention to mask the murderous destinations of trains to deportees.



**Figure 1.1** “To the Umschlagplatz, 1943” (WS 26537). Courtesy of USHMM Photo Archives.



**Figure 1.2** Deportation, Warsaw Ghetto, 1943 (WS 79111). Courtesy of USHMM Photo Archives.

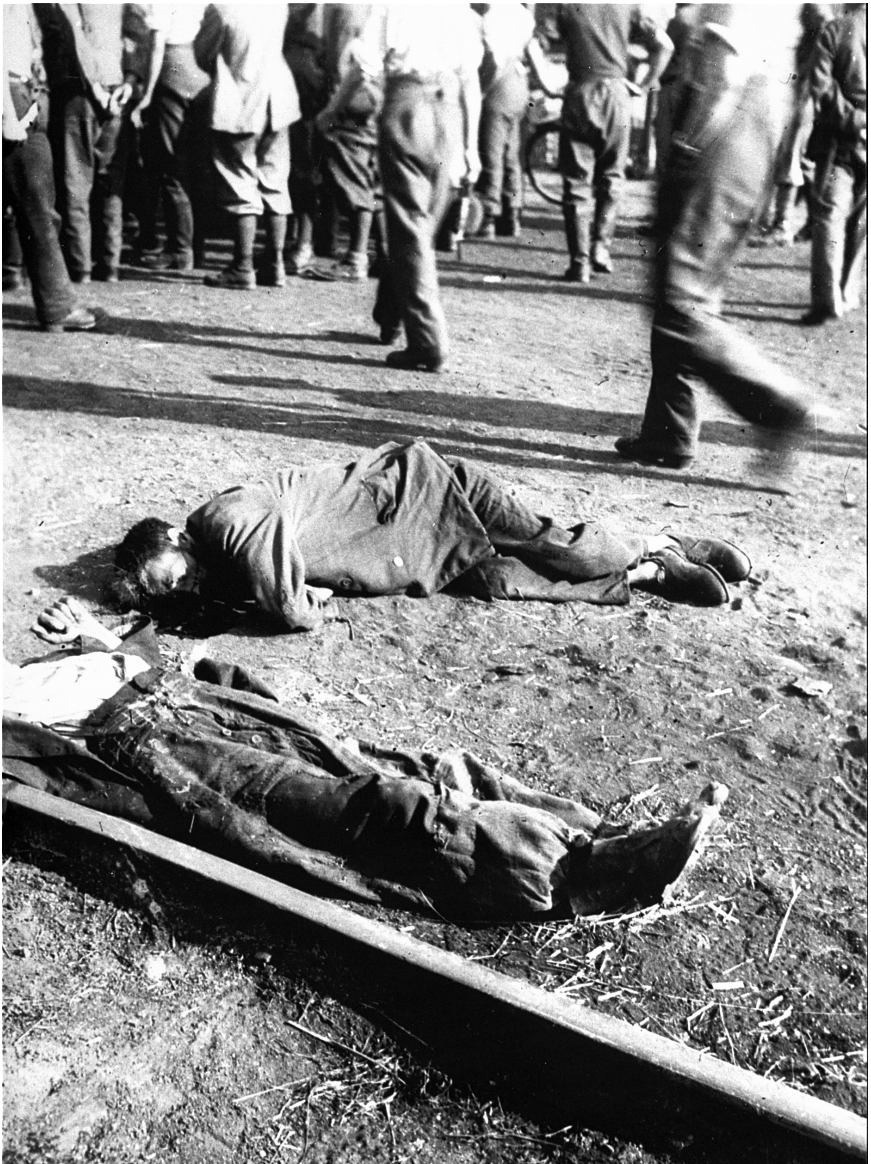


**Figure 1.3** Deportation, Lodz Ghetto, 1942 (WS 74537). (Jüdisches Museum der Stadt Frankfurt), Courtesy of USHMM Photo Archives.

Although Jewish photographers portrayed crowds carrying luggage under surveillance, scenes that were similar to German and Nazi images, they also moved beyond objectification and used the camera as an instrument of evidentiary disclosure and truth telling. Jewish photography of deportations, particularly by Mendel Grossman and Henryk Ross in the Lodz Ghetto, did not remain on the outside of the crowd, but moved among and with the prospective deportees. Their photos exhibited an ethical commitment to a range of victims' physical and emotional responses, including their anxiety, frantic activity, courage, and emotional despair. These responses were largely omitted from the German and Nazi record. Mendel Grossman's image of a victim of the Lodz Ghetto's "Gehsperre" of September 1942 may not reveal much about the circumstances outside the frame that led to the scene; that is, knowledge of what occurred during the week-long roundup of the ghetto's ostensible weak links of the aged, children, and hospital patients (see Figure 1.4). It does, however, reveal Grossman's intention to document resistant actions as ruptures to the image of compliance. These actions were also clandestinely captured by Austrian soldier Hubert Pfoch (see Figure 1.5). The photograph is an urgent visual testimony of violence and abandonment. The image (of two presumably dead) bodies slumped next to the railroad tracks outside of Siedlce, near Treblinka, is a powerful corrective to the impression of compliance and order, and corroborates the claims of testimonies of departure locations as sites of death.



**Figure 1.4** Jewish victim killed during the "Gehsperre," Lodz Ghetto, 1942 (WS 02698). Courtesy of USHMM Photo Archives.



**Figure 1.5** Jewish victims killed during a deportation action, Siedlce, 1942 (WS 88278). (Dokumentationsarchiv des Oesterreichischen Widerstandes), Courtesy of USHMM Photo Archives.

Photography, like cinema, provided a screening of deportation's procedures that suggested the trauma of victims. These depictions were limited to exterior depictions of the train and its passengers at departure, in transit, and at arrival. One of the few filmed wartime sequences of deportees inside trains at departure is found in a short silent film about the deportations from Thrace and Macedonia in March 1943 to Treblinka, a journey that lasted for three weeks and included transport by boat along the Danube.<sup>30</sup> Postwar cinema from Europe and the United States drew on photographic depictions of passivity and occasionally resistance in ghettos, though it rarely focused for prolonged periods of time on the inside of the freight cars.

Cinema's intervention was to recreate the camps and their death-world as deportation's destination, locations largely omitted from the historical visual archive of resettlement. This cinematic gallery of deportation includes agonizing separation moments at departure, such as those in *The Pianist* (2002), violent scenes of boarding trains in ghettos and transit camps, external images of closed freight cars in motion, and selections of deportees at arrival at camps. There are some films, such as *The Pawnbroker* (1964), *Angry Harvest* (1985), *Fateless* (2005), and *Der Letzte Zug* (2006), which have taken the inside of the cattle car as an extended stage of immobilization and distress, portraying deportees' battles with space, smell, sound, and each other. Holocaust trains also feature as vessels for the trafficking of victims, especially in deathly and remote landscapes, as depicted in Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (1985). Lanzmann's framing of the intersecting grid of iron tracks shift its Nazi intention of benign resettlement into a memorial to the failed arrival of Holocaust trains—the railroad tracks are permanent scars of death traffic across Europe to Poland's backyard.

Although postwar documentary and narrative cinema gave voice and vision to victims' testimonies, it also conflated experiences, scenes, and archival photography to present a generic cinematic journey. These acts of appropriation have been exhibited in museums, where the photography of deportation has emanated from wartime film footage of transit and resettlement, images that have produced a collective deportee identity, and a decontextualized and visually mobile victim of universal suffering without much reference to the ethnic or religious biography of the represented person. A commonly used example of an endless Holocaust journeyer is the film still, widely circulated as a photo, of a frightened child. She is Settela Steinbach, peering out of a cattle car, en route from Westerbork transit camp (see Figure 1.6).<sup>31</sup> Her captive status is repeatedly reinscribed and represented in post-Holocaust uses of her victimization. In her vulnerability, she transcends her historically immobile transport moment and that of her racial group and departure origin, the deportation of Sinti from Westerbork. Her universality stands in for the entrapment of deported Jewish children in Europe.<sup>32</sup>



**Figure 1.6** Sinti child on train en route from Westerbork transit camp, 1944 (WS 05199). (Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz), Courtesy of USHMM Photo Archives.

This cultural output of deportation's trauma is a sample of the enormous range of traumatic references associated with Holocaust transit. The emphasis on traumatic transit is so broad that an explanation about this book's focus is needed. Which experience is under examination given that trains and transit played formative roles in Jewish victims' lives under the Nazi regime?

There are innumerable experiences of mobility and immobility that can be studied. Victims' lives were increasingly shaped by a policy that entailed ongoing displacements, deprivation, humiliation, and abandonment. Moved from villages and shtetls to ghettos, from ghettos to camps, between camps, and from camps to evacuations and death marches near the end of the war, victims were nothing if not in a permanent state of existential and residential crisis. Their lives were itinerant, uncertain, and without a future. The deportation journeys under examination are compelling examples of forced transit of persecuted groups under oppressive regimes. For Jews, however, this example of forced transit has an additional resonance in their experience and collective memory of exile, migration, and tenuous residence in diaspora locations. The Final Solution sought to terminate the long-term survival of the Jews as an ethnic group. Although persecution was advertised and promoted in propaganda, rhetoric, and speeches, a murderous intention was not

concretized or formalized into a coordinated policy of destruction until late 1941. The itinerary toward that destination is reflected in contradictions in Nazi policy. These contradictions can be explored in the restrictions on Jewish mobility and emigration options before that time: locally in Germany, in occupied Poland from 1939, during the so-called resettlement or wild deportation phase, and finally in the murderous deportation phase—from 1941 to 1944.

Before their journeys to the death camps as part of the Final Solutions, Jews and their mobility were of key concern to the Nazis. The alleged threat of Jewish infiltration in transit and social space existed in a complex relationship long before the SS requisitioned the Deutsche Reichsbahn to supply trains for deportations. Restrictions to transit and leisure before 1939 were based on laws that promoted the displacement and marginalization and immobility of the Jews in German social space: sitting on park benches, swimming, cinema attendance, and curfews were examples of such incursions.<sup>33</sup> Alon Confino has argued that tourism in postwar Germany provides telling insight into Germany's Nazi past as it promoted practices about what was considered as normal and exceptional in everyday life as well as national experience.<sup>34</sup> Confino indicates how the tourism industry was implicated in segregative practices against Jews. For example, the 1935 Nuremberg Laws forbade most hotels from accommodating Jewish guests, while a decree from the Ministry of Interior issued on 24 July 1937, set extreme restrictions on the presence of Jews in spas and another decree of 16 June 1939, made access to them impossible.<sup>35</sup>

Railway stations were targeted as potential infiltration sites from a number of sources, including the illegal sale of foreign newspapers and unregulated Jewish mobility. These concerns of infiltration were addressed in the Reich Chamber of Culture on 1 November 1933, which, in line with the "reconstruction of the German press in the National Socialist State," vetted or approved individuals who worked in railway bookshops based on their political and moral reliability.<sup>36</sup>

The threat of the Jews to the internal security of civilian train space and their proposed containment in class-based carriage captivity achieved particularly obsessive focus in a conversation between Josef Goebbels and Hermann Goering on 12 November 1938 in the wake of the Kristallnacht. The conversation discussed the outrage about Jews sharing a sleeping car with Germans. Goebbels remarked that the Jews "will be given a separate compartment only after Germans have secured seats," to which Goering replied it would be preferable to give them separate compartments: "I'd give the Jews one coach or one compartment, And should such a case as you mention arise and the train be overcrowded, believe me, we won't need a law. We'll kick him out and he'll have to sit all alone in the lavatory all the way."<sup>37</sup>

Arising from this exchange were two unsustainable possibilities: the entitlement of Jews to their own compartment, and the racial pollution that could result from spatial fusion with German passengers. The investment of dangerous and permeable qualities to train space at this time evoked late nineteenth-century anxieties about trains as unsettled spaces that violated social boundaries of class, gender, and race. Train spaces and their regulation through carriage comforts symbolized the mobility and immobility of travel, the benefits and detriments of confinement, and enforced segregation as a solution. It is tempting to link this conversation to the train's role in deportations as the link of travel into the Final Solution, but a less deterministic reading suggests the ambiguities of defining secure and contaminated public spaces in Nazi Germany, and the alleged threats posed by Jews and their mobility. There were other examples of Holocaust transit before 1939. In the captive world of the victims, though not yet physically imposed, transit involved the voluntary if not fiscally burdensome emigration of the Jews within continental Europe and away from it.

After the Kristallnacht of 9 November 1938, emigration was formalized in the Kindertransport program, the relief package for Jewish children and teenagers from Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia to the United Kingdom. Between 1938 and the outbreak of the war, thousands of children traveled by train to various ports for the voyage to Britain. These travels have been recalled with anguish and despair by the children and the parents in numerous memoirs and several films.<sup>38</sup> The push for emigration and the threats to Jewish life in Germany did not resolve the Nazi construct of the "Jewish problem" but deferred its resolution by creating refugee crises and exportable problem populations in several countries, including France, Portugal, the Netherlands, and Hungary.<sup>39</sup> The European refugee crisis, as the persecution of the Jews was called at the time, was addressed at the July 1938 Evian conference in France. The proposal of Holocaust transit as a further emigration and resettlement of European refugees to countries such as Australia, Canada, South Africa, Britain, and the United States, was denied by leaders and diplomats. The Jews, it was alleged, could incite local anti-Semitism and racial tensions and displace specialized labor.

Although these examples suggest how the history of Jews under the Nazi regime can be discussed in terms of transit traumas and solutions, I do not explore them in depth. This book is not a comparative history of forced relocation of communities and deportation movements in specific countries, or an investigation of policies of resettlement and experimentation implemented by the Nazis in their treatment of Jews and non-Jews before 1941.<sup>40</sup> Whereas there were countless train and foot journeys implemented by the Nazi regime in their plans for resettlement, forced labor, and deportation,

what defines the parameters of this book is the murderous intention and impact of deportations in the achievement of the Final Solution.

I focus mainly on Jewish victims and their experiences of deportation from late 1941 to late 1944. I use a method that is spatially and temporally grounded in the wartime topography of occupied Poland. I analyze testimonies of deportees as defined by their stages of departure, transit, and arrival at the camps of Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, Auschwitz, and Majdanek. This method is destination determined, but it is also challenged by multiple experiences of finality. Some survivors were transported several times in train journeys that were intended as final, meaning that they were deported from a ghetto to a camp, escaped during transit, returned to the ghetto, and were deported again to another camp. As a result, one can expect some conditioning of trauma from the first train journey, allowing for a comparison about the experience of readiness, shock, and finality in subsequent deportations.<sup>41</sup>

The representation of experiences of finality in survivor testimonies acknowledges the prevalence of backshadowing as discussed by literary critic Michael André Bernstein in *Foregone Conclusions: Against Apocalyptic History*.<sup>42</sup> When applied to the tellability of the train journey, backshadowing refers to how a survivor's first encounter with a camp via a deportation transport, as one of departure–train transit–arrival, becomes largely rerouted in testimonies as a camp-originated memory of arrival–departure–train transit–arrival. In this itinerary, the camp emerges not only as a destination of the train, but also as a perpetually present departure platform where traumatic life experiences find origin, meaning, and are subjected to innumerable comparisons.

The experience of finality was also shaped by prior periods of displacement and captivity. These journeys were often preceded by other violent and degrading experiences of deportation, confinement, and forced movement by train, foot, ship, and truck from rural to urban locations, covered varying time periods, distances and landscapes, and involved progressive separation of families and dissolution of communities. In representational terms, the realization that the journey's outcome was a failed resettlement adds to the resonance of deportation as a final journey in testimonies and reports. The intense spatial constraints that characterized Jewish victims' transit histories were not consistent. For some ghetto communities, such as Lodz, the final journey was preceded by a long ghettoization where spatial deprivations came to be managed. By contrast, where ghettoization occurred relatively late and was followed by rapid deportations, as in the case of Hungarian Jews, the victims' first real experiences of spatial constraints were quite possible in the trains to Auschwitz.<sup>43</sup>

References to other destinations, Jewish and non-Jewish victims, and varying transport methods, are evidence of the applicability of transit to describe an

experiential condition of persecuted groups. The persecution and deportation of Jews can be contextualized in the history of forced displacements of other victims in Germany and across Europe during the 1930s and 1940s. These targeted groups include the disabled, Sinti and Roma, Poles, homosexuals, and political prisoners. This book excludes witnesses whose experiences of ghettoization and persecution did not result in deportation to the main concentration or death camps, for example, in the Baltic region or in Ukraine.<sup>44</sup>

The end of the war and the collapse of the Third Reich heralded further traumatic journeys of displacement: the forced repatriation of German expellees back to the “Heimat” by train, of Soviet POWs and refugees in Germany, and the forced evacuation of emaciated survivors from concentration camps on death marches. The liberation of Nazi camps in Poland, and later camps in Germany and Austria, announced photography as a formative visual eyewitness in the documentation of genocide’s victims, topography, and scale. Desolate camp landscapes, pits, androgynous-looking inmates, and corpses all featured as horrific evidence of hidden crimes, as did the trains, which made their final journeys in the forced evacuations of inmates from camps in late stages of 1944 and early 1945. The perpetrators’ intentional cruelty and deprivations toward their victims are graphically conveyed in the image of carriage in the Dachau “death train” (see Figure 1.7). This train comprised nearly forty railcars containing the bodies of



**Figure 1.7** Death train, Dachau, 1945 (WS 62241). Courtesy of USHMM Photo Archives.

between 2,000 and 3,000 prisoners who were evacuated from Buchenwald on 7 April 1945.

In suggesting that deportation by trains produced fatal transit experiences, it is possible that objections might arise regarding the temporal and geographical focus when other historical cases of forced transit and displacement have claimed numerically more victims. I do not enter into a debate about a quantitatively defined and competitive “victims’ history” of displacement in the twentieth century, or earlier examples of forced migration, biological displacement, and colonial exterminations. Rather, I argue that deportation journeys during the Holocaust are prismatic and suggestive for engaging with these historical and ongoing examples of the displacement of colonized, indigenous, and oppressed populations. These displacements include those committed in the name of imperial expansion, including forced migrations, territorial invasion, and killings during New World colonialism of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century, and the physical trafficking of eleven to fifteen million Africans during the slave trade to the Americas and the Caribbean from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth century. The Middle Passage, the name given to the harrowing journeys of the slaves across the Atlantic from West African ports, took weeks and months, and the slave ship has become a symbol of spatial suffering and inhumanity.<sup>45</sup>

Other examples of ethnic cleansing and genocide from an unfortunately long list include the territorial dispossession and physical exterminations of indigenous peoples in white settler societies in Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. There were also episodes of colonial extermination under the banner of European imperialism in Africa from the mid-nineteenth century, for example, in the Congo and in South-West Africa. Episodes in the twentieth century include the Turkish genocide of the Armenians, forced resettlements and incarceration of ethnic and political minorities in the USSR in the 1930s and 1940s, including deportation train journeys to Gulags,<sup>46</sup> the forcible deportation of approximately 3.2 million Soviet citizens to the Third Reich,<sup>47</sup> the use of trains as massacre sites in the partition of India,<sup>48</sup> and ethnic cleansings in post-communist Balkan countries in the 1990s.<sup>49</sup>

The specific focus on deportation journeys is instructive, as the possibilities for future comparative and interdisciplinary research on other transit experiences are rich. Reading testimonies of deportation is conducive to future studies of transit spaces, emplotted experiences, forced movements, and displacements in World War II that prefaced and followed victims’ deportations to the camps, such as evacuations and death marches, and postwar relocations to displacement camps and refuge. Comparative histories of transit experiences of victims from specific communities, or regions, are waiting to be written and visualized, using, for example, the methods of Geographical Information Systems to produce an interactive mapping of

these journeys in their origins, stopovers, and destinations. Holocaust transit also applies to the spatio-temporal movements of perpetrators as individuals and in groups. A visual and spatial interpretation of the criminal routes or trajectories of the wartime activities and occupations of roving individuals, and killing squads, such as the work of police battalions in the invasion of Poland, or in occupation activities in the East, would be especially useful in mapping geographies of crime, complicity, and persecution.

This book is based on published and unpublished English-language testimonies of Jewish survivors of the Holocaust who have written or spoken about their experiences in a number of forums and projects. These sources include interviews conducted by David Boder with displaced persons in camps in the American zone of occupation in postwar Europe in the summer of 1946, survivor testimony given at the Eichmann trial in 1961, unpublished sources held in the archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and oral histories from the 1980s commissioned in the United States, such as the American Gathering Conference Collection. I have also used video testimonies from the 1980s and 1990s, and well-known Holocaust memoirs in English.

The use of testimonies available in English reflects how the victims' history of deportation is a survival narrative through language as refuge. English was not always adequate or available as being the medium for telling, but the preservation of the "perplexity" of telling trauma in fragmented, often frustrated speech and prose, allows for an interpretation of testimony as a mediation of experience, language, and memory.<sup>50</sup> My use of English-language testimonies builds on Alan Rosen's discussion of English and its evolution as a "tertiary language" in the representation of the Holocaust.<sup>51</sup>

English-language Holocaust testimonies allowed the foreign to become familiar, at least linguistically, for audiences removed from its European geography. There is a caution that published and unpublished testimonies that have been written and spoken in English could distance the survivor from the trauma, and continue a repression of memory. Yet if this is case, it is more than likely that testimonies are incomplete fragments or traces of an embodied, irretrievable experience. Philosopher Burkhard Liebsch advances this belief, commenting, "Never ... will there be a definitive testimony, a final text about the Shoah. All that has been said hitherto has its future still in front of it, a future still 'pending' because the testimonies transmit not only what has been said, but also this irretrievable surplus of what remains to be said."<sup>52</sup> The contention of the "unsaid" surplus is inherited from the long-standing debate among scholars about the Holocaust's ostensible "unspeakability."<sup>53</sup> In this reading, the Holocaust represented a profound rupture, defies comprehension to those who were not there, and is particularly resistant to artistic or creative genres of representation. The

contention of the radical ineffability of the Holocaust is more than a hermeneutic debate or an ethnic claim for uniqueness. At its core is an experiential unavailability, the missing testimony of the dead. I do not intend to replicate that approach.

An early undertaking that explored the potential of the Holocaust's frustrated tellability was, as mentioned previously, David Boder's oral history interviews. Eight of the interviews were published in 1949 as *I Did Not Interview the Dead*, the first published book of oral documentation in English after the war.<sup>54</sup> With a gesture to the future, and to guide the passage of the stories to American audiences, Boder transcribed 70 of the 109 interviews he conducted in Yiddish, German, Russian, French, and other languages into English. In 1957 these transcripts were published in the sixteen-volume opus, *Topical Autobiographies of Displaced People*,<sup>55</sup> which Alan Rosen has described as "the greatest work on the Holocaust to appear in English in the decade after the war."<sup>56</sup> Boder's decision to make a multilingual experience a monolingual chronicle reflected his intention to remedy the emerging disparity between the abundance of visual material collected at the end of the war and the paucity of first-hand auditory material on the subject.<sup>57</sup> Boder was searching for the ordinary witness with the extraordinary, untold story. His impulse guides my approach to reading the exceptional in the ordinary witness story of deportation.

I use testimony to explore the tellability of ordinary witness stories of deportation, and to uncover the fluid narrative space between the said and the unsaid. I do not use testimonies as a supplementary or secondary source to highlight or corroborate empirical facts anchored in documentary sources of the perpetrators, as is common practice among historians. Rather, I use testimony as one critical symptom of witness itself to offer an intervention into the writing of deportation histories as a victims' story—a compilation of fragments, vignettes, and embodied truths. Much of what occurred inside the deportation trains en route from ghettos to camps remains inassimilable to social discourse, and is marginalized in the historiography of the Holocaust. I use testimonies about deportation's fear, excrement, violence, and sensory assault to reverse that ongoing marginalization.

My interpretation of victims' testimonies of deportation has several objectives, and is guided by influences from philosophy, sociology, anthropology, and cultural studies. The first objective is to ask questions about victims' experiences that reflect their own existential crises of truth telling: how are bodily pain and trauma explicable to others who do not share similar experiences? Testimonies of deportation contain traumatic data that historians sometimes find difficult to interpret. These testimonies are nothing if not subjective, emotional, and agony-filled indictments of the effects of Nazi bureaucratic efficiency, and also witnesses to its improvisation and chaos. Although

deportees' responses to transit may have been conditioned by ghetto deprivations and violent roundups, the very containment of deportation's effects inside the train carriages produced an unseen group suffering. Historians might also suggest that the relatively short duration of deportation train journeys, whether in hours or days, and their impact on victims, is difficult to assess in relation to comparatively longer periods of incarceration in ghettos and camps. Yet the suggestion of trauma as having an empirical truth that can be timed is misplaced when analyzing testimonies of deportation. Transport time was unquantifiable: the length of a train journey—hours, days, or weeks—had little relationship to the impact of compression and the psychological ruin it caused.

Second, I focus on the corporeality of the Holocaust as the basis for sensory and olfactory witness truths. I revisit Terrence Des Pres's claims about the impact of excremental assault, which he principally analyzed as a camp phenomenon. His focus minimized the effects of transport shame, the ubiquitous stench, and presence of excrement, urine, and vomit, as initiations into the camp world. Telling and writing at the time, but for the most part, after the war, survivors of deportation transports anticipated the train journey as a reprieve from the miserable ghetto life of disease, malnutrition, and other deprivations. But the illusion of resettlement was quickly destroyed. The conditions in the trains were profoundly invasive, violating, and traumatizing. Already initiated into the sensory assaults of constrained living quarters in ghettos and towns, deportees were still not quite prepared for what inescapable space did to smell, sound, and touch. Indeed, victims' testimonies of olfactory trauma suggest that it was inside the trains that excremental assault incited the most intense and transgressive responses, isolating this space as distinct from other sites of assault.

Deportation train journeys produced countless moments of transport shame. Victims were forced, for example, to turn private experiences—such as excreting and urinating—into public and observed acts. It is from these moments of transport shame that deportation train journeys provide incredibly affecting sources for writing a sensory history of the Holocaust according to its largely unknown, ordinary witnesses. These ordinary witnesses, the majority of whom were Holocaust survivors, were forced by circumstances of history to become messengers but with despairingly few listeners or readers. There are thousands of such testimonies, but very few people have heard of the authors: Leo Bretholz from Vienna, the Warsaw Ghetto fighter Benjamin Piskorz who told his story to David Boder in an Italian displaced persons camp in 1946, and Rosa Ferera from Rhodes. Their experiences of transit—the impairment to sight, the unwanted touch of bodies, and the common practice of ingesting urine—suggest that the sensory assault of transit remains lost in the footnotes, replaced in the

text, and thus in history, with rhetorical themes of hope, survival, courage, moral action, and convoluted definitions of spiritual resistance. Could it be that a lack of critical interest in transport shame is reflective of an ongoing repression of ostensibly taboo topics in the representation of the Holocaust, and indeed, scholarly marginalization of unpublished testimonies, which are seen to exhibit minimal literary distinction or revelations about the human condition? Why is it that Holocaust testimonies which affirm or recuperate the human condition from sustained psychological injury and narratives of a distinguished literary character continue to marginalize the otherwise abundant and ordinary victim experiences found in unpublished accounts and spoken-word video-testimonies?<sup>58</sup> This reading implies that what constitutes an authentic Holocaust experience is less the content of the story, but rather the drama and sophistication of its telling, the revelation of a previously mystifying experience in language that rewrites the Holocaust as a continuing cultural moment of disruption, mourning, and return.

In what ways does deportation testimony challenge a long-standing scholarly reliance on well-known literature and eyewitnessing as tellable mediums for victims' diverse experiences? To what extent is the claim of challenge too exaggerated as a critical intervention considering the comparatively brief duration of transit in relation to other victim spaces? A third objective is to question what makes a witness in confined spaces, when visual perception, the assumed normative basis of eyewitnessing during the Holocaust, was compromised and regularly failed the deportee in train carriages. It is the primacy of sight that is often advanced as the most critical and essential condition for assessing the authenticity of victims' testimony about their Holocaust experiences. A study of how victims responded to deportation transit questions the sustainability of a visual truth when vision itself was unreliable. Embodied responses and sensory trauma came to represent, for deportees, more suggestive expressions of their confinement. Yet, to suggest that embodied witnessing characterized deportees' responses is hardly an original reading. Were not all Holocaust victim experiences embodied? Indeed, what is striking about the embodied witnessing argument is its lack of application to Holocaust victim responses. A study of deportation transit is therefore suggestive of the possibilities of thinking about witnessing that is more expansive and sensitive to the body traumas of confinement, persecution, and shame. Compressed space heightened deportees' sensorial perception and representation of transit stresses as arguably more extreme and intense than those spatial and sensory attacks in ghettos and camps. An examination of deportation transit allows the recuperation of the suffering body from historiographical neglect and validates the deportee as a witness with authenticity and agency.<sup>59</sup>

A fourth objective is to consider the impact of this heightened sensory space as a significant witnessing moment that is outside the principal fixed locations of ghettos and camps, which are the main locations of many scholarly studies of victim chronicles and postwar representations. Ghettos and camps, in particular, comprise what Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi has called the symbolic geography of the Holocaust. Ezrahi argued that representations of the Holocaust mark it as a universe consisting of “concentric circles,” of which the gas chamber was the center or black hole, and that to have spent the war years avoiding that fate was to have inhabited the “outer circles” of that universe.<sup>60</sup> By this logic, she writes, “multiple points of reference or departure are not equally valid but rather mark degrees of separation from the ‘Event’ itself.”<sup>61</sup> To what extent do testimonies of deportation provide both a portal to and disconnection from the camp world?

My argument questions the dominance of camp destinations as the traumatic core of this symbolic geography. The sensory invasions of deportation transports anticipated the degradations of the camp world, and in some instances, exceeded them. Survivors compared the bodily pain of transport with previous experiences of separation and captivity, degradation and fear of death, and to imagined ones. For many survivors, their memory of being a deportee was akin to a death that is provocatively suggestive of the gas chambers. Although deportees were transported to the camps to reach the condition of witnessing authenticity, the fact of their survival exempts them from what many scholars and philosophers regard as the Holocaust’s most authentic yet unavailable witnesses: the victims who were killed in gas chambers. Cattle car “deaths” are ignored as secondary traumas compared to the camp deaths. An examination of deportees’ testimonies is not only scholarly in purpose, it is also restorative. I attempt to give life to cattle car voices that have been displaced by the dead.

A final objective is to rethink how victims’ testimonies of deportation can be mapped in comparative and perceptual terms. In what ways is it possible to think about their experiences of train space, mobility, and exclusion as a displaced geography in Holocaust historiography? In what ways are deportation testimonies without a place, so to speak, in historians’ recognition of suffering sites and spaces of the victims? How do victims and survivors work through their memories of deportation using fixed and fluid anchors to place, landscape, and structures? Rather than take the national frame of reference as an organizing principle for analyzing deportation testimonies, I adopt a thematic, stage-based approach that began with removal from the ghettos and terminated at the camps. But what factors made a departure location meaningful? Overwhelmingly, most of the testimonies I use are from the postwar period, and the camps depicted in them are memory points that ground and validate the traumatic narrative of victimization and

survival. The Final Solution camps were the reception and killing centers for the remaining three million Jews from continental Europe. Yet the journeys deportees were forced to take to get to them were needlessly long, humiliating, and unfamiliar. It is the progression from the familiar to the unknown and uncertain that dominates testimonies. What references do deportees use to describe this alienating, existential crisis, experienced twice, first in the war, and then in representational, testimonial time? What geographies of transit are recalled in departures, train journeys, and arrivals at the camp?

One example of mapping literary geographies occurs in *Travelers, Immigrant, Inmates: Essays in Estrangement*, Frances Bartkowski's study of the literature of explorers, survivors, and immigrants. Although Bartkowski approaches the Holocaust memoir as a hybrid form of travel writing, her main location of captivity is the camps. Bartkowski's study of the Holocaust memoir briefly considers experiences of deportation, though not in a lengthy fashion that might argue for this phase as distinct: "Memoirs of deportation under the Nazi regime are focused on the death trains that took days to go from a place that was home or near home to a place that was nameless and foreign, where it quickly became clear that no previous rules applied. The conditions on the trains of crowding and starvation began to do the work of dividing human beings among themselves in a struggle for breath, water, light."<sup>62</sup> Bartkowski's consideration of narratives of travel, ethnicity, and captivity raises issues of class, gender, and sexuality, with the apparent link among them being that "they all find themselves having left 'home' and ventured out, and having some new faces and places in the world tell them something about where they have come to and from. Travel writing, ethnic discourses of displacement, and the postmodern captivity narratives of concentration camp memoirs offer unique opportunities to examine the rhetoric of submission and domination, that is, the analytics of power. Through this rhetoric, we can read the consolidation of identities as inevitably and simultaneously a strategy of appropriation and accommodation, claim and resistance, provisionality and necessity."<sup>63</sup>

Bartkowski's omission of deportation transit as an experience that also produces "representations of the selves shaped in relation to an elsewhere" undermines her contention that the Holocaust memoir is a postmodern captivity narrative.<sup>64</sup> But the sense of captivity is not limited to written testimonies. In video testimonies, deportees' memories of transit are relived as feelings of being "retortured," "reviolated," and "decentered," a boundary-crossing space of behaviors, moralities, and extremes that also has philosophical, sociological, and ethical implications. In telling stories of transit, survivors evoke irreversibility, of not being able to revert to their original self from having endured transit. An examination of deportees' testimonies reveals the factors that create and unmake body image—geographical and

existential displacement, sensory assaults, and abjection. These representations of the suffering self are also instructive for interpreting other events and literatures of torture, political imprisonment, and captivity in modernity. In written testimonies about the Holocaust witnesses narrates displacement and estrangement in spatial and temporal binaries of inside/outside, before/after, and presence/absence. These binaries are not necessarily as explicable or portable as spoken word experiences. The narrative order of writing the self as a traumatized subject is in opposition to the ruptures and chaos of sense memory that often intrudes on the spoken-word telling of transit in the presence of the interviewer.

I read written and oral deportation testimonies in their moments of telling, shifting uneasily between documentation, bearing witness, negotiation of liturgical archetypes, reportage, literature, and the use of fictional references to foreground the real. Collectively, I interpret testimonies as conversations or “journey talk,” that is, stories from the abyss. The testimonies used are bearers of distressing truths that often stand alone in their estrangements from language, the self, and what can be talked about in social discourse. They are very often emotional and combative. In using testimonies to rethink witnessing, I am also cognizant of the philosophical ambiguities that surround the uselessness of testimony produced from experiences of corporeal suffering. There is more than coincidence in the titles of works by eminent philosophers of Holocaust memory: Emmanuel Levinas and “Useless Suffering,” Primo Levi and “Useless Violence,” and Charlotte Delbo and “Useless Knowledge.”<sup>65</sup> My reading of deportation acknowledges the privacy of pain and brings into view some problems of using these testimonies as an anti-genocide narrative.

In the chapters that follow, I provide a narrative journey of deportation where the themes of train transit, captivity, and witness are explored. Chapter 2, “Resettlement: Deportees as the Freight of the Final Solution,” sits, figuratively speaking, on the outside of the train carriages. I explore the bureaucratic representation of deportations as resettlement in records and to ghetto residents. This chapter provides an anchor to subsequent chapters on deportees’ anticipations and experiences of the image of resettlement. The manufactured image of deportation as a benign relocation, as journey that promised safety, security, and future mobility, continued the social death of victims through objectification and dehumanization. In bureaucratic records, Jews were immobilized by numbers and language as a preface to their confinement on trains. They were represented as objects of an administered process, and defined by their oppressors as statistics and categories to be shipped.

Chapter 3, “Ghetto Departures: The Emplotment of Experience,” introduces deportees’ visions of ambivalence and uncertainty in ghettos before

their journeys in trains. This chapter initiates a discussion of victims' representations of their immobility, an immobility already initiated through constraints on spaces of residence, work, and assembly in ghettos. Journeys to concentration and extermination camps cannot be analyzed without this focus. As depicted in testimonies, eyewitness scenes of waiting for the trains, of families crushing in overcrowded spaces in assembled areas, and in hospitals, synagogues, public squares, prisons, and on station platforms, were a preface to the spatial attacks that would soon entrap deportees in the trains. I examine the pretransit mood and psychology of ghetto communities, relating these accounts to the false image of security and survival that the Nazis willfully constructed.

An examination of how the Nazis constructed and implemented the image of deportation as resettlement is directly related to deportees' interpretation of their transit experiences. Although I argue that the presentation of deportation as a transit experience was central in the psychology of compliance, I do not contend that victims necessarily saw their experiences in this way. For them, deportation journeys were anything but a leisurely transit experience. The intention to see victim testimony as related to the perpetrators' perceptions of them was also significantly addressed in David Boder's interviews. In the "Addenda" to volume XVI of *Topical Autobiographies*, Boder assessed the psychological value of the testimonies. He believed that they offered insight into the "fate of the suffered and their 'techniques' of survival," at the same time disclosing a number of "pertinent behavior mechanisms and aspects of personality dynamics of the perpetrators of their hardships."<sup>66</sup>

Boder's contention about persecutor-victim dynamics, both physically near and distant, provides a useful approach to reading testimonies in chapter 3. I argue that the bureaucratic presentation of deportation transit, in its historical and aesthetic conception, was a critical but by no means sufficient condition in implementing Nazi deportation policy. The image of transit to a work destination was inconsistently applied and developed in its deceptive power in the numerous occupied countries from which Jews were deported. Why did the Germans feel they had to sustain the ruse of a journey with deportations from Western Europe, for example? Distances from ghettos to camps, local knowledge and rumors about destination of deportation trains,<sup>67</sup> information from escaped deportees,<sup>68</sup> and wartime demands on rolling stock and supply of troops, influenced the availability and types of carriages used. Yet these variables did not always translate into a consistent image of security and survival in the representation of resettlement to deportees. The failure of the image was evident in the fear, panic, resistance, and suicide of deportees before, during, and after having been assigned to a deportation transport.<sup>69</sup>

I also show that captivity was anticipated before it was experienced, though not to the degree of excruciating invasion reported from accounts of having survived it. The prehistory of captivity in testimonies placed the reader in ghetto space and its multiple crisis scenes of an experiential, ontological, and interpretive nature. Testimonies of deportations to the East also produced a revealing commentary on ethnic space, community, and architecture. Testimonies of deportation exemplified what I contend is not only a geographical exile during the Holocaust, but also an exile from language uttered in the constant repetition of words such as “unspeakable” and “incomprehensible.”

Chapter 4, “Immobilization in ‘Cattle Cars,’” introduces the reader into the space of deportation trains. I build on the words of Gundel, Heilman, and Klüger, and analyze deportees’ testimonies and their representation of the existential, spatial, and sensory traumas of train journeys. These traumas included a tenuous relationship between space and confinement, the feeling of abandonment, ongoing physical and psychological degeneration, and repeated attempts at ethical community among deportees. I also examine the narrative paradigms that permit and repress train captivity’s visceral representation: the sometimes conflicting contexts in which testimonies were written or enunciated as a critical preface to chapter 5, which unpacks the ostensible literary and visual order of these narratives.

The analysis of train space and captivity in motion provides the foundations for chapter 5’s exploration of the tellability of train memories. “Sensory Witnessing and Railway Shock: Disorders of Vision and Experience,” investigates the disorders of Holocaust transit, particularly the marginalization of sight as a primary basis of witness perception and truth. Enlightenment philosophers in the eighteenth century interpreted the visual world as possessing a privileged epistemological status of truth and knowledge—a prerequisite for understanding. The relationship between seeing and comprehension was disrupted during the Holocaust, and especially so in the trains, raising questions about the claims of visual authority in confined space. The issues that dominated the previous chapters such as thematic sameness in the representation of confinement, the impairment to sight, and the repression of taboo topics in Holocaust writing, are telescoped in a close reading of David Boder’s interviews with five survivors about their train traumas.

Deportees’ testimonies of the journey’s end are explored in chapter 6, “Camp Arrivals: The Failed Resettlement.” This chapter examines the ways in which arrival at Auschwitz, Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec, Chelmno, and Majdanek allowed, on the one hand, the emergence of place as an organizing principle to restore territoriality and fixity to deportees’ testimonies. On the other hand, the unloading of deportees into the feared and foreign

environs of the camps provided no reassurance that the sudden restoration of vision was any more reliable than the other senses as a knowledge or truth to explain what they saw, heard, and felt. Did the sudden return of sight restore clarity to what confronted the deportee? How was arrival represented in terms of discovery, exploration, and relief?

Upon arriving at concentration and extermination camps, deportees consistently remarked that what they saw had no comparison to previous experiences in ghettos, or with rumors about the existence and function of camps. Upon arrival, a cosmopolitan and multilingual inmate population met deportees, yet they principally heard German as the language of incarceration, and indeed were forced into its accelerated acquisition as a camp discourse. This chapter analyzes what arrival represented to deportees, because the distance of their deportation origins to the camps varied, as did the impact of deception, awareness of the connotation of names such as Treblinka, and the circuits of information available prior to deportation, and during transit. Arrival represented termination, separation, and powerlessness to reverse an uncertain destiny. The chapter also expands the literary connotation of arrival through interpreting deportees' entry into the camp through the prism of alternative destinations and exile. Prominent in testimonies of deportation is the appearance of the platform and station as markers of ongoing and completed journeys, though platforms are also synonymous with final exits, the distribution of deportees, and their murder.

In the long history of distressingly abundant state-sponsored violations of the human body, why should deportees' experiences of train journeys during the Holocaust concern us, after all? Anthropologists, in particular, have long interpreted the body as a primary target of state and ethnic violence. Arjun Appadurai contends that although it is obvious to study the body as an object of the "worst possible infliction of pain, terror, indignity, and suffering," its coordinated design and impact cannot be denied: "Wherever the testimony is sufficiently graphic, it becomes clear that even the worst acts of degradation—involving feces, urine, body parts, beheading, impaling, gutting, sawing, raping, burning, hanging and suffocating—have macabre forms of cultural design and violent unpredictability."<sup>70</sup> To what extent do "cultural design" and "violent unpredictability" emerge in testimonies of deportation as evidence of Nazi genocide? Indeed, if one is to understand the trauma of deportation, and captivity in trains, they first have to be imagined.

## Notes

1. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Record Group 02, "Survivor Testimonies," Kay Gundel, "Reborn: Memoirs of a Camp Survivor, 1947–1986," RG-02.004\*01; Acc. 1986.019, p. 93.
2. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Record Group 50, Oral History, Interview with Anna Heilman, RG-50.030\*0258.
3. Ruth Klüger, *Still Alive: A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered* (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2001), 91. For recent readings of Klüger's work, see Pascale R. Bos, *German-Jewish Literature in the Wake of the Holocaust: Grete Weil, Ruth Klüger, and the Politics of Address* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Linda Schulte-Sasse, "'Living On' in the American Press: Ruth Klüger's *Still Alive* and Its Challenge to a Cherished Holocaust Paradigm," *German Studies Review* 27, no. 3 (2004): 469–75; Frederick Lubich, "Surviving to Excel: The Last German Jewish Autobiographies of Holocaust Survivors Ruth Klüger, Marcel Reich-Ranicki, and Paul Spiegel," *Modern Judaism* 25, no. 2 (2005): 189–210; and Nancy K. Miller, "Ruth Klüger's *Still Alive*: A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered, An Unsentimental Education," in *Teaching the Representation of the Holocaust*, ed. Marianne Hirsch and Irene Kacandes (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2004), 386–95.
4. See Tim Cole's analysis of the Budapest Ghetto, *Holocaust City: The Making of the Jewish Ghetto* (New York: Routledge, 2003).
5. Many survivors use the terms "cattle car," "freight car," and "boxcar" interchangeably in their testimonies. Wherever possible, I have retained the original references as they appear in survivor testimonies. When I discuss victim testimonies at length in the following chapters, I use the term "cattle car" to describe the popular or common, though inaccurate, identification of carriage types used in Holocaust deportations. I also use the term "cattle car" as a phrase of reclamation to identify the emotional and sensory impact of confinement, and its emergence as a genre of testimony. The multiple references to Jewish transports in Holocaust historiography reflect historical descriptions of transport as "freight cars." As indicated in the research of Alfred Mierzejewski, the freight car or standard fifteen- or twenty-ton *Güterwagen* (goods wagon) was commonly used for Jews during deportations, particularly those deportations originating in the Generalgouvernement. (Passenger cars were sometimes used over longer distances, for example, from Westerbork transit camp in the Netherlands.) The labelling of the freight car as a "cattle car" resulted from a misidentification of carriage types by survivors, particularly in the United States. In the discussion of what constitutes a "cattle car" experience, I have relied on the work of historians of the Deutsche Reichsbahn (DRB), most particularly Alfred Mierzejewski, and my e-mail correspondence with him to clarify the types of carriages used in deportations for the Final Solution. I am very thankful to him for assistance on the freight car issue. See Alfred C. Mierzejewski, *The Most Valuable Asset of the Reich: A History of the German National Railway*, vol. 2, 1933–1945 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).
6. Terrence Des Pres, *The Survivor: An Anatomy of Life in the Death-Camps* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 51.
7. *Ibid.*, 69.
8. Robert Eaglestone, *The Holocaust and the Postmodern* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 9.
9. See the map, "DRB/Ostbahn Routes and Nazi Death Camps, 1942," in Mierzejewski, *Most Valuable Asset of the Reich*, 118.
10. Raul Hilberg has discussed the methodological and source problems involved in quantifying the number of Jewish deaths. Based on his assessment of the sources, he concludes that

the “raw data are seldom self-explanatory, and their interpretation often requires the use of voluminous background materials that have to be analyzed in turn. Assumptions may therefore be piled on assumptions, and margins of error may be wider than they seem. Under these circumstances, exactness is impossible.” See Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, 3rd ed., vol. III, appendix B (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 1303. Hilberg also provides three tables: “Table B-1: Deaths By Cause,” “Table B-2: Deaths by Country,” and “Table B-3: Deaths by Year.” “Table B-1: Deaths by Cause” lists the total figure of 5.1 million Jews killed through ghettoization and general privation (over 800,000), open-air shootings (1.4 million), and camps (up to 2.9 million), of which 2.6 million Jews were killed in death camps. See appendix B: 1320–21.

11. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 30.
12. These projects include Yad Vashem’s project “Deportation of Jews during the Holocaust.” See the Yad Vashem Web site at [http://www1.yadvashem.org/about\\_yad/what\\_new/temp\\_about\\_yad/temp\\_index\\_about\\_yad\\_institute.html](http://www1.yadvashem.org/about_yad/what_new/temp_about_yad/temp_index_about_yad_institute.html).
13. Serge Klarsfeld, *Le memorial de la deportation des juifs de France* (Paris: Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, 1978), and Serge Klarsfeld and Maxime Steinberg, *Memorial de la deportation des juifs de Belgique* (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1982); Michael Molho, ed., *In memoriam: hommage aux victimes juives des Nazis en Grece* (Thessaloniki: Communauté Israélite de Thessalonique, 1973); H.G. Adler, *Der Verwaltete Mensch: Studien zur Deportation der Juden aus Deutschland* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1974); Alfred Gottwaldt and Diana Schulle, *Die “Judendeportationen” aus dem Deutschen Reich 1941–1945: Ein kommentierte Chronologie* (Wiesbaden: Marixverlag, 2005). On the gender dimensions of deportation, see Margaret-Anne Hutton, *Testimony from the Nazi Camps: French Women’s Voices* (Oxford: Routledge, 2005). Recent comparative studies of deportation include Pim Griffioen and Ron Zeller, “Anti-Jewish Policy and Organization of the Deportations in France and the Netherlands, 1940–1944: A Comparative Study,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 20, no. 3 (2006): 437–73.
14. There have been references to the organization of deportation train journeys and, less frequently, to their deadly impacts. See, for example, Yitzhak Arad, “The Trains of Death,” in *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 63–67; Yaacov Lozowick, “Judenspediteur: A Deportation Train,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 6, no. 3 (1991): 283–92; Israel Gutman, “Deportation to Death,” in *Resistance: The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1994), 133–45; Simone Gigliotti, “Cattle Car Complexes: A Correspondence with Historical Captivity and Post-Holocaust Witnesses,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 20, no. 2 (2006): 256–77; and my book chapter, “Deportation Transit and Captive Bodies: Rethinking Holocaust Witnessing,” in *Lessons and Legacies IX*, Jonathan Petropoulos, et al. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2009).
15. At various points in the book, I use testimony from the Eichmann trial to demonstrate how it was used, successfully or otherwise, to corroborate a large number of documents on deportations in countries of Nazi occupation and collaboration. For a selective compilation of analyses (in chronological order) of Eichmann, the trial and its continuing impact, see Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin, 1963); Gulie Ne’eman Arad, ed., “Hannah Arendt and Eichmann in Jerusalem,” special issue of *History & Memory* 8, no. 2 (1996); Shoshana Felman, “Theaters of Justice: Arendt in Jerusalem, the Eichmann Trial, and the Redefinition of Legal Meaning in the Wake of the Holocaust,” *Critical Inquiry* 27, no. 2 (2001): 201–38; Christian Gerlach, “The Eichmann Interrogations in Holocaust Historiography,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 15, no. 3 (2001): 428–52; Ylana N. Miller, “Creating Unity through History: The Eichmann Trial as Transition,” *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 1, no. 2

- (2002): 131–49; Haim Gouri, *Facing the Glass Booth: The Jerusalem Trial of Adolf Eichmann* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004); Hanna Yablonka, *The State of Israel vs. Adolf Eichmann*, trans. Ora Cummings with David Herman (New York: Schocken Books, 2004); Idith Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). For an affirmation of the “banality of evil” thesis from a sociological perspective, see Guy B. Adams and Danny L. Balfour, *Unmasking Administrative Evil* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998). More plentiful are recent revisions of Arendt’s notion of the “banality of evil,” including those by Yaacov Lozowick, “Malice in Action,” *Yad Vashem Studies* 27 (1999): 287–330, and *Hitler's Bureaucrats: The Nazi Security Police and the Banality of Evil* (New York: Continuum, 2000). See also Hillel Halkin, “Eichmann: The Simplicity of Evil,” *Commentary* (July–August 2005): 57–61. Eichmann is also the subject of biographical studies; for example, David Cesarani, *Eichmann: His Life and Crimes* (London: Heinemann, 2004), and David Cesarani, ed., *After Eichmann: Collective Memory and the Holocaust since 1961* (London: Routledge, 2005), which was first published as a special issue of *Journal of Israeli History* 23, no. 1 (2004). Also of relevance is Marianna Torgovnick, “Eichmann’s Ghost,” in *The War Complex: World War II in our Time* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 45–69 and 166–72.
16. *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann: Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem, State of Israel, Ministry of Justice, Volume III* (Jerusalem: The Trust for the Publication of the Proceedings of the Eichmann Trial in Co-operation with the Israel State Archives and Yad Vashem, 1998), 1153.
  17. Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi, *Booking Passage: Exile and Homecoming in the Modern Jewish Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 109.
  18. Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (London: Abacus, 1989), 85.
  19. Elie Wiesel, *Night*, trans. S. Rodway (London: Penguin, 1960), 33. Wiesel was born in 1928 in Sighet, Transylvania, which is now part of Romania. He was fifteen years old when he and his family were deported by the Nazis to Auschwitz. His mother and younger sister perished, his two older sisters survived. Elie and his father were later transported to Buchenwald, where his father died shortly before the camp was liberated in April 1945. See my analysis of Wiesel’s memories of trains, “Night and the Teaching of History: The Trauma of Transit,” in *Approaches to Teaching Wiesel’s Night*, ed. Alan Rosen (New York: Modern Language Association, 2006), 32–40; Primo Levi, *If This Is a Man/The Truce*, trans. Stuart Woolf (London: Abacus, 1987); Charlotte Delbo, *Auschwitz and After*, trans. R. Lamont (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995) and Charlotte Delbo, *Convoy to Auschwitz: Women of the French Resistance*, trans. Carol Cosman (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997).
  20. Christian Bernadac, *Déportation, 1933–1945* (Paris: France-Empire, 1992–93). See his other works on deportation to various camps, including Dachau and Mauthausen, *The Death Train* trans. S. Van Vliet White (Geneva: Ferni, 1978); and *Train 7909, Destination Dachau* (Paris: M. Lafon, 1994).
  21. For a discussion of Pagis, see Ezrahi, *Booking Passage*, 157–78, and Robert Alter, “Dan Pagis and the Poetry of Displacement,” *Judaism* 45, no. 4 (1996): 399–412.
  22. “Treblinka Dorte” (audio file), Music of the Holocaust Online Exhibition, USHMM, available at: [www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/music/detail.php?content=treblinka](http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/music/detail.php?content=treblinka).
  23. See Steve Reich and Kronos Quartet, *Different Trains* (Los Angeles: Elektra/Asylum, 1989), Herbert Distel, *Die Reise* (Therwil, Switzerland: Hat Hut Records, 1988).
  24. Ziva Amishai-Maisels, *Depiction and Interpretation: The Influence of the Holocaust on the Visual Arts* (Oxford and New York: Pergamon Press, 1993), 32.

25. Arie A. Galles, *Fourteen Stations* (Madison, NJ, 1993). For a critical reading of "Fourteen Stations," see Andrea Liss, "Rituals of Mourning and Mimesis: Arie A. Galles's Fourteen Stations," in *Image and Remembrance: Representation and the Holocaust*, ed. Shelley Hornstein and Florence Jacobowitz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 31–42. Andrew Rodger's Pillars of Witness sculptures are located at the Jewish Holocaust Museum and Research Centre in Melbourne, Australia, available at <http://www.jhc.org.au/default.asp>, and Judy Chicago, *Holocaust Project: From Darkness into Light* (New York: Viking, 1993).
26. For information on the "Canada" Installation that was exhibited in Toronto in 1988, see Didier Semin, Tamar Garb, and Donald Kuspit, *Christian Boltanski* (London: Phaidon, 1997), 80.
27. The trains with pogrom survivors departed from Iasi, Romania on 30 June 1941. They were destined for safety but the condition of the transports resulted in the deaths of hundreds of Jews. See Radu Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania: The Destruction of Jews and Gypsies under the Antonescu Regime, 1940–1944* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000), 80–90.
28. Jewish labor productivity was the main emphasis of Genewein's collection.
29. The future destination of the deportees who stand beside the passenger train is uncertain according to the text that accompanies the photo. See USHMM Photo Archives W/S no. 74537.
30. Parts of the deportation are captured in the film "Deportation of Jews from Bulgarian-Occupied Macedonia," March 1943, available at the USHMM Wexler Learning Center, <http://www.ushmm.org/lcmedia/viewer/wlc/film.php?RefId=DFB0212D>.
31. This photo is from a Dutch film about Hanns Rauter, an Austrian SS official with responsibility for Westerbork. See *Rauter Trial, Westerbork* (1948) at the Steven Spielberg Film and Video Archive at USHMM: Story RG-60.0785, Tape 317, available at [http://resources.ushmm.org/film/display/main.php?search=simple&cdquery=Deportations&cache\\_file=uia\\_abDqGB&total\\_recs=10&page\\_len=25&page=1&rec=5&file\\_num=1099](http://resources.ushmm.org/film/display/main.php?search=simple&cdquery=Deportations&cache_file=uia_abDqGB&total_recs=10&page_len=25&page=1&rec=5&file_num=1099).
32. See Chris Vos, "The Past in Iconic Clichés: The Case of the Girl between the Doors of a Cattle-Wagon to Auschwitz," in *History in Words and Images: Proceedings of the Conference on Historical Representation*, ed. Hannu Salmi (Turku: University of Turku, Department of History, 2005), 168.
33. Jacob Borut has examined the continuity thesis about anti-Semitism in German history through his study of segregationist tourist facilities against Jews during the Weimar period. See Borut, "Antisemitism in Tourist Facilities in Weimar Germany," *Yad Vashem Studies* (Vol. XXX, 2002), 1–42.
34. Alon Confino, "Dissonance, Normality, and the Historical Method: Why Did Some Germans Think of Tourism after May 8, 1945?" in *Life after Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe during the 1940s and 1950s*, ed. Richard Bessel and Dirk Schumann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 327.
35. Confino, "Dissonance, Normality and the Historical Method," 328.
36. See Documents 278 and 279, in *Nazism 1919–1945: A Documentary Reader, Vol. 2, State, Economy and Society, 1933–1939*, ed. J. Noakes and G. Pridham (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1984), 396. Reprinted from J. Wulf, ed., *Presse und Funk im Dritten Reich* (Gütersloh: Sigbert Mohn Verlag, 1964).
37. See Document 427, ND PS-1816, in *Nazism 1919–1945*, ed. Noakes and Pridham, 558–60.
38. Acclaimed scholar of the Holocaust, Geoffrey Hartman, was sent to England in 1939 as part of the Kindertransport program. See <http://www.library.yale.edu/testimonies/about/hartman.html>. Accounts of the Kindertransport include Mark Jonathan Harris and Deborah Oppenheimer, *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport*

- (London: Bloomsbury, 2000) and the film by the same title. For a critical reading of the Kindertransport in relation to the construction of diaspora identity see Beate Neumeier, "Kindertransport: Memory, Identity and the British-Jewish Diaspora," in *Diaspora and Multiculturalism: Common Traditions and New Developments*, ed. Monika Fludernik (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2003), 83–112; and Michael Geyer, "Virtue in Despair: A Family History from the Days of the Kindertransport," *History & Memory* 17, nos. 1/2 (Fall 2005): 323–65.
39. On emigration options for German Jews see Wolfgang Benz, "Emigration as Rescue and Trauma: The Historical Context of the Kindertransport," *Shofar* 23, no. 1 (Fall 2004): 1–6.
  40. On the deportations of Polish communities, see Phillip T. Rutherford, *Prelude to the Final Solution: The Nazi Program for Deporting Ethnic Poles, 1939–1941* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007).
  41. For example, see David Boder's interview with Jurek Kestenberg from 31 July 1946. Kestenberg was thirteen when he was deported to Majdanek in 1943. He escaped from a deportation train, recovered from a gunshot wound with the help of a compassionate Polish peasant, made his way back to the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943, and was then deported to Majdanek after the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The interview is available at "Voices of the Holocaust," [http://voices.iit.edu/frames.asp?path=Interviews/&page=keste&text=\\_t.html](http://voices.iit.edu/frames.asp?path=Interviews/&page=keste&text=_t.html). Parts of the interview are also reprinted as "Jurek K.," in *Fresh Wounds: Early Narratives of Holocaust Survival*, ed. Donald L. Niewyk (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 108–17.
  42. Michael A. Bernstein, *Foregone Conclusions: Against Apocalyptic History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).
  43. I thank Tim Cole for this insight.
  44. On this point, I refer to deportees, such as German Jews, who were sent to killing sites in Riga and Minsk, and also to experiences of occupation and persecution in Ukraine. On ghettoization in Ukraine, see the recent works by Wendy Lower, "Facilitating Genocide: Nazi Ghettoisation Practices in Occupied Ukraine, 1941–1942," in *Life in Ghettos During the Holocaust*, ed. Eric J. Sterling (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2005), 120–44, and her book, *Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).
  45. A recent study is Markus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (New York: Viking, 2007).
  46. On train journeys to Gulags, see Anne Appelbaum, "Transport, Arrival, Selection," in *Gulag: A History* (London: Penguin, 2003), 159–78.
  47. Testimonies of state-engineered repression through captivity are not unique to the Nazi regime. Pavel Polian discusses the theory and practice of deportation in relation to the displacement of ethnic groups in the Soviet Union. He remarks that the "USSR was neither the trailblazer nor the only practitioner as far as deportations were concerned. It was, rather, the regime that most consistently and insistently implemented such a policy." See Pavel Polian, *Against Their Will: The History and Geography of Forced Migrations in the USSR*, trans. Anna Yastrzhembsk (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), 2.
  48. On trains as death spaces in other countries, I refer to train massacres that occurred during the partition of India along religious lines in August 1947. Partition produced an enormous refugee displacement of approximately ten million people. The massacres were most atrocious when trains from Punjab were sent across the border into India and into Pakistan, filled with dead bodies of fleeing refugees. For oral testimony of these train massacres see Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, *Freedom at Midnight* (London: Collins, 1975), especially chapters 13 and 14. My thanks to Maria-Suzette Fernandes Dias for

- this reference. See also Salman Rushdie's acclaimed novel, *Midnight's Children* (London: Cape, 1981).
49. Recent surveys and critical interpretations include Dan Stone, ed., *The Historiography of Genocide* (London: Palgrave, 2008); Ben Kiernan, *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007); A. Dirk Moses and Dan Stone, eds., *Colonialism and Genocide* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007); Benjamin A. Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004); Eric Stover and Harvey M. Weinstein, eds., *My Neighbor, My Enemy: Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004). For a useful overview of approaches to writing histories of genocide see Cathie Carmichael, "The Violent Destruction of Community during the 'Century of Genocide,'" *European History Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (2005): 395–403, and Peter Fritzsche, "Genocide and Global Discourse," *German History* 23, no. 1 (2005): 96–111.
  50. See Alan Rosen's analysis of Boder's use of "perplexity" in *Sounds of Defiance: The Holocaust, Multilingualism and the Problem of English* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 21–33 and 198–200.
  51. Rosen, *Sounds of Defiance*, 9.
  52. Burkhard Liebsch, "Giving Testimony," in *Contemporary Portrayals of Auschwitz: Philosophical Challenges*, ed. Alan Rosenberg et al. (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2000), 75.
  53. See, for example, Amy Hungerford, *The Holocaust of Texts: Genocide, Literature, and Personification* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003), Thomas Trezise, "Unspeakable," *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 14, no. 1 (2001): 39–66, and Berel Lang, *Holocaust Representation: Art within the Limits of History and Ethics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).
  54. David P. Boder, *I Did Not Interview the Dead* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1949).
  55. David P. Boder, *Topical Autobiographies of Displaced People, Recorded Verbatim in Displaced Persons Camps with a Psychological and Anthropological Analysis*, 16 volumes (Chicago: Illinois Institute of Technology, 1957). *Topical Autobiographies* was intended as an inconclusive statement on the project, as Boder failed to secure the requisite funding to continue his research. His unique archive also included songs sung by interviewees in the DP camps. Boder recalled his method of inviting DPs to sing: "I would meet a colony of DPs in a particular shelter house for lunch or dinner. After the meal I would ask them to sing and, with their knowledge, I recorded the songs. When I played these back, the wonder of hearing their own voices recorded was boundless." See Boder, *I Did Not Interview the Dead*, xx. One of the recorded songs "There in the Camp" can be heard at Music of the Holocaust Online Exhibition, available at <http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/music/detail.php?content=boder>.
  56. Rosen, *Sounds of Defiance*, 17.
  57. See "Addenda," *Topical Autobiographies*, vol. XVI, 2-3161.
  58. On historians' marginalization of the witness, see Tony Kushner, "Holocaust Testimony, Ethics, and the Problem of Representation," *Poetics Today* 27, no. 2 (2006): 275–95. I thank Alan Rosen for this reference.
  59. See Karein K. Goertz, "Body, Trauma, and the Rituals of Memory: Charlotte Delbo and Ruth Klüger," in *Shaping Losses: Cultural Memory and the Holocaust*, ed. Julia Epstein and Lori Hope Lefkowitz (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 177.
  60. Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi, "Questions of Authenticity," in *Teaching the Representation of the Holocaust*, ed. Hirsch and Kacandes, 54. These ideas were first explored in Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi, "Representing Auschwitz," *History & Memory* 7, no. 2 (1996): 121–54.

61. DeKoven Ezrahi, "Questions of Authenticity," in *Teaching the Representation of the Holocaust*, ed. Hirsch and Kacandes, 54.
62. Frances Bartkowski, *Travelers, Immigrants, Inmates: Essays in Estrangement* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 15.
63. *Ibid.*, xxvii.
64. *Ibid.*, 3.
65. See Emmanuel Levinas, "Useless Suffering," in *The Provocation of Levinas*, ed. Robert Bernasconi and David Wood (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), 156–67; Primo Levi, "Useless Violence," in *Drowned and the Saved*, 83–101; and Charlotte Delbo, "Useless Knowledge," in *Auschwitz and After*, 115–231. On the ethics of writing about the dead, see Edith Wyschogrod, *An Ethics of Remembering: History, Heterology and the Nameless Others* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998) and Antoon de Baets, "A Declaration of the Responsibilities of Present Generations Toward Past Generations," *History and Theory* 43, no. 4 (2004): 130–64.
66. Boder, "Addenda," *Topical Autobiographies*, vol. XVI, 3-3162.
67. On the topics of knowledge and rumor, see the compilation of primary testimonies from Jews and ordinary Germans in Eric Johnson and Karl-Heinz Reuband, eds., *What We Knew: Terror, Mass Murder and Everyday Life in Nazi Germany* (London: John Murray, 2005).
68. Yehoshua Büchler examines an overlooked attempt at rescue in 1944 of members of He-Halutz (a Zionist pioneer underground group) to provide immigration visas for remaining Slovakian prisoners (following deportations in 1942) interned in Auschwitz for their relocation to Palestine. Büchler details how information about Auschwitz was disseminated; in addition to the Vrba and Wexler reports, deportation destinations of Slovakian Jewry and attempts at gathering information about their arrival locations. See Yehoshua Büchler, "Certificates for Auschwitz," *Yad Vashem Studies* XXX (2002), 1–29. See the report by Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler, *Extermination Camps of Auschwitz (Oświęcim) and Birkenau in Upper Silesia* (Washington, DC: Executive Office of the President, War Refugee Board 1944), Rudolf Vrba and Alan Bestic, *I Cannot Forgive* (New York: Bantam, 1964) and Ruth Linn, *Escaping Auschwitz: A Culture of Forgetting* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).
69. See David Lester, *Suicide and the Holocaust* (New York: Nova Science Publications, 2005).
70. Arjun Appadurai, "Dead Certainty: Ethnic Violence in the Era of Globalisation," in *Genocide: An Anthropological Reader*, ed. Alexander Laban Hinton (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), 289. See also Michael D. Jackson, "Thinking through the Body: An Essay on Understanding Metaphor," *Social Analysis* 14 (Dec 1983): 127–49, and Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).